

Final Evaluation Report

Strengthening Integral Local Development by Building the Capacities of the Municipal Authorities in Timor-Leste

Mid-term Evaluation

**Submitted to
UNDP Timor-Leste**

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ACRONYMS

CPD	Country Programme Document
CSC	Civil Service Commission
CSO	Civil Society Organization
DIM	Direct Implementation
ICT	Information and Communications Technology
INAP	Instituto Nacional da Administração Pública
IOB	Institute of Business
KII	Key Informant Interview
MSA	Ministry of State Administration
MTE	Mid-Term Evaluation
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
OECD-DAC	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development's (OECD) Development Assistance Committee
PB	Project Board
QBS	Questionnaire Based Survey
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
TL	Timor-Leste
TOR	Terms of Reference
UNCDF	United Nations Capital Development Fund
UNDAF	United Nations Development Assistance Framework
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNEG	United Nations Evaluation Group
UNSDCF	United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The project “Strengthening Integral Local Development by Building the Capacities of the Municipal Authorities in Timor-Leste”¹ is implemented by UNDP. The project’s overall objective is to contribute to Timor-Leste’s sustainable development. More specifically, it aims to support the deconcentration and Decentralization process, bringing governance, public administration, and services closer to people, for both women and men, giving special attention to the needs and priorities of people living in vulnerable situations. The Project has three major components: a. strengthened capacity of the National Parliament in Timor-Leste, b. improved capacity of municipal public servants to deliver services at the local level, c. improved capacity of local institutions to collect, analyze and use reliable and timely socio-environmental disaggregated data (development of a Municipal Portal).

This report contains findings, lessons learnt and recommendations from the Mid-Term Evaluation (MTE) of the UNDP Decentralization project conducted between August 9th until September 15 2022. The evaluation adopted primarily two approaches including participatory and consultative approach and contribution analysis approach. The overall evaluation criteria were based on the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) Development Assistance Committee (DAC) criteria. Specifically, it evaluated progress towards achievement of outputs and objectives of the Decentralization project based on a set of criteria as outlined in the MTE terms of reference (TOR). These criteria include relevance/coherence, effectiveness, efficiency and sustainability. Below is a summary of the MTE findings

Summary of Findings

A1- Relevance: The Decentralization project was found to be ‘Relevant’ to the national level priorities, UNDAF, UNSDC Framework, UNDP’s Strategic and Country Plans and SDGs. Relevance dimension of the project was found as one of the strongest attributes of the project. The project is also highly aligned and relevant with Article 72 of the Constitution of the Democratic Republic of Timor-Leste ‘Local government is constituted by corporate bodies vested with representative organs, with the objective of organising the participation by citizens in solving the problems of their own community and promoting local development without prejudice to the participation by the State’; Three of the objectives of the Decentralization of the Public Administration as stipulated in the National Strategic Development Plan; and to UNDAF (2015-2020) outcome 2 & 4, UNSDF’s Outcome 5 as well as with SDGs 1, 2, 5, 16 & 17

A2 – Effectiveness: While the level of progress and achievement of the targets varies from one output to the other, the project has shown significant progress in all 3 outputs nonetheless. Output 1 (Parliament Support) in particular, has made immense progress with most major targets achieved. Output 2 and 3, despite delays caused by the covid-19 pandemic, have made some significant progress too and have partially achieved some of the targets. For example, under output 2, a multiple partner-based mechanism is underway to develop and implement e-Learning platform (UNDP, CSC, INAP, Coursera, IOB etc.) aimed towards improving the capacity of the local authorities to deliver public services. Under output 3, the development and implementation of Municipality Portal

¹ Project is referred as UNDP Decentralization project in the Mid-Term Evaluation report

was found to be a major milestone achieved. Also, gender sensitive awareness campaigns were perceived as beneficial and important to motivate and sensitize stakeholders to use the portal.

Need assessment exercises resulted in provision of basic ICT training to Municipal civil servants and deployment of ICT labs. The ICT training was found to be an unintended positive contribution of the project whereby the importance of building the foundation before high tech interventions have been realized.

Despite these hard-won progresses and milestones, there remains concern and key activities under output 2 and 3 to be completed. For example, although the concept of e-Learning platform is good, considering the envisaged e-Governance programme, the use of Coursera as content provider has been assessed as providing short-term solution, that too with certain gaps. Targets related to the training of the Municipalities staff under output 3 is yet to be achieved.

A3 – Efficiency: Overall efficiency of the Decentralization Project was found as ‘efficient’ even though the level of efficiency varies from one component to the other including implementation arrangement, M&E, partnerships and budget efficiency

A4- i) Project Board – Although the overall role of project board was found to be ‘efficient’ in terms of the periodic supervision of the progress, discussing the risks and challenges and take decisions, it is however worth mentioning finding that significant gap in the board meeting has resulted in slowing down the actual implementation of the project;

ii) PMU – Overall, stakeholders have shown acknowledgement and appreciation for the PMU’s project management role in general, and coordination support in particular. However, the overall efficiency of the PMU was found to be hindered by high staff turnover.

iii) M&E – The M&E function of the project, particularly in terms of progress reporting and field visits were assessed as one of the stronger links of the project implementation mechanism. The assessment indicated that the M&E team revised results framework has made it simplified with more clearer linkages with the country level plans. Stakeholders have also shown satisfaction about UNDP’s M&E function, particularly reporting mechanisms.

iv) Communication & Visibility – The project is backed by a well-documented communication strategy/plan. However it was found during the stakeholder consultations that while visibility of output 1 (Parliament Support) & output 3 (Municipality Portal) have been widely acknowledged, the project interventions and activities under output 2 requires more and continued visibility and communication to the wider audience.

v) Budget Efficiency – The overall planned vs. actual expenditure stands at approximately 71% (till March 2022) which indicated relatively efficient expenditure pattern, particularly considering the challenge imposed by the Covid-19 pandemic and related restrictions. This is more evident from the fact that planned vs. actual expenditure was just 54% in year 2020-21 and it was increased to 97% in 2021-22.

A5 – Partnership Strategy: UNDP’s partnership strategy for the Decentralization project has been found as one of the stronger attributes of the project. As guided by the ProDoc and the Project Board, UNDP has developed and

maintained multiple level of partnerships that includes government sector organizations, private sector entities and academia etc

A6 – Impact: Although the impact of any project is usually assessed sometime after the completion of the project, UNDP’s decentralization project has yielded promulgation of the two laws on decentralization: Law on Local Power and Administrative Decentralization, and the Law on Municipal Elections. Stakeholders consulted validated and acknowledged the extraordinary support and contribution of UNDP/the Decentralization Project in this achievement. These 2 laws, though being an integral targets of the project results framework, it has formed a long term foundation to guide the historic decentralization process in Timor Leste.

A7 – Sustainability: Due to the intrinsic design of the project whereby the primary objective of all 03 components/outputs is to build capacities of Government departments and community, it is ‘likely’ to sustain the project results and mechanism. However, there is no clear or coherent sustainability and exit strategy found, both in the Pro-Doc as well as any other documents. Moreover, no evidence is found that any such exit strategy development is currently under process.

A8 – Gender Mainstreaming, Youth, & PWDs: Ensuring gender equality, inclusion of youth and PWDs were found to be given considerable focus in the project, particularly with reference to the inclusion in trainings. Both at the design (Results Framework in Pro-Doc) and implementation stages, gender equality was given a priority to address the gaps observed and grievances reported during the capacity need assessment.

Lessons Learned

Based on the identified and discussed lessons learned for each output, following is a summary of key lessons learned for the overall project:

Ensuring commitment and ownership of Municipalities and stakeholder in all phases of project is vital to ensure long-term sustainability.

Any reform in general and ICT related in particular requires a well thought-out change/adaptive management strategy from the beginning.

Bringing all partners, particularly multiple level government entities requires continued coordination and follow up efforts, time and strategic planning.

The project involved multiple ICT/digital solutions should ensure that aspect of any integration & interoperability is not ignored. It helps in avoiding duplication as well as technical issues at an advanced stage.

Project dealing with decentralization process in a country from its preliminary stages require flexibility and adaptability in every evolving scenario.

To implement a reform project that required both technical as well as administrative support, high turnover results in loss of institutional memory as well as adverse impact on implementation efficiency.

Recommendations

Having identified key findings and lessons learned as outlined above, the following set of recommendations are put forward for further consideration and / or follow up by UNDP Decentralization Project:

Transition Phase (01 Year No-Cost Extension)- Keeping in view that unfinished targets of the project are on track with mechanisms under process to complete them, it is recommended that the project should be extended for 1 additional year. This shall allow the project to continue and complete the implementation of work in progress with review of following issues:

Putting in place clear and concise plan and quality assessment for connectivity in the targeted Municipalities. This should include the reliance on TIC Timor's intranet facilities as much as possible. Where it is unavoidable to use internet, it is recommended to conduct regular connectivity quality assessment and service provider with better quality results should be given priority for uninterrupted connectivity

Ensuring internal coherence and integration between the components of the project by reviewing and wherever possible integrating silo ICT/technology related as well as municipality level public service delivery interventions early on to avoid interoperability and integration issues of envisaged e-Governance in the future. For instance, it was found that 'One Stop Shop' is envisaged for Municipalities related public services as well as Municipality Portal is about to become fully functional. It is highly recommended that wherever possible, all digital components of One Stop shop, Municipality Portal, e-learning platform should be integrated as 'one stop digital platform' for the information and public services

While keeping identified partners' portfolio intact, Review the modalities of implementing e-Learning mechanism 'NOW' to avoid 'Future' issues. For instance: a) In short term-Negotiation with Coursera for more flexible module management including optimum download of content for translation as well as offline modules. It is vital to smoothly develop and implement envisaged standard and customized modules in local language b) Alternatively and for medium to long term, use the standard modules of Coursera and develop local content and modules (by IOB or specialists).

Review the scope of IOB in customizing learning modules where more specialist and sensitive content is already in practice by the relevant stakeholders. This is for instance, relevant in the case of developing and implementing PFM module whereby Ministry of Finance may not be willing to fully hand over the content to IOB as well as allow IOB to implement and certify the training outcomes.

