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***Promotion of climate change and disaster risk reduction solutions in the water and civil protection sectors for enhanced rural resilience***

***ADA Ref. No. 8364-00/2018***

***UNDP Project ID: 00111725***

**Final Evaluation, February - March 2022**

**Final Report**

25 March 2022

**Republic of Moldova**

**ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

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**DISCLAIMER**

This report is the work of independent consultants and does not necessarily represent the views, or policy, or intentions of the UNDP, ADA or other stakeholders referred to in this report.

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| **UNDP Evaluation Information** | | |
| **Project Title** | Promotion of climate change and disaster risk reduction solutions in the water and civil protection sectors for enhanced rural resilience, CC&DRR Project, Moldova | |
| **Type** | Final Project Evaluation | |
| **Period under evaluation** | **Start** | **End** |
| 1 December 2018 | 31 March 2022 |
| **Evaluators** | Mr. Peder Bisbjerg  International Consultant  [pedergregersbisbjerg@hotmail.com](mailto:pedergregersbisbjerg@hotmail.com) | Mr. Serghei Ostaf  National Consultant  [sostaf@gmail.com](mailto:sostaf@gmail.com) |
| **Evaluation dates** | **Start** | **End** |
| 1 February 2022 | 25 March 2022 |

# Table of Contents

Table of Contents 4

Acronyms and Abbreviations 5

1 Executive Summary 6

2 Introduction 9

2.1 Purpose of the Final Project Evaluation 9

2.2 Structure of this report 10

3 Background and Context Analysis 11

3.1 Background 11

3.2 Project Description 12

4 Evaluation Design and Approach 15

4.1 Methodological Approach 15

4.2 Data Collection and Analysis Tools 16

4.3 Limitations, Risks and Mitigation Measures 17

5 Findings 17

5.1 Relevance 18

5.2 Effectiveness 20

5.3 Efficiency 31

5.4 Sustainability 33

5.5 Crosscutting Issues 34

6 Conclusions 37

7 Recommendations 38

Annex A: Terms of Reference 40

Annex B. Evaluation Framework 48

Annex C: Evaluation Matrix 50

Annex D: Questions used in interviews 57

Annex E: List of persons met 59

Annex F: List of documents reviewed 62

Annex G: Signed UNEG Code of Conduct form 63

Annex H: Management Response Table 65

Annex I: Result Assessment Form 66

Annex J: Feedback Matrix 67

# Acronyms and Abbreviations

ADA Austrian Development Agency

ADC Austrian Development Cooperation

APA Republican Union of Agricultural Producers’ Associations

BCI Business Consulting Institute (Moldovan consulting company)

CBO Community-Based Organisations

CC&DRR Climate Change and Disaster Risk Reduction

CEDAW UN Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women

CEI Call for Expression of Interest

CALM Congress of Local Authorities in Moldova

CO Country Office

COVID-19 Coronavirus disease of 2019

CWG Community Working Groups

EGSIM Environmental, Gender and Social Impact Management

EGSS Environmental, Gender and Social Standards

EIARMSP Environmental Impact Assessment and Risk Management & Sustainability Plan

GDP Gross Domestic Product

GIES General Inspectorate for Emergency Situations

ha hectare (10,000 m2)

ICESCR UN International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights

LPA Local Public Authority

MoE Ministry of Environment

MDL Moldovan leu (1 USD = 18.5 MDL)

NDC Nationally Determined Contributions

NFFM National Farmers Federation Moldova

NGO Non-Governmental Organisation

PMU Project Management Unit

SDG Sustainable Development Goals

UNDP United Nations Development Programme.

UNEG United Nations Evaluation Group

UNFCCC United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change

USD United States Dollars

# Executive Summary

*Introduction*

This report is the final evaluation of the Project “*Promotion of climate change and disaster risk reduction solutions in the water and civil protection sectors for enhanced rural resilience”*. The project is financed by the Austrian Development Agency (ADA) with funds from Austrian Development Cooperation (ADC) and implemented by the United Nations Development Programme. The objective of this assignment was to conduct an evaluation of the overall project progress against the outcome, outputs and indicators of achievement as mandated by the project donor (ADA) with an emphasis on the coherence to the stated deliverables and whether these produced the intended impact. The evaluation was carried out following the guidelines of these two organisations.

*Background and Context Analysis*

The recipient country, Moldova, is very vulnerable to climate change, it is expected that the average temperature will increase with 2 to 3ºC by 2050. This will cause in more acute weather patterns in terms of more frequent droughts and more severe floods. These changing climatic conditions will impact agriculture and water resources. There will be insufficient availability of water during droughts and dry spells, while at the same time intensifying the flood risks due to heavy precipitation events/extreme storms and limited adaptation options in the respective sectors.

The project aims to mitigate the impact of climate change by strengthening local policies, capacities and infrastructure which enable climate and disaster resilient development at the community level. This is achieved by assisting five rural communities in, firstly, developing specific management plans to tackle droughts, floods and fires caused by rising global temperatures, and promoting climate-smart agriculture with improved water management. Secondly, to augment local emergency response through improved awareness, safety measures and firefighting posts.

The project was carried out from 1 December 2018 to 31 March 2022 by a Project Management Unit consisting of a Project Manager and a Project Associate based in the UNDP Country Office. Under the first output, the project provided training to local public authorities on tools and approaches to preparing for climate change. This coaching allowed the local authorities to an understanding of the future scenarios, as well as the risks and opportunities they present. The local authorities used this knowledge to develop and implement strategies to mitigate the impact of climate change by budgeting and planning for these risks. The project helped raise awareness amongst all stakeholders on improved agricultural practices, water management, and flood protection. A total of nine water storage basins were built in the five districts covered by the project, providing these with an increased water availability, both for farming and firefighting, as well as flood protection.

The second output saw the establishment of four community firefighting posts. These posts have been equipped with a fire truck, each has been staffed with 9 permanent employees, an intervention vehicle, and a large group of trained volunteers. The project also raised awareness within the communities regarding fire hazards and how to lessen these, and many vulnerable households were provided with fire alarms.

*Evaluation Design and Approach*

The evaluation adopted a participatory approach to ensure accountability, promote ownership, and arrive at comprehensive recommendations, engaging a wide and diverse range of stakeholders as described in Section 4 of this report. The Evaluation Team was in contact with all parties involved in Project, for reference, please see Annex E, encompassing donors, decision makers, those involved in project implementation process, beneficiaries, and participants in project activities. Overall, 58 stakeholders, including 30% women, representing local and district public authorities from all project sites; central authorities; community members; project experts; implementing partners; end-beneficiaries; and donors. To ensure that impartial conclusions and recommendations were made, the Evaluation Team used a broad range of sources and types of information to obtain reliable data and evidence, which was validated through triangulation.

The geographical coverage of the evaluation included: Hincesti, Ungheni, Cantemir, Leova and Criuleni districts.

The evaluation was done against the four (4) selected OECD/DAC Evaluation Criteria that establish the Relevance, Efficiency, Effectiveness, and Sustainability of the project.

In addition to assessing the relevance, effectiveness, efficiency and sustainability of the project, the evaluation determined the extent to which the project is contributing to address the cross-cutting issues of gender equality, environmental sustainability, human rights, and social standards.

The evaluation faced few limitations or constraints during the data collection phase. All stakeholders were prompt in providing information and willing to join meetings. The COVID-19 pandemic meant that some meetings were held remotely or outdoors, to ensure that there was no transmission of the virus.

*Findings Summary*

The Evaluation Team has found this to be a well-managed and successful project. The project is highly **relevant** to the priorities of the Government of Moldova, of ADA, and of UNDP. The project’s support in terms of climate change adaptation solutions in the water sector and emergency response directly contributes to improving the livelihoods of the population in the project areas. Moldova is exposed to an array of natural hazards; floods, droughts, and severe weather events are recurring threats, and their impact disproportionately affects the poor. Consequently, this project is highly relevant in that is mitigates the impact of floods, droughts, and severe weather.

The project implementation was **effective** and almost all project indicators were either met or exceeded. The original Project Document was comprehensive and well thought out, and all stakeholders can be commended all on the close and productive collaboration. The Evaluation Team does observe that the Project Document requires a co-contribution of 20% from the farmers that were to be recipients of water storage basins. The project stakeholders found that smallholder farmers, the intended beneficiaries of these basins, did not have access to the required financial resources. Instead, the water storage basins were all established for medium and large agricultural farmers, some with horizontal integrated business with agricultural products fabrication and retail. Any future project will require a different strategy, so that the water management systems benefit smallholder farmers.

The project was implemented in a very **efficient** manner, despite the COVID-19 pandemic and frequent replacements of both the Project Manager and the Project Associate. All project activities were completed successfully, with the local communities developing comprehensive climate and risk management plans, the successful establishment of firefighting posts and water supply basins, accompanied by good quality training and awareness raising activities for the rural populations. The pandemic did somewhat delay the project implementation, so a four-month no-cost extension was necessary to ensure that all planned activities were completed in a satisfactory manner.

The targeted communities are poor, and as the project design correctly highlighted, this is a considerable challenge to the **sustainable** implementation of the project strategy. The village clusters involved in project implementation had difficulties identifying the necessary financial resources required to cover their contribution to the activities but managed. The local authorities were highly motivated, managed to pay their contributions to the project, and were closely involved in its execution. Today, they are actively implementing the management plans they developed in cooperation with the project to tackle climate change and reduce disaster risk.

The four firefighting posts established by the project are now part of the GIES emergency response network and hence fully integrated into the national services. The local authorities anticipate that the firefighting posts will greatly decrease the pay-outs they must make to compensate for damage caused by fires, thereby allowing them to operate and maintain the fire stations at less costs than those previously incurred by disbursing reparations to citizens for fire losses. The water storage basins are beneficial to the recipients and improves their economic security, ensuring that they have sufficient resources to maintain their water management structures.

Both the ADA and UNDP place a high priority on **crosscutting issues**, such as gender equality, human rights, social concerns, and protection of the environment, in all their projects. Through all project phases, close attention was paid to these issues and both organisations, as well as the PMU, to ensure that the project safeguarded the interests of the most vulnerable, receive input from all stakeholders, and preserved the ecosystem.

Conclusions and lesson learnt

This is a project that has been both well designed and executed. The project has been very resilient, weathering both a high turnover within the PMU staffing, as well as two years where the COVID-19 pandemic restricted travel and meetings, caused price increases due to supply chain issues, and hindered construction work. This reflects well on the project management, and especially the Project Board, which ensured the smooth and successful implementation of the project. Hence, it can be concluded that the project management structure used on ADA-UNDP projects in Moldova is robust and well-adapted.

The project’s only weakness was that smallholder farmers were found to be unable to co-finance their share of water storage basins, so project targeted mid-sized commercial farmers instead. Any future project should be planned in a manner where smallholder farmers can be the direct beneficiaries of infrastructure established by the intervention.

Other than using the lessons learnt from this project when planning any future water management project involving water storage basins and smallholder farmers, the project’s elements should be replicated to the extent possible, as they greatly benefit the rural population of Moldova, as they improve their livelihood and strengthen their resilience to climate change. The advantages of replicating of the project’s key components are briefly summarised below:

The training of local public authorities on climate change and helping these develop of climate and risk management strategies and action plans meets a deep need of the rural population, as there is a pressing need to mitigate the negative effects of droughts, flooding and fires. Hence this activity was enthusiastically endorsed by local officials and residents, as all directly benefit from better protection.

The model used by this project to establish firefighting post and to raise awareness about fire safety seems successful. If proven sustainable, this model could be replicated in collaboration with GIES for other communities that currently lack emergency services. Rapid response to fires saves lives and reduces property losses. As local authorities must compensate citizens for losses due to fire, they reduce their annual costs by maintaining a community fire station. Furthermore, the jobs created are an added benefit to the area.

Smallholder farmers can greatly benefit from improved water infrastructure, as this can both decrease their vulnerability to droughts, floods and open the possibility of growing higher value crops. Individual water-basins management plans advice on the management of the risks and maintenance of the water-basins. Hence small farms with access to a dependable water supply are no longer at risks during droughts, and furthermore a reliable source of water could allow them to grow vegetables and fruits, greatly increasing their revenue. As in this project, any future project should include all appropriate accompanying measures, such as training for the farmers on water management and best farming practices.

Recommendations

Climate change and disaster risk reduction solutions are both in demand and very appropriate to all stakeholders in rural Moldova. This evaluation concluded with a number of three recommendations for implementation of future interventions that can be further integrated into UNDP Moldova Environmental portfolio to move the adaptation process forward. Therefore, the knowledge obtained in this project can be used as described below.

1. Development of climate and risk management strategies and action plans for their implementation to assist other rural communities, to support these in their efforts to mitigate the impact of droughts, flooding and fires. As well as assistance through the accompanying measures in terms of training local officials and raising awareness in the population.
2. Assist smallholder farmers in developing better water management plans and infrastructure, so that they can both decrease their vulnerability to droughts and open the possibility of growing higher value crops. If small farms have access to a dependable water supply, they will no longer be at risks during droughts, and furthermore a reliable source of water could allow them to grow high value crops such as vegetables and fruits, greatly increasing their revenue. Based on the experience gained in this project, where the request for a contribution from the beneficiary meant that only mid-sized commercial farms could join the scheme for water storage basins. An approach should be considered where a future project works closely with Districts and local communities, as well as farmers’ associations, to identify suitable recipients and locations. It could be envisaged that water storage basins could be developed to serve smallholder farmers, presumably these could be integrated through a cooperative. Fees paid to the cooperative would then ensure maintenance of the water storage and water distribution systems, a fair allocation of the water, and so forth. Again, any future project should include all appropriate accompanying measures, such as training to the farmers on water management, the best farming practices, and so forth.
3. The model used by this project to establish firefighting post and to raise awareness about fire safety seems successful. If proven sustainable, this model could be replicated in collaboration with GIES for other communities that currently lack emergency services. Rapid response to fires saves lives and reduces property losses. As local authorities must compensate citizens for losses due to fire, they reduce their annual costs by having a community fire station, with the jobs created being an added benefit to the area. The lessons learnt through this project have recently been incorporated into a JICA project that also plans to establish improved emergency response facilities in rural areas

# Introduction

## Purpose of the Final Project Evaluation

The Final Evaluation of the CC&DRR project was carried out according to the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) *Evaluation Guidelines* and following the guiding principles of the Austrian Development Agency’s (ADA) *Guidelines for Programme and Project Evaluations* (July 2020). The evaluation was carried out in February and March 2022 by Mr Peder Bisbjerg and Mr Serghei Ostaf. They were hired by the UNDP as the independent International and National Consultants to carry out the review and their Terms of Reference can be found in Annex A.

Under the UNDP *Evaluation Guidelines*, the aim of the final evaluation is to provide a systematic and comprehensive review and appraisal of the performance of the project by assessing its design, processes of implementation, achievement relative to its objectives. Under this overarching aim, the assessment’s objectives are i) strengthen learning within the UNDP and among stakeholders to support better decision making; ii) to promote accountability and transparency, strengthening the ability of stakeholders to hold UNDP accountable for its development contributions; and iii) generally to generate empirical knowledge about what has worked, what has not, and why, to help managers and other stakeholders make informed decisions.

A UNDP Project Evaluation’s specific objectives are to appraise the project implementation arrangements and the achievements of outputs, as well as to assess the project’s outputs in the context of their contribution to broader developmental goals. Here, the project evaluation is to provide advice on possible improvements, on how an initiative can be continued or scaled up, and on the project’s sustainability and replicability. In this evaluation, see Annex A, the Team was requested to consider the project’s performance in terms of the OECD/DAC evaluation criteria of Relevance, Effectiveness, Efficiency and Sustainability.

The ADA’s guiding principles for project evaluation are very similar to those of the UNDP. The ADA uses an evaluation matrix as a planning tool, which is intended to help ensure that an evaluation will both address and answer all evaluation questions in a systematic manner. This evaluation was requested to use the ADA matrices for evaluation, feedback, and management responses to the Evaluation Report’s recommendations.

Against this background and as per the ToR, the purpose of this evaluation specifically was twofold – learning and steering, since it assesses and presents the achievements of project results, conclusions and lesson learned including appropriate recommendations for effective implementation of future interventions that can be further integrated into UNDP Moldova Environmental portfolio to move the adaptation process forward

Moreover, the objective of this evaluation was to perform an evaluation of the overall project progress against the outcome, outputs and indicators of achievement as mandated by the project donor (ADA) and stipulated in the project document / logical framework matrix in line with the Guidelines mentioned above, with a focus on their coherence to the stated deliverables and whether these produced the intended impact.

Since, both the United Nations and ADA promote environmental protection, gender equality, social issues, human rights and disability concerns, the evaluation also covers the degree to which this cross-cutting issues were addressed during project design and implementation.

To conclude, this report is an independent examination of the project, assessing its results in terms of relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability, and crosscutting issues such as gender and human rights. This report endeavours to provide recommendations on lessons learnt and how the project’s achievements can be duplicate, scaled-up or otherwise used.

## Structure of this report

This report follows the outline set out in the Terms of Reference (Annex A), it furthermore strives to follow the structure and content requirements of both the UNDP and ADA guidelines for project evaluation. Section 3 of this report provides a description of the project and the development context in Moldova, and Section 4 explains the evaluation methodology and application. The next section of this evaluation report covers the Findings, where the project’s achievements are held against the outputs foreseen in the Project Document, this assessment of the project’s performance is made in terms of the OECD/DAC evaluation criteria of Relevance, Effectiveness, Efficiency and Sustainability. A final subsection has been added to the Findings, where the crosscutting issues of gender, social inclusiveness, human rights, and environmental protection are discussed. The last two sections draw together the Conclusions and Recommendations of the Evaluation Team.

All photos in the report, unless otherwise noted, were taken by Mr Serghei Ostaf in February and March 2022.

