

**FINAL EVALUATION OF THE UNDP GEORGIA PROJECT:**

**“CREATING BETTER LIFE-LONG LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES THROUGH LOCAL PARTNERSHIPS (17 Sep. 2020 – 17 Dec. 2023)”**

**FINAL EVALUATION REPORT**

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**List of acronyms and abbreviations**

AWP Annual Work Plan

CBLLL Creating Better Lifelong Learning Opportunities through Local Partnerships

CSO Civil Society Organization

EntreComp European Entrepreneurship Competence Framework

ETF European Training Foundation

EU European Union

DigiComp Digital Competence Framework

MoES Ministry of Education and Science

MoLHSA Ministry of Internally Displaced Persons from the Occupied Territories,

Labour, Health and Social Affairs of Georgia

MSY Ministry of Sport and Youth Affairs of Georgia

NCEQE National Centre for Education Quality Enhancement

NEET Not in Employment Education or Training

NGO Non-Governmental Organization

NIM National Implementation Modality

LLL Lifelong learning

PPP Public-private partnerships

PwD Persons with Disabilities

RPA Responsible Partner Agreement

SSO Sectoral Skills Organization

UNDP United Nations Development Programme

UNICEF United Nations Children's Fund

VET Vocational Education and Training

VSA Vocational Skills Agency

WBL Work-based learning

**Executive Summary**

**Creating Better Life-Long Learning Opportunities through Local Partnerships (CBLLL – UNDP Georgia)**

The objective of the CBLLL project is to strengthen employability for men and women in the capital and in rural areas of Georgia through increased access to high quality vocational education and training services. The project aims to contribute to the improvement of the quality and accessibility of skills training for life-long learning and enhancement of employment opportunities for youth and vulnerable groups.

The CBLLL project was implemented from January 2020 to December 2023 with a total budget of 1,125,000 euros (900,000 from the EU and 225,000 from UNDP). Its main implementing partners were the Vocational Skills Agency (established by the Ministry of Education and Science of Georgia and the Chamber of Commerce and Industry) and the non-governmental youth organisation “Sunny House”. The project was managed by a UNDP Georgia team and was accountable to a multi-stakeholder Project Board.

The main objective of the evaluation was to assess the project’s relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, and sustainability in terms of achieved outputs and outcomes, and to produce conclusions, recommendations and lessons learned to be incorporated into future UNDP VET projects.

A mixed methodology was applied, allowing for appropriate triangulation of information. The following methods were used:

* **Desk Review** of a large number of project documents and background information
* **Semi-structured interviews** conducted virtually by the international evaluator and by a local consultant

A total of 26 interviews with individuals from representative and balanced groups of stakeholders were conducted and documented. The desk review and the in-depth interviews provided the following conclusions and recommendations:

Conclusions:

1. UNDP Georgia has invested in a deep understanding of the field of VET in Georgia which is a condition for the development of a relevant project design. The design of the project fits perfectly with its well-developed theory of change that constitutes the project starting point. The ToC illustrates clearly the logical steps towards the overall objective and encompasses all the inputs into that journey. The project is in line with national development priorities, UNDP country program outputs and outcomes and the SDGs.
2. Monitoring data indicate that despite a slow initial implementation rate, the CBLLL project managed to overcome challenges and satisfactorily delivered on its outputs and outcomes. Project indicators show that most targets have been met while a few are still in progress.
3. Interlocutors with the evaluation unanimously expressed their satisfaction with the support from the UNDP project management team. Once management overcame initial personnel challenges and identified the right composition of individuals for the team, satisfaction among counterparts was very high.
4. The prospect for overall sustainability of the project is favourable because of the choice of activities (capacity building, development of lasting tools etc) and the relevance and commitment of the national project partners.
5. While a clear consensus is expressed by all stakeholders regarding the crucial role of the business community in the VET reform process, the diverse and complex CBLLL project is only using two main implementing partners, Sunny House and the Skills Agency. The business associations and Sector Skills Organisations are only subject to the project, not participating partners of it.
6. A fundamental area of project outputs is the establishment of networks, platforms, youth clubs and other coordination and cooperation forums. Such forums risk losing their current momentum once technical and financial support cease. It remains to be seen if these networks and cooperation forums will be self-sustained once the project ends. To evaluate that aspect, this evaluation comes too early.
7. Data indicate that gender equality was not explicitly and systematically addressed in the CBLLL project. However, its support to awareness-creating efforts around gender-based job-stereotypes in the VET community is an important step towards gender equality.
8. The VET sector in Georgia is currently experiencing an important momentum as a result of national and international initiatives, including new VET legislation, VET reform strategies and new institutional structures. Important international donors, including the EU, the UN, ADB and bilateral agencies, are willing to pursue poverty reduction through an improved match between the labour market needs and the skills of the unemployed population. The availability of substantial international funds and expertise in the VET area is therefore likely to continue or even increase. This creates an important need for a permanent VET coordination platform.
9. Communication as a tool to achieve outcomes and outputs is not absent from individual components of the project but is not used in the form of a comprehensive strategy to achieve the overall objective of increasing youth and NEETs’ access to high quality vocational education and training.
10. UNDP Georgia advocates for the authorities and public agencies to involve PwDs in all decisions that may affect the implementation of their rights, but the evaluation has not received any evidence indicating that persons with disabilities were involved in project planning and implementation.

Recommendations:

1. Considering the emphasis that government, donors and VET experts put on the role of the private sector in a reformed and improved VET ecosystem, UNDP Georgia should explore the possibility of making Sector Skills Organisations and other business associations implementing partners of future project activities.
2. To make the evaluation process more targeted, consider prioritizing evaluation efforts exclusively focused on the sustainability aspect of activities aimed at establishing networks, platforms and other cooperation and coordination arrangements between multiple sectors and stakeholders. For best effect, such evaluation efforts should only be initiated at the earliest six months after the finalization of the project.
3. Consider involving a gender expert to support the initial design of VET projects as well as the design of the activities of the implementing partners, or solicit the support of UN Women Georgia during the design phase of any follow up project. Such expertise can effectively mainstream gender equality efforts into planned programmes and activities without losing the focus on VET and without turning it into a “gender-equality project” per se. One possible outcome of such an exercise could be the design of activities in support of strengthened gender equality competencies among VET teachers.
4. UNDP Georgia should ensure that the already initiated donor coordination efforts in the area of VET are kept up beyond the end of the project. The Cooperation Platform established in October 2022 should continue its activities, and involve not only EU funded VET actors/projects but broaden its membership to all relevant VET stakeholders.
5. Given that the GoG expresses concern about the stigmatization of VET, UNDP should consider strengthening the strategic communication component of its VET support programmes to increase public awareness of the VET reform, the new educational opportunities now available and the general transformation the sector is going through.
6. Given that UNDP Georgia has taken a strong public stand in favour of the participation of persons with disabilities in all activities affecting their rights and well-being (“nothing about us without us”), it would be recommendable that future UNDP Georgia VET projects have a strong cross-cutting focus on inclusion of persons with disabilities in all phases of the project, not limited to a role as beneficiaries of certain individual project activities.