Consider linking e-Learning platform with Municipality Portal to avoid multiple forums and have 'one stop platform' for municipality (Future e-Governance one stop digital window for Municipalities). As indicated above, it is highly recommended to revisit the strategy to implement and maintain all existing ICT tools that are related to decentralisation in silos. Rather 'one stop digital platform' (e.g. enhanced Municipality Portal) is highly recommended whereby all information, public services, e-learning tools etc should be available on 'single platform'. It will assist in avoiding medium to long term interoperability and integration issues

While CSC's effort to include e-learning modules are commendable, a clear strategy and policy approval to sustain ICT and Municipality Coordinators should be pursued now to ensure sustainability. It is thus, recommended that

UNDP should negotiate with CSC and MSA to create small ICT/IT unit in each municipality with permanent ICT staff to ensure sustainability and ownership. It was found that TIC Timor has at least 1 personnel deputed in each municipality. However, the role of these personnel is more focused towards troubleshooting rather than 'whole of system' IT support

Develop and implement a clear South-South cooperation strategy to learn from best practices and leapfrog certain stages of Municipalities' capacity building in general, e-governance and digital tool for local governments in particular.

UNDP Decentralization Project – Phase II -Keeping in view the importance of the success stories of phase 1 as well as common and consensus based feedback of stakeholders that UNDP's support should be continued in the areas of i) Continued and sustained legal and technical support to Parliament for implementation of decentralization process ii) enhanced sensitization, awareness and advocacy activities for communities and citizens about decentralization iii) building capacities of Municipalities in implementation of decentralization, It is recommended a Phase II of the project should be envisioned.

It is also recommended that the new phase should have simplified results framework based on following high level two area of outputs Output 1- Capacity Building & Technical Support & Output 2-E-Governance

Implementation and Management – i) Keeping in view that UNDP may continue to support government in the implementation of long decentralization process, Project Management Unit for project should be strengthened with more secured contract to avoid staff turnover. It will bring efficiency as well as assist in building institutional and knowledge memory; ii) The Project Board Meetings should take place more frequently, considering the complexities of context for planning and implementation of decentralization process; iii) Alternatively, A mid-level implementation layer 'Technical Advisory Committee' (Between PB & PMU) should be formed that will assist in overseeing and steering routine activities of the project. It may comprise of for example DRR, DG etc. It is recommended that PB can delegate implementation related decision making to this body while keeping the strategic and high-level decisions intact. However, it is also acknowledged that in case of formation of such body, a clear TORs needs to be developed under the guidance and direction of the Project Board.

Sustainability – i) A clear, coherent, and comprehensive sustainability/exit strategy should be developed covering political, socio economic, institutional and financial components of the project sustainability; ii) The sustainability strategy should be complemented by a well-planned and targeted 'resource mobilization strategy' to ensure timely financial sustainability of the programme.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. Context

Decentralization in Timor-Leste

Timor-Leste is a village-based society where the majority (69%) of the population currently lives in rural areas with limited access to governance processes and service delivery. Some of the most pressing issues affecting rural communities are poverty, social exclusion, unemployment, access to and availability of basic services, and lack of capacity. Those who belong to the most vulnerable social groups, such as people with disabilities, women (particularly domestic violence survivors and single mothers), youth, children, the elderly, and people with mental illness, have the most serious challenges in accessing basic services. The problems highlight the importance of efficient and effective decentralization in the country to close these gaps at the local level.

The Constitution of the Republic of Timor-Leste has progressive provisions regarding Decentralization. In that it stipulates the principle of decentralization of public administration and the creation of local government vested with representative organs as the basis for territorial organization and management to: (i) encourage and organize public participation in addressing collective issues facing their respective community; and (ii) promote local development without prejudice to the participation by the State. To this end, the government have introduced several initiatives and reforms beginning with the definition of the municipalities and identification of their respective capitals in 2009, enactment of several Decentralization Laws including a decree law defining competencies of the municipalities in 2016 and Law on Local Power and Administrative Decentralization and Municipal Election Law in 2021.

1.2. Project Background

The project “Strengthening Integral Local Development by Building the Capacities of the Municipal. Authorities in Timor-Leste”² is implemented by UNDP. The project’s overall objective is to contribute to Timor-Leste's sustainable development. More specifically, it aims to support the deconcentration and Decentralization process, bringing governance, public administration, and services closer to people, for both women and men, giving special attention to the needs and priorities of people living in vulnerable situations. The Project has three major components: a. strengthened capacity of the National Parliament in Timor-Leste; b. improved capacity of municipal public servants to deliver services at the local level; c. improved capacity of local institutions to collect, analyze and use reliable and timely socio-environmental disaggregated data (development of a Municipal Portal).

² Project is referred as UNDP Decentralization project in the Mid-Term Evaluation report

The project contributes to outcome five of the United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (UNSDCF) 2021-2025 and the UNDP Country Programme Document (CPD). The outcome is about empowering the excluded people of Timor-Leste to claim their rights, including freedom from violence, through accessible, accountable, and gender-responsive governance systems. The initiative complements UNDP's governance efforts, particularly in parliament, elections, and rural poor and vulnerable populations' access to justice.

Co-funded by the European Union and UNDP, the total project duration is three years, starting from March 20, 2020. The total budget of the Project is 3.98M USD. The project is being implemented under the direct implementation (DIM) modality of UNDP in partnership with the National Parliament and the Ministry of State Administration (MSA). It covers 12 out of the 13 municipalities of the country.

The Project Board (PB) provides strategic guidance and oversight to the project and is co-chaired by the Minister for State Administration and UNDP Resident Representative. The Board has representation from the National Parliament, National Authorization Agency, and the UNDP. The project is managed by a team of national and international staff, and the project staff are based in 12 municipalities.

1.3. Project objectives

The overall objective of the project is to contribute to Timor-Leste's sustainable development. More specifically, it aims to support the deconcentration and Decentralization process, bringing governance, public administration, and services closer to people, for both women and men, giving special attention to the needs and priorities of people living in vulnerable situations.

1.4. Project Outputs

- ❖ **Output 1:** Enhanced capacity of Commission A and C2 at the National Parliament to perform informed discussions and increase awareness of the Timorese population of the Decentralization process.
- ❖ **Output 2:** Improved capacity of the local authorities to deliver public services including the development and implementation of computer-based modular courses for public servants.
- ❖ **Output 3:** Local authorities have improved access to municipal data for planning, monitoring, and better service delivery by using ICT tools

2. EVALUATION OBJECTIVES & APPROACH

2.1. Evaluation Approach

This Mid-Term Evaluation (MTE) primarily adopted two approaches that are, participatory and consultative approach and contribution analysis approach. The former was selected based on the requirement for the evaluation as outlined in the MTE TOR. This approach ensured close engagement with all relevant stakeholders including project management team, implementing partners and direct beneficiaries both male and female of the project activities. Through this approach, the evaluation captured the views of the direct beneficiaries and key stakeholders both on their initial thoughts and expectations, and their feedback following project intervention. Their overall views on project activities, inputs, progress, challenges, and risks to successful implementation were also documented and communicated through the findings of the report.

The latter approach sought to identify and confirm whether particular outcomes are attributable to a deliberate and well-thought-out process and actions guided by the theory of change the project adopts from the outset. In this regard, it sought to demonstrate, taking into account the ongoing efforts and any challenges both internal and external the project had to overcome or is currently dealing with, the causal link or the contribution the project has made through its programs and activities to particular outcomes the project has accomplished up to date. In turn, this informed and enabled the evaluation to further confirm the validity of the project design vis-à-vis the actualization of the theory of change in terms of a set of evaluation criteria as outlined in the project document.

2.2. Evaluation Criteria

The overall evaluation criteria were based on the OECD DAC criteria and are aligned with the (United Nations Evaluation Guidelines (UNEG) 'Ethical Guidelines for Evaluation' as well as UN – Independent Evaluation Office's best practices. Specifically, it evaluated progress towards achievement of outputs and objectives of the Decentralization project based on a set of criteria as outlined in the MTE TOR. These criteria include relevance/coherence, effectiveness, efficiency and sustainability. Under each of the criteria, the evaluation developed a series of key question to guide the inquiry into and the evaluation of the project's progress and achievements.

Table 1: Evaluation Criteria

No.	Criteria	Information to be captured
1	Relevance / Coherence	Under this criterion, the evaluation evaluated the extent to which the project's goals and objectives is harmonized with Timor-Leste Strategic Development Plan, UNDP Strategic Plan and the Sustainable Development Goals
2	Effectiveness	Under this section, the evaluation evaluated the extent to which the project's activities, outputs and objectives contributed to the country's programme outcomes and outputs, the SDGs, the UNDP Strategic Plan and national development priorities
3	Efficiency	Focused on the cost-effectiveness and timely delivery of the project outputs as well as the role of project management and structure on the delivery of project outcomes and objectives

4	Sustainability	Focuses on the institutions and the mobilization of required resources including financial resources to sustain the project achievements into the future
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In addition, the evaluation also included assessment of the project's partnership strategy and cross cutting themes (**Annex B includes list of guiding questions for each of the criteria mentioned above**).

No.	Criteria	Information to be captured
5	Cross-cutting theme	Focuses on the project's contribution to other specific goals such as gender equality and women empowerment as well as for empowerment of youth and vulnerable communities
6	Partnership strategy	Focused on the strategies adopted by the project and relevant partners and assess the extent to which the current arrangement either contribute to or hinder the successful delivery of the program goals and objectives

2.3. Evaluation Objectives

This mid-term evaluation is part of the project's ongoing efforts to assess progress towards the achievement of the project objectives and outputs. It forms part of the project's larger evaluation framework that includes a final evaluation of the project that will be aimed at assessing the performance of the project since its inception.

Primary Objective

To undertake a mid-term evaluation of the project outputs in terms of their: relevance; effectiveness; efficiency; sustainability; gender; theory of change or results/outcome map; stakeholders and partnership strategy. The mid-term evaluation also provides recommendations for any improvements that can be made for follow up by the project.

