FINAL EVALUATION

Project Title: Resilience Strengthening in Albania

Prepared by:

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August 2024

Albania

NOTE: All *amounts include commitment and potential GMS'*.

Project Information	
Project Title	Resilience Strengthening in Albania - RESEAL
Atlas/Quantum ID	00125460; 00125461 and 00115508
Corporate outcome and output	
Project Coverage – Country/Region	National (Albania) with focus at local level in the Fier Prefecture
Date project document signed	July 2020
Project dates	**Start:** July 2020 / **Planned end:** June 2025
Total committed budget	USD 2,796,593.00
Project expenditure at the time of evaluation	USD 1,871,921
Funding source	Swedish Sida; Government of Portugal; Government of Albania; UNDP Co-financing
Implementing parties	UNDP – DIM (Direct Implementation Modality)

Evaluation information		
Evaluation type (project/ outcome/thematic/country programme, etc.)	Project Evaluation	
Final/midterm review/other	Final Evaluation	
Period under evaluation	**Start:** July 2020	**End:** March 2024
Evaluator/s	Ms. Daniela Nuredini	
Evaluator email address		
Evaluation dates	**Start:**	**Completion**
	March 2024	August 2024

Table of Contents

List of Acronyms

CP	Civil Protection
CPAP	Country Programme Action Plan
DPFR	Directorate of Fire Protection and Rescue
DRM	Disaster Risk Management
DRR	Disaster Risk Reduction
EUCPM	European Union Civil Protection Mechanism
FE	Final Evaluation
GDFPR	General Directorate of Fire Protection and Rescue
IGEO	Institute of Geosciences
MoD	Ministry of Defense
NACP	National Agency of Civil Protection
PCU	Project Coordination Unit
PDNA	Post Disaster Needs Assessment
ProDoc	Project Document
PSC	Project Steering Committee
RESEAL	Resilience Strengthening in Albania
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
SESP	Social and Environmental Safeguards Procedure
SFDRR	Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction
Sida	Swedish Development Agency
SMART	Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, Timely (Indicators)
SRF	Strategic Results Framework
ToR	Terms of Reference
UNDP	United National Development Programme

1. Executive summary

In accordance with UNDP policies and procedures, as well as the established criteria for UNDP-supported projects according to the UNDP Evaluation Guidelines[1], the "Resilience Strengthening in Albania" (RESEAL) project was required to undergo a Final Evaluation (FE).

The FE of the UNDP implemented project "Resilience Strengthening in Albania" assesses the achievement of project results against what was expected to be achieved and draw lessons that can both improve the sustainability of benefits from this project, and aid in the overall enhancement of UNDP programming. The FE report promotes accountability and transparency and assesses the extent of project accomplishments.

The FE report is designed to set out the purpose and scope of the evaluation, the approach to data gathering, analysis and reporting, and the limitations and risks of the evaluation. It outlines the evaluation scope and objectives as well as methods and approaches sources of data, and data collection procedures. It includes a summary of the data collection methodologies, the list of documents reviewed, and the schedule of the evaluation.

The FE report will be primarily used by UNDP and the Project Team to complete the project's activities following the project's work plan as well as the recommendations provided by the FE. The report and its findings will also help project's stakeholders to fulfil their role within the project's timeframe. And finally, the FE's findings and its recommendations will assist the UNDP in further upscaling and developing similar projects in the future both in this region and elsewhere as well as to further disseminate lessons learned.

Summary of findings, conclusions, recommendations and lessons learned

Relevance: The RESEAL project has addressed country preparedness and response coming out of post-earthquake and emerging COVID 19 very effectively. It is also commensurate with the country's efforts to adopt/approximate to the EU acquis, including the biggest achievement of accessing EUCPM. The project is very well aligned with the UNDP strategic priorities. It is linked with the UNDP's Strategic Plan and adheres to the UNDP role as identified in the UNDAF Country Programme and Countries Programme Action Plans (CPAP). It also aims at implementing the SENDAI framework, and several SDGs.

Key findings and conclusions
- **Effectiveness**: The project has achieved its objective as well as its components. The FE finds that these components have been commensurate with Albania's priorities. One particular achievement was the effectiveness of stakeholders' engagement, through development of policy and strategic documents (DRR Strategy and action plan at central and local level Fieri region), which was the crucial element that brought functionality of the DRM system with NACP at the core. Equally so, the project was very effective in raising the capacity as well as the awareness on critical DRR problems

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[1] UNDP Evaluation – access at: https://popp.undp.org/document/undp-evaluation-guidelines-revised-edition-june-2021

in the, that has contributed to the wide acceptance of project components and outputs among all stakeholder groups.

- **Efficiency:** The project has confronted two major obstacles: initial delays in the start of the project caused by various issues that demanded initial consensus such as municipal versus prefectural approach at local level work as well as COVID-19 crisis. The project implementation team managed to adapt quickly to these changing circumstances, and the impacts of these disturbances were not felt as one might have expected.
- **Sustainability:** Institutional capacity has been strengthened at national level and local level, and management and knowledge tools have been provided that will enable Albania to sustainably implement Disaster Risk Management on a long-term basis. The project has extended its reach to integrate a number of cross-cutting issues, such as environment, gender and social inclusion through also demonstration activities simulations, etc. The project has achieved full support of the participating stakeholders largely due to a successfully implemented Stakeholders' Mapping and Engagement Plan as well as gender mainstreaming approaches. The UNDP's long-standing experience in dealing with stakeholders' participation and social and environmental mainstreaming made this aspect the backbone of the project contributing thus to its overall success.

Key recommendations

- Efforts should be continued to upscale work at local level and implement the National Strategy on DRR according to its Action Plan. Role of the NACP should be further strengthened, in those processes as this will increase their coordination and convening power and contribute to better DRM in the country.
- Design of future projects through pooled funds should concentrate all funding sources under one project management unit to maximise efficiency. 'Strengthening Capacities of Albania's Fire Protection and Rescue Service,' provided under Module II of the RESEAL project. This project was implemented by UNDP through a specific project implementation unit, and therefore, it was not included in this evaluation. It is worth noting that, in terms of efficiency and cost-effectiveness, it would have been advantageous to arrange this project under the same implementation unit as RESEAL.
- The project's design should have clearly articulated an exit strategy from the outset to ensure continuity and prevent lengthy intermission periods. It is commendable that the decision to develop an exit strategy was made during the project's implementation, though it is still in progress.
- Pooled fund arrangements and processes are heavily dependent on consistent project financing to become scalable and effective. In the case of RESEAL pooled funds attracted additional donors who were unable to commit large sums individually and their contributions were leveraged alongside other funds for greater impact i.e this was also the case with government co-financing. But it should be highlighted that any disruption due to funding gaps can adversely impact the project's overall success and sustainability, thus this is an issue to be considered in future programming.

Key lessons learned:

- Project has clear and achievable objectives followed by a rational design of project's components, outcomes and outputs. The design simplicity is an essential prerequisite for a successful implementation of the project.
- All project stakeholders have to be actively involved in the implementation of the project. Well-developed stakeholder engagement and integration mechanisms significantly contribute to better countries' buy-in of the project and its overall success.
- Successful communication and information strategy and a well-developed management information system at central and local level make the project's implementation transparent, increase trust in project actors and contribute to countries' support to the project and implementation of its results increasing, thus, its sustainability level.
- Gender strategies are effective if they are developed in early stages of the project in order to guide gender mainstreaming throughout the implementation process.
- Efforts to deliver more results than initially envisaged improves the project's catalytic/replication effect. Catalytic effect of the project is enhanced by examples presented through demonstration initiatives/drills.
- The committed UNDP team is key ingredient of the project's success. This project has shown that the team has spared no time to engage in frequent and fruitful consultation with a variety of project partners. Its long-standing experience in dealing with stakeholders' participation and gender mainstreaming made this aspect the backbone of the project contributing thus to its overall success.
- Capable team is essential element to successfully confront unexpected changes in the project's environment, such as political events, crises, pandemics etc. This also contributes to the increased project's effectiveness and efficiency.
- Capacity building (individual as well as institutional) at national, prefecture and local level, as well as at regional/cross border levels in this area (DRR and CP) are key factors for sustaining results.

*Table 1. **Summary of the FE Rating***

1. Monitoring & Evaluation (M&E)	Rating
M&E Design at entry	S
M&E Plan Implementation	HS
Overall Quality of M&E	HS
2. Implementing Agency (IA) Implementation & Executing Agency (EA) Execution	Rating
Quality of UNDP Implementation/Oversight	HS
Quality of PCU Execution	HS
Overall Quality of Implementation/Execution	HS
3. Assessment of Outcomes	Rating
Relevance	HS
Effectiveness	HS
Efficiency	S
Overall Project Outcome Rating	HS
4. Sustainability	Rating
Financial sustainability	ML

Socio-political sustainability	**L**
Institutional framework and governance sustainability	**L**
Environmental sustainability	**L**
Overall likelihood of sustainability	**ML**

2.   Introduction and overview

The purpose of the FE is to provide an impartial review of the project in terms of its relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact, sustainability, overall performance, management and achievements. The FE assesses the achievement of project results against what was expected to be achieved until the moment the FE is taking place. The information, findings, lessons learned, conclusions and recommendations generated by the evaluation will be used by UNDP and its partners to strengthen the remaining project's implementation and inform prospects for the replication and sustainability of the intervention in future similar projects.

The FE was carried out in three phases: (i) desk reviews, data collection, analysis, and preparation of final evaluation inception report; (ii) meetings with UNDP and the project team, evaluation missions in the project sites and a series of interviews with the project's stakeholders and (iii) preparation of the draft and, subsequently, final versions of the Final Evaluation Report.

The FE report follows the structure required by the respective UNDP Evaluation Guidelines, as summarized in the ToR (Annex 10.1). The main sections of the report are as follows:
- Section II Introduction and overview: purpose and objectives of the evaluation; scope, methodology, limitations and report structure
- Section III Description of the intervention being evaluated
- Section IV Evaluation scope and objectives
- Section V Evaluation approach and methods
- Section VI Data analysis
- Section VII Findings and conclusions
- Section VIII Recommendations
- Section IX Lessons Learnt
- Section X Annexes

3.   Description of the intervention being evaluated

Project Milestones
Start Date: July 2020
Project Duration: 48 months, later extended up to a total of 60 months
Project End Date: June 2025 (as per the extension endorsed during the PSC on 15 February 2024)

The RESEAL project officially started its implementation in July 2020, following the bilateral signing of the project document by the Ministry of Defense and UNDP.

The implementation built upon the two-tier UNDP funded pilots: National DRR Capacity Assessment and ii) pilot intervention in Lezha Municipality. Both pilots were considered an integral part of RESEAL and its two-fold starting platforms, being the basis for building up the implementation path.

The first ongoing pilot aimed at carrying out a full institutional capacity assessment in terms of the DRR knowledge, roles and complementarities at the central level and the proposed establishment of a National DRR Platform. Both elements fed into the formulation and finalization of the National DRR Strategy as well as additional central level policy and normative documents that shape the national DRR framework.

The second pilot was implemented in the municipality of Lezha, with the goal of developing a replicable methodology and approach for municipalities to establish local Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) Strategies and Civil Protection Plans. This also included building capacities to incorporate DRR into development planning and to effectively mitigate and respond to disasters. The key lessons learned from this process were the importance of engagement and data collection protocols, and the emerging need to adopt a regional or prefecture-based approach to DRR planning and implementation. This approach is necessary because the risks and exposures are similar for municipalities within the same prefecture, and a coordinated response at the prefecture level is crucial for effective preparedness and disaster response.

The RESEAL project mirrored several recommendations provided in the 2019 PDNA, following the November 2019 earthquake, aligned to support the implementation of the legislation on Civil Protection sanctioned in the Law 45/2019, taking into consideration the momentum where the main government institution responsible for DRR policy and coordination was under a full redesign and overhaul, as well as proposes development of response measures and related capacity building, triggered by the outbreak of the global COVID-19 pandemic and its further impact.

The RESEAL project document provided the frame of the needed assistance in the DRM sector. It was divided in two Modules, taking into consideration the realistic resource mobilization limitations, prioritizing in the first Module the technical assistance related to the DRM (DRR and CP) framework and institutional coordination at all levels and leaving in a less probable second Module covering tangible investment and equipment needs.

The commitment of 20 million SEK from the Government of Sweden prompted UNDP, in consultation with government counterparts, to identify specific sub-priority areas within the broader RESEAL Module 1 scope to address. These priorities aligned with UNDP's pilot directions and focused on a three-year work plan aimed at supporting the development of a national Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) framework. This included creating the National DRR Risk Profile, Strategy, and National Civil Protection Plan. Additionally, the plan sought to build a solid local-level experience by engaging local stakeholders in the development and adoption of local DRR strategies and Civil Emergency Plans in the Prefecture of Fier. The selection of the Prefecture of Fier was based on a multicriteria methodology, developed in close consultation with the National Agency of Civil Protection and other stakeholders involved in the process.

In December 2020, the government of Portugal transferred an additional contribution of EUR 250,000 as part of post-earthquake donor pledges. This contribution was allocated to further support the identified priorities mentioned above.

To ensure an effective management of resources, a pooled fund approach was elaborated in the RESEAL Framework Project Document, stipulating the following:

"UNDP will dedicate a unique and identifiable project code (ATLAS Award ID) for financial management of the project. UNDP will:

- Produce a project budget, unique to this project which is identifiable in all transactions, and which will be the budget into which third-party and government cost sharing contributions (donor contributions) will be credited (accounts receivable) for carrying out of the project activities;
- Ensure physical security of financial contributions, cash, and records;
- Disburse funds in a timely, proper and effective manner;
- Ensure financial recording and reporting, and
- Prepare, authorize and adjust commitments and expenses".

Operational management of the funds was done under UNDP ATLAS ERP system until the full launching of Quantum in January 2023.

Development context

The Government of Albania, answering to the globally accepted obligations as part of the Sendai Framework, as a full member of the EU Civil Protection Mechanism (EUCPM) and aspiring to become a future EU member state but most importantly wanting Albania to become a disaster resilient country, is strongly supporting the implementation of the National Disaster Risk Reduction Strategy (NDRRS). Even though the preconditions in terms of existing national level framework and expertise were there it needs to be noted that the turning point directing changes in how the DRR system was perceived in Albania was the 26 November 2019 earthquake. It was then when the Government of Albania considered this major disaster as an opportunity to strengthen the overall DRM (DRR and CP) system, both in terms of capacity and strategic planning. This entire DRM strengthening process is something that the Government of Albania could be and is willing to internationally present as an example of success post 2019 earthquake.

