MUNICIPAL TRAINING SYSTEM PROJECT
PHASE II

Final Project Evaluation

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Acknowledgements and disclaimer

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The content of this report is the sole responsibility of the consultant and can in no way be taken to reflect the views of the United Nations Development Programme, authorities in Bosnia and Herzegovina, nor those of any other party. All efforts have been made to ensure that the information presented here is correct, and any factual error that may appear is unintended and is the sole responsibility of the consultant.

List of Abbreviations and Acronyms

AMC	Association of Municipalities and Cities
BiH	Bosnia and Herzegovina
CSA	Civil Service Agency
DRR	Disaster Risk Reduction
FBiH	Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina
HRM	Human Resources Management
ILDP	Integrated Local Development Planning
LOD	Reinforcement of Local Democracy
LSG	Local Self-Government
LSGE	Local Self-Government Employee (including elected officials)
MALSG	Ministry of Administration and Local Self-Government
MTS	Municipal Training System
OSCE	Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe
RS	Republika Srpska
SDC	Swiss Agency for Development Cooperation
Sida	Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency
TC	Training Committee (RS)
TCB	Training Coordination Body (FHiB)
TSLSGE	Training System for Local Self-Government Employees (including elected officials)
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme

Executive Summary

The Municipal Training System (MTS) project implemented by UNDP and financially supported by Sida in Bosnia and Herzegovina started in January 2008 and its second phase will come to an end in December 2015. The objective of the MTS project is to support the Governments and Association of Municipalities and Cities in both entities of Bosnia and Herzegovina with the establishment of an effective and sustainable Training System for Local Self-Government Employees and elected representatives.

This final project evaluation was tasked to assess the relevance, performance, results and impact of the second phase of the MTS project and the sustainability of the project's achievements. The evaluation was carried out in September 2015 and included a comprehensive review of relevant documents, interviews with the various partners in the project in both entities and interviews with a selected group of project beneficiaries (trainees and their supervisors at the Local Self-Government level) and several trainers who participated in the provision of various training modules.

In the Republika Srpska (RS), the operational management of the training of Local Self-Government Employees (LSGEs) falls under the responsibility of the Ministry of Administration and Local Self-Government (MALSG). In the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina (FBiH), the Civil Service Agency (CSA) at entity level organises training for civil servants including those employed by municipalities and cities, even though the Local Self-Government Employees fall legally under the mandate of the cantons and as a result some cantons opt out of the training offered by the CSA. In both entities the training of elected representatives at the Local Self-Government level (i.e. the executive mayors and councillors) is taken care of by the two Associations of Municipalities and Cities (AMCs).

At the end of 2010, as part of the MTS I, two Training Strategies for Local Self-Government Employees (including elected representatives) were completed, which included a comprehensive training needs assessment and the institutional set up of a Training System for Local Self-Government Employees (TSLSGE) that were more or less the same for both entities. In the RS a Training Commission was established to coordinate and oversee the training of Local Self-Government employees and elected representatives, while a similar body called the Training Coordination Body was established in the FBiH.

Results of the MTS project

Between 2010 and 2015, these Training Systems with technical and financial support from the MTS project have developed 47 new training modules and trained almost 8000 LSGEs (6300 government staff and 1700 elected officials), of which 43% were female. Out of these 8000, roughly 6500 LSGEs received a training as part of the MTS phase II (i.e. between 2012 and 2015), while it planned to train only 1900 LSGEs, which is 342% more.

While the number of trained LSGEs is impressive, the most important achievement of the project, according to all stakeholders interviewed as part of this evaluation, is the establishment of the Training System for Local Self-Government Employees itself, almost completely in line with the planned set up as described in the Training Strategies for both entities and the MTS II project document, including the establishment and formalisation of two new institutional bodies, the Training Coordination Body (TCB) in the FBiH and the training Commission (TC) in the RS. This might not seem such a big achievement for outsiders, but in the complex socio-political context of BiH that hampers most institutional reforms and cooperation between stakeholders, it is a big accomplishment. It took a bit longer than anticipated, but the result is truly owned by the implementing partners in the two entities.

In addition to the establishment of these coordinating bodies, the partners implementing the actual training modules have improved their capacities substantially, to such a level that (except for the two AMCs, which are not 100% capable of doing so) they are now able to design, plan, implement and monitor a high quality training programme that is practical, cost efficient and highly appreciated by the trainees and their supervisors at the Local Self-Government level. All quality assurance instruments are in place, while the beneficiaries (the Local Self-Governments and their staff) have a large say in the design and content of the training modules. The quality of the training and the training methods that are used can always be improved further and the e-learning tools are for example not yet at the same quality level as the face-to-face training modules, but the implementing partners have sufficient capacity to work on this with their own staff or engage external expertise if necessary.

In all but one area the MTS project achieved (or even over-achieved) its anticipated outputs, being the direct support provided to Local Self-Governments to improve their HRM systems and performance. The project provided HRM support to a pilot group of 20 SLGs, but it hasn't evaluated the results yet as to what extent this support has contributed to actual changes in the HRM practices at the local level, but the expectations of the project staff as to what has been achieved are rather low. In hindsight, the project underestimated the amount of resistance at local and entity level to an improvement of HRM and performance management in particular that would result in a more transparent system that improves the accountability of both employers and employees. Nevertheless, this remains an important area that requires urgent improvement since it has a direct impact on the effect of the trainings provided.

Performance of the MTS project
In general, the project design as reflected in the project document for the MTS phase II meets all UNDP planning quality standards. It was done in a participatory manner, it was based on a good problem analysis (which was an integral part of the MTS phase I), the project rational was in hindsight adequate and realistic, the result map was comprehensive and complete and clearly result based. The assumption and risk analysis as reflected in the project document could have been done better however as this is an important aspect of any capacity development intervention. This is partly caused by the standard project template of UNDP, which doesn't stimulate an integration of assumptions and risk analysis in the project rationale. The template does not explicitly ask for a critical reflection on the critical assumptions, while the risk analysis is dealt with in a separate paragraph while it should be a more integral part of the result chain description and analysis. Capacity development interventions have a long and complex result chain with intermediary outcomes and are therefore facing more assumptions and potential disrupting factors at each stage that could possibly influence or even contravene the effect of training on the improved performance of LSGs.

In addition the project initially didn't plan to conduct a detailed Training Impact Assessment, which is important in order to complete the training cycle but also to be able to monitor the possible impact of context related factors on the actual use of the acquired knowledge and if necessary implement remedial activities. The project board did at a later stage correct this and requested the project to develop such methodology, which was done and tested in 2014. Due to its complexity and related costs, it hasn't been implemented on a larger scale however and will therefore still need some adjustments in order to make it easily implementable by the implementing partners.

The MTS project provided a narrative description of its objective and how that is broadly defined, while it also broke down the main objective into three determining factors being:
- Regulatory and institutional anchoring of the training system in both entities;
- Training support facilities' capacities to respond to the needs and deliver quality training, and
- Financial sustainability of the training system.

The MTS project did however not clearly translate these into success indicators at outcome level in its project document, i.e. it did not specify in a measurable way what an "effective and sustainable Training System for LSGEs" actually means and how the achievement of the outcome can be measured. Normally, if one adopts a process approach for the implementation of a project or programme, which is the only way to achieve some kind of institutional reform in a highly complex socio-political context such as in BiH, the success indicators are defined at outcome level, while the activities are flexible and only specified on an annual base.

The project therefore also didn't monitor the progress on its intended outcome adequately (only on activity indicators). If it would have done so, i.e. if it would have designed clear outcome success indicators and monitored their progress regularly, an exit strategy for the project would have been almost ready at the start of phase II, while now it is still lacking.

While the project design was solid, the process approach that was adopted by the project throughout its duration, is the most important reason for its success. By being flexible and responsive to the capacity support needs of the implementing partners, by letting the partners set the pace for change and adopting an incremental learning by doing approach, it achieved maximum local ownership of the Training Systems in both entities and therefore a solid foundation for their sustainability beyond the life span of the project.

Relevance of the MTS project
As a result of the changes in the roles and functions of Local Self-Governments from an administrative layer of government to a more development oriented institution and the related changes in laws and regulations that have a direct effect on the work of local government staff, there is a large need for continuous and systematic training of local staff employees and of newly elected councillors and mayors to equip them with the right skills to implement their job adequately. In order to address these training needs, a comprehensive and well-coordinated training system was required that addresses both the needs of local government staff as well as the needs of sector ministries issuing new laws and instructions that need to be implemented at the local level. Since the implementing partners were not able to develop such a system on their own, the project intervention by UNDP was highly relevant.

One could say that as a result of the obsolete HRM systems at LSG level that are still heavily influenced by clientelistic practices, the relevance of training staff might be limited since there are no strong incentives for staff to improve their performance. This is certainly true, but on the other hand, partly as a result of the combined efforts of the partners in this project, the need for more systemic improvements in the HRM system at the LSG levels are now acknowledged both at entity as well as LSG level, which are reflected in the ongoing incremental improvements in the legislative framework.

Impact of the MTS project
Regarding the impact of the project the evaluation addressed to interrelated aspects:

1. The impact of improved training of LSGEs on their performance and on the management and quality of service delivery of municipalities and cities.
Without a Training Impact Assessment mechanism that is applied systematically by the training partners, the MTS project is not able to provide sufficient evidence that the training of LSGEs has a positive impact on their performance and therefore on the functioning of the LSGs. This doesn't mean that there is no impact, it only means that there is a lack of information to make a well informed judgement. The evaluation can therefore also not draw a final conclusion regarding the effectiveness of the project on this aspect. Qualitative information from both beneficiaries, trainers and supervisors that was collected during the evaluation indicate that there is a positive relation between the training

provided and an improved performance of LSGEs, but that information is not substantial enough to make a well informant final judgement on its effectiveness.

A Training Impact Assessment mechanism has been developed by the MTS project, and it has been tested in the project cycle management training. While it delivered valuable information on the effectiveness of that specific training component, it also became clear that in its present format it was too sophisticated and too costly to implement on a wider scale covering all training modules. Together with the implementing partners it was therefore decided not to integrate it in its present format into the training system. A simplified, but also less reliable adjusted version of the impact assessment could have been developed, which provides at least sufficient qualitative information to further improve the training modules.

As a result there is at present no workable training impact assessment methodology, meaning that the training cycle is not complete and that there is:
   a. No complete feedback mechanism available that will provide information that can be used to further improving the quality of the training modules,
   b. There is no monitoring mechanism that can provide information on the potential factors at the local self-government level that may either enhance or contravene the impact of the training. If that information would be available, the partners would be able to make a stronger case for additional funding for training and for the necessary review of the HRM practices at local level and they would also be able to convince the managers of local staff with evidence that training is necessary and helps to improve performance;
   c. It is difficult for UNDP (and Sida) to provide qualitative evidence of the success of their efforts and investments;

All implementing partners see the need for such an instrument and would like the project to augment the existing one before the end of the project.