Other Objectives

- To assess the effectiveness and coherence of the coordination mechanisms in project implementation
- To identify what worked well and what did not and draw lessons for future programming, organization, and strategy
- To document and/or harvest project outcomes and provide detailed contextual information and analysis on the thematic project areas
- To promote further accountability and transparency of and/or in the project and among key stakeholders
- To encourage greater ownership of project outcomes among all relevant parties involved in the project not least among the beneficiaries
- To bolster further collaboration among the project team, key stakeholders and the beneficiaries

2.4. Inception Meeting/Call

Upon the award of a contract, a virtual inception meeting was held on Monday, 8th August 2022. The meeting was initiated with a brief introduction of the UNDP Decentralization project by the UNDP team. National consultant also participated in the meeting. The overview was followed by discussions on expectations about key deliverables, and timelines. In addition, the inception meeting call served as an opportunity to discuss management approach and coordination mechanisms of the assignment and to request relevant important documents. After the meeting, UNDP also shared available information as well as documents pertaining to the UNDP Decentralization project for desk review and document analysis.

3. EVALUATION METHODOLOGY

The following sections provide relevant details about the **evaluation methodology** finalized based on the TORs for undertaking the assignment and findings from the Desk Review.

PREPARATION OF THE EVALUATION

3.1. Desk Review and Document Analysis

The foundation of the desk review was the background documents shared by the UNDP team. A review of the documents such as UNDP Decentralization project documents, results framework, revised framework and indicators, progress reports, minutes of project management board meetings, etc., facilitated a basic understanding of the project and enabled an effective assessment design.

Keeping in view some of the attributes found in the desk review and while evaluating the project under the basic criteria of the midterm review, the assessment was also based on 3 primary parameters:

- I. How has the UNDP Decentralization project performed so far with reference to its results framework, related indicators, and targets.
- II. How and if the project can cope with and realign with the evolving unforeseen impact caused by the Covid-19 Pandemic and/or any changing context that UNDP Decentralization project has experienced since its inception?
- III. **The evaluation report also assesses and describes any lessons learned, challenges faced and furnish recommendations.** Capturing key lessons learned was vital to inform any adjustments and realignment of the UNDP Decentralization project for the remaining years. Enquiring and documentation of lessons learned has been done through multiple sources to validate the findings and observations. This includes the key lessons learned that are already documented, findings and observations that will be gathered through Key Informant Interviews (KIIs), and documents review survey. The scope of assessment aimed at the following basic questions:
 - ❖ How and to what extent, the key lessons learned so far have been documented and discussed?
 - ❖ What didn't go so well and what can we learn from that?

- ❖ What should be done to improve the project planning and implementation in the remaining years of the project?

A basic list of documents reviewed during this stage is provided in the **Annex A**.

3.2. Programmatic Scope of the Assessment

The programmatic scope of the evaluation exercise primarily focused on assessing the projects' progress on key outputs, indicators, and targets of the results frameworks.³

3.3. Development of Assessment Tools

The TORs and the Desk Review of the documents provided an informed foundation for the development of assessment tools. Keeping in view that stakeholder consultations involve high level government officials, parliamentarians as well as support of a National Consultant to fast-track data collection, a mix of data collection tools were adopted to gather data from multiple sources. Initially 4 data collection tools were envisaged. However, after consultations with the UNDP team and considering the communicated logistical issues to conduct Focused Group Discussions (FGDs), one tool was dropped and data collection used the following three techniques:

- Key Informant Interviews (KIIs)
- Questionnaire Based Survey (QBS)
- Direct Observations/Site Visits to the Municipalities

The above-mentioned tools were user friendly and provided a combination of qualitative and quantitative information. **Annex B** provides a detailed '**Evaluation Questions Matrix**', relevant/related data collection methods and sources for the evaluation mission. These questions also provided the guiding basis for the interviews.

DATA COLLECTION FROM THE FIELD

3.4. Data Collection

While undertaking the data collection process, it was ensured that both quantitative and qualitative information is gathered through a combination of primary and secondary sources. Data collected from one source was triangulated with the other to ensure accuracy and validity. An intelligent mix of both approaches offered more quality and depth to ensure greater understanding of the phenomenon. This, therefore, presented information about the nature, extent, effect, and impact of the issues in the targeted area.

3.4.1 Key Informant Interviews (KIIs)

To consult the relevant project stakeholders, key informant interviews were conducted. **Annex B** provides a list of questions that guided the independent key informant interviews under the criteria of

³ Results frameworks and related indicators are derived from the proDoc and revised results framework.

relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, coherence, sustainability, cross cutting themes and UN's partnership strategy. As a minimum, following key stakeholders/categories were initially identified through the documents review:

- Representatives from UNDP Programme and project staff
- Representative from the Ministry of State Administration
- Parliamentarians
- Representative from the Civil Service Commission
- Representative from the Institute of Public Administration, and
- Trainees/Staff of Municipalities etc.

Complete list of stakeholder consultation is included in the Annex D

3.4.2 Questionnaire Based Survey (QBS)

To further validate the collected data as well as to accommodate stakeholders that were not available or accessible for the KIIs, a Questionnaire Based Survey (QBS) was administered to complement other data collection tools and to capture data from a range of stakeholders of the project. It assisted in further validating and triangulating data gathered from the range of project documents as well as data gathered during KIIs. **Annex E** provides the basic set of questions for QBS, divided into 2 parts⁴: i) for UNDP project staff including programme staff and M&E officer, ii) for beneficiaries (Municipality Staff). Although municipality staff provided feedback on questions during the site visits of the National Consultant, UNDP staff provided comprehensive feedback on QBS

3.4.4 Direct Observations/Site Visits

To validate the support provided to the municipalities, site visits were proposed to make Direct Observations. It included visit to the project sites, observing work in progress as well as wherever possible, meet staff to assess their involvement, participation, and ownership of the project. **Annex C** provides preliminary screening questions for the data collection tool. National consultant conducted site visits to 4 Municipalities based on geographical coverage as well as level of project interventions. The site visits assisted in the validation of the project interventions and beneficiaries' feedback about the projects.

Following 4 municipalities were visited

- Liquica
- Bobonaro
- Manufahi
- Baucau

3.5. Data Analysis

The process of data analysis was intensive as it aimed to analyze both quantitative and qualitative data from broad stakeholder base, outcome, and various outputs; analytical tools were applied which permit comparisons. **Qualitative data** gathered during the course of the assessment was transcribed and

⁴ A combined QBS is included as Annex E. However separate QBS was circulated for each of the 2 identified category of respondents

categorized according to the various themes and topics explored with clear conclusions drawn. The **quantitative analysis** included percentages, comparisons, planned vs actual quantitative targets (as per the UNDP Decentralization project's results framework), etc.

Development of Evaluation Report

3.6. Presentation on the Initial Findings

Based on the initial data collected and analyzed through the data collection activities of documents interviews, QBS and site visits, a debriefing session was held on 14th September 2022, with UNDP to present the preliminary findings and seek inputs/feedback at the end of the field mission.

3.7. Evaluation Limitations

Although the evaluation was conducted in a structured manner, there were certain limitations in gathering the data during the evaluation exercise:

- Although initially planned, Focused Group Discussions were not undertaken owing to related logistical issues communicated by the UNDP Project Team. The participants (project beneficiaries) were spread over many localities and it would not have been possible to mobilize them to travel to a particular location for FGD.
- The representation and number of beneficiaries during site visit of a municipality were limited
- It is not designed for evaluating impacts as impact can only be assessed some periods after the project ended.

To tackle these limitations, the evaluation methodology was designed in a way that survey was envisaged as an additional and back up tool to further validate data gathered from other sources, and a brief analysis of the immediate impacts of the project activities on project recipients is also included in this report. International Consultant with the help of a National Consultant and UNDP team proactively conducted detailed KIIs with the key stakeholders as well as comprehensive documents review. A comprehensive range of documents were made available by the UNDP that includes progress reports, Project Board Minutes, as well as published articles and materials. Moreover, National Consultant conducted interviews with key government stakeholders and beneficiaries during the site visits. The beneficiaries' feedback was also recorded during these site visits as much as possible. Overall and as a result, considerable data was gathered from multiple sources for triangulation and analysis.

EVALUATION FINDINGS

3.8. Relevance

Finding: The Decentralization project was found to be ‘Relevant’ to the national level priorities, UNDAF, UNSDCF Framework, UNDP’s Strategic and Country Plans and Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Relevance dimension of the project was found as one of the strongest attributes of the project.

3.8.1. Relevance with the National Level Priorities

The Decentralization project is highly aligned and relevant with **Timor-Leste’s Constitution & Strategic Development Plan (SDP) 2011-2030**. More specifically, direct linkages can be drawn with:

- ❖ Article 72 ‘Local government is constituted by corporate bodies vested with representative organs, with the objective of organising the participation by citizens in solving the problems of their own community and promoting local development without prejudice to the participation by the State’
- ❖ Three of the objectives of the Decentralization of the Public Administration as stipulated in the National Strategic Development Plan, i.e. (i) The promotion of the strong state institutions in the territory; (ii) The creation of the new opportunities for democratic participation; (iii) To ensure effective and efficient provision of public services.
- ❖ Strategy for Decentralization developed by the Ministry of State Administration (MSA) in 2019.

Since the three components of the project are strongly interlinked and build on each other, all related project were found to be highly relevant to the above stated national level priorities.

3.8.2. Relevance with UNDAF (2015-2020), UNSDCF (2021-2025) & UNDP Strategic Plan (2022-2025)

The Project was found to be aligned and contributing to the following outcomes of the UNDAF

UNDAF Outcome 2: People of Timor-Leste, especially the rural poor and vulnerable groups, derive social and economic benefits from improved access to and use of sustainable and resilient infrastructure.

UNDAF Outcome 4: State institutions are more responsive, inclusive, accountable, and decentralized for improved service delivery and realization of rights, particularly of the most excluded groups.

