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Final **EVALUATION REPORT**

## FINAL PROJECT EVALUATION

# Support to Civil Registration System Reform in Tajikistan

Phase I: January 2016- December 2018

**Project ID:**00097519

**Implementing Partners/Responsible parties:** UNDP Tajikistan,  
in cooperation with the Ministry of Justice of the Republic of  
Tajikistan, EPOS, UN Women, UNFPA

March 2019

### Evaluator

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PROJECT INFORMATION		
Project title	Support to Civil Registration System Reform in Tajikistan	
Atlas ID	00097519	
Corporate outcome and output	<p><i>Outcome 1:</i> The reformed civil registry system of Tajikistan is effectively managed and provides quality and affordable services to the population and qualitative vital statistical data for the State.</p> <p><i>Outcome 2:</i> The population of Tajikistan know how to and timely have their vital events recorded in the civil registry system.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Output 1:</i> Legislative framework for civil registration is compliant with international best practices.</li> <li>• <i>Output 2:</i> New internal regulations defining roles, responsibilities and processes are applied by civil registry offices and jamoats.</li> <li>• <i>Output 3:</i> Civil registry offices and jamoats' staff have enhanced capacities to provide quality services to the population.</li> <li>• <i>Output 4:</i> Civil registration and archiving of data is managed through an electronic system.</li> <li>• <i>Output 5:</i> Ministry of Justice makes use of new communication strategies to proactively incentivise the population to register their vital acts.</li> <li>• <i>Output 6:</i> Outreach awareness rising campaigns by selected civil society organisations complement the Ministry of Justice communication strategies.</li> </ul>	
Country	Tajikistan	
Region	Central Asia	
Date project document signed	.....	
Project dates	Start	Planned end
	01 January 2016	31 December 2019 (Phase I) 31 December 2023 (Phase II)
Project budget	Phase I – USD 5,239,789	
Project expenditure at the time of evaluation	.....	
Funding source	Swiss Direction for Cooperation – USD 4,214,963 UNDP – USD 1,024,826 Government of Tajikistan – in kind	
Implementing party	UNDP Tajikistan	

EVALUATION INFORMATION		
<b>Evaluation type</b>	Project evaluation	
<b>Final/midterm review/ other</b>	Final	
<b>Period under evaluation</b>	<b>Start</b>	<b>End</b>
	01 January 2016	31 December 2018
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## Disclaimer

This project evaluation report presents the view of the Consultant and does not necessarily fully correspond to the opinions of UNDP, other UN Agencies, SDC or other state and non-state 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 Consultant.

Final Project Evaluation: *Support to Civil Registration  
System Reform in Tajikistan*

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## TABLE OF CONTENT

<b>Executive Summary</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>Part I. INTRODUCTION &amp; BACKGROUND</b>	<b>12</b>
1.1 Introduction	12
1.2 Background and context	12
Part II. OVERVIEW OF THE PROJECT	14
<b>Part III. EVALUATION FRAMEWORK</b>	<b>15</b>
3.1 Scope and objectives of evaluation	15
3.2 Evaluation methodology	15
3.3 Evaluation Criteria and Assessment Grid	17
3.4 Management of Evaluation	17
3.5 Quality Management	18
3.6 Ethical norms of evaluation	18
3.7 Information about evaluator	19
3.8 Limitations and constraints	19
<b>Part IV. EVALUATION FINDINGS</b>	<b>20</b>
4.1 RELEVANCE	20
4.2 EFFECTIVENESS	23
4.3 EFFICIENCY	32
4.4 SUSTAINABILITY	36
4.5 Cross-cutting issues	37
<b>PART V. CONCLUSIONS &amp; LESSONS LEARNT</b>	<b>39</b>
<b>PART VI. RECOMMENDATIONS</b>	<b>42</b>
6.1 General framework of the recommendations	42
6.2 Detailed recommendations	42
<b>PART VII. ANNEXES</b>	<b>48</b>
ANNEX 1: Lead Evaluation Questions	48
ANNEX 2: List of reviewed documents	49
ANNEX 3: Evaluation Matrix	52
ANNEX 4. List of consulted stakeholders	57
ANNEX 5: Term of References	60

Figure 1: Map of Republic of Tajikistan

Figure 2: The core concept of HRBA

Figure 3: Distribution of de-facto project costs per Outputs 2016-2018

Figure 4: Cumulative distribution of de-facto project costs per Outcomes

Table 1: Evaluation assessment grid

Table 2: Distribution of de-facto project costs per Outputs

Table 3: Cumulative distribution of de-facto project costs per Outcomes

## Acronyms

CAR	Civil Acts Registration
CR Project	<i>“Support to Civil Registration System Reform”</i> Project
CRVS	Civil Registration and Vital Statistics
CPAP	Country Programme Action Plan
CPD	Country Programme Document
CRO	Civil Registration Office/s
CTA	Chief Technical Adviser
DAC	Development Assistance Committee
DHS	Demographic and Health Survey
EOP	Executive Office of President
ERG	Evaluation Reference Group
EU	European Union
FGD	Focus Group Discussion/s
HRBA	Human Rights Based Approach
GoT	Government of Tajikistan
IALE	Institute for Advanced Legal Education
JLRP	Judicial and Legal Reform Programme
ILRC	International Legal Resource Centre
IRC	Innovations and Reforms Centre
IT	Informational Technologies
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MFA	Ministry of Foreign Affairs
MoJ	Ministry of Justice
MTDS	Mid-Term Development Strategy
NDS	National Development Strategy
NGO	Non-governmental organization
OSS	One-Stop-Shop
OECD	Organization for Economic Development and Cooperation
PO	Public Organisation
RBM	Results Based Management
RoL	Rule of Law
RT	Republic of Tajikistan
SDC	Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation
SDG	Sustainable Development Goals
ToC	Theory of Change
ToR	Terms of Reference
UN	United Nations
UAGS	Main Department of Civil Registration
UNDAF	United Nations Development Assistance Framework
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNEG	United Nations Evaluation Guidelines
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UN Women	United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women
WG	Working Group
ZAGS	Civil Registration Office

## Executive Summary

This report presents the findings, conclusions and recommendations of the final evaluation of the *Support to Civil Registration System Reform in Tajikistan* Project (Phase I) funded by the Government of Switzerland and implemented during January 2016 - December 2018 by UNDP Tajikistan in close cooperation with the Ministry of Justice of Republic of Tajikistan, EPOS, UN Women and UNFPA.

The project represents a multi-year action aimed to address the development needs and support the Government of Tajikistan in implementing the civil registration (CR) reforms by: adjusting the national normative and regulatory framework to the thematic international practice; capacity strengthening of the CR officers and enabling environment; developing the electronic systems for improving the functionality of CR offices; digitalization of CR Archive; providing support to Ministry of Justice (MoJ) for development of the communication plan/strategy and implementation of the outreach awareness raising initiatives of the population, especially the vulnerable one.

Project evaluation was carried out on the initiative of the UNDP Tajikistan and was focused on assessment of the project performance and generation of the relevant findings, conclusions, lessons and recommendations, which will be used by UNDP and its partners in the process of further supporting the reform of Civil Registration System in Tajikistan.

Thus, the expected users of the final project evaluation include: UNDP, Ministry of Justice of Republic of Tajikistan, key implementing partners, SDC as well as other state and non-state actors.

The evaluation was structured around the DAC Criteria (*Relevance, Effectiveness, Efficiency and Sustainability*) applied for assessing the project interventions for supporting civil registration system reform in Tajikistan. The data collection tools used by the evaluator included: a detailed review of the documentation, semi-structured interviews and focus groups discussions with the 97 selected key state and non-state informants and sites visits in three localities of Tajikistan: Dushanbe, Kulob and Bokhtar. Throughout the evaluation process, the evaluator also observed an informational campaign and systematically triangulated the collected data and informational sources.

The final evaluation concluded that the Phase I of the CR Project is highly relevant and aligned to the national CR reform priorities of Tajikistan and UN strategic documents, such as: National Development Strategy (2016-2030), ZAGS Reform Programme (2014-2019); Country Program Document (2016-2020), UNDP Strategic Plan (2018-2021). The project is also in line with the Sustainable Development Goals and its intervention areas are aiming to advance Tajikistan's progress towards the achievement of the SDG: # 16<sup>1</sup> and SDG # 5<sup>2</sup>.

The project represents a multi-stakeholder, inter-sectorial and complex intervention, with the key elements of the Human-Rights-Based-Approach because targets both: capacity development of the “duty bearers” (ZAGS, MoJ) to fulfil adequately their obligations, i.e. “supply side” and information and awareness raising of the “rights holders”, i.e. “demand

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<sup>1</sup> Peace, Justice & Strong Institutions – “Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels”.

<sup>2</sup> “Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls”.

side”. The cross-cutting issues (particularly gender aspects) are partially reflected in the project design, but are well mainstreamed during the project implementation in the key components of the project at the policy level, but also in capacity building and awareness raising. The project has a results’ chain approach and the outcomes and outputs are clearly linked, but there are some inconsistencies at the indicators and targets level. Some of the initial targets (e.g. those involving jamoats, CR Archive digitalization) turned to be unrealistic to be reached during the Phase I, but the project proved flexibility and adjusted the approach, which is commended by the evaluator. The methods of delivery and approaches are mostly relevant for the adequate implementation of the CR reform in Tajikistan and reaching those realistic targets, but the greatest challenge of the project is not related to the appropriateness of the methods of delivery, but to the dynamics of delivery.

The findings of the final evaluation show that so far the *CR Project scores modestly under effectiveness and partially achieved the project outputs, although the efforts and interventions are in place. Because of the complexity, implementation difficulties and lower implementation dynamic than planned, the assessment of the project performance is mostly premature, i.e. the achievements still should happen and are mostly on the way.* Three of the outputs such as: Adoption of the CR amendments to the legislative and regulatory framework (Outputs 1 and 2), as well as use of communication plan/strategy by the MoJ (Output 5) are likely to be achieved by the end of the Phase I, while three other outputs: Capacity enhancing of the CR offices and jamoats (Outputs 3), Electronic CR system and digitalized CR archive (Output 4) and Outreach awareness rising campaigns (Output 6) are unlikely to be achieved and should be reinforced during the next Phase of the CR project, because the targets were extremely high and the implementation difficulties and costs in terms of financial resources, time consumption and needed efforts turned to be greater than initially estimated, which slowed down the project performance.

The key driving forces of the project, in the opinion of the evaluator are: 1) SDC, which proved to be more than just a donor, but also a boosting, augmentation and strategic vision sharing actor and 2) Ministry of Justice, which proves ownership, openness and supports actively the CR project, although its influence in boosting legislative changes is limited. Recently, upon the official declaration, one important key driving actor might become the involvement of the President of the Republic of Tajikistan, who reiterated the importance of the CR reforms and of the CR electronic system for the country.

As for the constraining factors, which affected the project implementation and its performance, they are: 1) Complexity of the project, i.e. inter-sectorial issues of the CR reforms (MoJ, MoH, EoP, MFA, Gossecret, Parliament) and multi-lateral aspects, as described in the report; 2) Slow decision making process (e.g. approval of the legislative amendments, info materials); 3) Multi-stakeholder involvement (public authorities, national experts, international experts, UN Agencies, EPOS and other providers), which sometimes generated different visions, expectations, approaches, overlaps and tensions regarding the project interventions; 4) Difficulties in setting up partnership and involvement of the Executive Office of the President, which is especially important for boosting approval of the CR legal amendments; 5) Some project management aspects, e.g. delays in procurements because of different management and normative aspects and 6) Higher implementation costs than anticipated.



The timeliness of the project implementation, i.e. the efficiency aspect of the CR project is pretty much influenced by the factors described and, generally, is modest and should be increased, because the project performance is behind the initial timeframe and there are delays in reaching the project targets of all six outputs and two outcomes. This situation postpones achievement of the strategic outcomes and delays the expected ultimate impact of the action. Increasing the project efficiency envisages not just the key leading agency, UNDP, which is coordinating the overall project implementation, but also all key project partners, including the Ministry of Justice of Tajikistan, as the strategic partner of the project and the Government of Tajikistan as such, because the CR project supports the implementation of the thematic national policy of the country, particularly the Civil Registration System Reform Programme (2014– 2019).

The distribution of the project costs shows that the majority of the financial resources 84,6 % were consumed by the Outcome 1 focused on supply side (particularly policy level actions Output 1 and Output 2), while the Outcome 2 absorbed about 15,4 %, out of which awareness raising (Output 6) represents 6,9%.

In terms of the likelihood of sustaining the benefits and results of the project, it is prematurely to be assessed, because the project achievements are still in the process. Therefore, evaluator assessed the *potential sustainability prospects* of the results, which are likely to be achieved by the end of the Phase I. Although some potential achievements reflect a higher level of sustainability and some are more ephemeral, generally the sustainability prospects of the achievements are partially promising. In terms of *policy sustainability*, the prospects are significant and there is a clear commitment of the legislative body of the country and, apparently, of the EOP to support the amendments.

Once the legislative package is adopted the policy sustainability is secured, because the amendments will become part of the normative framework and will be mandatory for an undefined period of time. The same is valid for the CR regulatory framework.

In terms of *institutional sustainability*, the CR project was geared towards: capacity development of the ZAGS staff; infrastructural/reconstruction support in the ZAGS of Kulob city; CR electronic system development; digitalization of CR Archive, development of the OSS model; enabling environment by provision of the IT/office equipment to ZAGS and to Institute for Advanced Legal Education (IALE) and developing the training curricula of IALE.

Thus, infrastructural/reconstruction support, electronic system, digitalized archive, OSS Model the IT and office equipment and training curricula of IALE are going to have a long lasting sustainability prospects, while the capacity development effects in terms of knowledge acquired or skills developed, usually are sustainable, but are depending on the extent to which the capacitated human resources will remain in the CR system.

*Financial sustainability* of the CR project achievements is mostly satisfactory. The eventual policy-level and regulatory achievements (Outputs 1 and 2) should not require additional financial resources; the renovated ZAGS office in Kulob, enabled environment, i.e. IT and office equipment, electronic platform and training curricula represent the property/ownership of the Ministry of Justice and will be maintained from the public finances. The sustainability of the digitalized archive, it is prematurely to be assessed, because it is not completed, de-facto it did not properly started as such.

As for the financial perspectives and commitments for the next phase of the CR project, the Ministry of Justice is allocating about \$ 1 mln for infrastructure building of so called “Justice Houses” and this financial investment partial envisages the CR project, because on the ground floor are going to be located ZAGS offices. The Ministry of Finance is available to examine the possibility for co-financing and covering of a part of the operational costs, for instance related to IT issues, including IT Unit of the MoJ, but requires more concrete information about the amount and destination. UNDP, as implementation agency, is able to contribute with about \$ 900,000, as for other UN implementation partners, the perspectives are unclear. The resource mobilization efforts during the project implementation did not brought expected results, although several potential donors were approached.

Regardless of the project performance, there is always room for improvement. Usually, any approach, which does not fully work as planned, represents an excellent opportunity for the project team to learn a lesson. Based on the evaluator’s review of project documents, interviews with key informants, and analysis of the information collected in project sites, the Consultant suggested and described in the report three lessons that may be of value to the UNDP and project partners.

- Engagement and coordination with different state institutions, especially EoP and Parliament is vital for a prompt legislative reform processes. Therefore, the project should intensify cooperation and communication with them and to increase their involvement in the next phase.
- Such a complex, cross-sectorial and multi-stakeholder initiative as CR project is highly dependent on various (technical, economic, political and social) factors and requires a proactive, flexible, but still results-oriented and “pushing” approach during the all stages of the project implementation. Partnerships, common vision, coordination among project partners and joint advocacy efforts are important and should be used through the whole project cycle management for overcoming implementation bottle-necks and/or resistances.
- Public awareness raising on the necessity of the registration of the vital civil acts is not necessarily conditioned by the undergoing reforms of the CR system. The population of Tajikistan does not register their vital civil acts not just because the existing CR system is paper-based or the normative framework is not adjusted, but also because of many other social reasons, including low informational and awareness level, which should be increased in parallel (not after) the ongoing legislative and technological reforms.

Given the main findings and conclusions, the evaluator suggested and explained thirteen overarching recommendations, which in the opinion of the evaluator might contribute to increasing the relevance, performance and sustainability of the Phase II of the CR Project:

1. Maintain both project outcomes, but reshape some of the outputs.
2. Improve the project design aspects.
3. Reinforce lobby and advocacy for adoption of the CR legislative amendments.
4. Change the IT equipment provision principle to ZAGS, adjust the Electronic Platform Integration Plan and continue capacity enhancing of the CR officers.
5. Identify how many computers and other IT equipment are still necessary to fully equip the remaining ZAGS offices.
6. Replicate gradually the OSS model in other ZAGS offices.

7. Strengthen the IT Unit of the Ministry of Justice.
8. Pilot archive digitalization in some area and developing a scale-up plan based on accurate financial estimations.
9. Pilot the electronic system and CR normative acts in some jamoats.
10. Increase budget allocations for public information and outreach awareness raising for boosting civil registration.
11. Establish strategic partnerships with the key implementing actors based on the comparative advantages.
12. Introduce a Chief Technical Advisor position.
13. Synergize elaboration of the Phase II of the CR Project with the new CR Reform Strategy of the Government of Tajikistan.

## Part I. INTRODUCTION & BACKGROUND

### 1.1 Introduction

The final project evaluation was carried out on the initiative of the UNDP Tajikistan and was focused on assessment of the project performance and generation of the relevant findings, conclusions, lessons and recommendations, which will be used by UNDP and its strategic and operational partners in the process of supporting the reform of Civil Registration System in Tajikistan. Although the Phase I of the Project, formally ends in December 2019, the final evaluation of the Phase was planned to be undertaken in advance, at the beginning of the last year, to make sure that the project team and strategic partners has sufficient time to analyze the findings, conclusions and recommendations of the assessment and to incorporate them in the future planning for the Phase II of the project. Thus, the primary audience and the users of the evaluation are: Ministry of Justice of Tajikistan, UNDP Tajikistan, SDC, UN Country Office, as well as key implementing partners such as: UN Women, UNFPA, EPOS.

The final evaluation report is prepared following the outline provided in the Terms of Reference (ToR) and the Guidance for UNDP evaluation reports and quality standards. It is prepared based on a review of the documents related to the project, field mission consultations and direct observations of the project activities. The report provides the background and the context to the evaluation, describes the overall approach and 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 report also contains a set of annexes: TOR, evaluation questions, evaluation matrix, list of consulted stakeholders and list of reviewed documents.