# Background and Context Analysis

## Background

The Republic of Moldova is a landlocked country in Eastern Europe. Its western border with Romania follows the Prut River; and Ukraine borders the country to the north, east, and south. The 33,844 km2 country has a population of 2.6 million (1 January 2021). The capital and largest city is Chisinau.[[1]](#footnote-1)

During the dissolution of the Soviet Union, on 27 August 1991, the Moldavian SSR declared independence and took the name Moldova. The breakup of the Soviet Union resulted in a decrease in industrial and agricultural output in Moldova, today the service sector has grown to dominate Moldova's economy and constitutes over 60% of the nation's GDP. With a GDP per capita of 4,600 USD in 2020, it is one of the poorest countries in Europe. [[2]](#footnote-2)

Moldova is very vulnerable to climate change thus it is expected that the average temperature will increase with 2 to 3ºC by 2050. This will cause in more acute weather patterns in terms of more frequent droughts and more severe floods. These changing climatic conditions will impact agriculture and water resources. There will be insufficient availability of water during droughts and dry spells, while at the same time intensifying the flood risks due to heavy precipitation events/ extreme storms and limited adaptation options in the respective sectors. [[3]](#footnote-3)

Climate change has already impacted Moldova, between 1990 and 2015, Moldova experienced eleven droughts that caused significant yield declines in crops and pastures. These droughts in turn greatly reduced revenues, harming the agricultural sector. A catastrophic drought in 2007 impacted 80% of the country’s rural population, the majority being women. Farmers are very vulnerable to these changes in weather patterns, as most of the agricultural production is directly dependent on rain for watering the crops.

Another impact of global warming is that there will be greater storms with more precipitation. Hence the annual rainfall will come in fewer but larger precipitation events. Such torrential rains will cause increased flooding and almost half of all Moldovan communities are located in flood-prone areas. [[4]](#footnote-4) The country experienced severe flooding in 2008 that damaged houses, bridges, and roads, and flooded 7,500 hectares of agricultural land. Future events are predicted to be harsher.

The shift in climate, where precipitation events become rarer but more intense, not only causes difficulties for farmers due to droughts and to the population in general due to flooding. The longer duration of droughts has seen an increase in wildfires. This last problem was exacerbated by the liquidation of over 400 firefighting units in the 1990s following the extensive privatization process promoted by development banks. The scarcity of fire stations resulted in increased response time and fewer awareness raising activities for the citizens. The outcome has been an increased frequency of fires in rural areas, resulting in a considerable increase in loss of life, material damages and affected ecosystems.

Hence climate change is placing rural communities in Moldova at greater risk of droughts, impacting their revenue from farming and increasing the risks of fire. Furthermore, the more intense nature of precipitation events puts some areas at risk of flooding. This the project aims to increase resilience and adaptive capacities of rural communities in face of these challenges.

## Project Description

The project *Promotion of climate change and disaster risk reduction solutions in the water and civil protection sectors for enhanced rural resilience* was implemented by UNDP in partnership with the General Inspectorate for Emergency Situations (GIES) with financial assistance provided by the Austrian Development Agency (ADA) with funds of Austrian Development Cooperation, Ministry of External Affairs of Estonia and with contributions from Local Public Authorities. The project’s intended outcome is “strengthened local policies, capacities and infrastructure which enable climate and disaster resilient development at the community level.” [[5]](#footnote-5)

The project aims to strengthen rural communities against climate change and improve their emergency response capabilities. To achieve these goals, the project is to:

1. “Create an enabling environment for local resilient livelihoods through improved climate-sensitive planning and climate-smart agriculture approaches at community level to increase water availability for agricultural livelihoods and protect from floods;” and
2. “Enhance local disaster risk reduction capacities in a decentralized manner through establishment of capacitated community-based rescue and firefighting brigades with access to resources for response and recovery needs.”

The project started on 1 December 2018 and will be completed on 31 March 2022. The Project Management Unit (PMU) has had a turbulent time, going through three Project Managers and three Project Associates in 39 months! Despite this, the project’s aims of strengthen rural communities against climate change and to improve their emergency response capabilities was achieved. This outcome was realised through two components as described under the implementation status further down.

The project’s geographical area of interventions specifically is the following: at least 55 communities from Hincesti, Ungheni, Cantemir, Leova and Criuleni Districts.

The Project has a total final budget of 1,523,115.97 USD. The funding sources and amount is the following:

* ADA: 1,226,158.78 USD
* EST: 108,921.89 USD
* APL: 188,035.30 USD
* Private sector in-kind contribution: 118,045.85 USD

*Stakeholder engagement*

The project design put a high priority on stakeholder engagement, mobilising the community when working at the local level, to ensure that all interventions and initiatives were planned and established with maximum involvement of the community members. The intent of this approach was to make sure that the local population has ownership of the outcomes. The community mobilization meant that the local population is involved in the planning, implementation, and evaluation of project activities.

One of the project’s crucial stakeholders was GIES as the national implementation partner. This organisation, under the Ministry of Internal Affairs has the overall responsibility for disaster prevention, preparedness, response, and relief in Moldova. This institution ensured that the project could reach out to their territorial units, it helped with the fundraising and community mobilisation to ensure the long-term support of 33 local authorities.

The Apele Moldovei Agency (Moldova Water Authority) was an essential partner in the project. This agency under the Ministry of Environment has, as one of its responsibilities, the development and supervision of water storage basins for common use and was therefore a key team member in the implementation of these features.

The Local Public Authorities were very actively involved in the decision making and implementation process, ensuring that the local people were heard and that they participated in the project activities. At this level, NGOs, such as EcoContact, contributed as board members and helped promoted the project activities.

Finally, the media was an indispensable and helpful participant in awareness raising campaigns.

*The implementation status of the project*

The project was carried out through two components, where the first one provided training to Local Public Authorities (LPAs) on tools and approaches to preparing for climate change. This coaching allowed the local authorities to an understanding of the future scenarios, as well as the risks and opportunities they present. The local authorities used this knowledge to develop and implement strategies to mitigate the impact of climate change by budgeting and planning for these risks. The project helped raise awareness amongst all stakeholders on improved agricultural practices, water management, and flood protection. In the project’s five districts (see Figure 1) a total of nine water storage basins[[6]](#footnote-6) were built to strengthen the local communities in the face of climate change, providing these with an increased water availability, both for farming and firefighting, as well as flood protection.



*Figure 1: Districts targeted by the project.*

Through the second component, the project built four community firefighting posts [[7]](#footnote-7) These posts have each been equipped with a fire truck, staffed with 9 permanent employees, and a large group of trained volunteers (a total of 177 volunteer firefighters). Furthermore, the project has raised awareness within the communities regarding fire hazards and how to lessen these. Many vulnerable households were provided with fire alarms.

A detailed presentation of the implementation status of the project, at the time of the evaluation, can be found in section 5.

The five project targeted districts can be seen in Figure 1; a brief description of each district can be found below.

The **Cantemir** **District** consists of the eponymous town and there are 51 settlements. The district is 868 km2 and has a population of 61,500, of which 91% lives in rural areas. Three quarters of the land is used by agriculture, whereof 80% is under private ownership. There is a total of 66 ponds in the district with a total area of 570 ha. The Cantemir District is situated in the southwest region bordering with Romania and has the lowest precipitation level within Moldova. The region has dry and semi-dry climate with the forecasted temperature rise from an annual average between 9.7 and 10.7OC to between 11.75 and 12.58OC in the next two decades, with an associated increase of storms and extreme temperatures. The project activities are in the Antonesti and Baimaclia villages.

The sole town of the **Criuleni district** is Criuleni on the Dniester River and there are 43 settlements. Three quarters of its 688 km2 are used for agriculture and 83% of these are in private hands. Only 12% of the 73,500 inhabitants live in urban areas. There is a total of 364 ha of surface water in the district. The Criuleni District is located in the centre-east area which has low precipitation levels. The region has a semi-dry climate with a forecast temperature rise from an annual average between 9.36 and 10.10OC to between 10.36 to 11,98OC in the coming two decades with an accompanying higher frequency of extreme climate events. The project activities are in the Boscana and Drasliceni villages.

The **Hincesti** **District** is 1,472 km2 and named after its administrative centre, it furthermore has 63 settlements, and the share of agricultural lands is around 60% whereof most is privatised. Only 15% of the district’s 119,000 inhabitants live urban areas. The district’s territory contains 117 water reservoirs and ponds with a total area of 1,300 ha. The Hincesti District is found in the central western region of Moldova on the border with Romania, a region with low precipitation levels. The district has a semi-dry climate with an expected increase in the average annual temperature due to climate change from between 9.36 to 10.4OC to between 11.37 and 12.23OC over the next twenty years, with an accompanying increase in extreme climate events. The project activities are in the Lapusna, Ciuciuleni, Fundul Galbenei and Sarata Galbenei villages.

Leova and Iargara are the two towns in the **Leova** **District** and there are also 40 settlements on its 765 km2. Approximately 70% of the area’s 52,000 people live in rural areas, and 57% of the district’s land is cultivated, mostly under private ownership. The district holds a total of 71 water reservoirs with total surface area of 848 ha. The Leova District if found on the southwest border with Romania and has some of the lowest precipitation levels in Moldova. The region has semi-dry climate with a calculated average annual temperature rise over the next two decades from 9.36-9.58OC to 11.36-11.98OC, with bigger rainfall events, floods, and more severe droughts. The project activities are in Bestemac and Sarateni villages.

The Ungheni district consists of two towns, Ungheni and Cornesti, and 74 settlements. The district is 1,082 km2, with 68% used for farming, and 73% of the land under private ownership. The region’s population is 117,000, whereof 35% is urban. The territory has 136 water reservoirs with total surface area of 1,584 ha. The Ungheni District is adjacent to Romania and receives the least precipitation within Moldova. The region has a dry and semi-dry climate and the projected upswing in the average annual temperature rise is from between 8.8 to 10.0OC to between 10.85 and 11.92OC over the coming two decades, resulting in more severe storms, floods, and droughts The project activities are in Magurele and Pirlita villages.

# Evaluation Design and Approach

This section describes the methodology that was used in the planning and execution of the final project evaluation.

## Methodological Approach

The Project Evaluation follows the directions given in the Terms of Reference (Annex A), the *UNDP Evaluation Guidelines,* and the ADA *Guidelines for Programme and Project Evaluations*. Furthermore, the Team was instructed to use the ADA evaluation matrix and to consider the ADA gender and social standards appraisal requirements. [[8]](#footnote-8)

The Terms of Reference, as well as UNDP’s and ADA’s evaluation guidelines, provide the basis for the evaluation framework, which in turn underpins and guides the overall approach. Furthermore, the Evaluation Team used the Evaluation Questions according to the in the Terms of Reference (ToR) that structured following the selected OECD-DAC criteria (relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, sustainability). The main questions, together with a few additional questions, forms the evaluation framework that can be found in Annex B.

The ADA *Guidelines for Programme and Project Evaluations* uses an Evaluation Matrix to track the project progress against set indicators. The Evaluation Matrix was developed during the inception period using the indicators in the logical framework analysis found as Annex 1 in the Project Document. The Evaluation Matrix has allowed the Evaluation Team to cross check the project’s achievements against the targets set in the Project Document, covering topics such as the number of jobs to be created, the volume of water storage capacity to be created, and so forth. The Matrix can be found in Annex C.

The project design was developed using Theory of Change where a logical framework analysis approach is used. First, the desired long-term goals are identified, and the analysis then works back from these to identify all the conditions (outcomes) that must be in place for the goals to occur. By identifying all required conditions that are necessary for a successful impact, the Theory of Change assessment ensures that there are no flaws in the project design. This evaluation examines the project design.

Crosscutting Issues

Both the United Nations [[9]](#footnote-9) and the ADA [[10]](#footnote-10) [[11]](#footnote-11) emphasise the high priority of crosscutting issues such as human rights and gender equality on all their projects. These issues must be closely scrutinised during project design, implementation, and evaluation. The UN guidance document requires that human rights and gender equality be examined in two dimensions during an evaluation:

1. To what extent the intervention was guided by the UN’s organisational and system-wide objectives on the issues and whether the objectives were achieved; and
2. To what human rights and gender equality were integrated into the project’s implementation.

The ADA’s *Environmental, Gender and Social Impact Management Manual* requires that all projects either partly or fully funded and/or implemented by ADA must undergo environmental, gender and social assessments throughout the project cycle. The agency accepts the use of standards and procedures from other organisations if these are equivalent to ADA’s requirements.

The guidelines laid out in ADA’s *Human Rights Manual* tie into the priorities and obligations specified in the EGSIM Manual and are hence covered by this manual. This project evaluation covers both the UNDP’s and ADA’s environmental, gender, social and human rights standards appraisal requirements.

## Data Collection and Analysis Tools

The Evaluation employed a combination of qualitative and quantitative assessment methods and tools as further described. The evaluation process followed a participatory and consultative approach during the evaluation stages that ensured a close engagement with the evaluation manager, implementing partners and male and female direct beneficiaries. Specifically, the scope of the participants in the evaluation process covered all stakeholders, i.e., representatives of the groups directly and indirectly involved in the project and the groups that were directly and indirectly affected by the project as detailed in the list of respondents that can be found in Annex E, encompassing donors, decision makers, implementing partners, beneficiaries, and representatives of key civil society organizations.

All relevant documentation (see Annex F) was received from the PMU in a prompt manner. The records were analysed in a desk review and accompanied by key stakeholder consultations (men and women) in the form of structured and semi-structured interviews (the list of questions can be found in Annex D). Field visits to all infrastructures were performed to validate the key tangible results and interventions of the Project and pictures are included in this report.

The Evaluation Team strived to incorporate crosscutting elements into all stages of the project appraisal. Where there was a choice of respondents, as for instance interviews with the training activities, the gender balance was ensured. Of the owners and the beneficiaries of the water-basins, the woman owners were contacted. Therefore, overall, of 58 respondents, 30% were women ensuring the best possible gender balance in an environment where the majority is male. The interview choice of questions and considerations included specifically tailored gender-sensitive perspectives as for instance the employment provided by the project and the private jobs created by the project. Another aspect was the consistent check of the project indicators and project materials under the gender perspective.

To ensure that reliable information was used in the evaluation, data was gathered from as many sources as possible and cross-checked. Hence, the information gathered during the desk review was verified through interviews with a wide range of stakeholders and site visits, (see Annex E for a listing). Some sites were selected for a second longer in-depth examination, allowing for a thorough understanding of the project outcomes. These in-depth visits allowed the Team to assess whether training had been successful, if sound operating procedures were in place, to check if records were kept as intended, and so forth. The findings from these visits were used to validate the project’s reports. Given the use of multiple sources, it is the Evaluation Team’s opinion that this report portrays a comprehensive and reliable assessment of the project.

## Limitations, Risks and Mitigation Measures

The on-going COVID-19 pandemic was the biggest limitation for this project evaluation, as the International Consultant could only work remotely. The National Consultant was able to meet with all stakeholders and visit all project sites.

During the evaluation, it was found that the project’s activities and decisions were well documented through bi-annual reports, minutes of meeting, etc. Furthermore, it was possible for the National Consultant to visit all project sites and have meetings with all stakeholders. So, other than the two firefighting posts where activities have not yet been fully finalised, see section 5.2, it was possible to accurately appraise the project’s outputs through meetings and field visits.

Apart from visiting all project sites, interviews were held with all relevant stakeholders, either in person or by phone, depending on interviewees preference, given COVID-19 communication restrictions. Direct communication was further constrained following the onset of the War in Ukraine that started on 24 February 2022. These constraints did result in fewer interviews with the beneficiaries of project training, as these were difficult to contact and meet with. Although the Evaluation Team would have liked to interview a few more trainees, the National Consultant was able to discuss with enough participants to reliably assess their satisfaction with training courses and workshops.

It can be remarked that not all the indicators given in the Project Document’s Logical Framework Analysis are easily verified. For example, the “increased agricultural productivity and resilience due to enabled access to irrigation as a result of project intervention” can probably only be correctly gaged five to ten years after a reservoir’s completion. In this report, only indicators that can be substantiated in an objective manner are used in section 5.2.

# Findings

This section covers the observations of the Evaluation Team, where the project’s achievements are held against the outputs foreseen in the Project Document. The project’s performance was assessed following the OECD/DAC evaluation criteria of Relevance, Effectiveness, Efficiency and Sustainability.

The ToR has three evaluation questions on project Relevance. The first question is answered thoroughly in section 5.1 of the Evaluation Report, i.e., Relevance section. As for the second and third, these are judged to belong under Effectiveness and Efficiency sections (sections 5.2 and 5.3), hence the assessment can be found there. There are four questions on Effectiveness of the project. Judgement on the first three queries is found in Effectiveness section, 5.3., while the cross-cutting issues raised in the fourth question are covered in section 5.5. A final subsection has been added to this part, where the crosscutting issues of gender, social inclusiveness, human rights, and environmental protection are discussed (5.5 Crosscutting Issues). The two questions on Efficiency are addressed in section 5.3. The four questions of Sustainability are entirely covered in section 5.4.

For an easy reference, see below the information in tabular format indicating the sections in which each evaluation question was addressed by the team of evaluators.

| **Evaluation questions** | **Section reference, page nr.** |
| --- | --- |
| **Relevance**  1. To what extent are the objectives of the project still valid for the partner country, the partner organization, and the beneficiaries? How do these contribute to the climate change adaptation agenda and priorities in the context of the Paris Agreement and assumed NDC? | Section 5.1, pag.20 |
| **Relevance** 2. Are the expected results/outputs of the project consistent with the outcome, immediate impact, and overall goal/impact (as part of the analysis of the log frame matrix/project theory? | Section 5.2, pag.22  and Section 5.3, pag. 35 |
| **Relevance** 3. Were the objectives of the project clear, realistic, and likely to be achieved within the established time schedule and with the allocated resources? |
| **Effectiveness**  1. To what extent has the project already achieved the expected outcome, outputs, and respective targets? | Section 5.2, pag. 22 |
| **Effectiveness** 2. How has the project successfully built or strengthened an enabling environment for local resilient livelihoods? |
| **Effectiveness** 3. What have been the main contributing and challenging factors towards project’s success in attaining its targets? |
| **Effectiveness**  4. To what extent were the cross-cutting issues such as gender equality, environmental sustainability, human rights, and social standards have been addressed in the design and implementation of the project and to what extent were recommendations from the ADA appraisals considered and implemented? | Section 5.5., pag.35 |
| **Efficiency**  1. If applicable, to what extent were all items/equipment purchased and used as planned under this project/programme? | Section 5.3, pag. 33 |
| **Efficiency**  2. Was the project implemented in the most efficient way (time, personnel resources)? Have any issues emerged, if so which ones and why? |
| **Sustainability**  1 Regarding capacity development, to what extent will the project outcomes and flow of benefits are likely to continue after the project/external funding ends? | Section 5.4, pag. 35 |
| **Sustainability**  2 To what extent did the project forge partnerships and, as part of these partnerships, supported replicability of project benefits/results and advancement of the climate change adaptation agenda? |
| **Sustainability**  3. What were the major factors which influenced the achievement or non-achievement of sustainability of the project? |
| **Sustainability**  ***Additional***  4*. What needs to be done and/or improved to ensure sustainability? Have improved systems been incorporated into state budgets? Is adequate staffing and support being applied to continue processes? Are risk management plans established, monitored and appropriate actions in place?* |

## Relevance

This subsection discusses the relevance of the project within its international and national context. Firstly, it will be examined to what extent the project meets the needs and priorities of Moldova and the participating national institutions, Secondly, the project’s alignment with the strategies of both the Austrian Development Agency and the United Nations are explored.