UNSDCF (2021-2025)

Outcome 5: By 2025, the most excluded people of Timor-Leste are empowered to claim their rights, including freedom from violence, through accessible, accountable, and gender-responsive governance systems, institutions, and services at national and sub-national levels.

UNDP Strategic Plan (2022-2025)

UNDP is a key stakeholder involved in the decentralization process of Timor-Leste. The project therefore, benefits from UNDP's previous experiences and draws on lessons learned in the past.

More specifically, in this regard the project contributes to the following objective of the UNDP Strategic Plan (2022-2025) in the area of Governance

- ❖ Address emerging complexities by “future-proofing” governance systems through anticipatory approaches and better risk management.

CPD (2021-2025)

The following outputs of the Decentralization project are aligned with and contributing to the Timor-Leste CPD (2021-2025).

Outputs 3.1.: Excluded groups have increased participation and representation in democratic institutions and local governance processes

Output 3.2: Capacity for planning, monitoring, and accountability of national and municipal institutions and CSOs improved.

3.8.3. Relevance with the SDGs

Objectives and outputs of the Decentralization project were found to have indirect linkages with SDGs 1, 2, 5 and 17. However, more effective and direct linkages and related contributions of the project were found with the **SDG 16- *Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all, and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels.***

More specifically, the project was found aligned with the:

- **Target 16.6:** Develop effective, accountable and transparent institutions at all levels.
- **Target 16.7:** Ensure responsive, inclusive, participatory and representative decision-making at all levels.
- **Target 16.A:** Ensure public access to information and protect fundamental freedoms, in accordance with national legislation and international agreements.
- **Target 16.C:** Promote and enforce non-discriminatory laws and policies for sustainable development.

3.9. Coherence

Internal Coherence

Finding: The internal coherence of the Decentralization project with regards to its linkages and design synergies with other projects of the UNDP in the country as well inter output alignment was found to be strong. For instance, UNDP's role in the decentralization process of Timor-Leste has been crucial since early 2000s when UNDP in partnership with UNCDF provided technical support to the Ministry of State Administration's Local Development Programme (LDP), which was later scaled up in 2010. Moreover, the inter output alignment of the project was also found as stronger attribute. Output 1 was based on providing technical support to the Parliament to develop foundation laws on decentralization whereas the related output 2 and 3 are focused on preparing and sensitizing Municipalities as well as communities with enhanced capacities to implement these laws.

External Coherence

Finding: Through the Decentralization project, UNDP's external coherence to improve the cooperation and strategic partnership with the government, linkages with the national priorities defined in the UNDP Strategic Plan as well as SDGs was found to be stronger attributes of the project.

Finding: However, although considerable number of established partnerships with external development actors are found, project's linkages and demonstrated synergies with other development actors and partners could have been further strengthened.

3.10. Effectiveness

During the evaluation exercise, the UNDP Decentralization project's results framework, defined in the project document along with the changes indicated in the minutes of the Board meetings (such as addition of sub-indicators) provided the basis for the assessment of projects effectiveness. It is worth mentioning that the results framework has a clearly and well-defined set of outputs with specific baseline and target indicators.

Overall Key Summary of Findings

Finding: On the basis of assessment conducted for the 3 outputs, UNDP Decentralization project has shown significant progress in all 3 outputs. However, it is worth mentioning that the level of progress and achievement of the targets varies from one output to the other. Comparatively, Output 1 (Parliament Support) has shown immense progress with major targets achieved.

Although progress under output 2 (Capacity Building of Municipalities) & Output 3 (Municipality Portal) has recently come back on track with major pre-requisite activities are underway, some of the targets are partially achieved.

Output 1- Enhanced capacity of Commission A and C⁵ at the National Parliament to perform informed discussions and increase awareness of the Timorese population of the decentralization process

Output Indicator	Baseline	Final Target	Target achieved as of September 2022	Progress
Strategic Indicator 1.1: % Of MPs in Committees A and C better informed about policy options on decentralization (disaggregated by sex)	0	100% of MPs (women 36%) in committees A and C are better informed about policy options on decentralization	11	11 of committee A
Sub-indicator 1.1.1: # Of experts recruited to support informed and transparent parliament discussion.	0	3	3	3 experts are recruited (including a Team Leader at 50% capacity) to provide technical advisory support for informed and transparent parliament discussion of the new legal framework and bills
Sub-indicator 1.1.2.: # Of reports and technical documents developed to support the parliament debates regarding the decentralization framework.	0	3	2	2 Technical Reports, the last Technical report could not be developed as the bill on Municipal Finance was not tabled in the parliament
Strategic Indicator 1.2: The extent to which the National Parliament has increased efforts to improve public awareness of decentralization. (Scale from 1 to 4) (a) at least 3 TV debates organized,	0	4 Points	3 Points	3 points

⁵ Commission A: Committee on Constitutional Affairs and Justice, and Commission C: Committee on Economy, Finance, and Anti-Corruption

1 point; (b) at least 8 radio debates organized, 1 point; (c) at least 1000 booklets about the local power and the new legal framework distributed 1 point. (d) at least 20 civic education videos to keep citizens informed about Parliament business during the emergency state restrictions,				
Sub-indicator 1.2.1: # Of TV debates to explain the content and impact of the decentralization legislative package distributed to civil society, scholars, and law students	0	3	2	2 T.V. Debates have been conducted
Sub-indicator 1.2.2: # Radio debates and Self-explanatory booklets about inclusive local governance and the new legal framework.	0	8 radio debates 1000 booklets	6 Radio debates 500 booklets	6 Radio debates 500 booklets
Strategic Indicator 1.3: The National Parliament maintains business continuity, crisis management, and engagement with the citizens, particularly during the crisis (Yes/No indicator))	0	Yes	Yes	Yes
Sub-indicator 1.3.1: # Of Parliament members attending virtual meetings	0	50	50	50 Attended using virtual softwares
Sub-indicator 1.3.2: # Of Press briefings organized by the Parliamentary Secretariat.	0	31	25 # 1 Uma Komunikasaun	25 Press briefings # 1 Uma Komunikasaun

Summary of Findings

Finding 1: As indicated in the progress update above, most of the output related indicators and targets are either achieved or one the course to be achieved. **The progress towards output 1 was found as the strongest attribute of the project**

Finding 2: Overall, the project has achieved major progress and success under Output 1, widely acknowledged and appreciated by the stakeholders. The success of this output is attributed mainly to the endorsement of the two laws on decentralization: Law on Local Power and Administrative Decentralization, and the Law on Municipal Elections. The project is on track to meet the remaining targets of the output within the anticipated period. Provision of technical experts under this output

enabled the project to enhance capacity of the Commission A to perform informed discussions on the Bills: Local Power and Administrative Decentralization, and Municipal Elections.

Finding 3: The establishment of Communication House (*Uma Komunikasaun*) has been assessed as a high-level success story, in terms of its impact, visibility and more importantly its sustainability. The project has provided technical support in the form of three (3) advisors, facilitating TV & Radio debates, and press releases etc., also aimed to increase awareness among the general population about the Bills. Stakeholders have shown immense interest and suggestion for the continued support of the UNDP in both drafting of and implementation of the related laws and legal framework.

Output 2- Improved capacity of the local authorities to deliver public services including the development and implementation of computer-based modular courses for public servants

Output Indicator	Baseline	Final Target	Target achieved as of September 2022	Progress
Strategic Indicator 2.1: Availability of gender-sensitive capacity needs analysis within municipal bodies focusing on public financial management and information and communication technology	0	Yes	Yes	Completed
Strategic Indicator 2.2 # Of Public/civil servants working at Municipal and National levels that finalized the course	0	240	0	Project has been able to sign memorandum of understanding (MOUs) with the Civil Service Commission (CSC), the Institute of Public Administration and the Ministry of Finance. The CSC and INAP as the key public sector institutions in building the capacity
Sub-indicator 2.2.1: # Of Computer-based training modules developed	0	6	0	Development of the 7 modules is in progress
Sub-indicator 2.2.2: # Of Municipalities that have enabling environment for online capacity building of public servants through (a) computer labs and/or (b) video-conferencing facilities.	0	12	12	All 12 municipalities have been verified to have an enabling environment for online capacity building of public servants through (a) computer labs and/or (b) videos-conferencing facilities
Strategic Indicator 2.3: # Of Municipalities that are enabled to maintain COVID-19 protocols in their interactions with citizens.	0	12	12	All 12 municipalities in Timor-Leste have been enabled to maintain COVID-19 protocols in their interactions with citizens, with the right equipment.

Finding 1: Overall, the results and related targets and indicators for the Output 2 have been partially achieved, hindered by delays such as Covid-19 pandemic however, progress has recently been made to bring it back on track. To this end, a multiple-partner based mechanism is underway to develop and implement e-Learning platform (UNDP, CSC, INAP, Coursera, Ministry of Finance (MOF), IOB etc.) aimed towards improving the capacity of the local authorities to deliver public services.

This capacity building mechanism includes the development and implementation of computer-based modular courses for public servants. All the institutional arrangement has been made regarding the development, translation and launching of the digital learning courses.

Finding 2: Although the concept of e-Learning platform is good, considering the envisaged e-Governance programme, the use of Coursera as content provider has been assessed as providing short-term solution, that too with certain gaps.

For instance, it was found that envisaged translation of Coursera modules in Tetum by the IOB might face technical issues. It was also found that the role of IOB in customizing and facilitating sensitive technical modules like PFM was not perceived as relevant and/or appropriate by the related stakeholders. Connectivity and skill to access Coursera as well as learning platform has been found as big challenge, hence require a clear implementation roadmap. Moreover, it was found that stakeholders/participants are more likely to respond and have confidence in the e-learning program if the platform reflects higher level of ownership by the government. Consequently, a landing page with logos from the government entities, namely the CSC, INAP, MOF and MSA are now under construction.