2. The impact of the MTS project on establishing an effective and sustainable Training System for LSGEs in both entities.
Given the complex socio-political context, which obstructs almost every initiative for institutional progress in Bosnia and Herzegovina and the initial reluctance of the potential partners to even start to try tackling the problem of the lack of a systematic training system for Local Self-Government employees and elected officials, the MTS project has been able to achieve a small but significant initial institutional reform, which generates more cooperation between the various levels of government, between the same institutions in both entities and between the administrations and representative organisations of local government. With support of the MTS project, the implementing partners have been able to set up a Training System for Local Self-Government Employees that is:
   - Responding to the training needs of staff at local self-government level and to the training needs of entity level ministries that provide services at local level or develop regulations that have to be implemented by government staff at the local level;
   - Delivers high quality training in a cost efficient manner that is relevant and practical; and is
   - Institutionally and legally well anchored in the government systems in the two entities and therefore in principle sustainable.
One may therefore conclude that the project has achieved its major objective within the timeframe and budget ceilings provided.

Sustainability of the MTS project achievements
Regarding the sustainability of the Training Systems for Local Self-Government Employees a lot has been achieved, especially regarding their institutional sustainability. While it is impossible to predict the

possible impact of the wider political context on the future of the TSLSGEs, at least the legal and institutional framework is solid and sound, and the partners are able to adjust it to evolving circumstances in the near future if necessary.

Regarding the organisational sustainability of some of the partners/institutions in the Training Systems it is not sure whether all of them have sufficient capacity to continue their function at the same level as now without additional external technical support.

The CSA in the FHiB and the MALSG in the RS are now well capable to continue providing the same quality and quantity of training to their LSGEs after the MTS project has come to an end, especially once the training unit in the MALSG is well established and staffed and a well-functioning training impact assessment mechanism is in place. Regarding the development of new training modules or the upgrading of existing ones they might require external expertise, but they are well capable of organising that themselves.

The Training Coordination Body in the FBiH and the Training Commission in the RS are still immature and they do not yet have the legitimacy or the leadership they should have in order to take the training system to a higher level or to lobby successfully for more resources from either the government or external sources. While they need to earn that position themselves, a continuation of some form of hands off technical support provided by UNDP, focussing on improving leadership, high level quality assurance, finalizing and operationalising the next phase Training Strategies and monitoring and comparing (as an external agent) the implementation of the co-financing strategies in both entities would be very useful. This does not have to be in the format of a continuation of the MTS project however if other ways of providing such support are possible.

The co-financing models in both entities are ready. The one in the FBiH is approved by the entity government, while the MALSG in the RS wants to reach an agreement with each municipality on the implementation and their contribution in order to avoid that this is seen as being imposed on them by the entity government. The co-financing models will only be put to the test once the external funding for the implementation of the actual training modules has come to an end. The government partners have had sufficient time to prepare themselves for this situation (and they even got an extra year to do so), so the evaluation sees no reason why the external funding for running the regular training programme (besides the training programme of the AMCs as argued below) should continue after 2015.

The AMCs in both entities are not yet able to continue playing their role in the TSLSGE at the same level as they are doing now without a continuation of external financial and technical support. Even if the co-financing models are implemented as planned per the 1st of January 2016, they will not generate enough funds for the AMCs to recover all the costs involved in planning, organising and implementing the trainings for elected officials, especially not in 2016 when they face extra costs due to the induction training they have to organise for the newly elected councillors. In addition, partly because they lack adequate staffing of their training units, they will not be able to do much more than run the present training programme since they lack capacity to develop new modules, collect feedback from trainees and scale up the programme to include even more elected officials.

Main recommendations
The evaluation recommends:

1. That the MTS project meets with Sida to agree on an exit strategy and have that endorsed by the project board, which ensures among others a continuation of the support to the training units of the AMCs;
2. That the MTS project reformulates the Training Impact Assessment mechanism in such a way that it meet the needs of the partners (practical and not too costly to implement);
3. That UNDP considers some form of hands-off technical support to the implementing partners after the closure of the project to:
   a. Assist the AMCs with the further development of advanced learning tools and improvement of the training material and with organisational capacity building as indicated in annex 4;
   b. Further improve the capacities of the TCB and TC to guarantee quality assurance of the training provided;
   c. Further improve the networking and leadership capacities of the TCB and TC and their ability to market the TSLSGE at LSG level;
   d. Monitor as an external agent the implementation of the co-financing models and propose adjustments to these models if necessary.

Follow up activities

UNDP, through the implementation of the MTS project and other projects has gained substantial experience working directly with LSGs in both entities in BiH. Based on its solid reputation, its perceived neutrality and the network that UNDP has built up through its involvement in the TSLSGEs in both entities, strengthening the HRM systems at local self-government level could be an area for UNDP to become involved in even though a "return on investments" might be much more difficult to achieve. This is a politically sensitive area and there are most likely no quick wins to achieve, but the legal framework is increasingly facilitating such improvements and (partly as a positive spin off from the MTS project) more and more people at entity and local level realise the importance of sound HRM practices at the LSG level for improved service delivery.

1.   Introduction

**Figure 1.   Administrative Map of Bosnia and Herzegovina**

1.1   Project Background

In 2007, UNDP BiH commissioned a feasibility study (Discussion Paper) to review the status of training and capacity building for local self-governments (LSGs) in Bosna and Herzegovina (BiH). The study identified a complex set of issues, ranging from the absence of uniform training policies through to the ambiguities in the institutional structure of local self-government training. In order to effectively address these challenges, the process of establishing a Training System for Local Self-Government Employees (TSLSGE) in BiH was launched in 2008. Note that where this report mentions Local Self-Government Employees (or LSGEs), this includes government staff (either civil servants, or locally recruited staff) as well as elected representatives (including mayors) of the LSG council.

This initiative was carried out by relevant national counterparts, being the Civil Service Agency and the Association of Municipalities and Cities (AMC) in the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina (FBiH) and the Ministry of Administration and Local-Self Government (MALSG) and the AMC in the Republika Srpska (RS). The consultations and drafting of the Training Strategies were supported by the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida) and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) in BiH through the Municipal Training System (MTS) Project. This initiative resulted in two Training Strategies for Local Self-Government Employees 2011 – 2015, one for each of the two entities in BiH, and they were subsequently endorsed by both Entity Governments and the two Associations of Municipalities and Cities. The two training strategies set out key principles and objectives of a training system that would combine the training of government staff (both Civil Servant working at the Local Self-Government level as well as locally recruited municipal employees) and elected representatives of the citizens who are member of the Local Self-Government Council, including the executive mayors of these bodies; target groups and priority training programmes; the institutional and financial set-up of the training system, as well as the monitoring arrangements.

The rational of the Training system is presented in figure 2 below.

Figure 2.   Rationale of the Training System for Local Self-Government Employees
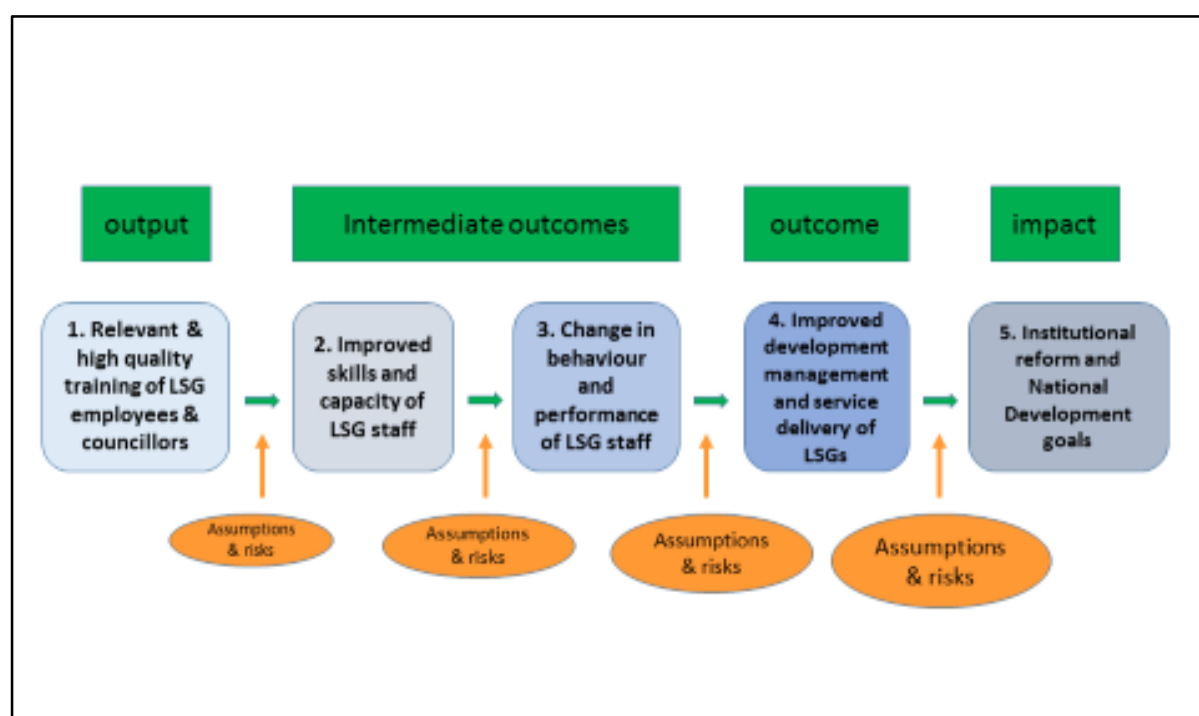
In order to consolidate the gains made through the project's first phase and backed by the positive final evaluation of MTS I and its recommendations, UNDP, supported by Sida, launched the second phase of the Municipal Training System Project in March 2012 (MTS II).

The objective of the MTS II is to contribute to the development of a professional and competent local government being able to effectively manage development processes and deliver quality services to its citizens. The outcome of the MTS II is to have a long-term effective operation of the Training System for Local Self-Government Employees established in Bosnia and Herzegovina. In order to achieve this, MTS II focuses on strengthening of the structures and functions of the TSLSGE in BiH, and supports its affirmation as an effective public mechanism for carrying out the local self-governments' capacity development agenda country-wide as defined within the Training Strategies for Local Self-Government Employees 2011 – 2015, so as to enable the long-term effective operation of the training. In addition, the MTS II Project also supports the design and delivery of priority and demand-driven training programmes for both local government elected officials and employees.