For the Government of Moldova, the project is obviously directly linked and highly relevant to the implementation of the Paris Agreement; [[12]](#footnote-12) where one objective is an increased ability to respond to the adverse impacts of climate change and to and to foster climate resilience. Under the Nationally Determined Contributions (NDC) to achieve the targets of the Paris Agreement, other than a reduction of greenhouse gas emissions, Moldova has the following aims that coincide with this project:

* Action 1.2. Mainstream climate change adaptation in the sectoral policies of national economy.
* Action 2.3. Raise the awareness of all stakeholders on climate change risks and adaptation measures.
* Action 3.1. Risk Management and Climate Change Adaptation in the Agriculture Sector.
* Action 3.2. Risk Management and Climate Change Adaptation in the Water Resources Sector.

The Government of Moldova is cognisant that a large proportion of the rural population is very vulnerable to the interacting effects of climate change. The Ministry of Agriculture, Regional Development and Environment (MARDE) is the anchor agency responsible for defining strategies and policies for the water sector. Moldova’s *Environmental Strategy for 2014–2023* focuses on integration of climate change adaptation principles into all sectors of national economy.

The key strategies that direct the management of water resources and the water-related sectors in the context of climate change and disaster risk reduction include emphasis on the actions that can be found in Table 1 below.

*Table 1: National Strategies and Programmes that prioritise CC&DRR*

| **Priority** | **Strategies and Programmes**  (See below table for reference) |
| --- | --- |
| Creation of new reservoirs to improve use of hydrological resources | [1] [2] [3] |
| Adaptation of existing water distribution infrastructure | [1] [2] [3] |
| Implementation of new infrastructure for the collection and use of rainwater | [1] |
| Flood protection for areas at risk | [2] |
| Improved agricultural practices to reduce water usage and increase yield | [1] [2] [3] |
| Emergency response | [4] |

Strategy/ Programme referenced:

[1] *2014 Climate Change Adaptation Strategy of the Republic of Moldova*

[2] *Program for the development of water management and hydro-melioration in the Republic of Moldova for the years 2011–2020*

[3] *Program of Activity of the Government of the Republic of Moldova 2016–2018*

[4] *Disaster Risk Management Strategy*

Furthermore, the *National Development Strategy "Moldova 2030,"* which was approved by the Government in 2018 recognises that drought and flood represent the most pressing climate change risks which requires adaptation actions to reduce the vulnerability and exposure of rural communities.

Therefore, this project’s priorities are well reflected in the national priorities, not only does Moldova’s *Environmental Strategy for 2014–2023* focus on meeting the country’s obligations under the Paris Agreement, but this is also part of other essential strategies and programmes. It can be concluded that the project directly contributes to the execution of the *Environmental Strategy* and to the nation’s endeavours to adjust to climate change.

The General Inspectorate for Emergency Situations (under the Ministry of the Internal Affairs) recently started the elaboration of a draft *Disaster Risk Management Strategy* where fire is identified as a major risk for the country, threatening the population, the economy, and the environment. [[13]](#footnote-13) The draft *Strategy* calls for strengthening of the fire protection systems at the community level to better protect the population and the environment. Therefore, the project is very much aligned with the priorities of GIES and the national authorities.

The project is aligned with the Austrian Development Agency (ADA) *Development Cooperation Strategy for Moldova* for the years goals for the years 2016-2020. The second thematic priority of this strategy is “water, environment and climate change aiming to contribute for the sustainable development of Moldova not only in the priority sector of water, environment and climate change, but also in relation to rural and urban regional development.”

The project contributes to achievement of the following Targets under the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDG):

SDG # 2: End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture

Target 2.3: By 2030, double the agricultural productivity and incomes of small-scale food producers, in particular women, indigenous peoples, family farmers, pastoralists, and fishers, including through secure and equal access to land, other productive resources and inputs, knowledge, financial services, markets and opportunities for value addition and non-farm employment

Target 2.4: By 2030, ensure sustainable food production systems and implement resilient agricultural practices that increase productivity and production, that help maintain ecosystems, that strengthen capacity for adaptation to climate change, extreme weather, drought, flooding and other disasters and that progressively improve land and soil quality

SDG # 5: Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls

Target 5.5: Ensure women’s full and effective participation and equal opportunities for leadership at all levels of decision-making in political, economic, and public life

SDG # 6: Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all

Target 6.4: By 2030, substantially increase water-use efficiency across all sectors and ensure sustainable withdrawals and supply of freshwater to address water scarcity and substantially reduce the number of people suffering from water scarcity

Target 6.5: By 2030, implement integrated water resources management at all levels, including through transboundary cooperation as appropriate

Target 6.6: By 2020, protect and restore water-related ecosystems, including mountains, forests, wetlands, rivers, aquifers, and lakes (note this target includes strengthen the participation of local communities in improving water management)

SDG # 11: Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient, and sustainable

Target 11.5: By 2030, significantly reduce the number of deaths and the number of people affected and substantially decrease the direct economic losses relative to global gross domestic product caused by disasters, including water-related disasters, with a focus on protecting the poor and people in vulnerable situations

SDG # 13: Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts

Target 13.1: Strengthen resilience and adaptive capacity to climate-related hazards and natural disasters in all countries

Target 13.3: Improve education, awareness-raising and human and institutional capacity on climate change mitigation, adaptation, impact reduction and early warning

As can be seen above, the project is directly contributing to addressing the United Nation’s SDGs and relevant in ensuring the ultimate objective, “peace and prosperity for people and the planet.”

The United Nations, under the 2015 Sendai Framework Disaster Risk Reduction, wishes to promote national strategies that safeguard vulnerable sectors through a reduction of disaster risk and losses in lives, thereby protecting livelihoods and health, in terms of economic, physical, social, cultural, and environmental assets. Targets of the Sendai Framework include lowering the loss of life from disasters, reducing their impact, and to strengthen resilience against calamities.

The United Nations commitment to resilient development in line with commitments assumed under the Paris Agreement and the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction are also reflected in the country strategy. The UNDP *Country programme document for the Republic of Moldova (2018-2022)* reflects the UN’s SDGs, in this programme the third Pillar, “Climate change, environment and energy,” emphasises the importance of measures that strengthen climate change adaptation for rural populations and to promote that “risk-informed decision-making [is] introduced at the district level.”

The two other project evaluation questions under Relevance *“Are the expected results/outputs of the project consistent with the outcome, immediate impact, and overall goal/impact (as part of the analysis of the log frame matrix/project theory?”* and “*Were the objectives of the project clear, realistic, and likely to be achieved within the established time schedule and with the allocated resources?”* These questions are judged to belong under Effectiveness and Efficiency, as they do not pertain to Relevance in the Evaluation Team’s opinion. The responses to these two questions are found in sections 5.2 and 5.3.

## Effectiveness

A fundamental measure of a project’s progress is to review its outputs to date and assess the progress against the milestones and indicators anticipated during the project planning phase. In the following the project’s progress and its activities are evaluated. This section evaluates each of the two Outputs. First the anticipated impact and outcome indicators are evaluated against the project’s achievements.

*Table 2: Impact Indicator and Targets*

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Impact** | **Indicator** | **Target** |
| Improved resilience of rural communities’ livelihoods in the face of climate change | Number of men and women in 5 rural districts of Moldova effectively engaged in decisions over water-use efficiency and with strengthened resilience and adaptive capacities to climate-related hazards and disasters | 19,860 people, including 51% women and 449 vulnerable households in Ungheni  11,411 people, including 51% women and 85 vulnerable households in Leova  9,206 people, including 50% women and 290 vulnerable households in Cantemir  1,607 people, including 51% women and 121 vulnerable households in Criuleni  8,276 people, including 50% women and 45 vulnerable households in Hincesti |

The impact indicator and the respective target values for engaging men and women in five rural communities in decisions over water-use efficiency and strengthened resilience and adaptive capacities to climate-related hazards and disasters can be found in Table 2. The targets were achieved, this is evidenced jointly by the operational firefighting posts that cover 65 communities, as well as the nine water basins that stabilises and increases agricultural production.

*Table 3: Outcome Indicators and Targets*

| **Outcome** | **Indicator** | **Target** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Strengthened local policies, capacities and infrastructure which enable climate and disaster resilient development at the community level | Outcome Indicator # 1  Number of rural people (men and women incl. vulnerable people) covered by appropriate climate and disaster risk management strategies with costed actions plan, inclusive of drought, flooding and fire risks. | 4,474 people, including 2185 women and 222 vulnerable in Pirlita  775 people, including 378 women and 12 vulnerable in Sarateni  2,603 people, including 1300 women and 87 vulnerable in Baimaclia  1,607 people, including 776 women and 185 vulnerable in Drasliceni 4,790 people, including 2371 women and 105 vulnerable in Sarata Galbena |
| Outcome Indicator # 2  Number of rural famers (men and women) with enhanced livelihoods and access to water for production needs due to water harvesting basins in place as a result of project interventions | At least 10 farmers (at least 3 women farmers) |
| Outcome Indicator # 3  Number of rural people (men and women incl. vulnerable people) covered by appropriate climate and disaster risk reduction infrastructure and capacity in place | 19,860 people, including 51% women and 449 vulnerable households in Ungheni  11,411 people, including 51% women and 85 vulnerable households in Leova  9,206 people, including 50% women and 290 vulnerable households in Cantemir  1,607 people, including 51% women and 121 vulnerable households in Criuleni  8,276 people, including 50% women and 45 vulnerable households in Hincesti |

The expected project outcome and the associated indicators can be found in Table 3. The Outcome Indicator # 1 with target values for the number of rural people covered by appropriate climate and risk management plans, inclusive of drought, flooding and fire risk measures were achieved. Evidence shows that the respective action plans comprehensively cover these aspects for the five communities and that the plans’ recommendations were endorsed by the local authorities. The approved strategies are aimed to mitigate adverse impacts on the most vulnerable.

Outcome Indicator # 2 required that at least 10 rural farmers, whereof at least 3 should be women, had improved livelihoods and access to water for production needs through water storage basins has been partially achieved. Nine rural farmers benefited from the establishment of water basins with water pumps and were trained agricultural irrigation. Experts and the beneficiaries’ comments point to an increased agricultural resilience and increased production. Four of the beneficiary farms were operated by women (1 founder and 3 co-founders).

Outcome Indicator # 3 measures the creation of appropriate climate change and disaster risk reduction infrastructure and capacity building for the populations. The goals were achieved by the building of four firefighting posts covering 65 beneficiary communities, detailed local action plans that have been approved, and the distribution of fire detectors/ alarms to vulnerable households.

For each Output, the text below will first provide a summary of the component’s objective. Thereafter, the progress will be presented, followed by a discussion of the status at the time of the evaluation and any observations.

**Output 1: Adaptation interventions in the water sector for agricultural purposes and flood management demonstrated and local climate change related policy frameworks in place in a selected number of districts**

The objective of this output is to strengthen local communities in the face of climate change through improved planning, improved agricultural practices, increased water availability, and flood protection. This goal was to be achieved through the implementation of two activities. The implementation of these two activities is described below. The project achieved all indicators and targets under this output.

Indicator 1 with *target value* of supporting *5 communities* to have gender sensitive climate and disaster risk management priorities integrated into approved local development strategies was achieved. It is evidenced by 5 community participatory elaborated climate change and risk management community profiles, with the budget estimations, and the proposals for the local action plans endorsed by the respective local authorities.

Indicator 2 with *target value* of ensuring of *120 ha* of irrigated land that produce high value agricultural crops has been achieved. This is evidenced by expert data and interviews with the beneficiaries in all 9 instances, on-the-spot observations on the agricultural land to be covered by the irrigation as a result of the water basins built and water pumps provided.

Indicator 2.1 with *target value* of creation conditions for *120,000 m3* precipitation and run-off water storage capacity to be used for the irrigation has been achieved. This is evidenced by the building of nine water storage basins (9 out of the 10 planned basins) as confirmed by engineering, water experts and beneficiaries and direct observations.

Activity 1.1: Mainstream climate change adaptation and disaster risk management priorities into local development planning frameworks in a participatory and gender-sensitive manner

Five anchor communities (Sarata Galbena (Hincesti), Sarateni (Leova), Pirlita (Ungheni), Baimaclia (Cantemir), Drasliceni (Criuleni)) were chosen based on the criteria of the respective local communities’ commitment to become the host communities for the firefighting posts. These communities had already adopted their local social-economic development plans/ strategies; therefore, this framework was chosen to be enriched with the climate change and disaster risk management aspects.

Business Consulting Institute (BCI) was contracted to implement this activity in 2019. In each community, 15-20 people (81 in total, 58% women) and socially representative (local authorities (75%), farmers (10%), civil society (15%), elderly, young, etc.) and balanced Community Working Groups (CWG) were created as the main vehicle for the participatory process. The CWG selection process was based on the representation, active role, and availability to engage. This is evidenced by list of participants, interviews with some members. CWGs and local authorities benefited from two 1-day capacity-building trainings (between August and October 2020 for 154 representatives) on climate change and disaster risk management approaches and best-practices, as evidenced by training materials and interviews with responsible experts and participants. Most of the events have been carried out in person, yet some via the online facility.

*Table 4: Composition of Community Working Groups*



The events and the participants’ comments were used by the BCI experts for the elaboration of the draft community profile reports for each area with the input from local authorities, input from CWGs members, comments from wider community. Interviews with at least 2 participants at the events (1 from local authorities and 1 from civil society) from each community points to their increased understanding of the ways how climate change and risk disasters could be managed in their communities’ contexts. The process was hampered by the COVID restrictions, as public events and in person participation was restricted and the infection affected several potential participants.

*Table 5: Structure of participants at training events*

Table

Description automatically generated

The community profiles are 20-page reports that contain climate change, disaster risks factors and their impact analysis, proposals for management and mitigation, their costing, and their formulation as risk management plans in the community social-economic development plan/strategy based on the best-practices available. This is evidenced by the reports and the opinions of the independent experts.

The draft reports were discussed in a separate 1-day event with CWG and wider community information, as evidenced by public placement for consultations, with dozens of comments reflected and considered in the final versions of the reports and proposals. The proposals have been provided with the local councils and majors and endorsed by them as part of their local-economic development plans as evidenced by interviews with the mayors.

Activity 1.2: Pilot water storage infrastructures in 5 districts of the country to enhance adaptation to climate change in the water and agricultural sectors

The selection of the beneficiaries of the water storage infrastructures was carried out via proposals received from the applicants after the publication and circulation of the announcement (via a Call for Expression of Interest/CEI). The announcement envisaged support for the high-value agricultural producer, 20% co-contribution from the potential beneficiary, the project aimed at selecting at least 3 women-led farms as beneficiaries of water storage basins that also serve as flood-protection and for fire-fighting needs. This is evidenced by the public call of proposals.

The project extended several times calls of proposals. Based on 25 proposals received, 10 potential beneficiaries were identified, of which one was women-led and three had a woman as the co-proprietor. Project experts (engineers, water experts, agricultural, finance experts), together with the beneficiaries and local authorities, identified the possible land spots and elaborated technical proposals for each water basin and the corresponding required infrastructure.

The technical proposals, as evidenced by their texts and interviews with the experts involved, detail all aspects of basin construction, water potential accumulation, quality of storage, coverage of the agricultural land to be irrigated, transportation of water and their modalities to the respective lands as well as measures to maintain water basins. The project announced calls for purchasing of construction services in several terms due to the COVID impact on the cost of the construction materials and services (estimated 30% increase) during the project life – two contractors were selected for the construction of water basins.

*Table 6: Water Storage Basins established by the project*

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Water basin, operational** | **Irrigation area (ha)** | **Water capacity m3** | **Crops** | **Beneficiary** | **Cost share, (USD)** |
| Antonesti (Cantemir), 2021 | 28.2 | 4,200 | vegetables (green house) |  | $5,145 |
| Bestemac (Leova) | 23 | 10,310 | fruits: cherry, sour cherry, plum, | Woman co-proprietor | $11,310 |
| Ciuciuleni (Hincesti), 2022 | 32.6 | 16,000 | corn, vegetables (green house) |  | $7,600 |
| Fundul Galbenei (Hincesti), 2020 | 5 | 5,220 | cherry |  | $17,825 |
| Lapusna (Hincesti), 2022 | 20 | 12,800 | cereals | Woman co-proprietor | $11,618 |
| Boghenii Noi (Ungheni), 2021 | 27 | 15,430 | vegetables (carrots, onions, cabbages) |  | $25,700 |
| Magurele 1 (Ungheni), 2021 | 6 | 25,000 | vegetables, |  | $23,191 |
| Magurele 2 (Ungheni), 2021 | 5.08 | 25,000 | vegetables, strawberries, cherry, plum | Woman co-proprietor- led | $9,457 |
| Boscana (Criuleni), 2022 | 30; pluvial | 5,160 | sour cherry, grapes | Woman-led | $6,200 |
| **Total** | **177** | **119,150** |  | **4** | **$118,046** |

The requirement for co-contribution of 20%, or between 7,000 and 15,000 USD towards the construction, most likely left smaller agricultural farmers and their associations out of the competition. The selected beneficiaries represent medium and large agricultural farmers, some with horizontal integrated business with agricultural products fabrication and retail. Each beneficiary received individual support prior, during and after the construction on the management, financing, agricultural water transportation and maintenance of the water basins. one beneficiary dropped out in late 2021 due to his changed commercial plans. Nine of the water basins were built with the total water storage capacity 119,150 m3 and total irrigation area 177 ha. The beneficiaries matching contributions towards the water bases varied from 7,000 to 25,000 USD. This is evidenced by the technical documentation and registration decisions and expenses incurred by the farmers. The water basins have been registered with local authorities.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| D:\Programs\AdvocacyActions\Projects\2022\Individual\UNDP_clima\Inception report\Water\Antonesti (Cantemir)\IMG_0050.JPG | D:\Programs\AdvocacyActions\Projects\2022\Individual\UNDP_clima\Inception report\Water\BogheniiNoi (Ungheni)\IMG_0394.JPG |
| *Photo 1: Antonesti (Cantemir) water basin* | *Photo 2: Boghenii Noi (Ungheni) water basin* |

The project provided beneficiaries with the water pumps to facilitate the water transportation based on the estimated irrigation technology that fits the growing crops. Interviews with the project beneficiaries showed water storage contribution towards stability in water provision and increased harvest by some 20-30% in some cases. Interviewed experts outside the project said that according to their data, there are around 200 water basins built so far across the country that could be qualified as collecting and storing water from pluvial sources. Therefore, the project’s addition of nine water basins is a substantial contribution, in terms of the water capacity this corresponds to around a 10% increase when compared to the pre-project capacity in Moldova.