### 1.2 Background and context

Republic of Tajikistan (Tajikistan) is a mountainous, landlocked country in Central Asia with an area of 143,100 km<sup>2</sup> and an estimated population of 8,734,951 of people<sup>3</sup> out of which 73.5% reside in rural areas and 49.5% are women<sup>4</sup>.

Tajikistan is included in the group of medium development countries per Human Development Index 2018 (0.650), which is ranked in 127<sup>th</sup> position and with the Gender Development Index 0.933<sup>5</sup>. According to World Bank estimations, the country is ranked in 128<sup>th</sup> position according to the Doing Business 2017 Report<sup>6</sup> among the 190 countries and 152<sup>th</sup> in the Corruption Perception Index, behind Kazakhstan (124) and Kyrgyzstan (132), but above Uzbekistan (158) and Turkmenistan (161)<sup>7</sup>.

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<sup>3</sup>Please see: "[World Population Prospects: The 2017 Revision](#)". United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Population Division. 10 September 2017.

<sup>4</sup>Please see United Nations in Tajikistan: [https://untj.org/?page\\_id=535](https://untj.org/?page_id=535)

<sup>5</sup>Please see UNDP Human Development Reports: <http://hdr.undp.org/en/countries/profiles/TJK>

<sup>6</sup>*Doing Business* is a World Bank Group flagship research, which measures regulations affecting 11 areas of the life of a business. For additional information: *Doing Business 2017 Report. Equal Opportunities for All*. World Bank, October 25, 2016, <http://www.doingbusiness.org/en/reports/global-reports/doing-business-2017>.

<sup>7</sup>Please see: [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Corruption\\_Perceptions\\_Index](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Corruption_Perceptions_Index)

*Figure 1: Map of Republic of Tajikistan*



During the last twenty years Tajikistan has been in transition from the old Soviet system towards an open democracy, freedoms and economic development. Reforms have been started in multiple sectors. Despite the progress in the legislative sphere and the commitment by the Government to the reforms, key challenges are related to their implementation, affected by insufficient

finances, weak functionality, low capacities and poor coordination. Rule of law and access to justice are priorities for Tajikistan, serving as one of the root causes of vulnerability, social exclusion and inequalities. A weak civil registry system is part of these problems. Civil registration is a prerequisite for being able to enjoy rights, including to education, health care, social protection and property.

Recognizing the challenges of the current civil registration system and their impact on the most vulnerable and at-risk population, especially women, children and persons with disabilities, the Government approved in 2014 the Civil Registry Offices (ZAGS) Development Programme (2014-2019). The ZAGS Programme is based on the existing thematic legislation and policy documents, which mainly is outdated and does not respond either to the needs of the Government and of the population. Legislation is one of the core reasons for the non-registration of civil acts. Legislation contains vague, unclear and “dead” norms, as well as contradictory regulations. Difficult procedures, lengthy terms of registration, a long list of documents, some of them are not necessary for decision-making, and the absence of effective legal mechanisms, which could streamline the timely identification and registration of civil status acts are all detrimental to the system. Procedures related to registering a change of name, making amendments and additions to civil acts, registration of births or deaths after one year, and recovery of civil acts are complicated. Existing organizational structure of CR is inadequate, resulting in a lack of coordination between ZAGS and jamoats and between other state institutions. There are no effective tools for information exchange among the registration bodies and relevant state agencies, as well as performance M & E systems. The current paper-based registration system is inefficient and there is no centralized database of civil acts. There is no IT connectivity between the elements of the system. The situation in the archives of the CR is poor and there are no minimal conditions for the protection of the civil acts. While the Government effort to improve the civil registration system (CRS) is commendable, the functional review of the CRS in Tajikistan reveals important capacity gaps in the implementation of the ZAGS Reform Programme, in general and in service delivery in particular, resulting from the weak implementation of policies and laws and lack of procedures and mechanisms for evidence-based planning and decision making. Registration bodies, both ZAGS and jamoats are understaffed and face problems related to variable staff capacity, which impinges their ability to provide quality services to the population. These problems are especially prominent in remote and hard to access areas whereas the service provision is complicated because of: distance to the district center; low capacities of ZAGS and jamoats to provide quality services and low awareness of the population, especially in the rural communities making the service inaccessible for women, children, disabled persons, stateless persons and other vulnerable people.

## Part II. OVERVIEW OF THE PROJECT

The “*Support to Civil Registry System Reform*” Project represents a multi-year initiative, which has been started in January 2016 and shall complete in December 2023 in two consecutive phases (Phase I January 2016 - December 2018 and Phase II January 2019 – December 2023)

The project aims to address the development needs and support the Government of Tajikistan in implementing the CRS reforms by enabling the regulatory framework, improving its functionality and making it responsive to the needs of the population, especially the most vulnerable groups. The project builds on the outcomes of the Functional Review of Civil Registration Offices initiated by UNDP Tajikistan in 2014 under the on-going “*Access to Justice in Tajikistan*” Project funded by SDC, and based on consultations with the national and local public authorities, UN Agencies, international and local NGOs and the population. The project also reflects the priorities of the Judicial and Legal Reform Programme of the Government of Tajikistan (2015-2017).

*The overall goal of the project:* Women’s, men’s and children’s human rights (civil, social, political and economic) are better protected by strengthened provision of civil registration services and by increased public access to the system.

The Phase I of the CR project has two Outcomes that are expected to contribute to the achievement of the goal:

*Outcome 1:* The reformed civil registry system of Tajikistan is effectively managed and provides quality and affordable services to the population and qualitative vital statistical data for the State.

*Outcome 2:* The population of Tajikistan know how to and timely have their vital events recorded in the civil registry system.

Both Outcomes target national, regional and local levels, the first one being focused on the supply, while the second strategic expected result is on the demand side.

Project has six key outputs as presented below:

- O1: *Legislative framework for civil registration is compliant with international best practices.*
- O2: *New internal regulations defining roles, responsibilities and processes are applied by civil registry offices and jamoats.*
- O3: *Civil registry offices and jamoats’ staff have enhanced capacities to provide quality services to the population.*
- O4: *Civil registration and archiving of data is managed through an electronic system.*
- O5: *Ministry of Justice makes use of new communication strategies to proactively incentivise the population to register their vital acts.*
- O6: *Outreach awareness rising campaigns by selected civil society organisations complement the Ministry of Justice communication strategies.*

The project was designed as a countrywide initiative focused on rural and remote areas, where it has been identified that the problems related to the civil registry system (both undocumented people and poor service provision) are highest.

## Part III. EVALUATION FRAMEWORK

### 3.1 Scope and objectives of evaluation

The aim of the assignment was to assess the project performance and based on the findings, conclusions and lessons learnt to provide feasible and evidence-based recommendations for UNDP and its strategic and operational partners for further supporting the reform of Civil Registration System in Tajikistan. The evaluation will serve as a mean of validating or filling the gaps in the initial assessment of relevance, effectiveness, efficiency and sustainability.

*Objectives of the evaluation* of the Phase I of the project are:

- Assess whether the project achieved or did not achieve outcomes and outputs reflected in the Project and Results Framework as compared to the results of the Baseline Study;
- Identify factors that have contributed to (non)achievement of the project results;
- Identify to what extent the project has so far contributed to the implementation of the on-going reform of civil registration offices;
- Assess the effectiveness of the existing partnerships established/maintained with the Government, civil society, UN Agencies, donors and other key stakeholders.
- Identify lessons learnt and provide strategic recommendations for adjustments, entry points and resources mobilization for further implementation of the project in Phase II 2019 – 2023;
- Identify potential scaling up pathways, commitment to project goals, and adherence to delivering as One UN principles;
- Assesses to what extent the project has addressed gender considerations and promoted gender equality throughout its implementation.

### 3.2 Evaluation methodology

The final evaluation adopted a strong participatory approach, engaging a wide and diverse range of stakeholders. Participation of the main partners (Ministry of Justice, UNFPA, UN Women and EPOS) was a necessary condition to ensure accountability, promote ownership, facilitate future buy-in and arrive at comprehensive recommendations for UNDP Tajikistan and its strategic partners. The methodology of data collection included both primary and secondary information. Primary information was collected verbally from the various stakeholders reflected in the sampling framework, while secondary information was gathered from the written informational sources. The evaluation process consisted of the following phases:

*Preparation:* Evaluation Reference Group formation, finalization of TOR, orientation discussion and contract signing.

*Design and office-based data collection:* desk review; key stakeholder mapping; designing data collection tools for the in-country/field phase. Secondary information was gathered from written strategic and project documents, log frame, progress reports, and other project documents provided by UNDP Tajikistan. The list of consulted documents is attached to the evaluation report. Please see the Annex 2.

Data and collection methods were determined by the evidence needed to address the evaluation questions of the UNDP Project. Final evaluation used a *mixed method design* with

both *quantitative* and *qualitative* data sought for evidence-based findings, and to provide a comprehensive and meaningful understanding of project progress. Quantitative data provides accuracy about the numbers of persons involved in the project and their participation in various activities. It is used to assess progress of the project based on concrete numerical results and performance indicators. Quantitative data include: number of reviewed legal acts and/or regulations on civil registration; number and coverage of pilot areas, number of beneficiaries who benefitted of capacity development support; number of approached donors; number of registration actions etc. However, quantitative data by itself does not always capture a complete picture of project performance, or information about changes generated with the project contribution, or how capacity development of ZAGS and jamoats, as “duty bearers”, contributed to increasing their functionality.

Hence quantitative data are supplemented with qualitative data to ascertain: how for example the UNDP Project contributed to adjustment of the regulatory framework or increasing functionality and efficiency of the CR system, whether project interventions improved the legislation and regulations on CR of Tajikistan, discrepancy between statistics, functionality of the electronic system, increased awareness of the population etc. Qualitative data include e.g. improvements of the legal framework, changes in competences of the ZAGS representatives as well as other target groups, functionality of the electronic system, awareness of the targeted population of Tajikistan etc. It provides insights about why progress was made and what were likely factors contributing to project progress. Evaluation also includes evaluability analysis, particularly assessment of the performance planning and performance reporting aspects and tools, such as: results-based approach and results and resource framework (outcomes, outputs, baselines, indicators, targets).

Field-based data collection took place in the period 28 January – 08 February 2019 and included: conducting key informant interviews, focus group discussions, observations and site visits in Tajikistan, particularly: Dushanbe, Kulob and Bokhtar. Primary information was collected verbally from the wide range of national, international and local stakeholders reflected in the sampling framework. *Semi-structured interviews* and *focus group discussions* with pre-determined sets of questions were the techniques of choice. The meetings were tailored according to the background of the respondents.

The cumulative sampling framework includes 97 person, which is representative and reflects a wide and diverse range of stakeholders from whom information was collected representing: UNDP project team; representatives of SDC, UNDP Country Office; National and local public authorities of Tajikistan (Parliament representatives, Ministry of Justice and its relevant subdivisions, ZAGS, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Finance); EPOS, UN Agencies (UNFPA, UN Women, UNICEF, UNHCR); CSOs; national and international individual experts; groups of population from the project sites of Tajikistan; and other project stakeholders. The process of selection the sample was *purposive* in the case of the project team, implementing partners, central public officials, donor representatives, national and international consultants and *randomized* in the case of ZAGS offices and population of Tajikistan. Please see attached the Annex 3: *List of stakeholders consulted*.

Analysis & Synthesis included: structuring, analysis and synthesis of the collected data; preparation of a draft evaluation report; review process and delivery of the final project evaluation report.



### 3.3 Evaluation Criteria and Assessment Grid

The final project evaluation was guided by “big four” OECD/DAC Evaluation Criteria (Relevance, Effectiveness, Efficiency and Sustainability).

The key evaluation variables:

- Relevance: To what extent the purpose and objectives of the project were and are still valid and pertinent to the context of Tajikistan? The degree to which the logic of intervention and the project design are consistent, coherent and inter-linked?
- Effectiveness: To what extent the project achieved its expected results at the outputs and outcomes levels?
- Efficiency: How cost-efficient the UNDP Project is?
- Sustainability: To what extent the project outputs and outcomes are (likely to be) sustainable: institutional sustainability, policy sustainability, and financial sustainability?

*Cross-cutting issues* of the evaluation of the project will represent:

- To what extent cross cutting issues (gender, accessibility for disabled persons, other HR aspects) were mainstreamed in the planning, implementation and reporting?

For a more detailed list of lead evaluation questions please see the Annex 1 of the evaluation report. The questions have been developed by the evaluator as a guide for conducting semi-structured interviews and to collect data from various stakeholders. They were orally administered in Russian or/and in English. In order to increase the validity through the triangulation process, some of the questions to stakeholders were similar and repeated to more than one type of stakeholders.

In assessing the project performance and achievements, the following RAG<sup>8</sup> (Red-Amber-Green) Rating System will be used:

Table 1. Evaluation assessment grid

Color	Assessment	Comments
Green	Fully achieved	Evaluation findings prove that the targets have been reached.
Amber	Partially achieved	Project partially achieved its targets (> 50%).
Red	(Mostly) not achieved	Targets (mostly) have not been reached.
White	Cannot be assessed	Performance cannot be assessed due to lack of information.

### 3.4 Management of Evaluation

As per UNDP Evaluation Policy (2016) and “UNDP Handbook on planning, monitoring and evaluating for development results”, an Evaluation Reference Group<sup>9</sup> (ERG) was established to guide the evaluation process. The ERG was comprised of the key stakeholders and served as the mechanism and structure to ensure an adequate level of stakeholder participation throughout the evaluation process. In particular, the ERG:

<sup>8</sup> The RAG system is a popular project management method of rating for issues or status reports, based on Red, Amber (Yellow), and Green colors used in a traffic light rating system.

<sup>9</sup> ERG included representatives of: Ministry of Justice, Swiss Cooperation Office, UNDP, UN Women and UNFPA.

- Performed advisory role throughout the evaluation process;
- Ensured that evaluation standards, as provided by UNEG, are adhered to, including safeguarding of transparency and independence;
- Provided advice on the evaluation's relevance, on the appropriateness of evaluation questions and methodology, and on the extent to which conclusions and recommendations are credible;
- Provided feedback to the inception and evaluation reports;
- Supported and provided input to the development of the management responses and key actions to the evaluation recommendations.

### 3.5 Quality Management

The evaluator was committed to give his best professional and independent judgment and to provide quality deliverables and service. Final 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 recommendations at the end of the field mission to: UN Country Office; ERG and SDC (run three times).
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. This ensured that multiple opportunities were provided to resolve issues and challenges throughout the project evaluation.

### 3.6 Ethical norms of evaluation

The evaluation of the project was carried out according to ethical principles and standards established by the United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG).

- *Anonymity and confidentiality.* The evaluation respected the rights of individuals who provided information, ensuring their anonymity and confidentiality.
- *Responsibility.* The report must mention any dispute or difference of opinion that may have arisen between the evaluator and the project management in connection with the evaluation process, sampling, findings and/or recommendations. The evaluator should corroborate all assertions, or disagreement with them noted.
- *Integrity.* The evaluator is responsible for highlighting issues not specifically mentioned in the TOR, if this is needed to obtain a more complete analysis of the intervention.
- *Independence.* The evaluator ensured his independence from the intervention under review, and was not associated with its management or any element thereof.
- *Incidents.* If problems arise during the field work, or at any other stage of the evaluation, they will be reported immediately to the UNDP Tajikistan.
- *Validation of information.* The consultant will be responsible for ensuring the accuracy of the information collected while preparing the reports and will be responsible for the information presented in the evaluation report.
- *Intellectual property.* In handling information sources, the evaluator shall respect the intellectual property rights of the UNDP Tajikistan, institutions and communities that are under review.

### 3.7 Information about evaluator

Final Evaluation was performed by Gheorghe Caraseni, Master in Public Administration, Lawyer and Certified Evaluator with more than 24 years of professional experience in capacity development and 12 years in evaluation of over 50 development projects/ programs and policies in areas of: governance, justice, human rights, empowerment and sustainable development, gender, children protection in different countries from Eastern Europe, CIS Region and Central Asia such as: Moldova, Romania, Bulgaria, Ukraine, Belarus, Russia, Georgia, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan. Gheorghe is the ex-Monitor within the Independent Monitoring Mechanism<sup>10</sup> of the Open Government Partnership<sup>11</sup> and assessed the open governance commitments of Moldovan Government (access to information, public participation, accountability).

### 3.8 Limitations and constraints

The UNDP project team provided all required support during the data collection. However, the most serious data collection limitations facing the evaluation included the following:

- *Limitation on key state informant.* Although the majority of key state and non-state informants were consulted during the field mission in Tajikistan, the evaluator could not meet the representatives of the Executive Office of the President of Tajikistan. Despite the efforts of the UNDP project team, this meeting was not possible to be arranged due to unavailability of the public officials. This was mitigated through interviews of other state project stakeholders, such as: representatives of the Parliament and Ministry of Finance, as well as Ministry of Justice.
- *Limitations of progress reports as performance tracking tools.* The progress reports form the basis for documenting project interventions and preliminary findings and conclusions about the achievements, but in the given situation it was challenging to identify and assess the project performance during the July – December 2018, because the last progress report, according to the reporting schedule, was semi-annual and covered January – June 2018. To mitigate this constraint, the evaluator asked for and referred to some primary documents from the project partners, such as: reports and deliverables of the selected stakeholders (UN Women, UNFPA, Gender and Development), Steering Committee minutes etc. Evaluator also included in the sampling framework a greater number of final beneficiaries in the visited project sites.

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<sup>10</sup> The IRM produces annual independent progress reports for each country participating in OGP. The reports assess governments on the implementation of OGP action plans and make recommendations to stimulate dialogue and promote accountability between governments and citizens. For additional info:

<https://www.opengovpartnership.org/about/independent-reporting-mechanism/about-irm>

<sup>11</sup> The OGP aims to secure commitments from governments to promote transparency and democracy, empower citizens, fight corruption, and harness new technologies to strengthen governance, promote innovation and stimulate progress. The OGP brings together 70 states from Europe, Africa, Asia, Australia, North and Latin America, civil society representatives and other stakeholders. For additional info: <https://www.opengovpartnership.org/about/about-ogp>

## Part IV. EVALUATION FINDINGS

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

### 4.1 RELEVANCE

The relevance of the project is assessed mostly by the extent of which the purpose and objectives of the project were and are still valid and pertinent to the context of Republic of Tajikistan, national CR priorities and SDGs, as well as by the degree to which the logic of intervention and the project design are consistent, coherent and inter-linked.

#### 4.1.1 Consistency between the project, national priorities of Tajikistan and UN priorities

The *Support to Civil Registration System Reform in Tajikistan* Project (CR Project) is highly relevant and consistent with the civil registry system reform of the Government of Tajikistan, particularly with the ZAGS Reform Programme (2014-2019), as part of the Government's broader efforts in legal and judicial reform.

