

UNDP-GEF TE Report Audit Trail

To the comments received on (7, 28 August and 15 September 2020) from the Terminal Evaluation of (Vietnam POPs and Sound Harmful Chemicals Management) (UNDP Project ID-PIMS 5154

The following comments were provided in track changes to the draft Terminal Evaluation report; they are referenced by the institution (“Author” column) and track change comment number (“#” column):

Author	#	Para No./ comment location	Comment/Feedback on the draft TE report	TE team response and actions are taken
VEA	1	Acknowledgement	Pls change to PMU	Have not been incorporated as PMU is different from the PB.
VEA	2	Acknowledgement	Pls change to PMU	Incorporated. PMU is replacing PMU and PCU.
VEA	3	1.4 Summary of conclusions, recommendations, and lessons learned	Suggest revising Recommendation 6 to: Encourage central and local state management agencies to continue disseminating, guiding and using project documents and products in community awareness-raising and capacity building activities (including young people and women)	Recommendation #6 was rephrased but the suggestion provided was not used. A couple of words were added to make the recommendation clearer.
VEA	4	3.1 Project design	The Project is under GEF5 cycle.	Noted but nothing to incorporate as the TE should make the linkages with other GEF cycles.
UNDP	5	3.1.1	Can we make it like an “a significant changes” instead of few changes as stated in IR? I just think the word “problem” might a bit hard, as some changes are to add a new thing compare to original.	The word “problem” was modified to “a big issue”.
UNDP	6	3.1.1	Can we highlights this as a great compliement as it is not in the original design, but was later implemented successfully.	Not incorporated here as irrelevant to the discussion.
UNDP	7	3.1.1	I suppose many actions have been taken after the MTR and recommendation from the MTR. I would suggest to double check with Project team on this point.	Incorporate based on the new set of evidence shared by UNDP CO.
UNDP	8	3.1.2	This could be a bit too strong assessment?	The word “correctly” was changed to “fully”.
UNDP	9	3.1.2	Can we have a look at the annual report. Actually, monitoring and follow up with risk assessment at QPR seems not very realistic; at annual level would be more practical.	Noted but nothing to incorporate.
PMU	10	3.1.2	The risk assessment and mitigation measures were included and reflected in PIRs	Noted. Nothing to incorporate as risks and issues should be quarterly updated.

UNDP	11	3.1.4	Maybe we could ask Project Team to provide further evidence. As from CO oversight, this Project has been quite successful in engaging stakeholders from ministries, local level and private sectors, which TE identified in later paragraphs.	Noted. TE team has asked the team more than one time.
UNDP	12	3.1.4	Same as again, maybe information provision from the Project Team to TE team was not good enough.	Noted. TE team has asked the team more than one time.
UNDP	13	3.1.4	This was true at the beginning phase when VEA and Vinachemia were joint implemented a project for the first time. But it had been improved later, and CO would like to take this as a good practice for next project modality. So, can you elaborate more and give some positive points for this coordination.	Incorporated.
UNDP/ Consultant	14	3.1.4	I would not agree on this. The partnership with the provinces and some industries was very high, otherwise some outcomes (for instance the monitoring of industrial facilities or the access to POP contaminated sites) would not have been possible. The limited cooperation between MOIT and MONRE could be a fact, however this is a structural problem of the country rather than a project failure. This is indeed a lesson to be learnt for the implementation of future projects.	Incorporated.
PMU	15	3.1.4	VEA and VINACHEMIA signed an agreement on responsibility of the two parties in the implementation of the project on 17 October 2016, which was a landmark of their partnership in the project.	Based on new pieces of evidence shared, the text was updated.
PMU	16	3.1.4	Please revise this paragraph to “the project has achieved effective partnerships with relevant stakeholders.” Indeed, the effective partnerships have contributed significantly to the project’s implementation and success.	Not incorporated. The project team cannot intervene in the rating/assessment.
UNDP	17	3.1.8	This diversified participants with annual meeting chaired by Vice Minister is a great point to support the stakeholder participation in this project. I just	Noted.

