**Contract N°**

Independent Evaluation of Confidence Building Measures Programme

Moldova

September 2014

**DRAFT FINAL REPORT**

Prepared by:

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# List of Acronyms

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| AWP | Annual Work Plan |
| CBM | Confidence Building Measures |
| CfP | Call for Proposals |
| CSP | Country Strategy Paper |
| EU | European Union |
| EUD | Delegation of the European Union |
| PO | Programme Officer |
| RA | Result Area |
| TA | Technical Assistance |
| TN | Transnistra |
| ToR | Terms of Reference |
| UNDAF | United Nations Development Assistance Framework |
| UNDP | United Nations Development Programme |

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# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

**Introduction**

The evaluation commenced with the contract signature on 5 September 2014. Before the consultant departed for the field mission, the Inception Report was submitted on 12 September and approved on 19 September. The consultant arrived in Moldova on 15 September and a kick-off meeting was held with UNDP on 16 September. In the week that followed, he met with key stakeholders and a sample of project grantees in Chisinau and on both banks of the Nistru River. The focus of the project grantee interviews was an assessment of the extent to which their individual projects contributed to the CBM programme’s purpose and goal. Interviews were semi-structured and pursued interlocutors’ interventions and their assessments of impact in terms of the overall purpose and goal. The consultant complemented this with his own independent assessment. The evaluation was conducted in accordance with the standard DAC evaluation criteria, in terms of which the report is structured, and the two eu-specific criteria, Coherence and Value added. The field visit concluded with a debriefing of the EUD and UNDP on the preliminary findings of the evaluation. On return, the consultant completed the literature review and prepared the draft final evaluation report.

**Design and Relevance**

Overall, the Confidence Building Measures programme is highly relevant and the design responds to the needs of the situation to which it seeks to respond. The programme corresponds with national policy, the EUD CSP, and the UNDAF outcomes. Furthermore, given the EU is a participant in the so-called 5 + 2 negotiating framework, the programme is coherent with both EU policy and the CSP. Furthermore, given the on-going political stalemate, the design remains relevant demonstrating continued responsiveness to the situation. The logframe, while sharing with other confidence building interventions a disconnect between the expected outputs and aspirant outcomes, purpose and goal, nonetheless, is capable of utilisation as an effective management tool. The programme management structure meets the requirements of the programme’s implementation, although greater efficiency would be achieved through the introduction of an Executive Committee to implement policy determined by the Board. Finally, the human resources appear the minimum required for efficient and effective programme implementation.

**Efficiency**

There has been considerable efficiency across all components. Such shortfalls (e.g. the Civil Society’s Dialogue sub-component, or the Infrastructure Environment sub-component), are for understandable reasons and most are expected to demonstrate greater efficiency as programme closure approaches. Given that the achievements of the identified outputs are a necessary condition for attaining the desired outcome, the investment also represents value for money. With the exception of Infrastructure’s health component and the CSO component, the CBM programme’s investment is shared evenly both overall and in business development, Infrastructure overall and the Environment sub-component. As such, the consultant is satisfied that the resources have been utilised efficiently.

**Effectiveness**

Despite the expected and experienced challenges, the CBM programme demonstrates considerable effectiveness. Possibly excepting the Environment sub-component[[1]](#footnote-1), all RAs are on track to be broadly achieved. Subject to the limits discussed above, the achieved RAs are expected to contribute to the achievement of the desired programme outcome. Possibly, any future programme should express more realistic outcome aspirations; while desirable to have aspirational goals, they must be achievable or you are just setting yourself up to fail.

**Impact**

Evidence of impact is limited but it will become increasingly evident with the passage of time. Because of the successive nature of the three phases to date, untangling the impact of each phase is neither necessary nor desirable. It is necessary is to perceive a growing cumulative impact of the programme over time and CBM III’s experience strongly suggests that this is the case. First, and possibly most importantly, across the board the CBM programme has provided a framework for increased people to people contact. Furthermore, the three components grants demonstrate impact; considerable achievements in social infrastructure reaching in excess of 100 000 people, business development has seen contractual, partnership, and trading relationships established, and CSO grants have reached numerous people and established/reinforced cross-river partnerships and links,

**Sustainability**

It remains too early to assess the programme’s sustainability. But, there are some fairly strong suggestions that the gains achieved have sound prospects for sustainability. The challenge to sustainability of confidence building programme’s gains are that the conditions are outside the control of the programme to a far greater extent than in almost all other programmes. Having said this, subject to no escalation in the political environment, or major downturn in the economy, there is demonstrable early evidence that gains achieved to date have real prospects to be sustainable.

**Lessons Learned**

The CBM III programme, like other confidence building interventions elsewhere, is predicated upon a clear perception of the impartiality of the implementing body. In Transnistria, this, arguably, is even more important given that the EU is an active part of the political process seeking to resolve the crisis.

Confidence building requires time and interventions in support of it frequently underestimate the disconnect between decision-makers and the targets of the intervention. The benefit that confidence building brings to the peace-building process is that it contributes to establishing the necessary socio-political environment in which peace-making can occur.

Confidence building is far more likely to occur when people to people contact takes place. Examples include cross-river local authority, business, CSO and individual links established through CBM III. Health care brings people from both sides into contact with each other and attacks unfounded prejudices. It is also likely to raise questions about reasons for relative socioeconomic conditions, when it appears that people very similar to the observer somehow have a better quality of life. And this is why the role of the Business Development component is critical to establishing conditions of socioeconomic hope.

The sustainability of these links, however, depends on the mutual advantage that accrues as a result. Continued intervention in support of confidence building addressing all four groups is, therefore, both desirable and necessary.

**Recommendations for Future Directions**

Recommendations address a potential fourth phase of Confidence Building Measures in *de jure* and *de facto* Moldova.

**General**

Discussions surrounding CBM IV have commenced. In the consultant’s opinion, this is a clear lesson emerging from the confidence building experience in Moldova and elsewhere, not least because sustained investment supports on-going contact and exchanges. To the extent possible, any follow-up should ensure a seamless transition between the current and any future programme.

**Design and Relevance**

Prepare a log- or Results Framework as part of the project documents. Ensure it reflects practical links between outputs and outcomes.

To strengthen a Phase 4, it is desirable to include a specific CSO component, focussed around grants for a limited number of areas. In the consultant’s opinion, these should include: micro-enterprise development, with a specific gender empowerment bias, local economic development,

**Efficiency**

Include a CSO grant component in any new programme, alongside the proposed Business Development and Infrastructure investments. This will provide a means to re-invigorate and sustain inter-CSO partnerships.

Explore the potential for longer-term grant contracts, possibly through closed calls for proposals. This will permit reductions in the time required to contract grantees, so extending the period available for implementation.

**Effectiveness**

Explore the potential for longer-term grant contracts, possibly through closed calls for proposals.

Table 1: Evaluation Questions, Summary Answers and Location in the Report

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| # | Subject Area | Evaluation Question | Summary Response | Report Location |
| 1 | Design and Relevance | Did the CBM programme respond to   1. National Priorities 2. The EUD CSP 3. The UNDAF   Is it still relevant today | 1. Yes 2. Yes 3. Yes   Yes | Pp 13 – 4; 17 |
| 2. | Efficiency | Were the resources adequate in respect of   1. Purpose and goal 2. The Expected Results/Outputs 3. The activities envisaged   Were there alternative, more cost-effective ways to utilise the resources | 1. Yes 2. Yes 3. Yes   Possibly greater focus in CSO component | Table 5, Figs 2 – 9, Pp 24 ff |
| 3. | Effectiveness | To what extent have the envisaged results been achieved for   1. Component 1: Business Development 2. Component 2: Community Empowerment 3. Component 3:CSO Engagement | 1. On-track 2. On-track; environment expected to improve over closing period of programme 3. On-track; question over utility of Dialogue sub-component | Pp 26 – 34 |
| 4 | Impact | What has the impact been in respect of   1. Individual grant projects 2. Purpose and goal | 1. All three components grants demonstrate impact; considerable achievements in social infrastructure reaching in excess of 100 000 people, Business development has seen contractual, partnership, and trading relationships established, CSO grants have reached numerous people and established/reinforced cross-river partnerships and links, 2. Outputs are expected to contribute to achievement of purpose and goal | Pp 33, 35 - 6 |
| 5 | Sustainability | Are the achievements of the CBM programme sustainable in respect of   1. Individual grant projects 2. Purpose and Goal | I & ii. Sustainability is likely in short- to medium-term. Longer-term sustainability requires additional resources in order to provide the reinforcement to maintain links and partnerships | P 36 - 7 |
| 6. | Coherence | Does the CBM programme demonstrate coherence with   1. the CSP 2. other EU programmes | 1. Yes 2. Supports EU’s political agenda to promote the resolution of the dispute | Pp 13 - 4 |
| 7 | Value Added | As a result of the programme, is EU-support visible  Has the CBM programme added value to other EU initiatives in the country | Yes  Supports the EU’s political agenda to promote the resolution of the dispute | Pp 34 |

# 1. INTRODUCTION

## Sector context

In September 1990, several groups from Transnistria, the eastern region of Republic of Moldova situated on the left bank of the Nistru River, proclaimed its independence from the rest of Moldova. An armed conflict followed in 1992, and the so-called “Transnistrian Moldovan Republic” has maintained its separate path from Moldova since then. Following this, the conflict entered its “frozen” phase; this continues to substantially hinder Moldova’s socio-economic development. The settlement of the conflict and the reintegration of the Transnistria region is a national priority and are included among the main objectives of the Government of Moldova’s National Development Strategy.

Efforts to reach a settlement to the Transnistria conflict presently are conducted at two levels. Politically, Chisinau and Tiraspol carried out both formal and informal talks on a settlement assisted by three international mediators[[2]](#footnote-2) and two observers[[3]](#footnote-3), the so-called “5+2 format”. Technically, a number of Working Groups were formed, which involved institutions and experts from both banks aimed at joint cooperation and technical approximation of the two distinct socio-economic, institutional and legal systems in order to facilitate the development of the entire Republic of Moldova. At present, a Deputy Prime Minister represents Moldova in the formal 5+2 talks to negotiate a settlement. The Deputy Prime Minister is supported by the Bureau for Reintegration, which was established to spearhead reintegration efforts and coordinate the corresponding activities of ministries and departments.

Formal talks have been resumed, having been on hold since 2006 until November 2011. Nonetheless, a political settlement remains elusive. The increasingly complex regional context and the evolution of the situation in Ukraine since the end of 2013 have compounded the underlying set of difficulties, making the prospects of a solution even more remote. Not withstanding this, the developmental challenges facing both sides present an on-going opportunity for practical cooperation between the two banks. Authorities on both sides agree that activities outside the existing political (5+2 talks) and Working Groups formats that reduce mistrust and increase confidence between both banks, are acceptable and necessary.

1.2. Project Background

The third phase of the “Support to Confidence Building Measures” Programme (SCBM Programme)

was launched in 2012, principally funded by the European Union and co-funded and implemented by UNDP Moldova. The overall objective of the programme is to increase confidence between both banks of the Nistru River through ensuring social-economic development by involving local authorities, civil society organizations, business community and other stakeholders.

The programme has four components, *viz.*

1. **Business Development Component** – activities which promote the common interests of business actors from both banks in the context of EU integration have been implemented. The projects were planned to contribute to stimulating the SME sector in Transnistria and encouraging cross-river cooperation among business actors. These projects include the continuation of business education through the Transnistria business school project, the establishment of business services for entrepreneurs and a road map for micro-financing opportunities as well as consulting services for businesses from both Moldova and Transnistria on export/import operations, trade between the two banks, EU quality systems, trade certificates and all other business and trade related areas.
2. **Community Development Component** - projects were implemented which enable and empower citizens on both banks to jointly participate in tackling community development needs, particularly the rehabilitation of social institutions and basic infrastructure in Transnistria region and the security zone, as well as improve access to and quality of mother and child health care, including perinatal care and immunization in the region. Small grants were provided to community-based organizations to encourage community mobilization.
3. **Environment Component -** projects have provided an opportunity for the development of joint solutions in addressing common environmental concerns, building on successful cooperation between authorities, civil society organizations, specialists and communities.
4. **Support to Civil Society Component -** through the provision of grants, projects were supposed to enhance the capacity of civil society organizations to generate activities, which reduce mistrust and increase confidence. Platforms will be created to link specialists from both banks who share common interests. The project will encourage cross-river NGO-to-NGO partnerships. Harnessing NGO expertise to produce practical improvements in areas relevant to the population, cross-river NGO-to-community links will be promoted.