Albania is vulnerable to a range of natural disasters. The main hazards affecting Albania are earthquakes, floods, forest fires and landslides. Other hazards include snowstorms, droughts, temperature extremes, epidemics, avalanches, technological hazards (e.g., dam breaks), and windstorms. The International Disaster Database (EM-DAT) shows that, during 1979-2019, floods accounted for the majority of disaster events (38%), followed by earthquakes (15%). The vulnerability of the Albanian population to disasters of large and small scales is compounded by poverty, poor quality infrastructure and communications, a construction boom and a range of human-influenced environmental factors, from rapid deforestation and poor watershed management to environmental pollution. Moreover, the education and awareness of the population on these risks remains low. The latest data shows Albania is exponentially more vulnerable to disasters as in the past decade all the above-mentioned hazards have, at some point, turned into a large-scale emergency or a disaster. Numerous reports and documents evidence the high level of risks that threaten the country, the high exposure, and vulnerability, but also the insufficient capacity to cope with and adapt to them. As a result of high exposure and insufficient coping capacities disasters are affecting Albanian

development path so on average damage from earthquakes and flooding are estimated at US$147 million per year, with a catastrophic event, such as a 1-in-100-year earthquake for example causing over US$2 billion in damage.

Problems that the project sought to address

The UNDP RESEAL project aimed to address several critical problems in the area of Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) in Albania. These problems included:

- Lack of Key Policy Documents and Strategic Framework for DRR - Insufficient risk assessments and hazard mapping, leading to inadequate understanding of vulnerabilities and risks across different regions. Lack of a DRR Strategy, Outdated National Civil Emergency Plan
- Weak Institutional Capacities - Limited capacities of national and local institutions to effectively manage and reduce disaster risks.
- Poor Early Warning System - Ineffective early warning systems for natural hazards, resulting in delayed or inadequate responses.
- Inadequate Public Awareness and Preparedness - Low levels of public awareness and preparedness for disaster risks, leading to increased vulnerability of communities.
- Insufficient Integration of DRR into Development Planning - Disaster risk reduction measures not adequately integrated into national and local development plans.
- Coordination Challenges - Poor coordination among various stakeholders, including government agencies, NGOs, and communities, leading to fragmented DRR efforts.
- Limited Financial Resources for DRR - Inadequate financial resources allocated for DRR initiatives, hindering comprehensive implementation of risk reduction measures.

The issues mentioned above remained prominent during the first two years of the project's implementation. The ProDoc identified challenges related to the on-the-ground implementation of reforms, the enforcement of key planning and strategic documents, and alignment with EU Civil Protection legislation. In response, the project directly addresses the priorities outlined in Law 49, dated 2019, on Civil Emergencies, as well as the specific Disaster Risk Management (DRM) needs at the national level. The project's goal is to help overcome existing fragmented approaches and diverse administrative and legal frameworks for DRM, thereby fostering a more cohesive and effective system.

The project's objectives and components are commensurate with the SENDAI objective, contribute to UNDP's Strategic Plan, and are part of the UNDP Country Programme Document 2022-2026 and United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework 2022-2026. Finally, the project is compatible with 10 of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals, namely SDG 1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 9, 11, 13, 14 and 15. This was not explicitly stated in the project related documents; however, the analysis of the projects' objectives, components and activities shows high level of compatibility.

Immediate and development objectives

The overall objective of the project is to strengthen, Albania's DRM system and support country's efforts in becoming a fully-fledged member of the EU Civil Protection Mechanism, promoting the implementation of Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction and measures related to risk preparedness and risk mitigation of biological hazards in the light of COVID 19 pandemic.

The above objective will be attained through supporting the enhancement of and improvement of institutional coordination and cooperation in DRM system by further developing the DRR framework, providing direct support to key DRM institutions with a particular focus on the National Agency for Civil Protection, and delivering capacity building for strengthening preparedness and response capacities of the national, prefecture and municipal bodies.

The above will be achieved through the following components and outputs:
COMPONENT 1: Strengthening DRM institutional, policy and legal framework in Albania
  Output 1.1: Capacity Assessment of DRR institutions including the ones related to biological hazards (public health) carried out (Module I)
  Output 1.2: National Civil Protection Agency (NCPA) supported in shaping organizational model, scope and capacity building Output (Module I & II)
  Output 1.3: Recommendations for substantiating Civil Protection & DRR related legislation developed and submitted to GoA (Module I)
  Output 1.4: Establishment of National Platform for DRR supported (Module I)
  Output 1.5: Functionality and usefulness of National Platform for DRR tested (Module II)
  Output 1.6: New building codes according to Eurocode & national annexes prepared (Module I)
  Output 1.7: Support national capacity development in risk assessments (including biological hazards risk) and emergency planning (Module I)
  Output 1.8: Civil protection system Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) improved (Module I)
  Output 1.9: National DRR Strategic Document & Action Plan developed (Module I and II)
  Output 1.10: National Seismic Risk Assessment supported (Module I and II)
  Output 1.11: National Civil Emergency Plan (NCEP) formulated (Module I and II)
COMPONENT 2: Strengthening disaster preparedness capacities at all levels
  Output 2.1: Seismic hazard monitoring strengthened (Module I)
  Output 2.2: Biological risk management with focus on prevention and preparedness used for medium to longer-term risk monitoring and evaluation (Module I)
  Output 2.3: Local risk assessment for LGUs supported (11 affected municipalities and then the remaining ones) (Module I & II)
  Output 2.4: Local DRR Strategies & Local Civil Emergency Plans (LCEP) supported (11 affected municipalities and then the remaining ones) (Module I & II)
  Output 2.5: Operational capacities of 'first responders' strengthened (Module I & II)
COMPONENT 3: Sustain Albanian's Regional & International Cooperation
  Output 3.1: Cooperation with EU Civil Protection Mechanism (EUCPM) and regional networking and knowledge sharing strengthened and sustained (Module I & II)

Expected results
The Project's expected results were provided in the Project Results Framework (PRF) of the ProDoc. The framework suffered changes as per the agreed prioritization due to funds limitations.

*Table 2. **Total resources***

Project Contributions	At the beginning of the project (US $)	At the time of carrying out FE (US $)	Note
[1] SIDA- Swedish International Development cooperation Agency	$ 2,310,341.00	$ 363,234.49	This amount includes commitment and potential GMS $392,148
[2] Government of Portugal	$ 306,748.00	$ 9,349.85	This amount includes commitment and potential GMS $204,616.8
[3] Other multi-/bilateral			
[4] Private Sector			
[5] IGO/NGOs			
[6] Total Financing [1+2+3+4+5]	$ 2,617,089.00	$ 372,584.34	
[7] Total Co-financing	$ 179,504.00	$ 179,504.00	
[8] Total Project Funding [6+7]	$ 2,796,593.00	$ 924,672.68	

Main stakeholders

The key project stakeholders are various levels of government key coordinating partner National Agency for Civil Protection (NACP) and Ministry of Defense (MoD), Prefecture of Fieri and Municipalities under Fieri Prefecture i.e. academia, Civil-society and private sector actors. The main project areas where the above stakeholders were involved in consultation process and enhanced dialogue was during the preparation of the strategic policy and planning documents for DRR and Civil Protection at all levels.

Key partners in the project

Implementing agency for the project is the UNDP, while the steering committee that has steered the decision making throughout the implementation process is composed of the following:

- Ministry of Defense representative/ National Agency for Civil Protection (co-Chair)
- UNDP Resident Representative (co-Chair)
- Donors - Government of Sweden Sida and Government of Portugal
- Ministry of Interior representative
- Prefectures and municipalities
- Institute of Geosciences

4. Evaluation scope and objectives

In accordance with the Terms of Reference (ToR) (Annex 10.1), the purpose of the FE is "…to provide an impartial evaluation of the project in terms of its relevance, effectiveness,

efficiency, impact, sustainability, overall performance, management and achievements." The information, findings, lessons learned, conclusions and recommendations generated by the evaluation will be used by the UNDP and the executing partners to strengthen the remaining projects' implementation and inform prospects for the replication and sustainability of the intervention in future similar projects.

The objectives of the evaluation are to assess the achievement of the projects' results and to draw lessons that can both improve the sustainability of benefits from the projects, and aid in the overall enhancement of UNDP programming.

The evaluation assesses the extent to which planned projects' results have been achieved since the beginning of the project in July 2020 and the likelihood of their full achievement by the revised end date of the project in June 2025[2] based on the work plan part of the ProDoc and Strategic Results Framework (SRF). The evaluation assesses the monitoring and evaluation component of the projects and their compliance with UNDP standards, including SMART criteria for indicators.

In accordance with the ToR, the scope of the evaluation has covered, among other, the following specific aspects:

- Project design;
- Risk assessment and risk management;
- Progress toward results, outputs, outcomes and impacts;
- Implementation and execution arrangements;
- Partnership approach and stakeholder participation;
- Communications and public awareness;
- Work planning, financial management/planning and co-financing;
- Flexibility, innovation and adaptive management;
- Gender mainstreaming in implementation;
- Projects' sustainability; and
- Catalytic role: replication and up-scaling.

This final evaluation is based on the status of the project as of June 2024. The project did not undergo a Mid-Term Evaluation, as this was not stipulated in the ProDoc. The final evaluation encompasses national coverage with a specific focus on Fieri Prefecture, assessing all components of the project.

5.   Evaluation approach and methods

The evaluation has been performed in accordance with UNDP's Evaluation Guidelines. An evidence-based approach has been adopted to assess the projects' performance, including a desk review of 100 relevant project related documents and website research (Annex 10.4), and semi-structured interviews with extended project stakeholders through a consultative, participatory approach (Annex 10.3). All other interviews were conducted in person and very few online and through email exchanges.

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[2] The project was granted an extension until June 2025, which was approved in the Project Steering Committee Meeting held on 15 February 2024.

The evaluation methodology comprises three major groups of issues/aspects in its analysis: project concept and design; project implementation; and project outputs, outcomes and impact. The methodology is further developed in a tabular form and presented as Evaluation Matrix in Annex 10.2. The Evaluation Matrix served as a general guide for the evaluation. The matrix, based on the criteria presented below, provided direction for the evaluation, particularly for the processing of relevant data:

- **Relevance**: How does the project relate to the main objectives of the DRM area, and to the development priorities at the local, regional and national levels?
- **Effectiveness**: To what extent have the expected outcomes and objectives of the project been achieved?
- **Efficiency**: Was the project implemented efficiently, in-line with international and national norms and standards?
- **Sustainability**: To what extent are there financial, institutional, social-economic, and/or environmental risks to sustaining long-term project results?
- **Gender equality and women's empowerment**: How did the project contribute to gender equality and women's empowerment?
- **Impact**: Are there indications that the project has contributed to, or enabled progress toward, reduced environmental stress and/or improved ecological status?

The following sources of primary data and information were collected:

- Desk-top review of key project documents;
- Face-to-face consultations with PCU staff and other partners as available using semi-structured interviews with a set of key questions; and
- Online consultations with other key partners as available using the same set of questions.

The RESEAL Project's ProDoc provided the basis on which the achievement of results was assessed, particularly the Project Results Frameworks. The Project Coordination Unit (PCU) has also made available a range of other project documents including Project Reports, financial and co-financing tables, annual workplans and Project Steering Committee meeting minutes, etc. These documents were reviewed and allowed the consultant to compile a table of progress achieved and prepare a list of key points and questions that followed up during the evaluation.

Consultations with as many project stakeholders as possible within the given timeframe were important in developing an evidence base for the evaluation. In person meetings and discussions were complemented as needed with online interviews. The PCU helped facilitate the interview process with stakeholders in Fieri.

The consultant prepared a set of questions to guide interviews addressing the five criteria listed above. Given the limited time available for the evaluation, consideration was given to prioritizing partners to be interviewed in two priority groups (1st priority and 2nd priority) in consultation with the UNDP team.

Once all documents were reviewed and interviews completed, the data was aggregated and analyzed. The information collected was compiled and organized according to the questions in the evaluation matrix. Triangulation of results, i.e. comparing information from different sources, such as documentation and interviews, or interviews on the same subject with

different stakeholders, was used to the extent possible to corroborate or check the reliability of evidence.

The draft report follows UNDP guidelines for final evaluations of projects. During the drafting of the report there were consultations with PCU and other stakeholders for clarifications or follow up questions.

Specific recommendations are made where it was considered that improvements could be made to strengthen future similar project designs and/or implementation strategies.

The final report was produced after receipt of comments from UNDP and included an audit trail detailing how these have been addressed in the report.

6. Data analysis

An evaluation matrix was designed for the inception report and is included in Annex 10.2. The matrix provides the set of review questions and indicators against which project performance has been measured. It also identifies the data collection and analysis methods adopted and the information sources used. Table below lists the data collection methods, information sources and number of interviewees.

Table 3. Data collection methods, information sources and respondents

Data collection method	Information source	Number of documents/ respondents	Annex for details
Document review	• Project document • Project Bord meetings' minutes • Stakeholder meetings' reports • Reports • Workplans • Financial reports • Co-financing letters • Workshop reports • Project outputs • Miscellaneous documents • Evaluation guidelines	10	10.4
Key informant interviews	• Government institutions at Central and Local Level • Other stakeholders	15 (counterparts and 5 UNDP)	10.3

After thoroughly reviewing all documents and completing the interviews, the collected data was aggregated and analysed. The information gathered was then compiled and organized systematically according to the questions outlined in the evaluation matrix. This structured approach ensured that each piece of data was aligned with specific evaluation criteria.

To enhance the reliability and validity of the findings, triangulation of results was employed extensively. Triangulation involved comparing information from multiple sources, such as

cross-referencing documentation with interview data or contrasting interviews conducted with different stakeholders on the same topic. This method allowed for a comprehensive validation process, ensuring that the evidence was corroborated, and discrepancies were identified and addressed.

By using triangulation, the analysis benefited from a multi-faceted perspective, which enriched the understanding of the feedback obtained. This rigorous approach not only verified the consistency of the information but also provided a deeper insight into the context and nuances of the data. Ultimately, this thorough and methodical process ensured that the final conclusions were well-supported and reliable.

7.   Findings and Conclusions

This section presents the findings of this FE adhering to the structure outlined in the Inception report in line with requirements of the UNDP project evaluation guidance and as reflected in the TORs.

7.1   Project Formulation

Following the November 2019 earthquake, Albania was under the full impact of the global COVID-19 pandemic, while it had to cope with numerous fire disasters and isolated floods during the last summers. This incessant flow of unfortunate events has shown once again the necessity and importance of specific role across all levels of governance, the important coordination and leading role of the central institutions and the indispensable role of local governments in the micro-coordination, response, and care for the communities as well as the existing deficiencies, gaps and shortages that exist in this continuum.