The desk review and the field mission consultations show that the project provides complex support to the Government of Tajikistan to reform the civil registry system by bringing expertise for adjusting the regulatory framework, enabling environment, development and integration of the electronic system of civil registration, digitalization the archive for improving CR functioning nationwide, making it more responsive to the needs of the population, especially the most vulnerable groups and increasing awareness of the population. As remarked a representative of the national public authority: *"This project is very important for our country and UNDP and SDC are our key partners in advancing Civil Registration System Reform in Tajikistan, because the project brings not just the financial and technical resources, but also much needed expertise"*<sup>12</sup>.

The project is aligned with the National Development Strategy (2016-2030)<sup>13</sup>, which targets *"country's institutional capacity strengthening"* and with the Outcome of the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF 2016-2020), which establishes: *"People in Tajikistan have their rights protected and benefit from improved access to justice and quality services delivered by accountable, transparent, and gender responsive legislative, executive and judicial institutions at all levels"*<sup>14</sup>. The project also corresponds to the thematic Output of the Country Program Document (CPD, 2016-2020): *"Justice Sector institutions enabled to uphold rule of law in compliance with international commitments; promote and protect Human Rights and improve access to justice and civil registration of vulnerable population groups, especially women, youth and persons with disabilities"*<sup>15</sup>.

The project is linked to the UNDP Global Strategic Plan (2018-2021), which sets that by 2021 UNDP wants to catalyze tangible progress on: *"Accelerating structural transformations for*

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<sup>12</sup> Key informants' interviews.

<sup>13</sup> National Development Strategy of the Republic of Tajikistan for the period up to 2030.

<sup>14</sup> United Nations Development Assistance Framework (2016-2020).

<sup>15</sup> UN Country Program Document for Tajikistan (2016-2020).

*sustainable development, especially through innovative solutions that have multiplier effects across the Sustainable Development Goals*”<sup>16</sup> and to the Integrated Results and Resources Framework of the UNDP Strategic Plan, particularly Signature Solution 2: “Governance”, Output 2.2.1: “Use of digital technologies and big data enabled for improved public services and other government functions” and Output: 2.2.3 *Capacities, functions and financing of rule of law and national human rights institutions and systems strengthened to expand access to justice and combat discrimination, with a focus on women and other marginalized groups*<sup>17</sup>.

#### **4.1.2 Consistency between the project and the priorities put forward in the SDGs**

The CR Project is in line with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and its intervention areas are aiming to advance Tajikistan’s progress towards the achievement of the SDG 16: *Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions – “Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels”* and SDG 5 “*Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls*”<sup>18</sup>. It is worth noting that civil registration and vital statistics as such play a key role in monitoring progress of SDGs and facilitates access to justice, social protection, health care and protection of other human rights in Tajikistan. Monitoring and assessment of the reaching of the SDG targets by Republic of Tajikistan require data, which should be captured from the CRVS system. Civil Registration upholds the SDG vision of 'leaving no-one behind' where the project seeks to identify and enable those marginalized people in Tajik society to access public services they need. Therefore, a robust civil registration system is relevant to Tajikistan's progress towards achieving the SDG targets.

#### **4.1.3 Consistence and coherence of the project design and intervention logic**

The CR project represents a multi-stakeholder, inter-sectorial and a complex intervention, which involves several international, national and local actors, such as: UN Agencies (UNDP, UNFPA, UN Women, UNHCR, UNICEF); Ministry of Justice with its relevant subdivisions and ZAGSs, as line ministry; other state actors (Executive Office of President of RT, Parliament of RT, MFA), and national and international civil society organizations, providers and experts.

The action includes policy-level initiatives, particularly legal and regulatory review and adjustment, communication plan/strategy development; as well as capacity development interventions; archive digitalization, mainstreaming electronic platform in CR system and outreach awareness rising campaigns at the grass roots level.

Final evaluation remarks that the key elements of Human Rights Based Approach (HRBA), as reflected below in the Figure 2, are mainstreamed in the project design of Phase I, but with a much greater accent in terms of budget allocations, consistency and duration of the interventions on empowerment of the “duty bearers”/supply side than on the “rights holders”/demand side. This is understandable given the necessity identified and subsequently planned hard and soft interventions, as well as the coverage of the project.

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<sup>16</sup> UNDP Global Strategic Plan (2018-2021)

<sup>17</sup> Includes: youth, people with disabilities, people living with HIV and other traditionally marginalised groups, as relevant in each national context.

<sup>18</sup> See the link: <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/?menu=1300>

Figure 2: The core concept of HRBA



Thus, on one side the CR project targeted providing support for enabling environment, particularly policy and regulatory framework review, and institutional capacity strengthening interventions of “*duty bearers*”, i.e. ZAGS, MoJ and other state actors (trainings, study tours, international expertise etc.) to fulfill their obligations; on the other side it

targeted awareness raising/informational activities focused on the “*right holders*”, i.e. population of Tajikistan, especially the vulnerable one to claim their rights and to fulfill their obligations regarding the civil registration.

The design of the CR project is well-structured, justified, all outputs and outcomes are inter-linked, although there is no a Theory of Change<sup>19</sup> (ToC). The project represents a complex, inter-sectorial and in-wide approach, for instance targeting national coverage all ZAGSs and jamoats, but also an in-depth approach, e.g. outreach of the most vulnerable people in the remote areas of the country.

In terms of Results-Based Management (RBM), the project contains a results’ chain reflecting outcomes and outputs and the results’ portfolio consists of six outputs and two outcomes with distinct baselines, indicators and targets.

There are some inconsistencies and gaps mostly at the indicators level. Some of the targets are extremely ambitious, even unrealistic to be achieved by the end of the Phase I (or even Phase II) given the available and potential financial, human and time resources<sup>20</sup>. Thus, for instance to assess to what extent the Outcome 1: “*The reformed Civil Registration system of Tajikistan is effectively managed and provides quality and affordable services to the population and qualitative vital statistical data for the State*” is achieved, those four indicators<sup>21</sup> reflected in the project design are not consistent and sufficient. An important indicator would be the extent to which the CR system respects the operational CR standards and procedures, which are missing in the CR system, but are envisaged by the project. An example of unrealistic target, given the available resources and existing challenges described below, can be illustrated the target: “*All Jamoats and ZAGS staff participate in training once every 2 years (i.e. twice until 2019)*” of the Indicator 1<sup>22</sup> of the Output 3: “*Civil Registration offices and jamoat staff have enhanced capacities to provide quality services to the population*”. It is worth noting, that this issue was realized by the project and the Steering Committee decreased the project coverage and exited from the jamoats.

<sup>19</sup> A Theory of Change is a method that explains how a given intervention (project/program), or set of interventions, is expected to lead to specific development change, drawing on a causal analysis based on available evidence. For additional information please consult: <https://undg.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/06/UNDG-UNDAF-Companion-Pieces-7-Theory-of-Change.pdf>.

<sup>20</sup> Please see the *Effectiveness* Part of the report.

<sup>21</sup> *Indicator 1*: Nr of ZAGS offices and Jamoats that are fully functional, able to carry out all activities required by law and regulations; *Indicator 2*: % of users of CR services (disaggregated by gender and rural/urban, including changes in absolute values) who are satisfied with the quality and affordability of the CR system; *Indicator 3*: Discrepancy between birth data in CR and birth data in the Ministry of Health and Social Protection and *Indicator 4*: Nr of procedures (i.e., individual visits, different documents required, different authorizations needed) required for registration of civil acts.

<sup>22</sup> % of jamoats’ staff responsible for CR system participated in induction course prior to provision of services and training on improvement of qualification once every 4 years. Frequency of participation of ZAGS’ staff in training and the coverage.



Another example is the target is “20% of ZAGS offices show improved conditions of work (infrastructure, equipment, administration, access to rules and information, etc.)” of the Indicator 2 linked to the same Output 3. Given the available financial resources it is unrealistic to expect it, especially in the situation when it is not clear who is going to cover those infrastructural costs, which turned to be much higher and more time consuming than initial estimations, e.g. see the renovation of the Kulob ZAGS.

In the case of Indicator 1: “Electronic systems for registration and archiving are introduced and are functional across all ZAGS offices” of the Output 4: “Civil Registration and archiving of data is managed through an electronic system” the only target: “Feasibility study conducted on electronic registration of civil acts” is not sufficient for the indicator, and as a prove the project delivered and reached more than just the target reflected in the initial project design.

The baseline and the target for the Indicator 1: “% of identified population residing in districts where isolated communities can be found are assisted to obtain missing CR documents” of the Output 6 are missing and were planned to be established by the CSOs upon identification of population with the CR problems.

The selected methods of delivery and approaches, as well as the logic of intervention are mostly relevant for the adequate implementation of the CR reform in Tajikistan and reaching the realistic targets. The implementation strategy includes actions focused on: feasibility studies; needs assessments; “learning from each other”, e.g. study visits and comparative analysis of the CR systems and legal frameworks of the countries with the common background (Moldova, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Latvia, Russia); adjustment of the normative framework on CR reform; transfer of competence and strengthening capacities; development of electronic platforms; development and piloting of OSS; etc.

The greatest challenge of the CR Project is not related to the appropriateness or relevance of the methods of delivery, but to the dynamics of delivery as described below in the report.

## 4.2 EFFECTIVENESS

The following part of the report presents the findings of the final evaluation related to the effectiveness of the CR Project in context of the achievements. The findings are reflected both at the levels of the outcomes and outputs accordingly to the project components.

The findings of the final evaluation show that the ***project scores modestly under effectiveness, although the efforts and interventions are in place, but because of the complexity, implementation difficulties and lower implementation dynamic than planned, the assessment of the project performance is mostly premature, i.e. the achievements still should happen and are mostly on the way. Some expected results might be achieved by the end of the Phase I, but majority of them should be reinforced during the next Phase of the CR project.*** In other words, the implementation difficulties and costs in terms of financial resources, time consumption and needed efforts turned to be greater than initially estimated and expected, which slowed down the project performance. Because the project indicators are preponderantly change-oriented and the project is behind the initial schedule, evaluation assessed the performance also through the perspectives of “done” or “likely to be done”, not just through “what has been changed as the result of what has been done”. Below is described the project fulfillment and is presented the project performance per each of the outcomes and outputs.

Partially  
achieved.  
On track.

*OUTCOME 1: The reformed civil registration system of Tajikistan is effectively managed & provides quality and affordable services to the population and qualitative vital statistical data for the State.*

The initial targets of the outcome were changed by the Steering Committee. Thus, the jamoats were excluded from the Phase I of the project, due to project complexity. The number of the targeted piloting ZAGS Offices was reduced from three to one - ZAGS from Kulob city of Khatlon region, due to the ownership issues of MoJ. At the moment of evaluation, there is an agreement between the UNDP and MoJ to pilot in one more office - Rudaki Civil Registration Office. Thus, by the end of the Phase I, the project is likely to reach two ZAGS Offices. The premise of the Kulob ZAGS is renovated and mostly equipped with: Queue Management System, Intercom systems, IT Equipment, Air-conditioners, Design of volumetric letters, TV set. The renovation process lasted one year (Dec 2017- Nov 2018d) and took more time and financial resources than initially estimated. The process of One-Stop-Shop (OSS) concept development also took significantly more time than expected.

The evaluation field visit to the recently renovated ZAGS showed that the unit is operational, but still faces some functionality and technical problems, such as: not all the equipment of the Queue Management System (QMS) is installed, but was recently procured and, subsequently, it is premature to assess the functionality of the QMS; multi-functional office equipment and electronic platform periodically have some technical errors, e.g. with the search system; there are still some problems with tokens and the OSS was just approved in January 2019 and it is not functional yet. Thus, the piloted ZAGS Office provides CR services using paper-based system and, afterwards enters CR data in beta version of CROIS2. This is a double work, which is “temporarily”, as remarked several interviewed state and non-state actors<sup>23</sup>. It illustrates eloquently the transition phase of the CR system in Tajikistan from the paper-based system to the electronic platform.

Measuring degree of satisfaction and affordability for users of the civil registration system is premature at this stage, because the project is still delivering the planned activities. The assessment of reducing the discrepancy of data between Ministry of Health (MoH) and civil registration system is also premature, because, on the one hand the action research exercise is not finalized yet; on the other hand reducing the discrepancy depends not only on the indicators of this outcome, but also on other cross-sectorial aspects, such as: birth registrations procedures, legal norms/amendments; data collection methods of operational statistics of MoH and official statistics of ZAGS/MoJ etc.

The assessment of the performance against the target of the last outcome indicator “*reduced number of procedures required for registration of civil acts*” also cannot be measured since amendments to laws and regulations including moving to electronic system are not approved/endorsed yet by the public authorities of Tajikistan.

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<sup>23</sup> Key informants’ interviews.



Partially achieved  
On track.

Output 1: *Legislative framework for CR is compliant with international best practices.*

The project brought collective, substantive and valuable technical support to the Working Group<sup>24</sup> through the team of international and national legal and civil registration experts in the area of: general and key CR issues, gender related aspects, civil registration of the stateless persons. This output put together expertise from the public authorities, particularly MoJ and different UN Agencies (UNDP, UN Women, UNHCR, UNFPA) empowered by a wide range of international experts. As a result, the thematic legislation and regulation was revised and a package of draft of amendments to the five laws: “On State Registration of Acts of Civil Status”, Family Code, Law “On Jamoats”, Code on Administrative Offences, and draft Law “On Personal Data Protection” was submitted to the Government of Tajikistan in December 2017.

The findings of the evaluation consultations show that the elaborated package was not approved yet and it is at the consultation stage among the MoJ, Parliament of Tajikistan and Apparatus of the President. According to the interviewed representatives of Parliament and MoJ, there is a high probability that the amendments to the Law “On State Registration of Acts of Civil Status” will be approved by the end of May - July 2019.

As for the amendments to other four laws – the perspectives are not defined yet, except the opinion expressed by the public officials “*we will approve them during the year 2019*”. Therefore, they should represent a lobbying initiative for CR Project (partners) and UN CO.

Partially achieved.  
On track.

Output 2: *New internal regulations defining roles, responsibilities and processes are applied by civil registry offices and jamoats*<sup>25</sup>.

This output is likely to be achieved by the end of the Phase 1, but is depending on the achievements of the previous output. The approach towards this output represents an example of the good practice of proactive involvement. Thus, according to the logic of intervention and to the legislative/regulatory process, implementation of this output, should take place after the legal framework review, i.e. Output 1. Given the slow implementation dynamic of the previous output, the project and Ministry of Justice did not wait to reach it and proceed with the adjustment and elaboration of the internal regulations defining roles, responsibilities and processes within the civil registry offices, approving and adoption of the Communication Plan, OSS concept and CROIS2 platform developed with the support of the project actors and team.

However, because the elaborated amendments to the existing CR legal framework are not approved yet by the public authorities, this output cannot be reached in the way it is formulated. Therefore, boosting the performance of the Output 1, will have a direct and positive effect on the achievement of the Output 2. The adjusted CR regulations would be enforced for application by the civil registry offices. Subsequently, only then it will be possible to assess to what extent the ZAGS offices apply the new CR internal regulations.

<sup>24</sup> The Working Group (WG) was created by the MoJ one year after the official beginning of the project (March 07, 2017) and included representatives of MoJ and chiefs of ZAGS. The WG elaborated amendments both the thematic laws and to the regulatory framework on CR.

<sup>25</sup> Jamoats were excluded from the project as per SC decision.

Partially achieved  
On track.

Output 3: *Civil registry offices and jamoat<sup>26</sup> staff have enhanced capacities to provide quality services to the population.*

This project output is partially achieved, but it is highly to be fully achieved by the end of the Phase 1. It involved two subcomponents with distinct targets: capacity development of the ZAGS staff, which has been done, but needs additional delivery and provision of the IT equipment to ZAGS offices, which is not done yet, due to some procurement issues, particularly requirements to pass certification for compliance with the national security standards and norms.

Thus, the logic of intervention under the first subcomponent involved: 1) provision of the IT equipment for the Institute for Advanced Legal Education (IALE); 2) Capacity needs assessment and TOT for the staff of IALE provided by EPOS; 3) Development of the training curricula and materials and 4) Full scale training course provision to the ZAGS staff on basic computer skills, information system CROIS2, data quality and gender orientation<sup>27</sup>, which was provided during May-Nov 2018 to 301 pers. (253 women or 84% and 43 men or 16%).

Field mission consultations with the project stakeholders, especially with the representatives of ZAGS, show that the delivered training course indeed increased the computer literacy and thematic knowledge and skills of the beneficiaries<sup>28</sup>. However, it turned to be insufficient, because some of the ZAGS staff still need additional training, while others (about 40 pers. or about 12%) are newcomers in ZAGS system and did not benefitted of the trainings<sup>29</sup>. It is worth noting that another similar training (on-site) is planned to be delivered in 2019.

The second subcomponent - provision of the basic equipment: laptops, printers, modems to all 68 ZAGS offices of the country is delayed. The equipment is procured and after certification is expected to be distributed by the MoJ.

However, the concern raised by the final evaluation is regarding the distribution of the computers. According to the information gathered during the field mission, the distribution principle will be “a little bit to every ZAGS”, particularly each ZAGS is planned to get two computers. This is going to generate functionality problems to majority of ZAGS, because getting two computers will not fully equip them and majority of the ZAGS will be in the position when part of the staff will work using the electronic platform, while other part of the staff will have to use paper-based civil registration<sup>30</sup>.

Interviewed stakeholders, do not have information on how many computers are still needed to fully equip the ZAGS of Tajikistan and the assessment undertaken by EPOS in 2014-2015 is outdated. To the best professional judgment of the evaluator, in order to avoid this imminent issue, the distribution principle of the computers should be changed. Please see *Recommendations* part of the Report.

<sup>26</sup> Jamoats were excluded from the project as per SC decision.

<sup>27</sup> Gender aspects were mainstreamed in the training curricula of the IALE and include four academic hours.

<sup>28</sup> According to the training assessment questionnaires, participants increased their knowledge up to 40%.

<sup>29</sup> The list of trainees were presented by the MoJ and UAGS and only those presented benefitted of the capacity development trainings. The additional list did come at the end stage of the trainings.

<sup>30</sup> For instance, one interviewed chief of ZAGS mentioned: “I have 14 pers. in the ZAGS and just 4 computers + 2 computers are planned to get from the project, so I will have 14 pers. and 6 computers and I have no idea how to secure electronic functionality of the ZAGS”; Other chiefs of ZAGS underlined the same problem: e.g. 8 pers. having two or three computers + 2 promised, covers just 50-60% of the equipping needs.

Partially achieved  
On track

Output 4: Civil registration and archiving of data is managed through an electronic system.