## Global objective

The overall objective of the programme is to facilitate the settlement of the Transistria issue through ensuring social and economic development of local communities and increasing confidence between both banks of the Nistru River by involving local authorities, civil society organisations, the business community and other stakeholders in this process.

## Specific objective(s)

More specifically the project is intended to achieve:

* Enhanced economic development in the Transnistra region and the security zone and contribute to economic rapprochement between the two banks of the Nistru River by promoting cross-river exchanges and expanding the range of catalytic business support services
* Empower local communities and actors from both sides to participate in collaborative projects, which address pressing development needs and ensure the delivery of essential public services
* Address common environmental development concerns by creating opportunities for joint collaboration from both banks
* Foster civil society development by enhancing the capacity of NGOs to generate activities, which promote cross-river collaboration and address key development needs.

## Expected results

Programme activities will build on the two earlier phases achievements, including the development of trust in the EU and UNDP as credible partners implementing programmes that is viewed as non-threatening and benefitting the population at large.

Programme activities will

* increase confidence between both banks of the Nistru River,
* address concrete development needs by promoting cross-river NGO partnerships linking NGOs and communities across banks, and
* transferring specialist knowledge from bank to bank, and creating platforms for interaction between stakeholders (people – to – people contacts in the form of workshops, seminars, study visits etc.)

## Proposed approach and activities

The TOR required that the evaluation be conducted in line with standard DAC criteria and EU guidelines and crosscutting issues. As such, the consultant examined the CBM Programme’s

* Design and Relevance
* Efficiency
* Effectiveness
* Impact and
* Sustainability

He also considered the EU criteria

* Coherence and
* Value Added

and UNDP’s and EU’s cross-cutting issues, in particular Gender

The consultant’s approach was informed both by participatory approaches wherever possible and seek to maximize ownership of the outputs and the ‘Do No Harm’ approach.

Implicit to the TOR is a four-phase approach, *viz.* Inception Phase, Desk Study Phase, Field Phase, and Synthesis Phase.

i. Inception Phase: Following a kick-off meeting with the key stakeholders (UNDP, EUD, and Bureau for Reintegration), the Inception Phase included a preliminary literature review, but focussed on refining the Work Plan.

ii. Field/Desk Study Phase: Exceptionally, this phase comprised a brief visit to Moldova and the Transnistra region to initiate interaction with grantees, local authorities, business groups and, where possible, sub-project beneficiaries, on both banks of the Nistru River. It was also informed by the consultant’s’ participation in a two-day Grantees workshop.

iii. Desk Study Phase: The Desk Study Phase comprised a detailed literature review of programme documents, made available in advance and in the course of the international consultant’s in-country mission (Field/Desk Phase)

iv. Synthesis Phase: This phase saw the synthesis of the information gained in the course of the desk and field phases and the draft final evaluation report submitted.

## Fieldwork: Research

The TOR envisages a three-phased approach, viz: (i) Inception phase, (ii) Desk-research phase, and (iii) Fieldwork phase. This is completed by a synthesis report of the findings obtained during the Desk and Field phases.

### Selection of Sample

In accordance with the TOR, the team engaged with stakeholders based in Chisinau, including programme officers, and Tiraspol. Annex provides details of those with whom the consultant engaged. The main constraint was the time available for sub-project visits to both banks of the Nistru River.

### Semi-structured interviews and Focus Groups

Interviews were conducted with relevant stakeholders, both at national level and locally. Key areas of enquiry (Detailed evaluation questions are appended at Annex 2) were addressed.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Design | Does the assistance respond to needs |
| Relevance | Are the projects suited to the priorities and policies of the target group. |
| Efficiency | Have the resources been utilised in the most appropriate manner. |
| Effectiveness | To what extent have the expected results been achieved. |
| Impact | What are the positive and negative changes likely to be produced by the projects directly or indirectly, intended or unintended. |
| Significance | What is the worth or significance of the projects. |
| Sustainability | Are the benefits of the projects likely to continue after project completion? What is the probability of continued long-term benefits? The resilience to risk of the net benefit flows over time. |
| Vale Added | What value added (to the EU and UNDP) has the programme achieved |
| Coherence | Is the programme coherent with the EU strategic approach and the UNDAF? |

### Informant Interviews

Interviews were conducted over an eight-day period (15 – 23 September), the timeframe being determined by the TOR. This represented a heavy workload and possibly limited access to information to inform the evaluation more deeply.

## Structure of the Report

The report is structured in accordance with standard OECD DAC criteria. In Section 2, it discusses the programme’s design and relevance including an assessment of the logframe. This is followed in Section 3 by a discussion of Efficiency and, in Section 4, of Effectiveness. Section 5 makes a preliminary assessment of Impact, followed by consideration of programme Sustainability in Section 6. Section 7 outlines the consultant’s recommendations arising from the foregoing.

# 2. Design and Relevance

This section discusses the design of the Confidence Building Measures III programme and its relevance to the needs of the country and the Transnistria region, in particular

## Introduction

Four areas are considered: the programme’s responsiveness in terms of the *de jure* Government’s national policy, the EU’s country and regional strategies, and the UN Development Assistance Framework. The programme’s logframe is discussed subsequently before overall conclusions are drawn.

## National Policies

The programme responds to the *de jure* Government’s policy to promote the reintegration of the Transnistria region. Some debate surrounds the strategic approach (i.e. whether it is most desirable to build confidence before or after reintegration), the less competitive project selection approach on the left bank on the Transnistrian region, and the investment balance between the left and right banks. Notwithstanding these areas, there is widespread support for the programme and for its continuation into a fourth phase. As such, the programme responds positively to the *de jure* Government policy agenda.

## EU Country and Regional Strategy

EU relations *vis a’ vis* Moldova is governed by three key instruments, *viz*. the European Security Strategy (12 December 2003), the European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP) and the EU – Moldova ENP Action Plan. The 2007 – 13 Country Strategy Paper explicitly states that in this context,

the EU attaches great importance to the resolution of the Transnistria conflict and is actively involved in ongoing efforts to achieve a settlement, amongst other things through an EU Border Assistance Mission on the Moldovan-Ukrainian border, including the Transnistrian section.

Given that the overall objective of the Confidence Building Measure’s programme is to facilitate the resolution of the *impasse* over Transnistria, the programme directly responds to the EU CSP’s strategic approach. Furthermore, to the extent that the individual components promote increased economic and social well being in the target areas, the programme as a whole responds to EU development policy objectives, *viz*. the reduction of poverty, supported through the promotion of good governance and respect for human rights.

As such, the Confidence Building Measures III programme is wholly in line with EU policy *vis a’ vis* Moldova, regional policy as a whole, and overall development policy.

2.4 The UNDAF

The UNDAF covers the period 2013 – 17 inclusive. It comprises three pillars, *viz*. (i) Democratic Governance, Justice, Equality and Human Rights, (ii) Human Development and Social Inclusion, and (iii) Environment, Climate Change and Disaster Risk Management. The Confidence Building Measures III peogramme directly responds to the three pillars Outcomes:

1. Outcomes 1.1 and 1.4
2. Outcomes 2.1, 2.2 and 2.3
3. Outcome 3.1

Given the foregoing, the programme responds to the UNDAF priorities and contributes to the achievement of six of the framework’s 10 outcomes. As such it is highly relevant in terms of the UNDAF.

## 2.5 The Logframe

Logframes are vital tools in project management and- are intended to be living documents. As such, they require adaptation in the light of experience in order to maintain their relevance in the course of a project’s or programme’s life. As such, this discussion is based upon the description provided in the CA and its attachments.

The narrative represents a logical progression from envisaged activities through results/outputs and on to aspirant outcomes/purpose and goal. Interestingly, the annexed draft work plan addressed only activities and outputs; specific and overall objectives are describer in the main text. This reflects a common weakness in confidence building programme logframes, possibly the result of the disconnect between expected outputs, aspiring to achieve the desired outcomes. This possibly reflects reality, given that peace making is carried out at a level well beyond the reach of the activities, which address the general population.

Little can be said about indicators and their means of verification since they were not identified in the project documents available to the consultant at the time of the report’s drafting. As is usual, these are left to subsequent elaboration; and given the content of the reporting in this regard, this was successfully achieved; indicators reported against are a combination of quantitative and qualitative and provide clear indications of progress, but, given the absence of a baseline made available to the consultant, it is difficult to judge against what. The logframe accompanied the comments received on the draft report. The consultant subsequently reviewed it, focusing in particular on the OVIs and their means of verification. In general, he is of the view that they are satisfactory and, subject to the availability of baseline data, to allow assessment of progress across the RAs, are SMART.

Understandably, given the nature of the CBM programme, considerable attention is paid to risks and mitigation measures. These appear to be encompassing (to the extent that is ever possible) and the mitigation measures proposed appear entirely logical.

Overall, therefore, despite its disparate locations, which is dysfunctional in terms of a utilitarian programme management tool, the implicit logframe is sound and generally appears to have been utilised effectively in managing and reporting the programme components’ progress. Programme Management Structures

Hereafter we consider the policy and day – to day management structures of the CBM Programme.

2.6 Programme Management

2.6.i The Programme Board

A Board, comprising representatives of the EU Delegation, the UNDP, and the Bureau for Reintegration, manages the programme. Additional members are drawn from the country’s donor community – representative of the Swedish and British Embassies, a representative of the Institute for Public Policy and an NGO representative from the National Participation Council. The Board’s responsibilities are to

* Provide overall guidance to the programme, ensuring it remains within any specified constraints
* Address issues as raised by the Programme Manager
* Provide guidance and agree on possible counter-measures/management actions to address specific risks
* Agree on Programme Manager’s tolerance, as required
* Review the Progress Reports and provide direction and recommendations to ensure that the agreed deliverables are produced satisfactorily according to plans
* Appraise the programme’s Annual Review Report and make recommendations for the next AWP
* Provide *ad hoc* direction and advice for exception(al) situations when Programme Manager’s tolerance are exceeded
* Assess and decide on programme changes through revisions
* Decide on the Selection Committee composition and selection criteria. Approve the list of projects and communities to be supported.

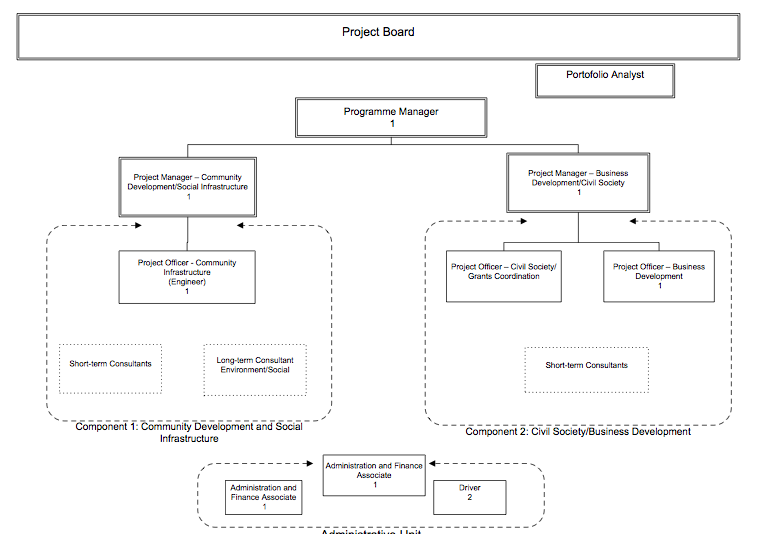
The Selection Committee evaluated project proposals against the selection criteria established by the Board and make recommendations to the Board for funding.

The first Board meeting took place on 11 April 2012 and the last (and eighth) one for which minutes were made available, took place on 27 June 2014. A review of the minutes indicates that, while the Board activities were by and large within its purview (above), there were issues that might have been dealt with more efficiently had it been more compact. In the evaluator’s view, while there are clear advantages of drawing in other donors and NGO actors, they are unnecessary when dealing with internal management issues. As such, the evaluator believes that it would be more efficient to retain a similar structure in any future programme but to select an Executive Committee (membership of three), which would be responsible for management. Under this new approach, the Board’s role would be broad policy direction, which the Executive Committee would ensure its execution.