MTS II had originally two components as intermediate outcomes:

1. **Component 1: Strengthening the core structures, functions and policies of the TSLSGE and strengthened capacities of LSGs.**
   This component envisions three principle activities:
   a) *Support to the training system`s core structures, functions and policies*, aimed at consolidating and advancing institutional and policy gains from MTSI;
   b) *Support to capacity development of BiH local governments*, directed at meeting the local governments' priority training needs, as articulated in the strategy documents; and,
   c) *Support to creation of the training system`s tools*, designed to expand the instruments available to the system's structures in meeting their training mission;

2. **Component 2: Support to the to support the training system`s enabling environment, partnership building and visibility**. This component had two main activities:
   a) *Training market development*, through a set of measures aimed at improving the providers' range and capacity, and
   b) *Engagement of external stakeholders*, through a set of promotion, partnership and visibility activities.

In August 2014, a third component was added to the project. In light of the floods and landslides that hit the country in May 2014, and to address the need of partners in managing and reducing the risk of disasters, UNDP proposed to Sida an additional project component that would focus on strengthening the capacities of local and, in FBiH of cantonal governments, to design adequate disaster risk reduction plans and measures. In August 2014, Sida approved the request with additional USD 259,550 allocated for the new project component. This additional group of activities is naturally fitting under Component 1 (b), but was kept separately just for operational management and reporting purposes.

3. **Component 3: Integrate Disaster Risk Reduction in the TSLSGE.** As part of this third component a separate training module will be developed to improve disaster preparedness at the LSG level, which will be implemented in 50% of the LSGs before the end of 2015 and subsequently integrated in the regular training system.

Figure 3 presents an overview of the components, activities and how they contribute to achieving the project objective in such a way that the Training Systems in both entities are able to carry out the training (as presented in figure 2) independently and sustainably.

Figure 3.   Overview of the project rational and result chain of MTS II
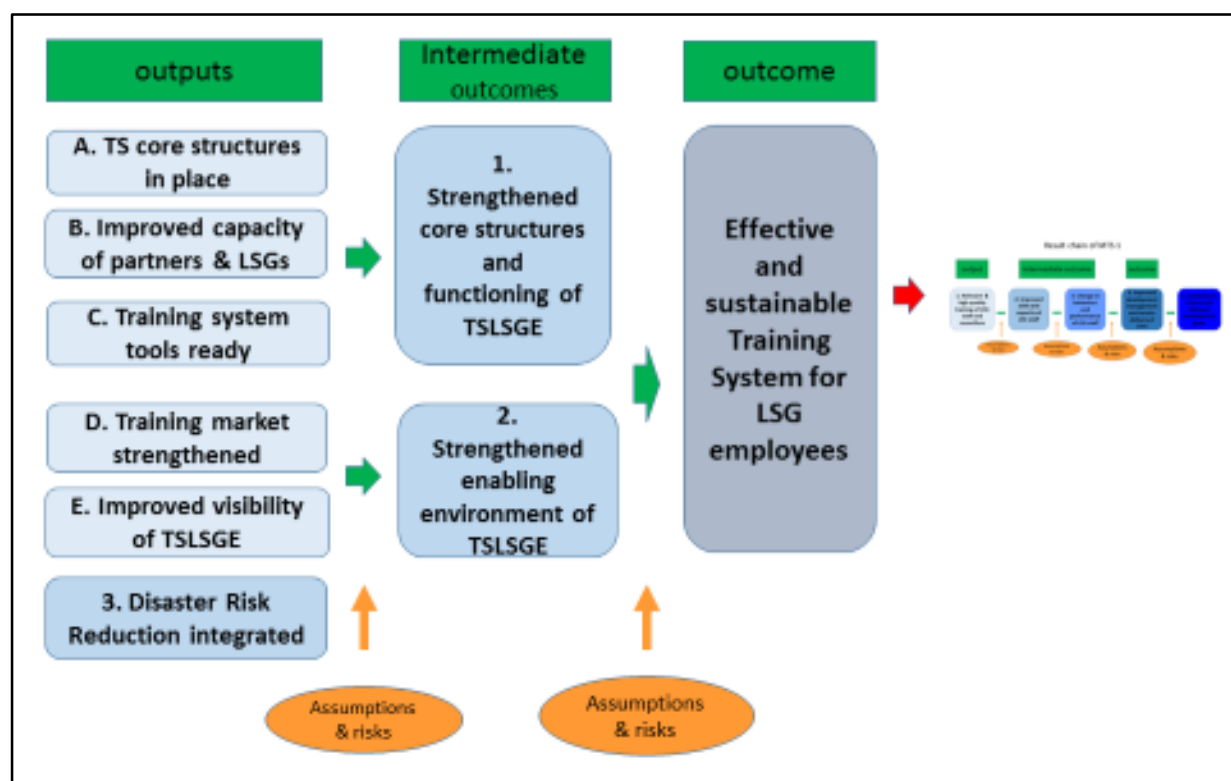
1.2   The purpose, objective and the scope of the Final Project Evaluation

The purpose of the Final Project Evaluation (as described in the ToR is to: provide an impartial view of the second phase of the Municipal Training System Project's relevance, quality performance, management and achievements.

The objective of the Final Project Evaluation is to identify and assess a number of elements to determine the project's relevance, performance, results, impact and sustainability of project's achievements.

The scope of work of the Final Project Evaluation is defined by the main questions to be answered by the Final Project Evaluation, which are:
- Were the project's objectives and outputs appropriate and relevant to the needs of the country?
- Were the project's actions to achieve the outputs quality, effective and efficient?
- To what extent has the project created local ownership over the training system and its functions?
- To what extent are the results sustainable? Will the outputs lead to benefits beyond the lifespan of the project?
- What are the positive or negative, intended or unintended, changes brought about by the project interventions?
- How could project results be further sustainably projected and expanded, having in mind the broader local government agenda of BiH?

- What are, if relevant, after-project possible priority interventions and general recommendations, which could further ensure sustainability of project's achievements and contribute to development of local governance in Bosnia and Herzegovina?

Based on:
- The main objective of the MTS II project to create an effective and sustainable Training System for Local Self-Government Employees in BiH;
- An initial analysis of the project progress reports;
- The conclusions of the MTS phase I final evaluation and the phase II Mid-Term Evaluation and the conclusions of the self-evaluations implemented by the RS Training Commission and the FBiH Training Coordination Body;
- Initial consultations with the Rural and Regional Development Sector Coordinator and the Deputy Resident Representative of UNDP BiH,

It was decided to limit the scope of Final Project Evaluation even more. It was agreed that the Final Project Evaluation, while addressing all five standard evaluation criteria used by UNDP, being efficiency, effectiveness, relevance, impact and sustainability, will address first and foremost the "sustainability" criteria and look at this criteria from an organisational, institutional and financial perspective.

This report builds on the three earlier evaluations that have been conducted and will therefore not repeat the findings of these earlier evaluations, but will make reference to them when these findings are confirmed by primary data collected during the course of the evaluation or evidence has been found which confirm that recommendations made by these evaluations have been addressed.

1.3   Methodology

In order to be able to provide a well-informed judgement on each of the five evaluation criteria (efficiency/performance, effectiveness/results, relevance, impact and sustainability), the evaluation used the following four core questions as guideline, of which the first three questions are linked to the result chain steps in figure 3 above and relate to the content of the project, while the fourth question relates to important management processes that have affected the outputs and outcomes of the project. All questions mentioned in the Terms of Reference under the scope of work of this evaluation were integrated in the specific questions under these four core questions.

1. Have the planned activities of the MTS II project been implemented in accordance with the approved project document and were they completed successfully and in the most efficient way. If so, why or if not so, why not?

The evaluation assessed the actual implementation of all activities under the three components and assessed whether the project resources have been used in accordance with UNDP standards and quality criteria and whether value for money has been obtained.

To answer this questions the evaluator collected relevant data using the following sources:
- A desk review of regular monitoring data from the UNDP M&E system, Project Progress Reports, Annual Work Plans and Annual Reports;
- Interviews with project and sector management staff;
- Interviews with members of the project board;

- A verification and validation of the achieved results through visits to selected municipalities, interviews with training beneficiaries (both trainees and supervisors in several LSGs) and interviews with key resource persons;

2. Did the activities that were implemented by the MTS II project contribute to capacity development of the LGSEs and if so, did these strengthened capacities actually contribute to the intended change in behaviour of training beneficiaries and of Local Self-Governments and to better managed development processes and improved quality in service delivery of Local Self-Governments?

This question relates to the ultimate outcome of both phases of the MTS project and relates to the effectiveness, the relevance and impact of the project; the extent to which project outputs are instrumental in achieving the outcome of the project; was, in hindsight the original project rationale, reflected in the assumed causal relationship between implemented activities, outputs and outcomes, correct?

In order to answer this question, the evaluation looked at the quality and effect of the actual capacity training of LSG employees and elected officials that has been implemented by the project and its implementing partners. This was the main focus of the MTS I project, while ensuring and enhancing the quality and relevance of the training provided by the implementing partners continued to be an important objective of the MTS II project. In addition, the MTS II project developed and implemented a number of additional training courses directly, for which it was responsible of ensuring their quality and effect.

Information to answer this question came from:
- Regular monitoring reports drafted by the MTS project staff;
- The training impact assessment methodology that has been developed by the MTS II project;
- Group and individual interviews with training beneficiaries, on how they have used their newly acquired insights, skills and knowledge in their own setting in order to assess whether anything has changed in practice and if so, to what extent this can be attributed to the training they received;
- Interviews with municipal mayors and HRM staff or training focal points at municipal level;
- Interviews with representative from the implementing partners and training service providers.

3. Have the structures and functions of the Training System for Local Self-Government Employees been strengthened to the extent that a long-term effective operation of the training mechanisms is guaranteed? Are the outcomes of the MTS II project institutionally, organisationally and financially sustainable?

As with the former question, this question addresses the effectiveness of the project, i.e. the establishment of an effective and sustainable training system for LSG employees, while it is directly linked to the sustainability question as well. If the project has been able to support the emergence of a long-term effective Training System, it has automatically achieved its sustainability objective.

In order to answer this main question, the evaluation focused on the following leading questions (among others):

1. Does the present institutional set up (including the legal framework) function adequately? What are the bottlenecks, what can be done to improve the institutional set up further?

2. Is the financial model for implementing the Training System for LSG employees for FBiH and RS adequate to cover all related costs, to increase the outreach to full country coverage, to sustain and even upgrade the present training modules and is it viable and realistic? If not, what could be done to achieve this (within and beyond the project lifespan)?

3. Have the institutional and organisational capacities of the implementing partners and local self-governments to implement their intended roles and functions as described in the FBiH and RS Training Strategies for LSGEs been raised to the level that they can fulfil their roles and functions adequately and without external support of the MTS II project? If not, what additional support is required?

    This refers in particular to the following actors/stakeholders:
    a. The Ministry of Administration and Local Self-Government in the RS
    b. The Civil Service Agency in the FBiH
    c. The Association of Municipalities and Cities of both entities (including the training units)
    d. The FBiH training Coordinating Body and RS Training Commission.