This output has the greatest transformational character of the project, and represents the core of the action consisting of two inter-linked and complex subcomponents: 1) Electronic system of the CR and 2) Digitalization of the CR archive. Although the project scored relatively acceptable under the subcomponent one, this output has no chance to be achieved as formulated by the end of the Phase I. It is a small probability to be fully achieved even by the end of the Phase II, mostly due to the complexity and high costs of the subcomponent two, i.e. digitalization of the archive.

The electronic system was elaborated by EPOS and is certified until 2022. The field visits to the ZAGS and consultations with the chiefs of ZAGS show that the electronic system sometimes faces technical issues related to some errors on research system and data introducing. The functionality of the civil registration electronic system is depending on several factors, such as: technical aspects of the software; available IT equipment; internet connection; competencies of the users, i.e. ZAGS offices; strong IT support unit etc. The field consultation shows that the functionality of the electronic system is very much affected by the poor internet connection and slow traffic, which will also affect the functionality of the archive after digitalization. As remarked all interviewed ZAGS representatives, the internet connection creates difficulties and interruptions and they have to introduce the same data in the electronic system twice or even three times. As mentioned one of the interviewed stakeholders: *“Because of the internet connection problems sometimes we spend more time for civil registration that it would require to do it on paper-based”*<sup>31</sup>. In other words, one of the key factor which affects and which will always affect the functionality of the electronic system is the internet. This risk was not foreseen during the project development stage and no risk mitigation measures were planned and implemented. The functionality of the electronic system is also pretty much affected by the lack of clear national strategy on e-Governance of the Government of Tajikistan, which generates technical, regulatory and operational gaps. The electronic system developed by the project is planned to be integrated nationwide accordingly to the step-by-step integration plan/schedule developed by the Ministry of Justice but do not approved yet. In the opinion of the evaluator, the integration plan should be adjusted according to the recommendation on distribution of the computers (See *Recommendations* part of the report). It is worth noting that the electronic system needs a robust IT support unit, which Ministry of Justice does not have yet, but it is in the process of establishment with the technical support of the project.

As for the digitalization of the archive of Tajikistan, the project is at the inception phase, as the feasibility study was conducted by the Georgian company - Innovations and Reforms Centre (IRC) and the institutional capacities and technical requirements for the digitization of archives were defined. EPOS conducted a follow-up study and examined the best models for archiving and digitization based on the Moldovan experience. As the result, the prospects and methods of digitization of CAR archives in Tajikistan were identified and presented. The next project action would involve selection of the provider, software development and piloting<sup>32</sup>.

<sup>31</sup> Key informants' interviews.

<sup>32</sup> Total number of civil registry acts to be digitally archived for piloting agreed with Ministry of Justice: 168K + 10K second copies.

According to IRC the implementation of the initiative would cost about EUR 4 mln, while according to Moldovan experts it might cost about EUR 1,5 mln. So far, there are no accurate financial estimations of the initiative. It is expected that the piloting of the archive digitalization will provide a more accurate estimation.

Cannot be assessed	<b>OUTCOME 2: <i>The population of Tajikistan know how to have their vital events timely recorded in the civil registry system.</i></b>
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This Outcome is focused mostly on “rights holders” as component of HRBA and its’ achievement, in the way it is formulated, is not a subject just to one project; it is a process, which, usually takes many years of joint efforts. According to the project design, this Outcome was planned to start later than the Outcome I, which in the opinion of the Evaluator was not an inspired decision, because it does not and should not necessarily depend on each other. People, especially vulnerable groups are less interested whether the civil registration system is paper- based or electronic-based. The meaning of the Outcome is to increase the awareness of the population and to impulse them to register their CR acts, regardless of the CR operational aspects of ZAGS and/or jamoats.

This outcome cannot be assessed because there is no yet available information needed to assess the achievement of the targets of all three indicators: Indicator 1: “% of children under 2 years old with a birth certificates (disaggregated by gender)”; Indicator 2: “% of untimely birth and death registrations in ZAGS is decreasing” and Indicator 3: “% of households have all their vital events registered (disaggregated by sex of head of household and province)”.

Regarding the indicator 1, the available DHS data<sup>33</sup> and data of UNICEF on birth registration “Percentage of children under age 5 whose births are registered (by sex, place of residence and household wealth quintile)”<sup>34</sup> are not relevant for the project, because the CR project targets children under 2 years old and DHS and UNICEF data are reflecting birth registration of the children under 5 years old. The achievements against the target of the indicator 2 are bottlenecked by approval of the legislative amendments elaborated and submitted to the Government (See the Output 1). As for the indicator 3 there is no available data yet because it is pending the Annual Action Research results.

Partially achieved On track	<b>Output 5: <i>Ministry of Justice makes use of new communication strategies to proactively incentivize the population to register their vital acts.</i></b>
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This project output has two indicators, one of which (the second) is beyond the output framework: Indicator 1: “A coherent, comprehensive and inclusive strategy for communication has been adopted by Ministry of Justice” and Indicator 2: “% of population that are aware of the necessity of registering civil acts and of how to do so”.

The intervention portfolio included: 1) a survey on the level of public awareness and use of Civil Registry services, which was conducted covering 4 sites: Dushanbe, Bokhtar (Khatlon Region), Rudaki (RRS) and Bobojon Gafurov (Sughd region); A thematic capacity development training course delivered for the representatives of MoJ and a 3) Communication Plan/strategy of the MoJ was developed under the leadership of the organization “Gender

<sup>33</sup> See: <https://www.dhsprogram.com/what-we-do/survey/survey-display-521.cfm>

<sup>34</sup> See: <https://data.unicef.org/topic/child-protection/birth-registration/>.

and Development” and approved in January 2019. Therefore, measuring its effects on the population awareness is premature at this stage.

The field mission consultation remarked that the MoJ is committed to implement the Communication plan and it takes into consideration the findings and recommendations of the previously undertaken baseline study, for instance: creation of the website of UAGS and Legal Assistance Centre; SMS messages about CR; Questions & Answers Leaflets about CR. The Communication Plan does not have yet a monitoring plan, in other words it is not yet clear who and how is going to monitor the implementation of the planned communication activities. The M&E plan is planned to be developed by the “Gender and Development” during the following period. Some of the activities reflected in the Communication Plan of MoJ such as: informational visits of the multifunctional mobile groups; printing the informational materials, would require financial allocations and it is not clear if the MoJ will be able to finance or co-finance them. Some of the informational campaigns included in the Communication Plan of the MoJ might be provided free of charge by the public TV and Radio stations in the case of an express agreement with the respective institutions.

Partially achieved. On track	<i>Output 6: Outreach awareness rising campaigns by selected civil society organisations complement the Ministry of Justice communication strategies.</i>
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The activities linked to this output started later than those within other outputs and without reflection of the baseline and target of the envisaged indicator<sup>35</sup>. Identification of the population in isolated communities assisted to access civil registration services was included in the Action Research methodology developed in June 2018. Data on risk groups of populations was also captured through communications research. Nevertheless, the initial dynamic of implementation was slow<sup>36</sup>, but gradually it increased in delivering the interventions’ portfolio on public awareness raising consisting of: publication and dissemination of the information materials/info graphics on civil registry acts (CRA); TV shows and radio programs about CR and ZAGS services; face-to face outreach by involving local community leaders; as well as mobile consultations in the targeted districts (Rudaki, Bokhtar and Kulob).

As the result of the observation of a mobile consultation delivered by PO “Gender and Development” in Bokhtar with the participation of about 30 people, evaluator concluded that outreach awareness raising campaigns and especially direct interactions are highly efficient and relevant. The informational campaign started with the one-way information about the ZAGS functions and gradually turned into a two-way conversation when the audience started to raise their questions regarding the civil registration of their vital acts. The direct observation revealed that many vulnerable people (e.g. single mothers, families from remote areas, disabled persons etc.) do not have birth certificates of their children, some of which are attending already the school; IDs of the parents are expired several years ago; no residence address of both parents and children etc. Some of them do not know what means ZAGS, as illustratively mentioned a single mother: *“For me the meaning of ZAGS was associated with the registration of marriage and I learned that they are undertaking seven types of civil*

<sup>35</sup> Indicator 1: “% of identified population residing in districts where isolated communities can be found are assisted to obtain missing civil registration documents.”

<sup>36</sup> For instance, it took almost two months to consider and harmonize the text of printing materials.

*registration acts not just marriage registration”.*

The value of direct interaction with the population is indeed high, because the people do not just get information and learn about the CR process and ZAGS, but they can also raise their numerous CR related issues and can get tailored answers, as happened during the info-campaign and “door to door” approach with the involvement of the community leaders. As an efficiency aspect, this type of approach is expensive in terms of financial costs, time and efforts, but is effective because it is not just a passive one-way information, but it is a powerful interactive problem-solving attempt and a boosting CR factor, which should not be underestimated. For instance, when asked how many people went to ZAGS to register their CRVA after a two-three month campaign - the answer was eight persons, which represents a good achievement. Therefore, this type of outreach should be scaled up in jamoats in the next phase of the project and should be combined with other informational actions reflected in the communication plan of the MoJ.

In conclusion, the CR project has contributed to the implementation of the on-going reform of civil registration system in Tajikistan. Nevertheless, with some exceptions described above, it is premature to assess the transformational changes generated by the project and its most significant achievements, because some of them still should and are likely to happen during the 2019, while other need more time and resources and should be followed up during the next phase of the project.

So far, the key driving forces of the project, in the opinion of the evaluator are: 1) SDC, which turned to be more than just a donor, but also a boosting, augmentation and strategic vision sharing actor as can be concluded from the Steering Committee minutes and from the field mission consultations and 2) Ministry of Justice, which proves ownership, openness and supports actively the CR project, although its influence in boosting legislative changes is limited. Recently, upon the official declaration one important key driving actor might be the involvement of the President of the Republic of Tajikistan, who reiterated the importance of the CR reforms and of the CR electronic system for the country.

As for the factors, which affected the project implementation and performance, they are: 1) Complexity of the project, i.e. inter-sectorial issues of the CR reforms (MoJ, MoH, EoP, MFA, GosSecret, Parliament) and multi-lateral aspects, i.e. policy and regulatory review; institutional/capacity development (soft interventions); infrastructure development and enabling environment (hard interventions, software development); grass-roots level interventions on outreach etc.; 2) Slow decision making process (e.g. approval of the legislative amendments, info materials); 3) Multi-stakeholder involvement (public authorities, national experts, international experts, UN Agencies, EPOS and other providers), which sometimes generated different visions, expectations, approaches, overlaps and tensions regarding the project interventions; 4) Difficulties in setting up partnership and involvement of the Executive Office (EOP) of the President of Tajikistan, which is especially important for boosting approval of the CR legal amendments; 5) Some project management aspects, e.g. delays in procurements of IT equipment, management styles<sup>37</sup>) and 6) Higher implementation costs than anticipated e.g. renovation works in Kulob office, archive digitalization costs.

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<sup>37</sup> See the *Efficiency* part of the report.

The partnership is one of the key principles of the CR project described in the project document and targeted during the project implementation. Thus, the CR project p. 3.2 “Partners” states: *“UNDP is the project implementing partner, it disposes of regional expertise in implementing civil registration related projects in Georgia, Azerbaijan and Armenia and has strong and recognized positioning to act as counterpart and advisor to high governmental levels... It is envisaged that the Ministry of Justice will be the main partner to the project together with the Department of Civil Registration and local civil registry offices and jamoats responsible for the registration of civil status acts. A partnership with the Institute for Advanced Legal Education will be developed as the main provider of training for ZAGS.... The database developed through the EU/EPOS initiative may be useful in the early stages of the project in terms of registering civil acts electronically but in the long-term there are potential shortcomings of the database, which suggest that the database may not be suitable as a long-term solution... Additional partnerships will be sought with development partners, including but not limited to UN Agencies, INGOs and NGOs that are active in civil registration. A partnership will be created with UNFPA who already have established relationships with the Agency on Statistics under the President of the Republic of Tajikistan. Partnerships will also be created with UN Women to provide gender expertise in legal review and capacity building efforts, plus to support civic awareness activities.... The project will also work closely with civil society organizations, in particular through creating participatory processes for legislative and policy reforms and in raising the awareness of the population at the local level”<sup>38</sup>.*

The findings of the final evaluation of Phase I prove, that the CR project gathered together the above envisaged actors and some additional ones, which, in the opinion of the evaluator, are appropriate to deliver the needed support for the civil registration reform actions: Ministry of Justice with its relevant units, EPOS, UNFPA, UN Women, other UN Agencies, INGOs, NGOs, as well as various national and international experts. All the actors were involved mostly as designed in the project document. In the case of UN Women, beside the *“gender expertise in legal review and capacity building efforts, plus to support civic awareness activities”* reflected in the project document, the Agency was involved in developing the OSS concept, which proved to be a challenging task for the Agency, as confirmed by the SC minutes<sup>39</sup> and required more time and joint efforts than planned.

The international exchange of experience and joint efforts of the UN partners were crucial for successful result, which is commended by the evaluator. The partnership approach brought additional value, thematic expertise as described above and, in some cases, financial contribution<sup>40</sup> to the project, but also sometimes differences of visions, expectations, which generated frictions mentioned in the minutes of the Steering Committee and during the evaluation field mission, which usually are inevitable for such complex interventions.

However, one important actor, Executive Office of President (EOP) of Tajikistan was not expressly included in the project design and its role proved to be highly influential for the performance of the project, especially related to policy review (Output 1). As mentioned above, the CR project faced difficulties in bridging with the EOP, although there are some isolated cases when the project cooperated acceptable with the EOP, e.g. while arranging the

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<sup>38</sup> See the CR Project document, p.3.2.

<sup>39</sup> See the Minute of the Steering Committee, 19 June 2018.

<sup>40</sup> UN Women covered part of its premises and support staff costs



evaluation mission with other public institutions and not only.

### 4.3 EFFICIENCY

The final evaluation shows that the timeliness of the project implementation, i.e. efficiency aspect of the CR project is pretty much influenced by the factors described above.

It is generally modest and should be increased, because the project performance is behind the initial timeframe and there are delays in reaching the project targets of all six outputs and two outcomes. This situation postpones achievement of the strategic outcomes and, finally delays the expected ultimate impact of the action. Increasing the project efficiency envisages not just the key leading agency, UNDP, which is coordinating the overall project implementation, but also all key project partners, including the line Ministry of Justice of Tajikistan, which is strategic partner of the project and the Government of Tajikistan as such, because the CR project supports the implementation of the thematic national policy of the country - Civil Registration System Reform Programme (2014– 2019).

The cost-effectiveness is examined in terms of the overall project allocations for the major project interventions and expected results (to be) achieved. The final evaluation findings show that the efforts, material and financial resources invested in the CR project in Tajikistan in policy/regulatory framework review, human resources, capacity development interventions, researches, public campaigns, software etc. are adequately, but in some cases not sufficiently to reach the project targets as initially planned, for instance in the cases of number of piloted ZAGS, digitalisation of the CR Archive and jamoats as targeted entities.

The Table 2 and Figure 3 shows that during the implementation period 2016-2018, majority of the budget resources of the CR project were spent for the policy and regulatory framework review (Outputs 1 and 2), which cumulatively absorbed majority of the outputs-focused resources in each year and totally per Phase I (49,3 %) and the CR electronic system development (Output 4) – 24,7%.

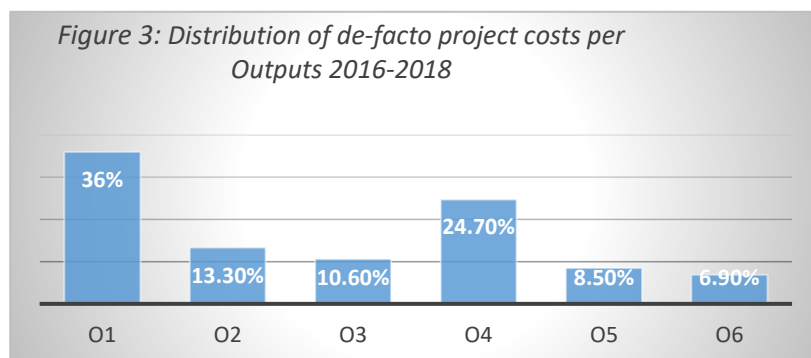
*Table 2: Distribution of de-facto project costs per Outputs<sup>41</sup>*

<b>Output</b>	<b>2016</b>		<b>2017</b>		<b>2018</b>		<b>TOTAL</b>	
	<b>\$</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>\$</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>\$</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>\$</b>	<b>%</b>
O1. Legislation on civil registration is compliant with international standards.	199,192	41,7	449,309	45,6	228,728	23,5	877,229	36,0
O2. New internal regulations defining roles, responsibilities and processes are applied by civil registry offices and jamoats.	64,947	13,6	132,324	13,4	126,653	13,0	323,924	13,3
O3. Civil registry offices and jamoat staff have enhanced capacities to provide quality services to the population.	59,671	12,5	119,588	12,1	78,049	8,0	257,308	10,6
O4. Civil registration and archiving of data is managed through an electronic system	153,565	32,2	248,655	25,3	199,927	20,5	602,147	24,7
O5. MoJ makes use of new communication strategies to proactively incentivize the population to register their civil acts.	0,00	0,0	0,00	0,0	208,475	21,4	208,475	8,5

<sup>41</sup> The table reflects the numbers from the financial reports and does not include the direct project costs, which is a separate line.



O6. Outreach awareness raising campaigns by selected CSOs complement the MoJ communication strategies.	0,00	0,0	34,734	3,6	132,812	13,6	167,546	6,9
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>477,375</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>984,610</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>974,644</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>2,436,629</b>	<b>100</b>



Analyzing the distribution of de-facto project costs per project outputs reflected in the Table 2 and (eventual) achievements per each of the project, as well as the complexity of activities, one can conclude that the distribution of costs is appropriate for the Outputs

1, 2, 5 and partially for the Output 4 (Electronic platform), but insufficient for Output 3 (additional IT equipment needed for ZAGS offices), Output 4 (Digitalization of CR Archive) and Output 6<sup>42</sup> (Outreach awareness campaign) to generate expected results as reflected in the project framework.

As for the distribution of the cost per CR Project Outcomes, as reflected in the Table 3 and Figure 4, the majority of the financial resources were spent for the Outcome 1 (84,6%) focused on “duty bearers” versus 15,4% (Outcome 2) focused on “rights holders”<sup>43</sup>. This dis-balance is explicable given the necessities identified<sup>44</sup> and the logic of intervention, which required both hard and soft interventions within the Outcome 1, as well as the national coverage of the same Outcome 1, while the Outcome 2 involved soft interventions, which usually are less costly.