This also gives way to question the sustainability of e-learning modules from Coursera in the medium to long term. The highlighted issues of translation, connectivity and the long term sustainability of the Coursera modules, for example, the transfer of modules, ownership and teaching mechanisms may trigger and lead to an immediate review of scope and modality of e-learning platform and roles & responsibilities of concerned parties to avoid future technical and administrative issues.

Finding 3: Need assessment exercises resulted in provision of basic ICT training to Municipal civil servants and deployment of ICT labs. This was found to be an unintended positive contribution of the project whereby the importance of building the foundation before high tech interventions have been realized.

As of August 2022, 968 civil servants from 12 municipalities were reported to have benefitted from the training; of which 26 percent were women participants and 74 percent were men participants. The post-training assessments revealed participants' satisfaction with the trainings and eagerness to gain ICT skills. The improved ICT skills of the Municipal civil servants are expected to significantly contribute to the effective implementation of the e-learning initiative as well as the Municipal Data Portal (MDP).

Output 3- Local authorities have improved access to municipal data for planning, monitoring, and better service delivery by using ICT tools

Output Indicator	Baseline	Final Target	Target achieved as of September 2022	Progress
Strategic Indicator 3.1 # Of Municipalities using Municipal Data Portal for planning, budgeting, and monitoring.	0	12	--	
Sub-indicator 3.1.1: Municipal Data Portal has been developed, including satellite data and imagery.	0	Yes	Yes	Municipal data portal is developed complete with satellite data and imagery and it is fully operational and hosted by the government
Sub-indicator 3.1.2: # Of Municipal civil servants and officials trained on data collection, entry, and use of the Portal	0	240	0	Training Manual is being developed and plans for countrywide trainings are in progress.
Strategic Indicator 3.2: # Of Visits to the Municipal Data Portal (monthly average)	0	100	274	Average Numbers indicated 274 Visits as per the Municipal portal.
Sub-indicator 3.2.1: # Of campaigns to promote the use of the Municipal Data Portal among students, local governments, and local organizations.	0	2	11	11 campaigns have been conducted to promote the use of the Municipal Data Portal among citizens, CSOs and educational institutions, and others
Strategic Indicator 3.3: # Of men, women, youth, and people with disability (PWDs) participating in local planning processes.	Average 311/municipality (19% women)	(Average of 360 people/municipality, 33% women; 33% youth; 2% PWDs)	0	
Sub-indicator 3.3.1: # Of campaigns to promote women and youth empowerment at the local level.	0	12	11	A total 12 campaigns have been conducted and a total of 391 people, mostly women (52%), have been empowered around the issue of local development and local governance
Strategic Indicator 3.4: Availability of e-government strategy (Yes/No indicator)	0	Yes	No	Hiring of an international and a national consultant is in final stage to prepare an e-government strategy of the municipalities

Sub-indicator 3.4.1: # Of Municipalities equipped with online communication tools, such as Zoom and WebEx, for efficient coordination with the central government	0	12	12	All the municipalities have equipped with the equipment needed.
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Finding 1: Overall, Output 3 has shown progress, although some of the targets are partially achieved by the time of the MTE. Initially hindered by the delays, the development and implementation of Municipality Portal was found to be a major milestone achieved whereby the project staff based in the municipalities have started to upload the local and non-technical information in the respective municipalities' websites. Stakeholder consultations suggested that community members/students have already started using it. However, it is to be noted that **staff turnover poses a risk to its sustainability**, etc.

Finding 2: Moreover, targets related to the **training of the Municipalities staff is yet to be achieved**. The capacity building efforts without thorough change/ adaptive management plan can further slowdown the outcome in terms of limited usage, etc. However, as the next steps, the development of Training Manual seems to be on track as plans for country wide trainings for capacity building of the municipal staff are in progress.

Finding 3: Gender sensitive awareness campaigns were perceived as beneficial and important to motivate and sensitize stakeholders to use the portal. Additionally, a total of 391 people, (of which more than half are women – 52%), have been empowered around the issue of local development and local governance through campaigns in 11 municipalities to promote the use of the Municipal Data Portal among citizens, CSOs and educational institutions, and others.

3.11. Efficiency

Overall efficiency of the Decentralization Project was found as 'efficient' though the level of efficiency varies from one component to the other including implementation arrangement, M&E, partnerships and budget efficiency. The following is the assessment of efficiency under each sub-thematic area.

3.11.1. Implementation Arrangements and Output's Efficiency

Overall project implementation mechanism is based on multi-layered mechanism. It includes:

i. Project Board

Finding: Although the overall role of **project board was found 'efficient'** in terms of the periodic supervision of the progress, discussing the risks and challenges and take decisions, it is however, worth mentioning finding that significant gap in the board meeting has resulted in slowing down the actual implementation of the project.

ii. Project Management Unit

Finding 1: Overall, stakeholders have shown acknowledgement and appreciation for the PMU's project management role in general, and coordination support in particular. **Bringing key stakeholder together with continued coordination and follow up have been highlighted as key strengths of the PMU.**

Finding 2: However, the **overall efficiency of the PMU was found to be hindered by high staff turnover.** Although the Project's response in terms of new recruitments to fill in vacant positions was found to be quick and satisfactory particularly with regard to merit-based hiring.

iii. Output Efficiency

Finding: Hindered by the Covid-19 Pandemic as well as considerable gap in PBM meeting, **the overall efficiency of planned vs actual results/targets both in terms of time and completion varied from one output to the other.**

iv) Monitoring & Evaluation

Finding: The M&E function of the project, particularly in terms of progress reporting and field visits were assessed as **one of the stronger links of the project implementation mechanism.** The assessment indicated that the revised results framework has made it simplified with clearer linkages with the country level plans. Stakeholders have also shown satisfaction about UNDP's M&E function, particularly reporting mechanisms. The necessary M&E tools to collect, compile and analyze field data were found to be adequate and effective. It is reflected through concise results-based reporting in the annual reports. However it is proposed to develop a simplified project monitoring dashboard that is accessible to all relevant stakeholders. This digital dashboard will provide Realtime progress monitoring against all outputs and indicators

v) Communication & Visibility

Finding: The project is backed by a well-documented communication strategy/plan. However, it was found during the stakeholder consultations that while visibility of output 1 (Parliament Support) & output 3 (Municipality Portal) have been widely acknowledged, the project interventions and activities under output 2 require more and continued visibility and communication to the wider audience.

vi) Budget Efficiency

Finding: The overall planned project budget till March 2022 was USD 2423279 and the actual expenditure stood at USD 1724364. It means that the overall planned vs. actual expenditure stands at **approximately 71% (till March 2022) which indicated relatively efficient expenditure pattern,** particularly considering the challenge imposed by the Covid-19 pandemic and related restrictions. This

is more evident from the fact that planned vs. actual expenditure was just 54% in year 2020-21 and it was increased to 97% in 2021-22.

Source	2020-2021		2021-22		Overall till March 2022	
	Planned Budget	Actual Expenditure	Planned Budget	Actual Expenditure	Planned Budget	Actual Expenditure
EU	1,390,015	741,219 (53.3%)	812,532	782,188 (96%)	220,2547	1523407 (69.1)%
UNDP	80,732	60,957 (75.5%)	140,000	140,000 (100%)	220732	200957 (91%)
Total	1,470,747	802,176 (54.5%)	952,532	922,188 (97%)	2423279	1724364 (71.1%)

vi) Partnership Strategy

Finding 1: UNDP's partnership strategy for the Decentralization project has been found as one of the stronger attributes of the project. As guided by the ProDoc and the Project Board, UNDP has developed and maintained multiple level of partnerships that includes government sector organizations, private sector entities and academia etc. However, keeping in view that project is predominantly focused on ICT interventions, involvement of Private sector partners was found limited and can be enhanced. Although recent partnership with the IOB is a step in the right direction, exploring partnership with IT related private partners like Google, Microsoft, Meta etc that offers capacity building programmes, training modules, best practices and platforms for learning will assist in getting benefits and value from existing and well tested models, building capacities of the municipalities and developing ecosystem for ICT interventions in the Government sector. Stakeholder consultations indicated a very strong and consensus-based trust and validation of UNDP's partnership development and management credentials in the project.

3.12. Impact

Although a project's impact is usually assessed few years after the completion of project, the stakeholder consultations and data collected had highlighted following key impacts that project has created during its implementation phase.

Finding: The Project has met most of the targets under output 1 mainly due to the promulgation of the two laws on decentralization: Law on Local Power and Administrative Decentralization, and the Law on Municipal Elections. Stakeholders consulted validated and acknowledged the extraordinary support and contribution of UNDP/the Decentralization Project in this achievement.

The former law essentially approves the Local Power and Administrative Decentralization. It establishes the organization, composition and powers of the bodies of Local Power, as well as the legal framework

for the administrative decentralization of the State. In particular, it defines the municipality as a public collective person, of population and territory, endowed with administrative, financial, patrimonial, organizational autonomy, and representative bodies that aim to pursue the interests of the respective populations, as a factor of national cohesion. These 2 laws, though being an integral target of the project results framework, have formed a long-term foundation to guide the historic decentralization process in Timor-Leste.

3.13. Sustainability

As indicated above, due to the intrinsic design of the project whereby the primary objective of all 03 components/outputs is to build capacities of Government departments and community, it is 'likely' to sustain the project results and mechanism, although with the following key findings/gaps to consider:

Finding: There is no clear or coherent sustainability and exit strategy found, both in the Pro-Doc as well as any other documents. Moreover, no evidence is found that any such exit strategy development is currently under process.

Finding: Due to its design, UNDP has been working directly with the government departments to build their capacities in the relevant thematic areas, there is no clear evidence found about any mechanism and KPIs to assess if the capacities are successfully built or not as well as sustained at the Municipalities after completion of the project (that includes sustaining Municipalities & ICT coordinators, ICT equipment/lab, master trainees of municipality portal, etc.).

Although the introduction of positions for 6 Municipal Coordinators and 06 Municipal IT Officers to be placed in the Municipalities to maintain and update the Portal system is encouraging to ensure a solid skill transfer, however, there is a danger of risking the overall sustainability in the light of anticipated reduced role/budget of UNDP. It is also likely that Municipality staff will require technical support beyond this programme intervention. Therefore, a more phased, gradual, and structured approach with well-designed exit strategy can mitigate the risk.