# INTRODUCTION

## Background

UNDP has been actively involved in reforming the Vocational Education and Training (VET) system in Georgia for the last 10 years and built strong working relations with the major stakeholders and a sound understanding of the prevailing challenges within the VET system. Key intervention areas of UNDP’s current VET-activities include: support to the implementation of a new legal framework, involvement of the private sector both on governance and provision of VET, support of the new flexible, and high-quality education services to increase access and life-long-learning opportunities for all, and development of entrepreneurial education eco-system, which will lead to increased employability of the population, small and medium-sized enterprises (SME) development and increase of productivity of Georgia’s economy. Since 2012 UNDP has been implementing the “Skills for Employment Program” which focuses on formalizing training/retraining, introducing work-based learning, strengthening teacher/instructor capacities, introducing system components to support life-long-learning.

## Project to be evaluated: Creating Better Life-Long Learning Opportunities through Local Partnerships (CBLLL)

The overall objective of the CBLLL project is to strengthen employability for men and women in the capital and in rural areas through increased access to high quality services. The project aims to contribute to the improvement of the quality and accessibility of skills provision for life-long learning and enhancement of employment opportunities for youth and vulnerable groups in 6 target regions (Guria, Racha-Lechkhumi, Imereti, Kakheti, Tbilisi and Adjara) with perspective for institutionalization and replication of models and approaches nationwide.

The results framework is organized around 14 action areas, linked to three outputs, striving for the following two outcomes:

1. Strengthened institutions contribute to the delivery of high-quality lifelong learning in selected regions
2. Youth and selected vulnerable groups have access to flexible services of formal and non-formal learning in targeted regions

The CBLLL project was implemented from January 2020 to December 2023 (including two non-cost extensions) with a total budget of 1,125,000 euros (900,000 from the EU and 225,000 from UNDP). Its main implementing partners were the Vocational Skills Agency (established by the Ministry of Education and Science of Georgia and the Chamber of Commerce and Industry) and the non-governmental youth organisation “Sunny House.” The project was managed by a UNDP Georgia team consisting of a project manager (100%), a project assistant (100%) and Section Team Leader (25%). It reported to and was accountable to a multi-stakeholder Project Board made up of representatives from UNDP senior management, the main donor (EU) and the Ministry of Education and Science.

# OBJECTIVES, SCOPE AND LIMITATIONS OF THE EVALUATION

## Evaluation Objectives

The specific objectives of the final external evaluation were:

* To evaluate the project’s objectives and target results.
* To evaluate how much delivered activities of the project enabled achieving its objectives and delivering its intended outputs, outcome, and impact.
* To assess to what extent the project fulfilled the commitments to accessibility, quality of educational opportunities provided and relevance of skills as stipulated in the Project Document.
* To assess the effectiveness, efficiency, and added value of the project in terms of achieved outputs and results.
* To evaluate the contribution of the project to Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).
* To provide results, findings, recommendations, lessons learned, and good practices.

## Purpose and scope of the evaluation

The purpose and scope of the evaluation included:

* Evaluate relevant sources of information, such as the project document, project reports, national strategic and legal documents, records, management, and clients’ responses, and any other materials considers useful for the evidence-based evaluation.
* Elaborate an evaluation matrix with evaluation criteria, priority evaluation questions (and, where needed, sub-questions), the data sources and the data collection methods.
* Acquire background knowledge of the current standings of vocational education development on national level and in target regions.
* Frame the evaluation effort using the criteria of (a) relevance; (b) coherence; (c) effectiveness; (d) efficiency; and (e) sustainability (including cross-cutting topics: Human Rights, Gender Equality, and Disability).
* Analyze the key objectives of the project and assess to what extent these objectives have been achieved.
* Assess the effectiveness of the CBLLL project`s interventions/initiatives in achieving its stated objectives and contributing to the relevant outcomes as stated in the project document.
* Identify the key stakeholders and hold discussions with them.
* Evaluate what has worked and what has not worked, and why.
* Identify and describe key factors that contributed to sustainability of project outputs/outcome/impact.
* The evaluation report will include a chapter providing a set of conclusions, recommendations, and Lessons Learnt useful to the design of the next phase of the project.
* Analyze the project’s contribution to UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).
* Finalize an FE Report based on solicited feedback from the UNDP team and key stakeholders.

## Limitations to the evaluation exercise

The evaluation was planned to take place during the months of November/December 2023, but delays in the recruitment process pushed the evaluation to December 2023/January 2024. This meant that much of the work had to be carried out in the middle of the Christmas/End-of-Year holiday season.

The consultant was hired for 18 working days, while the ToR used a template example of working day allocation from the UNDP Evaluation Guidelines which suggests the use of 35 days for an outcome evaluation. For the CBLLL evaluation, the desk review phase as well as the data collection phase were reduced to half the recommended days in the UNDP template. Instead, a local consultant was hired to assist the evaluator. The evaluator was based outside of Georgia.

# EVALUATION QUESTIONS AND CROSS-CUTTING ISSUES

The evaluation was organized around the five OECD-DAC evaluation criteria as set out in the evaluation ToR. It also included the cross-cutting areas of human rights, gender equality and disability.

Evaluation questions under OECD-DAC’s standard criteria:

RELEVANCE/COHERENCE

* To what extent was the project in line with national development priorities, country program outputs and outcomes, the UNDP Strategic Plan, and the SDGs?
* To what extent was the project aligned with the national strategies and priorities in the vocational education field?
* To what extent were lessons learned from, and coordination with, other relevant projects considered in the design?
* To what extent has the project been appropriately responsive to political, legal, economic, institutional, etc., changes in the country?

EFFECTIVENESS

* To what extent were the project outputs, outcome and impact achieved, considering men, women, and vulnerable groups?
* What factors have contributed to achieving, or not, intended project outputs and outcomes?
* To what extent has UNDP Georgia’s partnerships with all respective stakeholders been appropriate and effective?
* What factors contributed to effectiveness or ineffectiveness?
* In which areas does the project have the greatest achievements? Why and what have been the supporting factors? How can the project build on or expand these achievements?
* In which areas does the project have the fewest achievements? What have been the constraining factors and why? How can or could they be overcome?
* What, if any, alternative strategies would have been more effective in achieving the project objectives?

EFFICIENCY

* To what extent was the project management structure as outlined in the project document efficient in generating the expected results?
* To what extent have the CBLLL project implementation strategy and execution been efficient and cost-effective?
* To what extent have resources been used efficiently? Have activities supporting the strategy been cost-effective?
* To what extent have project funds and activities been delivered in a timely manner?
* To what extent do the M&E systems utilized by UNDP Georgia ensure effective and efficient project management?

SUSTAINABILITY

* To what extent the project output/outcomes/impact fulfill the institutional, policy level and financial sustainability as detailed in the project document?
* Are there any financial risks that may jeopardize the sustainability of project outputs/outcome/impact affecting women, men, and vulnerable groups?
* To what extent will targeted men, women and vulnerable people benefit from the project interventions in the long term?
* To what extent will financial and economic resources be available to sustain the benefits achieved by the project?
* Are there any social or political risks that may jeopardize the sustainability of project outputs and the project contributions to country program outputs and outcomes?
* Do the legal frameworks, policies, governance structures, and processes within which the project operates pose risks that may jeopardize the sustainability of project benefits?
* To what extent do stakeholders (men, women, vulnerable groups) support the project’s long-term objectives?