*Table 7: Status for Output 1 at the time of evaluation*

| **OUTPUT 1: ADAPTATION INTERVENTIONS IN THE WATER SECTOR FOR AGRICULTURAL PURPOSES AND FLOOD MANAGEMENT** | | |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Indicators** | **End-of Project Target** | **Status at Evaluation** |
| Output 1 Indicator 1: LPAs from 5 communities have gender sensitive climate and disaster risk management priorities integrated into approved local development strategies | 1.1: Five LPAs have approved local development strategies with gender sensitive climate and disaster risk management priorities | Completed; Fully achieved |
| Output 1 Indicator 2a: Area of agricultural land with access to water for irrigation as a result of constructed precipitation accumulation basins. | 1.2a: Precipitation water storage capacity of 120,000 m3 | Completed:  Largely achieved  119,150 m3 |
| Output 1 Indicator 2b: Number of hectares of agricultural land with increased resilience to drought due to stored run-offs for irrigation. | 1.2b: At least 120 ha of agricultural land with increased capacity to withstand droughts | Completed: Fully achieved  177 ha of land covered |
| Output 1 Indicator 2c: Increased agricultural productivity and resilience due to enabled access to irrigation as a result of project intervention | 1.2c: Beneficiaries’ perception of the quality of their production and their capacity to withstand severe drought conditions is increasingly positive compared to baseline situation. | Completed; Fully achieved |
| Output 1 Indicator 3: Number of officials from LPAs, heads of public institutions and private sector (disaggregated by sex) with better knowledge of inclusive and gender sensitive climate resilient local development planning | 1.3: 50 officials from 5 LPAs, heads of public institutions and private sector including women and men, with capacity to integrate inclusive and gender sensitive climate and disaster risk management. | Completed; Fully achieved |
| Output 1 Indicator 4: Number of farmers with enhanced understanding and knowledge to adapt to climate change and use of natural resources in a sustainable manner | 1.4: 50 (at least 15 women) benefit from capacity development on adaptation solutions in the agriculture and water sectors and the sustainable use of natural resources. | Completed; Fully achieved |

The private sector is key partner of the project by participating in identification, formulation, planning and implementation of adaptation solutions in the water sector. The project could have explored possible relationships with the various farmer associations and specific agricultural associations, to support greater participation of the small and medium farmers, and as a result producing a wider-spread impact on small farmers. The Farmers Associations in particular, National Farmers Federation Moldova (NFFM) and Republican Union of Agricultural Producers’ Associations (APA), as well as Congress of Local Public Authorities, should be engaged in consultations over the possible next phases of the project implementation.

The co-financing requirement and the limited finances for the water storage basins, given the substantial costs for the construction, allowed participation in the program of only medium-large and financial capable applicants. In future, this requirement should be revised to better target a wider number of the small farmers.

**Output 2: Community-level climate and disaster management capacities improved for disaster risk reduction, prevention, and timely response**

The objective of this output is to build and develop capacity of the firefighting posts to reduce the risk of damage and losses to households and agricultural fields. This output is envisaged intertwined with the output 1. This output was to be achieved through the implementation of two activities as described further down.

Under this output, the project achieved all indicators and targets. Indicator 1 with *target value* of creating four new rescue and firefighting posts. These were established, properly equipped and corresponding local budgets allocated, and inclusive prevention plans elaborated. This is evidenced by the four firefighting posts that were built and equipped, the four purchased fire truck, and the matching firefighters trained to be employed as voluntary firefighters.

Indicator 2 with *target value* of 55 communities was exceeded, as 65 communities and their population (60 thousand), from four districts benefit from an increased protection from natural and man-made disasters, due to capacitated rescue and firefighting teams. It is evidenced by the participation of the relevant communities’ authorities in the firefighting posts functioning and allocation of the respective annual financial contribution, joint exercise and coordination of the regional firefighting stations and the community firefighting posts to intervene. The main contribution of the community and regional firefighters is to greatly diminish the fire damage by reducing the time required for the primary intervention.

Indicator 3 with *target value* of creation 40 permanent jobs (10 jobs per rescue/firefighting unit) and 36 persons benefited from professional capacity development trainings around climate change and disaster risk prevention and response, hence the target was mostly achieved. This is evidenced by the participating local authorities’ agreement to co-participate in the establishment of four community firefighting posts and the selection of respective community firefighters for the employment.

Indicator 4 with *target value* of 4,720 people (including 50% women) reached by public awareness raising campaigns on climate and disaster risk reduction was achieved. This is evidenced complimentary by capacity-building and awareness activities, dissemination of materials, and installation of fire detectors in the beneficiary communities.

Activity 2.1: Establish Community-based rescue and firefighting brigades in the most vulnerable and risk exposed districts of the country

The selection of the firefighting brigades was carried out based on the criteria of the fire disaster risks, willingness to contribute from the local (1st level) and regional (2nd level) authorities and the recommendations from the General Inspectorate for Emergency Situations (GIES) based on the Governmental Decision no. 202 from 2012. The project screened five geographic areas covering more than 80 local communities for the firefighting posts: Pirlita (Ungheni) with 18 local communities, Baimaclia (Cantemir) with 22 local communities, Sarata Galbena (Hincesti) with 8 local communities, Sarateni (Leova) with 17 local communities and Drasliceni (Criuleni) with 5 local communities. However, the Drasliceni had to be dropped, due to significantly delays in the local and regional decision-making process to participate and to provide the required financial contribution.

The firefighting posts that were establishment help implement the Governmental Decision no. 202, though to date, far from all the posts required to provide good firefighting coverage have been established. Therefore, the firefighting posts are considered highly necessary. The firefighting posts reduce the response time by 20 to 40 minutes, time that is essential to preserve houses from destruction by fire. According to the experts and GIES, the firefighting posts response time within their respective communities is 5 to 15 minutes, a period that effectively saves many houses on fire and particularly the houses belonging to the most vulnerable households.

*Table 8: Established firefighting posts*

| **Anchor location** | **Participating communities, population** | **Distance from regional station** | **Population covered** | **Employed (trained) staff** | **Financial contribution, thousands MDL** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Pirlita (Ungheni) | 18 in total = Pirlita (6,000), Alexeevca (1,200), Busila (1,788), Chirileni (1,749), Negurenii Vechi (1,814), Radenii vechi (1,614), Todiresti (4,250), Agronomovca (943), Tescureni (1,030) together with satellite communities | Prilita fire-fighting post cuts at least 20 minutes reach out respective communities | 19,860 people in Ungheni region (51% women, 449 vulnerable), | 9 to be employed and 47 trained | Ungheni regional Council (550), Pirlita (170), Alexeevca (34,1), Busila (50,8), Negurenii Vechi (51,4), Radenii vechi (45,9), Todiresti (120,8), Agronomovca (26,8) = 1,050 |
| Baimaclia (Cantemir) | 22 in total = Baimaclia (3,093), Chioselia (2,128), Ciietu (1,232), Cirpesti (2,325), Cisla (650), Costangalia (962), Tartaul (1,866), Ciobalaccia (3,033), Enichioi (1,807), Lingura (1,550) together with satellite communities | Baimaclia fire-fighting post cuts at least 25 minutes reach out to respective communities | 9206 people in Cantemir region (50% women, 290 vulnerable) | 9 to be employed and 27 trained | Cantemir regional Council (500), Baimaclia (127), Chioselia (87,3), Ciietu (50,6), Cirpesti (111), Cisla (29,9), Costangalia (39,5), Tartaul (79,8), Ciobalaccia (75), = 1,100 |
| Sarata Galbena (Hincesti) | 8 in total = Sarata-Galbena (5,334), Mereseni (2,510), Caracui (2,394), | Sarata-Galbena fire-fighting post cuts at least 20 minutes reach out to respective communities | 8,278 people in Hincesti region (50% women, 45 vulnerable) | 9 to be employed and 17 trained | Sarata-Galbena, Mereseni, Caracui (in kind contribution, technical equipment) |
| Sarateni (Leova) | Sarateni (979), Cneazevca (978), Tomaiul Nou (762), Orac (1,193), Ceadir (1,181), Colibabovca (997), Vozneseni (1,212), Saratica Noua (985), Bestemac (948), Covurlui (1,612) | Sarateni fire-fighting post cuts at least 30 minutes reach out to respective communities | 11,411 people in Leova region (51% women, 85 vulnerable) | 9 to be employed and 50 trained | Leova Regional Council (700), Sarateni (36), Cneazevca (36), Tomaiul Nou (28), Orac (44), Ceadir (43,6), Colibabovca (36,8), Vozneseni (44,7), Saratica Noua (36,3), Bestemac (35), Covurlui (59,4)=1,100 |
| Drasliceni (Criuleni) |  | Drasliceni fire-fighting post cuts at least 30 minutes reach out to respective communities | 1,607 people in Criuleni region (51% women, 121 vulnerable) | N/A |  |
| **Total** |  |  |  | **36 to be employed and 141 trained**  **Total volunteers: 177** | **3,250** |

Regional and local authorities agreed on the cost-sharing and for each firefighting post they each contributed 1.1 million MDL (some 62,000 USD) towards the firefighting post’s construction, this also allowed for the purchase one firefighting truck for each station. The project technically supported the elaboration of legal procedures and draft decisions for the LPA to allocate the necessary funds for maintenance from local budgets. It also helped draft the Inter-Community Association Agreement and to prepare the annual budget estimates to facilitate LPA budgetary planning (the annual budget for FF maintenance is approximately 500,000 MDL). This agreement was used and signed by participating LPAs and GIES to ensure that the posts have an adequate operations budget. The project elaborated terms of reference in collaboration with GIES but had to make several procurements calls as the COVID pandemic drove up the cost of construction materials and services during the project life with 20 to 30%. This delayed the implementation of the activity. The launching into the operation of the firefighting posts is subject to the decisions of the local council in coordination with the GIES, as well as the employment of the community firefighters and took place during February -March 2022.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| A fire truck parked outside a building  Description automatically generated with low confidence | A picture containing truck, red, transport  Description automatically generated |
| *Photo 3: Baimaclia Fire post (Cantemir)* | *Photo 4: Fire truck in Pirlita (Ungheni)* |

The project developed a tailor-made curriculum for the training of the voluntary members of the firefighting posts and GIES carried out several theoretical and practical training sessions for them. Review of the training curriculum, interviews with the GIES representatives responsible for the training, and with some members of the volunteers, indicated that these have necessary skills to fight fires.

GIES firefighting intervention for the respective communities is now 2-staged. The primary immediate intervention is within 5 to 10 minutes (by the community firefighting posts established by the project) and the 2nd level core firefighting intervention from the regional authorities arriving within 30-40 minutes. The primary intervention contains the fire, while the core intervention extinguishes the fire. Based on the information obtained from the firefighting authorities and the mayors, the number of house-related fires is 1-2 per month in each community, thus there are probably dozens of fires per month within the intervention area of each fire station. According to the law, local and regional authorities must compensate for the damage caused to the burned houses, therefore, they register considerable cost saving from timely interventions that prevent or mitigate fires.

The project together with GIES evaluated and identified the most vulnerable households in each region and purchased fire/ smoke detectors for them. The detectors have been distributed and installed in the most vulnerable households.

Activity 2.2: Conduct capacity development for climate and disaster response local teams and raise awareness towards building a culture of safer living

The project carried out the tailor-made and activity specific capacity-building activities reflected above in this evaluation report.

Review of the conventional media appearance of the project returned several news lines and video sequences by the national-wide media networks (TVR Moldova, ProTV, National TV, Jurnal TV). Project specific activities promoted visibility of activities, such as success story on the water infrastructure construction progress and results via the social networks and the local authorities’ public spaces and forums. These programs targeted national and society-at-large awareness.

Using social media, the evaluators found project distributed three posts covering the story in video format - which has an organic impact of 357,000 and a total number of views of 385,580 and two posts with text and photo album that recorded - impact 6,900 and 8,000 total views. The success story has been widely disseminated via UNDP official web page and social media profiles that were further disseminated by the project partners, civil society, press, etc. These efforts targeted national and society-at-large awareness.

*Table 9: Status for Output 2 at the time of evaluation*

| **OUTPUT 2: COMMUNITY-LEVEL CLIMATE AND DISASTER MANAGEMENT CAPACITIES IMPROVED** | | |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Indicators** | **End-of Project Target** | **Status at Evaluation** |
| Output 2 Indicator 1: Number of rescue and firefighting posts established and properly equipped to respond timely to man-made and natural disasters | 2.1 Four new rescue and firefighting posts established, properly equipped and corresponding local budgets allocated and inclusive prevention plans | Completed; Fully achieved |
| Output 2 Indicator 2: Number of communities benefitting from increased protection from natural and man-made disasters due to capacitated rescue and firefighting teams including inclusive prevention measures | 2.2 55 communities (and their population) from 4 districts benefit from increased protection from capacitated rescuer and firefighting teams. | Completed; Fully achieved  65 communities covered |
| Output 2 Indicator 3: Number of rescue and firefighting staff (sex disaggregated) employed and professionally trained | 2.3 40 permanent jobs (10 jobs per rescue/ firefighting unit) created resulting in additional income for 40 families in Moldova. | Completed: Largely achieved  36 permanent jobs and 141 volunteer positions created |
| 2.3 40 persons (women and men) benefitted from professional capacity development trainings in the area of climate change and disaster risk prevention and response | Completed, Fully achieved |

The project completes implementation of these activities in the final stage of the project life cycle. The benefits of the project, saved lives, saved costs to the households due to the fires are to be received after the project end.

## Efficiency

Below the project design and success of its implementation will be examined. This will cover the project strategy, whether the management structure and resources outlined in the Project Document were sufficient of producing the anticipated results, and finally if the PMU and Project Board operated in a proficient manner.

Project Design

The project was designed using the theory of change and results framework. The assumptions and drivers foreseen in the Project Document have proven correct; today the rural communities where the project intervened are strengthened in terms of resilience to droughts and fires. The combined impact of awareness raising, training, the provision of firefighting posts and water storage basins has reinforced rural communities, and especially women, in the face of climate change.

The PMU faced one challenge when implementing the project: The project was to target small-scale farmers but at the same time required co-financing from the recipients of the water storage basins. During the implementation stage, it was found that smallholder farmers were unable to co-finance with at least 20% of the total cost, as required in the Project Document. In their place, mid-sized commercial farms were selected as the beneficiaries of the water storage basins.

Therefore, the requirement for co-financing meant that the project was unable to work with the most deprived smallholder farmers. It can furthermore be observed that small-scale farms generally grow corn, and other crops that are relatively drought resistant. With a reliable water supply, such farms could instead grow high value crops, such as fruits and vegetables, thereby significantly increasing the annual revenues for these vulnerable smallholders.

Management Arrangements

The project is implemented using National Implementation Modality as per UNDP’s procedures. The project’s Executing Entity, or National Implementing Partner, is the General Inspectorate for Emergency Situations, whilst UNDP is the Implementing Entity.

The project is managed through a small Project Management Unit, consisting of a national Project Manager and a Finance Associate located within the UNDP Programme Management Unit. The Project Manager has overall responsibility for the implementation of project activities and the achievement of planned project outputs and reports to the National Project Coordinator (GIES) and to the UNDP Country Office. The Finance Associate provides administration, management and technical support to the Project Manager as required. International and national technical experts and specialists work under the direction of the Project Management Unit.

All major project decisions are taken in close cooperation with the key stakeholders and approved by the Project Board. On the Project Board, the role of Executive (project “owners”) is taken by the General Inspectorate for Emergency Situations. Senior Beneficiaries represented on the Project Board are the Apele Moldovei Agency (the MARDE agency responsible for water), LPAs, NGOs/CBOs, ADA, and UNDP.

The project has adapted to change surprisingly well. The project has faced challenges on two fronts. Firstly, the project is on its third Project Manager, who joined almost two years into the project, and on its third Project Associate. The reason for the rapid changeover in PMU staff is that capable experts are in high demand in Moldova, so there is a tendency for project staff to be lured to new opportunities. Surprisingly, these management changes did not disrupt project progress, a strong indication that the Project Board has advised and guided the project as intended. All interviewed people were satisfied with the project management arrangements and felt that the lines of communication within the project worked well.

The second, and largest challenge faced by the project was the **COVID-19 pandemic.** The outbreak of the pandemic in early 2020 greatly constrained the project’s activities, as it hindered the collaboration with local public authorities, contractors, and beneficiaries. The impact of the epidemic has been felt over the past two years as follows:

* 1. The pandemic slowed the decision-making process within LPAs, delaying the securing the funds from the local authorities for the maintenance of the firefighting posts.
  2. Delays in the work of contractors, as deliveries of materials were hindered due to constraints caused by the pandemic. Also, unrelated to COVID-19, heavy rainfall caused delays for contractors in 2021.
  3. The PMU has needed to renegotiate contracts with suppliers, as the cost of cement and cladding increased significantly; and
  4. The restrictions imposed by the pandemic made it difficult or impossible to conduct some training and awareness raising activities.

The PMU worked remotely using online communication channels and, when obliged, organised physical meetings were all a necessary infection control measures were taken. To overcome the delays caused by the pandemic, the Project Board approved a 4-month no-cost project extension and made an associated budget reallocation.

The evaluation found that the PMU and UNDP have been diligent in reporting on the project’s progress, keeping minutes of Board Meetings, minutes of focus group meetings with local communities, and so forth.