The RESEAL project attempted to propose a comprehensive framework for addressing most of the identified needs and gaps of the country DRR system, and it comes with a high estimated, yet not exhaustive, overall cost. Realistically, it is difficult if not impossible that the overall level of the estimated costs could be met by potential partners within a single project/intervention. In this sense, RESEAL can be considered a document providing the overall framework of the needed assistance in the DRR sector.

Practically, RESEAL has been divided in two Modules, taking into consideration the realistic resource mobilization limitations, prioritizing in the first Module the soft assistance related to the DRR framework and institutional coordination at all levels and leaving in a less probable second Module the hard assistance, covering tangible investment and equipment needs.

7.1.1. Analysis of Results Framework

The RESEAL Project's overall objective and components are clear and practical and follow a logical sequence (objective ➡ component➡ outcome ➡ output). The project's components also respond adequately to the Albania's' priorities. This fact was clearly emphasized by all the stakeholders that were interviewed.

The project results framework identified during the design phase mostly presents a good and clear set of expected results. The FE also finds that the revised indicators based on the prioritization of interventions as per resources available are SMART and fully compatible with the stated project's objective.

7.1.2. Assumptions and risks

The ProDoc provides for the risks and mitigation measures that are adequately implemented since the start of implementation. The assumptions are well articulated and seem logical and are directly linked to the activities and planned outputs. Overall level of the risk is low and there was no new risk identified during the project implementation. This conclusion was reached based on the review of the risk log and monitoring process, assessment of the risk management effectiveness, risk impact on project performance further assessed via exchange with stakeholders.

7.1.3. Lessons from other relevant projects incorporated into project design

The design of the project benefited from PDNA recommendations and emulates several of them; ensures compliance with the Law 45/2019 and benefits from lessons learned from the two pilot interventions in follow up to PDNA undertaken by UNDP at central and local level with the scope of: 1) strengthening the DRR framework and capacities at the central level, 2) building DRR local level knowledge, planning and organizational capacities for prevention and response to disasters, 3) as well as proposes development of response measures and related capacity building, triggered by the outbreak of the global COVID-19 pandemic and its ongoing impact.

The project also takes into consideration the changing landscape of DRR assistance, where several international actors are coming into play (in the areas of short-term recovery, as well as longer-term support of DRR institutions in terms of logistics, resources, and capacities), triggered by the last disasters or speeding up their plans in view of the fragility of the DRR system in Albania.

In view of the above, RESEAL project has identified, in agreement with the government counterparts, a major niche that encompasses the soft assistance for enabling cross institutional dialogue for DRR, integration of the DRR perspective into development, and the establishment of the DRR strategic, institutional and operational governance framework at both central and local levels, along with the necessity for capacity building for using these instruments. This is, however, still a wide area of action, and the project remains dynamically adaptable to the opportunities and limitations.

7.1.4. Stakeholder participation

Main stakeholders were identified in a number of project related documents at various government levels as well as academia and civil society organisations. The FE also finds that, the roles of key institutions and players in the area of DRR were provided for in the activities and major policy documents as well as in the composition of the steering committee. It managed to bring together the interest of various groups in the forefront of the decision making of the DRR.

FE commends the work done in one of the UNDP pilots (central level one) that provides for a thorough assessment and mapping of stakeholders and a self-assessment of their role and expectations put in the perspective of the system thinking approach. This intervention established the stakeholder consultation in form of the working groups and platforms of consultation and decision making in preparedness and response structures.

7.1.5 Linkages between project and other interventions within the sector

The RESEAL framework document has informed the funding of various initiatives, particularly the project funded by the Polish government as part of the One UN post-earthquake support: 'Strengthening Capacities of Albania's Fire Protection and Rescue Service,' provided under Module II of the RESEAL project. This project was implemented by UNDP through a specific project implementation unit, and therefore, it was not included in this evaluation. It is worth noting that, in terms of efficiency and cost-effectiveness, it would have been advantageous to arrange this project under the same implementation unit as RESEAL.

The FE concludes that the RESEAL Project has established strong linkages with other complementary interventions. These include 'Integrated Climate-Resilient Transboundary Flood Risk Management in the Drin River Basin in the Western Balkans (Albania, the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro),' funded by the Adaptation Fund and implemented by UNDP; and the National Adaptation Planning Process in Albania, funded by the GCF and implemented by UNDP. Other significant projects include EU-funded initiatives such as IPA Floods and Fires; Improved Forest FIRE Preparedness in Greece and Albania; and TO BE READY. Additionally, the project has established exchange and connections with Swedish Civil Contingencies Agency (MSB) on their programming in Albania and the region; World Bank-funded initiatives such as 'Integrating Disaster Risk Management into Albanian Municipal Planning and Budgeting' and Disaster Risk Financing, as well as the project implemented by Italy and UNESCO, 'Disaster Risk Management of Cultural Heritage Sites in Albania.'

7.1.6. Gender responsiveness

Gender mainstreaming was addressed in the ProDoc. The project design incorporated gender considerations using a two-pronged approach: (1) mainstreaming gender in project execution, and (2) integrating a gender perspective into Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) policies. While a Gender Action Plan was not prepared during the ProDoc preparation phase, gender issues were integrated into the project's strategy and rationale. The FE finds that the gender mainstreaming component of the RESEAL project is well-developed and feasible, as reflected in all policy documents at both central and local levels with the project's support.

This approach also benefited follow-up initiatives implemented by other UN entities, such as UN Women, funded by the same source within the DRR area.

7.1.7. Social and Environmental Safeguards

The UNDP Social and Environmental Safeguards (SESP) screening has not identified any environmental or social risks associated with the implementation of the project. This screening ensures that the project adheres to the highest standards of social and environmental responsibility, thereby minimizing any potential adverse impacts. The absence of identified risks reflects the project's thorough planning and commitment to sustainable practices.

However, it is important to note that an initial SESP assessment for Module II was not conducted. This oversight highlights the need for due diligence in future project phases to ensure that all modules are thoroughly evaluated for potential risks. If additional funding is mobilized for Module II, a comprehensive SESP assessment will be required. This assessment will be crucial in identifying and mitigating any potential risks, ensuring that the project continues to adhere to UNDP's stringent safeguards.

A detailed SESP assessment for Module II should involve several key steps:

- Stakeholder Consultation: Engaging with stakeholders to gather input and identify any concerns related to social and environmental impacts. This process ensures that all voices are heard and that the project benefits from a diverse range of perspectives.
- Risk Identification and Analysis: Systematically identifying potential risks associated with Module II and analysing their potential impacts. This step is critical for developing strategies to mitigate identified risks effectively.
- Mitigation Strategies: Developing and implementing strategies to mitigate any identified risks. These strategies will be integrated into the project plan to ensure that they are effectively managed throughout the project's lifecycle.
- Monitoring and Reporting: Establishing a robust monitoring and reporting framework to track the effectiveness of the mitigation strategies. Regular monitoring will help ensure that any emerging risks are identified and addressed promptly.

By conducting a comprehensive SESP assessment for Module II, the project will be better positioned to manage any potential social and environmental risks. This proactive approach will contribute to the overall sustainability and success of the project, reinforcing UNDP's commitment to responsible project management.

In conclusion, while the initial SESP screening did not identify any risks for the current phase, it is imperative to conduct a thorough assessment for any future interventions under module I and II. This will ensure that the project continues to meet the highest standards of social and environmental responsibility, safeguarding the well-being of all stakeholders and the environment.

7.2. Project Implementation

This section discusses the assessment of how the project has been implemented. It assesses the efficiency of the project management and how conducive it has been to contribute to a successful project.

7.2.1. Adaptive management

The project has been well managed; the project implementation team followed UNDP procedures for the project implementation and used adaptive management extensively to secure project deliverables while maintaining adherence to the overall project design. The FE finds that project achievements are aligned with the Project Document that was endorsed by stakeholders. The SRF included in the ProDoc has been used as a strict guidance to implement the project. An efficient execution team has been in place, detailed work plans have been guiding the implementation, assignments were conducted with the required participation of relevant stakeholders, progress of the project was well monitored by the respective UNDP assurance mechanisms, including the Project Steering Committee. The project was implemented following a logical implementation process. Each initiative proposed by the project and supported by the SC was conducted following well-defined terms of reference.

An example of effective adaptive management was the proposal and endorsement of a no-cost extension by the PSC, allowing ample time for project absorption, commitment, and leadership. The project team swiftly adapted the work plan to the new circumstances with minimal budget changes. COVID-19 posed a significant challenge to the project's implementation, but this was addressed efficiently by making necessary adjustments to ensure smooth progress. Face-to-face meetings were replaced by online meetings, and the pace of online consultations returned to normal quickly. The UNDP Business Continuity Plan (BCP) and online platforms proved effective in managing this challenge.

The project's effective use of adaptive management is best demonstrated by its strategic shift at the local level. After the first year of implementation, the project transitioned from a standalone municipal approach to a prefecture/regional approach, showcasing its ability to adapt and change course effectively. In conclusion, the FE finds that this project used adaptive management extensively as a management approach to adapt to new situations, including the changing situation caused by COVID-19.

7.2.2. Actual stakeholder participation and partnership arrangement

It is important to highlight that the success of the RESEAL project is heavily reliant on the active involvement of national and local stakeholders. The project began with the development of a Shared Vision in the Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) strategy and action plan, which adopts a phased, parallel implementation approach. This vision was the result of an inclusive, multi-stakeholder process that involved numerous consultations, ensuring broad-based support and alignment with the needs and priorities of all parties involved.

Overall, the project developed very good collaboration with a multitude of stakeholders at national level, and local level which was confirmed in all interviews that FE consultant had

with the stakeholders. Partnerships have been very valuable for implementing project activities and contributed to a good national ownership of these activities as well as achievements. It will certainly contribute to the long-term sustainability of project achievements.

The FE review of how gender mainstreaming was integrated in the implementation of the project reveals that the implementation skillfully managed a gender mainstreaming agenda through activities supported by the project but also ensuring that women were well represented in the project decision making process.

7.2.3. Project finance and co-finance

UNDP engaged the BDO Albania auditing company to conduct an audit of the RESEAL project in the year 2022 in line with the office Audit Plan and as stipulated in the project document. The audit has resulted with satisfactory results.

Financial records were consolidated into the UNDP-ATLAS system as the accounting and financial system for all UNDP projects. In 2023 UNDP has transitioned to QUANTUM system that resulted with complications of the change in systems in mid project implementation.

The financial planning and management of RESEAL has been carried out according to the UNDP rules. Below is given the situation of funds and delivery until May 2024. The project has managed to mobilize USD 2,796,593 through pooled fund modality reaching a mobilization of 28% of total USD 10,047,850 required sources of Module I. The delivery in the Q1 of the fourth year of implementation is 68%.

*Table 4. **Current Financial Situation:***

Funds	At the beginning of the project (US $)	Remaining budget at FE (US $)	Delivery rate at TE
SIDA- Swedish International Development cooperation Agency	$ 2,310,341.00	$ 363,234.49	84.28%
Government of Portugal	$ 306,748.00	$ 9,349.85	96.95%
Total Financing	$ 2,617,089.00	$ 372,584.34	90.61%
Total Co-financing	$ 179,504.00	$ 179,504.00	0
Total Project Funding	$ 2,796,593.00	$ 924,672.68	67.96%

*Table 5. **Confirmed Co-financing at FE stage***

Sources of Co-Financing	Name of Co-Financer	Type of Co-Financing	Investment Mobilized/Recurrent Expenditure	Amount (US$)
Implementing agency	UNDP	Cash	UNDP Crisis response package	$ 200,000

Donor Agency	Government of Albania	Cash	Financial Agreement signed	$	179,504
Total				$	379,504

The importance of mobilizing co-financing from the NACP cannot be overstated, as it is a key donor requirement and demonstrates the Albanian government's commitment and ownership of the project. Ensuring long-term sustainability of these interventions is crucial and relies significantly on the government commitment.

7.2.4. Monitoring and evaluation

The monitoring and evaluation (M&E) framework in the ProDoc provide details of M&E planning and implementation that includes quarterly and annual reporting; (incl. quality assurance and risk monitoring) auditing and end of project evaluation requirements. The frameworks also provide for learning and knowledge sharing and requirements for communications and visibility. Tables of responsible parties, budget and timeframes for M&E activities are provided in the ProDoc. The M&E framework is consistent with UNDP Monitoring and Evaluation policy and has formed the basis for tracking progress towards achieving objectives. The roles and responsibilities are well articulated, and the budget allocated was sufficient to cover the requirements of the M&E plans.

A summary of operating modalities of the M&E plan is as follows:

- The performance indicators with their respective baselines and targets by the end of the project were identified and documented in the Results Framework. They have been used to monitor the performance of the project at the objective and outcomes level and this information has been reported in progress reports. The number of indicators is considered as optimal with regards to the number of outcomes.
- Annual Project Reviews / Project Progress reports have included a review of the development objective, measuring the progress made - using the performance indicators - to achieve the overall expected objective and outcomes; and a review of the implementation measuring the progress made during the past year.
- Financial Audit has been conducted in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (ISA). The audit objective was to certify, express an opinion, and quantify the Net Financial Misstatement (NFM) on each of the following:
    - ✓ UNDP Statement of Expenses - the Combined Delivery Report (CDR) - for the period 1 January to 31 December 2022.
    - ✓ Statement of Assets and Equipment as of 31 December 2022.
    - ✓ Statement of Cash Position reported by the project as of 31 December 2022.
- Final Evaluation (this report) is focusing on the delivery of the project's results as initially planned on impact and sustainability of results, including the contribution to capacity development and the achievement of global environmental benefits/goals and provides recommendations for follow- up activities.

The TE finds that the M&E design at entry, as presented in the ProDoc is rated as **Satisfactory (S)**. Monitoring and Evaluation implementation is rated as **Highly Satisfactory (HS).** Progress in achieving targets for each indicator has been well elaborated in every Progress Report, and cumulative progress was very easy to follow. Overall, quality of M&E is rated as **Highly Satisfactory (HS).**

7.2.5. UNDP implementation/oversight

UNDP provided the required guidance to apply UNDP project management procedures such as procurement, hiring and contracting as well as financial management and guidance for reporting project progress. UNDP backstopped the project and supported the project management team throughout the implementation, including the participation in the decision-making process for implementing the project during the PSC meetings. It was responsive to the implementation problems caused post-earthquake and COVID-19.

The project was managed effectively and administered day-to-day activities appropriately ensuring inclusivity and participatory fashion. As elaborated in progress reports, it was focused on timely implementation of project's outputs and effectively recuperated time lost in the first year of implementation. Its role was particularly pronounced during the COVID-19 crisis, when the communication with project partners was quickly established through online means. UNDP persisted in keeping the pace of PSC meetings regular as well as organised successful stakeholders' engagement/conferences regularly. These events kept the awareness of the project at a high level among national stakeholders. The UNDP implementation/oversight is rated as **Highly Satisfactory (HS)**.