Evaluation questions under cross-cutting issues:

HUMAN RIGHTS

* To what extent have poor, indigenous, and physically challenged, women, men, and other disadvantaged and marginalized groups, including NEETs benefited from the work of CBLLL/UNDP in the country?

GENDER EQUALITY

* To what extent have gender equality and the empowerment of women been addressed in the design, implementation, and monitoring of the project?

DISABILITY

* Were persons with disabilities consulted and meaningfully involved in program planning and implementation?
* To what extent the project interventions addressed issues of disability?

# METHODOLOGY

## Evaluation approach

The UN Evaluation Group’s Norms and Standards emphasize that evaluations should promote: “evidence-based learning through the application of a utilization focused approach and the engagement of users and beneficiaries.” A utilization focus approach was the key organizing approach of this evaluation, which emphasized the importance of working with evaluation users to ensure that results and recommendations were relevant, and followed up. The utilization approach was effective to:

* Determine why interventions were successful or not, and the CBLLL project’s contribution to the stated results
* Establish if the processes intended to lead to results were adequate
* Establish whether key results have been achieved.

## Evaluation Methodology Framework

The evaluation was guided by the UNDP Evaluations Guidelines (June 2021), UNEG Norms and Standards for Evaluation in the UN System (2016), and the UNEG Guidance on Integrating Human Rights and Gender Equality into Evaluations (2012). These documents provided general background and direction concerning approach and a menu of methodologies from which to choose.

The evaluator worked in close collaboration with the UNDP Georgia Team to ascertain the adequacy of the methodology used. As specified in the ToR, a mixed methodology was applied, allowing for appropriate triangulation of information. The following methods were used:

* **Desk Review:** general background to the current VET context in Georgia, including institutional framework; background documents on previous and current UN/EU/bilateral donors’ support to VET in Georgia, review of profiles and activities of key project partners (MoES, Skills Agency, Sunny House etc.), project documents, work plans and project progress reports (annual, semi-annual), normative and research documents produced by or related to the project
* **Semi-structured interviews** conducted virtually by the international evaluator and by a local consultant. Priority interviewees can be clustered into three groups of data sources:
* International community (members of the UNDP Georgia Team, EU representatives, other international organisations collaborating with the project)
* Georgian national authorities and state institutions (MoES, Skills Agency, Youth Agency, VET collages, secondary schools, local and regional authorities)
* Representatives of civil society (Sunny House, other NGOs)

A total of 26 interviews with individuals from representative and balanced groups of stakeholders were conducted and documented (see list of interviewees in Annex 3).

The Methodological Framework (see Annex 1) is based on the standard OECD/DAC evaluation criteria referred to above and in the evaluation ToR, namely: relevance/coherence, effectiveness, efficiency and sustainability. For each evaluation criteria in the framework, various performance indicators were developed and included in the framework. Further, the data sources as well as the methods used for collecting the data are also identified in the framework.

**Data sources, triangulation and analysis**

The data collected originate from three main sources, namely: 1) UNDP monitoring and reporting efforts, 2) EU monitoring and reporting and 3) bilateral on-line interviews with a diverse and representative group of stakeholders, including:

* The Project Team
* Implementing partners
* State institutions
* National and local authorities
* Beneficiaries (collages and schools)
* Civil society organisations
* Individual consultants contributing to the project
* Donor agencies.

Data presented in the findings and used for the conclusions have been systematically triangulated between these different categories of sources in order to enhance the reliability of the findings.

A descriptive data analysis was used throughout the evaluation, gathering and systematizing data according to the evaluation criteria, in order to respond to the evaluation questions.

# FINDINGS

## Relevance/Coherence

### Relevance of the VET sector and the CBLLL project

* To what extent was the project in line with national development priorities, country program outputs and outcomes, the UNDP Strategic Plan, and the SDGs?

According to the Social-Economic Development Strategy of Georgia 2020, one important development priority is the reform and strengthening of the VET system, to ensure the country’s workforce meets labor market requirements.[[1]](#footnote-1) It has been proven that higher levels of investment in human development through health and education can raise people above the poverty line through increased employment. Georgia’s investment in education is comparatively low at 3.6% of GDP compared to global averages: 5.1% in EU and 5.3% in OECD countries (2021). Addressing unemployment through education is therefore a national priority.[[2]](#footnote-2)

The project has contributed to both the UNDP Strategic Plan 2018-2021, Outcome 1: Advance poverty eradication in all its forms and dimensions (particularly Output 1.1.2.), as well as UNDP’s Country Programme 2021-2025, Output 3.1: Improved competitiveness of private sector and labour force, especially youth and vulnerable groups through […] skills development.

Several of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) address the importance of vocational education and training, particularly SDG 4, which aims to ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all. Further, SDG 8, which focuses on promoting sustained, inclusive, and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment, and decent work for all, is another goal that highlights the importance of vocational training.

* To what extent was the project aligned with the national strategies and priorities in the vocational education field?
* To what extent has the project been appropriately responsive to political, legal, economic, institutional, etc., changes in the country?

Several recent Georgian laws, policies and strategic institutional developments in the area of vocational education guided and aligned perfectly with the CBLLL project. These include the Vocational Education Reform Strategy (2013-2020), the Law on Vocational Education (2018), and the creation of the Vocational Skills Agency (2022).

Interviews with the Skills Agency confirm that the activities in the CBLLL project were all priorities for the agency and in many cases were already under way or in the work plan of the agency but lacked sufficient resources. This is not a coincidence but a result of close collaboration on the design and development of the CBLLL project.

### Coherence and coordination with other VET programmes

* To what extent were lessons learned from, and coordination with, other relevant projects considered in the design?

The number of governmental and non-governmental actors involved in support to the VET sector in Georgia is impressive. That brings with it a risk of duplication of efforts, uncoordinated activities, dissimilar approaches and uneven thematic and geographical coverage. It can also risk overwhelming the receiving institutions and organisations. Therefore, several interlocutors of the evaluation stressed the need for enhanced coordination going forward.

The CBLLL project has done well in this area, quickly realizing the need for VET coordination. The project therefore set up a cooperation platform for coordination of VET activities, especially those within the framework of the EU funded “Skills for Jobs” programme. The purpose of this platform is to promote and facilitate communication, cooperation and coordination between the projects with similar activities, carried out in the same regions/municipalities and targeting similar beneficiaries. This initiative clearly facilitates complementarity and avoids duplication of project activities.

Already at an early point of the project, it became obvious that too many VET studies and research projects supported by international resources were under way or planned (particularly related to the labour market). During formal and informal donor coordination meetings it was therefore agreed that some actors should reduce their studies.[[3]](#footnote-3)

However, sometimes “duplication” is not something to be avoided but rather enhances the impact of the activity: “converting overlaps into synergies,” as one interviewee put it. For example, the development of VET capacity in schools was a joint initiative with ADB, a total of 30 schools were supported, 10 of them through the CBLLL project.