			want to come back to the previous point.	
UNDP/ consultant	18	3.1.8	This is quite surprising considered that we had a long interview. In addition to the visiting specialist, I was recruited under 2 contracts lasting around one year, of which several months spent in Vietnam. Bowderwijn was also participating intensively in the project. I think the role of international team is largely underestimated here.	Noted but irrelevant.
UNDP	19	3.1.8	Great finding. It's was true for the beginning phase, but it's good to see the ownership of both MONRE and MOIT in this project and the situation got much better at later phase, and this could marked a successful implementation of a project by two agencies.	Incorporated. The text was added to update the status of cooperation.
PMU	20	3.1.8	These staff are not PMU members and the project accountant is also full-time staff.	PMU replaced by the project management team.
PMU	21	3.1.8	The Project was endorsed in January 2016 The Inception workshop was held in April 2016 The Inception report submitted in July 2016, and approved in Oct 2016	Dates are noted. Nothing to incorporate in this sub-section.
UNDP	22	3.2.1	End of November to be corrected to Beginning of October	Incorporated
VEA	23	3.2.1	No need to include those sectors. PSC was to provide strategic decisions and management guidance to the Project management Unit (PMU) thus can not be NGOs, communities and private sector. Those group participate into the project as participants in consultant workshop/ technical meeting ... (if needed)	Incorporated. The text was updated.
PMU	24	3.2.1	The major adaptive management measures proposed in the PSC meeting, see PSC meeting minutes	Noted.
VEA	25	3.2.1	This is not the reason leading to the delay of implementation activities	Incorporated. The text was updated.
VEA	26	3.2.1	The cooperation and partnerships with industries and private sector were very good, therefore the project was able to partner with hundreds of enterprises, that are willing to	Not incorporated. The issue is on the quality of the partnership rather than the quantity.

			cooperate and share data on emission release. Without this good partnership, the pilot PRTR in Binh Duong would not have been successful.	
VEA	27	3.2.3	The national consultant of the TE team could have reviewed the documents that are available in Vietnamese, this should have been discussed and assigned between members of the TE team.	Noted.
UNDP	28	3.2.3	All actions were completed as Vinh showed and confirmed in the virtual meeting on 20 of August. Pls. revise this sentence	The text was updated based on new pieces of evidence shared.
VEA	29	3.2.4	We have all documents/ correspondence from relevant agencies regarding co-financing	Based on new documents shared after the submission of the draft TE report, the section was updated.
UNDP	30	3.2.5	Beside the project fund spend for M&E, the government also has its own M&E, during the project implementation, there has been one state audit, every 6-month checking the balance of the MONRE and VEA. Funding for these gov' M&E comes from the budget for the professional tasks of MONRE	Based on new documents shared, the text was updated.
VEA	31	3.2.5	See actual fund spent on M&E in the file named "actual fund for M&E" in shared google drive link	The text was updated based on new info provided after submitting the draft TE report
VEA	32	3.2.5	UNDP CO does not participate in preparation off the Project APRs	Noted but not incorporated. UNDP CO role is to review and approve the APR.
VEA	33	3.2.5	The frequency of PSC meetings follow the approved operating regulation which regulated that PSC's members meet once a year. PSC only provide instruction to PMU, not approval.	Noted.
VEA	34	3.2.5	Pls revise this sentence. All MTR recommendations were achieved.	Based on new documents shared, the text was updated.
VEA	35	3.2.5	Not the same date, the final draft of IR was submitted in July 2016	Noted and the date was added to the report.
VEA	36	3.2.5	Pls provide clearer explanation why and on what ground was this statement made? Inception phase has reviewed and updated legal status and the needs at the time of inception, for example: added new activities in Quang Binh, updated documents, prepared annual workplan . This was the basis for implementing the project in the following years	Not incorporated as the text is self-explanatory.
UNDP	37	3.2.5	We have 3 kinds of reports, 2 follow the required standard	Not incorporated as irrelevant.