    Issues that will be addressed under this question were:
    A. The development and maintenance of relevant policies and strategies like an updated LGSE Training Strategy for the coming years, the definition of training standards, accreditation of training providers;

    B. The capacities of each of the relevant organisations to:
    - Successfully manage and implement the annual training cycle (plan, prepare, implement, monitor and evaluate);
    - Conduct regular training needs assessments (annually and multi-annually);
    - Guarantee quality assurance (monitoring) like certification, accreditation and the development of a transparent, open and competitive regulatory framework for the training market;
    - Network Successfully(national and international);
    - Renew and improve existing training modules and methodologies and develop new ones when required;
    - Conduct and organise regular Training of Trainers programmes;
    - Ensure good vertical coordination;
    - Manage co-financing mechanisms adequately;
    - Ensure a country wide coverage of the TSLSGE;
    - Availability and use of adequate administrative and communication tools;
    - Maintenance and development of a Website and e-learning;
    - Integrate all work processes in the daily routines of staff at all levels.

4. What could the project have done more or better to achieve long-term sustainability of the TSLSGE and what can be done (by UNDP and/or others) to enhance the sustainability of the TSLSGE after the project has come to a closure?

Information sources that were used to answer these questions were:
- The MTS II Mid-term Review;
- Interviews with MTS II project staff;
- The self-evaluations conducted by the implementing partners in both entities in May 2015; and

- Interviews with representatives from the above mentioned organisations.

4. To what extent have internal management processes and external relations of the MTS II project contributed to the successes or failures of the project?

While the answers to the core questions 1 to 3 provide valuable information on the content and actual success of the MTS II project, the evaluation was only be able to answer the "why" questions adequately by assessing the actual performance related to internal and external project processes as well.

In addition to the above content related questions, the evaluation therefore collected additional data to assess the quality of the following processes:
- The overall management approach of the MTS II project;
- the functioning of UNDP quality assurance mechanisms;
- the functioning of decision-making structures and procedures;
- internal and external communication;
- risk management;
- progress monitoring and the use of monitoring data (including gender disparities);
- synergy with other projects/interventions;
- participation of stakeholders in decision making processes;
- ownership and effectiveness of the partnerships (incl. the functioning of the project board); and
- coordination with other development partners in the field of decentralisation/strengthening local governance.

These data were collected through:
- A review of existing M&E information generated by the project;
- Interviews with sector and project staff;
- Interviews with other partner organisations active in BiH in the field of local governance; and
- Feedback from implementing partners in the project on the performance of the project.

1.4   Country and Sector Background

In order to be able to understand the relevance and possible effect of the MTS project as well as making a judgement on the sustainability of the TSLSGE, one has to understand the specific socio-political context of the country as well as the role of LSGs in the governance system of BiH. It is not the objective of this Final Project Evaluation to conduct a full analysis of this socio-political situation, while several good studies have been implemented recently, out of which an abstract is presented below.

The BiH's administrative organization is structurally defined by the Dayton Peace Accords. The country is composed of two entities - the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina (FBiH) and the Republika Srpska (RS) - and the Brčko District (BD) as a single administrative unit of local self-government. Including BD, there are 145 local governments – 80 of which are located in the FBiH (74 municipalities and 6 cities) and 64 of which are in the RS (58 municipalities and 6 cities). The average population size of a local self-government is approximately 26,000 inhabitants, which is relatively large in comparison to the EU average of 5,580 inhabitants. Currently, 30 local governments are classified as "extremely

underdeveloped" and 31 and are "underdeveloped;" in combination, low-development localities amount to more than 40% of the total[1].

According to Dr. Vesna Bojičić-Dželilović, "Decentralisation and regionalisation in Bosnia and Herzegovina have been primarily approached as a way to redefine the governing framework established under the Dayton Peace Agreement with the prima aim to facilitate ethnic conflict management in the aftermath of the war". "…strong local political interests to preserve the status quo in terms of powers and resources vested in the intermediate levels of government (i.e. the two entities and the FBiH cantons) have…resulted in a fragmented institutional and policy framework for the provision of public services and an overall poor quality of service delivery across the country"[2]. "Decentralisation and regionalisation have foremost been approached through identity politics lens and in response to demands for territorial delineation, rather than from its functional role in the context of building multi-level system of governance to improve development outcomes as a prime concern"[3]. The key obstacle to decentralisation may not be systemic weaknesses, but outright political opposition.[4]

While the law on Local Government has been adapted several times in both entities in order to align local legislation with the principles of the European Charter of Local Self Government, the actual experience and practice of local governance in BiH remains rather different from what the normative framework would imply, which has repercussions on the public service delivery outcomes.[5] In the FBiH even more so than in the RS since the split in regulating local government matters between the entity and the cantons has contributed to a system of overlapping responsibilities and unclear and unfunded local government mandates. This has all resulted in inadequate levels of administrative and fiscal capacities of local governments.

Nevertheless, local governments are politically and administratively autonomous units with their own competences and revenue-raising powers, and with directly elected mayors and councillors. They have the same rights and responsibilities as each other, despite considerable differences in the size of their populations, and territories, and their administrative and fiscal capacities. They have the exclusive service provision responsibility for waste management, water provision, local roads and sanitation, and have a shared responsibility with the canton to provide education, health, housing, and social welfare. In these shared functions, the cantons are primarily responsible for policy development while the LSGs are responsible for implementation. In general, local governments are responsible for spatial planning at the local level, as well as for the creation of development programmes and plans. Importantly, local governments maintain the right to borrow, which allows access to finances necessary to fund capital investments[6].

The legal and institutional framework related to local governance issues at local level in BiH is different in the two entities[7].

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[1] UNDP (2013): UNDP policy paper. Integrated Local Development in Bosna and Herzegovina 2014-2020; a joint approach to realising the potential of each locality. Page 2

[2] Dr. Vesna Bojičić-Dželilović (2011): Decentralisation and Regionalisation in Bosnia-Herzegovina: Issues and challenges. Research paper no. 2 2011 LSEE papers on Decentralisation and Regional Policy 2011. Page 1

[3] Ibid page 2

[4] UNDP 2005: Bosnia and Herzegovina National Human development Report 2005. Page 135

[5] Dr. Vesna Bojičić-Dželilović (2011): Decentralisation and Regionalisation in Bosnia-Herzegovina: Issues and challenges. Research paper no. 2 2011 LSEE papers on Decentralisation and Regional Policy 2011. Page 15

[6] UNDP (2013): UNDP policy paper. Integrated Local Development in Bosna and Herzegovina 2014-2020; a joint approach to realising the potential of each locality. Page 3

[7] The paragraphs below are an update from the institutional framework as presented in the MTS II Mid-Term Review. UNDP (2013): UNDP Bosnia and Herzegovina Municipal Training System 2 project Mid Term Review.

- In the RS, the Ministry of Administration and Local Self-Government (MALSG) is the key institution in charge of local government issues.
- In the FBiH, no equivalent counterpart (in the form of a designated Ministry) exists; the primary responsibility for local government rests with the Ministry of Justice (responsible only for general oversight of application of Law on Principles of Local Self-Governance) and cantonal governments. Their relations with municipalities vary significantly, depending to a large extent on political objectives and local power dynamic.

Considering their changing, and increasingly prevalent roles, local self-governments in BiH require a whole new set of institutional and technical capacities to take on the role of development leaders. Fundamentally important skills and capacities to translate strategic visions into concrete actions are still largely missing. Local governments have still limited success when it comes to developing viable projects and attracting external funds to add to their often dwindling budgets. Besides project capacities, major challenges relate to the procurement of goods and services, to urban/spatial planning, asset management, treasury and programme-based budgeting, non-administrative service management and delivery, and vulnerability to corruption. Human resource management is insufficiently developed; there are significant discrepancies in knowledge and skills between local governments, with only a few having proper human resource policies and training plans[8].

Because of differences in the administrative structure between the two entities, stakeholders that are nominally identical in terms of their names, e.g. the CSAs, have different responsibilities in the context of municipal training, which also reflects on their roles in project implementation.

The **Civil Service Agencies (CSAs)** in both entities are in charge of supervising the enforcement of the civil service legislations at entity level. The civil service legislation in the FBiH covers the rights and obligations of civil servants and include the right of LSGEs to be trained. In the RS there are no civil servants working at the municipal level. The responsibilities of the CSA in RS over LG HRM are limited to organising entry exams for local government staff (namely, the state license exams, which all public employees need to pass). The right of training for locally employed staff was however recently formalised when the amended Law on Local Self-Governance became effective in late 2013.

The training of Local Self-Government Employees falls in the RS therefore directly under the responsibility of the **Ministry of Administration and Local Self-Government (MALSG)**, which had several staff members allocated to coordinate the training programme and has recently decided to set up a specific Training Unit with one or two full time staff members to organise the training in future.

The CSA in FBiH organises training for civil servants including those employed by municipalities, which is however contested by some of the cantons since the FBiH constitution has delegated administrative matters to be part of the competence of the cantons. In particular, these developments created a situation in which a clear mandate for training civil servants, including at local level, which had previously been bestowed to the FBiH CSA, is no longer exclusive. In practice, this means that the local governments in one of the ten cantons are presently not participating as actively in the training provided by the CSA, while it also slows down the process of adopting institutional changes in the training system like the one implemented by the MTS project.

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[8] UNDP (2013): UNDP policy paper. Integrated Local Development in Bosna and Herzegovina 2014-2020; a joint approach to realising the potential of each locality. Page 4

The **Associations of Municipalities and Cities (AMCs)** in both entities are financed mainly from membership fees. Their capacity is generally limited: for example according to the interviews the collection rate for the membership dues has dropped to around 60 percent. Although the AMCs support also the development of professional skills of municipal staff, their role is marginal and their capacity and finance insufficient.

The financial sources available for the training of municipal employees and elected officials, include besides the MTS contribution:

- Local sources (municipal budgets). The entity laws on local governance were accompanied by the new Law on Public Revenue Allocation in the Federation and the amendments to the RS Budget System Law, which were adopted in 2006, and provided for the adjustment in the financial framework for funding local government. In both entities, the tax administration is centralised however and the lower government levels have very limited taxing powers; also, there are no efficient mechanisms for fiscal equalization among the local governments;
- Training organized by entity and central level ministries for local government staff (limited);
- Training organized by the CSA in the FBIH for the local government employees, who are civil servants (limited);
- Training provided with funding from international organisations. Table 1 summarizes the projects, implemented both by UNDP and other funding agencies which are conceptually related to MTS II and were implemented/are being implemented during the same time frame. Note that this is not a complete overview of all support activities to LSGs in BiH.