2.6.ii The Programme Implementation Unit

The PIU was established with a 10 person staff complement, supported by long- and short-term consultants. Fig. 1, overleaf, is the organogram at the time of the PIU’s establishment.

Fig. 1: PIU Organogram



At the time of the final evaluation, the Programme Manager had resigned and not been replaced, responsibilities in this respect being shared between the two Project Component Managers and the UNDP Country Office.

## 2.7 Conclusions

Overall, the Confidence Building Measures programme is highly relevant and the design responds to the needs of the situation to which it seeks to respond. The programme corresponds with national policy, the EUD CSP, and the UNDAF outcomes. Furthermore, given the EU is a participant in the so-called 5 + 2 negotiating framework, the programme is coherent with both EU policy and the CSP. The logframe, while sharing with other confidence building interventions a disconnect between the expected outputs and aspirant outcomes, purpose and goal, nonetheless, is capable of utilisation as an effective management tool. The programme management structure meets the requirements of the programme’s implementation, although greater efficiency would be achieved through the introduction of an Executive Committee to implement policy determined by the Board. Finally, the human resources appear that required for efficient and effective programme implementation.

# 3. EFFICIENCY

The section assesses the efficiency of resource conversion into results.

3.1 Resource Allocation

The third phase of Confidence Building Measures (CBM )in Moldova is valued at €10.6 million; the EU contribution is €9.5 million; UNDP contributed €1.1 million. Table 2 sets out the budgetary provisions.

Table 2: Budgetary Allocation

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | € - Year 1 | € - Total |
| 1. Operating Costs  1.1 Human Resources  1.2 Travel  1.3 Equipment & Supplies  1.4 Office Costs  1.5 Other Operating Costs | 204 900  10 000  92 000  43 900  27 600 | 622 200  24 600  93 000  132 400  113 305 |
| Sub-total Operating Costs | **378 300** | **985 505** |
| 2. Component 1: Business Development  2.1 Assessments and Feasibility Studies  2.2 Training and Business Advisory Services  2.3 Business Incubator  **Sub-total Component 1** | 30 000  250 000  432 700  **712 700** | 70 000  900 000  1 700 000  **2 670 000** |
| 3. Component 2:: Community Empowerment  3.1 Community Infrastructure Projects in Security Zone and Transnistra  Region  3.2 Integration of specialist care in the field of health  3.3 Environmental Projects  **Sub-total Component 2** | 1 100 000  300 000  250 000  **1 650 000** | 4 030 000  500 000  560 000  **5 103 000** |
| 4. Component 3: CSO Engagement  4.1 Dialogue Programme for merging activities of top level decision-makers  4.2 Fostering development of civil society and support for joint grass-toots  activities in the Transnistra Region  **Sub-total Component 3** | 100 000  250 000  **350 000** | 500 000  720 000  **1 220 000** |
| **Sub-total Programme Components** | **3 091 000** | **9 978 505** |
| Administrative costs (7%, excluding UNDP contribution) | 213 559 | 621 495 |
| **TOTAL** | **3 304 559** | **10 600 000** |

Source: Contribution Agreement,

The Contribution Agreement (Contract 2012-284/007) came into force with the signature of both parties and implementation commenced. The 36-month programme ran from 2012 – 2014 inclusive.

For a variety of reasons, not least of which were major challenges surrounding the possibility of implementing the Business Incubator sub-component, the budget was reorganised. Table 3 sets out the detail of the reorganisation.

Table 3: Reassigned Budget

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| # | Component Description | Budget - € |
| 1 | Operating Costs   * 1. Human Resources   2. Travel   3. Equipment & Supplies   4. Office Costs   5. Other Operating Costs | 768 300  20 910  93 000  151 900  124 555 |
|  | **Sub-total: Operating costs** | **1 158 665** |
| 2 | Component 1: Business Development  2.1 Assessments and Feasibility Studies  2.2 Training and Business Advisory Services (including the continuation of the business school project, sectorial business training trips and advisory services for the functioning of the regional business associations across Transnistria)  2.3 Support and service provision to SMEs; information exchange on the level of business associations on both banks and work on joint confidence building measures in the field of business development | 43 900  900 000  1 103 276 |
|  | **Sub-total Component 1** | **2 047 176** |
| 3 | Component 2: Community Empowerment   * 1. Community infrastructure projects in the Security Zone and Transnistrian region (about 30 community infrastructure projects will be implemented with about 120,000 EUR each)   2. Integration of specialist care in the field of health (continuation of previous activities based on the principle of exchange of expertise between both banks of the river).   3. Environmental projects (promoting joint activities in the environmental protection field) | 4 131 500 507 235  492 765 |
|  | **Sub-total Component 2** | **5 131 500** |
| 4 | Component 3: CSO Development  4.1 "Dialogues" programme merging activities for top-level decision makers (Track 1), professionals and experts from economic and social sectors (Track 2), the research community and the official Confidence Building Working Groups (Track 3)  4.2 Fostering development of civil society and support for joint grassroots activities in TN region and people-to-people confidence building | 318 750  1 322 404 |
| ` | **Sub-total Component 3** | **1 641 164** |
| **5** | **Sub-total Components 1 – 3** | **8 819 840** |
| 6 | Administrative Costs (maximum 7%, excluding UNDP co-financing) | 621 495 |
| **7** | **TOTAL** | **10 600 000** |

## 

## 3.2 Resource Utilisation

Table 4 compares budgeted resources (see Table 2 above) with resourced expended for the period 15 March 2012 – 31 July 2014 (the latest available date.

Table 4 Budgeted and Utilised Resources

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| # | Component Description | Budget - € | Expenditure - € |
| 1 | Operating Costs   * 1. Human Resources   2. Travel   3. Equipment & Supplies   4. Office Costs   5. Other Operating Costs | 768 300  20 910  93 000  151 900  124 555 | 528 496  6 438  81 985  136 523  46 724 |
|  | **Sub-total: Operating costs** | **1 158 665** | **800 167** |
| 2 | Component 1: Business Development  2.1 Assessments and Feasibility Studies  2.2 Training and Business Advisory Services (including the continuation of the business school project, sectorial business training trips and advisory services for the functioning of the regional business associations across Transnistria)  2.3 Support and service provision to SMEs; information exchange on the level of business associations on both banks and work on joint confidence building measures in the field of business development | 43 900  900 000  1 103 276 | 37 738  862 020  793 203 |
|  | **Sub-total Component 1** | **2 047 176** | **1 862 961** |
| 3 | Component 2: Community Empowerment  3.1 Community infrastructure projects in the Security Zone and Transnistrian region (about 30 community infrastructure projects will be implemented with about 120,000 EUR each)  3.2 Integration of specialist care in the field of health (continuation of previous activities based on the principle of exchange of expertise between both banks of the river).  3.3 Environmental projects (promoting joint activities in the environmental protection field) | 4 131 500 507 235  492 765 | 3 569 629  272 717  125 938 |
|  | **Sub-total Component 2** | **5 131 500** | **3 970 204** |
| 4 | Component 3: CSO Development  4.1 "Dialogues" programme merging activities for top-level decision makers (Track 1), professionals and experts from economic and social sectors (Track 2), the research community and the official Confidence Building Working Groups (Track 3)  4.2 Fostering development of civil society and support for joint grassroots activities in TN region and people-to-people confidence building | 318 750  1 322 404 | 61 538  1 055 406 |
|  | **Sub-total Component 3** | **1 641 164** | **1 116 944** |
| **5** | **Sub-total Components 1 – 3** | **8 819 840** | **7 580 356** |
| 6 | Administrative Costs (maximum 7%, excluding UNDP co-financing) | 621 495 | 399 778 |
| **7** | **TOTAL** | **10 600 000** | **7 980 134** |

Table 5: Percentage Utilisation of Component Budget

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| # | Sub-component Description | % Utilised |
| 2 | Component 1: Business Development  2.1 Assessments and Feasibility Studies  2.2 Training and Business Advisory Services (including the continuation of the business school project, sectorial business training trips and advisory services for the functioning of the regional business associations across Transnistria)  2.3 Support and service provision to SMEs; information exchange on the level of business associations on both banks and work on joint confidence building measures in the field of business development | 86  96  71.9 |
|  | **Sub-total Component 1** | 91 |
| 3 | Component 2: Community Empowerment  3.1 Community infrastructure projects in the Security Zone and Transnistrian region (about 30 community infrastructure projects will be implemented with about 120,000 EUR each)  3.2 Integration of specialist care in the field of health (continuation of previous activities based on the principle of exchange of expertise between both banks of the river).  3.3 Environmental projects (promoting joint activities in the environmental protection field) | 86.4  53.8  25.6 |
|  | **Sub-total Component 2** | 75.4 |
| 4 | Component 3: CSO Development  4.1 "Dialogues" programme merging activities for top-level decision makers (Track 1), professionals and experts from economic and social sectors (Track 2), the research community and the official Confidence Building Working Groups (Track 3)  4.2 Fostering development of civil society and support for joint grassroots activities in TN region and people-to-people confidence building | 19.3  79.8 |
|  | **Sub-total CSO Development** | **68.1** |
| **5** | **Sub-total Components 1 – 3** | **85.9** |

**3.1.i Utilisation of Resources by Sub-Component of Components (%)**

Tables 4 and 5 demonstrate widespread variation in the utilisation of resource use in the period to end July 2014. Figs 1 – 3 below, demonstrate this by sub-components of each component (numerical references reflect the numbering in Tables 3 and 4 above).

Fig. 2: Component 1: Resource utilisation by sub-component

Resource use in the Business Development component is demonstrably efficient with an overall utilisation by end July 2014 of over 90% and sub-component 2.2 being 96%. Furthermore, since sub-component 2.3 is an on-going activity, resource utilisation is expected to continue increasing as advice and support is provided.

Fig. 3: Component 2: Resource utilisation by sub-component

The Community Empowerment component’s resource utilisation (over 75%) demonstrates an acceptable level of efficiency as of the end of July 2014. Sub-component 3.3’s efficiency, however, is poor, reflecting challenges in identifying appropriate investment opportunities. Having said this, the CBM programme is to be congratulated for avoiding a frequent tendency in the consultant’s experience, an emphasis on ‘getting the money out of the door’. Avoiding this is of particular importance both in terms of ‘Do No Harm’ and avoiding wasteful expenditure simply to spend the money. Sub-component 3,2 utilisation is low[[4]](#footnote-4) but given that these are largely infrastructure renovation and equipment supply in the health sector, they are dependent on the achievement of targeted deliverables and completion of procurement processes.

Fig. 4: Component 3: Resource utilisation by sub-component

Given that at the time of the consultant’s mission a number of projects under this component were still on-going, the overall utilisation of resources at somewhat under 70% is judged efficient. This is certainly the case also with regard to sub-component 4,2 (79.2%) (grants for NGO/CSO joint activities on each side of the River Nistru. Sub-component 4.1’s efficiency, i.e. in terms of resource utilisation[[5]](#footnote-5), however, is dismal; having said this, however, based on experience elsewhere (Cyprus, Georgia), the consultant has serious reservations about the value for money of the activities identified, especially when compared to other ‘people to people’ interventions. This is because ’Dialogue’ interventions of this nature seldom have anything new to add and, as such, either repeat earlier conclusions and recommendations or address like-minded listeners. In either case, they do little to contribute to confidence building except in so far as they are fora for participants to renew academicised [sic] discussion.

3.2.ii Location of Investment Contracts

In the course of interaction with the CBM programme’s core stakeholders, the consultant’s attention was drawn to the perception of core stakeholders that programme investments had been based towards the left bank of the River Nistru.Following the consultant’s investigation, this perception was found to be ill-founded. It is important to emphasise that investment operations took place on both banks. Fig. 4 presents the share of the total investment by contractee, reflecting the primary contractor, on each bank.

Fig 5: Share of total investment by riverbank

As can be seen the right bank received a greater share of the CBM’s investment. In part, as Fig. 6 shows, this was because of the Right Bank’s substantially larger share of awarded CSO resources

Fig. 6: Share of CSO investment by riverbank

but there was as important an imbalance in favour of the right bank in infrastructure too (Fig. 7).