			formats of UNDP/GEF, 1 follow the standard Govt's format	
VEA	38	3.2.5	The shared management response was develop right after MTR, then UNDP updated from UNDP side, The PMU follow and implement all recommended activities	Noted but nothing to incorporate.
VEA	39	3.2.5	The best way is the draft PTR made during the last three months, the final one made when the project completely finished	A note from the project team. Nothing to incorporate.
VEA	40	3.2.6	It is clear that the Closing WS is the terminal review meeting. The project also have a phase (6 months from end of July) to close the project and hand over the deliverables A consultative workshop was also held earlier on the project results. This was an important workshop to technically review project results/ deliverables before the closing workshop and to once again display project results.	Not incorporated. A closing workshop is a technical activity while the terminal review meeting is a strategic planning event. It is mainly targeting the PSC and project team to review all aspects related to the project including the sustainability plan and the exit strategy.
PMU	41	3.2.6	Maybe better to remove "feels" as based on the fact and figures, the Project has contributed significantly.	Irrelevant. Not incorporated.
PMU	42	3.2.6	MTR recommendation were followed and implemented. The Management response was developed right after the MTR report was available, then it was updated by UNDP system Co-financing has met target.	Incorporated.
PMU	43	3.2.6	It is not 16 months delay. From ProDoc approval (1/2016) to IW (4/2016) was only 4 months	Not incorporated. Review section 1 of the report.
VEA	44	3.2.6	No ground for this conclusion	Not incorporated as more than 3 beneficiaries reported communication problems with the project team mainly the Project manager. The same issue faced the TE international consultant, who struggled to get access to data due to the project manager attitude and poor communication skills.
VEA	45	3.2.6	It is not responsible of PSC In the operation regulation of pSC, PSC was responsible for instruction of project implementation	Not incorporated as it is a false statement. According to the ProDoc. Page 85: "The Project Steering Committee (PSC) will have oversight of the Project Management Unit (PMU). The PSC will consist of a Chairperson (MONRE Vice Minister); with PSC members from MOIT, UNDP Viet Nam, MARD, MOH. The primary

				functions of the PSC will be to provide the necessary direction that allows the Project to function and achieve its policy and technical objectives, and to approve the annual Project plans and M&E reports”.
PMU	46		Not all decisions are approved at 3 different levels at MONRE. Some decisions are approved by VEA or PMU	Noted and incorporated.
UNDP	47	3.3.1	Please re-check this one, maybe a not clear in presentation and documentation. Actually, the Project has been successful in eliminating 50 tons of POP waste and safeguarded 280 tons of contaminated soils, which is exceeding the target.	No new pieces of evidence shared on the achievement of the target. The participation of events does not mean “consolidated participation”.
VINACHEMIA	48	3.3.1	After the end of the Project, MOIT had attended ICCM/SAICM to presentate and discuss on chemical management in the events. These contents include GHS implementation in Vietnam, chemical risk assessment, implementing Mercury Convention that has been obtained from ourcome of this project. A list of MOIT' working trips to participate ICCM/SAICM and other related workshop/conference is also attached file.	Noted but nothing to incorporate
VINACHEMIA	49	3.3.1	This sentence needs to be written clearly as explained above. That could be counted as co-financing.	The sentence was rephrased but nothing changed in terms of content. This section is about technical work done by the project and is not on co-financing.
UNDP	50	4.2	Great point. Actually, can we aim to get this at closing workshop to be held on 29 th July?	Noted
UNDP	51	4.2	To be introduced and shared at closing workshop	Noted
UNDP	52	Summary of conclusions	Please help to explain this rating. I thought it has to be consistent with the one in the later paragraph?	It is self-explanatory. This rating here is for the project's relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, monitoring and evaluation, replicability, and factors affecting project performance. This was rated as moderately satisfactory. However, the overall rating for the project on the achievement of results is Satisfactory.
UNDP	53	Summary of conclusions	There was a workshop to review the project deliverables in June, which many stakeholders showed up. Later, the PMU organized a closing workshop with all stakeholders and shared	This recommendation is concerning the project exit strategy and not organizing a workshop. No evidence shared with the TE team concerning the project's exit strategy.