Table 1.   Related projects implemented by UNDP and other international partner agencies

Partner	Project	Brief description and relation to MTS II
Swiss Govern-ment and UNDP	ILDP	**Integrated Local Development Project, ILDP II (**2012-2016), funded by the Government of Switzerland. ILDP provides support to help strengthen local development planning and the realisation of local strategies in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The project aims to provide a "bridge" between the strategic and budgetary frameworks of local and higher levels of government and also provides assistance to 40 local governments to design their integrated local strategies and to successfully implement them in partnership with their communities. All training modules developed under the ILDP are now integrated in the regular training package offered by the TSLSGE.
	LOD	**Reinforcement of Local Democracy (LOD)** The project, funded by the European Union works with selected municipalities toward improving the relationship between local self-governments and civil society, and to facilitate financing mechanisms for improved service delivery. Among other activities officials from the municipalities are trained to effectively engage with civil society (promoting civil dialogue, participation of CSOs in public decision-making). MTS II developed the training module which is also integrated in the regular training package offered by the TSLSGE in both entities.
OSCE	"Local First"	The Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) is implementing a project entitled **"Local First"**. The project aims to "deepen citizens' engagement with municipalities as a means of ensuring an equitable and accountable allocation of public goods and services". Recently, the project has limited its support to 55 communities and focusses more on conflict prevention and the creation of platforms for dialogue. In the recent past, the OSCE used the induction training for councillors designed with the AMCs as part of the TSLSGEs as part of its own training programme for councillors.

Sida / Embassy of Sweden / VNG	Capacity Dev. for AMCs	Sida / Embassy of Sweden have in the past provided support to the AMCs in both entities to enhance their capacity to fulfil their role as Local Government Associations. It is in discussing with the Embassy of Switzerland and the AMCs the design of a possible follow up support programme for the AMCs, which could entail a continuation of the support to the training units to enable them to continue their role in the TSLSGE. If accepted and approved by both organisations, this support could start mid-2016.

Source: Updated from the MTS II MTR based on information provided by the relevant project staff members

2.   Key Findings

2.1   Project approach and project design

Relevance of project intervention

The relevance of the MTS project, i.e. supporting the establishment and institutionalisation of a systematic Training System for Local Self-Government Employees has sufficiently been addressed in the three earlier evaluations of the project, but was again confirmed during the interviews with relevant stakeholders during this evaluation.

Even though the Local Self-Governments in BiH have only limited functions as compared to local government institutions in other countries, they do have a semi-autonomous status, they are in practice the level of government where direct interactions between citizens and state is taking place most directly and their performance therefore has a direct impact on the perception of citizens regarding the legitimacy of the state and its role in reconstructing a democratic society.

UNDP's concept paper on Integrated Local Development[9] that was drafted in 2013 identifies the lack of capacities at the Local Self-Government level as one of the critical areas that require additional capacity development support. "Considering their changing, and increasingly prevalent roles, local governments in BiH require a whole new set of institutional and technical capacities to take on the role of development leaders. Fundamentally important skills and capacities to translate strategic visions into concrete actions are still largely missing. Local governments have still limited success when it comes to developing viable projects and attracting external funds to add to their often dwindling budgets. Besides project capacities, major challenges relate to the procurement of goods and services, to urban/spatial planning, asset management, treasury and programme-based budgeting, non-administrative service management and delivery, and vulnerability to corruption. Human resource management is insufficiently developed; there are significant discrepancies in knowledge and skills between local governments, with only a few having proper human resource policies and training plans. As facilitators of local development processes, local governments in BiH need capacities to effectively interact and partner with socio-economic stakeholders in local development processes. While cooperation with civil society has improved through formal partnership agreements and more transparent funding mechanisms, experiences are still mixed when it comes to effective citizens' engagement in public affairs" (UNDP 2013, page 4).

As a result of the changes in the roles and functions of Local Self-Governments from an administrative layer of government to a more development oriented institution and the related changes in laws and regulations that have a direct effect on the work of local government staff, there is a large need for continuous and systematic training of local staff employees and of newly elected councillors and mayors to equip them with the right skills to implement their job adequately. In order to address these training needs, a comprehensive training system was required that addresses both the needs of local government staff as well as the needs of sector ministries issuing new laws and instructions that need to be implemented at the local level.

Project approach

Even though it is not that strongly reflected in the project documents of the MTS I and II, due to the rather restraining format of the template used by UNDP, the project has in practice adopted a strong

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[9] UNDP (2013): UNDP policy paper. Integrated Local Development in Bosna and Herzegovina 2014-2020; a joint approach to realising the potential of each locality.

process approach, which has been, as will be shown later on, one of the key factors contributing to the success of the project, given the highly complex and politicized context of BiH.

The project took as a starting point the problem that the trainings offered to LSGEs until 2007 were hardly relevant because no systematic country wide training was available for LSGEs in BiH that was more supply than demand driven. It did not explicitly have an institutional reform objective. Through a comprehensive and participatory analysis, the partners themselves realised that, given the particular setting in BiH, a new institutional arrangement was necessary in order to address the problem in a structural and sustainable way. It thus created in advance already an ownership of the newly created institutional arrangements.

Another strong element of the project design was that it worked from the start with a group of stakeholders in each entity, who gradually became change agents in the process holding each other accountable and on their toes, instead of the project as an external agent doing so, which is hardly ever effective.

Even though it took a while to get finalized and endorsed, the MTS project implemented the design of the Training Strategies and related Training Systems for both entities as part and parcel of the first phase of the project, giving the process ample time and attention to guarantee maximum ownership of the strategies by the partners involved, instead of doing it in a hasty technocratic manner before the start of the project as is usually done, knowing that the process of going through the design process, weighing alternatives and options as a team is as important as the end result.

Given the initial hesitance of the CSA in FBiH and the MALSG in RS, the project therefore appropriately opted for a relatively long and highly participatory design phase of the Training Systems in both entities to ensure that the actual training that would be offered would actually address the needs of the potential trainees (both in content as well as in the way the training was conducted) through a the implementation of a comprehensive training needs assessment. In addition, all stakeholders were intensively involved in the consultation process regarding the institutional set up of the Training Systems. This active involvement did not only create a high level of ownership among the stakeholders involved, it also took away the initial reluctance at the entity level since the active involvement of the municipal level in the design showed that they did not see the proposed Training System and the related Coordinating Bodies as something that was imposed on them by the entity level, but as a useful mechanism for dialogue, mainly because their needs were listened to and integrated in the system.

Throughout the actual establishment of the Training Commission in the RS and the Training Coordinating Body in the FBIH the project used the same incremental approach, letting the partners define the pace of progress, first working with these coordinating bodies in an informal way but gradually working towards an institutionalisation of these bodies until they were officially established by law in both entities.

This process approach adopted by the MTS project continued throughout the second phase, with the project being highly responsive to the changing training needs of LSGEs, thus adding more training modules (47) than originally planned for (20), or providing funds to run more of the regular training courses under the Training System if the demand for it was higher than expected, like with the real rights training module (see box 1). Another example of its flexibility is that the project management (or project board) realised during the implementation of the second phase that it had not planned for the development of a proper training impact assessment mechanism, while it became clear that such a system was indeed needed, which was subsequently added to the planned activities.

> **Box 1   Real Rights Law Training Programme**
>
> *The real rights law Training Programme was organized in 2014, following the proposal of Mr. Dragomir Lučić, a member of the Training Coordination Body of the FBiH, who is also the Municipal Training Contact Person from Kiseljak. Namely, new legislation in the field of Real Rights in both entities had been adopted in the previous year, introducing some new legal institutes, and regulating some issues in a way that caused confusion in the application of these Laws at the LSG level.*
>
> *The project sought the approval for this Training Programme from the Training Coordination Body of FBiH and Training Commission of the RS, and once the approvals were given, it commenced the procedure of the trainers' selection. The process was competitive and two excellent experts were hired out of 4 short-listed (due to very specific topic there were only some 5-6 applications in total).*
>
> *In the first round (between November 2014 to January 2015) seven training sessions were organized for, five in the FBiH and two in the RS. The turnout was very high, in total 168 participants, and the big interest was noticed immediately following the dispatch of invitations. There was no need for the project team to remind municipalities of this training offer, because the applications were returned to the team within a few days. In many cases municipalities asked to send more than 2 persons which was the maximum number that was invited. Having in mind the success of these first training sessions, and a need expressed during the training needs assessment focus groups (March 2015) for this particular topic, the MTS project organized a replication of the Real Rights Training for three additional groups in the period between May and June 2015. The number of trainees in these three additional groups was 55.*

Project Design

In general, the project design as reflected in the project document for the MTS phase II meets all UNDP planning quality standards. It was done in a participatory manner, it was based on a good problem analysis (which was an integral part of phase I), the project rationale was in hindsight adequate and realistic, the result map was comprehensive and complete and clearly result based. The assumption and risk analysis as reflected in the project document could have been done better however as this is an important aspect of any capacity development intervention. Capacity development interventions have a long result chain with intermediary outcomes and are therefore facing more assumptions and potential disturbing factors at each stage that could possibly influence or even contravene the effect of training on an improved performance of LSGs (see figure 4).

Figure 4.   **Examples of factors that could possibly affect the effectiveness of the LSGE training on improved performance of LSGs in BiH.**

Analysing these risks and assumptions during the project design phase and later on monitoring them closely during the project implementation, would have helped in identifying which of these or other potential factors did hamper the effectiveness of the interventions in practice and if possible identify additional supporting (or countervailing) activities. As an example, the lack of a basic Performance Management System (and culture) at the LSG level could have a negative impact on the ability (or willingness) of LSGEs to use their newly acquired competencies. It is therefore a risk for the project. If it would have been properly monitored and analysed it could have been possible that, even without overhauling the whole HRM system (which might be politically too sensitive at the moment), a few basic measures could have been identified that might have enhanced the effect of the training on staff performance. As is sown later on as well, the fact that the project has not been able to roll out an easy to implement training impact assessment mechanism further contributed to this lack of knowledge on the actual use of the newly acquired competencies as well.

The MTS project provided a narrative description of its objective and how that is broadly defined, while it also broke down the main objective into three determining factors being:
-   Regulatory and institutional anchoring of the training system in both entities;
-   Training support facilities' capacities to respond to the needs and deliver quality training, and
-   Financial sustainability of the training system.