*Table 3: Cumulative distribution of de-facto project costs per Outcomes*

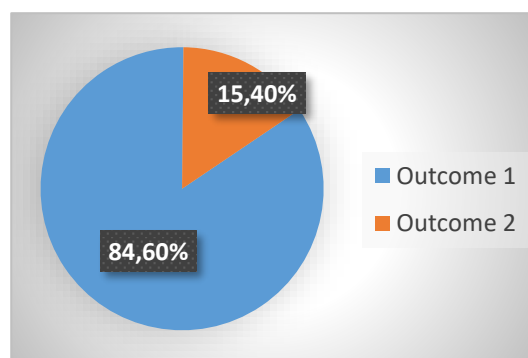
Outcome	Output	TOTAL 2016-2018	
		\$	%
Outcome 1: The reformed civil registry system of Tajikistan is effectively managed and provides quality and affordable services to the population and qualitative vital statistical data for the State.	O 1	2,060,608	84,6
	O 2		
	O 3		
	O 4		
Outcome 2: The population of Tajikistan know how to and timely have their vital events recorded in the civil registry system.	O 5	376,021	15,4
	O 6		
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>O 1-6</b>	<b>2,436,629</b>	<b>100</b>

<sup>42</sup> The conclusion for the Output 6 is based not in respect to achieving the project target, because the thematic target is not reflected in the Results & Impact Framework of the project, but taking into consideration the scale and complexity of the issue in society of Tajikistan.

<sup>43</sup> The Output 5 (Outcome 2) is primarily focused on “duty bearers” particularly Ministry of Justice, who benefits of the support in communication strategy/plan development, but as ultimate beneficiary is the population of Tajikistan, who will benefit of the communication actions.

<sup>44</sup> See the *Situational Analysis* described in the project document pages 6-12.

Figure 4: Cumulative distribution of de-facto project costs per Outcomes



As mentioned, some of the costs turned to be higher than initial estimations. Thus, in the case of renovations of the Kulob office, the infrastructural and environment enabling costs and durations turned to be higher and longer than initially planned, which also is a matter of efficiency not only of the project procurement and management, but also on the selected providers of the restorations, i.e. construction companies. It is also an issue of accuracy of financial and time

estimations, which was quite optimistic. However, this case provides a lesson, which should be learned. See the part “Conclusions and Lessons Learnt”.

As for the contribution of the project partners: outside of the CR project funds UN Women provided office equipment (computers, printers, etc) to the Institute for Advanced Legal Education in the value of \$ 88,200 and UNDP brought about \$ 1 mln as a co-finance of the CR project. UNDP developed a Resources Mobilization Document and periodically approached collectively and individually over twenty funds, embassies, consulates and agencies, but with no results so far.

Project management is an important and usually sensitive factor, which influences significantly implementation and efficiency, i.e. achievement of the expected results in due time and with the available resources. It is valid for any project and the CR Project is not an exception in this regard. It is worth noting, that the project started quite sluggish, which also raises a question of the efficiency of the existing procurement/selection procedures. It spent about five precious months for recruiting and staffing and for de-facto running the action. The project management represents a mixed picture and suffered modifications and adjustment during the implementation, as well as staff turnover both within the UNDP, but also within the both UN partners: UN Women and UNFPA. Thus, initially according to the field mission consultations and project documents, the management style was “soft” and mostly *laissez-faire*<sup>45</sup>, while a more proactive and “pushing”/results-oriented approach was needed. Later the project management went through a type of “dual” management stage in prime-plan with the Project Manager and Deputy Project Manager. This stage brought some positive dynamics in project management and implementation and a more scrutinized approach of activities, which was perceived by some of the partners, especially at the beginning, as a micromanagement. It also highlighted differences in: visions, approach and misunderstandings, especially for the project partners, which sometimes were getting different/dual messages and approaches from the project management. Finally, the third stage brings leadership changes in the management of the project. This, on one side consolidates the communications with the project partners (more often working meetings, more consistent communication with the Ministry of Justice and other public actors), anchors

<sup>45</sup> *Laissez faire* - "let (people) do (as they think best)" (French). The practice of non-interference in the problems/affairs of others, especially with reference to individual or collective behavior. In other words, it is the idea that people should solve by themselves their issues, without too much involvement. For additional information: <https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/laissez-faire>.

better the project to the country context and increases the project implementation dynamic; on other side the project management, as opposite to the *laissez-faire* style, sometimes apparently is dominating in an attempt to handle both strategic management and daily issues and this generates dissatisfactions, especially of one of the partners, which is not the case with other partners.

All these aspects require and consumes additional time, “back and forth” efforts and implications, but are inevitable for such complex and multi-stakeholder initiatives and should not be overestimated. Such complex project represents a “test of maturity” for any partners.

One of the added value of the project is that project partners learn to work together, “fine-tune” their visions, approaches, relationships, management and operational aspects, learn from each other, help each other if needed and enjoy the performance. It is worth noting that the project management respected the management and procurement procedures using available tools during planning, implementation, M&E and reporting.

The main strategic monitoring and key decision-making body is the Steering Committee (SC) of the project. As show field mission consultations and the respective minutes, the SC proved to be active, monitoring the implementation of the project and adjusting the “modus operandi”; analyzing the progress and use of resources, sensitizing on the need of resources mobilization and sometimes adjusting the project targets (e.g. changing coverage and excluding jamoats for the Phase I, reducing the nr of pilot ZAGS). All these interventions influenced positively the project efficiency.

According to the project document, the monitoring system is included and mostly mixed up in one matrix with the evaluation called “Monitoring and Evaluation Scheme”<sup>46</sup>, although they are distinct procedures. It includes four levels: 1) Context monitoring (political, legal, socio-economic and institutional), which is mostly done by the project team and partners and it is reflected in the progress reports; 2) Impact<sup>47</sup> *monitoring and evaluation* (outcome - goal level) by the evaluators during the mid-term and final Phase evaluation; 3) *Monitoring and evaluation* of effectiveness (output- outcome level) by the project team, partners and SC, which is confusing because neither SC nor project team/partners are not envisaged to evaluate the project<sup>48</sup>, and 4) *Monitoring and assessment* of efficiency (activity - output level) by project team through: regular meetings with project partners, annual follow up and operational plans, progress reports.

The project has performed satisfactory in achieving preliminary results in a cost-effective manner. Resources were used as planned with some adjustments. Allocations for some outputs are adequate for achieving the initial planned results and targets, in some cases are insufficient and partially targets were revised and need additional resources. Evaluation did not find any alternative solutions so far, which could be provided at fewer expenses and, which would be more economical for the project, except resources mobilization and a realistic targets setting. As for the monitoring system of the project, it is mostly action/activity-oriented, partially defined and partially efficient, and therefore, it should be clearly articulated and strengthened.

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<sup>47</sup> “Impact” is not included in the TOR for the final evaluation of the CR Project Phase I and it would have been prematurely to be evaluated, given the project performance.

<sup>48</sup> See project document, “4.1 Management Arrangements” (pag 35-37) and “4.2 Key Project Staff” (page 38)

## 4.4 SUSTAINABILITY

In terms of the likelihood of sustaining the benefits of the project, the results achieved are particularly important, but because the project performance is mostly premature to be assessed, the sustainability of the project also is mostly premature to be assessed.

However, evaluator assessed the potential sustainability prospects of the results, which are likely to be achieved by the end of the Phase I and of those preliminary achievements described above. Although some potential achievements reflect a higher level of sustainability and some are more ephemeral, generally the sustainability prospects of the project achievements are partially promising, as described below.

In terms of *policy sustainability*, the prospects are significant, although they are premature to be assessed, because the CR policy review targets were, so far, half achieved, i.e. were reviewed by the working group of the MoJ and the project experts, but not adopted by the decision making authorities of Tajikistan.

However, there is a clear commitment of the legislative body, i.e. Parliament and, apparently, of the EOP to support the amendments. Once the legislative package is adopted the policy sustainability is secured, because the amendments become part of the normative framework and are mandatory for an undefined period of time. The same is valid for the CR regulatory framework elaborated with the project support. The Ministry of Justice already approved some of the regulations, but upon adoption of the legislative initiatives, the viability and sustainability of the regulations will be secured.

In terms of *institutional sustainability*, the CR project was geared towards: capacity development of the ZAGS staff; infrastructural/reconstruction support in the ZAGS of Kulob city; development and integration of the electronic system; digitalization of CR archive; development of the OSS model; enabling environment by provision of the IT equipment provided to ZAGS and Institute for Advanced Legal Education (IALE) and development of the training curricula of IALE. Thus, infrastructural/reconstruction support, electronic system, digitalized archive, OSS model, IT and office equipment and training curricula of IALE are going to have a long lasting sustainability prospects, while the capacity development effects in terms of knowledge acquired or skills developed, usually are sustainable, but are depending on the extent to which the capacitated human resources will remain in the CR system of the country, especially in the ZAGS offices. In other words, the sustainability of the capacity development effects is depending pretty much on the staff turnover, if the capacitated people leave the CR system, the sustainability is affected, if they continue their activity in the system, the sustainability is augmented. The sustainability of the Communication Plan of the MoJ is not significant and is determined by its duration (two years 2019-2020), but the important issue is that the MoJ increased its capacity in communication policy making as the result of the “learning while doing”, i.e. learning while communication plan development.

As for the *community sustainability* it is premature to be assessed, because the public awareness initiatives were initiated for a short period of time.

*Financial sustainability* of the CR Project achievements is mostly satisfactory. The eventual policy-level and regulatory achievements (Outputs 1 and 2) should not require additional financial resources; the renovated ZAGS office in Kulob, IT and office equipment, electronic platform and training curricula represent the property/ownership of the MoJ and will be maintained from the public finances. As for the sustainability of the digitalized archive, it is

prematurely to be assessed, because it is not completed, de-facto it did not properly start as such.

As for the financial perspectives and commitments for the next phase of the CR Project, the MoJ is allocating about \$ 1 mln for infrastructure building of so called “Justice Houses” and capacity building of the CR staff and this financial investment is partial envisages the CR Project, because on the ground floor are going to be located ZAGS offices. The Ministry of Finance (MoF) is available to examine the possibility for co-financing and covering of a part of the operational costs, for instance related to IT issues, including IT unit of the MoJ, but as mentioned consulted representatives: *“we need to know how much and for what kind of expenditures”*<sup>49</sup>.

This represents a potential financial source and a recommended follow up initiative for the CR Project, which should not be overestimated, but also not underestimated.

Field mission consultations show that UNDP as implementation agency is able to contribute with about \$ 900,000, as for other UN implementation partners, the perspectives are unclear. The resource mobilization efforts during the project implementation did not brought expected results, although several potential donors were approached.

*Environmental sustainability* was not specifically targeted by the project, as the project was designed as non-environmental linked intervention. Therefore, the final evaluation did not remark any actions, which would produce harm or affect the environment.

#### 4.5 Cross-cutting issues

The project represents a thematic intervention focused on supporting civil registration reforms in Tajikistan and the cross-cutting issues (gender aspects, rights of people with disabilities) were not expressly formulated during the project planning neither at the outcome and nor at the outputs level. However, they are present in one of the indicators, particularly Indicator 2 of the Output 6: *“ % of population in these isolated communities (disaggregated by gender and vulnerable groups) who are aware of the necessity of registering civil acts and of how to do so”*<sup>50</sup>, which resonances with the Intended Outcome of the Country Programme Results & Resource Framework: *“Justice sector institutions enabled to uphold rule of law in compliance with international commitments; promote and protect Human Rights and improve access to justice and civil registration of vulnerable population groups, especially women, youth and persons with disabilities”*. The cross-cutting issues (gender aspects) are also highlighted in the body text of the project document, e.g. *“Partnerships will also be created with UN Women to provide gender expertise in legal review and capacity building efforts, plus to support civic awareness activities.”*<sup>51</sup>

The gender aspects were mainstreamed through the different CR project components, i.e. normative and regulatory framework, as well as in the informational support materials and in the training curricula of the Institute for Advanced Legal Education. Finally, the 301 representatives of ZAGS offices increased their competences in the thematic area of CR,

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<sup>49</sup> Key informants’ interviews.

<sup>50</sup> See the project document: *Support to Civil Registration System Reform in Tajikistan Phase I (2016-2019)*

<sup>51</sup> Ibidem, page 30.

including in the gender aspects.

However, the findings of the field mission consultations show that the thematic policy makers and some of the service providers do not consider gender aspects as an issues in the civil registration system of Tajikistan mentioning either: *“I do not consider that the gender aspects represent a problem in CR, because the absolute majority of the workers in CR are women; there are no legal and regulatory CR norms which treat differently men and women; both genders benefit of the same/equal conditions and none is privileged or disadvantaged when it comes to civil registration of their vital acts”*<sup>52</sup> or *“I do not understand why we make a problem out of it, because there are no any problems bases on gender inequalities on CR”*.<sup>53</sup> This reflects either a resistance or lack of understanding and recognition of gender issues in the civil registration system or an overestimation of the existing issues. In any case, it should represent a platform for future communications between the thematic and CR actors in an attempt to fine- tune a common vision and approach.

As for the aspects related to the accessibility towards the disabled persons, the findings of the evaluation indicate that they were not directly envisaged by the project outputs, outcomes, baselines, indicators and targets. However, at the intervention level, the evaluation identified a positive example when the accessibility aspects were integrated by the CR project in the infrastructural actions. Thus, the renovated ZAGS office from Kulob has a practicable access ramp and the exterior and interior doors of the location are wide enough and can be used by the persons in wheel chairs. This is commended by the evaluation, but the accessibility of the premises and public services for the disabled persons does not mean only a ramp and a wide door, it should also include the bath rooms/toilets adopted for the disabled persons. Therefore, these aspects should be incorporated in future similar interventions to increase the accessibility for the disabled persons of Tajikistan to the CR services.

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<sup>52</sup> Key informants' interviews.

<sup>53</sup> Ibidem.

## PART V. CONCLUSIONS & LESSONS LEARNT

At the outset of this final evaluation report, it is important to emphasize that the CR Project, was designed and implemented as a multi-stakeholder and complex initiative focused on the supporting different aspects of the civil registration reform in Republic of Tajikistan.

The CR Project is highly relevant to the national CR priorities and on-going reforms undertaken by the Government of Republic of Tajikistan and reflected in the policy documents, strategies and regulatory framework of the country. The project is also in line with the SDGs and with the UN strategic documents. The project represents a complex, inter-sectorial action, well-structured, justified, but mostly with ambitious targets. The action is based on RBM, HRBA and multi-stakeholder approach under the UNDP leadership and the Ministry of Justice ownership. The project design and performance management has some gaps and inconsistencies preponderantly at the indicators level, which are manageable.

The evaluation concluded that the project was designed as a multi-stakeholder, complex and extremely ambitious action in terms of targets and coverage. It is coherent at the Outputs and Outcomes level, but there are some incoherencies and inconsistencies of the performance indicators and targets, but they did not affect substantially the evaluability<sup>54</sup> of the CR Project. The evaluability of the project is not affected by the project design issues, but by the poor available data on projects achievements per indicators, because it is premature to evaluate accurately the project performance. The project was significantly influenced by the political, technological, economic and social factors, as well as by the management aspects, which slowed down the project performance, despite the efforts. Some of them (such as political, technological, economic and social) are mostly out of control of the project and are characteristic to the operational context, while other ones (such as management aspects) are under the control and influence of the project. It is worth noting that the project delivery turned to be more challenging and demanding in terms of efforts, time and resources than anticipated, although the project brought substantial national and international expertise and involved the key relevant state and non-state actors from Tajikistan and from other relevant countries.

Project efficiency is mostly modest and the project performance is behind the initial schedule. The costliest component (CR policy and regulatory review) did not reach yet the expected results and did not generated the anticipated changes, despite the consistent project resources and efforts of the involved national and international actors, which delivered all planned activities, but additional lobby is necessary, regardless of the promising commitments of the policy makers. Nevertheless, the material and financial resources invested by the project in policy/regulatory framework review, enabling environment, capacity strengthening of the human resources, researches, software and OSS model development, improving

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<sup>54</sup> Amongst international development agencies there appears to be widespread agreement on the meaning of the term “evaluability”. The following concept is widely quoted and used: “Evaluability” is the extent to which an activity or project can be evaluated in a reliable and credible fashion. OECD-DAC 2010; p.21.

infrastructure etc. were adequately, but in some cases not sufficiently to reach the project targets as initially planned.

It is worth underlining that the project increased its dynamics, especially in the last semester of 2018 and given the available perspectives, it is likely that targets of the Outputs 1, 2, and 5 will be achieved by the end of 2019. The targets of the Outputs 3 and 4, are likely to be partially achieved (except the archive digitalization), while the targets (and the baseline) of the Output 6 are not reflected in the results framework, although the project delivered different outreach actions.

The sustainability prospects of the project, so far, are generally promising (especially at the policy sustainability, institutional sustainability and partially financial sustainability), but still prematurely to be assessed, due to the delays in delivery the project results. However, a positive strategic perspective is the express commitment of the central public authorities of Tajikistan (especially Ministry of Justice, Parliament, President) to reinforce their engagements and to continue the implementation of the civil registration reforms.

### Lessons learned

Regardless of the project performance, there is always room for improvement. Usually, any approach, which does not fully work as planned or generated unexpected and significant changes, represents an excellent opportunity for the project team to learn a lesson. Based on the evaluator's review of project documents, interviews with key informants, and analysis of the information collected in project sites in Tajikistan, the Consultant suggests at least three lessons that may be of value to the UNDP Tajikistan and its partners:

- *Engagement and coordination with different state institutions, especially EoP and Parliament is vital for a prompt legislative reform processes.* The Phase I of the CR project demonstrated that for a review and adjustment of a policy and legal framework is not sufficient to involve the national and international experts, to encourage studying of the international relevant experience, to provide thematic and technical expertise and to rely on the political will and openness of the line ministry. It is important to inform and involve regularly and actively the representatives of the EoP and Parliament. The working group for CR legal drafts review shall be an inter-institutional one and shall include the representatives of both institutions who are familiar with the debates and amendments and can increase the promotion and advocacy for adoption of the CR legislative package. Otherwise, the legislation review process will take much more time, efforts and “back and forth” approach between the institutions, which will affect the project implementation dynamic, and, subsequently, the performance and efficiency.
- *Such a complex, cross-sectorial and multi-stakeholder initiative as CR project is highly dependent on various (technical, economic, political and social) factors and requires a proactive, flexible, but still results-oriented and “pushing” approach during the all stages of the project implementation.* It is necessary to be focused on delivering the planned activities in due time, using available resources and putting efforts to mobilize additional ones, but also is important or even more important to follow to what extent the initiatives generate expected changes (reflected in the indicators) as the results of the implemented actions. Partnerships, common vision, coordination among project partners and joint



advocacy efforts are important and should be used through the whole project cycle management<sup>55</sup> for overcoming implementation bottle-necks and resistances.