7.2.6. Risk Management

The ProDoc identified 8 risks at the design stage, none of those risks has been materialised during the project's implementation. All measures are elaborated in considerable detail in the project reports. The project was also extended for an additional one year (to accommodate government cost sharing related activities and ensure effective absorption of the remaining activities).

The ProDoc ensured compliance with Environmental and Social Standards Screening (ESSP) policy.

- The activities described in the ProDoc aim to address downstream effects of upstream activities hence create downstream benefits. There are no negative downstream effects expected as a result of the Project activities and do no harm to environment concept is acknowledged.
- It is acknowledged though that the preparation of strategic documents and plans specific considerations will be given to gender mainstreaming in DRR and social inclusion leaving no one behind principle. In the aggregate however, the DRR strategy, demonstrations and related policy documents will, by definition, seek to put in place a range of governance, management and other mechanisms that will improve the overall

environmental management and sustainability of the Disaster Risk Management system in Albania.

The FE finds that all of these issues have been addressed and that project has proceeded towards the satisfactory completion of its tasks.⌐SEP⌐

7.3. Project results and impacts

This section discusses the assessment of project results, what are the remaining barriers limiting the effectiveness of the project, how efficient was the project to deliver its expected results, and how sustainable and replicable these achievements will be over the long-term.

7.3.1. Progress towards objective and expected outcomes

The project has been implemented through seven (3) components. The implementation progress is measured though the indicators, each one with its respective target to be achieved by the end of the project. Below is a table listing key results achieved by the project against each expected outcome, using the corresponding targets to measure the progress made. Additionally, a colour "*traffic light system*" code was used to represent the level of progress achieved by the project.

Table 6. ***Achievement of objectives and outcomes at Final Evaluation stage***

Achieved at FE	On target to be achieved by end of project	Not on target to be achieved by end of project

Objective/Outcome	Indicator	Baseline	Targets End of Project	FE Assessment	Justification
Project Objective: The overall objective of the project is to strengthen, Albania's DRM system and support country's efforts in becoming a fully-fledged member of the EU Civil Protection Mechanism. The project is also in line with promoting the implementation of Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction (SFDRR) and is developed based on the Albania earthquake PDNA recommendations. Also, in light of the severe and acute public health emergency due to the COVID-19 global pandemic, measures related to risk preparedness and risk mitigation of biological hazards will be provided.	NA	PDNA	Described in components' achievements		A number of catalytic results provide additional evidence for the success of the project.
Component 1: Strengthening DRM institutional, policy and legal framework in Albania					

Output 1.1: Capacity Assessment of DRR institutions carried out including the ones related to biological hazards (public health) & Output 1.4: Establishment of National Platform for DRR supported	DRM Capacity Assessment Report /Action Plan with recommendations for Capacity Development Plan in line with the National priorities, Sendai Frame for DRR and EU requirements. Implementation of the Action Plan for DRM System Capacity Development # capacity building activities at different levels on the methods and approaches on DRM Capacity Development	0	DRM Capacity Assessment Report completed and informed all the strategic and Planning documents in the area of DRR and Civil Protection		Completed
			Implementation of the Action Plan for DRM System Capacity Development		In progress
Output 1.2: NACP supported in shaping organizational model, scope and capacity building	NACP functional review # capacity building activities for NACP # of sets of IT equipment provided to NACP Official reporting to Sendai framework	0	NACP staffed according to the approved organigram capacity building in process Official reporting to Sendai framework institutionalized		In progress
Output 1.3: Recommendations for Civil Protection & DRR related legislation	# of recommendations for legal modifications in the DRR framework		Establishment of the interinstitutional working groups		In progress

developed and submitted to GoA Output 1.4: Establishment of National Platform for DRR supported			Assessment of best examples from National Platforms in the region and proposal for Albania developed	(yellow)	
Output 1.5: Functionality and usefulness of National Platform for DRR tested	# of initiatives supported through the National Platform	0	No evidence provided	(red)	Not prioritised under the existing funding
Output 1.6: New building codes according to Eurocode & national annexes prepared	National annexes of the building code in place National Guidelines for Eurocode in place # of Designer Guide sets # of training on Eurocode and national designer guides	0	No evidence provided	(red)	Not on target to be achieved by the end of the project
Output 1.7: Support national capacity development in risk assessments and emergency planning	# of training on risk assessments and emergency planning A light version of the Multi Hazard Risk Assessment approval, through updating the national hazard/risk profile	0	Trainings conducted and additional ones in progress National risk profile approved in 2023	(green)	

Output	Indicator	Baseline	Target		Status
Output 1.8: Civil protection system Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) improved	# of consultations on SoPs for Civil Protection	0	SOPs in development	 	In progress
Output 1.9: National DRR Strategic Document & Action Plan developed	New DRR Strategy and Action Plan in place	0	DRR Strategy and Action Plan approved in 2023	 	Completed
Output 1.10: National Risk/or multi-hazard Assessment supported	National Seismic Risk/or Multi-hazard Assessment developed	0	National Risk Assessment approved in 2023	 	Completed
Output 1.11: National Civil Emergency Plan (NCEP) formulated	NCEP in place	0	NECP approved in 2023	 	Completed
Component 2: Strengthening disaster preparedness capacities at all levels					
Output 2.1: Seismic hazard monitoring strengthened	#of weak motion stations installed and operating	8	20 (10 new 10 refurbished)	 	To be noted project partially contributed to the objective as the majority was contributed by another UNDP project. The value added was UNDP enhanced efficiency in implementing both processes in parallel and maximizing effects of both interventions
Output 2.2: Biological risk management with focus on prevention and preparedness used for medium to longer-term risk monitoring and evaluation	Biological hazard risk assessment and mid to long term measures developed	0	Biological hazards 1 of 6 national risks identified	 	Completed as standalone assessment and as part of the National risk profile approved in 2023

Output 2.3: Local risk assessment for LGUs supported (11 affected municipalities and then the remaining ones)	Pilot LLRA completed. # municipalities with LLRA completed # of training for LLRA ToTs	0	7 local	■	Fier Prefecture and 6 municipalities as well as pilot municipality of Lezha
Output 2.4: Local DRR Strategies & Local Civil Emergency Plans (LCEP) supported	Local DRR (LDRR) and Local Civil Protection Plan (LCEP) completed in pilot municipality	0	7 local 1 prefecture	■	Fier Prefecture and 6 municipalities as well as pilot municipality of Lezha
Component 3: Sustain Albanian's Regional & International Cooperation					
Output 3.1: Cooperation with EUCPM and regional networking strengthened and sustained	Gap analysis for membership to Eu CP mechanism	0	Completed	■	Completed Albania member of EUCPM
	Roadmap for establishment of TESTA system	0	No evidence	■	Not prioritised under the existing funding
	Establishment of TESTA system	0	No evidence	■	Not prioritised under the existing funding
	# of training materials in line with EU guidelines	0	Completed	■	Completed Albania member of EUCPM
	# of training on UCPM legislation, rules and procedures	0	Completed	■	Completed Albania member of EUCPM

The review of RESEAL Project's achievements indicates that the project has delivered practically all of its outputs and achieved almost all of its end-of-project targets. As argued in previous sections the project used adaptive management extensively to provide flexibility in the project's approach working with partners and related government institutions and adapting to changing conditions, and in particular in adapting to impacts of COVID-19. The project is a clear response to national needs experiencing very good engagement and participation of stakeholders in project activities; hence the project created a good national ownership.

The project delivered three sets of results. Under Component 1, 2 and 3 the project created a strategic framework agreeing on a long-term vision of the DRR and Civil Protection delivering instruments for a long-term DRM. Project significantly contributed to institutional strengthening for DRR, an indispensable prerequisite for sustainable implementation of the DRR strategy and the associated action plan.

7.3.2. Performance across Evaluation Criteria

a) Relevance

The "RESEAL Project" implemented by the UNDP supports the efforts of the Government of Albania to improve the DRM system in the country. The overall objective of the project is to strengthen, Albania's DRM system and support country's efforts in becoming a fully-fledged member of the EU Civil Protection Mechanism. The project also promotes the implementation of SFDRR. It is developed considering the PDNA conducted after the November 2019 earthquake that hit Albania. Considering the severe and acute public health emergency due to the COVID-19 global pandemic, measures related to risk preparedness and risk mitigation of biological hazards will be provided.

Ahead of the RESEAL project take off, with the aim of laying the grounds and facilitating the project initiation, UNDP launched in February 2020 two pilot interventions: a central -level pilot on DRM System Capacity Development in Albania, and a local - level pilot starting with Municipal DRR Framework in Lezha Municipality and later extending to Fieri Prefecture including six municipalities.

RESEAL project officially started its implementation following the bilateral signing of the project document by the Ministry of Defense and UNDP on 16 July 2020. The RESEAL project has two major interlinked pillars:

1. strengthening the DRM strategic and operational framework and capacities at central level;
2. support the development of local (municipal) DRR framework and local response capacities in harmonization with the national DRR system and legal framework in place.

RESEAL project has been developed as a comprehensive response to the emerging need to strengthen the DRM systems at all levels in Albania. As such, in its entirety, the project contains a multi-level set of priorities around three components:

1. strengthening the DRR framework and capacities at the central level;
2. building DRR local level knowledge, planning and organizational capacities for prevention and response to disasters;
3. supporting critical needs for DRR infrastructure.

The project partners with the civil protection system and particularly the DRM at all levels in the country.

In conclusions, the FE finds the project highly relevant to the identified needs of Albania in the area of DRM and is therefore rated as **Highly Satisfactory (HS).**

b) Effectiveness

The RESEAL Project has achieved its overall objective to strengthen, Albania's DRM system and support country's efforts in becoming a fully-fledged member of the EU Civil Protection Mechanism. As noted in previous sections, all the outcomes of have been achieved within the budget initially allocated, albeit with a somewhat prolonged period characterised by two extensions. The FE finds that these outcomes have been commensurate with the country' s priorities. In a wider context, the project has contributed to the implementation of the UNDP Strategic Plan 2022-2025, UNDP CPD 2022-2026, and United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework 2022-2026 strategic priorities. Finally, even if they have not been specifically mentioned in the ProDoc, the project has contributed to the attainment of the SDGs.

One constraining factor was the unexpected occurrence of the COVID-19 crisis. However, the project management team navigated through the crisis with great skill, which resulted into no interruption of implementation of the project activities.

Project has, through the implementation integrated gender issues into all project activities. It was very efficient in stimulating participation of women not only in awareness raising activities, such as interinstitutional working groups, but also at the level of experts.

The effectiveness of the project at achieving its expected outcomes and objectives is rated as **Highly Satisfactory (HS)**.

c) Efficiency

In general, the has communicated well with all the parties and has had excellent relationships with the main project stakeholders. Many interviewees highlighted the experience and effectiveness of the Project team and the project enjoyed good collaboration as well as constant informal communication with all key stakeholders implementing an excellent participative approach, which is the area where UNDP has had a long-standing experience

which was successfully applied in this project. The team's relationship with the PSC is to be highlighted.

Furthermore, as argued in previous sections the FE found that the project management team used adaptive management to secure project deliverables while maintaining adherence to the overall project design. Adaptive management has been used regularly to adapt to a constantly changing environment; particularly to adapt to post earthquake and COVID-19.

The efficiency of the project was also the result of a well-managed day-to-day activities. Using a participative approach and a good transparent communication approach, project activities were implemented with a good engagement of stakeholders and clear management procedures to an efficient implementation.
The TE finds that the project has been implemented cost-effectively and it was an operation that created a good value for money, the fact that was stressed bay many interviewees. However, because of the project extensions, even if justified, the TE finds the efficiency of the project as **Satisfactory (S).**

The overall outcome of the RESEAL Project is calculated in the Table below:

Table 7. **Assessment of Outcomes**

Assessment of Outcomes	Rating
Relevance	Highly Satisfactory
Effectiveness	Highly Satisfactory
Efficiency	Satisfactory
Overall Project Outcome Rating	Highly Satisfactory

d) Sustainability

The ProDoc has not elaborated a coherent strategy for the sustainability of project's outcomes. Equally so, there was a need for the Exit Strategy instituted. But some institutional arrangements supported by UNDP will need to prove sustainable for the mid-long-term DRM. However, as discussed in the previous sections, project achievements are to a large extent "owned" by the relevant entities involved in DRR, making the key achievements "institutionalized" and becoming part of the "toolbox" to effectively manage DRM processes. By definition, project results should be sustained over the long-term.

Financial sustainability
When reviewing the sustainability of project achievements financial risk is the main area where the sustainability of some project achievements can be questioned. The key question is: What about after the project ends and the project resources will be no longer available? The project invested in some structures and mechanisms that created good grounds to sustain achieved results. Regarding the implementation of DRR Strategy, there are indications that institutions at central and local level may be ready to finance preparedness and response. The financial sustainability is rated as **Moderately Likely (ML).**

Socio-political sustainability

The FE identified no expected issues that would result in negative social impacts, therefore there is no socio- economic risk to the project's sustainability. At the time when the FE has been carried out, no changes were found that would justify altering that statement. Also, the project has established very good collaboration at local and prefecture level which is expected to have positive impacts regarding replication and upscale. The project has also established very good relationship with all stakeholder groups resulting in their ownership of the project, the fact that was frequently confirmed during the interviews. The socio-economic sustainability is rated as **Likely (L)**.

Institutional framework and governance

The project has addressed institutional and governance arrangements by enhancing the capacity of institutions for DRR and civil protection management. The training activities were all implemented as planned, the interinstitutional working groups aimed at facilitating development of strategic and planning DRR and civil protection documents has been installed, study visit have helped stakeholders to anticipate lessons learned in DRM in Portugal and replicate best functional measures such as command and control mobile vehicle that would support capacities of NACP and DRM system. But above all, the role of NACP which has been centrally positioned in implementation of the project by acting as the central body in DRM has been strengthened and it is now acknowledged as a body that may be taking more responsibility in the future. The FE rates the sustainability of institutional framework and governance as **Likely (L)**.

Environmental sustainability

The FE finds that there are no factors that could undermine the future flow of project environmental benefits, while the project itself does not pose a threat to the sustainability of the project's outcomes. The environmental sustainability of the project is **Likely (L)**.

The specific dimension's sustainability of the project is presented in Table below.

Table 8. **Assessment of sustainability dimensions**

Sustainability	Rating
Financial resources	Moderately Likely
Socio-political	Likely
Institutional framework and governance	Likely
Environmental	Likely
Overall likelihood of Sustainability	Moderately Likely

Taking all dimensions of sustainability into account and in accordance with UNDP guidance for conducting final evaluations which stipulates that the overall rating for sustainability should be no higher than the lowest rated dimension, the overall rating for the project is **Moderately Likely (ML).**

7.3.3. Country ownership

The project in its design was addressing PDNA findings and following its recommendations. The country has utilised the project's outcomes to work towards building a function DRM system and implementation of the EUCPM requirements that resulted in Albania being a new member of the mechanism with project support. The RESEAL Project also identified complementary activities supported by other development partners (World Bank, Sida, EU, Italian Government), which signifies anticipation of important national priorities.