Fig. 7: Share of infrastructure investment by riverbank

Investment in Health was overwhelmingly on the left bank (although this included included territory under the control of the *de jure* government of the country (Fig 8)

Fig. 8: Share of health investment by river bank

while investment in business development was roughly the same[[6]](#footnote-6) (Fig. 9)

Fig. 9: Share of Business Development investment by riverbank

The imbalance revealed in favour of right bank CSOs as contractees shown in Fig. 6 is also instructive because it supports the general understanding (reinforced by the high percentage of administratively ineligible proposals – Figs. 11 & 12) that civil society in *de facto* Moldova possesses far greater capacity that those in the territory administered by the *de facto* Transnistrian authorities. In the consultant’s experience, this is to be expected, since civil society in more centralised governance systems seldom has the same space in which to emerge, develop and thrive as those under more devolved systems of governance. However, this raises important questions around the draft Concept Note[[7]](#footnote-7) prepared in advance of a possible fourth CBM phase.

This outline fourth phase proposes a bipedal business development and infrastructure approach[[8]](#footnote-8) to confidence building on both sides of the river. Both of these are clearly important but EU (and other international) experience elsewhere (e.g. South Africa or . Northern Cyprus[[9]](#footnote-9)) is that a capacitated and vibrant civil society is an important contributory factor to shifting social and political attitudes in static situations. This understanding is precisely why CSO engagement is such an important component of confidence building programmes[[10]](#footnote-10).

The consultant understands that one of the reasons for this is that the EUD will be launching three CfPs under the various instruments that are available (e.g. the Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights (EIDHR)) in the coming months. However, the evident absence of CSO capacity on the left bank and his own observation (based on very limited evidence) of right bank CSO capacity strongly suggests that the prospects of Moldovan CSOs accessing EU resources through such calls are very limited. Furthermore, those who may be successful do not have the capacity, nor the resources to buy it in, to cope with the PRAG’s rigour[[11]](#footnote-11). As has been, and continues to be, the case internationally, the lack of capacity results in, sometimes very substantial, levels of ineligible expenditure. Lacking the resources to repay the money, CSOs close: effectively, this undermines civil society, the reverse of that which the donor community, including the EU, seeks to achieve.

In conclusion, people to people engagement through CSO engagement are an important third leg in confidence building. The reality is that in the absence of a supportive socio-political environment, conflict resolution is not achievable, even should the political leadership decide to pursue peace making (witness, for example, the failure to resolve the Cyprus conflict at the time of accession). Given the questions surrounding *de jure* Moldovan CSOs capacity, it is highly questionable whether the planned three CfPs will prove an adequate substitute for a CSO-leg to the pot in which to cook the fourth phase of confidence building measures on both sides of the River Nistru. The consultant strongly believes that such a leg should be reinstated and should support people to people engagement. In the event that the EU is unwilling to finance this component, UNDP should identify own resources, or those of another donor, for this purpose.

## 3.3 Value for Money

At the time of the evaluation, the results achieved by all components are summarised below:

Table 5: Business Development

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Projects Completed | On-going |
| 5 | 5 |

Table 6: Infrastructure

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Projects | Completed | Beneficiaries | Overall Investment (incl. local resources) |
| 40 | 33 | >100 000 | $4 868 503 ($590 000) |

Table 7: Health

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Procured | Procurement Underway | Projects Identified | Studies/Training | Policy (Clinical/Case review) |
| 1 ($155 917 519.27) | 3 | 1 ($1.5 million) | 4 | 16 |

Table 8: Environment

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Proposals Developed | Grants Awarded | Technical designs (Solar) |
| 4 | 4 | 22 |

Table 9: Civil Society

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Proposals Received | Contracted | Completed | On-going | Resources (plus local contributions) |
| 390 | 41 | 21 | 20 | €1 350 000 (€600 000) |

Tables 5 – 9 demonstrate considerable achievement in terms of value for money. First, both the infrastructure and civil society components mobilised substantial additional resources, US $590 000[[12]](#footnote-12) and €600 000 respectively, an indicative total of in excess of €1 million, *c.* 10% of the total investment value. Similarly, direct beneficiaries of the infrastructure component exceeded 100 000 people, business reported increased profits (in a deteriorating economic climate) as a result of the business school interventions, and new start-ups, resulting from the Youth Grants programme numbered 41. At this level, therefore, the project’s investment demonstrates value for money.

At purpose and goal level, however, the question or value for money remains moot. On the one hand, unless the business and people to people links are established and sustained, it appears unlikely that peace-making conditions are unlikely to exist. On the other, like all confidence building programmes, there appears a disconnect between the aspirations of the outputs/results and the desired outcome. In this situation, value for money in these terms is questionable.

Having said this, the achievement of the outputs is a necessary precondition for attaining the outcomes. As such, investment in output achievement is necessary and, for this reason, represents value for money.

3.4 Conclusions

The foregoing discussion has demonstrated considerable efficiency across all components. Where there have been shortfalls in this regard (e.g. the Civil Society’s Dialogue sub-component, or the Infrastructure Environment sub-component), there are understandable reasons for this and, the consultant believes that most will demonstrate greater efficiency as programme closure approaches. [In the case of the ‘Dialogue’ sub-component, the lack of efficiency, in the consultant’s opinion, is in itself capable of interpretation as efficiency since experience elsewhere suggests that investment in this regard seldom brings returns.] Furthermore, given that the achievement of the identified outputs are a necessary condition for attaining the desired outcome, the investment also represents value for money. Lastly, with the exception of Infrastructure’s health component, which is focussed on the left bank, and the CSO component, which reflects the capacity of right bank CSOs compared to left bank counterparts, the CBM programme’s investment is shared evenly both overall and in business development, Infrastructure overall and the Environment sub-component. As such, the consultant is satisfied that the resources have been utilised efficiently.

4.  EFFECTIVENESS

In this section, the report discusses the CBM programme’s effectiveness. Effectiveness considers the achievement of the Results and prospects for their conversion into the specific objectives of the programme.

4.1 Results

According to the CA, the expected results were:

* Enhance economic development in the Transnistria region and the security zone and contribute to economic rapprochement between the two banks of the Nistru River promoting cross-river exchanges and expanding the range of catalytic business support services
* Empower local communities and actors from both sides to participate in collaborative projects, which address pressing development needs and ensure the delivery of essential public services
* Address common environmental development concerns by creating opportunities and platforms for joint collaboration from both banks
* Foster civil society development by enhancing the capacity of NGOs to generate activities, which promote cross-river collaboration and address key development needs.

The extent to which the results have been achieved are discussed below.

4.2 Achievement of the Results

Evidence in support of the achievement of each of the four results is presented below. It is also important to acknowledge at the outset that there are attribution challenges in respect of each RA as a direct causal link is sometimes problematic. As such, what is being discussed is the contribution of the project activities under each component to the RA’s achievement.

1. **Enhanced Economic Development in the Transnistria Region and the Security Zone**

A number of interventions occurred, *inter alia* joint study visits to Poland, Austria, Germany by 60 entrepreneurs (11 women - 18.33%). Fifty-two partnerships negotiated, 15 (28,9%) were cross-river partnerships established. Transnistran companies joined Moldovan Chamber of Commerce and Industry. There were two main interventions in support of the achievement of this RA, *viz.* the Business School support and the grant programme for young entrepreneurs.

1.a The Business School sub-component built on the first phase (commencing 2010) and was implemented from July 2012 – June 2014. The project targeted both emerging and established businesses, focussing both on potential and emergent entrepreneurs and mid- and senior level management of large companies. In all, 40 training programmes covering a range of business topics (e.g. Financial Management, including book keeping, Personnel Management, Key Performance Indicators, and Marketing techniques) took place. Sixteen business trainers located in three cities, and intermittently supported by international trainers from Israel, Russia and Ukraine, were recruited and trained to provide the training, which were still on-going at the time of the consultant’s visit. The training was supported by two joint international study visits, to Czech Republic (January 2013) and Israel (April 2013) were carried out; in all 21 participated, 10 to Czech Republic and 11 to Israel. According to interlocutors, the training has resulted in a cultural change amongst the targeted business community, in that they now they now realised the need for on-going business education. Interlocutors informed the consultant that a culture of participation in business-related activities – training, discussions, and lectures – has developed. The project also supported exchanges between businesses and local authority leaders on the measures necessary to strengthen the enabling environment for business in their localities.

Of the potential and emergent entrepreneurs who participated in the training, 45% were operating their own businesses at the time of the consultant’s visit. Most are in retail trade (especially food), catering and other services (e.g. motor mechanics). They generally source their inputs from the right bank of the river, before adding value and providing services. Twenty-five percept of trainees have had to shut down original operations for a variety of reasons, including starting new businesses as the training received led them to realise they were active in the wrong sector. Eight per cent realised after the training that they were not suited to business. In total, 1 338 new full- and part-time jobs (576 full-time) jobs were created.

1.b The Youth Grants’ Scheme emerged from the micro-credit availability study conducted under the Business Development component and as a result of the Transnistrian de facto authorities’ withdrawal from the proposed Business Incubator plan. Young entrepreneurs were invited to submit business plans in a competition to select the best, who would be eligible for a capital grant, worth up to US $15 000[[13]](#footnote-13). Over 200 applications[[14]](#footnote-14) were received, 31 (12 women – 38.7%), of whom 15 were existing entrepreneurs, of which were selected to be part of the scheme[[15]](#footnote-15): the successful applicants comprised 12 limited liability companies, 11 individual entrepreneurs, and eight farmers. The businesses cover a range of sectors, e.g. agriculture (animal husbandry, fish farming and horticulture), furniture production, motor mechanics, beverages, computer services, cobbling. The Chamber procured all the capital investment requirements identified in the business plans and distributed these to the individual businesses. At the time of the visit, 27 businesses were operational and 102 (full- and part-time) jobs had been created. A further 72 jobs are confidentially expected to be created by the end of the programme. Total income generated through the businesses to date equals Rub 6.7 million (*c.* €135 865). Eleven of the new businesses have on-going business relationships with right-bank counterparts: for eight, it is a source of supply for their inputs, one has a contract for the provision of technical services and two network with right bank companies operating in a similar area to share export markets. Together with right bank beneficiaries from the same scheme, implemented by AXA Management, who were also active partners in the Business School project, a joint beneficiaries meeting held earlier in 2014 saw the establishment of an Association of Young Business Entrepreneurs.

1.c Similar levels of achievement have occurred through the Rural Tourism, although the consultant believes that there has been inadequate investigation of the actual market. The project has identified and supported the establishment of 23 bed and breakfast enterprises, roughly equally distributed on both banks of the Nistru that, if successful, will increase the disposable resources available to the primary source of income, which is agriculture. Such enterprises have proved important additional income sources elsewhere[[16]](#footnote-16) so there is clear potential. And, while he agrees with the grantee’s assessment that demand exists amongst urban Moldovans for ‘short-break’ opportunities, he is concerned that the extent of this demand has not been investigated in detail. As such the risk exists that, having facilitated the emergence of 23 new micro-enterprises, uncertain demand will result in owners abandoning the business when the return does not warrant their investment.

Both the former projects have clearly contributed to the achievement of the RA; the latter clearly has the potential to do so as well. The former have contributed to wealth creation and done so in a manner that encourages contacts with counterparts and other businesses on either side of the river. This will ensure on-going contacts with each other and underline the mutual advantages that accrue. Furthermore, successful business engagement will reinforce social engagement. In addition, successful entrepreneurial activity both requires and expands transparency and accountability. Finally, successful cross-river tourism will increase incomes of service providers as well as also increasing people to people exchanges, thereby contributing to breaking down stereotypes that reinforce perceptions of ‘the other’, often a key contributory component preventing conflict resolution.

1. **Empowered Local Communities and Actors from both sides**

The main interventions in support of achieving this RA were in respect of social infrastructure and health sector investments. In summary, progress towards this RA at the time of the evaluation was as follows:

* 40 projects identified; 33 (82.5%) completed
* Technical design of 12 infrastructure projects completed
* 62 (full time) jobs created; in addition, the reconstruction period saw the creation of 400 temporary jobs
* Quality of life for over 100 000 people improved
* Three JISB Service centres established in the Security Zone serving people on both sides of the divide.

Fig. 10 provides a summary overview of the projects achievements year by year.