			all project materials. Should we consider it as this is done?	
BRH	54	2.7	if this delay was due to COVID, request to add “due to COVID-19 situation”.	Incorporated.
BRH	55	2.7	These reports could be reviewed by the national consultant working as an evaluation team, the exact purpose of such a joint international and national consultant team	Noted. Nothing to incorporate. The national consultant did review all documents, but still it was a constraint for the IC to understand the progress in detail as desired.
PMU	56	3.1	Can you elaborate more on this. Did you mean three years is a short time for achieving the many targets? Thank you.	Sentenced was clarified.
UNDP	57	3.1.1	Please re-consider this statement. The Project has continue lessons and experience learnt from previous projects, especially GEF/UNDP POP Pesticides project.	Irrelevant comment. Not incorporated. This section covers the “Lessons from other relevant projects incorporated into the project design”. No evidence found in the ProDoc indicated that the project design benefited from lessons learned from other relevant projects.
PMU	58	3.1.4	Can you update as follow: 747, enterprises participated in project activities, including 400 in Binh Duong took part in the survey on pops emission (samples from 20 ofwhich were taken for analysis of pops); 73 took part in Hg emission survey (samples from 15 of which were taken for analysis of Hg); 39 took part in survey on Hg in products;230 in GHS survey and 5 in piloting new policies developed by the project.	No. Information provided in the report was extracted from the Project PIR. The new data provided were not supported by evidence. Hence, the IE team cannot update the text. However, the new figures shared by the PMU were added as a footnote.
PMU	59	3.1.8	PMU: Can you update this statement as in ProDoc Page 85: The primary functions of the PSC will be to provide the necessary direction that allows the Project to function and achieve its policy and technical objectives, and to approve the annual Project plans and M&E reports” In fact, VEA is the Project Owner takes the role of supervision and monitoring, while PSC provides direction/orientation.	Irrelevant comment. There is no need to copy the text from the ProDoc.

UNDP	60	3.2.1	Though there are some delay at the beginning, many adaptive measures have been taken later on. This results in smooth and timely implementation of the project, come up with substantial results and achievements. Please see project deliverables and this was strongly expressed by stakeholders at the closing workshop, which was joined by local TE member. So, kindly re-consider this statement.	Not addressed. No evidence shared.
BRH	61	3.2.2	This should be the national consultant to do. That is the role of a national consultant. Please explain.	Irrelevant comment. What is the role of the national consultant in strengthening the partnerships with industries?!
BRH UNDP CO	62	3.2.4	Since I joined the team in March 2019, project budget revision/reallocations were provided with justifications. Please check with the PMU and the UNDP CO. Dear Amal, all justification on budget reallocation has been there. I would happy to ask Thao to provide.	Incorporated after receiving the needed clarifications.
PMU	63	3.2.5	As explained above, PSC tends to provide direction orientation, while monitoring and supervision goes to the Project owner, which is VEA. VEA and its supporting Department such as International Cooperation Department, Planning and Finance Department etc.	Noted but nothing to incorporate.
UNDP	64	3.2.5	Well, the new outcome added was kind of duplication, not adding the new thing with new indicator and target. So, you may revise this statement. Tks	The text was updated although no info is provided in the project reports on this outcome. The fact that the project had 3 different log-frames indicates a weakness in the M&E cycle.
BRH	65	3.2.5	The description of the previous sentence about activities at the IW phase does not justify the conclusion of "substantial weakness" (it is a nature activities of the IW process). It needs a more detailed description of the shortcomings of the IW and why these activities lead to the conclusion of "substantial weakness"	Noted and incorporated. More details were provided to justify the conclusion.