Government representatives, research institutions, academia, and Civil Society were actively involved in the project implementation, in particular by participating in important events where the shape of the future project was outlined as well as being active members of the interministerial working groups. The financial commitment of the government in the form of direct cash transfers was minimal, but in-kind contribution was significant.

As a conclusion, the FE finds that the country's ownership has been well fostered, and it is expected that it will contribute to the long-term sustainability of project achievements.

7.3.4. Gender equality and women's empowerment

The project design incorporated gender considerations through a two-pronged approach: (1) mainstreaming gender in project execution, and (2) integrating a gender perspective into Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) policies and strategic documents at all levels. Although a Gender Action Plan was not developed during the ProDoc preparation phase, gender issues were embedded in the project's rationale. It must be mentioned that the RESEAL Project was not meant to contribute directly to the betterment of the status of women, in particular in economic sense, but had the aim to increase stakeholder participation with increasing role of women in that endeavor. Gender disaggregated data are collected for each and every project activity and engagement event. During the capacity building and training of the main beneficiary NACP has given priority to women staff that is increasing in number, decision making positions and active involvement the last 2 years.

The FE concludes that the gender mainstreaming component of the RESEAL project is well-developed and feasible, as evidenced by the support reflected in all policy documents at both central and local levels. This approach also benefited subsequent initiatives implemented by other UN entities, such as UN Women, funded by the same source within the DRR area. Below is a list of the documents that benefitted from the gender mainstreaming approach follows by the project:

o National Civil Emergency Plan
o National Disaster Risk Reduction Strategy
o Disaster Risk Assessment at the central level, consolidated report including the specific hazard reports
• Floods Risk Assessment Report from rivers, streams, and dam failures at the central level
• Biological risk assessment at the central level
o Civil Emergency plan in Lezha municipality
o Enforced Vulnerability and Capacity Assessment Fier municipality

- Enforced Vulnerability and Capacity Assessment Lushnjë municipality
- Enforced Vulnerability and Capacity Assessment Divjakë municipality
- Enforced Vulnerability and Capacity Assessment Patos municipality
- Enforced Vulnerability and Capacity Assessment Roskovec municipality
- Enforced Vulnerability and Capacity Assessment Mallakastër municipality
- Disaster Risk Assessment of Fier qark
- Disaster Risk Assessment of Fier Municipality
- Disaster Risk Assessment of Lushnjë Municipality
- Disaster Risk Assessment of Divjakë Municipality
- Disaster Risk Assessment of Patos Municipality
- Disaster Risk Assessment of Roskovec Municipality
- Disaster Risk Assessment of Mallakastër Municipality

7.3.5. Cross-cutting issues

The project was aligned with the UNDP country programming. The project's activities were fully consistent with the above UNDP strategic directions. Since the project's activities are being implemented, the requirement to respect UNDP country programming in DRR and Climate was full respected. Similarly, although not specifically mentioned the SDGs were also integrated, and contribution was made to reaching the respective SDGs targets at national and local levels.

The project has mainstreamed a number of cross-cutting issues, namely those on improved governance (this is the core objective of the entire project); climate change (in particular in relation to climate variability and change and risk assessment); disaster prevention and recovery (related to national risk profile), and above all, the capacity development, which is also one of the core objectives of the project.

The FE finds that the project has sufficiently integrated cross-cutting issues in its design as well as during its implementation.

7.3.6. Catalytic/replication effect

The review of the catalytic effect of this project is to consider the extent to which the project has demonstrated: (a) scaling up of the project achievements, (b) replication, (c) demonstration(s), and (d) the production of a "*public good*".

The project has continuously exhibited concrete replication examples in other regions and municipalities. Besides the above, a few other project's products could be replicated elsewhere, such as the very efficiently managed stakeholder' engagement strategy in the preparation of policy and strategic documents.

From a catalytic/replication project's role point of view, the project has developed "*public goods*", demonstrated the usability and effectiveness of the governance arrangements, tools, methods, innovative solutions, and skills and knowledge. It is now at the stage where it could be replicated and scaled-up throughout the relevant institutions including governmental and non-governmental organizations for some of these tools and methods. As it was discussed in other sections of this report, project achievements benefit from a good national ownership,

most of these achievements are already institutionalized and all signals point to the long-term sustainability of these achievements. It is anticipated that in the years to come, these achievements will be replicated and scaled-up throughout the country.

7.3.7. Progress to impact

The project has achieved good progress towards reaching the long-term impact.
In the latter stages due to the limited resources will be difficult to measure the project's outcomes which are designed as to result of the direct improvement provided from both modules which are fully implemented.
The revised project's results framework as per prioritized interventions within limited resources clearly depicts the strategy of project development towards impacts. The Components 1, 2 and 3 are of foundational nature as they are aiming at creating a base for a long-term and sustainable DRM. In this context, the strategic documents have been agreed upon following elaborate collaboration process and adopted by all stakeholders. With this, the project has made significant progress towards reaching its immediate objective establishing foundations of an effective DRM system in the country. Capacity building and demonstration character of the project are embedded in all components, which aim increasing the capacity of institutions and showing how some innovative solutions can assist in implementing the DRM.

7.4   Conclusions

The RESEAL Project has fully met its objective to promote and improve DRM system. In doing so, the project has achieved all expected results in the revised project annex even though with funding limitations. The UNDP team has managed to actively engage wide array of government, CSO and local stakeholder administrative departments, organizations and individuals.

Several factors contributed to the successful completion of the project. The ProDoc has clearly stated objectives followed by a rational design of project's components and outputs. The results framework was clear, and indicators were SMART, which allowed easy monitoring and reporting on the project's results. Furthermore, the project implementation team was very committed and spared no time to engage in frequent and fruitful consultation with a variety of project partners. The UNDP's long-standing experience in dealing with stakeholders' participation and social and environmental mainstreaming made this aspect the backbone of the project contributing thus to its overall success.

Another important achievement factor was the high relevance of the subject of DRM, not only regarding its national priorities but also aspirations to join EU in the future which referred to the EUCPM one of the pivotal components of the project that emerged with a highly successful outcome. It also enhanced country's ownership of the project. These are the basic ingredients for the long-term sustainability of the project's components, including the implementation of DRM. The exit strategy of the project is in process to further support sustainability and build the momentum reached by the current project. Finally, the support

for the continuation of the activities initiated by the project was expressed in the donor conference facilitated by UNDP in June 2019.

Finally, the project has excelled in adaptive management, monitoring, and reporting of progress. This is due to the quality and commitment of the UNDP team, in particular after the COVID-19 crisis started to affect the project's activities. The team has quickly reassembled and continued with the online meetings and consultation at the pace that existed before the crisis.

- **Effectiveness**: The project has achieved its objective as well as its components. The FE finds that these components have been commensurate with Albania's priorities. One particular achievement was the effectiveness of stakeholders' engagement, through development of policy and strategic documents (DRR Strategy and action plan at central and local level Fieri region), which was the crucial element that brought functionality of the DRM system with NACP at the core. Equally so, the project was very effective in raising the capacity as well as the awareness on critical DRR problems in the, that has contributed to the wide acceptance of project components and outputs among all stakeholder groups.
- **Efficiency:** The project has confronted two major obstacles: initial delays in the start of the project caused by various issues that demanded initial consensus such as municipal versus prefectural approach at local level work as well as COVID-19 crisis. The project implementation team managed to adapt quickly to these changing circumstances, and the impacts of these disturbances were not felt as one might have expected.
- **Sustainability:** Institutional capacity has been strengthened at national level and local level, and management and knowledge tools have been provided that will enable Albania to sustainably implement Disaster Risk Management on a long-term basis. The project has extended its reach to integrate a number of cross-cutting issues, such as environment, gender and social inclusion through also demonstration activities simulations, etc. The project has achieved full support of the participating stakeholders largely due to a successfully implemented Stakeholders' Mapping ans Engagement as well as gender mainstreaming approaches. The UNDP's long-standing experience in dealing with stakeholders' participation and social and environmental mainstreaming made this aspect the backbone of the project contributing thus to its overall success.

8.   Recommendations

Since the RESEAL project is approaching its closure in less than a year from the time of this FE, the following recommendations will refer to the exit strategy and future programming of initiatives but also similar initiatives in the region.

- Efforts should be continued to upscale work at local level and implement the National Strategy on DRR according to its Action Plan. Role of the NACP should be further

strengthened, in those processes as this will increase their coordination and convening power and contribute to better DRM in the country.

- Design of future projects through pooled funds should concentrate all funding sources under one project management unit to maximise efficiency. 'Strengthening Capacities of Albania's Fire Protection and Rescue Service,' provided under Module II of the RESEAL project. This project was implemented by UNDP through a specific project implementation unit, and therefore, it was not included in this evaluation. It is worth noting that, in terms of efficiency and cost-effectiveness, it would have been advantageous to arrange this project under the same implementation unit as RESEAL.

- The project's design should have clearly articulated an exit strategy from the outset to ensure continuity and prevent lengthy intermission periods. It is commendable that the decision to develop an exit strategy was made during the project's implementation, though it is still in progress.

- Pooled fund arrangements and processes are heavily dependent on consistent project financing to become scalable and effective. In the case of RESEAL pooled funds attracted additional donors who were unable to commit large sums individually and their contributions were leveraged alongside other funds for greater impact i.e this was also the case with government co-financing. But it should be highlighted that any disruption due to funding gaps can adversely impact the project's overall success and sustainability, thus this is an issue to be considered in future programming.

9. Lessons Learned

During the implementation of the RESEAL project, every effort was made to maintain institutional continuity, a strategy that was effectively complemented by the strong leadership and commitment of the National Agency of Civil Protection (NACP). This approach ensured that the project remained on track and aligned with its objectives, fostering a stable environment for achieving its goals.

The initial analysis indicates that a longer-term Disaster Risk Management (DRM) solution is potentially feasible, provided that resource sustainability at both local and central levels is maintained. During the project's design phase, considerable effort was invested in elaborating on the two modules, which were heavily dependent on securing adequate funding. By the time of the FE, only 28% of the required funding for Module I (USD 2,796,593 out of the total USD 10,047,850) had been secured, underscoring the importance of resource mobilization for the full realization of the project's objectives. It is important to highlight the cash co-financing provided by the Government of Albania, specifically through the Ministry of Defense via the NACP. Although this contribution was not initially planned in the project document, it was small but significant as a demonstration of the government's commitment to the project's success.

Lessons Learned:

- Clear and Achievable Objectives: The project was guided by clear and attainable objectives, supported by a rational design of components, outcomes, and outputs. The simplicity of the design proved to be a crucial prerequisite for successful

implementation, ensuring that all activities were aligned with the overarching goals of the project.

- Active Stakeholder Involvement: The active involvement of all stakeholders was essential to the project's success. Well-developed mechanisms for stakeholder engagement and integration significantly contributed to stronger national ownership and buy-in, enhancing the overall success of the project.
- Effective Communication and Information Strategy: A successful communication and information strategy, coupled with a well-developed management information system at both central and local levels, made the project's implementation more transparent. This transparency increased trust among project actors and stakeholders, which in turn bolstered support for the project and enhanced the sustainability of its results.
- Early Development of Gender Strategies: Developing gender strategies early in the project was critical for guiding gender mainstreaming throughout the implementation process. This early focus ensured that gender considerations were integrated effectively into all aspects of the project.
- Delivery Beyond Initial Targets: Efforts to deliver more results than initially envisaged enhanced the project's catalytic and replication effects. The catalytic impact was further amplified through demonstration initiatives and drills, which provided tangible examples of the project's benefits.
- Committed UNDP Team: The dedication and expertise of the UNDP team were key ingredients in the project's success. The team engaged in frequent and productive consultations with a variety of project partners, drawing on its extensive experience in stakeholder participation and gender mainstreaming. This commitment was a foundational aspect of the project's success.
- Adaptability to Changing Environments: A capable and adaptable team is essential for successfully navigating unexpected changes in the project environment, such as political events, crises, or pandemics. The team's ability to adapt to such challenges contributed significantly to the project's increased effectiveness and efficiency.
- Capacity Building: Building capacity at national, prefecture, and local levels—as well as at regional and cross-border levels—was crucial for sustaining project results. Capacity building in Disaster Risk Reduction and Civil Protection is a key factor in ensuring the long-term impact and sustainability of the project's outcomes.

These lessons provide valuable insights for future projects, emphasizing the importance of clear objectives, active stakeholder engagement, effective communication, gender mainstreaming, and the need for adaptable and capable teams. These elements are critical not only for achieving project success but also for ensuring the sustainability of its results in the long term.

10.   Annexes

10.1 Annex: ToR of the evaluation

Post Title: Final Evaluation of UNDP Project "Resilience Strengthening in Albania – RESEAL
Type of Contract: Individual Contract (National)
Duty station: Tirana, Albania
Project: Resilience Strengthening in Albania (RESEAL)
Application Deadline: December 15th, 2023
Languages Required: English
Expected Duration of Assignment: 25 working days within the period of December 27th, 2023 – April 27th, 2024

BACKGROUND

1. Introduction

In accordance with UNDP policies and procedures, all full- and medium-sized UNDP-supported projects are required to undergo a Final Evaluation (FE) at the end of the project. This Terms of Reference (ToR) sets out the expectations for the FE of the project titled "Resilience Strengthening in Albania - RESEAL (Project Number: 115508), implemented through the UNDP Albania. The project started its implementation following the bilateral signing of the project document by the Ministry of Defense and UNDP on 16 July 2020 and is in its 4th year of implementation. The FE process must follow the guidance outlined in the document "UNDP Evaluation Guidelines" which have replaced the previous "Handbook on Planning, Monitoring and Evaluating for Development Results".