The project has largely relied on national experts, this has worked well, though the PMU reported that at times it was difficult to hire qualified local experts. Throughout the project implementation, it seems that stakeholder involvement has been excellent. At the national expert level, looking at participants from the national institutions, the knowledge and awareness related to the project is high and project partners are aware of the project’s progress and are vested in its outcome. This is certainly due to a close involvement of technical and national experts throughout the project, there also seems to have been a good and proactive collaboration between stakeholders.

Resources spent were related to achieved outputs. Generally, the efficiency can be assessed as high by the evaluators as per the table below showing the overall view on the budget vs. expenditures.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Budget USD | Expenditure USD | Expenditure ratio in % |
| ADA: | $ 1,226,158.78 | $ 1,203,947.95 | 98.19% |
| EST: | $ 108,921.89 | $ 107,085.47 | 98.31% |
| Communities: | $ 188,035.30 | $ 186,693.05 | 99.29% |
| *Private sector in-kind contribution:* | *$ 118,045.85* | *$ 118,045.85* | *100.00%* |

## Sustainability

It is essential that the results achieved by the project are sustained after completion. This section examines the extent to which the project helped put in place the conditions likely to address the drivers, overcome the barriers and ensure the long-term sustainability of the project’s intended outcome. Therefore, the project’s results should preferably be both replicable and sustainable, contributing to the long-term advancement of the climate change adaptation agenda. The next four paragraphs discuss the project’s four activities and their sustainability.

The project developed five community specific management plans to tackle climate change and promote disaster risk reduction, these have been endorsed by the respective community mayors and the local councils. Developed and endorsed in 2019 and 2020, these management plans cover a mid-term planning period and refer to creating firefighting posts to reduce fire risks, the need to establish water storage basins for times of drought, to improve residents’ awareness, and other activities that have been discussed and found important by the community. The approval of the management plans identified risks and proposed solutions that the communities have acknowledged and support. Some recommendations found in the plans have already been implemented, such as the establishment of the firefighting posts, and awareness campaigns in the communities. The management plans, with their estimated financial requirements, are used by the community leadership to secure additional financial support to implement the recommendations. The estimated financial cost of the management plan for each community is around 1 million MDL (55,000 USD), while the respective communities’ budgets remain at around 8 to 9 million MDL (0.5 million USD) with only about 100,000 MDL (5,500 USD) readily available for such activities. The project supported identification of the risks, estimated their costs that permit the respective communities to engage in identification of additional resources from the development partners or via the joint intercommunity initiatives.

Building of the water storage basins and water distribution pumps to collect pluvial and run-off water to be used for the agricultural purposes is a considerable contribution from the project to the respective farmers and communities. The project elaborated maintenance plans for each water basin and carried out individual capacity-building activities for the beneficiaries to manage the water basins. Given the expert opinion, if the beneficiaries follow the maintenance plans, the investments into the water basins could last for at least 30 years. The collected water helps the farmers to withstand the annual oscillations of the rain and improve the ability to face gradually decreasing levels of precipitation in the coming years. As the result, the investment helps ensure that the farmers and the community can sustain their agricultural activity and ensure income to the respective households, especially in years of drought. Expert opinion put the increase in the production of the respective high-value-added agricultural crops of the beneficiary farmers by 30-40%, therefore the increased production contributes to the higher financial return, and therefore better financial sustainability of the farmers and of the community. The collected water volume is also essential to ensure the extended longevity of the agricultural products cultivated by the farmers. The annual water basins maintenance costs are estimated to fall within the increased margins and income secured due to the increased agricultural productivity. Apart from the beneficiaries own matching funds, in most cases, the farmers invested additional financial resources to build roads, improve surrounding landscape, built electricity network to and around the water basins. Interviews with the recipient farmers indicates a commitment for further development and investments in the lands irrigated by the water basins.

The project built and fully equipped four firefighting posts. These have been fully embraced by the participating communities’ citizens and authorities, as well as specialised regional and central authorities, as Regional Councils and GIES. The institutional sustainability at the community level is additionally supported by the intercommunity association agreements among the participating communities. All stakeholders are committed to create and support the functioning of the community firefighting posts. All authorities contributed finically, and in kind, and based on the Joint Memorandum endorsed coverage of the operational costs, including of the creation of 36 permanent firefighter jobs (9 permanent staff per post). These provisions have become part of the respective communities’ local annual budgets. The firefighting posts are now under the ownership of the participating local communities and are part of the GIES emergency response network and hence fully integrated into the national services. The created posts have been included in the national network of GIES to ensure coordination and functional compliance adding another institutional sustainability element. The expenses for the running costs for each participating community are manageable comparing to their annual budgets. As the firefighting posts start functioning, the citizens of the communities will see the benefits in terms of saved properties and households, therefore, projecting higher trust and support.

The project has managed to raise awareness in the beneficiaries’ communities, giving them a practical understanding of the climate change risks and the required actions to prevent and manage these risks. The respective communities’ citizens and authorities understanding has turned into the critical knowledge and pro-active actions, therefore, cementing these communities’ engagement. Apart from the participating communities, where management plans have been elaborated and endorsed and firefighting posts started functioning, the project additionally improved awareness in the nine communities where water storage basins were established. From the interviews and observations collected in the respective communities, the citizens from these communities are aware of the water basins built and identify these actions as part of the actions needed to support resilience against the drought, and they are supportive. Drawing on the wide dissemination via the national television networks of the project activities, specifically opening of the firefighting posts and of the benefits of the water basins, the coverage and subsequent view of the materials reached tens of thousands of people, giving a very wider out-reach.

The communities targeted by the project now enjoy higher protection and better capacity, both individually and jointly, to face certain aspects of climate change and to reduce its impact on their livelihood. The communities are empowered with an understanding on how to address these issues, and hence to mitigate the impact of climate change over the long-term.

## Crosscutting Issues

Crosscutting issues such as gender equality, human rights, social concerns, and protection of the environment are fundamental to both ADA and UNDP projects. Hence these topics are closely monitored throughout the project cycle.

Gender equality

The project design is consistent with the objective to promote gender equality and relevant provisions and recommendations on women rights. The project touches upon several relevant provisions and recommendations[[14]](#footnote-14) from the UN Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), art. 4 (adoption of special measures), art. 7 (eliminate discrimination in public life), art. 10 (equality in continuous education), art. 13 (eliminate discrimination in economic life), art. 14 (rural women) against which we shall evaluate.

All project indicators at impact, outcome and output levels and gender sensitive and the project reporting reflected attainment of these indicators. The project has collected sex-disaggregated data across the activities and reported them. The collected data show consistent practice of ensuring gender equality throughout the project. As the project targets population from the rural areas, addressing gender equality is essential.

The project contributed to the implementation of article 10 of CEDAW by ensuring equality of gender participation in CWG and in capacity-building activities under Activity 1.1 (mainstream climate change and disaster risk management plans). Interviews with the responsible experts and the participants rendered active participation of women in the identification of the respective risks and later discussed proposals to address them. The project complied with the implementation of article 7 (and para 26 recs) involving equally representatives of both genders in the process of the elaboration of the management plans. Moreover, responsible experts’ opinions and review of the proposals proper in the management plans provide reasonable conclusion of the gender-sensitive character of the proposals. At the same time, these proposals could have also reflected gender-sensitive budgeting as the current costs estimations costs reflect the generalist approach as well as emphases on the special measures as specified by article 4 of CEDAW.

Under activity 1.2, the project aimed at selecting at least three woman-led farmers as beneficiaries of the water storage infrastructures to support agricultural activities. The baseline situation occurs much fewer woman-led farms and insignificant woman-led farms with the water storage capacity. Interviews with the farmers’ beneficiaries, and the respective contracts renders that project has awarded two woman-led farmers and 2 woman-co-led farmers (woman active role) in the construction of the water basins. Interviews with project staff and the tender documents renders that out of fifteen farmers’ applications, absolute majority represented man-led farms. Therefore, the project contributed to the implementation of article 13 (and para 36 c) recs) in eliminating of the discrimination in economic life as well as the support for the implementation of the article 4 in adopting special measures in this respect. To make better compliance with article 4, the project could have removed 20% co-funding requirement for woman-led or co-woman-led applications. The project could have collected additional information on the gender-sensitive and disadvantaged employment impact given the alleged, based on interviews with beneficiaries’ farmers, rising to 30-40% of the productivity given the exploitation of the water basins.

Under activity 2.1, the project operationalized four firefighting posts and distributed numerous fire-alarms. The project matched the gender-sensitive indicators of the vulnerable groups for each region. Based on the expert review from the relevant state authorities and local mayors, the base-line situation evaluation showed the disproportionate adverse impact on the rural and poor or most vulnerable households with major impact on women and children because of fire incidents. The vulnerable and poor rural household house fire damage is much more substantial and happens within shorter period given the lower and less fire-resistant quality of the construction materials. The project contributed to the implementation of article 14 (para 2(h)) of CEDAW contributing to the prevention of the fire damage of the houses and social conditions and particularly women-led rural households. The project could have been more consistent in collecting gender-sensitive impact data from this activity, as well as estimate the savings.

Human rights and social standards

The project contributes to the improvement of the social and economic rights of the rural population as per International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights and respective recommendations by UN Treaty body[[15]](#footnote-15) (ICESCR: art. 6 (employment), art. 11 (housing rights), art.)[[16]](#footnote-16) and towards relevant SDGs (2 (food security), 5 (gender equality), 11 (safer settlements)). The project contributes to the promotion of the housing rights by installing fire-alarms detectors thus preventing some the most vulnerable households from fire incidents and thus making them safer. The community firefighting teams shorten the initial intervention time by at least 15-20 minutes thus making the effective intervention time under 10 minutes, considerably improving the containment of the fire, and hence greatly reducing the damage. The average cost of the house is the rural areas of the vulnerable households is hundreds of thousands and years to be erected and become habitable. Based on the interviews with the authorities from GIES and the mayors, there are a few cases of the house fire in each project targeted communities that result in complete house destructions given delayed firefighters interventions to protect housing rights. Interviews with the water experts and representatives of the GIES, as well as the observations of all water basins’ location and placement conclude that no danger for the human settlement flooding is possible. This has been ensured by the combination of factors: distance to the human settlements and technical construction.

The project contributes to extending of the right to employment in the targeted communities in the agricultural private sector and in the public sector with the firefighters. Thirty-six project induced firefighting employment jobs are secured in the long-term by the local communities. The firefighting jobs are subject of the equal opportunity and non-discrimination criteria as explained by the project staff and the local authorities. The list of the employed firefighters with the long-term contracts has to be reviewed to evaluate the gender-equality respect criteria. The estimate of the privately created jobs and their gender-features due to build water storage infrastructure that improves agricultural productivity by 30-40% has not been carried out, however, the interviews with the farmers’ beneficiaries and experts’ opinions the impact is direct and indirect. The direct impact is by the creation of the additional employment within the farmer’s beneficiaries, both managing the new technological processes and harvesting of the crops, and the indirect by the sales and trade chain and in processing industry. The project could have made an estimate for the positive impact of the project and its gender-related features.

Under the Activity 2.2, project developed awareness materials widely distributed across the targeted regions and beyond via the national television networks and social networks in both Romanian and Russian languages. The awareness materials reviewed have to emphasis accessibility of the informational materials for the special groups as persons with disabilities.

Environmental sustainability

The project objectives contribute to the adaptation to more sustainable agricultural activities and offers distinct actions to manage disaster risks caused by the climate change developments. The project carried out a baseline assessment of the project target areas for possible environmental risks[[17]](#footnote-17), identified the respective risks and elaborated specific plans of actions for each project site: water basins and firefighting posts. The identified risks included topography, hydrology and biodiversity of flora and fauna, and soil composition. Interviews with respective experts involved in the risks identification and monitoring of the constructions and works, as well as the interviews with the expert community from the outside of the project returned opinion that the project has not harmed the environment.

The project elaborated specific environmental protection measures for each site and project experts were involved in the follow and monitoring of the site-specific constructions and works respect and incorporate these recommendations. The farmers who received water basins have received joint and individual capacity-building activities including individual guidance on the management of the water storage and on water transportation in manner that does not to cause damage to the surrounding environment and to the quality of the crops. The project experts monitored for the duration of the project lifespan the respect of the recommendations.

# Conclusions

The Evaluation Team has found this to be a well-managed and successful project. The project can be judged as follows:

**Relevance** – The project’s support in terms of climate change adaptation solutions in the water sector and emergency response directly contributes to improving the livelihoods of the population in the project area. According to a 2020 World Bank report on disaster risk management, [[18]](#footnote-18) Moldova is exposed to an array of natural hazards, and their impact disproportionately affects the poor. Floods, droughts, and severe weather events are the most recurring threats. Consequently , this project is highly relevant in that is mitigates the impact of floods, droughts and severe weather, the most common recurring natural hazards that overly harm less affluent rural communities.

The project aligns well with the strategies and requirements of all stakeholders.

**Effectiveness** –The original Project Document was comprehensive and well thought out. There have been no changes to the original outcomes or objectives. One can commend all stakeholders on the close and productive collaboration.

The project’s only weakness was in the project design. It was found that smallholder farmers were unable to co-finance their share of water storage basins, so the project targeted mid-sized commercial farmers instead. Any future project should be planned in a manner where smallholder farmers can be direct beneficiaries of infrastructure established by the project.

**Efficiency** – The project was implemented in a very competent manner, despite the COVID-19 pandemic and frequent replacements of both the Project Manager and the Project Associate. All project activities were completed successfully, with the local communities developing comprehensive climate and risk management plans, the successful establishment of firefighting posts and water supply basins, accompanied by good quality training and awareness raising activities for the rural populations. The pandemic did somewhat delay the project implementation, so a four-month no-cost extension was necessary to ensure that all planned activities were completed in a satisfactory manner.

**Sustainability** - The targeted communities are poor, and as the project design correctly highlighted, this is a considerable challenge to the successful implementation of the project strategy. The village clusters involved in project implementation had difficulties identifying the necessary financial resources required to cover their contribution to the activities, that said, the local authorities have been highly motivated and have managed to pay their contributions to the project and they have been closely involved in its execution. Today, they are actively implementing the management plans they developed in cooperation with the project to tackle climate change and reduce disaster risk.

The local authorities anticipate that the firefighting posts will greatly decrease the pay-outs they must make to compensate for damage caused by fires, thereby allowing them to operate and maintain the fire stations at less costs than those previously incurred by disbursing reparations to citizens for fire losses.

The water storage basins are beneficial to the recipients, in that they are no longer at risk of significant financial losses due to drought, this in turn improves their economic security and ensures that they have sufficient resources to maintain their water management structures.

Finally, the awareness raising has certainly helped the communities, it that there is now a much greater understanding of the importance of climate change, water management and emergency response, Hence, the project has strengthened the resilience of the local communities and all implemented activities seem designed to operate successfully for many years.

**Crosscutting Issues** - The project fulfilled all ADA and UNDP intentions in terms of gender equality, human rights, social concerns, and protection of the environment. Through all project phases, close attention was paid to these issues by both organisations, as well as the PMU, to ensure that the project safeguarded the interests of the most vulnerable, receive input from all stakeholders, and preserved the ecosystem.

# Recommendations

This is a project that has been both well designed and executed. The project has been very resilient, weathering both a high turnover within the PMU staffing, as well as two years where the COVID-19 pandemic restricted travel and meetings, caused price increases due to supply chain issues, and hindered construction work. This reflects well on the project management, and especially the Project Board, which ensured the smooth and successful implementation of the project. Hence, it can be concluded that the project management structure used on ADA-UNDP projects in Moldova is robust and well-suited.

As shown in this evaluation, the promotion of climate change and disaster risk reduction solutions is clearly both needed and very relevant to all stakeholders. Hence the experience gained in this project can be replicated as follows.

1. Development of climate and risk management strategies and action plans for their implementation to assist other rural communities, to support these in their efforts to mitigate the impact of droughts, flooding and fires. As well as assistance through the accompanying measures in terms of training local officials and raising awareness in the population.
2. Assist smallholder farmers in developing better water management and infrastructure, so that they can both decrease their vulnerability to droughts and open the possibility of growing higher value crops. If small farms have access to a dependable water supply, they will no longer be at risks during droughts, and furthermore a reliable source of water could allow them to grow high value crops such as vegetables and fruits, greatly increasing their revenue. Based on the experience gained in this project, where the request for a contribution from the beneficiary meant that only mid-sized commercial farms could join the scheme for water storage basins. An approach should be considered where a future project works closely with Districts and local communities, as well as farmers’ associations, to identify suitable recipients and locations. It could be envisaged that water storage basins could be developed to serve smallholder farmers, presumably these could be integrated through a cooperative. Fees paid to the cooperative would then ensure maintenance of the water storage and water distribution systems, a fair allocation of the water, and so forth. Again, any future project should include all appropriate accompanying measures, such as training to the farmers on water management, the best farming practices, and so forth.
3. The model used by this project to establish firefighting post and to raise awareness about fire safety seems successful. If proven sustainable, this model could be replicated in collaboration with GIES for other communities that currently lack emergency services. Rapid response to fires saves lives and reduces property losses. As local authorities must compensate citizens for losses due to fire, they reduce their annual costs by having a community fire station, with the jobs created being an added benefit to the area. The lessons learnt through this project have recently been incorporated into a JICA project that also plans to establish improved emergency response facilities in rural areas.

# Annex A: Terms of Reference

**United Nations Development Programme**



**Terms of Reference**

**Job Title:** International Consultant (Team Leader) to undertake the Final Evaluation of the ADA/UNDP Project

**Project name:** “Promotion of climate change and disaster risk reduction solutions in the water and civil protection sectors for enhanced rural resilience”/CC&DRR;

**Duty station:** Home-based

**Contract type & Duration**: Individual Contract, up to 20 working days, January-March 2022

**Reporting to:** CC&DRR Project Manager and UNDP EEC Cluster lead

* **Context and background**

Considering its economic structure and geographic features, Moldova is highly vulnerable to climate change and is exposed to disasters due to hydrometeorological phenomena and natural hazards. While drought and floods are among top hydro-meteorological hazards caused by extreme weather and climate events, due to the current and projected abnormal high temperatures leading to water scarcity, the incidence of forest fires is increasingly posing a threat to natural ecosystems, the agricultural system, and human settlements.

Such high exposure is due to the country’s dependence on rain-fed agricultural production, which is tied to climate, making it the most vulnerable of all economic sectors. This is primarily due to the shortage of water for agricultural needs and limited resources and capacities to plan and put in place water storage facilities for irrigation needs in rural communities of Moldova, especially, since climate projections show larger rainfall events in the future, which could supply such facilities.