### Design of the CBLLL project and its Theory of Change

A detailed review of the CBLLL project document and work plans shows that it was designed and developed by UNDP staff and a consultant with an intimate knowledge and understanding of the VET sector in Georgia. UNDP Georgia has invested in a deep understanding of the field of VET in Georgia which is the starting point for a relevant project design. That investment consists of 10-years of support to the VET sector and concrete research and studies of the vocational education system.[[4]](#footnote-4)

The strategy of pursuing limited piloting while preparing for replication by others at a more comprehensive level is clearly not an afterthought but part of the project strategy from the beginning. Given the relatively modest budget, the small management team and the relatively brief implementation period this was a very appropriate strategy. However, several evaluation interlocutors expressed concern that within that focus, the project design was very ambitious, with an exceedingly large number of action areas, sub-activities and tasks. No fewer than 137 tasks are included in the 2022 workplan. Implementing these activities in so many different areas during 30 months would have been a challenge even without the delays caused by COVID-19 and other challenges which reduced the actual implementation time (see Effectiveness).

In terms of outcomes and outputs, they are kept to an appropriately manageable level, with Outcome 1 focused on strengthening institutions (9 Action areas) and Outcome 2 on access to the VET system (5 Action areas). Technically, it could be argued that Output 1.1 on youth’s access to skills fits better under Outcome 2, which focuses on access, but the delivered result is the same.

The design of the project fits perfectly with the well-developed theory of change (ToC) that constitutes its starting point. The ToC illustrates clearly the logical steps towards the overall objective and encompasses all the inputs into that journey. In the visual version, cross-cutting issues are left hovering by itself, which according to some interviewees, might be an appropriate illustration of their role in the project (see cross-cutting issues).

## Effectiveness

### Project outputs and outcomes successfully achieved

* To what extent were the project outputs, outcome and impact achieved, considering men, women, and vulnerable groups?

Monitoring data indicate that despite a slow initial implementation rate, the CBLLL project managed to overcome challenges and satisfactorily delivered on its outputs and outcomes. Project indicators show that most targets have been met while a few are still in progress.

Given the large number of national and international actors involved in supporting similar components of the VET reform in Georgia, it is often difficult to prove direct causality between a specific project and the progress evidently made in the VET field in the last couple of years. However, in addition to UNDP and EU positive monitoring results of the CBLLL project, several government reports confirm significant progress in the areas covered by the project.[[5]](#footnote-5)

Triangulated evidence gathered from the three sources used by the evaluation (UNDP monitoring, EU monitoring and key informant interviews) point to success in the following areas, among others: support to collages through new models and partnerships, support to secondary schools offering VET programmes, networks and platforms for new partnerships (SSOs, colleges and municipalities etc), extracurricular activities and non-formal education enhancing competencies[[6]](#footnote-6), VET staff and teachers provided with new competencies[[7]](#footnote-7), catch-up courses developed for NEETs, occupational standards, modules, guides, strategies, action plans and other tools developed, career education and orientation for vulnerable groups developed, digital as well as the introduction of blended learning concepts.

### Factors contributing to effectiveness

* What factors have contributed to achieving, or not, intended project outputs and outcomes?
* What factors contributed to effectiveness or ineffectiveness?

Interlocutors with the evaluation were systematically asked to identify factors that contributed to project effectiveness. Their answers can be summarized in the following points.

* A well-designed project
* Committed and capable implementing partners
* High degree of relevance/need for the project
* Momentum for vocational education in Georgia
* Availability of expertise within and around the project
* Existence of a broader national and international VET community with shared goals
* Trust and familiarity between actors in a small community of education professionals
* A realistic number of direct beneficiaries (coupled with replication and scale-up plans)

### Factors that hampered effectiveness

The data sources coincide in pointing to two major developments that hampered the effectiveness of the CBLLL project: 1) the COVID-19 pandemic, and 2) the unforeseen institutional and policy changes in the VET sector. Neither of these two developments was possible to foresee and plan for.

Interviewees and monitoring reports all stress the negative impact of the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic on the effectiveness of the CBLLL project. Most activities involved face-to-face meetings with college and school staff and the format of online meetings was not well-established and familiar to project interlocutors. The pandemic brought emergency regulations and new rules to working and learning processes for remote work and study and limited the project’s ability to host events and carry out field visits. This was particularly challenging for the implementing partner “Sunny House” who relies on face-to-face interactions between trained youth workers and youth in the regions. Eventually the project could gradually shift back to normal working procedures.

The delayed establishment of the Skills Agency on 29 April 2021 required major adjustments to the project work plan. The Skills Agency then became operational in January 2022.[[8]](#footnote-8) The Skills Agency appreciated the non-cost project extensions, but struggled to implement a very complex 30 months-project in about 1 ½ years.[[9]](#footnote-9)

On 22 June 2021, the National Center for Quality Development in Education issued new, more cumbersome, regulations for the approval of educational modules in the VET system, which substantially delayed the approval of the CBLLL produced modules on personal care and health services. Similarly, new VET student admission regulations were also introduced, which means VET applicants can only be admitted once a year (August) as opposed to twice previously.

Frequent institutional changes have also taken place in the Youth Agency which initially was a separate entity, then assigned to the Ministry of Sport, later to the MoES, then a separate entity and as of 2024, returned to the MoES. This reportedly resulted in a lack of institutional memory and continuity of activities.[[10]](#footnote-10)

A more foreseeable event, the local government elections in October 2021, also made the CBLLL project lose some ground. The change of local authorities and staff meant the project had to be re-introduced and explained to stakeholders once again. Trust had to be rebuilt and commitment and enthusiasm re-generated. Some activities which took place during this pre- and post-election period were also slightly affected.

#### The legacy of the USSR: need to overcome a mind-set

Some of the hands-on implementing actors providing information to the evaluation testified to the challenges inherent in overcoming old mind-sets among individuals who have been part of the vocational education system since the Soviet Union era. They reportedly expressed scepticism towards change and dissolution with conflicting reform initiatives, which reportedly lead to “feelings of alienation, anxiety and sometimes even protest.”[[11]](#footnote-11)

This mind-set, sometimes translated into a negative perception of youth activities and non-formal education within formal education institutions. Implementing partners therefore had to overcome occasional negative attitudes and scepticism towards their activities. But implementing partners also highlight the significant interest and appetite for youth activities and non-formal education in the regions, once beneficiaries became more familiar with the concepts.

### Selection of implementing partners

* To what extent has UNDP Georgia’s partnerships with all respective stakeholders been appropriate and effective?

The newly established Skills Agency, jointly established by the Ministry of Education and Science and the Chamber of Commerce and Industry, joined the project as a strategic partner on 4 January 2022 (1 year and 3 months after the start of the project). The Skills Agency and the CBLLL project appears to be a perfect match as their work plans largely include identical or similar activities. Further, cooperation with a permanent VET agency close to the MoES also ensured a range of technical competencies, continuity, follow up and sustainability of activities.

Co-applicant Sunny House, a nonprofit youth-oriented NGO promoting healthy lifestyle, high morality and civic awareness through non-formal education, was entrusted with the implementation of a broad range of CBLLL activities. The organization brought a close-to-the-ground perspective on youth, extracurricular activities and non-formal education. Sunny House’s activities were well-received by all interlocutors of the evaluation and proved to be a very complementary choice to the other implementing partner, the Skills Agency.

In addition, a number of short-term consultants were hired for concrete tasks such as developing modules, guides, frameworks and practical tools.