2. Project Description

RESEAL project has been developed as a comprehensive response to the needs for strengthening the Disaster Risk Management systems at all levels in the country. As such, in its entirety, the project contains a multi-level set of priorities around three components: 1) strengthening the DRR framework and capacities at the central level, 2) building DRR local level knowledge, planning and organizational capacities for prevention and response to disasters, and 3) supporting critical needs for DRR infrastructure.
The project mirrors several recommendations provided in the recent PDNA following the November 209 earthquake, attempts to support the implementation of the new legislation on Civil Protection sanctioned in the recent Law 45/2019 as well as takes into consideration the present momentum where the main government institution responsible for DRR policy and coordination is under a full redesign and overhaul, being at present in a phase of staffing and internal organization.
The project also takes into consideration the changing landscape of DRR assistance, where several international actors are coming into play, triggered by the last disasters or speeding up their plans in view of the fragility of the DRR system in Albania.
The process of capacity building, to cope with and mitigate disasters, is first a multi-stakeholder issue and solution, and second, it runs in a potentially risk-contained environment, where other disasters may occur along. Following the November 2019 earthquake, Albania is currently under the full impact of the global COVID-19 pandemic since March 2020, while it had to cope with numerous fire disasters during the last summer. This incessant flow of unfortunate events has shown once again the necessity and importance of specific role plays of all governance levels, the important coordination and leading

role of the central state and the indispensable role of local governments in the micro coordination, response and care for the communities as well as the existing deficiencies, gaps and shortages that exist in this continuum.

In view of the above, RESEAL project has identified, in agreement with the government counterparts, a well-defined niche that encompasses the soft assistance for enabling cross institutional dialogue for DRR, integration of the DRR perspective into development, and the establishment of the DRR strategic, institutional and operational governance framework at both central and local levels, along with the necessity for capacity building for using these instruments. This is, however, still a wide area of action, and the project remains dynamically adaptable to the opportunities and limitations.

RESEAL project was preceded by two UNDP pilot interventions, contributing to the buildup of the above niche. The first ongoing pilot aims at carrying out a full institutional capacity assessment in terms of the DRR knowledge, roles and complementarities at the central level and the establishment of a National DRR Platform. Both above elements feed into the formulation and finalization of the National DRR Strategy as well as additional central level policy and normative documents that shape the national DRR framework. The second pilot is being implemented in the municipality of Lezha and aims to, in line with the requirements of law 45/2019, develop a replicable methodology and approach for municipalities to have in place local DRR Strategies and Civil Protection Plans as well as capacities to consider DRR in development planning as well as mitigate and cope with disasters when they occur. RESEAL project officially started in July 2020, following the bilateral signing of the project document by the Ministry of Defense and UNDP. From July 2020, both UNDP pilots are considered an integral part of RESEAL, and the pilot results will be the basis for building up the next implementation steps.

The recent indication of a contribution of 2M Euro from the Government of Sweden has triggered UNDP to select, in consultation with government counterparts, the priority areas to be addressed from the broader RESEAL scope. Such priorities are in line with the pilot directions and focus, along a 2.5 year work plan attached, on supporting the development of the national DRR framework, that is the National DRR Strategy and National Civil Protection Plan as well as build a representative, yet a solid local level experience in engaging local stakeholders for the development and adoption of local DRR strategies and civil emergency plans.

At central level, the efforts will require at least the following:

In line with the goals and targets of the SDGs and the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction, UNDP supports actionable risk information; strengthens disaster and climate risk governance through policy, legal and institutional arrangements that foster integrated solutions. Based on the Capacity Assessment exercise that is being conducted under the pilot the capacity gaps related to disaster risk reduction, are assessed through stakeholder mapping and systems thinking approach. Results of the DRR capacity assessment will contribute to the development of strong national components such as the DRR strategy and Action Plan, the National Platform on DRR and the National Civil Emergency Plan. The National DRR strategy is essential for implementing and monitoring country's risk reduction priorities by setting implementation milestones, establishing key roles and responsibilities of government and nongovernment actors, and identifying technical and financial resources. In order to implement the priorities they are set out to achieve, they need to be supported by a well-coordinated institutional architecture, legislative mandates, political buy in of decision makers, and human and financial capacities at all levels of society and this will be assured through the national DRR platform. Development of the strategy will be conducted in line with Sendai Framework and will include a shift towards a more effective engagement of local stakeholders, scientific institutions and private sector, it will be developed for two periods, current (202R-2025) and planned (2025 -2030), in line with the DRM system capacity development plan. In the process of DRR capacity assessment and Strategic Planning, a core group of DRR stakeholders emerge, can be institutionalized in the DRR National Platform for the country. With the support of the working group and experts, the DRR National Platform concept, objectives, structure, main functions, management modality and mechanisms will be developed. Also, the National Civil Emergency Plan of 2004 will be updated accordingly.

Another important element that will feed into the above-mentioned processes in light of the severe and acute public health emergency due to the COVID-19 pandemic is assessment of risk and measures related to risk preparedness and risk mitigation of biological hazards. It has been recognized as part of the Sendai Framework, and is globally addressed under the International Health Regulations. In addition, guidelines for multi hazard risk assessment will be developed and stakeholders trained on their use and application.

Capacity building activities will be conducted to support operationalization and functionality of the national Platform, implementation of Sendai framework for DRR and strengthening of reporting capacities at national level as well as support the capacity building of the National Civil Emergency Agency to be part of EU Civil Protection Mechanism.

Another important element is DRR mainstreaming in other sectors which has tremendous potential to reduce disaster losses by ensuring that all decisions and activities, particularly around asset maintenance and development, are risk informed. This becomes very relevant as post-earthquake reconstruction emerges and the need for the country to update and align the building codes with Eurocodes is key and trainings at different level for development, application and enforcement will accompany the process.

At local level, the intervention will be based on the finalized Lezha municipality pilot, which will produce the methodology and the model for the local DRR documents and stakeholder operational roles. The Lezha pilot products are being consulted with the National Civil Protection Agency and will seek the approval of the latter, before moving forward.

The expansion will be limited, proportional to the resources, with the aim to cover at least six municipalities, divided in three typologies, considering several criteria, inclusive of: the extent of impact of the climate change (coastal area), the geographical distribution (north-south), the frequency of major disasters (historical vulnerability), the economic vulnerability to disasters (share of agricultural land, urban size, etc.).

In terms of resources, for the local level interventions the project will engage one senior DRR expert for the entire replication process, to oversee and guide the local processes, and the local part-time expert in each of the six municipalities selected for participating in the replication. Each municipal exercise is estimated to last 10 months; therefore, any local expert will be engaged not more than 10 months in the respective municipality, and starting from mid-2021, the project will work with more than one municipality at the same time.

It is also envisaged that, when and if appropriate, the role of the local expert could be given to a STAR3 coordinator, if his/her qualifications and residence are convenient for supporting RESEAL municipal work. This possibility must be checked on a case-by-case basis and depends on the selection of the municipalities for replication. If feasible, this solution will come to no cost to RESEAL.

Another element emerging from Lezha pilot is that the exercise has much in common for municipalities sharing the same natural resources base and risks; in such a case, the capacity building may extend to adjacent municipalities and influence positively their ability to engage in DRR thinking and work.

3. FE Purpose

The FE report will assess the achievement of project results against what was expected to be achieved and draw lessons that can both improve the sustainability of benefits from this project, and aid in the overall enhancement of UNDP programming. The FE report promotes accountability and transparency and assesses the extent of project accomplishments.

The FE process must follow a collaborative and participatory approach ensuring close engagement with key participants including UNDP Programme Officer for Environment and Climate Change; UNDP RESEAL Project Manager; the Country Office M&E Focal Points and Government counterparts including the National Civil Protection Agency and other key stakeholders at the regional and

municipal level. The FE occurs during the last few months of the RESEAL project activities, allowing the FE consultant to proceed while the RESEAL Project Team is still in place, yet ensuring the project is close enough to completion for the evaluation consultant reach conclusions on key aspects such as project sustainability.

Description of responsibilities

1. FE Approach & Methodology

The consultant is required to provide/submit a final evaluation tailored-made methodology that should be compatible with the UNDP approach to evaluations as described in the UNDP Evaluation Guidelines[3] which have replaced the previous Handbook on Planning, Monitoring and Evaluating for Development Results.

The FE must provide evidence-based information that is credible, reliable, and useful. The FE consultant will review all relevant sources of information including documents prepared during the preparation phase, the RESEAL Project Document, project progress reports, project budget revisions report, national strategic and legal documents, and any other materials that the consultant considers useful for this evidence-based evaluation.

The consultant may employ any relevant and appropriate quantitative or qualitative methods it deems appropriate to conduct the project final evaluation. Methods should include desk review of documents; interviews with stakeholders, partners, and beneficiaries; field visits; use of questionnaires or surveys, etc.

The FE consultant is expected to follow a participatory and consultative approach ensuring close engagement with the UNDP Country Office, RESEAL Project Team, government counterparts, Implementing Partners, direct beneficiaries and other relevant national and local stakeholders.

The specific design and methodology for the FE should emerge from consultations between the FE consultant, UNDP and NCPA regarding what is appropriate and feasible for meeting the FE purpose and objectives and answering the evaluation questions. The FE consultant must use gender-responsive methodologies and tools and ensure that gender equality and women's empowerment, as well as other cross-cutting issues and SDGs are incorporated into the TE report.

The final methodological approach including interview schedule, field visits and data to be used in the evaluation should be clearly outlined in the inception report and be fully discussed and agreed between UNDP, stakeholders, and the TE consultant.

The final TE report should describe the full TE approach taken and the rationale for the approach making explicit the underlying assumptions, challenges, strengths and weaknesses about the methods and approach of the evaluation.

If a data collection / field mission is not possible then remote interviews may be undertaken through telephone or online (skype, zoom etc.).

2. Detailed Scope of the FE

The FE will assess project performance against expectations set out in the project's Logical Framework/Results Framework/Financing Agreement and their relevant Annexes.

The FE will assess results according to the criteria outlined in the UNDP Evaluation Guidelines which have replaced the previous Handbook on Planning, Monitoring and Evaluating for Development Results.

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[3] https://erc.undp.org/pdf/UNDP_Evaluation_Guidelines.pdf

The Findings section of the FE report will cover the topics listed below. The asterisk "(*)" indicates criteria for which a rating is required.

Findings

i. ***Project Design/Formulation***
- National priorities and country drivenness.
- Theory of Change
- Gender equality and women's empowerment
- Social and Environmental Safeguards
- Analysis of Results Framework: project logic and strategy, indicators
- Assumptions and Risks
- Lessons from other relevant projects (e.g., same focal area) incorporated into project design
- Planned stakeholder participation;
- Linkages between project and other interventions within the sector
- Management arrangements

ii. ***Project Implementation***

- Adaptive management (changes to the project design and project outputs during implementation)
- Actual stakeholder participation and partnership arrangements
- Project Finance and Co-finance
- Monitoring & Evaluation: design at entry (*), implementation (*), and overall assessment of M&E (*)
- Implementing Agency (UNDP) (*) and Executing Agency (*), overall project oversight/implementation and execution (*)
- Risk Management, including Social and Environmental Standards

iii. ***Project Results***

- Assess the achievement of outcomes against indicators by reporting on the level of progress for each objective and outcome indicator at the time of the FE and noting final achievements;
- Relevance (*), Effectiveness (*), Efficiency (*) and overall project outcome (*)
- Sustainability: financial (*), socio-political (*), institutional framework and governance (*), environmental (*), overall likelihood of sustainability (*)
- Country ownership
- Gender equality and women's empowerment
- Cross-cutting issues (poverty alleviation, improved governance, environment, climate change mitigation and adaptation, human rights, capacity development, South-South cooperation, knowledge management, volunteerism, etc., as relevant)
- Catalytic Role / Replication Effect
- Progress to impact

iv. ***Main Findings, Conclusions, Recommendations and Lessons Learned***

- The FE consultant will include a summary of the main findings of the FE report. Findings should be presented as statements of fact that are based on analysis of the data.
- The section on conclusions will be written in light of the findings. Conclusions should be comprehensive and balanced statements that are well substantiated by evidence and logically connected to the FE findings. They should highlight the strengths, weaknesses and results of the project, respond to key evaluation questions and provide insights into the identification

of and/or solutions to important problems or issues pertinent to project beneficiaries and the UNDP, including issues in relation to gender equality and women's empowerment.

- Recommendations should provide concrete, practical, feasible and targeted recommendations directed to the intended users of the evaluation about what actions to take and decisions to make. The recommendations should be specifically supported by the evidence and linked to the findings and conclusions around key questions addressed by the evaluation.
- The FE report should also include lessons that can be taken from the evaluation, including best practices in addressing issues relating to relevance, performance and success that can provide knowledge gained from the particular circumstance (programmatic and evaluation methods used, partnerships, financial leveraging, etc.) that are applicable to other UNDP interventions. When possible, the FE consultant should include examples of good practices in project design and implementation.
- It is important for the conclusions, recommendations and lessons learned of the FE report to include results related to gender equality and empowerment of women.

The FE report will include an Evaluation Ratings Table.

3. FE Arrangements

The principal responsibility for managing the FE resides with the UNDP CO Albania.

The UNDP CO Albania will contract the consultant and ensure the timely provision of travel arrangements within the country for the FE consultant. The RESEAL Project Team will be responsible for liaising with the FE consultant to provide all relevant documents, set up stakeholder interviews, and arrange field visits.

An updated stakeholder list with contact details (phone and email) will be provided by the UNDP CO Albania and project office to the FE consultant.

4. Duration of the Work

The total duration of the FE will be approximately 25 working days over a time period of (4 months) starting December 27th, 2023, and shall not exceed 4 months from when the FE consultant is hired. The tentative FE timeframe is as follows:

Timeframe	Activity
December 27th, 2023	Start date of the contract
December 30th, 2023	Preparation period for the FE (handover of project documents)
By January 30th, 2024	Document review and preparing FE Inception Report
By February 8th, 2024	Finalization and Validation of FE Inception Report
By February 9th – 19th, 2024	FE assessment: interviews, stakeholder meetings and field visits.
By March 4th, 2024	Wrap-up meeting & presentation of initial findings
By March 15th, 2024	Preparation of draft FE report
By March 17th, 2024	Circulation of draft FE report for comments
By March 27th, 2024	Incorporation of comments on draft FE report into Audit Trail & finalization of FE report
By April 7th, 2024	Preparation & Issue of Management Response
By April 27th, 2024	Expected date of full FE completion

The expected start date of the contract is *27.12.2023 and ending date is 27.04.2024.*

5. Expected Outputs and Deliverables

#	Deliverable	Description	Timing	Responsibilities
1	FE Inception Report	FE consultant clarifies objectives, methodology and timing of the FE	*By February 8th, 2024*	FE consultant submits the Inception Report to the UNDP CO and RESEAL project management.
2	Presentation of the wrap-up meeting & initial findings	Initial findings	*By March 4th, 2024*	FE consultant presents to the UNDP CO and RESEAL project management, the wrap-up meeting & the initial findings.
3	Draft FE Report	Full draft report with annexes	*By March 15th, 2024*	FE consultant submits to the UNDP CO and RESEAL project management, the full draft FE report with annexes
4	Final FE Report* + Audit Trail	Revised final report and FE Audit trail in which the FE details how all received comments have (and have not) been addressed in the final FE report	*By April 18th, 2024*	FE consultant submits both documents to the UNDP CO and RESEAL project management.