- *Public awareness raising on the necessity of the registration of the vital civil acts is not necessarily conditioned by the undergoing reforms of the CR system.* The initial logic of intervention of the CR project accordingly to which the outreach awareness raising initiatives should take place after the policy and regulatory framework review, is not plausible, because they are two distinct issues, which are not necessarily determined by each other. As revealed the researches and the field mission consultations and observations, the population of Tajikistan does not register their vital civil acts not just because the existing CR system is paper-based or the normative framework is not adjusted, but because of many other social reasons, including low informational and awareness level, which should be increased in parallel (not after) the on-going legislative and technological reforms.

The evaluator recognizes that there might be additional project specific lessons. Some of them already were identified, analyzed and reported by the project partners. Nonetheless, given the weaknesses identified, the evaluator has restricted himself to lessons that are overarching and that are the most striking. However as “basic” the lessons learned may be, their application offers the opportunity for UNDP Tajikistan and its national and international partners to increase the relevance, effectiveness, and efficiency of their actions, including the future upcoming Phase II of the CR project.

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<sup>55</sup> Joint needs assessment, joint proposal development, joint co-financing; joint implementation, joint monitoring and, finally joint reporting.

## PART VI. RECOMMENDATIONS

This part of the report provides thirteen mostly complex but manageable recommendations based on the findings and conclusions of the final evaluation and are set forth for the UNDP Tajikistan, its partners and other stakeholders to use in the remaining period of the Phase I and in the next Phase II of the project, if this is considered most feasible.

### 6.1 General framework of the recommendations

The diagram presents the general framework of the recommendations.

N	Recommendations
Rec. 01	Maintain both project outcomes, but reshape some of the outputs.
Rec. 02	Improve the project design aspects.
Rec. 03	Reinforce lobby and advocacy for adoption of the CR legislative amendments.
Rec. 04	Change the IT equipment provision principle to ZAGS, adjust the Electronic Platform Integration Plan and continue capacity enhancing of the CR officers.
Rec. 05	Identify how many computers and other IT equipment are still necessary to fully equip the remaining ZAGS offices.
Rec. 06	Replicate gradually the OSS model in other ZAGS offices.
Rec. 07	Strengthen the IT Unit of the Ministry of Justice.
Rec. 08	Pilot archive digitalization in some area and developing a scale-up plan based on accurate financial estimations.
Rec. 09	Pilot the electronic system and CR normative acts in some jamoats.
Rec. 10	Increase budget allocations for public information and outreach awareness raising for boosting civil registration.
Rec. 11	Establish strategic partnerships with the key implementing actors based on the comparative advantages.
Rec. 12	Introduce a Chief Technical Advisor position.
Rec. 13	Synergize elaboration of the Phase II of the CR Project with the new CR Reform Strategy of the Government of Tajikistan.

### 6.2 Detailed recommendations

Below all recommendations are explained, which, as to the evaluator, could contribute to more effective development and implementation during the next phase of the CR project in Tajikistan, as well as to its enhanced relevance and effectiveness of the interventions. The order in which the recommendations are listed does not reflect their value or importance.

Rec. 01	<i>Maintain both project outcomes, but reshape some of the outputs.</i>
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Both project outcomes, which targets supply and demand side are valid and relevant for the Phase II of the CR project and should be maintained. On one side, the civil registry system of Tajikistan is not fully reformed yet and still does not provide effective and qualitative civil registration services to the population (Outcome 1); on the other side, the population of

Tajikistan still needs informational support to learn how to and timely have their vital events recorded in the civil registry system (Outcome 2).

As for the project outputs, it is recommendable to reshape some of the existing six outputs, for the Phase II. Thus, after adoption of the legislative package and the regulatory framework on CR, it would be necessary to get to the next level, i.e. the Outputs 1 and 2 can be combined and reformulated as *legislative and regulatory CR framework* and the focus should be shifted to monitoring their implementation by the civil registry offices. The Output 3 might be kept as it is, because there is still express need for capacity development. The Output 4 should be divided in two distinct outputs: 1) *Integration of the electronic system in ZAGS and jamoats* and 2) *Digitalisation of the CR Archive*, because the subcomponents although are interlinked, need different implementation approaches, additional financial resources and consistent and long lasting efforts. Output 5 and Outputs 6 can be combined, because both outputs have the same core elements and target information and awareness raising and might be reformulated as *“Public Information and Outreach awareness rising campaigns by MoJ and selected CSOs for boosting civil registration.”* Thus, for the Phase II of the CR project it is recommended to have the same two Outcomes and just five outputs instead of six.

Final evaluation highlighted the project achievements and the targets which were not achieved or were just partially achieved. Subsequently, the uncompleted but still relevant commitments should be reinforced in order to reach the expected changes, even if it might imply full of partial review of the approach, as suggested below.

<b>Rec. 02</b>	<i>Improve the project design aspects.</i>
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The Consultant highlighted already the importance of the adequate planning and design and how they influence implementation, monitoring, data collection and, finally reporting. Therefore, in future similar actions is highly advisable to improve the design aspects and eliminate the gaps. The suggestions described below might be helpful in this regard:

- Phase II of the project needs to be preceded by the *Theory of Change* (ToC), which identifies the long-term goal<sup>56</sup> and contain a backwards mapping of the longer-term, intermediate, and early expected results outcomes and outputs, called “changes pathway” reflecting “if... then...”, casual linkages. It should also reflect the basic assumptions, lessons learnt and adjusted key interventions needed to generate desired change. For a better assimilation it is suggested to combine narrative description and graphic presentation of ToC.
- *Improve the coherence of the logic of intervention and assessment.* Expected results – baseline-indicators - targets should be interlinked with no gaps, but also should be consistent enough for assessment of the performance under the outputs and outcomes. Indicators should be both quantitative and qualitative and should be sufficient to assess the achievements versus expected results.
- *Include milestones* in the log frame or in the Results Assessment Framework. Usually, the performance planning approach is *baseline vs. target*, but in a complex context as CR issues in Tajikistan, it is advisable to have milestones, especially for the Output 6, between the baseline and targets. Milestones should be linked to a certain time frame, e.g. project year or to some sub-activities. In some cases, the project might include also *ambition*, which, unlike milestones, is beyond the target. For instance, the target is to raise \$ 4 mln

<sup>56</sup> Reflected in the policy documents of the Republic of Tajikistan and of the UN/DP.

generated by the resources mobilization plan during a four-year project. The baseline is \$ 2 mln and the four yearly milestones might be: \$ 400,000 - 1<sup>st</sup> year, \$ 700,000 - 2<sup>nd</sup> year etc. The *ambition* would be to raise an extra 5%. The project team will report and the project will be evaluated against the target/s, but the *ambition* is a self-imposed level and represents an added value and a self-driven indicator. This approach might be included and assumed by UNDP and the project partners in different (sub)components of the project.

- Plan and undertake *accessibility* and *gender* reviews. *Gender* and *accessibility for disabled people* are important, although represent the cross-cutting aspects and not the core of the CRR project. Nevertheless, both aspects should be initially reflected expressly in the project design and, afterwards integrated in the project implementation /delivery and reflected in the progress reports. *Accessibility review* and *gender review* might represent the responsibility of UNDP (or other actor) and, respectively of UN Women. Partners should assume the responsibility for identification, mainstreaming and review of the outputs through the cross-cutting aspects (eventually suggest improvements to the partner/s). This could be reflected in the partnership agreements and in the description of the role of partners.

<b>Rec. 03</b>	<i>Reinforce lobby and advocacy for adoption of the CR legislative amendments.</i>
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As revealed the field mission consultations with the public officials of Tajikistan, there are promising perspectives for adoption within the next two months (March-April 2019) of the amendments to the Law “On Civil Registration” developed by the Working Group of the MoJ empowered by the project experts. However, it is important to bear in mind that there are CR amendments developed to four other laws, which also need to be examined and adopted in order to have an adequate legislative framework.

Therefore, the CR project, under the leadership of the UN Senior staff, UNDP and MoJ, should advocate for adoption of the amendments to whole legislative package, not just one thematic CR law. The close coordination and intensive communication with EoP and Parliament of Tajikistan are critical in this regard, even if cooperation with the EoP quite often is challenging.

<b>Rec. 04</b>	<i>Change the IT equipment provision principle to ZAGS, adjust the Electronic Platform Integration Plan and continue capacity enhancing of the CR officers.</i>
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This recommendation is linked to the Output 3 of the CR project. As described in the report, the MoJ is going to provide two computers to each ZAGS. This will not increase significantly the functionality of the ZAGS offices, on contrary - it will generate operational difficulties, because the absolute majority of the offices will not be adequately equipped and part of the staff will operate on electronic platform and part of workers will continue to operate on paper-based. This will affect not just the integration of the electronic platform on the full scale, but also will create technical problems both to ZAGS offices and to IT Unit. Therefore, it is recommended to change the initial principle and to equip adequately the CR offices in two stages: Phase I of the CR project fully covers the equipment needs of a certain number of the ZAGS offices (to be jointly decided numerically and nominative by the MoJ, UNDP in consultation with EPOS) and Phase II of the project provides equipment to the remaining part of ZAGS offices (preferably at the beginning of the Phase II). If there is a possibility to do it by the end of the Phase I, it would be much better. In such a way, on one hand, regardless if in

Phase I or Phase II, but each ZAGS office will get fully equipped at once and not gradually and the whole staff will switch simultaneously to electronic system avoiding dual CR format; on the other hand, the electronic platform integration will take place also in two stages, i.e. simultaneously with the equipment provision. The IT support burden on the IT Unit of the MoJ will be also divided, which will decrease the pressure on the unit. This would allow focusing on lesser number of ZAGS offices, at least at the initial stage of the electronic system integration. Subsequently, the actual Electronic System Integration Plan, should be adjusted according to the revised equipment provision principle described above.

The capacity development is a process not an act, because the staff turnover in civil registration is quite high, and according to the filed mission findings about 40 persons from the CR system did not benefitted yet of any capacity development support in electronic system. Therefore, enhancing the capacity of CR officers on such topics as: the new provisions in the legislation and instructions; application of the CROIS2; gender aspects in civil registration; OSS model etc. is necessary to be systematically undertaken by the Institute for Advanced Legal Education of the MoJ according to the curricula developed with the project support.

*Rec. 05*

*Identify how many computers and other IT equipment are still necessary to fully equip the remaining ZAGS offices.*

This recommendation is linked to the previous one. The equipment needs assessment is recommended to be undertaken (either by the IT Unit of the MoJ, EPOS or any other relevant actor) during 2019, i.e. by the end of Phase I of the project. Subsequently, the necessary procurements of the IT equipment should be planned for the Phase II and provided to the second group of the ZAGS offices. While assessing the IT and office equipment needs of the remaining ZAGS offices, it is recommendable to be taken into consideration not just the total number of the workers in the office and the number of computers and other IT equipment, but also to analyze the optimal workload of the office, i.e. to what extent the number of the working places/workers is adequate given the workload of the ZAGS.

*Rec. 06*

*Replicate gradually the OSS model in other ZAGS offices.*

The implementation of the OSS model at the national level is going to be challenging and in some ZAGS offices almost impossible, because, as remarked several chiefs of ZAGS offices, the available locations are small and do not allow introducing the OSS model with the front desk and back up desk, as for instance they have seen in Moldova and as is mostly envisaged in Tajikistan. Therefore, it is recommendable to assess in how many ZAGS offices the OSS model is feasible to be implemented given the existing infrastructural limitations. Subsequently, implementation of this recommendation will require additional analysis, which can be undertaken simultaneously with the one envisaged in the previous Recommendation 5.

*Rec. 07*

*Strengthen the IT Unit of the Ministry of Justice.*

The role of the IT Unit of the MoJ is important in the perspective of: integration of the electronic system in civil registration of Tajikistan, securing its functionality and digitalization process of the national CR Archive. Therefore, the CR project and the MoJ should make sure that the IT Unit itself is functional in terms of using and providing IT support for integration of

the CRO IS2 platform, it is adequately equipped with all required material, technological and capacitated human resources and is able promptly intervene when needed and to fulfil its obligations. A mentoring period for IT Unit would be highly recommended in this regard.

*Rec. 08*

*Pilot archive digitalization in some area and developing a scale-up plan based on accurate financial estimations.*

As remarked, the digitalization of the CR archive turned to be a greater challenge than anticipated in terms of implementation efforts, financial costs and time. The project adjusted its approach in this perspective and it is in the process of implementation of the first part of the recommendation, i.e. piloting archive digitalization, which is going to take place by the end of Phase I. However, it is important to underline that piloting, beside the technological aspects should provide also a more accurate financial estimation on the archive digitalisation costs at the national level, because so far both financial estimations of the Georgian and Moldovan service providers differ substantially. This should represent also an important basis for further scale up of the archive digitalization, which will require additional significant (multi-million) financial resources. Therefore, a step-by-step progressive archive digitalisation scale-up plan for the next four years is recommended, because the full digitalisation of the national CR archive, in the evaluator's opinion, might be reached even in the Phase III of the project, given the apparently high costs of the initiative.

*Rec. 09*

*Pilot the electronic system and CR normative acts in some jamoats.*

The CR project initially targeted CR reform in all jamoats of Tajikistan, but this proved to be unrealistic, given the operational costs, complexity, available resources, time etc. Therefore, for the Phase I it was decided to focus on ZAGS offices, which, in the opinion of the evaluator was an adequate strategic decision. For the Phase II of the project, it is highly recommendable to keep the focus on the CR reform in the ZAGS offices, but also to pilot the CR electronic system and implementation of the CR regulations and acts in some selected jamoats. This is recommendable to be done with the perspective of scaling up of the project in other jamoats in the next (eventually last) Phase III of the CR Project. Again, the selected jamoats should be previously capacitated and eventually equipped.

*Rec. 10*

*Increase budget allocations for public information and outreach awareness raising for boosting civil registration.*

As reflected by the evaluation report, the outreach awareness raising initiatives (Output 6) started later than the actions of other outputs and benefited of a least amount of financial resources (about 6,9%) of the CR Project budget allocated for the project outputs.

The project will never and should never satisfy all the needs of the Government, but it should definitively provide greater empowerment/informational support to population of Tajikistan. Therefore, the project should rely upon interaction and engagement with the local population, including those from the remote areas who have to be well-informed and aware of the importance of and responsibility for timely registrations of their civil registration vital status acts.

It is recommendable to support simultaneously the Ministry of Justice in implementing the communication plan for increasing the legal awareness of population on changes of CR

legislation and on timely civil registration of vital events and the CSOs for the maximizing the outreach and awareness raising effects. De facto, MoJ and CSO should join their informational and awareness raising efforts. The project should also capitalize and build on systems and mechanisms that already function at the community level, such as the mahalla committees, women's watch group and legal aid centres, which will increase the informational level of the population. All these will require more substantive allocations, a minimum of twice as much as it was allocated in the Phase I.

**Rec.11**

*Establish strategic partnerships with the key implementing actors based on the comparative advantages.*

It is recommendable to establish partnerships under the overall leadership of UNDP Tajikistan, as a lead agency and in close consultations with the Ministry of Justice. Partnerships in the Phase II of the project should be based on the strategic stakeholder mapping, on the added value, comparative advantages and proven thematic capacities of the partners in the context of their on-going activity related to civil registration and country-specific experience gained through the Phase I of the project. The increased CRR thematic expertise represents a valuable asset and the project should capitalize on it.

However, given the financial perspectives for the next phase, the lead agency and the key partners, beside bringing their own expertise, should focus on securing financial contribution and mobilization the resources. In other words, all partners (including lead agency) should assume operational and financial commitments tailored to their involvement and potential. Therefore, an additional but still important criterion, which can not be neglected should represent the financial contribution and the ability of the partners to bring financial resources. It is important considering the new requirement of the SDC for 50/50 funding. Mobilization of resources should be reflected in the agenda of all key partners. The amount of contribution, as well as the type and periodicity should be reflected in the partnership agreements.

**Rec. 12**

*Introduce a Chief Technical Advisor position.*

Given the complexity, inter-sectorial and multi-stakeholder approach, as well as the implementation challenges and difficulties faced by the CR Project, which affected its effectiveness and efficiency, it is advisable to introduce a part-time (coming and going) Chief Technical Advisor (CTA) position. The responsibility of the CTA might be to ensure that the overall thematic and technical direction and results-based orientation of the CR Project is maintained and flexibility adapted to meet the practical challenges faced during the implementation of the project. The CTA will work under the overall guidance of the UNDP and direct supervision of the Project Manager and will provide overall project advisory services and thematic technical assistance to: project management, partners and other project consultants.

The CTA will provide consultancy support directly the CR Project team throughout the project management cycle, for effective and timely annual planning, project implementation, synergizing the relations with the implementing actors and avoiding overlaps, monitoring and reporting.



The National Program for Civil Registration System Reform in Tajikistan ends in 2019, practically simultaneously with the Phase I of the CR Project and the Government of Tajikistan is committed to develop the next thematic strategy/program.

Therefore, it is highly recommendable to synergize development of the Phase II of the CR Project with the initiatives of the Government of Tajikistan of elaboration of a new strategy for Civil Registration System Reform. In such a way, the CR Project will make sure that the new phase is aligned with the national priorities reflected in the new thematic strategy.

## PART VII. ANNEXES

### ANNEX 1: Lead Evaluation Questions

#### *Relevance*

- To what extent is the project relevant to the national context in Tajikistan?
- To what extent is the project in line with the national priorities, SDG, UNDP's mandate, UNDP Country Programme Document (2016-2020) and UNDP Strategic Plan 2018-2021?
- To what extent the project meets the requirements of target groups and beneficiaries?
- To what extent is the project design realistic, consistent and coherent in terms of design, Human Rights Based Approach (HRBA) and results-based management (RBM)<sup>57</sup>?
- To what extent were the selected methods of delivery and approaches relevant and adequate for the successful implementation of the civil registration reform in Tajikistan?

#### *Effectiveness*

- What is the project fulfilment? To what extent the project reached its targets or is likely to reach them by the end of Phase 1?
- What are the most significant achievements and what are the key driving and constraining factors and actors, which influenced positively or negatively the (non)achievements?
- What has been changed as the result of the implemented activities (per each of the six outputs and two outcomes)?
- To what extent the project has so far contributed to the implementation of the on-going reform of civil registration system in Tajikistan?
- How the outputs delivered affected the outcomes, and in what ways have they (not) been effective?
- How effective have UNDP partnerships been in contributing to achieving the results?
- Did the project work with/address the right partners (Government, civil society, experts) while implementing the project objectives?