BRH and UNDP CO	66	3.2.5	<p>This is not agreeable, as the PIR is a unique report that we submit to the GEF Secretariat, while APR is used to report the project's progress and is an internal reference, within UNDP.</p>	<p>This is correct but many UNDP/GEF projects are using combined PIR/APR to facilitate the project's reporting. This is also indicated in this <u>ProDoc, page 89</u>. Please note the text excerpted from the ProDoc:</p> <p><i>“Annual Project Review /Project Implementation Reports (APR/PIR): APRs/PIRs are key reports prepared to monitor progress since project start and in particular for the previous reporting period (30 June to 1 July). The APR/PIR combines both UNDP and GEF reporting requirements, and includes, but is not limited to, reporting on the following:</i></p> <p><i>Progress made toward project objective and project outcomes, each with indicators, baseline data and end-of-project targets (cumulative); Project outputs delivered per project outcome (annual); Lesson learned/good practice; AWP and other expenditure reports; Risk and adaptive management; ATLAS QPR; and, Portfolio level indicators (i.e. GEF focal area tracking tools) that are used by most focal areas on an annual basis.”</i></p>
	67		<p>Chi Han, may you have a comment to this finding? I joined UNDP lately, therefore might have not enough information on if we have to update risk logs and risk mitigation measures quarterly.</p> <p>Dear Vinh oi, as far as I understand, like other projects, we do regular risks monitoring for POPs, including quarterly review (during quarterly progress reports and reviews between UNDP and PMU) and annual review (reflected in annual progress review reports and PSC meetings). Could you please check with the PMU on the evidences for these?</p> <p>Dear Amal, from discussion with Han UNDP M&E focal point, it is noted that the UNDP did implement M&E through quarter progress report, in which mentioned pending issue, reason for adjustment, emerging issues and recommendations.</p>	<p>Noted but not incorporated.</p> <p>The ProDoc clearly stated the project monitoring and reporting requirements.</p> <p>The review of the QPRs and APRs did not support the PMU and UNDP CO arguments.</p> <p>See the below paragraphs excerpted from the ProDoc, Page 89:</p> <p><i>“Based on the initial risk analysis submitted, <u>the risk log shall be regularly updated in ATLAS (if applicable otherwise outside ATLAS)</u>. Risks become critical when the impact and probability are high;</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Project Progress Reports (PPR) as generated in the Executive Snapshot and based on the information recorded in Atlas; and,</i> • <i>Other ATLAS logs that are used to monitor issues and lessons learned. The use of these functions is a key</i>

			Those are more specific things including risk (delay, slow, advance at very operational level), subsequently plan for next quarter is developed. Kindly refer to Project Reporting in the Drive. I would strongly request to revise this statement.	<i>indicator in the UNDP Executive Balanced Scorecard.”</i> <i>And</i> Annual Project Review /Project Implementation Reports (APR/PIR): APRs/PIRs are key reports prepared ..., and includes, but is not limited to, reporting on the following: <i>[... • Risk and adaptive management; • ATLAS QPR; and ...]</i>
PMU	68	3.2.6	Can you update: Vinachemia is responsible for Hg in product, while Hg in emission is responsibility of VEA.	Incorporated as a footnote
UNDP CO	69	3.3.1	Can you update this. The Project has cleaned up 51 tons of pure POP waste and confined 280 tons of contaminated soil. Please see outcome 3.3 below, and kindly request to update the assessment.	Text was updated.
UNDP CO	70	3.3.3	This seems to be a perception statement. It would be appreciated if more analysis is provided from the evaluation team (with evidence), so the readers can understand if the statement is appropriate.	Incorporated. Text was updated to explain the statement.