Climate scenarios also indicate the country is strongly trending towards becoming more arid. Unfortunately, rural communities experience a capacity deficit in terms of fire prevention, preparedness, and timely response, mainly due to the liquidation of over 400 equipped and capacitated firefighting units. It resulted in increased response time and lower awareness of fire risks by the rural population, subsequently leading to considerable increase in loss of life, property, and affected ecosystems. It is widely accepted that rural women are disproportionately affected by fires due to them being mostly engaged in cooking in unsafe cook stoves and collection of firewood in ecosystems that might be at high risk of fires.

Against this background, the CC&DRR project aims to increase resilience and adaptive capacities of rural communities to climate change and disasters through improved water storage infrastructures and disasters risk reduction measures. The project is supporting implementation of climate-smart water management solutions for agriculture, flood management, fire prevention and expansion of community-based rescue/firefighting teams in rural communities of Moldova with the purpose of reducing the exposure and vulnerability of the rural communities to climate change and disaster risks.

The project duration is December 01, 2018 – March 31, 2022 and is being implemented by UNDP with financial assistance provided by the Austrian Development Agency (ADA) with funds of Austrian Development Cooperation, Ministry of External Affairs of Estonia and with contributions from Local Public Authorities.

**The project outcome, outputs and major activities are as follows:**

Expected outcome: strengthened local policies, capacities and infrastructure which enables climate and disaster resilient development at the community level.

The project activities are clustered around 2 major outputs intended to produce impact in 5 districts of Moldova, in the Central (Hincesti, Criuleni and Ungheni districts) and Southern (Leova and Cantemir) regions.

*Output 1 – Adaptation interventions in the water sector for agricultural purposes and flood management demonstrated and local climate change related policy frameworks in place in a selected number of districts;*

Under the first output 2 major activities are implemented:

1.1. Mainstream climate change adaptation and disaster risk management priorities into local development planning frameworks in a participatory and gender-sensitive manner with intention to widely involve various stakeholders ranging from private sector to vulnerable groups (out of which 50% will be women) into policy and decision-making over priorities that affect their well-being; and

1.2. Pilot water storage infrastructures in 5 districts of the country to enhance adaptation to climate change in the water and agricultural sectors by supporting with grants at least 15 farmers, including women, to put in place climate-smart water systems, such as for instance, water storage basins.

*Output 2 – Community-let climate and disaster management capacities improved for risk reduction, prevention and timely response;*

Under the second output 2 major activities are implemented:

2.1 Establish Community-based rescue and firefighting brigades in the most vulnerable and risk exposed districts of the country which are seen as an instrument for resilient community development that will cover up to 10-20 km radius with maximum intervention time of 15 minutes; and

2.2 Conduct capacity development for climate and disaster response local teams and raise awareness towards building a culture of safer living in order to ensure that the performance of the climate and disaster response local teams in the target communities is exercised at its full capacity and that the local population have an enhanced understanding of the response patterns in case of disasters.

* **Purpose and objectives of the evaluation**

**Purpose:**

The purpose of this assignment is to assess and present the achievements of project results, conclusions and lesson learned including appropriate recommendations for effective implementation of future interventions that can be further integrated into UNDP Moldova Environmental portfolio to move the adaptation process forward thus, the final evaluation will serve as both learning and steering purpose.

**The objective of the final evaluation:**

. The objective of this assignment is to conduct an evaluation of the overall project progress against the outcome, outputs and indicators of achievement as mandated by the project donor (ADA) and stipulated in the project document / logical framework matrix in line with [Guidelines for Project Evaluations of ADA](https://www.entwicklung.at/fileadmin/user_upload/Dokumente/Evaluierung/Evaluierungs_Leitfaeden/Guidelines_for_Programme_and_Project_Evaluations_ADA_2020.pdf) and [UNDP’s Evaluation Guidelines](http://web.undp.org/evaluation/guideline/?utm_source=EN&utm_medium=GSR&utm_content=US_UNDP_PaidSearch_Brand_English&utm_campaign=CENTRAL&c_src=CENTRAL&c_src2=GSR&gclid=EAIaIQobChMI9dfr3cvj9AIVhKZ3Ch212QiuEAAYASAAEgImDvD_BwE).

Emphasis should be put on their coherence to the stated deliverables and whether these produced the intended impact.

The evaluation shall be done against 4 selected OECD DAC Evaluation Criteria that should establish the relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, and sustainability of the project. The evaluation should also reflect the degree to which cross-cutting issues such as environmental sustainability, gender equality, human rights and social standards were addressed during project design and implementation.

The evaluation will also seek to identify the constraints encountered by the project regarding project design, implementation, monitoring, and adaptive management and analyze lessons learned and best practices pertaining to the strategies employed, and implementation arrangements. The evaluation should provide relevant recommendations which may be utilized to inform future programming.

Furthermore, the evaluation will explore the partnership opportunities harnessed by the project to drive the adaptation agenda of the country. The evaluation should provide recommendations for the eventual next phase of the project based on the findings of the evaluation process but also based on the results of the on-the-ground interventions. While reflecting on the replicability of the project interventions, indication of how these could contribution to the Paris Agreement and NDC implementation will be provided.

* **Scope**

The evaluation will cover the assessment of the key activities that have been implemented in the frame of the project.

**Timing:** The evaluation should cover the entire implementation period of the Project, i.e.., December 01, 2018 – March 31, 2022.

**Geographical area to be covered**: The assessment must cover the target communities from five districts: Hincesti, Ungheni, Cantemir, Leova and Criuleni districts.

**Thematic focus to be covered by the evaluation:** climate change adaptation measures and local capacity development for disaster reliance development in the target communities.

**Evaluation criteria:** Four (4) selected OECD/DAC evaluation criteria, i.e.., Relevance, Efficiency, Effectiveness, and Sustainability.

In addition to assessing the relevance, effectiveness, efficiency and sustainability of the project, the evaluation will determine the extent to which the project is contributing to address the cross-cutting issues of gender equality, environmental sustainability, human rights and social standards.

* **Evaluation Questions**

To support the analysis the following indicative questions are proposed:

***Relevance***

1. To what extent are the objectives of the project still valid for the partner country, the partner organization, and the beneficiaries? How do these contribute to the climate change adaptation agenda and priorities in the context of the Paris Agreement and assumed NDC?
2. Are the expected results/outputs of the project consistent with the outcome, immediate impact, and overall goal/impact (as part of the analysis of the log frame matrix/project theory?
3. Were the objectives of the project clear, realistic, and likely to be achieved within the established time schedule and with the allocated resources?

***Effectiveness***

1. To what extent has the project already achieved the expected outcome, outputs, and respective targets?
2. What have been the main contributing and challenging factors towards project’s success in attaining its targets? *(Also consider any which were possibly beyond the control of the project)*
3. How has the project successfully built or strengthened an enabling environment for local resilient livelihoods?
4. To what extent were the cross-cutting issues such as gender equality, environmental sustainability, human rights and social standards have been addressed in the design and implementation of the project and to what extent were recommendations from the ADA appraisals considered and implemented?[[19]](#footnote-19)

***Efficiency***

1. If applicable, to what extent were all items/equipment purchased and used as planned under this project/programme?
2. Was the project implemented in the most efficient way (time, personnel resources)? Have any issues emerged, if so which ones and why?

***Sustainability***

1. Regarding capacity development, to what extent will the project outcomes and flow of benefits are likely to continue after the project/external funding ends?
2. To what extent did the project forge partnerships and, as part of these partnerships, supported replicability of project benefits/results and advancement of the climate change adaptation agenda?
3. What were the major factors which influenced the achievement or non-achievement of sustainability of the project?
4. What needs to be done and/or improved to ensure sustainability?

* **Design, approach and workplan**

The evaluators should address steering and learning aspects that can be drawn from the project but addressing the evaluation criteria stipulated in the previous section including cross-cutting issues of gender equality, environmental sustainability, and human rights.

The evaluation design, approach and methods should adhere to the evaluation principles such as *impartiality, credibility and utility* including the quality standards in accordance with the [Guidelines for Project Evaluations of ADA](https://www.entwicklung.at/fileadmin/user_upload/Dokumente/Evaluierung/Evaluierungs_Leitfaeden/Guidelines_for_Programme_and_Project_Evaluations_ADA_2020.pdf) and [UNDP’s Evaluation Guidelines](http://web.undp.org/evaluation/guideline/?utm_source=EN&utm_medium=GSR&utm_content=US_UNDP_PaidSearch_Brand_English&utm_campaign=CENTRAL&c_src=CENTRAL&c_src2=GSR&gclid=EAIaIQobChMI9dfr3cvj9AIVhKZ3Ch212QiuEAAYASAAEgImDvD_BwE).

It is expected that evaluators will apply triangulation method in the process to ensure that multiply sources are used to enhance the credibility of findings. The data collection and analysis methods will be sufficiently rigorous to allow for a complete, fair, and unbiased assessment. All data collected needs to be disaggregated by sex.

**Note: The evaluation design and by extension the implementation should be in line with the national and World Health Organization key requirements during COVID-19.**

The evaluation consists of several phases:

* Elaboration of the Inception Report containing the evaluation framework, detailed evaluation methodology, work plan and logistical arrangements
  + - The Report should include all stages of the assignment with the detailed description of methods used interviews/meetings to be conducted. The draft outline for the Inception Report is as follows:

1. *Background, Purpose and Objectives*

*2. Evaluation Design and Approach*

*2.1. Methodology and Methods*

*2.2. Evaluation Matric*

*2.3. Data Collection instrument*

*2.4. Data Analysis*

*2.5 Limitations Risks and Mitigation Measures*

*3. Quality Assurance and Ethical Consideration*

*4. Workplan*

*5. Annexes*

* Work plan and methodology should be approved by UNDP Moldova.
* Evaluation should involve the following stakeholders (but not be restricted to): UNDP Moldova, Government officials involved in the project implementation, representatives from Local Public authorities and private sector beneficiaries from the target communities of the project, etc. A list of interviewees should be included into the work schedule submitted by the Consultant;

Evaluation should be done through a combination of techniques, including:

* Desk study review of all relevant project documentation;
* Extended interviews with project stakeholders, partners and beneficiaries;
* Meetings/interviews with project consultants and experts;
* Data triangulation and quality control;
* Field trips to project beneficiaries;

Alternative evaluation techniques can be suggested, including, but not limited to an online survey.

* Perform a comprehensive documentary analysis of the background documents as well as the project deliverables;
  + Evaluate the Project Concept and design. The Consultant will assess the project concept and design. He/she should review the problem addressed by the project and the project strategy, encompassing an assessment of the appropriateness of the objectives, planned outputs, activities and inputs as compared to cost-effective alternatives. The evaluators will assess the achievement of indicators and review the work plan, planned duration and budget of the project.
  + Perform a desk review of the documents elaborated during the project implementation. Evaluation should include but not be limited to the following list of documents:

1. Project proposal, including logical framework, timetable and budget;
2. ADA´s gender and social standards appraisals including any recommendation thereof;
3. Narrative progress reports presented to ADA;
4. [Guidelines for Programme and Project Evaluations of ADA;](https://www.entwicklung.at/fileadmin/user_upload/Dokumente/Evaluierung/Evaluierungs_Leitfaeden/Guidelines_for_Programme_and_Project_Evaluations_ADA_2020.pdf)
5. [UNDP Evaluation Guidelines](http://web.undp.org/evaluation/guideline/?utm_source=EN&utm_medium=GSR&utm_content=US_UNDP_PaidSearch_Brand_English&utm_campaign=CENTRAL&c_src=CENTRAL&c_src2=GSR&gclid=EAIaIQobChMI9dfr3cvj9AIVhKZ3Ch212QiuEAAYASAAEgImDvD_BwE).
6. Other documents as necessary.

* Conduct interviews/meetings with the project stakeholders, partners and beneficiaries according to the work plan provided;
  + Conduct the interview/meetings with the stakeholders, partners and beneficiaries according to the work plan and methodology provided;
  + Organize and conduct visit to 2-3 communities which were selected for the activities (list of communities is in annex 1);
  + Conduct interviews/meetings with the project consultants and experts (can be done remotely).
* Elaborate and present to UNDP Moldova the Evaluation Report.
* Evaluation report should be presented in English language and it should include the lessons learned and recommendations for the next phase of the project. A pre-final draft will be shared for comments and comments will be addressed in the Final Draft. It is expected that the evaluation/review team will present concrete recommendations which are addressed to the specific stakeholders and the filled in [Results-Assessment Form for Final Project Evaluations/Reviews.](https://eur03.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.entwicklung.at%2Ffileadmin%2Fuser_upload%2FDokumente%2FEvaluierung%2FEvaluierung_Templates%2FAnnex9_Results_AssessmentForm_Template_01.xlsx&data=04%7C01%7Cmaria.tarigradean%40undp.org%7Ccadf70bf8eae4c1e74c808d9d69bddce%7Cb3e5db5e2944483799f57488ace54319%7C0%7C0%7C637776787628862896%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C3000&sdata=JXv1jV0q3dW0S%2B2kO%2FpFlvUZLQjOW0xQlsO8qmHL6ow%3D&reserved=0)

The draft outline for the Evaluation Report is as follows:

1. *Executive summary*

*2. Introduction*

*3. Background and Context Analysis*

*4. Evaluation Design and Approach*

*4.1. Methodological Approach*

*4.2. Data Collection and Analysis Tools*

*4.3. Limitations, Risks and Mitigations Measures*

*5. Findings*

*6. Conclusions*

*7. Recommendations*

*8. Annexes*

All collected data need to be sex-disaggregated, to the extent possible.

**4. Evaluation management, deliverables, and timeframe**

Under the supervision of the Project Manager and EEC Cluster Lead, the International Consultant (Team Leader) with the assistance of the National Consultant (Team Member) will perform the following substantive duties:

Deliverables

1. The Inception Report, containing the evaluation framework, detailed evaluation methodology, work plan and logistical arrangements (due 5 workdays after signing the contract);
2. Draft Evaluation Report including annexes (due 12 workdays after signing the contract, no later than March 11, 2021);
3. Final Evaluation Report and the filled in in [Results-Assessment Form for Final Project Evaluations/Reviews (due 3 days after receiving UNDP comments on draft, no later than March 25, 2021).](https://eur03.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.entwicklung.at%2Ffileadmin%2Fuser_upload%2FDokumente%2FEvaluierung%2FEvaluierung_Templates%2FAnnex9_Results_AssessmentForm_Template_01.xlsx&data=04%7C01%7Cmaria.tarigradean%40undp.org%7Ccadf70bf8eae4c1e74c808d9d69bddce%7Cb3e5db5e2944483799f57488ace54319%7C0%7C0%7C637776787628862896%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C3000&sdata=JXv1jV0q3dW0S%2B2kO%2FpFlvUZLQjOW0xQlsO8qmHL6ow%3D&reserved=0)

All reports need to be written in English. The executive summary should summarize key findings and recommendations (three to five pages) and needs to be submitted as part of the final draft report. The findings and recommendations of the draft final report and final report must be structured according to the evaluation questions.

**Conditions of service and requirements**

Duration: up to 20 working days, during the period January-March 2022

Payment schedule:

30% - upon submission and acceptance of the evaluation Inception Report containing the evaluation framework, detailed evaluation methodology, work plan and logistical arrangements;

70% - upon submission and acceptance and of Final Evaluation report;

**5.** **Requirements for education and experience**

**Knowledge and educational background:**

1. University degree or equivalent background in relevant disciplines such as environment, social science, with specialized training in project management, monitoring and evaluation;
2. In-depth knowledge of theory-based evaluation approaches and ability to apply both qualitative and quantitative data collection methods and to uphold standards for quality evaluation;
3. Excellent analytical skills and demonstrated ability to formulate evidence-based conclusions and realistic and actionable recommendations;
4. Excellent communication (written and spoken), facilitation and knowledge-sharing skills;
5. Sound knowledge of the national development context, climate change and environment would be an asset;
6. Fluency in written and spoken English is required for this assignment.