<sup>57</sup> See: *Results Based Management Handbook. Harmonizing RBM concepts and approaches for improved development results at country level.* UNDG, 2011

- To what extent did the achieved outcomes benefit women and men equally?

#### *Efficiency*

- Were the results achieved in the timeframe?
- Can more efficient alternatives be identified?
- Was the project management efficient?
- To what extent the M&E system was consistent, coherent and efficient?
- How activities and their concrete results contribute to outputs?
- How was monitoring and steering used for more efficient project implementation?
- Were there own contributions from other project actors, incl. Government of Tajikistan?
- What should be improved in the future? Why?

#### *Sustainability*

- What indications are there that the outputs and outcomes will be sustained, in terms of: policy sustainability, institutional sustainability, and financial sustainability, i.e. systems, procedures, regulations, finances, staff?
- To what extent did the main partner (Ministry of Justice) own the project results and to what extent it is able to sustain them?
- To what extent has a sustainability strategy, including capacity development<sup>58</sup> of key national stakeholders, been developed or implemented?

#### *Cross – cutting issues*

- To what extent *gender issues, accessibility (the rights of people with disabilities) and other human rights aspects* were mainstreamed in the UNDP Project planning, implementation and reporting process, as well as in the deliverables?
- To what extent did the achieved outcomes benefit women and men equally?
- To what extent the project promoted gender equality and accessibility throughout its implementation?

#### *Learning & Planning for the next phase:*

- What should be changed, dropped or reinforced as the results of the findings and conclusions of the evaluation?
- What are the good practices and key lessons learnt that might feed into designing of the next phase of the project?

## **ANNEX 2: List of reviewed documents**

1. Project Document “Support to Civil Registration System Reform in Tajikistan” phase 1, ENG.
2. Project Results and Impact Summary Jan 2016 - Dec 2018.
3. Analytical Report of Legal Framework for Introducing New Practices of Integrated Electronic of State Registration System of Civil Status Acts in the Republic of Tajikistan, Tomas Baranovas, August 2017.
4. Review of Legislative Frameworks, Coordination Mechanisms and Institutional Structure of Civil Registration System in Tajikistan, Tomas Baranovas, October 2016, ENG, RU.
5. Short Information on Tomas Baranovas’ Report.

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<sup>58</sup> See: *UN Development System A Collective Approach to Supporting Capacity Development*, August 2009 and *Capacity Development - A UNDP Primer*, 2011.

6. Annual Project Report, 1 January 2016 – 31 December 2016.
7. Annual Project Report, 1 January 2017 – 31 December 2017.
8. Semi Annual Project Report, 1 January 2018 – 30 June 2018.
9. Financial Statement for Annual Report 2016.
10. Annual Detailed Work Plan, 12 August 2016.
11. Annual Work Plan for 2017, 27 December 2016.
12. Annual Work Plan for 2018, 01 December 2017.
13. Annual Work Plan for 2019, 24 December 2017.
14. Physical Assessment of the Current Archive System of Republic of Tajikistan, 2016.
15. Baseline Study under the UNDP Project “Support to Civil Registration System Reform in Tajikistan”, Centre for Sociological Research “Zerkalo”, revised version, 24 Nov. 2016.
16. Gender Analysis of the Legislation and Policy of the State Civil Registration System, UN Women, 16 August 2016.
17. Comparative Analysis of Legislation for Registration of Civil Status Acts in the Russian Federation, the Republic of Kazakhstan, Georgia, the Republic of Moldova and the Republic of Lithuania, Tomas Baranovas, October 2016, RU.
18. Review of the Implementation of the State Program on CAR (Civil Acts Registration) in the Republic of Tajikistan for 2014-2019, Tomas Baranovas, October 2016, RU.
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### ANNEX 3: Evaluation Matrix

<i>Evaluation Questions</i>	<i>Indicators</i>	<i>Data Sources</i>	<i>Collection Methods</i>	<i>Comments</i>
<b>RELEVANCE:</b> The extent to which is the project relevant to the national priorities and context in Tajikistan and to the SDGs.				
1. To what extent the project meets the requirements of target groups and beneficiaries? 2. To what extent the project is in line with the mandate of UNDP? 3. To what extent is the project design consistent, realistic and coherent in terms of design, Human Rights Based Approach and Results-Based Management (RBM)? 4. To what extent were the selected methods of delivery and approaches relevant and adequate for the successful implementation of the civil registration reform (CRR) in Tajikistan? 5. The extent to which is the project relevant to the national priorities and context in Tajikistan and to the SDGs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Evidence of needs of target groups and beneficiaries defined, integrated and addressed in the project.</li> <li>Evidence of links between the project priorities and the UNDP strategic documents.</li> <li>Degree of consistency of the project, interconnection of the results' chain and "duty bearers" vs "rights holders" focus.</li> <li>Evidence of, variety and number of activities and mechanisms which contributed to achievement of the targets on CRR aspects in Tajikistan</li> <li>Degree of consistency of the project with Government/national priorities and SDGs.</li> </ul>	Prodoc, baseline survey, feasibility studies, other related documents, progress and monitoring reports.  Prodoc, UNDP CPD (2016-2020), UNDP Strategic Plan 2018-2021  Prodoc, logframe, UNDP guidelines on HRBA and RBM.  MJ, project partners, national and international consultants, project team, ZAGS, progress reports other project documents  Prodoc, SDGs, Governmental strategies and policies on CRR	Desk review and key informants' interviews  Desk review  Desk review  Desk review and key informants' interviews  Desk review	Ensure access to documents, and key informants interviews (KII)
<b>EFFECTIVENESS:</b> Extent to which the project Phase I was fulfilled				
1. To what extent the project reached its targets or is likely to reach them by the end of Phase 1? 2. What are the most significant achievements and what are the key driving and constraining factors and actors, which influenced positively or negatively the (non)achievements?	<i>Outcome 1<sup>59</sup> indicators.</i> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Nr of ZAGS offices and jamoats that are fully functional, able to carry out all activities required by law and regulations.</li> <li>% of users of CR services (disaggregated by gender and rural/urban, incl. changes in absolute values) who are satisfied with the quality and affordability of the CR system</li> </ol>	Progress reports, results and impact framework, monitoring and other relevant reports  Baseline and endline surveys, monitoring and progress reports	Desk reviews, sites visits to ZAGS and jamoats, FGD, KII  Desk review, sites visits to ZAGS and jamoats, FGD	Ensure key informants interviews, sites visits and FGDs

<sup>59</sup> Outcome 1: *The reformed CR system of Tajikistan is effectively managed and provides quality and affordable services to the population and qualitative vital statistical data for the State.*

<p>3. What has been changed as the result of the implemented activities (per each of the six outputs and two outcomes)?</p> <p>4. To what extent the project has so far contributed to the implementation of the ongoing reform of civil registration system in Tajikistan?</p> <p>5. How the outputs delivered affected the outcomes, and in what ways have they (not) been effective?</p> <p>6. How effective have UNDP partnerships been in contributing to achieving the results?</p> <p>7. Did the project work with/address the right partners (Government, civil society, experts) while implementing the project objectives?</p> <p>8. To what extent did the achieved outcomes benefit women and men equally?</p>	<p>3. Discrepancy between birth data in CR and birth data in the Ministry of Health and Social Protection (MoHSP).</p> <p>4. Nr of procedures (i.e., visits, different docs and authorizations required) for registration of civil acts</p> <p><i>Output 1 Indicators<sup>60</sup>:</i></p> <p>1. The legislation on CR, and the regulations implementing that legislation, are revised and adopted in line with the international best practices.</p> <p><i>Output 2 Indicators<sup>61</sup></i></p> <p>1. Internal rules and regulations are developed and adopted consistent with national legislation.</p> <p>2. % of ZAGS and jamoats implementing the new rules and regulations.</p> <p>3. Nr of people served by these ZAGS and jamoats.</p> <p><i>Output 3 Indicators<sup>62</sup></i></p> <p>1. % of jamoats' staff responsible for CR system participated in induction course prior to provision of services and training on improvement of qualification once every 4 years. Frequency of participation of ZAGS staff in training and the coverage.</p> <p>2. % of ZAGS offices that show improved conditions of work (infrastructure, equipment, administration, access to rules and information, etc.)</p> <p><i>Output 4 Indicators<sup>63</sup></i></p>	<p>Statistics from MoHSP and CR, Center of Statistics of MoHSP, Agency for State Statistics</p> <p>Beneficiaries of the ZAGS services ZAGS workers and administration</p> <p>Progress reports, Minutes from coordination meetings of the Steering Committee, MJ, members of WG/experts, Parliament representatives, members of the apparatus of President of RT.</p> <p>Progress reports, Minutes from coordination meetings of the Steering Committee, MJ, members of WG/experts,</p> <p>Progress reports, Minutes from coordination meetings, members of working group/experts, ZAGS workers.</p> <p>Progress and training reports, ZAGS and jamoats training participants.</p>	<p>Desk review, FGD, KII</p> <p>FGD, KII</p> <p>Desk review, FGD, KII</p> <p>Desk Reviews, Interviews, FGD</p>	<p>Access to documents, and key stakeholders</p>
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<sup>60</sup> Output 1: Legislative framework for CR is compliant with international best practices

<sup>61</sup> Output 2: New internal regulations defining roles, responsibilities and processes are applied by civil registry offices and jamoats

<sup>62</sup> Output 3: Civil registry offices and jamoat staff have enhanced capacities to provide quality services to the population

<sup>63</sup> Output 4: Civil registration and archiving of data is managed through an electronic system.

	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Electronic systems for registration and archiving are introduced and are functional across all ZAGS offices.</li> <li>% of paper-based records transferred to electronic archive</li> </ol> <p>Outcome 2 Indicators<sup>64</sup></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>% of children under 2 years old with a birth certificates (disaggregated by gender)</li> <li>% of untimely birth and death registrations in ZAGS is decreasing</li> <li>% of households have all their vital events registered (disaggregated by sex of head of household and province)</li> </ol> <p>Output 5 Indicators<sup>65</sup></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A coherent, comprehensive and inclusive strategy for communication has been adopted by Ministry of Justice.</li> <li>% of population that are aware of the necessity of registering civil acts and of how to do so.</li> </ol> <p>Output 6 Indicators</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>% of identified population residing in districts where isolated communities can be found are assisted to obtain missing CR documents.</li> </ol>	<p>Progress reports, sites visit to ZAGS of Kulob and observations, ZAGS workers and population.</p> <p>Progress reports, feasibility study reports, electronic system, electronic archive, EPOS, other providers, project team, MJ, ZAGS offices.</p> <p>Progress reports, CR statistics from MoHSP, DHS data, UN partners.</p> <p>Communication Plan of the MJ, reports of the baseline and endline studies, MJ, Gender and Development, project team and UN partners.</p> <p>Project progress and monitoring reports</p>	<p>Desk Reviews, sites visits to ZAGS, FGD, KII</p> <p>Desk review, filed observation, KII, FGD</p> <p>Desk review, filed observation, KII, FGD</p> <p>Desk review, filed observation, KII, FGD</p> <p>Desk review</p>	<p>Access to documents, and key stakeholders</p>
9. What was not achieved in full and what can be recommended for the Second Phase?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Nr of targets not achieved and reasons.</li> <li>Nr and type of recommendations for Phase II</li> </ul>	<p>Progress and monitoring reports. MJ, UNDP, UNFPA, UN Women, EPOS, Un CO, consultants.</p>	<p>Desk reviews, interviews, focus group discussions</p>	
<b>EFFICIENCY:</b> Extent to which resources / inputs have been turned into results				

<sup>64</sup> Outcome 2: The population of Tajikistan know how to have their vital events timely recorded in the civil registry system.

<sup>65</sup> Output 5: Ministry of Justice makes use of new communication strategies to proactively incentivise the population to register their vital acts



1. Were the results achieved in the timeframe?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Discrepancy between the planning schedule of annual work plans and progress reports.</li> <li>Number of project outputs delivered in a timely manner.</li> </ul>	Project document, Progress reports, annual work plans Key informants: project team, UNDP CO, UN FPA, UN Women, EPOS, MJ, SDC	Desk review and interviews	Access to documents, and key stakeholders
2. Was the project management efficient? To what extent the M&E system was consistent, coherent and efficient?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Number and types of measures taken to use resources efficiently (e.g. cost sharing, partnership arrangements).</li> <li>Evidence of the followed annual work plans and respected budgets.</li> </ul>	Prodoc, Monitoring & Evaluation Plans, Monitoring and financial reports. Key Informants: UNDP, MJ, M&E unit, project partners	Desk review and interviews	Access to documents, and key stakeholders
3. Were there own contributions from other project actors, incl. Government of Tajikistan?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Evidence of own contribution of the project actors</li> </ul>	Prodoc, Project Monitoring and financial reports Key Informants: UNDP, MJ,	Desk review and interviews	Access to documents, and key stakeholders
4. How was monitoring and steering used for more efficient project implementation?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Evidence of coordination mechanisms and practices facilitated.</li> <li>Number and areas of technical, policy, and management support provided.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Steering Committee minutes, progress and monitoring reports</li> <li>Key Informants: SC members, project team, SDC.</li> </ul>	Desk review and interviews	Access to documents, and key stakeholders
<b>SUSTAINABILITY:</b> Probability of the benefits of the intervention continuing in the long run.				
1. What is the likelihood that the project outputs and outcomes will be maintained for a reasonably long period of time if the project was to cease? (Policy, institutional, and financial sustainability).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Number of national and international actors committed to support the project - Phase II</li> <li>Number of stakeholders with financial capacity to sustain the project</li> <li>Evidence of the approved (amendments to) policies/laws/regulations/budgets and developed capacities.</li> </ul>	Project progress and monitoring reports, agreements, SC minutes.  Key Informants: UNDP, UNFPA, UN Women, MJ, SDC, MF,	Desk review and interviews	Access to documents, and key stakeholders
2. To what extent did the main partner (MJ) own the project results and to what extent it is able to sustain them?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Evidence of MJ political, technical and financial commitment to support and replicate the project.</li> </ul>	Results Framework, progress and monitoring reports, plans and budgets to support the project.	Desk review and interviews	Access to documents, and key stakeholders

CROSS-CUTTING ISSUES				
<p>3. To what extent gender issues, accessibility (the rights of people with disabilities) and other human rights aspects were mainstreamed in the UNDP Project planning, implementation and reporting process, as well as in the deliverables?</p> <p>4. To what extent the project promoted gender aspects and accessibility throughout its implementation?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Evidence of rights-based and gender responsive orientation in the project at the policy level, institutional and financial levels.</li> <li>• Number of mechanisms and measures to reach the most marginalized groups.</li> <li>• Degree of changes in power relations between “rights holders” and “duty bearers”.</li> </ul>	<p>Prodoc, Results Framework, Progress and Monitoring Reports, adjusted legal and regulatory framework</p> <p>Key Informants: UN Women, UNFPA, UNDP.</p>	<p>Desk review and interviews</p>	<p>Access to documents, and key stakeholders</p>

#### ANNEX 4. List of consulted stakeholders

<i>Nr</i>	<i>Name</i>	<i>Organisation/ Locality</i>	<i>Function</i>
1	Jan Harfst	United Nations Development Programme Tajikistan, Dushanbe	Country Director
2	Sanja Bojanic		Deputy Resident Representative
3	Zarina Mavlyanova		Monitoring & Evaluation Analyst
4	Alisher Karimov		CR Project Manager
5	Saidahmad Ikromov		Programme Manager/ Rule of Law and Access to Justice Programme
6	Yusufjon Kholov		Programme Associate/Governance, Rule of Law and Human Rights
7	Zulfikor Zamonov		Policy and Legal Adviser/ Rule of Law and Access to Justice Programme
8	Lola Latypova		Officer
9	Anvar Aminov		Project team member
10	Tony Cameron		Ex-CR Project Manager
11	Tatiana Bozrikova		Communication Expert
12	Aziza Hamidova	UN WOMEN, Dushanbe	Country Programme Manager
13	Diana Ismailova		Programme Coordinator
14	Milana Rikonovici		Ex-head of UN WOMEN Office
15	Elena Maximenco	EPOS, Dushanbe	International Project Manager
16	Daler Khakimov		National IT Expert
17	Sultonmamad Sultonmamadov		
18	Sayfullo Sadykov		Expert, Quality Specialist
19	Rosa Minasyan	UNHCR, Dushanbe	Protection Officer
20	Parviz Khakimov	UNFPA, Dushanbe	Programme Analytic on Population and Development
21	Nodiri Shahnoza Anvaz	Ministry of Justice, Dushanbe	Deputy Minister
22	Abduholoqzoda Akmal		Vice-Rector of Institute for Advanced Legal Education
23	Iftikhor Samadzoda		Deputy Chairwoman of the Main Department of Civil Registration Acts
24	Iskandar Shafozoda	Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Dushanbe	Deputy Head of Main Consular Department
25	Corinne Demenge	Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC), Dushanbe	Deputy Country Director
26	Shakarbek Niyatbekov		Law Programme Coordinator
27	Edwin Wennink	Helvetas Swiss Intercooperation, Dushanbe	Country Director
28	Gulnora Gaibova		Deputy Country Director
29	Mumina Ibrohimzoda	Civil Registration Office, Kulob	Head of Office

30	Farangis	Kulob	Visitor/ Beneficiary
31	Mirzoev Komron	NGO of Peoples with Disabilities, Kulob	Beneficiary
32	Shogisov Sultonsho		
33	Ayniddinov Nematullo		
34	Navruzova Maydagul		
35	Mailakaty Abdulkhair		
36	Amomov Safar		
37	Naimov Umedzon		
38	Sadirov Safarhon		
39	Sayfuddinov Saffar	Ministry of Health and Social Protection of the Population, Dushanbe	Chief Information Technology Specialist
40	Manonov Safarbek		Director of MoH Data and Statistical Center
41	Khakimov Farmon		IT Specialist
42	Sarvar Kurboniyon	Ministry of Finance, Dushanbe	Deputy Head of General Department of the State Budget
43	Mirzazada Abdulaziz		Head of Budgeting Department
44	Loikzoda Abdurazov		Head of the Department of Budget Administration
45	Marat Vaganov		Deputy Head of a Department
46	Nazruddin Nurov		Deputy Head of the Department of Budget Administration
47	Farida Noureddine	UNICEF, Dushanbe	International Child Rights Protection Officer
48	Tomas Baranovas		Project's International Legal Expert
49	Dilbar Turakhanova	Dushanbe	National Consultant/ Legal Expert
50	Larisa Aleksandrova	Dushanbe	National Consultant/ Legal and gender expert
51	Bahrom Abdulkhakov	Dushanbe	National Consultant/ National CR Legal Expert
52	Gulnora Beknazarova	Centre for Sociological Researches "Zerkalo", Dushanbe	OSS expert
53	Nargis Saidova	NGO "Gender & Development"	Chairwoman
54	Nargis Zokirova	NGO Bureau for Human Rights, Dushanbe	Chairwoman
55	Nurmahmad Khalilov	NGO Center for Human Rights, Dushanbe	Chairman
56	Surayo Saidova	NGO ASTI	Director
57	Shahodat Khaydarova		Project Expert
58	Khairiniso Yusufi	Parliament, Dushanbe	Chairwoman of the Parliamentarian Committee on Population and Development
59	Niso Jumahonzoda	CR Office, Shohmansur District, Vahdat city	Head of Civil Registration Office