Fig. 10: Social Infrastructure Component Status by Year

Fig.10 demonstrates clear evidence of effectiveness. In Year 1, 15 social infrastructure projects were in inception and a further 12 under construction; understandably, none had been completed. By Year 2 (2013), 25 had been completed, five were under construction, with eight in inception phase. By the time of the consultant’s arrival in2014, eight more had been completed, bringing the total completed to 33, and a further seven under construction.

Health projects target the Transnistria region, projects being implemented in both the areas under control of the *de facto* and *de jure* authorities. At the time of the evaluation, the summary position with regards to health projects was as follows:

1. Equipment Provision

* Needs assessment of Rybnita Maternity done. Medical equipment in the amount of $155,519.27 procured and delivered
* Additional medical equipment for perinatal Centres from Slobozia, Tiraspol, and Grigoriopol in the process of procurement

1. Studies

* Assessment of the functionality of obstetrical and neonatal care system in TN region completed
* Assessment on perceptions of immunization in the TN region done

1. Training

* Capacity building workshop for TN immunization managers in effective vaccine management done
* **Training** on neonatal resuscitation and simulation on obstetrical emergencies done
* “Near miss” case review methodology implemented in specialized institutions from Tiraspol Slobozia and Bender

1. Policies and Protocols

* New project concept for extension of health component negotiated and signed with SDC ($1,5 mil. Budget)
* 15 clinical protocols for the most relevant obstetrical and neonatal conditions revised and approved
* The "Future Mother's Guide" was revised, adapted and translated into Russian.

The component’s sub-projects have demonstrably improved life quality for in excess of 100 000 residents on both banks of the River Nistru. Refurbishment of social infrastructure has increased access to services: in Cosnita for example, the House of Culture’s refurbishment not only provides an accessible venue for all for a library and culture (music and dance) but it permitted the opening of one of the three JISB Service Centres, which together with the mobile teams based there, has ensured that vulnerable families, the elderly, disabled, and mothers with many children are able to access services, which had been disrupted following the end of the war in 1992, and which saw 15 of the 27 villages in the district remain under Chisinau’s authority. The resulting patchwork meant that distances between villages and the location of services are as much as 90 kilometres so having the service centre and the associated mobile teams has meant easier access to the core services provided as well as those villages under the control of the *de facto* authorities being able to access them more easily too. Similarly, the equipping of the medical centre in Varnitsa has meant that it is now able to serve *c.* 10 000 people both within the town (*c.* 5 200) and the surrounding areas (*c.* 5 000) administered by the *de facto* authorities in Transnistria[[17]](#footnote-17). Furthermore, the component is strongly supported by the *de facto* authorities, who recognise the important contribution it makes to improving the quality of services for those on the left bank of the river.

In this light of the achievements to date, the consultant is of the view that the component is on track to achieve the RA.

1. **Address Common environmental concerns**

This sub-component was the least advanced of all in terms of effectiveness (see Fig. 2 (3.3)). At the time of the evaluation, the summary position was

* The overall analysis completed
* Potential environmental projects shortlisted
* Four project proposals developed and approved for funding (Solid waste management in Causeni, Slobozia and Solar Collectors)
* Four Grant Agreements signed and Public Tenders launched
* Three specialised cars were procured within solid waste management projects and are fully operational
* The technical Design of solar collectors for 22 social institutions completed

Despite the relatively slow progress to date, provided the procurement process is completed in a timely manner, the consultant is of the view that the sub-component is capable of making a significant contribution to the RA before the end of the CBM III programme.

1. **Foster CSO Development**

As noted above, CSO development components are common to all confidence building programmes with which the consultant has direct experience. This is because this component forms the basis of people to people networking, working together, challenging preconceptions about the ‘enemy’, and providing a supportive environment for peace making. By the time of the evaluation

* Four Calls for Proposals had been launched
* Between 2012 and 2014, 390 proposals had been received and evaluated

Fig. 11: Overall Calls for Proposals

Fig. 12: Calls for Proposals by Call

Both Figs. 11 and 12 demonstrate considerable capacity challenges faced by CSOs, since the most basic capacity assessment is the ability to pass the administrative eligibility check. Recognising the challenges experienced, the CBM programme carried out two pre-bidding conferences and three capacity-building trainings for 101 CSO representatives. Additional trainings for CSOs, LPAs and business associations are planned before the conclusion of the programme.

In total, 41 grants (10.5% of proposals) had been contracted

Grant projects were from a diverse range of areas. Fig. 13 provides an overview of the number of projects by area and Fig. 14, the investment value.

Fig. 13: Grants by Subject Area

Fig. 14: Value by Thematic Area

At the time of the evaluation:

* 21 grant projects were completed
* 20 projects were on-going

Fig. 15: Location of grant contracts

Fig. 16: Implementing Partners (Primary contract)

It is important to emphasise that all grant contracts required that there be CSO partners on both the right and left banks. Thus, although contracted CSOs were overwhelmingly drawn from the right bank, beneficiaries were drawn from both.

Fig. 17: Beneficiaries by Area

Given the range of projects supported, the consultant has selected a limited number of examples that demonstrate progress towards achievement of the RA. For example, CALM’s project aimed to promote contacts between local authorities on both sides of the River Nistru. As part of this effort, they organised left bank mayoral study visits to right bank counterparts to provide best practice examples of strategic planning, resource mobilisation and project implementation. Many of the left bank mayors had studied at institutions on the right bank before the war but had not visited since, their perceptions being formed through Russian media. On arrival for the study visits, their initial observation that the reality they were observing was very different to that presented on television. Furthermore, the pedagogic strategy that was followed was site-visit based so that observers could observe the practical effects of the planning, resource mobilisation and implementation approaches described and discuss them with people on the ground. There were a number of direct results: first, mayors exchanged contact details and remain in contact with each other; second, they are reported to routinely discuss shared challenges and ways of addressing them. Finally, not only have possible business exchanges been established (e.g. supply of school uniforms) but 10 – 15 communities have applied to the *de jure* authorities’ Social Investment Fund (*c.* US $70 000 each) for infrastructure projects on the left bank.

On a smaller, albeit equally positive, scale Filocalla’s ‘Trust through Education’ approach has underlined the following lessons

1. Working together means that participants share the same problems: school, migration, lack of opportunities
2. It established inter-organisational trust and deepened it
3. The organisation is based upon volunteering; they do not believe that it will fall by the wayside since their approach is that volunteering is an opportunity to have fun and make new friends
4. Lastly, the experience has underlined the two organisations determination to continue working collaboratively

Finally, the Women in Business project aimed to support women’s empowerment. Targeting vulnerable rural women [unemployed, single parents, experience domestic violence, many children, those at high risk of unemployment], the project, implemented in partnership with a women’s organisation from each bank, aimed to empower the 60 women selected (53.5% of those who applied) and to motivate them to secure employment or start their own businesses. Following the project, which provided 60 hours of training,(which at the time of the consultant’s visit was still on-going), 26 women (14 on right bank, 12 on left) had secured full time employment; 14 (seven on each bank) had started their own businesses and had set up a cross-river business association. Furthermore, two round tables had been held, attended by 45 persons from each side of the river.

All three clearly show that the individual projects funded are contributing to the achievement of the RA. Cross-river contacts established during the projects are projected to continue, a message that was underlined in the course of presentations at the Bridge across the Nistru civil society conference, which the consultant attended briefly in the course of the field/desk phase.

4.2.i The Dialogue Sub-Component

Several results have been achieved, summarised in the Final Report on the Civil Society Dialogues Programme, together with the two Blueprints that have been designed through a highly participatory process: The Dialogues project created a Cross-River platform for civil society experts, professionals in two areas: Economy/Trade and Social issues/Humanitarian Aid (see Annex 5). In all, over 80 representatives from both banks discussed, in repeated meetings on both banks and study visits, joint initiatives, identify 18 projects of mutual interest. These are outlined in the two annexed blueprints. Several joint projects spun off the Dialogues process, and it was highly praised by participant NGOs.

The evaluation notes these achievements in Moldova, which are not inconsiderable. However, experience of this type of sub-component elsewhere (e.g. Cyprus and Georgia) is that, although appearing initially hopeful and capable of promoting progress towards purpose and goal, they fail to live up to expectations. There appear to be a number of reasons for this. First, over time, such initiatives tend to become ‘the converted talking to the converted’, when it is precisely the other group that need to be engaged; and when groups with opposing views do engage, the result tends to be a ‘dialogue of the deaf’, with each side restating rigid positions and, at best, agreeing to disagree[[18]](#footnote-18). Second, over time the risk emerges of participants being viewed by decision-makers as ‘the same old faces’; as such, their perspectives and views are ‘known’ and, frequently, discounted[[19]](#footnote-19).

For these reasons, and despite the acknowledged achievements to date, the evaluation is sceptical about the medium- to long-term efficacy of dialogue sub-components, in the absence of tangible outcomes that require actual ‘trans-boundary’ partnerships for implementation. If this this to occur, it requires investment of resources for these purposes, in other words, resources for people to people engagement. Since this is, at bottom, a choice between where the most effective return on the investment of what are scarce resources (both human and financial), the evaluation believes that direct investment in mutually beneficial people to people engagement is a far more direct route to achieve purpose and goal.

4.3 Prospects for Achievement of the Outcome

While the foregoing strongly suggests that the individual RAs will be achieved, no mean feat for a project that effectively has an actual 24-30 month implementation period at best, the major challenge is the conversion of the results achieved into the project outcome. As stated, this is to

….facilitate the settlement of the Transnistrian issue through ensuring economic and social development of local communities and increasing local confidence on both banks of the Nistru River by involving local authorities, civil society organisations business community and other stakeholders.

As noted above, as in all other confidence building programmes, there is a measure of dislocation between programme outputs and the outcome to which they are expected to contribute, or in this case ‘facilitate’, possibly something even more ambitious. This is because of the reality that in conflict-situations, peace-making occurs at levels divorced from exchanges between ordinary people, regardless of whether they are local authority representatives, businesses, or CSOs, at which level confidence building programmes operate. Given this reality, the consultants view is that the most that can be expected of confidence building programmes is that they contribute to establishing the socio-political environment necessary for conflict resolution to take place.

This requires that they should contribute to breaking down barriers, undermine prejudices, provide opportunities to correct misconceptions, all of which as sustainably as possible, and do it in a socioeconomic context that provides hope to both sets of protagonists. If the CBM III programme’s RAs support this, the consultant is of the view that it is making an important contribution to achieving the desired outcome.

All the programme components (although possibly, most importantly, the Business Development and CSO Capacity Building) address the need to contribute to the three areas. Both Business Development and CSO CB clearly provide these opportunities through (i) joint implementation, (ii) cross-river engagement, (iii) shared working experiences, (iv) development of personal and inter-organisational trust, and (v) commitment to on-going contacts[[20]](#footnote-20). Somewhat less directly, the infrastructure component also contributes to these: improved infrastructure can improve service outreach, which encourages cross-river communication, breaking down prejudice and misconceptions, etc.: simply seeking health care brings people from both sides into contact with each other and attacks unfounded prejudices. It is also likely to raise questions about reasons for relative socioeconomic conditions, when it appears that people very similar to the observer somehow have a better quality of life.

And this is why the role of the Business Development component is critical to establishing conditions of socioeconomic hope. To the extent that the component has achieved this, and there is clear evidence of progress in this regard, the combination of the components effect is to contribute to the achievement of outcome. However, realism demands that it is recognised that there remains a long road to travel; as a result, the consultant believes that a fourth phase is both desirable and necessary and that it should be agreed at the earliest possible moment to permit a seamless transition between the current programme and its successor.

4.4 Visibility

EU guidelines specify that all EU-funded interventions should promote the funder’s visibility, identifying the source of funding. In the main, this relates to ‘signing’ the project, displaying, *inter alia*, the EU flag, the size of which is set out in detail. As can be seen from the figures below, the Confidence Building Measures programme has pursued visibility on both banks of the river.

Fig. 18: EU Visibility Kindergarten, Tiraspol



Fig. 19: EU Visibility, Cosnita, House of Culture



In addition to the above, the PIU team ensured that media and public opinion regularly informed: this resulted in 55 Press Releases, 91 TV stories and programmes, 77 radio news bulletins, 64 newspaper articles, and 690 news items. Visibility materials were also developed and distributed (infographics, leaflets, brochure, studies, information boards, table calendar, balloons, T-shirts, hats, maps etc.). The consultant believes that this represents a considerable effort on the part of the PIU team in support of promoting EU visibility. Fig. 20, below, is an example of this.