*The final FE report must be in English. If applicable, UNDP CO may choose to arrange for a translation of the report into Albanian.

The final FE report will be published and submitted by UNDP Albania on all appropriate websites accordingly to FE policies and procedures.

REQUIRED SKILLS AND EXPERIENCE

Competencies
Core Values
- Integrity - Demonstrate consistency in upholding and promoting the values of UN in actions and decisions, in line with the UN Code of Conduct.
- Professionalism - Demonstrate professional competence and expert knowledge of the pertinent substantive areas of work.

- Teamwork - Demonstrate ability to work in team and to maintain effective working relations with people.
- Accountability – Takes ownership of all responsibilities and delivers outputs in accordance with agreed time, cost and quality standards.

Functional competencies
- Strong management and problem-solving skills;
- Ability to facilitate, consult and negotiate with a broad range of government partners;
- Excellent inter-personal, communication, report writing and presentation skills

Qualification

Education
- Master's degree in disaster risk management, evaluation, development studies, *or* other closely related field.

Work Experience
- At least 5 years of substantial experience and expertise in evaluation of projects related to disaster risk management and related fields;
- Relevant experience of disaster risk management principles, frameworks, and best practices.
- Familiarity with international and national policies related to disaster risk reduction and management.
- Proficiency in results-based management to assess the achievement of project objectives and outcomes, linking activities to intended results and impact.
- Familiarity with international evaluation standards, methodologies, and best practices, ensuring the evaluation meets rigorous quality standards.
- Ability to identify and assess project risks, as well as proposed mitigation strategies, considering the unique challenges of working in an international context.
- Experience in conducting impact evaluations, outcome evaluations, and process evaluations.
- Ability to assess project implementation, budget utilization, and adherence to timelines.
- Experience in managing and conducting evaluations remotely, considering potential travel restrictions or limitations, and ensuring effective communication and coordination.
- Familiarity with the global development agenda, including Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and international frameworks related to disaster risk reduction, climate change, and resilience.
- Experience working in nearby countries will be an asset.
- Experience in relevant technical areas for project evaluation.
- Demonstrated understanding of issues related to the most vulnerable groups[4].
- Excellent communication skills.
- Demonstrable analytical skills.
- Project evaluation/review experience within United Nations system and/or other international entities/donors in Albania will be considered an asset;

Language requirement
- Fluency in written and spoken in Albanian and English.

Evaluation Procedure

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[4] According to the Albanian National DRR Strategy: The most vulnerable groups are made-up of financially disadvantaged families, marginalized and socially excluded communities including minorities and LGBTQ community members, women, children, elderly and people with disabilities.

Only those applications which are responsive and compliant will be evaluated. Offers will be evaluated according to the Combined Scoring method – where the educational background and experience on similar assignments will be weighted at 70% and the price proposal will weigh as 30% of the total scoring. The applicant receiving the Highest Combined Score that has also accepted UNDP's General Terms and Conditions will be awarded the contract.

UNDP applies a fair and transparent selection process that would consider both the technical qualification of Individual Consultants as well as their financial proposals. The contract will be awarded to the candidate whose offer:

- Is deemed technically responsive / compliant / acceptable (only technically responsive applications / candidates will be considered for the financial evaluation)
- And has obtained the highest combined technical and financial scores.

Technical Criteria - 70% of total evaluation – max points: 70
- Criteria A: Compliant educational background – max points: 20
- Criteria B: Professional experience – max points: 30
- Criteria C: Relevant areas experience and knowledge – max points: 20

Financial Criteria - 30% of total evaluation – max points: 30

Candidates obtaining a minimum of 70% (49 points) of the maximum obtainable points for the technical criteria (70 points) shall be considered for the financial evaluation.

6. Evaluator Ethics

The TE team will be held to the highest ethical standards and is required to sign a code of conduct upon acceptance of the assignment. This evaluation will be conducted in accordance with the principles outlined in the UNEG "Ethical Guidelines for Evaluation". The evaluator must safeguard the rights and confidentiality of information providers, interviewees, and stakeholders through measures to ensure compliance with legal and other relevant codes governing collection of data and reporting on data. The evaluator must also ensure security of collected information before and after the evaluation and protocols to ensure anonymity and confidentiality of sources of information where that is expected. The information knowledge and data gathered in the evaluation process must also be solely used for the evaluation and not for other uses without the express authorization of UNDP and partners.

7. Payment Schedule

- 20% payment upon satisfactory delivery of the deliverable 1: Finalization and Validation of TE Inception Report.
- 20% payment upon satisfactory delivery of the deliverable 2: Presentation of the wrap-up meeting & the initial findings.
- 20% payment upon satisfactory delivery of the delivery 3: The full draft report with annexes.
- 40% payment upon satisfactory delivery of the final TE report and approval by the UNDP CO and RTA (via signatures on the TE Report Clearance Form) and delivery of completed TE Audit Trail

Criteria for issuing the final payment of 40%
- The final TE report includes all requirements outlined in the TE ToR and is in accordance with the TE UNDP guidance.
- The final TE report is clearly written, logically organized, and is specific for this project (i.e., text has not been cut & pasted from other MTR reports).
- The Audit Trail includes responses to and justification for each comment listed.

8. APPLICATION PROCESS

Scope of Price Proposal and Schedule of Payments

Financial Proposal:
- Financial proposals must be "all inclusive" and expressed in a lump-sum for the total duration of the contract. The term "all inclusive" implies all cost (professional fees, travel costs, living allowances etc.);
- The lump sum is fixed regardless of changes in the cost components.

9. Recommended Presentation of Proposal

a) **Letter of Confirmation of Interest and Availability** using the template provided by UNDP;
b) **CV** and a **Personal History Form** (P11 form).
c) **Brief description of approach to work/technical proposal** of why the individual considers him/herself as the most suitable for the assignment, and a proposed methodology on how they will approach and complete the assignment; (max 1 page).
d) **Financial Proposal** that indicates the all-inclusive fixed total contract price and all other travel related costs (such as flight ticket, per diem, etc.), supported by a breakdown of costs, as per template attached to the Letter of Confirmation of Interest template. If an applicant is employed by an organization/company/institution, and he/she expects his/her employer to charge a management fee in the process of releasing him/her to UNDP under Reimbursable Loan Agreement (RLA), the applicant must indicate at this point, and ensure that all such costs are duly incorporated in the financial proposal submitted to UNDP.

All application materials should be submitted indicating the following reference "Consultant for Final Evaluation of *(UNDP Project "Resilience Strengthening in Albania – RESEAL")* by email at the following address ONLY: procurement.al@undp.org Incomplete applications will be excluded from further consideration.

Agreed Revised timeframe as per the exchange of 4 April 2024

Evaluation phase	Deliverable	Responsible	Location	Deadline (unit days)	
Start of evaluation	Contract sign	Evaluation Consultant (EC)	Tirana	6 March 2024	**No revision needed**
Preparation and Documentation review, including initial online consultations or via email, telephone, etc	Inception Report	EC and UNDP	Desk work	08 April 2024 Proposed date	**15 May 2024** (*with recognition of draft IR being discussed with the project team and with a broad agreement on the methodology to be used)
Mission to the field	Initial findings presented to UNDP	EC and UNDP	Tirana and Fier	16-17-18-19 April 2024 Proposed date	**1-30 May 2024**

Preparation of the Draft Evaluation Report	Draft Evaluation Report	EC	Desk work	10 May 2024 Proposed date	**10 June 2024**
Review of the Draft Evaluation Report	Comments on the Draft Evaluation Report	UNDP and stakeholders as deem appropriate	Desk work	25 May 2024 Proposed date	**20 June 2024**
Preparation of the Final Evaluation Report	Final Evaluation Report	EC	Desk work	15 June 2024 Proposed date	**28 June 2024** (*upon coordination and agreement with the UNDP team, this date was later extended)

10.2 Annex: Evaluation matrix and data collection instruments

Evaluative Criteria Questions	Indicators	Sources	Methodology
Relevance – How does the project relates to the main objectives of the DRM in Albania, and to the environment and development priorities at the local, regional and national levels?			
• To what extent are the projects' objectives aligned with national priorities in DRM? • Do the projects' objectives fit UNDP strategic priorities and how do they support the DRM? • Were project partners adequately identified and were they involved in the project design and inception phase? • To what extent are the projects' designs, objectives and outcomes aligned with the needs and requirements of key partners and stakeholders? • To what extent have the projects contributed to gender equality, empowerment of women and human rights of target groups, including in relation to sustainable development?	• Alignment with national priorities • Alignment with SENDAI and UNDP strategic priorities • Evidence of partner identification process and of partner involvement in project design and implementation • Evidence that partners' and stakeholders' needs and requirements were taken into consideration • Evidence that gender equality, human rights and sustainable development were taken into consideration in project design and implementation • Quantity and quality of references to gender equality, human rights and sustainable development in project activities and outputs	• ProDoc • Project Inception Report (If available) • Progress Reports, AWPs, PSC minutes • SESP documents (If available) • Project output reports • PCU team • UNDP • Project partners	• Document review • In person and online interviews • Email
Effectiveness – To what extent have the expected outcomes and objectives of the project been achieved			

Evaluative Criteria Questions	Indicators	Sources	Methodology
• Has the project delivered their outputs and outcomes against the indicators and targets provided in the Results Framework? • What are the main factors that have contributed to achieving (or not achieving) the intended objectives, outcomes and outputs? • What are the positive or negative, intended or unintended changes brought about by the projects' interventions? • To what extent has the project increased knowledge and understanding of partners and beneficiaries on DRM?	• Status of outputs and outcomes achievement • Evidence that beneficial development effects are being generated • Perspectives of PCU, partners and stakeholders	• Results Frameworks, Reports, AWPs, PSC meeting minutes • PCU team • UNDP • Project partners	• Document review • In person and online interviews • Email
Efficiency – Was the project implemented efficiently, in-line with international and national norms and standards?			
• Was the Project Document sufficiently clear and realistic to enable effective and efficient implementation? • Were any delays encountered in project start up and implementation? What were the causes of the delays, if any,	• Quality of project design • Evidence of delays and their impact on project implementation • Clarity of project management structure • Evidence of adaptive management, problem solving and reporting	• Results Frameworks, Reports, AWPs, PSC meeting minutes • PCU team • UNDP • Project partners	• Document review • In person and online interviews • Email

Evaluative Criteria Questions	Indicators	Sources	Methodology
and how have these been resolved? • Have work-planning processes been based on results-based management and has the Results Framework been used as a management tool? • Has the project management structure operated effectively, producing efficient results and synergies? • Was the PCU effective in providing leadership towards achieving the project results? • Was the PCU able to adapt to changing circumstances and solve problems as they arose? • Were adaptive management changes reported by the PCU and shared with the PSC and other key stakeholders? • Were progress reports produced accurately, timely and in accordance with reporting requirements?	• Evidence that project management decisions have delivered efficient results • Quality and timeliness of progress reports		
• Did the PCU maintain productive relationships and communications with the partners and other key	• Quality and timeliness of communications between PCU, partners and other stakeholders	• Reports, PSC meeting minutes, project correspondence (as available) • Project partners	• Document review • In person and online interviews

Evaluative Criteria Questions	Indicators	Sources	Methodology
stakeholders throughout implementation? • Has communication between the PCU, UNDP and the stakeholders been clear, effective and timely?	• Perspectives of partners and stakeholders • Timeliness of transfer of funds against project budget requirements and allocation to budget lines • Impact of delays in funds transfers on implementation	• PCU team and UNDP	• Email
• Have financial, human and technical resources been allocated strategically to achieve project results? • Were the accounting and financial systems in place adequate for project management and for producing accurate and timely financial information? • Were the project's implementations as cost effective as originally proposed (planned vs actual)? • Did the leveraging of funds (co-financing) happen as planned?	• Extent to which funds were used to deliver results in accordance with the expectations of the ProDoc • Demonstrable financial control and due diligence • Evidence of communication between project management and financial management teams • Details of co-financing received against co-financing pledged	• Reports, PSC meeting minutes, project correspondence (as available) • Budget reports • Co-financing pledge letters (if available) • Co-financing tables • PCU team and UNDP	• Document review • In person and online interviews • Email
• To what extent were partnerships/linkages between institutions/ organizations encouraged and supported and how efficient were the	• Documentary and verbal evidence of cooperation and collaboration arrangements	• Reports, PSC meeting minutes, project correspondence • PCU team, UNDP, Donors • Project partners ProDoc, Reports, AWPs, PSC meeting minutes	• Document review • In person and online interviews • Email

Evaluative Criteria Questions	Indicators	Sources	Methodology
cooperation and collaboration arrangements? • To what extent have project-level monitoring and evaluation systems, reporting and project communications supported the project's implementation? • Are there sufficient resources allocated for monitoring and evaluation and are these being used effectively?	• Timely and meaningful monitoring and evaluation of project activities • Funding and resource allocation for M&E	• PCU team and UNDP, Donors	
Sustainability – To what extent are there financial, institutional, social-economic, and/or environmental risks to sustaining long-term project results?			
Financial Risks to Sustainability • To what extent is the sustainability of projects' results likely to depend on continued financial support? • What is the likelihood that any additional financial resources will be available to sustain the projects' results once donor's assistance ends?	• Estimates of financial and human resource requirements to sustain project results • Evidence of financial and human resource commitments to sustain project results • Evidence of project exit strategy • Perception of PCU, UNDP, Donors and other key partners and stakeholders	• ProDoc, Reports, PSC meeting minutes • PCU team, UNDP, Donors • Project partners and other stakeholders	• Document review • In person and online interviews • Email
Socio-economic Risk to Sustainability • To what extent have the projects' intervention strategies created ownership of the key international and national stakeholders?	• Evidence of ownership of project outcomes by key partners and stakeholders • Exit strategies for the projects have been reviewed by the PSC and a plan agreed	• ProDoc, Reports, PSC meeting minutes • PCU team, UNDP, Donors • Project partners and other stakeholders	• Document review • In person and online interviews • Email

Evaluative Criteria Questions	Indicators	Sources	Methodology
• What is the risk that that the level of stakeholder ownership will be insufficient to sustain the project outcomes/benefits? • Has the project achieved stakeholders' consensus regarding courses of action on project activities after the project's closure date?	• Course of action on project activities after the project's closure agreed by stakeholders		
Institutional Risk to Sustainability • Has the project developed sufficient institutional capacity (systems, structures, staff, expertise, etc.) to ensure sustainability of results achieved by the project? • What are the projects' potentials for scaling-up and replication in terms of the needs expressed by institutional partners and stakeholders?	• Systems, structures, staff and expertise to ensure sustainability of project results established • Capacity of institutions and programmes to sustain and build on project outcomes developed • Institutional partners and stakeholders' needs for scaling-up and replication of specific aspects of the projects have been reviewed by the PSC	• ProDoc, Reports, PSC meeting minutes • PCU team, UNDP, Donors • Project partners and other stakeholders	• Document review • In person and online interviews • Email
Environmental Risks to Sustainability • Are there environmental factors that could undermine the project's results, including factors that have been identified by project stakeholders?	• Risk assessment of environmental factors that could undermine the project's results conducted and updated	• ProDoc, SESP reports, Reports, PSC meeting minutes, • PCU team, UNDP, Donors • Project partners and other stakeholders	• Document review • In person and online interviews • Email
Gender equality and women's empowerment - How did the project contribute to gender equality and women's empowerment?			