Given the breadth of the project, the number of action areas covered and the profiles of the implementing partners, only two main partners might have been at the low end of an ideal project composition. Stakeholders contacted by the evaluation suggested that involving the private business community more in the actual implementation of the project would have been a strategic move. The CBLLL project, previous UNDP studies, and the government VET policies/strategies all point to the crucial role played by the private sector in guiding and supporting the development of a well-functioning VET system. But interviewees suggested that the private sector seems to not play a sufficiently significant role in the project. The project provides support to the formation of business association and sectorial skills organisations in a limited area of activities, but maybe some of the already established and well-functioning private sector organisations could have also been official project partners. It was argued such a role would create ownership of the process and private sector responsibility for project success and long-term sustainability.

## Efficiency

* To what extent was the project management structure as outlined in the project document efficient in generating the expected results?
* To what extent have the CBLLL project implementation strategy and execution been efficient and cost-effective?
* To what extent have resources been used efficiently? Have activities supporting the strategy been cost-effective?

### Efficiency of project management structures and support

Interlocutors with the evaluation unanimously expressed their satisfaction with the support from the UNDP project management team. Once management overcame initial personnel challenges and identified the right composition of individuals for the team, satisfaction among counterparts was very high.[[12]](#footnote-12)

The project management team receive praise from counterparts for an appropriate level of flexibility and adaptability to unforeseen challenges that delayed implementation. For example, during the first project extension UNDP and the main donor accepted the need for an update of the work plan, which allowed partners to re-adjust schedules and among other activities dedicate more time to development of qualifications.

### Monitoring and reporting

UNDP Georgia has a dedicated resource person for M&E of the entire Country Programme. This person has had limited involvement with the CBLLL project so far, but will be involved in final reporting. Individual UNDP Georgia projects normally have their own M&E person, unless they are too small to justify such a resource investment. For the CBLLL project, the project coordinator was responsible for monitoring and reporting through the periodic progress reports and directly to the project Board. It is evident from those reports that the project initially suffered from serious delays, but as implementation progressed, the reports logically became more valuable, with detailed reporting against targets. Reports were reviewed and discussed at regular project board meetings where updated work plans were approved. In addition, EU conducted its own monitoring, including through periodic field visits. A final CBLLL project report is due 6 months after project closure.

### Efficient use of project resources

The main efficiency problem reported to the evaluator relates to delays in implementation. Everyone agrees that the COVID-19 pandemic is the main culprit to the overall delay of implementation but other causes have also contributed. For example, in one region inadequate infrastructure in the selected secondary schools delayed VET support activities. Further, lengthy deliberations between UNDP, the Skills Agency and Sunny House on for example selection of schools and identification of ideal colleges for transformation into skills hubs also caused some delay. On the other hand, the project is making efficient use of resources already generated by other projects, including ETF resources for developing training modules on entrepreneurship.[[13]](#footnote-13)

## Sustainability

* Are there any financial risks that may jeopardize the sustainability of project outputs/outcome/impact affecting women, men, and vulnerable groups?
* To what extent will financial and economic resources be available to sustain the benefits achieved by the project?
* Are there any social or political risks that may jeopardize the sustainability of project outputs and the project contributions to country program outputs and outcomes?

### Stability of implementing partners support sustainability, but need for new financial resources

The data collected during the evaluation point to a few important factors supportive of the overall sustainability of the CBLLL project. These include the broad consensus around the relevance of the project and the urgent need to reform the VET sector in Georgia in general. Other factors include the extensive capacity building component of the project which should ensure a permanent transfer of skills and knowledge to teachers, managers and administrators. Similarly, the multiple modules, guidance documents and inputs to regulations produced by the project will remain relevant and highly useful long after the finalization of the project.[[14]](#footnote-14) Also, the recently created Skills Agency expressed a strong commitment to the continuation of the CBLLL project activities.

The important learning taking place through the capacity building activities could be captured and documented by systematically introducing anonymous pre- and post-tests before and after each training session. This would provide evidence and support the argument that capacity building is a sustainable contribution to the VET sector.

Other factors, some identified by the project’s own risk assessment, could be cause for concern in relation to overall sustainability. Most importantly -and as underlined in the CBLLL project’s sustainability matrix- the financial sustainability of some outcomes/outputs is rather uncertain. As the project is mostly developing models, and implementing pilot activities, which ideally should be replicated and scaled up, there is a need for continued funding to achieve more comprehensive results.

Interviewees pointed out that such funding can only come from three sources: state budget, external donor funding and private sector collaboration with VET providers. New and enhanced partnerships with the private sector is a fundamental component of the entire VET reform, but some informants doubted the commitment and capacity of the entire business community to provide the necessary funding. They argued that there is potential for involving some limited private sectors but that the replication of the successful VET model used in for example Switzerland and Germany might not be a realistic expectation.[[15]](#footnote-15)

Another fundamental area of project outputs is the establishment of networks, platforms, youth clubs and other coordination and cooperation forums. Interviewees warned that such forums risk losing their momentum once technical and financial support cease, particularly in regions and rural areas where public transport as well as internet connectivity is limited. It remains to be seen if these networks and cooperation forums will be self-sustained once the project ends. In that regard, this evaluation comes too early. It would be extremely useful to re-examine how operational these networks are a year from now.

The evaluation has not revealed any social or political risks that may jeopardize the sustainability of the project. The current political leadership and the institutions in charge of VET reform have expressed their strong support for the results pursued by the project.

## Cross-cutting issues

* + 1. **Gender equality promoted by the project**

* To what extent have gender equality and the empowerment of women been addressed in the design, implementation, and monitoring of the project?

In its reporting, the project team puts forward the argument that high-quality education is a requirement for women’s economic empowerment and that providing inclusive learning environments would eliminate discriminatory attitudes. It is further highlighted that gender mainstreaming and inclusive development are cross-cutting issues for both partners of the CBLLL project. Undoubtedly that is a helpful starting point, but does not necessarily turn the CBLLL project into a project with a gender-equality focus. Rather, the data indicate that gender equality was not explicitly and systematically addressed in the CBLLL project. However, its support to awareness-creating efforts around gender-based job-stereotypes in the VET community is an important step towards gender equality. Also, the gender-segregated statistic from the different project activities indicate a clear female majority participation in many CBLLL project activities.

Since the project was designed, the Skills Agency has developed a Gender Action Plan for 2022-2026 which could provide entry points for future UNDP gender equality support.

### Human rights of vulnerable groups upheld by the CBLLL project

* To what extent have poor, indigenous, and physically challenged, women, men, and other disadvantaged and marginalized groups, including NEETs benefited from the work of CBLLL/UNDP in the country?

Persons who are not employed and not in education (NEETs) and youth in general are the main target groups and beneficiaries of the CBLLL project. The conceptual category “vulnerable groups” is frequently referred to in the CBLLL project document as one priority target group, along with NEETs and youth, but is never explicitly defined (sometimes NEETs are included in this group). Representatives of the implementing partners explained that “vulnerable groups” encompass socially and economically excluded groups in Georgia, including persons with disabilities, persons living in severe poverty, internally displaced persons and often ethnic minorities with weak knowledge of the Georgian language (mostly Armenians and Azerbaijanis). The mentioned ethnic minorities benefitted from the project through support to Georgian language learning, which strengthened their access to vocational education.

The beneficiary category “vulnerable groups” is mentioned in most project activities, but there are two specific action areas that really focus on concrete activities for vulnerable groups, namely Action IV. *Creation of distance work or home-based work opportunities for vulnerable and special target groups (PwDs, youth ethnical minorities)* and Action XII. *Development and introduction of special Career Education and Orientation Programme*. More on this below in reference to Persons with Disabilities.