Fig. 20: EU Visibility through media



The situation is complicated by the Transnistrian authorities’ reluctance to publically acknowledge the contribution of the EU since they publically perceive it to be an actor in the political sphere (the 5+2 talks). The consultant pursued the source of the funding in the course of his meeting with representatives of the Transnistrian *de facto* DFA. He was informed that the authorities were fully aware that the EU was funding the programme and that they wished to express their and Transnistria’s residents to the EU and EU citizens for their support.

The consultant is of the view that the Confidence Building programme staff and UNDP have both met the requirements of the EU’s visibility guidelines and continue to do everything possible to communicate the primary source of the funding for the programme.

4.5 Conclusions

As has been shown, the CBM programme, despite the expected and experienced challenges, demonstrates considerable effectiveness. With the possible exception of the Environment sub-component[[21]](#footnote-21), all RAs are on track to be broadly achieved. Furthermore, subject to the limits discussed above, they are expected to contribute to the achievement of the desired programme outcome. In this connection, any future programme should perhaps express more realistic outcome aspirations; while it is desirable to have aspirational goals, they must be achievable or you are just setting yourself up to fail.

# 5. Impact

## 5.1 Introduction

This section discusses the contribution of the Results achieved to the overall programme purpose and goal. At the outset, it must be stated that any assessment of impact at this point in time is problematic, not least because it is best assessed *ex post*, and desirably some time after the intervention’s completion. Nonetheless, the consultant believes that some indicators of impact in some areas are visible.

5.2 Impact

First, and possibly most importantly, across the board the CBM programme has provided a framework for increased people to people contact. Whether this has been through business development (joint meetings, TN business membership of the Moldovan Chamber of Commerce and Industry, cross-river trade, cross-river contractual relationships, etc.), increased access to services through refurbished and re-equipped infrastructure) or shared activities (joint performances, participation in common cultural events, joint road safety initiatives, development of common child protection policies, or establishing cross-river friendships and practices etc.), there is clear evidence of this and strong suggestion it will be maintained into the future.

Second, the CBM investment in improvements to decaying infrastructure and replacing out-dated equipment, particularly in the health sector, has promoted not only more people to people contact and exchange but also contributed to improved quality of life for people on both banks of the river.

Third, the CBM has supported the emergence and strengthening of a small business culture and the links between small businesses on both banks. This has facilitated increased prosperity for participants, job creation, and cross-river trade. Furthermore, discussion with local authorities in this regard has focussed on the need to establish a more enabling environment for business development and expansion that can only contribute to increased opportunities for wealth creation.

Fourth, the CBM has built on past confidence building measures. This is underlined by the relative ease through which programme beneficiaries were able to identify partners on either side of the river so that they could seek grants and implement programmes. This underlines the important of on-going continuity between different phases of confidence building measures and, to the extent possible, the desirability of as seamless a transition between phases.

Lastly, there is clear evidence that the people to people exchanges have led to a questioning of the presentation of the *status quo* and resulted in increased openness to cross-river interaction. All interlocutors report that contacts established in the course of their individual projects have resulted in contacts with whom they, either organisationally or individually, intend to remain in contact.

## Conclusions

Although evidence of impact is limited at this stage, the consultant is of the view that it will become increasingly evident with the passage of time. Given the successive nature of the three phases to date, untangling the impact of each phase is neither necessary nor desirable. What is necessary is to perceive a growing cumulative impact of the programme over time and CBM III’s experience strongly suggests that this is the case.

# 6. Sustainability

Assessments of Sustainability at this point in time are problematic, not least because it is usually only evident *ex post*. However, some indicators of its potential and the challenges surrounding it are evident.

The sustainability of confidence building programmes is not the issue; by their nature such programmes are unsustainable. When they are necessary, they are dependent on external resources; when they become unnecessary; they are no longer in place. What is at issue, is the sustainability of the outcomes, *viz* behavioural changes at all levels of the society that culminate in resolution of the conflict that necessitated the confidence building intervention in the first place. Inevitably, this is an incremental process; for most of the time, behavioural change takes place in very small steps and only when the vast majority of the necessary work has been done does the major change become visible, seemingly without any attributable cause.

In this context, therefore, the CBM’s sustainability would seem to depend on three things: sustained cross-river contacts; on-going and increasing use of services provided; and joint rising prosperity through business links.

1. Sustaining cross-river contact

Based on statements made to the consultant, he is of the view that these are likely to continue as long as possible. It is important to note, however, that, at least intermittent, face-to-face engagement is more likely to be contributory to sustainability and this requires financial support. In its absence, it is unlikely that this can be sustained beyond the short- to medium-term, regardless of the intentions and desires of the interlocutors.

1. On-going and increased use of Services provided

While there is some caution regarding the former’s medium- to long-term sustainability, there is likely to be considerable sustainability in this regard. In the absence of any negative initiative or intervention by either authorities (e.g. the introduction of fees for Moldovan citizenship or a more rigid formalisation of frontier movement (as in Abkhazia or South Ossetia, for example)), TN residents can be expected to expand their uptake of the services offered.

1. Joint rising prosperity

The key influences in this respect are the business opportunities resulting from the project and their success. To a degree, therefore, sustainability lies outside the boundaries of the CBM’s control. Having said this, practical example is a sound teacher and if businesses benefit from cross-river engagement, this can be expected to encourage both the continuation of such engagement and the expansion of the interest of others in pursuing it. An example in this regard relates to the 23 rural bed and breakfast establishments established through the project. If those on the left bank benefit through additional income from rural tourism, realistically one can expect greater interest from others in such opportunities, encouraging both the sustainability of the industry and increased contact.

## Conclusions

As noted, it is too early to assess the programme’s sustainability. However, there are some fairly strong suggestions that the gains achieved have sound prospects for sustainability. The challenge to sustainability of confidence building programme’s gains are that the conditions are outside the control of the programme to a far greater extent than in almost all other programmes. Having said this, subject to no escalation in the political environment or a rapid deterioration in the economy, the consultant believes that there is demonstrable early evidence that gains achieved to date have real prospects to be sustainable, at least in the short- to medium-term.

# 7. Conclusions and Recommendations

**Design and Relevance**

Overall, the Confidence Building Measures programme is highly relevant and the design responds to the needs of the situation to which it seeks to respond. The programme corresponds with national policy, the EUD CSP, and the UNDAF outcomes. Furthermore, given the EU is a participant in the so-called 5 + 2 negotiating framework; the programme is coherent with both EU policy and the CSP. In addition, given the *de facto* stalemate in conflict resolution, the design remains relevant in the present day. The logframe, while sharing with other confidence building interventions a disconnect between the expected outputs and aspirant outcomes, purpose and goal, nonetheless, is capable of utilisation as an effective management tool. The programme management structure meets the requirements of the programme’s implementation, although greater efficiency would be achieved through the introduction of an Executive Committee to implement policy determined by the Board. Finally, the human resources appear that required for efficient and effective programme implementation.

**Efficiency**

The foregoing discussion has demonstrated considerable efficiency across all components. Where there have been shortfalls in this regard (e.g. the Civil Society’s Dialogue sub-component, or the Infrastructure Environment sub-component), there are understandable reasons for this and, the consultant believes that most will demonstrate greater efficiency as programme closure approaches. [In the case of the ‘Dialogue’ sub-component, the lack of efficiency, in the consultant’s opinion, is in itself capable of interpretation as efficiency since experience elsewhere suggests that investment in this regard seldom brings returns.] Furthermore, given that the achievement of the identified outputs are a necessary condition for attaining the desired outcome, the investment also represents value for money. Lastly, with the exception of Infrastructure’s health component, which is focussed on the left bank, and the CSO component, which reflects the capacity of right bank CSOs compared to left bank counterparts, the CBM programme’s investment is shared evenly both overall and in business development, Infrastructure overall and the Environment sub-component. As such, the consultant is satisfied that the resources have been utilised efficiently.

**Effectiveness**

As has been shown, the CBM programme, despite the expected and experienced challenges, demonstrates considerable effectiveness. With the possible exception of the Environment sub-component[[22]](#footnote-22), all RAs are on track to be broadly achieved. Furthermore, subject to the limits discussed above, they are expected to contribute to the achievement of the desired programme outcome. In this connection, any future programme should perhaps express more realistic outcome aspirations; while it is desirable to have aspirational goals, they must be achievable or you are just setting yourself up to fail.

**Impact**

Although evidence of impact is limited at this stage, the consultant is of the view that it will become increasingly evident with the passage of time. Given the successive nature of the three phases to date, untangling the impact of each phase is neither necessary nor desirable. What is necessary is to perceive a growing cumulative impact of the programme over time and CBM III’s experience strongly suggests that this is the case. However, a number of incidences of impact can be highlighted. First, and possibly most importantly, across the board the CBM programme has provided a framework for increased people to people contact. Furthermore, the three components grants demonstrate impact; considerable achievements in social infrastructure reaching in excess of 100 000 people, business development has seen contractual, partnership, and trading relationships established, and CSO grants have reached numerous people and established/reinforced cross-river partnerships and links,

**Sustainability**

As noted, it is too early to assess the programme’s sustainability. However, there are some fairly strong suggestions that the gains achieved have sound prospects for sustainability. The challenge to sustainability of confidence building programme’s gains are that the conditions are outside the control of the programme to a far greater extent than in almost all other programmes. Having said this, subject to no escalation in the political environment, the consultant believes that there is demonstrable earl evidence that gains achieved to date have real prospects to be sustainable, at least in the short- to medium-term.

**Lessons Learned**

The CBM III programme, like other confidence building interventions elsewhere, is predicated upon a clear perception of the impartiality of the implementing body. In Transnistria, this, arguably, is even more important given that the EU is an active part of the political process seeking to resolve the crisis.

Confidence building requires time and interventions in support of it frequently underestimate the disconnect between decision-makers and the targets of the intervention. The benefit that confidence building brings to the peace-building process is that it contributes to establishing the necessary socio-political environment in which peace-making can occur.

Confidence building is far more likely to occur when people to people contact takes place. Examples include cross-river local authority, business, CSO and individual links established through CBM III. Health care brings people from both sides into contact with each other and attacks unfounded prejudices. It is also likely to raise questions about reasons for relative socioeconomic conditions, when it appears that people very similar to the observer somehow have a better quality of life. And this is why the role of the Business Development component is critical to establishing conditions of socioeconomic hope.

The sustainability of these links, however, depends on the mutual advantage that accrues as a result. Continued intervention in support of confidence building addressing all four groups is, therefore, both desirable and necessary.

## Recommendations for Future Directions

Recommendations address a potential fourth phase of Confidence Building Measures in *de jure* and *de facto* Moldova.

**General**

To the extent possible, ensure a seamless transition between the current and any future programme.

**Design and Relevance**

Prepare a log- or Results Framework as part of the project documents. Ensure it reflects practical links between outputs and outcomes.

To strengthen a Phase 4, it is desirable to include a specific CSO component, focussed around grants for a limited number of areas. In the consultant’s opinion, these should include: micro-enterprise development, with a specific gender empowerment bias, local economic development,

**Efficiency**

Include a CSO grant component in any new programme, alongside the proposed Business Development and Infrastructure investments

Explore the potential for longer-term grant contracts, possibly through closed calls for proposals.

**Effectiveness**

Explore the potential for longer-term grant contracts, possibly through closed calls for proposals.

# ANNEXES

## 

## Annex 1: Terms of Reference



**Support to Confidence Building Measures Programme**

This Programme is financed by the European Union, co-financed and implemented by United Nations Development Programme

**TERMS OF REFERENCE**

**International Expert - Independent Evaluation of the Support to Confidence Building Measures Programme**

International Expert - Independent Evaluation of the Support to Confidence Building Measures Programme Chisinau and field trips to Tiraspol

“Support to Confidence Building Measures” Programme Individual Contract (IC) July – August 2014 (up to 20 working days)

**I. Brief National Context**

In September 1990, several groups from Transnistria, the eastern region of Republic of Moldova situated on the left bank of the Nistru River, proclaimed its independence from the rest of Moldova. An armed conflict followed in 1992, and the so-called “Transnistrian Moldovan Republic” has maintained its separate path from Moldova ever since. After this violent phase, the so-called Transnistrian conflict entered its “frozen” phase, which continues to substantially hinder Moldova’s socio-economic development. The settlement of the conflict and the reintegration of the Transnistria region is a national priority and are included among the main objectives of the Government of Moldova’s National Development Strategy.