60	Kulov Abduvali Nabievich	Statistic Agency, Dushanbe	Head of the Department of Demographic Statistics
61	Akhliiddin Khuseyzoda	Bohtar city	The Head of Community Leaders Group/ Leading Specialist of the Social Protection Department
62	Gafurov Ashurbek		Community Leader/ Chairman of Mahalla/ religious leader
63	Zairova Zarina		Community Leader/ Housewife
64	Sharipova Jamila		Community Leader/ Pensioner
65	Alamov Samariddin		Community Leader/ Entrepreneur
66	Sayfov Abdulfayz		
67	Radjabova Rafoat		Community Leader/ Housewife
68	Majidova Gulbahor		Community Leader/ Pensioner
69	Gurgalieva Gulru		
70	Jonova Surayo		Community Leader/ Chairman of the Mahalla Women Council
71	Jonova Dilorom		Community Leader/ Entrepreneur
72	Sabohat Miralizoda	Civil Registration Office, Bohtar	Specialist
73	Dilorom Haidarova	NGO "Gender and Development", Bohtar	Project Coordinator
74	Shamigul Aminova		Communication Specialist/ Journalist/ Psycholog
75	Zebo Sharifova		Monitoring & Evaluation Specialist
76	Sabohat Mirzomurodova	Bohtar city	Beneficiary/ Mother of two disabled children
77	Firuz Karimova		Beneficiary/ Mother of eight children
78	Muso Kholov		Beneficiary/ Pensioner
79	Amon Davlatov		
80	Sirojiddin Safarov		
81	Firuz Turaeva		Beneficiary/ Housewife
82	Tojinniso Boboyorova		
83	Mehriniso Barotova		
84	Safia Barotova		
85	Mushkilniso Sharipova		Beneficiary/ Mother of 8 months child
86	Mavliuda Nozimova		
87	Moshonvi Zardakova		Beneficiary
88	Sherzoda L. T.	Civil Registration MoJ Working group	Member of the Working group/ Regional CR Office
89	Savdullozoda M. S.		
90	Dostizoda S. F.		

91	Zuleahonzada N. I.		
92	Dadabaeva N. M.		
93	Kurbonzoda Sh. I.		
94	Lizomi Maksud		MoJ, Head of CR Administration Department
95	Ismatova Z.		Member of the Working group/ Regional CR Office
96	Nazifov H.		
97	Samadzoda I. A.		Deputy Head UAGS

## ANNEX 5: Term of References

### UNITED NATIONS DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME

<b>Country:</b>	Tajikistan
<b>Title of the Assignment:</b>	International Project Evaluation Expert
<b>Description of Assignment:</b>	Final project evaluation of the “Support to Civil Registration System Reform in Tajikistan” project
<b>Project title:</b>	Support to Civil Registration System Reform in Tajikistan
<b>Period of assignment/services:</b>	25 working days over a period of 60 calendar days (January 2019 – March 2019)
<b>Duty station:</b>	Home based with 10 days mission to Dushanbe, and possible travels to regions Tajikistan.
<b>Type:</b>	Individual Contract (IC)

## INTRODUCTION

### Project background

**Project description.** The project has been implemented since January 2016 and shall complete in December 2023 in two phases. The Phase I of the project covers the period of Jan 2016 to Dec 2018. The “**Support to Civil Registration System Reform in Tajikistan**” project builds on the outcomes of the Functional Review of Civil Registration Offices initiated by UNDP Tajikistan in 2014 under the ongoing ‘Access to Justice in Tajikistan’ project funded by SDC, and also based on extensive consultations with the state institutions at the national and local levels, UN Agencies, international and local NGOs, as well as the population. The project is in line with the Judicial and Legal Reform Programme of the Government of Tajikistan (2015-2017) and directly contributes to implementation of the ongoing reform of civil registration offices (ZAGS).

### The overall goal of the project:

*Women’s, men’s and children’s human rights (civil, social, political and economic) are better protected by strengthened provision of civil registration services and by increased public access to the system.*

The Project has 2 identified Outcomes that together will produce the goal:

**Outcome 1:** The reformed civil registry system of Tajikistan is effectively managed and provides quality and affordable services to the population and qualitative vital statistical data for the State.

**Outcome 2:** The population of Tajikistan know how to and timely have their vital events recorded in the civil registry system.

Outcome 1 intervenes at the national, regional and local level on the supply side, whereas Outcome 2 intervenes at the national, regional and local level on the demand side.

**Output 1: Legislative framework for civil registration is compliant with international best practices**

Output 1 is focused on analysing, amending and harmonising the existing legislation relating to civil registration in Tajikistan in line with international standards. Activities under this output included legislative analysis and recommendations, support to the development of instructions (by-laws) for legislation implementation, support to the development of an Action Plan and Budget of the National ZAGS Reform Programme, facilitating Working Groups and public hearings, as well as lobbying and advocacy, through the provision of expert support.

**Output 2: New internal regulations defining roles, responsibilities and processes are applied by civil registry offices and jamoats**

Output 2 is centred on the simplification and standardisation of business processes. Decisions were made on how best to provide this support after undertaking an analysis of the overall needs of the civil registry system. Various options were analysed as part of the simplification and standardisation process. For example, support was provided for the development of a new organisational structure for the civil registry system. The Government of Tajikistan was assisted by the Project to develop internal rules and regulations on civil registration reform consistent with national legislation. Additionally, equipment was provided to selected offices to enhance their service provision to the population. The project also reviewed existing funding mechanisms of the civil registry system with a view to enhancing the efficiency of budgetary spending.

**Output 3: Civil registry offices and jamoat staff have enhanced capacities to provide quality services to the population**

The development of the capacities of ZAGS and jamoats is crucial for an efficient civil registry service provision to the population of Tajikistan. Under output 3, the project supported the government in strengthening its training programme for ZAGS and jamoats through undertaking a capacity needs assessment, training of trainers, designing an appropriate training programme based on the assessment, developing and distributing manuals etc. The project also supported the development of a performance monitoring and evaluation system for ZAGS and jamoats. While doing so, the project worked closely with the Institute of Advanced Legal Education.

**Output 4: Civil registration and archiving of data is managed through an electronic system**

The activities under this output were informed by the comprehensive feasibility study which was undertaken in 2017 to assess the feasibility of introducing an electronic system of registration and digitalised archives to Tajikistan. The Feasibility Study also assessed the database developed under the EU Project and provided recommendations on how the system can be upgraded or was otherwise complementary. During 2016-2017, when there was a



break in implementation of the EU project, the Project provided basic IT support to maintain the parameters of the EU system, to ensure that it was not “lost” during this period.

**Output 5: Ministry of Justice makes use of new communication strategies to proactively incentivise the population to register their vital acts**

Output 5 was led by the Ministry of Justice, who took a more proactive stance in reaching out to the population through the development of innovative communication tools and undertaking mass media campaigns to increase the knowledge of the population and encourage them to register their civil acts.

The Ministry intended to develop a coherent, comprehensive and inclusive strategy for communication. The project provides technical assistance to support the MoJ’s work in this direction.

**Output 6: Outreach awareness rising campaigns by selected civil society organisations complement the Ministry of Justice communication strategies**

To complement the activities being undertaken by the government under Output 5 in incentivising the population to register their civil acts, civil society organisations were selected to develop campaigns to reach the population, including certain vulnerable groups such as women and children, persons with disabilities and minorities. The project provided support to these CSOs to conduct their campaigns, which aimed to increase public awareness of the population of Tajikistan about the needs and benefits of civil registration. While the government will create its own communication strategy, as detailed under Output 5, civil society complements the activities of the government, based on their ability to reach the communities and target groups in different regions of the country. The messages of the civil society outreach campaigns will align with the messages of the government’s communication strategy so that all messages are coherent.

**Geographic location.** The project operates countrywide but with a focus on rural and remote, yet populated areas, where it has been identified that the problems related to the civil registry system (both undocumented people and poor service provision) are highest.

**Partnerships.** The project is implemented by UNDP in close cooperation with the **Ministry of Justice**. The project works with different actors at different levels to make civil registry institutions and mechanisms more responsive to the population’s needs and more functional, by developing capacities among the relevant institutions and stakeholders and by simplifying and standardization the processes. This includes more refined capacity development approaches and creating strategic partnerships with other institutions, such as jamoat bodies, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Health and Social Protection, and the Ministry of Interior. The project adopts a human rights-based approach and works on both the supply and demand side of civil registration service provision enabling each side to substantively contribute to implementation of the civil registration reform process. Establishing partnerships and introducing relevant IT solutions are the important features of a successful civil registration reform.

The overall project implementation is co-funded by SDC, who were also a key partner in the project’s design and steering over time. Two other project implementing partners were identified early in the development of the Project. A key partnership was created with a) UNFPA who already had established relationships with the Agency on Statistics under the President of the Republic of Tajikistan, and b) UN Women who had established relations with

CSOs and the Committee of Women and Family Affairs. There is a contractual relationship between UNDP as the lead implementing partner and UNFPA and UN Women.

During the implementation of the on-going Access to Justice Project (A2J), UNDP established a good partnership with the Ministry of Justice including the civil registry institutions under the auspices of the Ministry. The project subsequently created linkages, synergies, learned lessons, and substantively built on the results of the A2J project. UNDP also has a functional partnership with Helvetas in the Access to Justice Project, also funded by SDC.

Other secondary partnerships were established with relevant state institutions including the Agency on Statistics under the President of the Republic of Tajikistan, the Ministry of Health and Social Protection, The Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and The Ministry of Interior yet the level of cooperation is still unknown due to their limited participation in the consultation process during the design of the project. Partnerships with the Committee of Women and Family Affairs and its subordinated structures were brought into the project through UN Women where CSOs specifically focusing on the interests of women were consulted on a wide range of legislative reforms.

A partnership with the Institute for Advanced Legal Education was developed as the main provider of training for ZAGS and jamoats with strong interest being demonstrated in this regard.

The project “Support to Civil Registration System Reform in Tajikistan” addresses these public service needs and supports the Government of Tajikistan in implementing the civil registry system reforms. The project supports the government in reforming the civil registry system by improving its functioning nationwide and making it responsive to the needs of the population, especially the most vulnerable groups. Exclusive IT products have been developed in the civil registration system that should ease up the registration process for the population but also allow for a more accurate data keeping.

## **B. PROJECT EVALUATION**

### **Evaluation Purpose**

The final project evaluation is being conducted to identify potential project implementation issues, assess progress towards the achievement of objectives, relevance and performance of the project as compared to the project document, identify and document lessons learned (including lessons that might improve design and implementation of the ongoing and other UNDP projects as well), and to make recommendations regarding specific actions that might be taken to improve the project concept over the next phase. The project evaluation is expected to serve as a means of validating or filling the gaps in the initial assessment of relevance, effectiveness and efficiency obtained from monitoring. The project evaluation provides the opportunity to assess project’s success or failure and prompt necessary adjustments.

### **Objectives and scope of the evaluation**

#### ***Main objectives of the project evaluation are:***

- Assess whether the project achieve or did not achieve outcomes and outputs stipulated in the Project Document and Results Framework as compared to the results of the Baseline Study;
- Identify factors that have contributed to achieving or not achieving project results;

- Identify to what extent the project has so far contributed to the implementation of the ongoing reform of civil registration offices (ZAGS);
- Analyse the effectiveness of the existing partnerships established/maintained with the Government, civil society, UN Agencies, donors and other key stakeholders. Identify lessons learnt, effectiveness of project partnerships, and provide recommendations for further implementation pathways to inform the Project's strategic vision for 2019 – 2023;
- Identify entry points for design and defining key issues to be addressed in Phase II of the project (2019 - 2023);
- Identify potential scaling up pathways, commitment to project goals, and adherence to delivering as One UN principles;
- Provide recommendations for more effective resource mobilization;
- Assesses to what extent the project has addressed gender considerations and promoted gender equality throughout its implementation.

### Evaluation product/Deliverables

The following evaluation products are expected to be produced:

- 1) **An Inception Report<sup>66</sup>** that should clearly articulate the evaluators' understanding of what is being evaluated and why. It should also show how each evaluation question will be answered by way of: proposed methods, proposed sources of data and data collection procedures. The inception report should include a proposed schedule of tasks, activities and deliverables, designating a team member with the lead responsibility for each task or product;
- 2) **Draft evaluation report** that should **meet quality standards** and provide practical, feasible and time-bound **recommendations** supported by robust evidentiary basis and linked to the findings and conclusions around key questions addressed by the evaluation;
- 3) **Final evaluation report including annexes as appropriate<sup>67</sup>.**

**Important note.** Evaluations in UNDP should be conducted in accordance with the principles outlined in the UNEG 'Ethical Guidelines for Evaluation' and should describe critical issues evaluators must address in the design and implementation of the evaluation, including evaluation ethics and procedures to safeguard the rights and confidentiality of information providers, for example: measures to ensure compliance with legal codes governing areas such as provisions to collect and report data, particularly permissions needed to interview or obtain information about children and young people; provisions to store and maintain security of collected information; and protocols to ensure anonymity and confidentiality.

In assessing **relevance** of the project, the following types of questions may be asked:

- To what extent is project timely and relevant to the national context in Tajikistan? To what extent is the project in line with national priorities, UNDP's mandate, and the requirements of targeted women and men?
- To what extent were the selected methods of delivery and approaches relevant and adequate for the successful implementation of the reform?

<sup>66</sup> to be prepared before going into the full-fledged data collection exercise

<sup>67</sup> Sample of the Evaluation report is available in [Annex 3](#)

In assessing **effectiveness**, the following types of questions may be asked:

- To what extent have outcomes been achieved or has progress been made towards their achievement? If not, what were the key obstacles?
- How have corresponding outputs delivered by UNDP affected the outcomes, and in what ways have they not been effective?
- What was the comparative advantage of the project partners engaged in the project implementation?
- What has been the contribution of partners and other organizations to the outcome, and how effective have UNDP partnerships been in contributing to achieving the outcome?
- Did the project work with/address the right partners (Government, civil society, int. donors) while implementing the project objectives?
- To what extent did the achieved outcomes benefit women and men equally?

In addressing **efficiency**, the following types of questions may be asked:

- To what extent has the project been implemented in an economic and efficient manner (use of resources and time)?
- Was the project management efficient? How was monitoring and steering used for more efficient project implementation? What should be improved in the future?

In addressing **sustainability**, the following types of questions may be asked:

- To what extent did the main partner (Ministry of Justice) own the project results and to what extent it is able to sustain them? What indications are there that the outcomes will be sustained, e.g., through requisite capacities (systems, finances, structures, staff, etc.)?
- To what extent has a sustainability strategy, including capacity development of key national stake-holders, been developed or implemented? To what extent are policy and regulatory frameworks in place that will support the continuation of benefits?

Planning of a next phase:

- What are the key lessons learnt that might feed into designing of the next phase of the project?
- What deviations may have the project idea if the additional funds (for archive digitalization) are not available?

### **Organizations recommended for interviews, focus-groups and meetings etc<sup>68</sup>.**

*Donor:*

- SDC – through briefing and debriefing meetings at the beginning and the end of the PE exercise.

*Government:*

- Executive Office of the President of the Republic of Tajikistan
- Ministry of Justice of the Republic of Tajikistan
- Department of Civil Registration under MoJ
- The Institute of Advanced Legal Education under MoJ
- Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Tajikistan
- Ministry of Health and Social Protection of Population of the Republic of Tajikistan
- Agency on Statistics under the President of the Republic of Tajikistan
- Agency on Social Insurance and Pension under the Government of the Republic of Tajikistan

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<sup>68</sup> Type of research – interview or focus-group etc. will be depending on methodology of evaluation

#### *UN agencies:*

- UNDP Country Office in Tajikistan
- UNDP programme “Access to Justice and Rule of Law”
- UNFPA in Tajikistan
- UN Women in Tajikistan
- UNHCR in Tajikistan
- UNICEF in Tajikistan
- UNDP Istanbul Regional Hub

#### *CSO and companies:*

- EPOS Health Management GmbH
- Public Organization “ASTI”
- Public Organization “Peshsaf” (optional)
- Public Organization “Gender and Development”
- Centre for Sociological Researches “Zerkalo”

#### *Other agencies*

- Development Coordination Council working group donors with an interest in e-governance and public administration reform.

#### **Documents to be reviewed**

Some of the background documents to be reviewed as part of the final project evaluation are as follows<sup>69</sup>

- United Nations Development Assistance Framework 2016 - 2020
- Country Programme Document (CPD) 2016 - 2020
- UNDP Strategic Plan 2014-2017
- UNDP Strategic Plan 2018-2021
- Judicial and Legal Reform Programme (2012-2014; 2015-2017)
- Civil Registration Offices Reform Programme (2014 - 2019)
- Project Document(s)
- Project Progress Reports
- Baseline study conducted within the project 2016
- Feasibility studies conducted within the project 2016-2017
- Legislation of the Republic of Tajikistan on CRVS
- Demographic and Health Survey 2012 and 2017
- Other relevant documents and evaluation reports;

#### **Required competencies:**

- University degree in social sciences, management and other related areas;
- At least 10 years of technical background in good governance, public administration, and/or local development issues;
- Experience and expertise in project design, management, and monitoring and evaluation;
- At least 5 years of proven experience in evaluating programmes/projects; Experience in evaluating programmes/projects in public administration related fields is a strong advantage;
- Knowledge of UNDP procedures and programme implementation strategies will be desirable;
- Good report writing skills, advanced computer literacy and the ability to effectively communicate and work with high-level government officials;
- Ability to make recommendations focused on results and impact, with a strong understanding of value for money concepts;
- Knowledge of CIS context, preferably Central Asia region; Experience in Tajikistan is desirable.
- Excellent knowledge of English with proven writing skills; knowledge of the Russian language would be an asset.

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<sup>69</sup> Final list of references and sources for desk research will be agreed and stipulated in Inception Report.