3.14. Cross Cutting Themes

4.7.1 Gender Mainstreaming, Youth, & PWDs

Ensuring gender equality, inclusion of youth and PWDs were found to be given considerable focus in the project, particularly with reference to the inclusion in trainings. Both at the design (Results Framework in Pro-Doc) and implementation stages, gender equality was given a priority to address the gaps observed and grievances reported during the capacity need assessment. More importantly, a specific new strategic indicator has been included in the results framework to capture gender, youth and PWDs related data. More specifically, the number of men, women, youth, and people with disability (PWDs)

participating in local planning processes has been added in the results framework. Moreover 12 workshops were conducted on women and youth empowerment in the decentralization process. A total of 391 people, mostly women (52%), have been empowered around the issue of local development and local governance

Accordingly, at least 30% of the elected representatives in the municipalities will be women. Moreover, the Municipal Portal captures gender-disaggregated data for 127 out of 294 indicators.

In 2020-21, 364 local officials (17% women), including, IT focal points from all the municipalities, received initial orientation/training about the Portal as well as on collection and verification of data, etc. Moreover, to raise awareness about the Municipal Portal to a wider audience, the Project held a campaign covering 93 participants (55% women) from seven universities and other institutions of higher education. In 2021-22, out of 507 people trained by the Project on MS Office, Google Drive, MS One Drive, etc., 33% were women. The Project has also advanced in preparing a specific online training module on gender mainstreaming. The course will have five modules, namely basic gender awareness, gender equality, gender mainstreaming, gender-based violence, sexual exploitation, abuse, and harassment.

With regards to PWD inclusion, it was reported that there is only 1 PWD in the Municipalities. This is unfortunate and it could reflect negatively on the project's efforts to promote inclusive development as human rights issue and the achievement of Target 16 of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Nevertheless, it also highlights the importance of continuous efforts to raise awareness on the importance of including PWDs in the project's training opportunities. It is also a lesson learnt moment for the project to take a more proactive role to support the achievement of inclusive development goal in the project related activities.

3.14.1. Poverty, environment, and Sustainable Livelihoods

While the project's results framework and targets do not directly address the nexus of poverty, environment and sustainable livelihoods, the intended focus of project on facilitating decentralization process has indirect linkages with addressing issues of poor people and sustainable livelihoods by empowering poor and vulnerable communities and enhancing their participation in the decentralization process at grassroot levels

3.14.2. Disaster Risk Management and Climate Change

The MTE did not find any direct link between the project and disaster risk management and climate change

3.14.3. Crisis Prevention and Recovery Issues

Similarly, the MTE did not find any direct link between the project and issues of crisis prevention and recovery

4. Key Challenges & LESSONS LEARNED – OVERALL PROJECT

Although the decentralization project is on its course to complete its key results and targets, on the basis of the findings above, following 5 key areas may pose challenge to the project in medium to long term

- ❖ **Connectivity-** Project with predominant focus on ICTs require uninterrupted, reliable and good bandwidth connectivity in Municipalities. It was found during stakeholder consultations and site visits that while intranet offered by TIC Timor is reliable and smooth, users face disruption in connectivity when they use internet (from 2 service providers). It will cause considerable issue in accessing e-learning platforms etc.
- ❖ **Potential Interoperability Issue** – Isolated ICT solutions/components can create major issues on medium to long-term in implementing coherent e-Governance agenda (Municipality Portal, E-Learning platform, OSS etc.) Since the project has a clear focus on e-governance, silo digital tools and platforms will create immense challenge of interoperability and integration at later stage.
- ❖ **Functional issues with engaged e-learning platform Coursera** – while Coursera can provide starting base for e-learning mechanism to create culture of e-learning in relatively easy manner, certain functional issues such as issue of copyrights, technical incompatibility (issue with translations etc.) can hinder and/or delay the implementation of e-learning mechanism. It was found during the consultation that some of the materials cannot be translated to local language and / or customized due to copyrights issue.
- ❖ In addition, there remains issue with consensus among stakeholders in handing over and transferring ownership of training manuals etc to be used/embedded in the Coursera E-learning platform. It was found during the consultations that Ministry of Finance is concerned about the mechanism and modalities to engage IOB whereby PFM manual/content will be handed over to IOB.
- ❖ **Issue of sustainability and high turnover** of ICT staff/ ICT equipment sustainability. The deployment of ICT staff and ICT lab has effectively fulfilled the pre-requisites of implementing technology-based implementation of decentralization. However, without any clear and comprehensive agreed sustainability mechanism, this good work will face issue of sustainability in medium to long term
- ❖ **Progress on South-South cooperation remains limited due to covid-19** - As indicated in the proDoc as well as the focus on digital tools and ICTs based interventions, south-south cooperation has always been perceived as a very useful tool for ICT/e-government related interventions. While the project / UNDP initially tried to forge partnership with INTAN and communication on further engagement between the two institutions had taken place, a follow up to this initial communication and interest for further engagement regrettably, came to a disappointing halt due to covid-19 imposed restrictions. This has deprived the project of the chances to make

further efficiency gains and obtain further optimum solutions in the implementation of the project outputs in general, and ICT based interventions in particular.

Based on the identified and discussed lessons learned for each output, following is **the summary of key lessons learned for the overall project**:

- ❖ Ensuring commitment and ownership of Municipalities and stakeholder in all phases of project is vital to ensure long-term sustainability.
- ❖ Any reform in general and ICT related in particular requires a well thought-out of change management strategy from the beginning.
- ❖ Bringing all partners, particularly multiple level government entities require continued coordination and follow up efforts, time and strategic planning.
- ❖ The project involved multiple ICT/digital solutions should ensure that aspect of any integration & interoperability is not ignored. It helps in avoiding duplication as well as technical issues at an advanced stage.
- ❖ Project dealing with decentralization process in a country from its preliminary stages requires flexibility and adaptability in every evolving scenario.
- ❖ To implement a reform project that required both technical as well as administrative support, high turnover results in loss of institutional memory as well as adverse impact on implementation efficiency.

5. CONCLUSIONS

In general terms, it can be concluded that the UNDP Decentralization project was relevant to the national and regional priorities, SDGs, UNDP's Strategic Plan and UNDAF. Moreover, the project's effectiveness varied from one component to the other and the level of progress and achievement of the targets varies from one output to the other. Comparatively, Output 1 has (Parliament Support) has shown immense progress with major targets achieved, and widely acknowledged & appreciated by the stakeholders. Whereas, although progress under output 2 (Capacity Building of Municipalities) & Output 3 (Municipality Portal) has recently come back on track with major pre-requisite activities are underway, some of the targets are partially achieved.

In terms of project's Efficiency, although the overall role of project board was found 'efficient' in terms of the periodic supervision of the progress, discussing the risks and challenges and take decisions, significant gap in board meeting has resulted in slowing down the actual implementation of the project. Overall, stakeholders have shown acknowledgement and appreciation for the PMU's project management role in general, and coordination support in particular, however, the overall efficiency of the PMU was found to be hindered by high staff turnover. Moreover, the overall efficiency of planned

vs actual results/targets both in terms of time and completion varied from one output to the other hindered by the Covid-19 Pandemic as well as considerable gap in PBM meetings.

Although project was able to establish and strengthen its partnership with the national and local government, the depth and scope of partnership with non-government partners like CSOs/NGOs, other development partners and private sectors was found to be limited. UNDP's well-established partnership with Government as well as its focus to build the capacity of local government departments has direct and positive impact on the sustainability of the project. However, it was also found that lack of a clear exit strategy and sustainability plan can pose a risk for effective and sustained transfer of capacities and ownership.

6. RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the lessons learned and the key findings mentioned in the sections above, following is a set of recommendations for the UNDP Decentralization Project:

6.1. Transition Phase (01 Year No-Cost Extension)

Keeping in view that unfinished targets of the project are on track with mechanisms under process to complete them, it is recommended that project should be extended for 1 year and continue the implementation of work in progress with review of following issues:

- i. Clear and concise plan and quality assessment for connectivity in the targeted Municipalities- It includes reliance of TIC Timor's intranet facilities as much as possible. Where it is unavoidable to use internet, it is recommended to conduct regular connectivity quality assessment and service provider with better quality results should be given priority for uninterrupted connectivity
- ii. Reviewing and wherever possible integrating silo ICT/technology related as well as municipality level public service delivery interventions to avoid interoperability and integration issues of envisaged e-Governance issues. **The internal coherence and integration between the components of project should be ensured.** For instance, it was found that 'One Stop Shop' is envisaged for Municipalities related public services as well as Municipality Portal is about to become fully functional. It is highly recommended that wherever possible, all digital components of One Stop shop, Municipality Portal, e-learning platform should be integrated as 'one stop digital platform' for the information and public services
- iii. While keeping identified partners' portfolio intact, Review the modalities of implementing e-Learning mechanism **'NOW' to avoid 'Future' issues**. For instance: For medium to long term, use the standard modules of Coursera and develop local content and modules (by IOB or specialists). It implies that a group of Master Trainers from relevant stakeholders should be trained only on standard modules of Coursera. These key stakeholders may include INAP, CSC, MSA, MOF, IOB. These master trainers can assist subject matter specialists in developing customized modules that are more relevant to the needs and priorities of the Municipalities and related functions as well in the local