Efforts to reach a settlement to the Transnistria conflict are presently being conducted at two levels. At the political level, Chisinau and Tiraspol have been carrying out both formal and informal talks on a settlement assisted by three international mediators (the OSCE, Russia and Ukraine) and two observers (the EU and the USA) forming the so-called “5+2 format”. At the technical level, a number of Working Groups have been formed involving institutions and experts from both banks aimed at joint cooperation and technical approximation of the two distinct socio-economic, institutional and legal systems in order to facilitate the development of the entire Republic of Moldova. Currently, a Deputy Prime Minister is mandated to represent Moldova in the formal 5+2 talks to negotiate a settlement. The Deputy Prime Minister is also supported by a Bureau for Reintegration which was established to spearhead reintegration efforts and coordinate the corresponding activities of ministries and departments.

Although the formal talks have been resumed, after being on hold since 2006 until November 2011, a political settlement has remained elusive. The increasingly complex regional context and the evolution of the situation in Ukraine since the end of 2013 have compounded the underlying set of difficulties, making the prospects of a solution even more remote. However, the developmental challenges facing both sides present an opportunity for practical cooperation between the two banks. Authorities on both sides agree that activities outside the existing political (5+2 talks) and technical (Working Groups) formats which reduce mistrust and increase confidence between both banks are acceptable and necessary.

In this context, in 2012, the third phase of the “Support to Confidence Building Measures” Programme (SCBM Programme) has been launched, funded by the European Union, co-funded and implemented by UNDP Moldova. The overall objective of the programme is to increase confidence between both banks of the Nistru River through ensuring social-economic development by involving local authorities, civil society organizations, business community and other stakeholders.

**II. Brief description of the programme to be evaluated**

***The overall objective*** *of the SCBM programme is to facilitate the settlement of the Transnistrian issue through ensuring economic and social development of local communities and increasing confidence between both banks of the Nistru River by involving local authorities, civil society organisations, business community and other stakeholders.*

The programme aims to ensure that ongoing efforts at settlement at the political level (5+2 informal and formal talks) and technical levels (confidence building working groups) are supported by development and confidence building initiatives at the community level that seek to create a general atmosphere conducive to dialogue and cooperation at all levels. The programme aims to reduce misperceptions and mistrust and increase confidence between programme participants and the population at large on both banks. Activities target individuals, communities, institutions, civil society and other stakeholders who demonstrate a willingness to engage in cross-river partnerships and platforms which contribute directly to greater socio-economic development. The major interventions of the project were defined mainly by building upon the lessons learned in the previous 2 phases of the SCBM project, which were successfully implemented during 2009-2011.

**Programme specific objectives:**

- To enhance economic development in the Transnistria region and the security zone and contribute to economic rapprochement between the two banks of the Nistru River by promoting cross-river exchanges and expanding the range of catalytic business support services;

1. -  To empower local communities and actors from both sides to participate in collaborative projects addressing pressing development needs and ensure the delivery of essential public services;
2. -  To address common environmental development concerns by creating opportunities and platforms for joint collaboration from both banks;
3. -  To foster civil society development by enhancing the capacity of NGOs to generate activities which promote cross-river collaboration and addressing key development needs.  These objectives were tackled through the following five components:  1.**Business Development Component** – activities which promote the common interests of business actors from both banks in the context of EU integration have been implemented. The projects were planned to contribute to stimulating the SME sector in Transnistria and encouraging cross-river cooperation among business actors. These projects include the continuation of business education through the Transnistria business school project, the establishment of business services for entrepreneurs and a road map for micro-financing opportunities as well as consulting services for businesses from both Moldova and Transnistria on export/import operations, trade between the two banks, EU quality systems, trade certificates and all other business and trade related areas.  2.**Community Development Component** - projects were implemented which enable and empower citizens on both banks to jointly participate in tackling community development needs, particularly the rehabilitation of social institutions and basic infrastructure in Transnistria region and the security zone, as well as improve access to and quality of mother and child health care, including perinatal care and immunization in the region. Small grants were provided to community-based organizations to encourage community mobilization.  3.**Environment Component -** projects have provided an opportunity for the development of joint solutions in addressing common environmental concerns, building on successful cooperation between authorities, civil society organizations, specialists and communities.

4.**Support to Civil Society Component -** through the provision of grants, projects were supposed to enhance the capacity of civil society organizations to generate activities which reduce mistrust and increase confidence. Platforms will be created to link specialists from both banks who share common interests. The project will encourage cross-river NGO-to-NGO partnerships. Harnessing NGO expertise to produce practical improvements in areas relevant to the population, cross-river NGO-to-community links will be promoted.

**B. Purpose of the evaluation**

**The purpose of the Evaluation** is to learn from the experience of the EU/UNDP funded programme on Support to Confidence Building Measures, with a forward looking approach. The Evaluation is expected to clarify underlying factors affecting the situation, highlight unintended consequences (positive and negative) and better design UNDP-supported interventions at the next stage. The Country Office accordingly plans to make use of the exercise as a learning opportunity not only for the office but also for key partners and stakeholders, as inclusively and as practically possible.

The overall objectives of the evaluation are the following:

1. Provide an objective assessment of the achievements, constraints, performance, results, impact, relevance and sustainability of the interventions.
2. Generate lessons from experiences in the respective interventions for the period 2011 to date (results of the two previous smaller CBM projects could be as well considered) to inform current and future programming at the country level
3. Identify whether past results represent sufficient foundation for future progress
4. Provide clear and forward-looking recommendations in order to suggest effective and realistic strategies by UNDP and partners.

The evaluation should be comprehensive and cover the outcome, outputs, activities and inputs of the project. The results of the evaluation will be used for re-focusing the interventions and guiding future programming. In this context, the evaluation will:

Extract lessons for future interventions in the sector; Propose improvement of the coordination between donor-supported interventions in meeting national requirements; Outline main areas of focus for next stage UNDP projects.

**General Terms of the Evaluation**

The scope of the evaluation should incorporate the following categories of analysis:

**Relevance**: the degree to which the purpose of the SCBM Programme remains valid and pertinent. **Efficiency**: the productivity of the implementation process - how good and how cost efficient the process of transforming inputs into outputs and outcomes was.

**Effectiveness**: a measure of the extent to which the SCBM Programme has contributed to achieve its results through an effective use of their resources.

**Capacity development**: as a key to **development effectiveness,** the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals and sustainable local development.

**Sustainability** – to what extent are the SCBM Programme results sustainable, taking into consideration the existing capacity, structures and political context in the country.

The evaluation is expected to address the following issues:

***Outcome status:***

*Outcome Analysis – what and how much progress has been made towards the achievement of the outcome (including contributing factors and constraints).*

* Determine whether or not the outcome has been achieved and, if not, whether there has been progress made towards its achievement.
* List innovative approaches tried and capacities developed through UNDP assistance.
* Assess the relevance of UNDP outputs to the outcome.
* Ascertain the progress made in relation to the outputs.
* List the factors (positive and negative) that affect the accomplishment of outputs.  ***Underlying factors:*** Analyze the underlying factors beyond UNDP’s control that influenced the outcome. Distinguish the substantive design issues from the key implementation and/or management capacities and issues including the timeliness of outputs, the degree of stakeholders and partners’ involvement in the completion of outputs, and how processes were managed/ carried out.  ***Outputs status:***  *Output Analysis – the relevance of and progress made in terms of UNDP and other UN Agencies outputs.*  Were the outputs relevant to the outcome? Were the outputs achieved? What are the factors (positive and negative) that affect the accomplishment of the outputs?  ***Activities status:***  *Analysis of activities - Were the activities to achieve the outputs effective and efficient?*  How well the activities were planned and implemented? Were key methodologies and approaches that facilitate the success of the initiative, particularly regarding participation and empowerment, gender balance, and delivery of necessary inputs appropriate?  ***Inputs status:***  *Inputs Analysis - what contribution UNDP and other UN Agencies have made to the progress towards the implementation of activities and achievement of the output and outcome.*  How appropriate were the inputs? Were the inputs sufficient to achieve the results? How cost effective they were?  ***Partnership strategy:*** Ascertain whether UNDP’s partnership strategy has been appropriate and effective. What were the partnerships formed? What was the role of UNDP? How did the partnership contribute to the achievement of the outcome? What was the level of stakeholders’ participation? Examine the partnership among UN Agencies and other donor organizations in the relevant field.  ***Cross-cutting issues:* Sustainability**: an assessment of the likelihood that the projects results will endure after the active involvement of UNDP has ended. To what extent the changes (and benefits) brought by the projects can be expected to last after projects completion. The evaluation team should be requested to provide recommendations for potential follow-up interventions, i.e. how feasible the follow-up actions would be, what alternatives can be identified and/or what components can be added to it, what knowledge products could be developed.

**D. Proposed Methodology**

An overall guidance on outcome evaluation methodology can be found in the *UNDP Handbook on Monitoring and Evaluating for Results* and the *UNDP Guidelines for Outcome Evaluators*. The evaluators should come up with a suitable methodology for the evaluation of this intervention based on the guidance given in these two documents

During the outcome evaluation, the evaluators are expected to apply the following approaches for data collection and analysis:

* 􏰁Desk review of relevant documents (project documents with amendments made, review reports - midterm/final, donor-specific, etc);
* 􏰁Discussions with the Senior Management and programme staff of UNDP Country Office;
* 􏰁Briefing and debriefing sessions with UNDP, EU Delegation and the Government, as well as with  other donors and partners
* 􏰁Interviews with partners and stakeholders (including gathering the information on what the  partners have achieved with regard to the outcome and what strategies they have used)
* 􏰁Fieldvisitstoselectedprojectsitesanddiscussionswithprojectteams,projectbeneficiaries;
* 􏰁Consultation meetings.

**E. Composition and qualification of the evaluation team**

Members of the mission must not have been associated with the project’s formulation, implementation or monitoring.

Specifically, the Consultant will perform the following tasks:

* 􏰁Lead and manage the evaluation mission;
* 􏰁Design the detailed evaluation scope and methodology (including the methods for data collection  and analysis) for the report;
* 􏰁Decide the division of labor within the evaluation team;
* 􏰁Conduct an analysis of the outcome, outputs and partnership strategy (as per the scope of the  evaluation described above) for the report;
* 􏰁Draft related parts of the evaluation reports; and
* 􏰁Finalize the whole evaluation report.

**F. Proposed Timeframe**

It is expected that the outcome evaluation be conducted during the period July – August 2014, over a period of 20 working days.

Activity Timeframe:



|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Evaluation design and work plan | One day, (home based) |
| Desk review of existing documents | 4 days, (home based) |
| Field visits, interviews with partners, and key stakeholders | 5 days, |
| Drafting of the evaluation reports | 6 days, (home based) |
| Debriefing with UNDP and with partners | One day, |
| Finalization of the evaluation reports (incorporating comments received on first drafts) | 3 days (home based) |

**G. Expected deliverables**

1. The key product expected from this evaluation is a comprehensive analytical report in English that should, as a minimum, include the following contents:

* 􏰀  Executive summary;
* 􏰀  Introduction;
* 􏰀  Description of the evaluation methodology;
* 􏰀  Analysis of the situation with regard to the outcome, the outputs and the partnership strategy;
* 􏰀  Analysis of opportunities to provide guidance for the future programming;
* 􏰀  Key findings (including best practices and lessons learned)
* 􏰀  Conclusions and recommendations
* Annexes: ToRs, field visits, people interviewed, documents reviewed, etc.1  2. An outline for the future UNDP intervention in support of confidence building measures covering areas like (business development, social welfare, healthcare, community infrastructure, environment, civil society etc.) based on the recommendations of the mission is to be produced. Opportunities to engage other UN agencies in future work would also be considered.

**H. Organisational settings**

The Consultant will work under the direct supervision of the UNDP Portfolio Manager, and will be supported by the SCBM team with the Programme-related documentation. The payment for services provided by the Consultant will be made according to deliverables completed, and approved by the UNDP Portfolio Manager.