Evaluative Criteria Questions	Indicators	Sources	Methodology
• How did the project contribute to gender equality and women's empowerment?	• Level of progress of gender action plan and gender indicators in results framework	• Project documents • PCU team • Project partners and other stakeholders	• Document review • In person and online interviews • Email
• In what ways did the project's gender results advance or contribute to the project's biodiversity outcomes?	• Existence of logical linkages between gender results and project outcomes and impacts	• Project documents • PCU team • Project partners and other stakeholders	• Document review • In person and online interviews • Email
Impact – Are there indications that the project has contributed to, or enabled progress toward, reduced environmental stress and/or improved ecological status?			
• To what extent are key stakeholders/final beneficiaries satisfied with the benefits generated by the project? • Is there any evidence that the project has achieved impact or enabled progress towards reduced environmental stress and/or improved ecological status?	• Extent to which stakeholders/final beneficiaries have expressed satisfaction with the benefits generated by the project • Indications that project has achieved impact or achieved progress towards reduced environmental stress and/or improved ecological status	• Reports, PSC meeting minutes, • PCU team, UNDP, Donors • Project partners and other stakeholders	• Document review • In person and online interviews • Email

10.3 Annex: List of individuals/groups interviewed in the respective project sites

Nr	Name of the Institution	Name Surname	Position	Mob no	E-mail	Date	Priority	Comments
	List of Beneficiaries, partners and stakeholder for RESAL project in Local institutions							
1	**Municipality of Fier**	Nasip Bani	Head of Sector in The Municipality of Fier	695746899	nasipbani67@gmail.com	29-May-24	1	in person
2	**Municipality of Lushnja**	Avni Begolli	Head of Sector in The Municipality of Lushnja	692135844	begolliavni1@gmail.com	29-May-24	1	in person
3	**Municipality of Divjaka**	Ferit Qosja	Head of Sector in the Municipality of Divjaka	676451549	feritqosja61@gmail.com	29-May-24	1	in person
4	**Municipality of Patos**	Arben Shperdheja	Head of Sector in the Municipality of Patos	696879398	beni.shperdheja123@gmail.com	30-May-24	1	in person
5	**Municipality of Roskovec**	Delina Hoxha	General Secretary of the Municipality of Roskovec	685552392	Delina.Hoxha@bashkiaroskovec.gov.al	30-May-24	1	in person
6		Viktor Kola	Head of Forestry in the Municipality of Roskovec		_	30-May-24	2	in person
7		Etjan Hyska	Head of Sector in the Municipality of Roskovec		Francesko.xhindi@bashkiaroskovec.gov.al	30-May-24	2	in person
8	**Municipality of Mallakaster**	Izet Ymeraj	Head of Sector in the Municipality of Mallakastra	699351001	izet.ymeraj2@gmail.com	30-May-24	1	in person
9	**Prefecture of Fier**	Kreshnik Ymeraj	Head of Sector for the civil emergency services	693272129	Kreshnik.Ymeraj@prefektifier.gov.al	29-May-24	1	in person
	List of Beneficiaries, partners and stakeholder for RESAL project in National Level institutions					**Date**	**Priority**	**Comments**
10-11	**National Civil Protection Agency(AKMC)**	Klajdi Nikolla	Director, Directorate of International Cooperation and Projects	693427471	Klajdi.Nikolla@akmc.gov.al	17/05/2024	1	in person and online

								for final response
		Adisa Bala	Director, Directorate of Risk Reduction, Disasters and Prevention	696717703	Adisa.Bala@akmc.gov.al	31/05/2024	1	in person and online for final response
12	**Institute of Geosciences**	Pr. Dr. Ylber Muceku	Director	682045451	y.muceku@geo.edu.al	31/05/2024	1	in person and online for final response
13	**General Directorate of Fire Protection and Rescue**	Arben Cara	General Director	694111366	Arben.Cara@mb.gov.al	31/05/2024	1	in person and online for final response
14	**Swedish Embassy in Albania/Sida (Project Donor)**	Linda Gjermani	Project Manager	692080887	linda.gjermani@gov.se	17/05/2024	1	in person in person
15	**Portugese Embassy/ Institute Camões (Project Donor)**	Lara Ramusga	Specialist, Portuguese Institute Camões – Cooperation and Language Institute	online	lararamusga@camoes.mne.pt	17/05/2024	1	online, not available until 3rd of July 2024

10.4 Annex: List of supporting documents reviewed

1. Project Document
2. Legal Agreements with donors
3. Project Progress Reports
4. Key Project Outputs (National Risk Profile; DRR Strategy and Action Plan and National Emergency Plan; as well as Risk assessment of 6 municipalities and other drafts produced at local level)
5. Project Workplans
6. Minutes of PSCs
7. Financial data
8. Co-financing data
9. Financial Audit report
10. Quality Assurance Reports

10.5 Annex: Revised Strategic Results Framework

Achieved at FE	On target to be achieved by end of project	Not on target to be achieved by end of project

Objective/Outcome	Indicator	Baseline	Targets End of Project	FE Assessment	Justification
Project Objective: The overall objective of the project is to strengthen, Albania's DRM system and support country's efforts in becoming a fully-fledged member of the EU Civil Protection Mechanism. The project is also in line with promoting the implementation of Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction (SFDRR) and is developed based on the	NA	PDNA	Described in components' achievements		A number of catalytic results provide additional evidence for the success of the project.

Albania earthquake PDNA recommendations. Also, in light of the severe and acute public health emergency due to the COVID-19 global pandemic, measures related to risk preparedness and risk mitigation of biological hazards will be provided.				 	
Component 1: Strengthening DRM institutional, policy and legal framework in Albania					
Output 1.1: Capacity Assessment of DRR institutions carried out including the ones related to biological hazards (public health) & Output 1.4: Establishment of National Platform for DRR supported	DRM Capacity Assessment Report /Action Plan with recommendations for Capacity Development Plan in line with the National priorities, Sendai Frame for DRR and EU requirements.	0	DRM Capacity Assessment Report completed and informed all the strategic and Planning documents in the area of DRR and Civil Protection	 	Completed

	Implementation of the Action Plan for DRM System Capacity Development # capacity building activities at different levels on the methods and approaches on DRM Capacity Development			 	
			Implementation of the Action Plan for DRM System Capacity Development	 	In progress
Output 1.2: NACP supported in shaping organizational model, scope and capacity building	NACP functional review # capacity building activities for NACP # of sets of IT equipment provided to NACP Official reporting to Sendai framework	0	NACP staffed according to the approved organigram capacity building in process Official reporting to Sendai framework institutionalized	 	In progress

| Output 1.3: Recommendations for Civil Protection & DRR related legislation developed and submitted to GoA

Output 1.4: Establishment of National Platform for DRR supported | # of recommendations for legal modifications in the DRR framework | | Establishment of the interinstitutional working groups

Assessment of best examples from National Platforms in the region and proposal for Albania developed | | In progress |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Output 1.5: Functionality and usefulness of National Platform for DRR tested | # of initiatives supported through the National Platform | 0 | No evidence provided | | Not on target to be achieved by the end of the project |
| Output 1.6: New building codes according to Eurocode & national annexes prepared | National annexes of the building code in place National Guidelines for Eurocode in place # of Designer Guide sets # of training on Eurocode and national designer guides | 0 | No evidence provided | | Not on target to be achieved by the end of the project |

Output 1.7: Support national capacity development in risk assessments and emergency planning	# of training on risk assessments and emergency planning A light version of the Multi Hazard Risk Assessment approval, through updating the national hazard/risk profile	0	Trainings conducted and additional ones in progress National risk profile approved in 2023		
Output 1.8: Civil protection system Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) improved	# of consultations on SoPs for Civil Protection	0	SOPs in development		In progress
Output 1.9: National DRR Strategic Document & Action Plan developed	New DRR Strategy and Action Plan in place	0	DRR Strategy and Action Plan approved in 2023		Completed
Output 1.10: National Risk/or multi-hazard Assessment supported	National Seismic Risk/or Multi-hazard Assessment developed	0	National Risk Assessment approved in 2023		Completed

Output 1.11: National Civil Emergency Plan (NCEP) formulated	NCEP in place	0	NECP approved in 2023	 	Completed
Component 2: Strengthening disaster preparedness capacities at all levels					
Output 2.1: Seismic hazard monitoring strengthened	#of weak motion stations installed and operating	8	20 (10 new 10 refurbished)	 	To be noted project partially contributed to the objective as the majority was contributed by another UNDP project. The value added was UNDP enhanced efficiency in implementing both processes in parallel and maximizing effects of both interventions
Output 2.2: Biological risk management with focus on prevention and preparedness used for medium to longer-term risk monitoring and evaluation	Biological hazard risk assessment and mid to long term measures developed	0	Biological hazards 1 of 6 national risks identified	 	Completed as standalone assessment and as part of the National risk profile approved in 2023
Output 2.3: Local risk assessment for LGUs supported (11 affected municipalities and	Pilot LLRA completed. # municipalities with LLRA completed	0	7 local	 	Fier Prefecture and 6 municipalities as well as pilot municipality of Lezha

then the remaining ones)	# of training for LLRA ToTs			■	
Output 2.4: Local DRR Strategies & Local Civil Emergency Plans (LCEP) supported	Local DRR (LDRR) and Local Civil Protection Plan (LCEP) completed in pilot municipality	0	7 local 1 prefecture	■	Fier Prefecture and 6 municipalities as well as pilot municipality of Lezha
Component 3: Sustain Albanian's Regional & International Cooperation					
Output 3.1: Cooperation with EUCPM and regional networking strengthened and sustained	Gap analysis for membership to Eu CP mechanism	0	Completed	■	Completed Albania member of EUCPM
	Roadmap for establishment of TESTA system	0	Completed	■	In progress
	Establishment of TESTA system	0	No evidence	■	Not achieved
	# of training materials in line with EU guidelines	0	Completed	■	Completed Albania member of EUCPM
	# of training on UCPM legislation, rules and procedures	0	Completed	■	Completed Albania member of EUCPM

10.6 Annex: Summary tables

Summary of the financial situation

Project Contributions	At the beginning of the project (US $)	At the time of FE (US $)	Note
[1] SIDA- Swedish International Development cooperation Agency	$ 2,310,341.00	$ 363,234.49	this amount excludes commitment and potential GMS $392,148
[2] Government of Portugal	$ 306,748.00	$ 9,349.85	this amount excludes commitment and potential GMS 204,616.8
[3] Other multi-/bilateral			
[4] Private Sector			
[5] IGO/NGOs			
[6] Total Financing [1+2+3+4+5]	$ 2,617,089.00	$ 372,584.34	
[7] Total Co-financing	$ 179,504.00	$ 179,504.00	
[8] Total Project Funding [6+7]	$ 2,796,593.00	$ 924,672.68	

Confirmed Sources of Co-Financing at FE Stage

Sources of Co-Financing	Name of Co-Financer	Type of Co-Financing	Investment Mobilized/Recurrent Expenditure	Amount (US$)
Implementing agency	UNDP	Cash	UNDP Crisis response package	$ 200,000
Donor Agency	Government of Albania	Cash	Financial Agreement signed	$ 179,504
Total				$ 379,504

10.7 Annex: Pledge of ethical conduct in evaluation signed by the evaluator

Please, see scanned copy enclosed in the following pages.

ETHICAL GUIDELINES FOR EVALUATION

PLEDGE OF ETHICAL CONDUCT IN EVALUATION

UNEG
United Nations Evaluation Group

By signing this pledge, I hereby commit to discussing and applying the UNEG Ethical Guidelines for Evaluation and to adopting the associated ethical behaviours.

INTEGRITY

I will actively adhere to the moral values and professional standards of evaluation prac-tice as outlined in the UNEG Ethical Guidelines for Evaluation and following the values of the United Nations. Specifically, I will be:

- **Honest and truthful** in my communication and actions.
- **Professional,** engaging in credible and trustworthy behaviour, alongside competence, commitment and ongoing reflective practice.
- **Independent, impartial and incorruptible.**

ACCOUNTABILIT Y

I will be answerable for all decisions made and actions taken and respon-sible for honouring commitments, without qualification or exception; I will report potential or actual harms observed. Specifically, I will be:

- **Transparent regarding evalua-tion** purpose and actions taken, establishing trust and increasing accountability for performance to the public, particularly those popu-lations affected by the evaluation.
- **Responsive** as questions or events arise, adapting plans as required and referring to appro-priate channels where corruption, fraud, sexual exploitation or abuse or other misconduct or waste of resources is identified.
- **Responsible** for meeting the eval-uation purpose and for actions taken and for ensuring redress and recognition as needed.

RESPECT

I will engage with all stakeholders of an evaluation in a way that honours their dignity, well-being, personal agency and characteristics. Specifically, I will ensure:

- **Access to** the evaluation process and products by all relevant stakeholders – whether power-less or powerful – with due attention to factors that could impede access such as sex, gender, race, language, country of origin, LGBTQ status, age, background, religion, ethnicity and ability.
- **Meaningful participation and equitable treatment** of all rele-vant stakeholders in the evaluation processes, from design to dissem-ination. This includes engaging various stakeholders, particularly affected people, so they can actively inform the evaluation approach and products rather than being solely a subject of data collection.
- **Fair representation** of different voices and perspectives in evaluation products (reports, webinars, etc.).

BENEFICENCE

I will strive to do good for people and planet while minimizing harm arising from evaluation as an inter-vention. Specifically, I will ensure:

- Explicit and ongoing consid-eration of risks and benefits from evaluation processes.
- **Maximum benefits** at systemic (including environmental), organi-zational and programmatic levels.
- **No harm.** I will not proceed where harm cannot be mitigated.
- **Evaluation makes an overall positive contribution** to human and natural systems and the mission of the United Nations.

I commit to playing my part in ensuring that evaluations are conducted according to the Charter of the United Nations and the ethical requirements laid down above and contained within the UNEG Ethical Guidelines for Evaluation. When this is not possible, I will report the situation to my supervisor, designated focal points or channels and will actively seek an appropriate response.

(Signature and Date)

Date 06/03/2024