The MTS project did however not clearly translate these into success indicators at outcome level in its project document, i.e. it did not specify in a measurable way what an "effective and sustainable Training System for LSGEs" actually means and how the achievement of the outcome can be measured. Normally, if one adopts a process approach for the implementation of a project or programme, which is the only way to achieve some kind of institutional reform in a highly complex socio-political context such as in BiH, the success indicators are defined at outcome level, while the activities are flexible and only specified on an annual base. This is done to enable the project to be as responsive as possible to

the changing circumstances, to turn lessons learned immediately into practice and to be able to address new opportunities or threats when they arise since not all of them can be predicted on forehand. The project document provides indications as to what an effective and sustainable training system would entail (training standards should be in place, accreditation of service providers, an M&E system in place, etc.), but it didn't specify what at least should be in place and achieved before the project could withdraw its support. An effort to draft such higher level indicators was made in the project result and resources framework (especially page 29 and 30 the first column), but these were not complete and clearly added on as an afterthought and not seen as key aspects of operationalising the objective of the project. The project therefore also didn't monitor the progress on these outcome indicators adequately (only on activity indicators). If it would have done so, i.e. if it would have designed clear outcome success indicators and monitored their progress regularly, an exit strategy for the project would have been ready at the start of phase II, while now it is still lacking.

One of the reasons why this was not done for the MTS II project was, according to the project management, that the standard lay out of the project document template that is used by UNDP doesn't stimulate (or even restrict) a project to be defined in a process approach manner. Maybe it could help, if these type of projects, i.e. those that aim for institutional change in a complex socio-political setting, are treated more as "small programmes" instead of projects, since this would help to focus the design of the intervention much more on achieving the required outcomes than on implementing activities and achieving the related outputs, as these become much more subservient and supportive to achieving the overall outcome.

Luckily, as mentioned earlier, and as shown below, both the project management and the project board, adopted in practice a flexible process approach and didn't limit themselves to implementing the predefined activities, but were very active in identifying and implementing additional support activities whenever required.

2.2   MTS project performance and results

In this paragraph, the evaluation will address the first core question: ***Have the planned activities of the MTS II project been implemented in accordance with the approved project document and where they completed successfully and in the most efficient way. If so, why or if not so, why not?***

Analysing the Annual Reports of the MTS II project, and the overview of completed activities as presented in table 2 and 3 below, the evaluation can easily conclude that almost all planned activities have either been completed at the time of the evaluation, or will most likely be completed before the end of the project period which is 31 December 2015.

Table 2.   **Overview of implemented activities by the MTS II project and their results**

Project Components	Main Activities	Results of activities
COMPONENT 1: Strengthening the training system's core structures, functions and	**Activity 1: Support to the training system's core structures,**	Throughout the entire implementation period, the MTS Project team, mainly via activities of Training Specialists in Banja Luka and Sarajevo provided continuous technical and substantial support and advice to the Training Coordination Body (TCB) in the FBiH, Training Commission (TC) in the RS and Training Units within the CSA FBiH, MALSG RS, AMC FBiH and AMC RS. The support was very intense in the period 2012-2013, but with the increased capacities of the all mentioned institutions, it was, during 2014 and 2015, reduced to mostly

| policies and support to capacity development of BiH local governments | functions and policies | consultations and coordination. The Project Team's support included organization and logistic support for the organization of meetings of the TCB and TC, development of annual plans, procurement process for training providers and training cycle management in general.

Apart from continuous support by the Project Team, the following expert was provided:
- In the FBiH in 2012: institutional assessment of the TS institutions; development of work plans for 2013 and indicative work plan for 2014; standard operating procedures for operating the system.
- In the RS in 2012: development of ToR for the procurement of training providers and of training evaluation methodology;
- In 2012: development of HMR standards for local governments, which were endorsed by the TS institutions.
- In 2013: Technical assistance provided to 20 LSG to implement the HRM standards. The result of this activity is yet to be finally verified, because some of the municipalities were hesitant to change the internal structure during 2014 which was the general election year.
- In 2013: expert drafted the Quality Assurance documents which were adopted in 2014 by the AMCs. CSA FBiH prior to this has resolved Quality Assurance issues by Government Decision on Obtaining Status of Trainers (regulating competitive procedure, fees, requirements, etc.) and a number of internal acts issued by the CSA Director (regulating the monitoring of trainings and performance of trainers, training material standards, etc.). The RS MALSG decided that QA issues should all be covered in one Rule Book which is currently in the process of issuance by the Minister.
- Expertise was provided for development of financial sustainability model (two consultants hired in 2012 to support entity working groups). In March 2013 in the RS model was finalized, while in the FBiH WG finalized the model in November 2013, which was adopted by Government Decision in July 2014. Project supported promotion of both models during 2015.
- A Training Impact Assessment Methodology was developed, piloted and presented to Training System Institutions in 2013. |
| | **Activity 2: Support to capacity development of BiH local governments** | - In 2012 the number of trainees was over 1300, which exceeded by far the targeted number of 500. The training programmes were provided by all 4 TS Training Units and the Project Team Directly. The number of training programmes developed was 14, which also exceeded the 6 planned training programmes.
- In 2013 total number of trainees was 2700, and number of training programmes developed and delivered was 28. 27 training programmes were delivered to the LSG employees, 1 to the elected officials. Both figures by far exceeded the number of trainees planned for this year.
- In 2014 the number of trainees was 1469, and 20 training programmes were developed and delivered.
- In the first 9 months of 2015, the number of trainees was 800, and they attended 8 training programmes. By the end of 2015, an additional 350 trainees are expected to be covered by the DRR training, and at least 400 trainees by the Training System institutions.
- In 2013, following the request from a few municipalities the project provided technical support for preparation of project proposals to 9 municipalities. Support was provided by 4 experts. |

		6 project proposals were submitted, and 4 were granted funds for implementation. - Technical support was provided to 20 municipalities regarding the introduction of improved HRM standards and practices.
	Activity 3: Support to creation of the training system's tools	Development of training web sites for the CSA FBiH and MALSG RS commenced in 2013. A company was hired for both web portals. The process lasted longer than foreseen, particularly in the RS because of administrative procedures related to IT activities of RS Government. Apart from this, in both entities the project had to buy hosting services as infrastructure of the FBiH CSA was not capable of hosting the portal, and in the RS it was decided it cannot be placed on RS Government servers. The FBiH training portal was expanded to cover all FBiH civil servants, meaning those employed in cantonal and federal ministries and institutions. Both portals are operational and can be found at: **FBiH CSA:** http://www.obuke.adsfbih.gov.ba/ **RS MALSG:** http://obuke.muls.vladars.net/index.php/yu/ For both AMCs, FBiH and RS, support was provided for an upgrade of their existing web portals, so that e-learning courses can operate on them. E-learning platforms, within the portals of AMCs can be found at: **RS AMC:** http://www.obuke.alvrs.com/ **FBiH AMC:** http://www.edukacija.sogfbih.ba/ Staff from all four Training Units, and some IT staff, were provided training to be able to update information on portals and in general to manage their operations. Training was done in 2013 – 2014. **E-learning courses:** In 2013 the following five e-learning courses were commissioned: Business Communication, Administrative Procedure, Office Management, Strategic Planning at Local Level and Local Government from A to Z. All, except the Strategic Planning at Local Level, are finalized and placed on web portals of Training System institutions. Upon request from the MALSG in 2014, the Project hired a company for development of a software, data base of LSG employees in the RS. This activity was not initially planned but was subsequently approved by the Project Board. The company was hired in August 2015, and data base should be operational in November 2015. Prior to the engagement of the company, a consultant was hired to make an analysis of current situation and draft technical specification for software.
COMPONENT 2: Support to the training system's enabling	**Activity 1: Strengthening of the training market in BiH**	In order to overcome the shortage of training providers on BiH market, in 2012 the project organized a comprehensive Training of Trainers programme that was completed by 32 new trainers. Followed by a Training of Trainers mentorship programme in 2013. 7 trainers completed the mentorship programme and delivered 3 training programmes in early 2014.

environment, partnership building and visibility		Starting in 2013, every year the project organizes one event at which training providers are invited. The last one was organized in May 2015.
	Activity 2: Promotion, partnerships and visibility	Every year the project supports the Training System institutions in organization of Training System's Annual Conferences at which mayors of all municipalities and cities are invited, relevant entity ministries as well as international organizations active in the field of local governance. Thus far conferences took place in Sarajevo, Banja Luka and Mostar. In 2012, in order to promote the Training System institutions, the MTS project printed posters that were placed in every municipality announcing training programmes to be delivered that year and indicating the name of municipal training contact persons. Visibility is ensured also by standard training materials which all contain a recognizable logo of the TS. In summer 2015, with aim of promoting web portals and e-learning, the project printed posters containing relevant information and link. Posters were distributed to all BiH municipalities.
COMPONENT 3: Disaster Risk Reduction	**Activity 1: Disaster Risk Management Training**	The first step in development of the comprehensive training program was an analysis of the legal framework in Bosnia and Herzegovina which regulates the disaster risk management. Consultancy commenced in December 2014, while the report was finalized in March 2015. The development of the comprehensive training programme for municipalities began in February. A UN expert in DRR was hired for this task, which includes development of training programme (finalized in July 2015), Training of Trainers (done in first week of August 2015) and follow – up of training delivery to first two groups of municipalities. The training programme was finalized taking into consideration comments from the Civil Protection Administrations of the FBiH and RS and State level Ministry of Security. 13 training groups (8 in the FBiH and 5 in the RS) are selected by the entity Civil Protection Administrations, and are scheduled to take place in the period 28 September to 11 November 2015. 92 municipalities are invited to participate.
	Activity 2: Integration of DRM in development strategies at local level	As a first step, a guide for mainstreaming DRR into cantonal and local development strategies was prepared with support of the UNDP DRR experts. In line with the guide, technical assistance is being provided to 7 cantons in these activities, while approx. 13 local governments that are initiating the process of revision of their development strategies will be provided with this type of support by the end of the year.