Travel: All project related-travel arrangements in Moldova and its Transnistrian region will be carried out by the SCBM Programme.

**I. Qualification requirements /selection criteria**

* 􏰀  Minimum of a master’s degree or equivalent in Management, Development Studies and/or International Affairs and other relevant fields
* 􏰀  At least 8 years of work experience in the areas relevant to the assignment (post conflict development, local development, participatory planning for sustainable development, including participatory monitoring and evaluation)
* 􏰀  At least 3 years’ experience in conducting evaluation of projects in the socio-economic field
* 􏰀  Excellent analytical and writing skills
* 􏰀  Excellent spoken and writing skills in English (Russian or Romanian are an advantage)
* 􏰀  Proven experience of participatory monitoring and evaluation processes
* 􏰀  Familiarity with development approaches in post-conflict context of Eastern Partnership or EU Neighborhood countries
* 􏰀  Experience within the country, including in Transnistrian region will be a strong advantage

**J. Reference materials**

The following documents should be studied by the evaluators:

1. UNDP Handbook on Monitoring and Evaluating for Results
2. UNDP Guidelines for Outcome Evaluators
3. UNDP Results-Based Management: Technical Note
4. United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) for Moldova (2013-2017)
5. UNDP Results-Oriented Annual Report (ROAR) for Moldova (2011, 2012, 2013)
6. SCBM Project Document (Description of Action) and relevant reports
7. UNDP National Human Development Reports for Moldova
8. Other documents and materials related to the outcome to be evaluated (from the  government, donors, etc.)

Background documentation is available on www.undp.md

1 See the ***UNDP Guidelines for Outcome Evaluators*** for a detailed guidance on the preparation of an outcome evaluation report.

## Annex 2: List of People/ Institutions Met

**September 16 - 22, 2014**

**SCBM evaluation mission**

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| ***Tuesday, September 16, 2014*** | |
| **9:15 – 10:15** | **Meeting with Ms. Doina Munteanu**, Assistant Resident Representative- Programme, UNDP and Viorel Albu SCBM Project Manager, Community Development and Environment  ***Venue: UN House, 131, 31 August 1989 Street, Chisinau*** |
| **10:30 – 12:00** | **Meeting with SCBM project team** - Viorel Albu, Project Manager, Community Development and Environment Projects, Olga Vasiliev, Project officer, Civil Society, Vitalie Craciun, Project Office/Community Development, Natalia Costas, Communication Consultant, Mariana Nerpii and Victoria Fonari, Programme Assistants.  ***Venue:*** *SCBM Office, of. 302, “Le Roi” building, 29, Sfatul Tarii street* |
| **12:00 – 13:00** | **Lunch** |
| **13:00 – 14:00** | **Meeting with Filocalia**, project coordinator Elena Munteanu, Veronica Lupacheso  ***Venue:*** *Sfatul Tarii street, 27, of 12, Chisinau* |
| **14:30 – 15:30** | **Meeting with Congress of Local Public Authorities,** Project Manager Irina Luncasu  ***Venue:*** *106A, Columna street, Chisinau* |
| **16:00 – 17:00** | **Meeting with George Balan**, Head of the Bureau for Reintegration  ***Venue:*** *Government of Moldova, Bureau for Reintegration, 1* |
| ***Wednesday, September 17, 2014*** | |
| **10.00 – 11.00** | **Meeting with Svetlana Lazar**, ANTREC project director (rural tourism)  ***Venue:*** *SCBM Office, of. 302, “Le Roi” building, 29, Sfatul Tarii street* |
| **11.30 – 12.30** | **Meeting with Terre des Hommes** team, Iveta Bartunkova and Dorina Ardeleanu  ***Venue:*** *6, Iorga street, Chisinau* |
| **12.30 – 13.30** | **Lunch** |
| **14.00 – 15.00** | **Meeting with** **Narine Sahakyan**, UNDP Moldova Deputy Resident Representative  ***Venue:*** *UN House, 131, 31 August 1989 Street, Chisinau* |
| **15.00 – 16.00** | **Meeting with Danielle Keulen,** Deputy Head of Operations Section of the European Union Delegation to Moldova TBC  ***Venue:*** *EU Delegation to the Republic of Moldova, 12, Kogălniceanu street, Chisinau* |
| **16.30 – 17.30** | **Meeting with Tatiana Batushkina,** director of International Council for Advancement of Women in Business  ***Venue:*** *98, 31 August street, “Uniunea Scriitorilor”building, 5 floor, office 511* |
| ***Thursday, September 18, 2014*** | |
| **9:00 – 10.00** | Drive from Chisinau to Vadul lui Voda |
| **10:00 – 13:30** | **Participation at the Civil Society Conference** - **Bridges of Confidence across Nistru**  ***Venue:*** *Odiseu resort, Vadul lui Voda* |
| **13.30 – 14.30** | **Lunch at Odiseu, Vadul lui Voda** |
| **14.30 – 15.00** | Drive from Vadul lui Voda to Cosnitsa |
| **15:00 – 17:00** | **Visit of Cosnita Joint Information and Service Bureau**, meeting with community representatives; key local beneficiaries and Dubasari District Local Public Administration: Maria Jimbei, Vancea Williams  ***Venue: Cosnitsa, Dubasari*** |
| **17.00 – 18.00** | Driving back to Chisinau |
| ***Friday, September 19, 2014*** | |
| **8:30 – 10:00** | Drive from Chisinau to Tiraspol |
| **10:00 – 11:30** | **Meeting with Chamber of Commerce, Tiraspol. Project: “Creating a sustainable system of business education” and “Creation of Job Opportunities through Business Support for Youth in the Transnistrian region**   * Yuri Ganin, Vice- President of CCI * Anna Mikoloshina, Director of “Business School” * Irina Bilak, Programme Manager, Youth Grants Support   ***Venue:*** *Transnistrian Chamber of Commerce office, Tiraspol* |
| **11.30 – 12.30** | **Visit of the Tiraspol kindergarten no. 44** (infrastructure and civil society projects to be observed, the latter is an initiative to support low vision children with glasses and professional eye testing.) |
| **12:30 – 13:30** | Lunch in Tiraspol |
| **14:00 – 15:00** | Meeting with **TN region de facto authorities** (TBC)   * Ganina Sandusta * Alexander Khonitskiy * Alexandra Tsarenko * Anastasio Bondarenko |
| **15.00 – 15.30** | Drive from Tiraspol to Varnitsa |
| **15.30 – 17.00** | Visit to Varnitsa **health center** and renovated **central road** of Varnitsa |
| **17.00 – 18.30** | Drive back to Chisinau |
| ***Saturday, September 20, 2014*** | |
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|  |  |
| ***Monday, September 22, 2014*** | |
| **9:30 – 10:30** | **Meeting with Sergiu Harea**, Moldova Chamber of Commerce. Project- Strengthening the capacity of SMEs from Moldova and the Transnistrian region to participate at international specialized fairs and exhibitions.  ***Venue:*** *Moldova Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Stefan cel Mare street* |
| **11.00 – 12.00** | **Meeting with Nicola Harington-Buhay**, UNDP Moldova Resident Representative  ***Venue:*** *UN House, 131, 31 August 1989 Street, Chisinau* |
| **12.30 – 13.30** | **Lunch** |
| **14.00 - 15.00** | **Meeting with Serghei Neicovcen Contact Center**, Director  ***Venue: 83, Bucuresti street, Chisinau*** |
| **15.00 – 16.00** | **Meeting with Vitalie Popa,** AXA Management director, Business grants for youth project  ***Venue:*** *SCBM Office, of. 302, “Le Roi” building, 29, Sfatul Tarii street* |
| **16.00 – 17.00** | **Debriefing with UNDP** |

## Annex 3 – List of documents consulted

Contribution Agreement

CBM, 1st Progress Report

CBM, 2nd Progress Report

Programme Board Minutes, eight meetings

Business Development Component, 2012 – 14

Civil Society Component, General Statistics

Civil Society Grant Register, September 2014

CALM Final Programme Report

Transnistrian Chamber of Commerce Final Narrative Report

Terre Des Hommes, Final Report

Concept Note: Increased Opportunities for better living across the Nistru River

Civil Society Initiative on Confidence Building Measures in the Areas of Economy/Trade and Social Issues/Humanitarian Aid

Civil Society Initiative on Confidence Building Measures in the Area of Social Issues/Humanitarian Aid: A Blueprint for Project Ideas on Both Banks of the Nistru River

Civil Society Initiative on Confidence Building Measures in the Area of Economy and Trade:

A Blueprint for Project Ideas on Both Banks of the Nistru River

Note: A number of project report documents were provided in Roumanian and are not listed.

## Annex 4: PPT presentation Debriefing (separate file)

**Annex 5: Dialogue Report and Two Blueprints (Economic and Social)**

1. Because of the time remaining to the CBM programme’s implementation. Having said this, ss part of the waste management projects, procurement of three specialised cars was carried out and all cars are fully operational and used by municipal enterprises from both banks. Structural technical design of 22 solar collectors was completed. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. the OSCE, Russia and Ukraine. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. the EU and the USA [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. In comments, the PIU underlined that this component is implemented in partnership with other UN Agencies (WHO, UNICEF). In fact, resources utilisation was much higher the time of evaluation but due to the fact that expenditures are recorded after being reported by Implementing Agencies (which is done during one month after the quarter ends; compared to all other cases when funds are considered spent once transferred to the third party), therefore, had not been captured in reporting as yet. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. Other aspects are discussed under Effectiveness, below. [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. The right bank investment was approximately €6 300 less than the left bank’s. [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. EU – UNDP Confidence Building Measures: Increased Opportunities and Better Living Conditions across the Nistru River, 2014 – 2018. [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. Ibid., Pp 4 – 5. [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
9. See, for example, the Support to the Victims of *Apartheid* Programme and Northern Cyprus CSO Capacity Building Programme [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
10. See, for example, Confidence Building Early Response Mechanism (COBERM) I and II, Georgia. [↑](#footnote-ref-10)
11. An INGO informed the consultant that UNDP’s reporting requirements were unnecessarily burdensome. The reality is that the PRAG’s requirements are internationally recognized as being the most complex of all donor organisations and require far more attention to detail (in record keeping and reporting) than those of any other donor. [↑](#footnote-ref-11)
12. Indicatively, this equates to €447 719.89 at the time of the evaluation. (http://ec.europa.eu/budget/contracts\_grants/info\_contracts/inforeuro/inforeuro\_en.cfm) [↑](#footnote-ref-12)
13. The scheme is the only source of microfinance for new businesses. The current interest rates in the banking system is 18% pa; security is also required so the banking system is beyond the reach of the vast majority of potential start-ups. [↑](#footnote-ref-13)
14. The Tiraspol Chamber of Commerce believes it necessary that any future, similar programme should introduce criteria to avoid this occurring again. The consultant sympathizes to some extent with this position but also notes that any successful business can be expected to have a poverty reduction impact through sustainable job criterion. [↑](#footnote-ref-14)
15. Seven of those selected had participated in the Business School training. [↑](#footnote-ref-15)
16. e.g. the consultant is aware of examples throughout Europe, as well as in a number of developing countries (e.g. Mongolia, South Africa, Sri Lanka, and Swaziland). [↑](#footnote-ref-16)
17. This is particularly beneficial for the elderly (62 and 57 years respectively for men and women) and children (below 18 years) who receive free medical insurance subject to Moldovan citizenship. Since application for citizenship is free for Transnistrian residents, it is easy to obtain this, [↑](#footnote-ref-17)
18. See, for example, reports of dialogues between Georgians and South Ossetians held in Istanbul as part of the COBERM I programme. [↑](#footnote-ref-18)
19. UNDP supported dialogue initiatives in the neutral zone in Cyprus almost as soon as the conflict ceased. These have proved increasingly ineffective, with both the Greek and Turkish Cypriot authorities regarding participants as ‘the same old faces’. [↑](#footnote-ref-19)
20. All of which are strong reasons to ensure that any follow up programme has a CSO component and one underpinned by a grant element to support ongoing cross-frontier cooperation. [↑](#footnote-ref-20)
21. Because of the time remaining to the CBM programme’s implementation. [↑](#footnote-ref-21)
22. Because of the time remaining to the CBM programme’s implementation. [↑](#footnote-ref-22)