- languages. These modules can be then, uploaded in e-Learning platform hosted by for instance 'Municipality Portal'. It will assist in developing a more sustainable e-Learning platform.
- iv. Review the scope of IOB in customizing learning modules where more specialist and sensitive content is already in practice by the relevant stakeholders. This is for instance, relevant in the case of developing and implementing PFM module whereby Ministry of Finance may not be willing to fully hand over the content to IOB as well as allow IOB to implement and certify the training outcomes.
 - v. Consider linking e-Learning platform with Municipality Portal to avoid multiple forums and have 'one stop platform' for municipality (Future e-Governance on stop digital window for Municipalities)- As indicated above, it is highly recommended to revisit the strategy to implement and maintain all existing ICT tools that are related to decentralisation in silos. Rather 'one stop digital platform' (e.g enhanced Municipality Portal) is highly recommended whereby all information, public services, e-learning tools etc should be available on 'single platform'. It will assist in avoiding medium to long term interoperability and integration issues. For instance as a right step, the e-learning initiative will use the municipal portal as the vehicle to get into the Coursera plat form. In this regard, a landing page is being developed within the portal facility
 - vi. While CSC's effort to include e-learning modules are commendable, a clear strategy and policy approval to sustain ICT and Municipality Coordinators should be pursued now to ensure sustainability. It is also recommended that UNDP should negotiate with CSC and MSA to create small ICT/IT unit in each municipality with permanent ICT staff to ensure sustainability and ownership. It was found that TIC Timor has at least 1 personnel deputed in each municipality. However, the role of these personnel is more focused towards troubleshooting rather than 'whole of system' IT support,

6.2. UNDP Decentralization Project – Phase II

Keeping in view the importance of the success stories of phase 1 as well as common and consensus based feedback of stakeholders that UNDP's support should be continued in the areas of i) Continued and sustained technical support to the Government in the implementation of decentralization process and continued and sustained legal and technical support to the Parliament in the oversight of the implementation of decentralization process ii) enhanced sensitization, awareness and advocacy activities for communities and citizens about decentralization iii) building capacities of Municipalities in implementation of decentralization, It is recommended a Phase II of the project should be envisioned.

It is also recommended that the new phase should have simplified results framework based on following high level two area of outputs

i) **Output 1- Capacity Building & Technical Support**

- Sub-output 1.1- Support to Relevant Government Ministries

- Sub output 1.2- Capacity Building of Municipalities
- Sub output 1.3- Advocacy & Awareness of Communities (with focus on Women, PWDs and Youth etc

ii) **Output 2-E-Governance**

Sub output 2.1 Development and Implementation of e-Governance Strategy and related plans

Sub output 2.2 One Stop Shop (Physical) (e.g ERP implementation One Stop Shop Office)

Sub output 2.3 One Stop Municipality Digital Platform (Municipality Portal, e-Learning platform, e-Services (Final stage where all services are available online with no need to visit physical one stop shop



It is also vital to develop and implement a clear South-South cooperation strategy to learn from best practices and leapfrog certain stages of Municipalities' capacity building in general, e-governance and digital tool for local governments in particular.

8.3 Implementation and Management

- i) **Keeping in view the UNDP may continue to support government in the implementation of long decentralization process, Project Management Unit for project should be strengthened** with more secure contract to avoid staff turnover. It will bring efficiency as well as assist in building institutional and knowledge memory.
- ii) The Project Board Meetings should take place more frequently, considering the complexities of context for planning and implementation of decentralization process;
- iii) Alternatively, A mid-level implementation layer 'Technical Advisory Committee' (Between PB & PMU) should be formed that will assist in overseeing and steering routine activities of the project. It may comprise of for example DRR, DG etc. It is recommended that PB can delegate implementation related decision making to this body while keeping the strategic and high-level decisions intact. However, it is also acknowledged that in case of formation of such body, a clear TORs needs to be developed under the guidance and direction of the Project Board.

6.2.1. Sustainability

- i) **A clear, coherent, and comprehensive sustainability/exit strategy should be developed** covering political, socio economic, institutional and financial components of the project sustainability;
- ii) The Exit Strategy should clearly identify KPIs to measure the capacities built and sustained;
- iii) The sustainability strategy should be complemented by a well-planned and targeted '**resource mobilization strategy**' to ensure timely financial sustainability of the programme.

ANNEXES

- UNDP (2021), Country Programme Document 2021-2025
- UNDP (2020, 2021), Project Board Meeting Minutes-‘Strengthening Integral Local Development by Building the Capacities of the Municipal Authorities in Timor-Leste’
- UNDP (2020-21, 2021, 2022), Annual Progress Reports- ‘Strengthening Integral Local Development by Building the Capacities of the Municipal Authorities in Timor-Leste’
- UNDP (2020), Pro-Doc ‘Strengthening Integral Local Development by Building the Capacities of the Municipal Authorities in Timor-Leste’
- UN (2015), UNDAF 2015-2019
- UNDP Strategic Plan 2022-2025
- Annual Work Plans
- Revised Results Framework
- MOUs with partners
- Project TORs
- Risk Log & Matrix
- Assessment Reports

ANNEX B Evaluation Criteria & Questions Matrix Checklist– UNDP decentralization project				
Evaluation Criteria	Key questions specific sub-questions	Data Sources	Data collection Methods/Tools	Indicators/Success Standard
Relevance/Coherence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To what extent is the UNDP decentralization project aligned with the priorities, needs and Strategic Development Plan of Timor-Leste? • To what extent is the UNDP decentralization project aligned with the UNDP's mandate, country priorities, UNDP Strategic Plan, and the sustainable development goals (SDGs)? • Is the project relevant for the main beneficiary? • To what extent has the UNDP decentralization project been appropriately responsive to political, legal and socio-economic development issues and challenges of Timor-Leste? • How well did the UNDP decentralization project address the needs of the most vulnerable groups of the targeted beneficiaries? 	UNDP project staff, partners, parliamentarians, municipality staff, Beneficiaries Project documents, annual reports, M & E documents	Key informant Interviews FGDs Document Review QBS	Project's results indicators

Effectiveness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To what extent have the UNDP decentralization project objectives, 3 outputs and targets, as set out in the UNDP decentralization project Document, project's (revised) Results Framework, and other related documents, have been achieved so far? • Are some components better achieved than others? If yes, then Why? • Are the UNDP decentralization projects objectives and outputs clear, practical, and feasible within its frame? • What are the underlying rationales and assumptions or theory that defines the relationships or chain of results that lead initiative strategies to intended outcomes? • What are the assumptions, factors or risks inherent in the design that may influence whether the initiative succeeds or fail? • How effective has been the contribution of the UNDP decentralization project to improving capacities of the targeted municipalities and parliamentarians to provide effective public service delivery? • Are the UNDP decentralization project objectives clearly stated and contribution to results measurable? • Did women, and marginalized groups of targeted youth directly or indirectly benefit from the 	<p>UNDP project staff, partners, parliamentarians, municipality staff, Beneficiaries</p> <p>Project documents, annual reports, M & E documents</p>	<p>Key informant Interviews</p> <p>Site visits</p> <p>FGDs with beneficiaries</p> <p>Documents review</p> <p>QBS</p>	<p>Project results framework and related performance indicators</p> <p>Number of community members benefitted</p> <p>Number of projects planned, designed and implemented</p> <p>Indicators and related targets of the results framework are met</p>
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	<p>UNDP decentralization project 's activities? If so, how, and what was the impact?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Were any changes made in the UNDP decentralization project regarding approach, partnerships, beneficiaries so far? If yes, why? • How effective was the project in adapting to the challenges faced due to the ongoing Covid-19 Pandemic? Were there any adaptive measures taken and/or any risk mitigation mechanism in place? Did project assist in responding to the challenges set by the Pandemic? If yes, how effective? 			
Efficiency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are outputs achieved within expected cost and time so far? • Could the activities and outputs have been delivered in fewer resources without reducing their quality and quantity? • Is there major cost- or time-overruns or budget revisions? • To what extent was the management structure outlined in the project document efficient in generating the expected results • Is there a management or coordination mechanism for the partnership? • How frequently and by what means information is shared within the UNDP decentralization project stakeholders? 	<p>UNDP project staff, partners, parliamentarians, municipality staff , Beneficiaries</p> <p>Project documents, annual reports, M & E documents</p>	<p>Key Informant Interviews</p> <p>FGDs</p> <p>Documents reviews.</p> <p>QBS</p>	<p>Results Framework Indicators</p> <p>AWPs</p> <p>Planned vs. Actual Budget Allocation & utilization</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How many levels of decision-making are involved in operational approval? • How efficient is the M&E system and to what extent did M&E mechanism provide management with a stream of data that allowed it to learn and adjust implementation accordingly? • Were the risks identified in the UNDP decentralization project document or process the most important and the risk ratings applied appropriately • How useful was the results framework as a management tool during implementation and any changes made to it? • To what extent are project management and implementation participatory and is this participation contributing towards achievement of the project objectives? 			
Sustainability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How sustainable has been the contribution of the UNDP decentralization project to improving capacities of the Parliamentarians and municipalities to ensure effective legislation and public service delivery? • Was UNDP decentralization project sustainability strategy developed during the project design? • Is the project itself sustainable? (Financial, Institutional, Socio Economic and Resources etc.) 	UNDP project staff, partners, parliamentarians, municipality staff , Beneficiaries Project documents, annual reports, M & E documents	Key Informant Interviews FGDs QBS Site visits Documents reviews	Sustainability strategy Resource mobilization mechanism

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To what extent have partners committed to providing continuing support? To what extent are lessons learned being documented by the UNDP decentralization project team on a continual basis and shared with appropriate parties who could learn from project? What could be done to strengthen exit strategies and sustainability? Are there jeopardizing aspects that have not been considered or abated by the project actions? Has ownership of the actions and impact been transferred to the corresponding stakeholders? Do the beneficiaries have the capacity to take over the results of the project and maintain and further develop the results 			
Cross Cutting Issues and Gender	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To what extent has gender equality and the empowerment of women been addressed in the design, implementation and monitoring of the UNDP decentralization project? Is the gender marker data assigned to this UNDP decentralization project representative of reality? To what extent has the UNDP decentralization project promoted positive changes in gender equality and the empowerment of women? Were there any unintended effects? 	<p>UNDP project staff, partners, parliamentarians, municipality staff, Beneficiaries</p> <p>Project documents, annual reports, M & E documents</p>	<p>Key Informant Interviews</p> <p>FGDs</p> <p>QBS</p> <p>Site visits</p> <p>Documents reviews</p>	<p>Project Indicators on gender and other vulnerable groups (if any)</p> <p>Number of women, youth and marginalized groups benefited (gender disaggregated)</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Were women and men distinguished in terms of participation and benefits within the project? • To what extent did UNDP decentralization project contribute to gender equality, the empowerment of women and the human rights-based approach and the inclusion of vulnerable groups and people with disability? 			data of beneficiaries
UNDP Partnership Strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How effective the UN partnership strategy and the partners are in providing added benefits for the UNDP decentralization project to achieve overall outcomes and outputs • To what extent have stakeholders been involved in UNDP decentralization project implementation? • Who are the major actors and partners involved in the project and how effective they were in project delivery? 	<p>UNDP project staff, partners, parliamentarians, municipality staff, Beneficiaries</p> <p>Project documents, annual reports, M & E documents</p>	<p>Key Informant Interviews</p> <p>FGDs</p> <p>QBS</p> <p>Documents reviews</p>	