### The involvement of persons with disabilities

* Were persons with disabilities consulted and meaningfully involved in program planning and implementation?
* To what extent the project interventions addressed issues of disability?

The evaluation has not received any evidence indicating that persons with disabilities were involved in project planning and implementation, but certainly as beneficiaries of several activities. Most notably, a Student Orientation Service focused on persons with disabilities. The CBLLL successfully supported the development of a guide for VET collages on how to offer orientation services on VET for PwDs. Through the Orientation Service, persons with disabilities can better understand what skills are needed for each professional area. Based on this information, and given the particular disability, the person can make a more informed choice of vocational training programme. Similarly, Action IV. (*Creation of distance work or home-based work opportunities for vulnerable and special target groups*) explicitly included persons with disabilities.

Persons with disabilities have also been targeted and supported in their active engagement in youth clubs. This has been particularly noticeable in Batumi (Black Sea Collage) where the active participation and integration of 7 students with various disabilities, including the hearing impaired, was observed. Therefore, the youth club at the Black Sea college pursued a specific project to educate their peers in sign language.

UNDP Georgia has taken a strong public stand in favour of the participation of persons with disabilities in all activities affecting their rights and well-being (“nothing about us without us”).[[16]](#footnote-16) It advocates for the authorities and public agencies to involve PwDs in all decisions that may affect the implementation of their rights. It would therefore be logical that all UNDP projects have a strong cross-cutting focus on inclusion of persons with disabilities.

# CONCLUSIONS

1. UNDP Georgia has invested in a deep understanding of the field of VET in Georgia which is a condition for the development of a relevant project design. The design of the project fits perfectly with its well-developed theory of change that constitutes the project starting point. The ToC illustrates clearly the logical steps towards the overall objective and encompasses all the inputs into that journey. The project is in line with national development priorities, UNDP country program outputs and outcomes and the SDGs.
2. Monitoring data indicate that despite a slow initial implementation rate, the CBLLL project managed to overcome challenges and satisfactorily delivered on its outputs and outcomes. Project indicators show that most targets have been met while a few are still in progress.
3. Interlocutors with the evaluation unanimously expressed their satisfaction with the support from the UNDP project management team. Once management overcame initial personnel challenges and identified the right composition of individuals for the team, satisfaction among counterparts was very high.
4. The prospect for overall sustainability of the project is favourable because of the choice of activities (capacity building, development of lasting tools etc) and the relevance and commitment of the national project partners.
5. While a clear consensus is expressed by all stakeholders regarding the crucial role of the business community in the VET reform process, the diverse and complex CBLLL project is only using two main implementing partners, Sunny House and the Skills Agency. The business associations and Sector Skills Organisations are only subject to the project, not participating partners of it.
6. A fundamental area of project outputs is the establishment of networks, platforms, youth clubs and other coordination and cooperation forums. Such forums risk losing their current momentum once technical and financial support cease. It remains to be seen if these networks and cooperation forums will be self-sustained once the project ends. To evaluate that aspect, this evaluation comes too early.
7. Data indicate that gender equality was not explicitly and systematically addressed in the CBLLL project. However, its support to awareness-creating efforts around gender-based job-stereotypes in the VET community is an important step towards gender equality.
8. The VET sector in Georgia is currently experiencing an important momentum as a result of national and international initiatives, including new VET legislation, VET reform strategies and new institutional structures. Important international donors, including the EU, the UN, ADB and bilateral agencies, are willing to pursue poverty reduction through an improved match between the labour market needs and the skills of the unemployed population. The availability of substantial international funds and expertise in the VET area is therefore likely to continue or even increase. This creates an important need for a permanent VET coordination platform.
9. Communication as a tool to achieve outcomes and outputs is not absent from individual components of the project but is not used in the form of a comprehensive strategy to achieve the overall objective of increasing youth and NEETs’ access to high quality vocational education and training.
10. UNDP Georgia advocates for the authorities and public agencies to involve PwDs in all decisions that may affect the implementation of their rights, but the evaluation has not received any evidence indicating that persons with disabilities were involved in project planning and implementation.

# RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Considering the emphasis that government, donors and VET experts put on the role of the private sector in a reformed and improved VET ecosystem, UNDP Georgia should explore the possibility of making Sector Skills Organisations and other business associations implementing partners of future project activities.
2. To make the evaluation process more targeted, consider prioritizing evaluation efforts exclusively focused on the sustainability aspect of activities aimed at establishing networks, platforms and other cooperation and coordination arrangements between multiple sectors and stakeholders. For best effect, such evaluation efforts should only be initiated at the earliest six months after the finalization of the project.
3. Consider involving a gender expert to support the initial design of VET projects as well as the design of the activities of the implementing partners, or solicit the support of UN Women Georgia during the design phase of any follow up project. Such expertise can effectively mainstream gender equality efforts into planned programmes and activities without losing the focus on VET and without turning it into a “gender-equality project” per se. One possible outcome of such an exercise could be the design of activities in support of strengthened gender equality competencies among VET teachers.
4. UNDP Georgia should ensure that the already initiated donor coordination efforts in the area of VET are kept up beyond the end of the project. The Cooperation Platform established in October 2022 should continue its activities, and involve not only EU funded VET actors/projects but broaden its membership to all relevant VET stakeholders.
5. Given that the GoG expresses concern about the stigmatization of VET, UNDP should consider strengthening the strategic communication component of its VET support programmes to increase public awareness of the VET reform, the new educational opportunities now available and the general transformation the sector is going through.
6. Given that UNDP Georgia has taken a strong public stand in favour of the participation of persons with disabilities in all activities affecting their rights and well-being (“nothing about us without us”), it would be recommendable that future UNDP Georgia VET projects have a strong cross-cutting focus on inclusion of persons with disabilities in all phases of the project, not limited to a role as beneficiaries of certain individual project activities.

# **LESSONS LEARNED**

## Teaching skills, educational tools and infrastructure can be developed, but

## mind-sets remain

Implementers of the CBLLL project were surprised to find that even 32 years after leaving the Soviet Union some teachers and school administrators were influenced by a certain “USSR-mind set” in their views and attitudes towards VET and education. This teaches us that needs assessments should try to capture wide-spread attitudes as much as technical gaps in capacity to deliver VET.

## Even in the era of the “gig-economy,” not everyone wants to be an entrepreneur

Extracurricular activities, informal education and development of core competencies were all extremely welcome by the youth beneficiaries. However, the implementing partner reports a mixed reception of the entrepreneurial skills trainings. Many youths expressed a lack of interest in the entrepreneurial segment of the programme. Given that the objective of the project is to match skills with the demand of the labour market, a cool reception of these activities by some beneficiaries should not necessarily lead to a re-think, but underlines the need to introduce the activities with clear and convincing arguments and realistic expectations.

## Local and regional authorities must be on-board to address contextual project challenges

Some of the project challenges reported to the evaluation falls outside of the realm and capacity of the project. In some regions, attending VET in centrally located towns was made complicated due to lacking or deficient infrastructure. Transport and/or on-campus dormitories were not always available. Also, in the mountainous regions heavy snowfall could also prevent students from attending public schools and VET colleges. Additionally, poor or inexistent internet coverage in some remote regions added to the challenge. This underlines the importance of creating early partnerships with the local authorities to try to address challenges affecting the effectiveness of the project. In at least one case reported to the evaluation, a local major organized ad hoc transport to VET activities carried out by the CBLLL project.