Source: MTS II project Annual Reports complemented with information from project staff members

Table 3.   Summary of MTS II results per result indicator

Result indicator	Achievement
1. At least 70 % of the entity Training Strategies for Local	The level of implementation of Training Strategies was assessed between January and April 2015, with two entity reports published in May 2015.

|	
Government Employees implemented by early 2015;	For both the FBiH and the RS, 4 out 6 operational objectives of the Training Strategy were completed as required, while the other two were partially completed. Outstanding issues were: Objective 2: Only a few LSGs have established internal procedures for training management (while all should have done so be the end of 2015) Objective 6: Delays in implementation of the co-financing model (should have been fully operational in 2015).
2. Level of fully established and functional entity core structures of the training system by late 2012; Level of developed and formally adopted operational framework of the structures of the training system in each entity by early 2013;	TC and TCB were established and formalized although with some delays. All Training System Institutions except the MALSG have established a training unit. According to latest information from the MALSG, it will be formally established as of 1 January 2016. The FBiH Rule Book on Internal Organization was amended in 2012 and job descriptions of two employees contain reference to LSG Training System. In reality all training department advisors are involved. In the RS the Rulebook was approved by the Minister of MALSG in August 2015 and will be released in October 2015.
3. Level of fully established quality assurance structures;	Quality Assurance mechanism is formally in place in CSA FBiH, AMC FBiH and AMC RS, and it is implemented in training activities. All standards as proposed by the Project are endorsed. In RS the Rulebook was approved by the Minister of MALSG in August 2015 and will be released in October 2015
4. At least 80 % of the annual budget of each entity training system is ensured by public resources (entity, local governments) in 2014 based on a formal financial mechanism;	This has not been achieved in 2014 and neither in 2015. The four implementing partners have contributed in kind and in funding to the implementation of the training courses, but so far the LSGs have not made any contributions.
5. At least 4 new training programmes are designed each year by the training system, thus increasing the overall portfolio to at least 30 high-quality standardized priority training programmes in offer for LSGEs in 2015	47 training programmes have been developed by the Training System Institutions thus far. The number of 4 training programmes to design annually or 30 in total has been exceeded by more than 50%, as 47 programmes will be ready and have been implemented at least once by the end of 2015.
6. At least 550 local government employees and officials annually obtain tailored, practical training via the training system, which directly strengthens their knowledge and skills, to cumulatively result in capacity development coverage of at least 30 % of BiH local government employees by early 2015; Level of satisfaction of trainees by the training programmes;	Numbers of trainees exceeded the number of 550 annually. For as far as the capacity development coverage of LSG employees in the amount of 30 % is concerned the situation is the following: 4999 trainees – employees are trained by March 2015 (data from MTS Excel data base). Having in mind that there are: 4177 employees in LSG in the RS (source MALSG from 2014) and 7313 employees in LSG in the FBiH (source CSA from December 2013), we can conclude that the capacity development coverage by early 2015 was 43%. Level of satisfaction of trainees by the training programmes in average is very high, based on evaluation of training programmes that UNDP directly provided. The coordinators of the four training institutes confirmed similar levels of satisfaction of trainees.
7. Number of local governments who undertake	HRM technical support was provided to 20 municipalities. We are yet to verify how many accepted our suggestions in relation to introduction of HRM

reform measures towards establishing or strengthening of their HRM function;	function. Some other municipalities, not encompassed by the MTS technical support, might have undertaken reform measures individually. Information from the interviews indicates however that this is not likely.
8. Number of accredited training providers and training programmes within the training system.	The list of training providers of the FBiH CSA contains 87 trainers. It is published at the link below: http://www.obuke.adsfbih.gov.ba/images/Dokumenti/Lista_trenera_2015_sluzbenenovine.pdf
9. Number of thematic networks of local government practitioners established and functional by 2015;	Having experience of HRM network dissolution after the OSCE support, the Project has not invested a lot of efforts in this field. It was never very clear in which form it should be done, neither the TS institutions were very enthusiastic about it. Informal networking is however taking place between former trainees.
10. Level of visibility and recognition of the training system by its direct beneficiaries, as well as by international partners;	Training Needs Assessment Draft Report for FBiH shows that 54 LSGs (95% of those who took part in TNA) send their employees to training organized by the FBiH CSA through TS. The same report for the RS shows that 55 LSGs (out of 56 that took part in TNA) send their employees to TS trainings. So, it can be concluded that the LSGs are recognizing the TS.
11. Number of unique visits to the training system websites and number of local government employees or officials who undertook the on-line training courses.	Since the launch and promotion of web portals were late, done in June and July 2015, precise information on the number of visits is not available but will be monitored and reported on. From FBiH CSA there is information that since the promotional meeting with contact persons (3rd June 2015) there is a substantial increase in the number of visits to e-courses.

Source: MTS II project Annual Reports complemented with information from project staff members

Regarding the most important output of the project and of the Training Systems in both entities, the number of trainees that received a training either through the TSLSGEs in the two entities or through training modules directly organised by the MTS II project exceeded the planned number by more than 360%. The actual number of trainees was 6864 vis-a-vis a planned number of trainees of 1900 between 2012 and 2015. Including the number of trainees that were trained during the MTS I period (in 2010 and 2011), the total number of trainees will be close to 8000 by the end of 2015. The number of trainees per annum is presented in figures 4 below.

The total number of trained government staff over the whole period is approximately 6300, which is estimated to be 55% of the staff at LSG level that is eligible for these trainings. Note that there are of course staff members who received more than one training, but the figure gives an indication of the outreach of the project. Another indicator of the outreach of the project is that in FBiH (no figures for RS available) 98% of LSGs have sent one or more LSGEs to these trainings over the last five years, which shows that the TSLSGE has an entity wide coverage and is well known among potential clients. The total number of trained elected officials is approximately 1650 at the end of 2015. Out of this number around 50% received an induction training and the other 50% a specialised training (often on top of the induction training).

Figure 5.   **Total number of trainees who received a training either organised by the TSLSGE or by the MTS project and the number of trained government staff and elected officials**
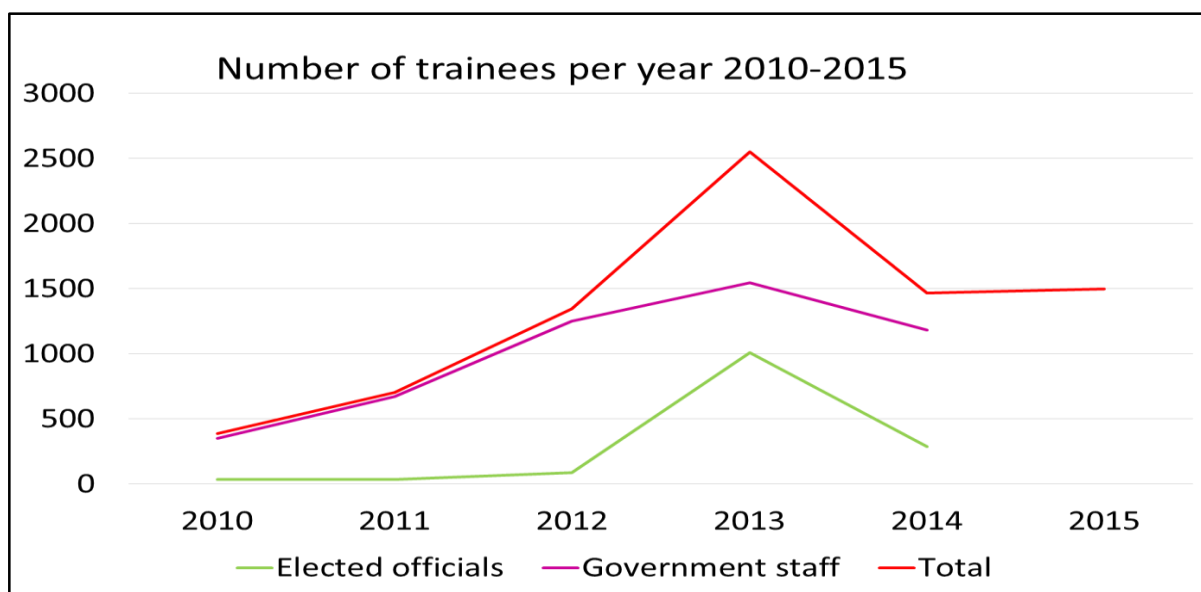
Source: MTS II annual reports and interview with project staff

Figure 5 shows that the number of trainees is gradually increasing over the years. The peak in 2013 was caused by the induction training of newly elected councillors, while the dip in government staff trainees in 2014 was caused by the heavy floods in BiH that led to a reduction in training modules delivered and the number of trainees that could attend.

The quality of the training modules that have been offered is in general perceived to be good according to the small number of beneficiaries and trainers that were interviewed for the evaluation, which can be attributed to the introduction and active use of several quality assurance instruments by the implementing partners. The interviews and questionnaires that are held at the end of each training session confirm that the quality is in general good and that most modules are practical and provide the trainees with useful suggestions as to how the newly acquired skills or knowledge can be applied in their work setting. Further improvements can always be made as this is a continuous process of implementing, reflecting and improving. Some suggestions that were made by the people that were interviewed are:
-    The TSLSGE should explore the possibility to provide the training with one experienced trainer and one senior experienced person who works in a similar setting and who can address the more practical questions an dilemmas;
-    To provide additional coaching or backstopping services to the trainees for a 6 months period after the completion of the training course. At least one training institute that was interviewed offered these services, but it could easily be integrated in all training contracts;
-    The e-learning modules that have been developed and are now running are a good starting point but they can be made more interesting by making them more interactive.

While the number of trained LSGEs is impressive, the most important achievement of the project, according to all stakeholders interviewed as part of this evaluation, is the establishment of the Training System for Local Self-Government Employees, almost completely in line with the planned set up as mentioned in the Training Strategies for both entities and the MTS II project document, including the establishment and formalisation of two new institutional bodies, the Training Coordination Body (TCB) in the FBiH and the training Commission (TC) in the RS.

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The only element of the TSLSGE institutional design that still needs to be formally established is the Training Unit under the Ministry of Administration and Local Self-Government in the RS, which will most likely happen in January 2016, while the MALSG has been managing the training in the interim period adequately using its regular staff.

Some other aspects of the TSLSGE took longer to be implemented than originally anticipated, like the development and approval of the co-financing system and the formalisation by the FBiH entity government of the Training Coordination Body, but the MTS project wisely opted for accepting these delays instead of trying to push for an earlier decision to ensure maximum local ownership.

The only deviation in terms of instruments and tools that were planned to be developed and implemented is the accreditation of trainers for the various training modules. While the project anticipated a full-fledged accreditation system to be in place by the end of 2015, this is not realistic in the present context in both entities due to political resistance. All four organisations responsible for organising training modules under the TSLSGE (i.e. the CSA in FBiH, the MALSG in RS and the two AMCs) and who are therefore in charge of recruiting trainers, do however use a transparent and competitive tender procedure for the recruitment of trainers which seems to be working well. The more credible training institutes would however still like to see that the relevant Ministry responsible would develop a more robust accreditation system.

One planned activity that was less successful, was the intended HRM support that the project wanted to provide directly to (a selected group of) LSGs. Anticipating that the training of LSGEs would be much more fruitful if the HRM system at LSG level would be more conducive, the MTS project in cooperation with the TCB and TC developed a set of HRM guidelines and a sample rulebook for local governments and introduced these guidelines in twenty LSGs to test whether they would work in practice. So far the project did not assess whether these guidelines are adopted and actually used in practice in these twenty municipalities, but the project management was not expecting a positive feedback based on its own impressions and negative experiences by OCSE that tried to implement something similar. Most likely, the project underestimated the resistance at entity, cantonal and LSG level to change the present HRM system, which cannot be achieved as a side activity of a training improvement project.