**Experience:**

1. Not less than 5 years of experience in conducting or managing evaluations in the field of climate change and disaster risk reduction or a related field;
2. Proven experience on preparation of written reports in an accurate and concise manner, and public presentation skills;
3. Project evaluation experiences within United Nations system will be considered an asset;

**Note: Candidates that have been involved in the design and implementation of the project subject to evaluation shall not be considered.**

# Annex B. Evaluation Framework

The Terms of Reference, as well as UNDP’s and ADA’s Evaluation Guidelines, provide the basis for the evaluation framework, which in turn underpins and guides the whole approach. The Evaluation Questions given in the Terms of Reference (section 4 of the ToR) are structured following the standard OECD-DAC criteria (relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, sustainability). The questions from the Terms of Reference, together with some additional questions, can be found below:

| **Evaluation criterion** | **Evaluation questions** |
| --- | --- |
| **RELEVANCE** | |
|  | * To what extent are the objectives of the project still valid for the partner country, the partner organization, and the beneficiaries? How do these contribute to the climate change adaptation agenda and priorities in the context of the Paris Agreement and assumed NDC? * Are the expected results/outputs of the project consistent with the outcome, immediate impact, and overall goal/impact (as part of the analysis of the log frame matrix/project theory)? * Were the objectives of the project clear, realistic, and likely to be achieved within the established time schedule and with the allocated resources? |
| **EFFECTIVENESS** | |
|  | * To what extent has the project already achieved the expected outcome, outputs, and respective targets? * What have been the main contributing and challenging factors towards project’s success in attaining its targets? (Also consider any which were possibly beyond the control of the project) * How has the project successfully built or strengthened an enabling environment for local resilient livelihoods? * To what extent were the cross-cutting issues such as gender equality, environmental sustainability, human rights and social standards have been addressed in the design and implementation of the project and to what extent were recommendations from the ADA appraisals considered and implemented? |
| **EFFICIENCY** | |
|  | * If applicable, to what extent were all items/equipment purchased and used as planned under this project/programme? * Was the project implemented in the most efficient way (time, personnel resources)? Have any issues emerged, if so which ones and why? |
| **SUSTAINABILITY** | |
|  | * Regarding capacity development, to what extent will the project outcomes and flow of benefits are likely to continue after the project/external funding ends? * To what extent did the project forge partnerships and, as part of these partnerships, supported replicability of project benefits/results and advancement of the climate change adaptation agenda? * What were the major factors which influenced the achievement or non-achievement of sustainability of the project?   *Additional:*   * What needs to be done and/or improved to ensure sustainability? * Have improved systems been incorporated into state budgets? * Is adequate staffing and support being applied to continue processes? * Are risk management plans established, monitored and appropriate actions in place? |

# Annex C: Evaluation Matrix

| **Evaluation question** | **Indicators** | **Sources** | **Data collection methods** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Evaluation criterion: Relevance** | |  |  |
| 1. To what extent are the objectives of the project still valid for the partner country, the partner organization, and the beneficiaries? How do these contribute to the climate change adaptation agenda and priorities in the context of the Paris Agreement and assumed NDC? | 1.1. Evidence of alignment of project activities with country priorities (NDC, SDGs)  1.2. Linkages of the project with the national environmental priorities.  1.3. Alignment of the project actions with the needs and demands of the project beneficiaries. | UN Strategic documents and meetings with UNDP  Stakeholders (farmers beneficiaries, representatives of LPAs and district councils, GIES, local groups)  Thematic documents, e.g.: Environmental Strategy for 2014-2023, Strategy on Water Supply and Sanitation (2014-2028), etc. | Meetings (UNDP team),  Interviews with stakeholders, review of project implementation reports  Document review |
| 2. Are the expected results/outputs of the project consistent with the outcome, immediate impact, and overall goal/impact (as part of the analysis of the log frame matrix/project theory? | 2.1. Evidence of project results/outputs consistency with outcome/impact | Project documents (annual Progress Reports, M & E documents) | Meetings (UNDP team),  Interviews with stakeholders, review of project implementation reports |
| 3. Were the objectives of the project clear, realistic, and likely to be achieved within the established time schedule and with the allocated resources? | 3.1. The degree of “SMART”-ness of the project objectives | Project documents (annual Progress Reports, M & E documents) | Documents review |
| **Evaluation criterion: Effectiveness** |  |  |  |
| 1. To what extent has the project already achieved the expected outcome, outputs, and respective targets? | 1.1 Evidence project achieved expected outcome, outputs, project fulfilment against set targets | Project documents (annual Progress Reports, M & E documents )  Stakeholders (farmers beneficiaries, representatives of LPAs and district councils, GIES, local groups) | Meetings (UNDP team),  Interviews with stakeholders, review of project implementation reports  Site visits |
| 2. How has the project successfully built or strengthened an enabling environment for local resilient livelihoods? | 2.1 Contribution to: access to water for agricultural use, fighter-fighting capacity increase in the target communities | Project documents (expert reports, Community Climate and risk management profiles and plans)  Meetings with stakeholders (project experts, farmers beneficiaries), | Meetings (interviews with Board members, project management)  Document review (comparing proposed objectives with results) |
| 3. To what extent were the cross-cutting issues such as gender equality, environmental sustainability, human rights and social standards have been addressed in the design and implementation of the project and to what extent were recommendations from the ADA appraisals considered and implemented? | 3.1 Contribution to: gender-sensitivity and participation in resource allocation. Evidence of alignment with Environmental, Gender and Social Standards in planning, procurement, and management of the project | Project documents ( appraisals, international standards and country recommendations, project implementation reports)  Project Experts | Interviews (with gender-expert, project management)  Document review (comparative analysis, evaluation of recommendations implementation)  Site visits and discussions with project beneficiaries. |
| 4. What have been the main contributing and challenging factors towards project’s success in attaining its targets? *(Also consider any which were possibly beyond the control of the project)* | 4.1 Factors which influenced the project delivery and its achievements and reasons for deviations.  a) PMU staffing  b) COVID-19 pandemic impact through limitations on meetings, travel and cost increases | Project budget, project reports, documents produced  Stakeholders (project staff, management) | Meetings (interviews with project team and stakeholders)  Document review |
| **Evaluation criterion: Efficiency** | |  |  |
| 1 If applicable, to what extent were all items/equipment purchased and used as planned under this project/programme? | 1.1 Evidence of efficient procurement and utilization of project resources and alignment with the project plan | Project budget, project reports, documents produced)  Stakeholders (project staff, management) | Meetings (interviews with project team and stakeholders)  Document review  Site visits |
| 2 Was the project implemented in the most efficient way (time, personnel resources)? Have any issues emerged, if so which ones and why? | 2.1 Adaptive management measures applied  2.2 Good use of human and financial resources | Progress report  Meetings with stakeholders (project experts, outside project experts, mayors, district council representatives) | Interviews with stakeholders  Document review  Site visits |
| **Evaluation criterion: Sustainability** | |  |  |
| 1 Regarding capacity development, to what extent will the project outcomes and flow of benefits are likely to continue after the project/external funding ends? | 1.1 Evidence on financial resources of local and private actors allocated | LPAs meetings minutes and decisions)  Stakeholders (LPAs and district council representatives), | Interviews (selected representatives of participants based on questionnaires)  Documents and desk review (watching tv programs, comparing proposals)  Site visits |
| 2 To what extent did the project forge partnerships and, as part of these partnerships, supported replicability of project benefits/results and advancement of the climate change adaptation agenda? | 2.1 Effective stakeholder involvement and partnerships building  2.2. Evidence of resources mobilisation  2.3 Follow up actions to capitalize on achievements and replication of the initiative | Consultations minutes, comments from communities, tv programs),  Stakeholders  Representatives of community, local decision-makers | Interviews (selected representatives of participants)  Documents and desk review (watching tv programs, comparing proposals with final drafts of plans) |
| 3. What were the major factors which influenced the achievement or non-achievement of sustainability of the project?  *Additional*  *4. What needs to be done and/or improved to ensure sustainability?*  *5. Have improved systems been incorporated into state budgets?*  *6. Is adequate staffing and support being applied to continue processes?*  *7. Are risk management plans established, monitored and appropriate actions in place?* | 3.1 Factors which influenced the project sustainability | Project documents (progress reports).  Steering decisions  Project team/ stakeholders  Recipient communities and beneficiaries | Meetings  Documents review  Site Visits |
| **Evaluation criterion: Logframe Indicators from Project Document** | | |  |
| Output 1 Indicator 1: LPAs from 5 communities have gender sensitive climate and disaster risk management priorities integrated into approved local development strategies | 1.1 Five LPAs have approved local development strategies with gender sensitive climate and disaster risk management priorities | Document review (list of participants, draft documents, draft proposals, comments provided), meetings with stakeholders (selected participants, experts, LPAs reps, independent experts) | Interviews (selected participants, independent experts on the process and plans), documentation (checking gender, social, institutional representation, comparing materials with good practices, checking evaluation forms results) |
| Output 1 Indicator 2a: Area of agricultural land with access to water for irrigation as a result of constructed precipitation accumulation basins. | 1.2a: Precipitation water storage capacity of 120,000 m3 | Document review (technical documents), meetings with stakeholders (farmers’ beneficiaries, project experts), and site visits (all waters basins) | Documentation (comparing technical data, registration with observations, calculations), and site visits (visual observations of water basins) |
| Output 1 Indicator 2b: Number of hectares of agricultural land with increased resilience to drought due to stored run-offs for irrigation. | 1.2b: At least 120 ha of agricultural land with increased capacity to withstand droughts | Technical documents  Stakeholders such as farmers, beneficiaries, and project experts  Site visits | Documentation (comparing technical data, registration with observations, calculations)  Meetings with stakeholders  Site visits (visual observations of all water basins) |
| Output 1 Indicator 2c: Increased agricultural productivity and resilience due to enabled access to irrigation as a result of project intervention | 1.2c: Beneficiaries’ perception of the quality of their production and their capacity to withstand severe drought conditions is increasingly positive compared to baseline situation. | Technical documents  Stakeholders such as farmers, beneficiaries, and project experts | Document review  Interviews (with all farmers’ beneficiaries, project experts) |
| Output 1 Indicator 3: Number of officials from LPAs, heads of public institutions and private sector (disaggregated by sex) with better knowledge of inclusive and gender sensitive climate resilient local development planning | 1.3: 50 officials from 5 LPAs, heads of public institutions and private sector including women and men, with capacity to integrate inclusive and gender sensitive climate and disaster risk management. | Technical documents (draft documents, draft proposals, list of participants, comments provided),  Stakeholders such as course and workshop participants, experts, LPAs reps, and independent experts | Document review (checking gender, social, institutional representation, comparing materials with good practices, checking evaluation forms results)  Interviews (selected participants, independent experts on the process and plans) |
| Output 1 Indicator 4: Number of farmers with enhanced understanding and knowledge to adapt to climate change and use of natural resources in a sustainable manner | 1.4: 50 (at least 15 women) benefit from capacity development on adaptation solutions in the agriculture and water sectors and the sustainable use of natural resources. | Documents such as lists of participants, agendas, materials, evaluations  Stakeholders such as trainers and selected participants | Document review (checking gender, social, institutional representation, comparing materials with good practices, checking evaluation forms results)  Interviews (selected participants, trainers based on questionnaires), |
| Output 2 Indicator 1: Number of rescue and firefighting posts established and properly equipped to respond timely to man-made and natural disasters | 2.1 Four new rescue and firefighting posts established, properly equipped and corresponding local budgets allocated and inclusive prevention plans | Documents (Decisions of reception of firefighting posts)  Stakeholders such as firefighting team members, mayors and experts  Firefighting posts | Document review  Interviews (mayors, selected communities mayors, selected firefighters)  Site visits to observe fire trucks and firefighting posts |
| Output 2 Indicator 2: Number of communities benefitting from increased protection from natural and man-made disasters due to capacitated rescue and firefighting teams including inclusive prevention measures | 2.2 55 communities (and their population) from 4 districts benefit from increased protection from capacitated rescuer and firefighting teams. | Documents (local communities’ decisions to participate, minutes of joint meetings, decisions to allocate finance, district council decision to allocate resources)  Stakeholders such as mayors, regional firefighting stations, firefighters, and GIES representatives  Firefighting posts | Document review (observation, checking data from documents, collecting data from documents, calculating gender equality)  Interviews with selected stakeholder representatives  Visits to firefighting posts and communities |
| Output 2 Indicator 3: Number of rescue and firefighting staff (sex disaggregated) employed and professionally trained | 2.3 40 permanent jobs (10 jobs per rescue/ firefighting unit) created resulting in additional income for 40 families in Moldova. | Documents (decisions and minutes of local/regional councils, employment contracts, list of training participation, agendas and materials),  Stakeholders (mayors, selected firefighters, GIES district offices, trainers, selected training participants) | Document review (observation, checking data from documents, collecting data from documents, calculating gender equality)  Interviews (selected stakeholders representatives, selected participants and selected firefighters),  Visits to firefighting posts |
| 2.3 40 persons (women and men) benefitted from professional capacity development trainings in the area of climate change and disaster risk prevention and response |

# Annex D: Questions used in interviews

Note: These questions are intended mostly as a checklist to ensure that all focus areas are covered in an interview. It is not envisioned that the questions be asked in a chronological order.

* What is your role/relationship with the project?
* What are the main achievements of the project?
* So do you have any recommendations as to what could have been done better or more efficiently?
* Would there be reasons to prolong the project? If yes, why and what activities should be undertaken?
* What steps have been taken to ensure replication of the concept?
* Who pays for the operation of the new systems? Who supplies equipment, spare parts, transport and so forth?
* Who is responsible for ensuring that the systems work?
* Was staff trained? If yes, who, where and how?
* Do you have standard operating procedures, record of water quantities stored and released, instructive posters on the walls for operations, etc.?
* Is the system cost effective?
* Please provide all information on co-finance to date, including both cash and in-kind expenditure and a summary of the items on which the co-finance has been spent.
* What are you doing to ensure sustainability of the project’s processes and impacts?
* Do you think that the system(s) are sustainable?
* Who are the partners (i.e., people actively working to the same goals) on the project?
* Who would you say *owns* the project?
* Who are the stakeholders in the project (i.e., people that are involved in the project, either actively or passively or will be affected by the project in some way)?
* Who are the main beneficiaries?
* Have there been sufficient meeting and other communication regarding the project?
* Has experience been exchanged with the other similar projects? If yes, please provide details.
* Did the project listen to your advice/ concerns/ requests for information?
* Who prepares the TOR for all contracting?
* Who signs the contracts?
* Is the project having any unexpected positive or negative impacts?
* How has it been working with a UNDP-ADA project?
* What are the strengths and weaknesses of the Project Document?
* Who are the project’s champions?
* Standard issues:
  + Project Management
  + Procurement rules and efficiencies
  + UNDP training/support
  + Financial audits
  + Backing up data and digital information
  + Team functionality
  + Staff turn over
  + If training is provided, how is training is now being used in job?
  + Environmental issues
  + Gender issues?
  + Social issues?
  + Human rights issues?
  + Resettlement issues?
  + Need to provide all information, including equipment, inputs, infrastructure, tracking tool data.
  + Reasons for any delays in the project implementation.
* How is the project aligned to the General Inspectorate for Emergency Situations policies?
* How is the project aligned to the Ministry of Agriculture, Regional Development and Environment policies?
* How is the project aligned to the UNDP and ADA goals?
* Has the project worked to train people and raise awareness? Who were the target groups? How is the project monitoring the outcome of their efforts?
* How has any changes in attitude and awareness affected project implementation, and how is it being used in the daily, professional lives of the target groups?

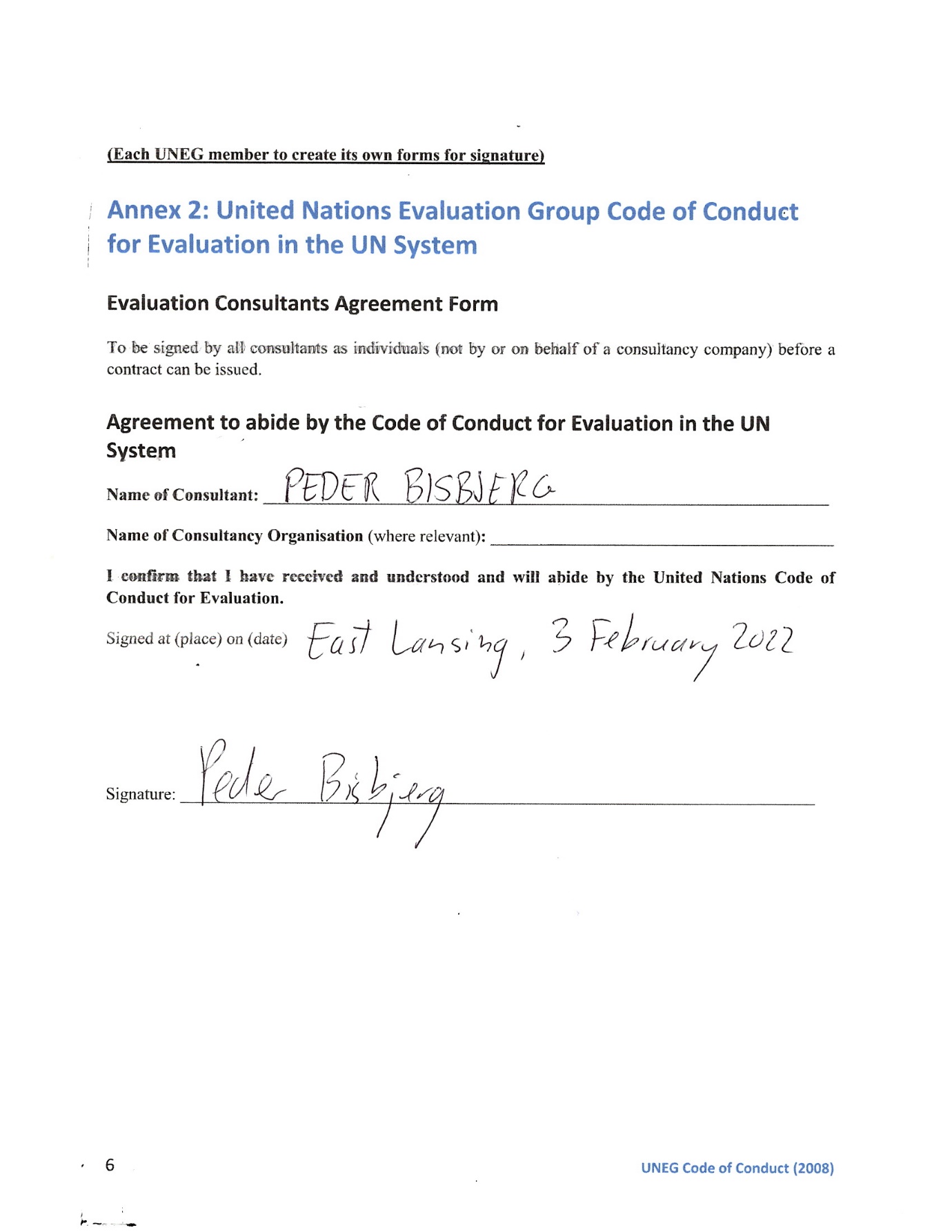
# Annex E: List of persons met

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **#** | **Organisation/Institution** | **Title** |
| 1 | General Inspectorate for Emergency Situations | Head and  Deputy head |
| 2 | General Inspectorate for Emergency Situations | Chief of Division, International Cooperation |
| 3 | EcoContact NGO | Program Manager |
| 4 | Water of Moldova Agency (MoE) | Chief of Division, Water Monitoring |
| 5 | BCI, contractor | Director |
| 6 | GȚ ”Popa Ilie” | Director |
| 7 | GȚ ”Ursu Constantin” | Director |
| 8 | ”Agro-Vet Consulting” SRL | Director |
| 9 | ”GG Prim” SRL | Director |
| 10 | ”Rotaru Lucia” GȚ | Director |
| 11 | “Binețe - Lux” SRL | Director |
| 12 | "Grand Depot", SRL | Director |
| 13 | ”Cand-Vas” SRL | Director |
| 14 | Concom RTCA SA | Director |
| 15 | CCDRR | Civil engineer, hydro |
| 16 | UNDP | Consultant |
| 17 | UNDP | Consultant |
| 18 | Cantemir district council | Chairperson |
| 19 | Cantemir district council | Chief of Finance division |
| 20 | Ungheni district | Chairperson |
| 21 | Leova district | Chairperson |
| 22 | Hincesti | Chairperson |
| 23 | Cantemir, territorial unit, GIES | Head of division |
| 24 | Ungheni, territorial unit, GIES | Deputy head |
| 24 | Pirlita Mayoralty | Mayor |
| 25 | Baimaclia Mayoralty | Mayor |
| 25 | Sarateni Mayoralty | Mayor |
| 26 | Sarata Galbena Mayoralty | Mayor |
| 27 | Todiresti, Mayoralty | Mayor |
| 28 | Agronomovca, Mayoralty | Mayor |
| 29 | Cirpesti mayoralty | Mayor |
| 30 | Tartaul mayoralty | Mayor |
| 31 | Drasliceni Mayoralty | mayor |
| 32 | UNDP Moldova | Programme Analyst, Environment and Climate Change Cluster |
| 33 | UNDP Moldova | Project Manager |
| 34 | UNDP Moldova | Programme Associate |
| 35 | GIES | Director |
| 36 | UNDP | Consultant |
| 37 | UNDP | National consultant |
| 38 | UNDP | Engineer |
| 39 | Coordination Office for Technical Cooperation Austrian Embassy, Chisinau | Head of Office&  Program Manager |
| 40 | UNDP | Water consultant |
| 41 | UNDP | Gender consultant |
| 42 | Pirlita | Participant training |
| 43 | Pirlita | Participant training |
| 44 | Pirlita | Participant training |
| 45 | Baimaclia | Participant training |
| 46 | Baimaclia | Participant training |
| 47 | Baimaclia | Participant training |
| 48 | Sarateni | Participant training |
| 49 | Sarateni | Participant training |
| 50 | Sarateni | Participant training |
| 51 | Drasliceni | Participant training |
| 52 | Drasliceni | Participant training |
| 53 | Sarata Galbena | Participant training |
| 54 | Sarata Galbena | Participant training |
| 55 | Sarata Galbena | Participant training |
| 56 | Estonian Development Cooperation | Head Representative |