ANNEX C-DIRECT OBSERVATIONS-DUE DILIGENCE EU DECENTRALIZATION PROJECT SITES- MUNICIPALITIES

PRELIMINARY EU DECENTRALIZATION'S PROJECT SITES-SCREENING QUESTIONS		SCORE/RATING	REMARKS
Infrastructure and Beneficiaries feedback	Does the visited municipalities have ICT lab/equipment/assistance fully installed and operational?	4	Municipalities visited have ICT lab fully installed and operational
	Are the staff members satisfied with the intervention of the project and do they validate increased capacity due to the project intervention?	4	While the modular based training for municipal staff have not started, municipal staff are satisfied with backstopping and ict basic training that project staff provided.
Functionality	Is the installed ICT equipment functional with up to date/targeted functionalities	4	Yes. Several applications including MS office, Adobe Acrobat reader, three different web browsers, zoom and team viewer have all been installed in each of the unit and they are all functional.
	Is any beneficiary already availing services and/or trained to use the functions of the installed equipment?	4	Not yet as modules for training are still being developed. Once modules are developed, the lab will be ready for use for staff training
4: Satisfactory (S): minor shortcomings 3: Moderately Satisfactory (MS): moderate shortcomings 2 Moderately Unsatisfactory (MU): significant shortcomings 1. Unsatisfactory (U): major shortcomings			
Overall Assessment and Note 4 All sites visited have computer lab fully installed with ICT installed equipment are functional with up to date / targeted functionalities. The labs are ready for use for staff training purposes. All lab is equipped with video conferencing facility and other equipment that will make online learning experience a comfortable and rewarding experience			

Person Name	Designation/Component	Stakeholder Type
Bruno Lencastre	CTA (Chief of Technical Adviser) for parliament component of the project	UNDP
Pedro Ximenes	Director of Institute of Business (IOB)	Tertiary Education - Project Implementing partner
Adelino Afonso de Jesus	Secretary General of the National Parliament	National Parliament – project beneficiary
Agostinho Letêncio de Deus	Director General	Public Administration National Institute or INAP – project implementing partner
Andre Felix Marques	Director Infrastructure	Government Agency TIC Timor – Project implementing partner
Francisco Gama	Director Nacional for Capacity building and Trainings	Civil Service Commission – Project Implementing partner
Marlina Viegas	Focal Point for Decentralization Project	European Union (EU) – Donor organization
Carmelita Moniz	Member of Parliament and Committee A of the National Parliament	National Parliament – Project Beneficiary
	Director General	Ministry of State Administration – Project implementing partner and beneficiary
Lazima Onta-Bhatta	DRR	UNDP
Yamnath Sharma	CTA	UNDP
Bernardino da Costa Pereira	National Project Manager	UNDP
Emiliana Soares	Open Data Portal Specialist	UNDP
Paul Waiswa	M&E Specialist	UNDP
Honoring Sament	QA and RBM Analyst, UNDP	UNDP
Auxiliadora dos Santos	Programme Analyst	UNDP

Survey- Questionnaire- UN/Project Staff Only

Name	Title, Department (if applicable)	Institution
Category of Stakeholder a) UNDP staff	Email Address	City

Introduction: The UNDP Timor-Leste is conducting the midterm evaluation of its 'UNDP Decentralization project'

It examines UNDP's contribution to project results to ensure organizational learning and accountability. The evaluation is carried out by an independent international evaluation specialist and a national consultant.

Being responsible for the planning, implementation, and monitoring of the project, you have been identified as one of the key stakeholders of the UNDP's UNDP Decentralization project, and we would like to receive your feedback on your experience with UNDP-supported project. Your feedback is valuable and will be used as part of the overall analysis together with other information and data collected by the consultant. You will send the response directly to the consultant.

Please provide feedback on the questions that you find as relevant to your organization's role in the project. Insert N/A (Not Applicable) wherever required.

1. RELEVANCE:

- ❖ To what extent is the UNDP Decentralization project aligned with national priorities, need and Strategic Plan of the Timor-Leste?
- ❖ Did the project anticipate and respond to identified problems of Parliamentarians and staff of municipalities, and was the design adequate to address these problems?
- ❖ To what extent has the UNDP Decentralization project been appropriately responsive to political and socio-economic development issues and challenges of Timor-Leste?
- ❖ How well did the UNDP Decentralization project address the needs of the most vulnerable groups of the targeted community?

- ❖ To what extent did UNDP Decentralization project contribute to gender equality, the empowerment of women and youth, and the human rights-based approach and the inclusion of vulnerable groups and people with disability?

2. EFFECTIVENESS

- ❖ To what extent have the UNDP Decentralization project objectives, 3 outputs and targets, as set out in the project Document, project's Results Framework, and other related documents, have been achieved so far?
- ❖ Are some components better achieved than others? If yes, then Why?
- ❖ How effective is the Theory of Change? What are the underlying rationales and assumptions or theory that defines the relationships or chain of results that lead initiative strategies to intended outcomes?
- ❖ How effective has been the contribution of the UNDP Decentralization project to improving capacities of the parliamentarians and staff of municipalities for effective legislation and public service delivery?
- ❖ Did women, and marginalized groups of targeted youth directly or indirectly benefit from the UNDP Decentralization project 's activities? If so, how, and what was the impact
- ❖ Were any changes made in the UNDP Decentralization project regarding approach, partnerships, beneficiaries so far? If yes, why?
- ❖ How effective was the project in adapting to the challenges faced due to the ongoing Covid-19 Pandemic? Were there any adaptive measures taken and/or any risk mitigation mechanism in place? Did project provide any support in responding to the Covid-19 pandemic? If yes, how effective

3. IMPACT

- ❖ Is there evidence of long-lasting desired changes?
- ❖ Has the initiative influenced policy making at different levels?
- ❖ Has the project impacted the desired target actors?
- ❖ To what degree the has the project contributed to the development taken place with regards the overall project objectives?

4. EFFICIENCY:

- ❖ Are outputs achieved within expected cost and time so far?
- ❖ Could the activities and outputs have been delivered in fewer resources without reducing their quality and quantity?
- ❖ Is there major cost- or time-overruns or budget revisions?
- ❖ Is there a management or coordination mechanism for the partnership?
- ❖ Are UNDP Decentralization project objectives and strategies understood by staff?
- ❖ How efficient is the M&E system and to what extent did M&E mechanism provide management with a stream of data that allowed it to learn and adjust implementation accordingly?
- ❖ How useful was the results framework (as well as the revised version) as a management tool during implementation and any changes made to it?
- ❖ Were the risks identified in the UNDP Decentralization project document or process the most important and the risk ratings applied appropriately

5. SUSTAINABILITY:

- ❖ How sustainable has been the contribution of the UNDP decentralization project to improving capacities of the Parliamentarians and municipalities to ensure effective legislation and public service delivery?
- ❖ Was UNDP decentralization project sustainability strategy developed during the project design?
- ❖ Is the project itself sustainable? (Financial, Institutional, Socio Economic and Resources etc.)
- ❖ Are there any social or political risks that may jeopardize sustainability of UNDP DECENTRALIZATION project outputs?
- ❖ What could be done to strengthen exit strategies and sustainability?
- ❖ Has ownership of the actions and impact been transferred to the corresponding stakeholders?

- ❖ Do the beneficiaries have the capacity to take over the results of the project and maintain and further develop the results

6. Please list down top 3 lessons learned?

6.1 Please List down top 3 challenges that have or may hinder performance of the overall project?

6.2- Please provide 3-5 high priority recommendations for the way forward?

Survey- Questionnaire for the Beneficiaries

Name	Title, Department (if applicable)	Institution
Category of beneficiary 1. Municipality Staff/Official	Email Address	City

Introduction: The UNDP Timor-Leste is conducting the midterm evaluation of its 'UNDP Decentralization project'

It examines UNDP's contribution to project results to ensure organizational learning and accountability. The evaluation is carried out by an independent international evaluation specialist and a national consultant.

Being a key staff in the municipality who have benefited from UNDP Decentralization project, you have been identified as one of the beneficiaries of the project, and we would like to receive your feedback on your experience with UNDP-supported project. Your feedback is valuable and will be used as part of the overall analysis together with other information and data collected by the consultant. You will send the response directly to the consultant.

Please provide feedback on the questions that you find as relevant to your role and your organization's role in the project. Insert N/A (Not Applicable) wherever required.

QUESTIONS FOR BENEFICIARIES (MUNICIPAL STAFF)

- ❖ Could you describe the key activities in the project that you benefitted from?
- ❖ Are the activities/outputs of the project relevant to the needs and priorities of organization?
- ❖ Could you describe any key successes of the project activity?
- ❖ Can you provide any 1-3 key strengths of the project activities that you benefitted from?

- ❖ Can you provide any 1-3 weakness of the project activities that you benefited from?
- ❖ Can you highlight 1-3 key challenges/lessons learned that you as beneficiary have faced during your participation in the project activities?
- ❖ Could you help us in identifying that how the activity has brought difference in your work and capacity? (Your situation before and after the project intervention/support)
- ❖ Do you have any recommendations for the way forward?