# ANNEXES

## Annex 1

**Methodological Framework for the evaluation of UNDP Georgia project: “Creating Better Lifelong Learning Opportunities through Local Partnerships (CBLLL)”**

| Evaluation Criteria (OECD/DAC) | Key evaluation questions | Indicators/success standards | Data Sources | | Data Collection Methods |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Relevance/Coherence | To what extent was the project in line with national development priorities, country program outputs and outcomes, the UNDP Strategic Plan, and the SDGs?  To what extent was the project aligned with the national strategies and priorities in the vocational education field?  To what extent were lessons learned from, and coordination with, other relevant projects considered in the design?  To what extent has the project been appropriately responsive to political, legal, economic, institutional, etc., changes in the country? | VET explicitly addressed as a priority tool to address poverty in Georgia  Initial draft project design adapted to new circumstances and avoiding overlap with similar projects | | National policies & development plans, UNDP Strategic Plan, SDGs.  UNDP Georgia Team, MoES, Skills Agency | Document review & in-depth interviews |
| Effectiveness | To what extent were the project outputs, outcome and impact achieved, considering men, women, and vulnerable groups?  What factors have contributed to achieving, or not, intended project outputs and outcomes?  To what extent has UNDP Georgia’s partnerships with all respective stakeholders been appropriate and effective?  What factors contributed to effectiveness or ineffectiveness?  In which areas does the project have the greatest achievements? Why and what have been the supporting factors? How can the project build on or expand these achievements?  In which areas does the project have the fewest achievements? What have been the constraining factors and why? How can or could they be overcome?  What, if any, alternative strategies would have been more effective in achieving the project objectives? | 80% of targets in project results framework achieved  Identification of three or more factors of success  Identification of three or more hindrances/blockages to success | | Project Progress Reports, UNDP Georgia Team, EU representatives, European Training Foundation, ADB, GIZ, international consultants collaborating with the project, MoES, Skills Agency, VET collages, secondary schools, local and regional authorities, Sunny House, youth clubs, Social Research and Consultation Centre, ACT etc. | Document review & in-depth interviews |
| Efficiency | To what extent was the project management structure as outlined in the project document efficient in generating the expected results?  To what extent have the CBLLL project implementation strategy and execution been efficient and cost-effective?  To what extent have resources been used efficiently? Have activities supporting the strategy been cost-effective?  To what extent have project funds and activities been delivered in a timely manner?  To what extent do the M&E systems utilized by UNDP Georgia ensure effective and efficient project management? | Identified hindrances/blockages to project success not related to/related to CBLLL management structure or implementation strategy  Delays in delivery of funds and activities resulting in modification of work plans  All tools of the M&E system have been used effectively | | Monitoring data, risk logs, project progress reports, UNDP Georgia Team, EU representatives, European Training Foundation, ADB, GIZ, international consultants collaborating with the project, MoES, Skills Agency, VET collages, secondary schools, local and regional authorities, Sunny House, youth clubs, Social Research and Consultation Centre, ACT etc. | Document review & in-depth interviews |
|
| Sustainability | To what extent the project output/outcomes/impact fulfill the institutional, policy level and financial sustainability as detailed in the project document?  Are there any financial risks that may jeopardize the sustainability of project outputs/outcome/impact affecting women, men, and vulnerable groups?  To what extent will targeted men, women and vulnerable people benefit from the project interventions in the long term?  To what extent will financial and economic resources be available to sustain the benefits achieved by the project?  Are there any social or political risks that may jeopardize the sustainability of project outputs and the project contributions to country program outputs and outcomes?  Do the legal frameworks, policies, governance structures, and processes within which the project operates pose risks that may jeopardize the sustainability of project benefits?  To what extent do stakeholders (men, women, vulnerable groups) support the project’s long-term objectives? | Assessed level of true institutional State commitment to the overall objective of the CBLLL project (including local authorities and secondary schools)  Political and financial stability of the MoES and the Skills Agency  Interest and commitments from the Georgian business community to be part of VET governance and delivery  International community (UN, EU, WB, bilateral donors etc) commitment to address poverty in Georgia through VET | | Project Progress Reports, UNDP Georgia Team, EU representatives, European Training Foundation, ADB, GIZ, international consultants collaborating with the project, MoES, Skills Agency, VET collages, secondary schools, local and regional authorities, Sunny House, youth clubs, Social Research and Consultation Centre, ACT, Georgian business community etc. | Document review & in-depth interviews |
| Human rights | To what extent have poor, indigenous, and physically challenged, women, men, and other disadvantaged and marginalized groups, including NEETs benefited from the work of CBLLL/UNDP in the country? | % of individual project beneficiaries who fall in the category: “poor, indigenous, and physically challenged, women, men, and other disadvantaged and marginalized groups” | | UNDP monitoring data, project progress reports, UNDP Georgia Team, EU representatives, European Training Foundation, ADB, GIZ, international consultants collaborating with the project, MoES, Skills Agency, VET collages, secondary schools, local and regional authorities, Sunny House, youth clubs, Social Research and Consultation Centre, ACT etc. | Document review & in-depth interviews |
| Gender equality | To what extent have gender equality and the empowerment of women been addressed in the design, implementation, and monitoring of the project? | # of CBLLL project design features aimed at achieving gender equality in terms of access to the benefits from the project  Gender parity achieved among the individual beneficiaries of the project (teachers, VET staff, participants in Sunny House activities, NEETs in general etc) | | UNDP monitoring data, project progress reports, UNDP Georgia Team, EU representatives, European Training Foundation, ADB, GIZ, international consultants collaborating with the project, MoES, Skills Agency, VET collages, secondary schools, local and regional authorities, Sunny House, youth clubs, Social Research and Consultation Centre, ACT etc. | Document review & in-depth interviews |
| Disability | Were persons with disabilities consulted and meaningfully involved in program planning and implementation? | Affirmative confirmation from CBLLL project team and representative Georgian disability organisation | | CBLL project team, Georgian disability organisation | Interviews |