# Annex F: List of documents reviewed

* The Project Document
* Project Annual Progress Reports
* Project Annual Narrative Report on Project Implementation
* Project Annual Work Plans
* Minutes of Project Board Meetings (in English and Romanian)
* *Facilitate the mainstreaming of climate change adaptation and disaster risk management priorities into local development planning frameworks in a participatory and gender-sensitive manner*, BCI (October 2020) [Preparation and implementation of community development plans]
* EIAs for the construction of Firefighting Stations
* Gender, Social, Environmental Health & Safety Monitoring Reports
* The UNDP Country programme document for the Republic of Moldova (2018-2022)
* *Strengthening Moldova’s Disaster Risk Management and Climate Resilience - Facing Current Issues and Future Challenges*, World Bank (June 2020)
* *UNDP Evaluation Guidelines* (revised June 2021)
* *Integrating Human Rights and Gender Equality in Evaluations*, UNEG Guidance Document (August 2014)
* *Guidelines for Programme and Project Evaluations*, ADA (July 2020).
* *Environmental, Gender and Social Impact Management Manual*, ADA (June 2018).
* *Human Rights Manual (Guidelines for Implementing a Human Rights Based Approach in ADC)*, ADA (July 2010).
* *Environmental, Gender and Social Standards (EGSS) Checklist*, ADA (undated).

# Annex G: Signed UNEG Code of Conduct form



Text, letter

Description automatically generated

# Annex H: Management Response Table

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Recommendation of the evaluation (insert number and brief title) (A) | Recommendation fully accepted (B) | Recommendation partially accepted B) | Recommendation not accepted B) | Recommendation partially accepted or not accepted, please, explain reasons (C) | Recommendation fully or partially accepted: please, define concrete measures to implement the recommendation (D) | Timeline for implementation (E)) | Name of the organisation and, department responsible for the implementation of the recommendation (F) | Current status of the implementation and date (G) |
| 1. Promote the development of climate and risk management strategies and action plans for their implementation in other rural communities, to support these in their efforts to mitigate droughts, flooding and fire risks. | YES |  |  |  |  | By the end of 2024 | Energy and Environment Cluster/UNDP CO | UNDP will explore opportunities for further supporting the Government in the improvement of policy framework related to DRM in the framework of new and/or on-going projects. |
| 2. Assist smallholder farmers in developing better water management plans and infrastructure, so that they can both decrease their vulnerability to droughts and open the possibility of growing higher value crops. | YES |  |  |  |  | By the end of 2024 | Energy and Environment Cluster/UNDP CO | UNDP will explore opportunities to assist smallholders’ farmers in developing water management plans and infrastructure in the framework of new and/or on-going projects. |
| 3. Establish firefighting post and raise awareness about fire safety in other districts. |  | YES |  | Given that the Project aims to promote disaster risk reduction measures and adaptation to climate change and increase local capacities as to increase the community resilience in the face of climate change, UNDP will continue its efforts to promote these measures at Community level for Action replication by local actors based on the example / results obtained in the project. UNDP will focus its efforts on raising awareness in this area and in other districts. |  | By the end of 2024 | Energy and Environment Cluster/UNDP CO | UNDP will explore opportunities to provide support to the Government as to enhance local disaster risk reduction capacities in other districts depending on their level of vulnerability, in the framework of new and/or on-going projects. |

# Annex I: Result Assessment Form

The complete RAF can be found as a separate file to this report.



# Annex J: Feedback Matrix

| **Comment provided by** | **to Report Section** | **Page** | **About** | **Comment text** | **Reaction Evaluator(s)** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| UNDP/Evaluation Manager | TOC | 4 | Annexes | Please update table of contents with RAF enclosure/annex as well once included. | The Results Assessment Form is now included in the Report as Annex I. |
| UNDP/Evaluation Manager | 1 | 6 | Structure of Executive Summary | ES: Includes the chapters 2-7 outlined in structure according to Guidelines. Included – pls revise as well. | The Executive Summary now has the same six headlines as sections 2 through 7 of the Evaluation Report. |
| UNDP/Evaluation Manager | 1 | 7 | Executive Summary | Please add such data if available (it supports the gender dimension to the evaluation process as well). | This has been done |
| UNDP/Evaluation Manager | 1 | 7 | Executive Summary | Please check and add if missed other stakeholders | This has been done |
| UNDP/Evaluation Manager | 1 | 7 | Executive Summary | Please include in brief on limitations – COVID19 perhaps? | A description of limitations is now included. |
| UNDP/Evaluation Manager | 1 | 7 | Executive Summary | Another important aspect regarding sustainability is that the community posts are included in the National Firefighting Posts network of GIES and subsequently the communication (calls for interventions) go through the National Service for Emergency Calls \*112 . Should/can this aspect be included/considered? | This is a very good point and is now included in the report (Executive Summary and Section 5.4) |
| UNDP/Evaluation Manager | 1 | 8 | Executive Summary | Please separate Conclusions from Recommendations. | This has now been divided into two subsections. |
| UNDP/Evaluation Manager | 1 | 8 | Executive Summary | Should be deleted as the project hasn’t developed water management plans. Perhaps the farmers can benefit from the community adaptation plans? If this is the case, pls review otherwise delete the section on WM plans. | Noted and the report has been updated accordingly. |
| UNDP/Evaluation Manager | 1 | 8 | Executive Summary | Kind request to separate Conclusions from Recommendations and list the recommendation only in brief in a separate bloc. | Conclusions from Recommendations are now separated. |
| UNDP/Evaluation Manager | 2 | 10 | Introduction | This chapter should include:  1. Clearly defined purpose why is it conducted, **who needs** the information and **how the information will be used**.  2. The objectives and scope  3. Reference to quality standards and criteria applied.  Reflected but should be a little bit restructured, in accordance with the ToR and guidelines, please revise accordingly. | Maria kindly made this adjustment. |
| UNDP/Evaluation Manager | 3 | 11 | Background and Context Analysis | This chapter should include:  1. Description of context of key social, political, economic, demographic and institutional factors that have a direct bearing on the programme or project being evaluated.  2. Scale and complexity of the project, components, geographic coverage, purpose, mng. and budget.  3. Key stakeholders involved in the design and implementation, and their role  4. Description of Logic model, theory of change and/r expected results at different level  5. The implementation status of the project specifically, including any significant changes (adaptive management measures that have been applied and why and their results)  Reflected, few inputs/changes provided in terms of structure. Please review. | Section 3 has been reviewed to ensure all points are covered. |
| UNDP/Evaluation Manager | 3 | 13 | Background and Context Analysis | Please include in this section info ref. in brief for the following:  The key stakeholders involved in the design and implementation of the programme or project are mentioned, including implementing and other development partners, as well as their roles.  You may use: Prodoc, pag 24 (Stakeholder Engagement) | A subsection on Stakeholder Engagement has been added |
| UNDP/Evaluation Manager | 3 | 14 | Staffing of firefighting posts | Staff and volunteers at the community posts are non-professional FF, hence they are considered all volunteers firefighters in accordance with GIES regulation, as a statute/role. | Noted and reflected in the text. |
| UNDP/Evaluation Manager | 3 | 14 | Description of project districts | The intention was to provide info on geographic coverage and why the Project was implemented the respective areas as pilot areas? If yes, please adjust a bit from the perspective of high vulnerability to CC etc,.in brief. | The description of each district now also reflects their climate change vulnerabilities. |
| UNDP/Evaluation Manager | 4 | 15 | Evaluation Design and Approach | This chapter should include:  1. The methodological approach, including literature references - description and justification. –reflected but should be a little bit restructured.  2. A description of stakeholder’s consultation process in the evaluation, including the rationale for selecting the particular level and activities for consultation - This should be added  3. The actual assessment of the of the design, implementation and monitoring of the programme/project being evaluated with a view to sound gender and human rights analysis as well as actual results on gender equality, environmental sustainability, human rights and other fundamental principles of development cooperation through which cross-cutting issues are implemented. - this should be added  4. A description of how the approach chosen reflects the basic principles underlying ADA’s work as well as the human rights-based approach and the commitment to cross-cutting issues – this is reflected.  Reflected, some revision (restructure) is needed, please review. | The section has been slightly revised. |
| UNDP/Evaluation Manager | 4 | 15 | Evaluation questions | Suggest this part to be deleted as it is reflected above. | This part has now been deleted. |
| UNDP/Evaluation Manager | 4 | 17 | Data Collection and Analysis Tools | This chapter should include:  1. Data collection methods description and the rationale behind  2. Sampling frame is described  3, How data collection process reflected the basic ADAs principles (human rights and cross cutting issues)  4. Measures for quality of data, evidence or reliability, etc (certainty)  Reflected, some minor input is needed ref point 3 (data collection process/principles), please add. | The data collection and processing methodology is now described further. |
| UNDP/Evaluation Manager | 4 | 17 | Number of women contacted during evaluation | How exactly ? Please include in brief info to support this statement. Can the nr. of women interviewed be of help? If yes, pls add below. including other relevant supporting info to confirm that the principles were followed in the evaluation process at this point. | A description and supporting information is not part of the narrative. |
| UNDP/Evaluation Manager | 5 | 18 | Findings | This chapter should include:  1. Relevance to evaluation criteria  2. description of findings specifically that should be based on evidence  3. Triangulation done and documented  4. Findings should be well presented (numbered), coherent and logical  5. ADAs principles and commitments to HBR and cross-cutting issues  Well reflected, minor inputs, RAF needed/should be included. Please include. | The RAF is now included as Annex I |
| UNDP/Evaluation Manager | 5 | 18 | Findings | Please include the RAF overview/scoring here (table mode):  Achievement of Results – Score  F (Fully achieved)  L (Largely achieved)  P (Partially achieved)  N (Not achieved)  NAP (not applicable)  NAS (not assessed) | The RAF is now included as Annex I |
| UNDP/Evaluation Manager | 5.1 | 19 | The GIES *Disaster Risk Management Strategy* | Disaster Risk Management Strategy is missing, this policy document does not exist yet, it is however planned/under way. You may refer to the State of Play/Assessment (Analiza Situationala) conducted by UNDP regarding DRM and the National Communication to the UNFCCC that reflect the narrative that you’ve included. | The document now more correctly reflects that this is currently a draft *Disaster Risk Management Strategy.* It was mistakenly thought the final document had been issued. References have been made to the other two comments in the document. |
| UNDP/Evaluation Manager | 5.2 | 30 | Direct contributions to maintenance from LPAs | Direct Contribution to construction only.  Please include info referring the Maintenance as well: the project supported the LPA to allocate the funds from local budgets for maintenance as well, the team has drafted the Inter-community Association Agreement and has prepared the annual budget (estimates). This agreement was used and signed by participating LPAs and GIES that ensures the post operations. (The annual budget for FF maintenance is approximately half million of MDL) | Noted for the correction, direct contribution only.  The funding of the operation is included in section 5.4, Sustainability. |
| UNDP/Evaluation Manager | 5.4 | 35 | Sustainability | Please add the following aspects regarding sustainability:  1. Ensuring Maintenance via signed Inter-community association agreement as commented above  2. The posts are included in the national network of GIES to ensure coordination and function accordingly. LPAs are indeed final responsible for the operation, but GIES is responsible for compliance in the field. | Now included in the section. |
| ADA PPM |  | 6 | participatory approach | How was the participatory approach applied? Please specify. | Revised, and specified in the report.   The approach is described in detail in section 4.  The description in the Executive Summary has  now been expanded. As can be seen in Annex E, the Evaluation Team interviewed representatives from all groups of stakeholders, including the staff of the organisation  responsible for the project, members of the  target population, community officials,  interested citizens, and NGOs. This information is now reflected within the report. |
| ADA PPM |  | 7 | Four (4) selected OECD/DAC evaluation criteria, i.e.., Relevance, Efficiency, Effectiveness, and Sustainability | Sentence is not coherent. Please revise. | Noted, sentence was revised as follows:  "The evaluation was done against the four (4) selected OECD/DAC Evaluation Criteria that establish the Relevance, Efficiency, Effectiveness, and Sustainability of the project. " |
| ADA PPM |  | 7 | will determine | Written in future tense, but evaluation already took place. | Noted, sentence was revised as follows:  "In addition to assessing the relevance, effectiveness, efficiency and sustainability of the project, the evaluation determined the extent to which the project is contributing to address the cross-cutting issues of gender equality, environmental sustainability, human rights, and social standards." |
| ADA PPM |  | 9 | be | Typo – delete “be” | The correction has been made, the sentence  now reads: “Hence small farms with access  to a dependable water supply are no longer  at risks during droughts, …” |
| ADA PPM |  | 9 | knowledge obtained in this project can be used as described below. |  | No comment text provided, though the sentence was slightly revised and now reads:   This evaluation concluded with a number of three recommendations for implementation of future interventions that can be further integrated into UNDP Moldova Environmental portfolio to move the adaptation process forward. Therefore, the knowledge obtained in this project can be used as described below. |
| ADA PPM |  | 17 | choice of respondents, as for instance interviews with the training activities, the gender balance | Please further describe how respondents were selected apart from applying the criterion of gender balance. | Noted, selection process of respondents further described/expanded in the 4.2. Section covering the Scope of the respondents. |
| ADA PPM |  | 18 | 5. Findings | Please kindly indicate which evaluation question is answered where in the text. This could be done for instance in a matrix indicating the evaluation question and the respective number of the finding/page number where it can be found. | Noted, a table has been inserted within the report (Findings section) indicating the specific sections and pages in which each evaluation question was addressed by the team of evaluators. |
| ADA PPM |  | 18 | Firstly, it will be examined to what extent the project meets the needs and priorities of Moldova and the participating national institutions, Secondly, the project’s alignment with the strategies of both the Austrian Development Agency and the United Nations are explored. | It seems as if evaluation questions 2 and 3 on relevance are not tackled within this section. They might be discussed in another chapter, though. If so, please indicate. | Noted, as indicated in the previous response, the  answers to the questions are judged to belong  under Effectiveness and Efficiency. The  responses to these questions are found in  sections 5.2 and 5.3 |
| ADA PPM |  | 59 | Annex E: List of persons met | Please anonymise the list of interview partners. | Noted, the list of interview partners was anonymised including the Feedback Matrix containing comments both from UNDP and ADA as well. |

1. <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Moldova> [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/NY.GDP.PCAP.CD> [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. Information taken from the Project Document [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. Information taken from the Project Document [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. Project Document, section 4.2 [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. The planned tenth water basin, in Sofia, Ungheni District was not built, as the direct beneficiary was unable to fulfil his required contribution for the construction, i.e. land area. The beneficiary, due to financial reasons, submitted for sale the land intended for the construction of the basin. [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. The planned fifth firefighting post, at Drasliceni in the Criuleni District was not built, as the local authorities were unable to allocate their required financial contribution for the construction of the post. [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. In must be observed that the selected Evaluation Team does not meet ADA’s requirement where teams with more than one evaluator should be “gender balanced and diverse. “ [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
9. *Integrating Human Rights and Gender Equality in Evaluations,* UNEG Guidance Document (August 2014) Quote below from page 4. [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
10. *Environmental, Gender and Social Impact Management Manual*, ADA (June 2018). [↑](#footnote-ref-10)
11. *Human Rights Manual (Guidelines for Implementing a Human Rights Based Approach in ADC)*, ADA (July 2010). [↑](#footnote-ref-11)
12. The Paris Agreement is an international treaty on climate change that was adopted in 2015. It covers climate change mitigation, adaptation, and finance. [↑](#footnote-ref-12)
13. This finding is confirmed in the *State of Play/Assessment* (Analiza Situationala) conducted by UNDP regarding Disaster Risk Management and the National Communication to the UNFCCC. [↑](#footnote-ref-13)
14. CEDAW Recommendations for Moldova (2020) <https://tbinternet.ohchr.org/_layouts/15/treatybodyexternal/Download.aspx?symbolno=CEDAW/C/MDA/CO/6&Lang=En> [↑](#footnote-ref-14)
15. UN Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights recommendations for Moldova (2017) <https://tbinternet.ohchr.org/_layouts/15/treatybodyexternal/Download.aspx?symbolno=E/C.12/MDA/CO/3&Lang=En> [↑](#footnote-ref-15)
16. UN <https://tbinternet.ohchr.org/_layouts/15/treatybodyexternal/Download.aspx?symbolno=E/C.12/MDA/CO/3&Lang=En> [↑](#footnote-ref-16)
17. Environmental Impact Assessment and Risk Management & Sustainability Plans [↑](#footnote-ref-17)
18. *Strengthening Moldova’s Disaster Risk Management And Climate Resilience - Facing Current Issues and Future Challenges*, World Bank (June 2020) [↑](#footnote-ref-18)
19. Recommendations related to gender, environment, human rights and social standards resulting from the donor’s relevant appraisals are a part of the project documentation list to be reviewed during the Final Evaluation process. [↑](#footnote-ref-19)