## Annex 2

**CBLLL EVALUATION ACTION PLAN**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **ACTIVITY** | **ESTIMATED**  **# OF DAYS** | **DATE OF COMPLETION** | **PLACE** | **RESPONSIBLE PARTY** |
| **Phase One: Desk review and inception report (4-11 December)** | | | | |
| Meeting briefing with UNDP (Team Leader/national program manager and project staff) |  |  | Remote | UNDP Commissioning Unit and Technical Support Staff |
| Sharing of the relevant documentation with the evaluation team | - | Via email | UNDP Commissioning Unit and Technical Support Staff |
| Desk review, Evaluation design, methodology, and updated workplan  including the list of stakeholders to be interviewed | 6 days | Home-based | Int. Evaluator |
| Submission of the inception report  (15 pages maximum) | - | Via email | Int. Evaluator |
| Comments and approval of inception report | - | UNDP | UNDP Commissioning Unit, and Technical Support Staff |
| **Phase Two: Data collection (12-18 December)** | | | | |
| Consultations and on-line meetings, in-depth interviews, on-line by international evaluator and face-to-face + on-line by local consultant | 5 days  (+ 5-10 days for local consultant) |  | Home based  Remotely home based | UNDP to organize with local project partners, project staff, local  authorities, NGOs, etc.  International Evaluator and Local Consultant |
|  |  |  |  |  |
| **Phase Three: Evaluation report writing (20-22 December, 28 December-12 January)** | | | | |
| Preparation of draft evaluation report (50 pages maximum excluding annexes), executive summary (4-5 pages) | 5 days | 20-22 Dec, 28 Dec-5 Jan) | Home-based | Int. Evaluator |
| Draft report submission | - | 5 January | Home-based | UNDP Commissioning Unit |
| Consolidated UNDP and stakeholder comments to the draft report | - | 11 January | UNDP | UNDP Commissioning Unit |
| Debriefing with UNDP and stakeholders | 0.5 day |  | Remotely UNDP | UNDP, evaluation reference group, stakeholders, and  evaluation team |
| Finalization of the evaluation report incorporating additions and  comments provided by project staff and UNDP country office and Submission of the final evaluation report to UNDP country office (50 pages maximum excluding executive summary and annexes) | 1.5 days | 12 January | Home-based | Int. Evaluator |
| **Estimated total days for the evaluation** | **18** |  |  |  |

## Annex 3

**List of individuals interviewed for the CBLLL evaluation**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Name** | | **Affiliation** |
| **Donors** | |
|  | **Ms Nika Kochishvili** | | **Programme Manager, EU** |
|  | **Marine Mizandari** | | **Grants Scheme Expert, EU** |
| **Local and national authorities** | |
|  | **Ms Tamar Kvinikadze** | | **Ministry of Education and science, Head of Department of Vocational Education** |
|  | **Ms Tamar Kitiashvili** | | **Skills Agency, Executive Director** |
|  | **Mikheil Daghundaridze** | | **Telavi, Deputy Head of Municipal Council** |
|  | **Paata Gurgenidze** | | **Youth Agency** |
| **UNDP Georgia Project Team** | |
|  | **George Nanobashvili** | | **Economic Development Team Leader, UNDP** |
|  | **Natia Mzhavanadze** | | **Project Manager, UNDP** |
|  | **Ms Khatuna Chanukvadze** | | **M&E Specialist, UNDP** |
|  | **Revaz Sakvarelidze** | | **VET consultant on the initial stage of the project** |
| **Implementing partners** |  | |  |
|  | **Ms Tamar Kitiashvili** | | **Skills Agency, Executive Director** |
|  | **Gela Lomiashvili** | | **Project Coordinator, Skills Agency** |
|  | **Nodar Maminaishvili** | | **Responsible Party, Head of Sunny House** |
| **National and international consultants** | |
|  | **Martina Ljubiova** | | **Consultant on Developing NEETs review** |
|  | **Ms Tamar Dvali** | | **Asian Development Bank** |
|  | **David Handley** | | **GOPA Worldwide Consultants GmbH** |
|  | **Maka Eradze** | | **Consultant on Concept of Digital and Blended Learning** |
|  | **MS Ani Diakonidze** | | **GOPA** |
|  | **Ms Ani Kitiashvili** | | **EU** |
|  | **Natia Andghuladze** | | **Consultant** |
|  | **Maia Bagrationi** | | **Consultant on disability** |
|  | **Beneficiaries – Colleges and Schools** | | |
|  | **Malkhaz Aslamazashvili** | | **College Aisi, Gurjaani, Kakheti** |
|  | **Konstantine Dolidze** | | **College Prestizhi, Telavi, Kakheti** |
|  | **Irakli Avaliani** | | **College Iberia, Kutaisi, Imereti** |
|  | **Fridon Buadze** | | **College Erqvani, Ambrolauri, Racha** |
|  | **Irma Megrelidze** | | **College New Ware, Kobuleti, Adjara** |
|  | **George Gogitidze** | | **College BlackSea, Batumi, Adjara** |
|  | **Nana Jolia** | | **College Horizonti, Ozurgeti, Guria** |
|  | **Gela Macharashvili** | | **Korbouli Public School #2 , Imereti** |
|  | **Nato Jankhoteli** | | **SchoolsLentekhi #1 Public School Racha-Leckhumi, Qvemo Svaneti** |
| **Civil society representatives** | |
|  | **Gubaz Koberidze** | | **Georgian Youth Workers Association** |
|  | **Ms Khatuna Ioseliani** | | **Open Society Georgia Foundation OSGF** |
|  | **Ms Tamta Utiashvili** | | **Save the Children** |

## Annex 4

**List of categories of documents reviewed**

* CBLLL Project Document and Annexes
* Responsible Party Agreements and amendments
* Project Work Plans
* Budgets
* CBLLL periodic Progress Reports
* Notes from Project Board Meetings
* Modules, guidelines, frameworks and strategies delivered by the CBLLL Project
* Other documents produced by the CBLLL project
* Labour market studies
* GoG VET regulations
* VET legislation, policy documents and strategies
* GoG development plans

1. Social-Economic Development Strategy of Georgia – Georgia 2020, p.43, chrome-extension://efaidnbmnnnibpcajpcglclefindmkaj/https://faolex.fao.org/docs/pdf/geo171436.pdf [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. ENDING POVERTY IN GEORGIA: NEW ECONOMIC MODELING, Givi Adeishvili Bazluh Khonder, the World Bank 2021 [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. Interview with international donor, December 2023. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. See for example Feasibility Study on the New VET System Coordination Set Up, Analysis and Consulting Team and Tbilinomics Policy Advisors, September 2019. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. See for example the MoES report: *Vocational Education 2022 Report on the Action Plan of the Unified National Strategy for Education and Science of Georgia (2023).* [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. Interview with VET collage representative: “It's challenging for formal education providers to embrace the integration of non-formal education. Initially, there was a lack of understanding, but with the assistance of trainers, examples, and my guidance, they became convinced that better results emerge through the integration of formal and informal education.” [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. Head of one participating VET collage interviewed by the evaluation: “It happened that the project did not include the training of our entire staff. I therefore financed a second round of training with my own funds and involved a significant portion of my management team in the training with the same [CBLLL project] instructors.” [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. The Letter of Agreement with UNDP/CBLLL was not signed until 11 May 2023. [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
9. Interviews with representatives of the Skills Agency, December 2023. [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
10. Interview with implementing partner, December 2023. [↑](#footnote-ref-10)
11. Interview with implementing partner, December 2023. [↑](#footnote-ref-11)
12. Comments from interviewees include the following: “We received tremendous support from UNDP throughout our involvement in the project” [↑](#footnote-ref-12)
13. Interviews with project stakeholders, December 2023. [↑](#footnote-ref-13)
14. For example, a practical manual on extracurricular activities was developed and printed by Sunny House, which will remain a long-lasting resource for individuals, teachers and VET providers when delivering extracurricular services to students. [↑](#footnote-ref-14)
15. Interviews with project stakeholders, December 2023. [↑](#footnote-ref-15)
16. UNDP Georgia public message on 3 December 2021: “UNDP urges the authorities and public agencies to include persons with disabilities and organisations of people with disabilities in all decisions that may affect the implementation of their rights and freedoms in full compliance with the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) and the spirit of its main message – “nothing about us without us.” [↑](#footnote-ref-16)