Besides conducting and facilitating the implementation of more training modules than planned, partly because both entity governments contributed in kind and in funding to the implementation of the training courses from 2012 onward, the MTS project managed to implement several additional activities that were not part of the original plan, but that were requested by the implementing partners or seemed necessary to improve the quality of the training or sustainability of the TSLSGEs. Some examples of these extra activities are:
- Every year the MTS project supports the Training System institutions in organization of Training System's Annual Conferences during which mayors of a large number of municipalities meet and share information and experiences;
- A Training Impact Assessment Methodology was developed, piloted and presented to the Training System Institutions in 2013. This was originally not planned for, but both the MTS project and the implementing partners felt the need for such a feedback mechanism to enable them to assess the impact of the training on enhanced performance of the trained employees. The methodology has however not been applied on a larger scale because it is to sophisticated and costly to implement by the implementing partners. The need for a simplified but accurate methodology therefore still exists (see below);
- On request of the MALSG, the MTS project hired a software company to develop an electronic data base of LSG employees in the RS, which will be introduced in November 2015;

- Instead of the planned 20 new training modules, the MTS project developed (usually in cooperation with local or international experts) 47 new training modules during the second phase of the project in response to the demand expressed by LSGEs and/or sector ministries. These were all drafted in a participatory manner using a small working group of local experts and practitioners and sufficiently tested by the MTS project before they were included in the regular package of the TSLSGEs.

All the above-mentioned deviations in activity implementation were properly justified and documented by the project management and discussed and approved by the project board, of which Sida as the main funder of the MTS project is a member as well.

Efficiency
Being able to train more LSGEs than planned and implementing a lot of additional activities within the time frame and budget available indicates that the MTS project is using its resources very efficiently. The fact that the implementing partners contribute their resources to the development and implementation of the training strategy and the high level of local ownership and commitment of these partners make it possible to do more with the limited resources and therefore contribute to the high level of efficiency as well. Since clear benchmarks are defined with regard to the maximum fees paid to the trainers who implement the training modules, ensure that the training costs per trainee are far below the costs paid for commercial trainings. This is not only important from an efficiency perspective but it will also be an important aspect of ensuring the financial sustainability of the TSLSGEs as we will see later on, as municipalities compare the costs of the TSLSGE training with what they would pay on the commercial market and are willing to pay for the TSLSGE training if it can continue to deliver high quality training for roughly 20-25% of the costs per trainee of a commercial training provider.

The project management did on the other hand not push for fast decisions or a speedy adoption of new procedures regarding the establishment of the coordinating bodies and neither for a fast resolution of the co-financing proposal, which would have been more efficient. It choose for maximum local ownership and therefore potential optimum effectiveness in the long term. Weighing these considerations, one can say that the project has done well in achieving a good balance between efficiency and effectiveness.

Gender mainstreaming
Figure 6 presents the number of trainees according to gender. While the LSG staff is fairly balanced in terms of gender, the percentage of male elected officials exceeds the percentage of female elected officials by far. The ratio of female elected officials who participated in the training was however slightly higher than the actual overall ratio of male and female elected officials.

Figure 6.   **Percentage of TSLSGE trainees according to gender between 2010 and 2014**
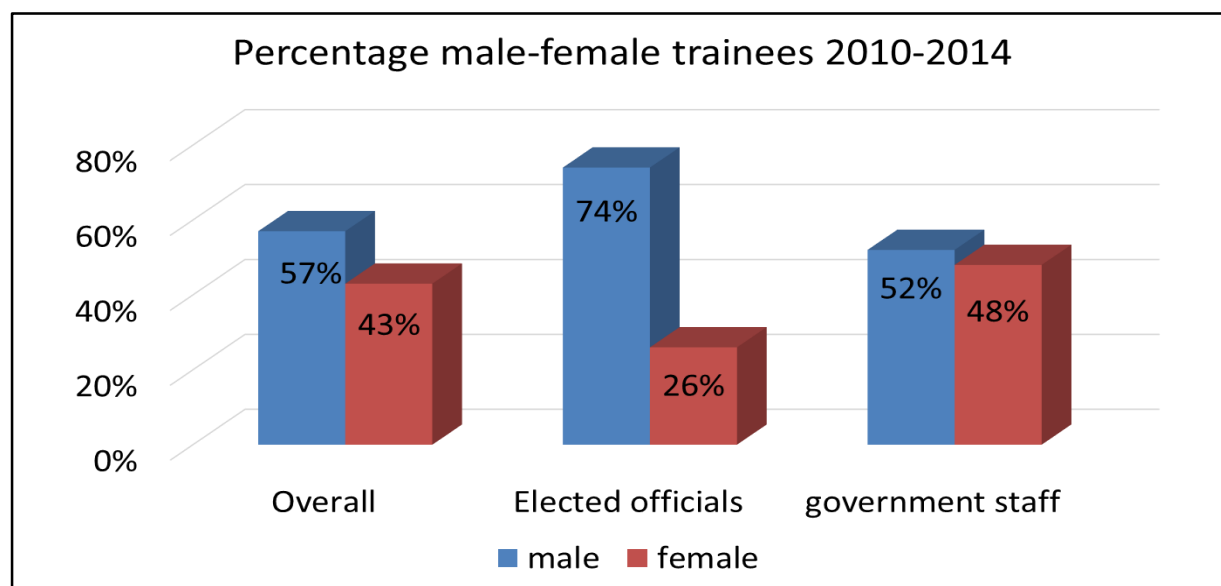
Source: MTS II annual reports and interview with project staff

According to the project management gender issues were integrated in some of the training modules like the training programme on local development planning and the e-learning programme on strategic planning in which gender mainstreaming is one of the important aspects that is reflected on. In addition, a separate module on gender mainstreaming in local policy making was part of the Training of trainers mentorship programme in 2013.

2.3   Effectiveness of the training provided by MTS and TSLSGE

Did the result chain of the Training Strategy work? Have the activities that were implemented by the MTS II project contributed to a capacity development of the employees and elected officials in the LSGs and did these enhanced capacities contribute to better managed development processes and improved quality in service delivery of LSGs?

As mentioned above, the MTS project in its design had not integrated a mechanism that would enable it (or its implementing partners) to measure the effect of the training activities on the actual way in which trainees use their newly acquired knowledge and skills in their day to day work, and if so whether that has an impact on the way the LSG as an organisation operates. The project board and project management however realised early during the implementation of the second phase of the MTS project that it was for various reasons important to be able to measure the impact:

1. First of all, the TSLSGE training cycle was not complete without an impact assessment mechanism (see figure 7).

Figure 7.   **TSLSGE training cycle**
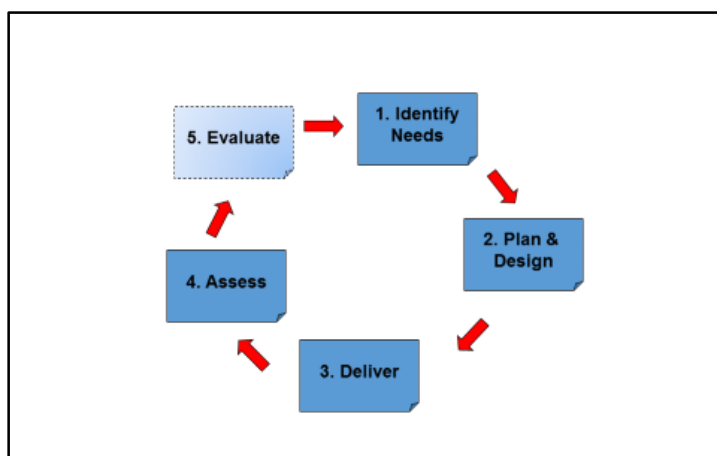
The project has developed a standardized training satisfaction questionnaire, a coordinators checklist and a lead trainers report that are used in every training course in order to assess the satisfaction with each training course (to assess the relevancy, applicability, usefulness, delivery mode, etc.) and an intake and exit questionnaire, specifically tailored to each training module to assess the level of skills and knowledge of the trainees before and after the training. While these instruments provide useful feedback to the training coordinators, it isn't enough to know whether the newly acquired skills and knowledge are actually used after the training course by the trainees in their day to day work. A training impact assessment tool would provide this information, which can be used to further improve the content of the training course in order to make it even more relevant for the trainees.

2. Secondly, both for the TSLSGE and the MTS project is important to be able to measure the impact, because it needs to be able to prove that the training of LSGEs actually improves the performance of LSGs and on top of that, it needs to be able to identify in what way other factors (like the ones mentioned in figure 3) affect the use of the newly acquired knowledge in the actual work setting. If it is able to identify the impact of these factors, additional interventions could be considered to enhance the impact of the training, or the TCB or TC could even decide to cancel a certain training if these contextual factors are negating the effect of the training. The MTS project therefore hired a consultant to develop and pilot a training impact assessment methodology, which was developed at the end of 2013 and piloted in 2014 as part of the Project Cycle Management training course. The methodology worked and showed good results in terms of the participants' direct response to the quality of the training course, their actual learning and the application of what they had learned in their actual work. More and better project proposals were drafted and approved by donors (see box 2).

> **Box 2   Summary results of pilot impact assessment for Project Cycle Management Training course**
>
> **1. Participants' reaction**: average score of 4.5 out of 5 on post-training evaluation questionnaire regarding usefulness, appropriateness, methodology and trainers' approach. Positive participants' response was evident in the trainers' report as well.
>
> **2. Learning**: Measured by entry and exit tests, the level of knowledge was at a score of 2.3 out of 5 before the training and reached 3.9 at the end of the training. Most of participants successfully prepared draft project proposals as part of the training course;
>
> **3. Application**: application of skills, knowledge and attitudes was measured in a survey that showed 60% of training participants use these „often" and „very often", while 70% of participants think they apply them „effectively" or „very effectively" in their practice;
>
> **4. Impact**: The survey showed an increase in number of prepared and submitted project proposals after the training and 40% of their latest submitted projects were approved and funded by donors, with a total budget of 7.6 mil. EUR.
>
> **5. Return of Investment (ROI)** – The assessment also showed a ROI of 299%, which means that the ROI for the two estimates of saved time and improved project implementation effect was positive. More concretely, it means that for each USD 1 spent on the PCM courses, almost USD 3 were returned to the training system as an added value. In addition, several non-financial results were identified such as interdisciplinary team work, increase in job satisfaction, institutional strengthening, building of employees' capacities etc.

Source: MTS II 2014 Annual Progress Report page 7

While some elements of this impact assessment methodology were integrated into the normal training cycle of the TSLSGE, it hasn't been replicated or applied on a larger scale since its inception. According to both project managers and the implementing partners, the methodology is good, but in its present form too costly and sophisticated to apply as a standard instrument for every training course or even for a selected number of training modules.

Besides the information from the pilot impact assessment, there are therefore no hard data available that confirm the effect of the training provided by the TSLSGE. During the interviews that were held as part of the evaluation both former trainees and supervisors of staff that were trained were positive about the impact. Some examples are:

-   According to the Assistant Minister in MALSG in the RS, the LSGs are better able to handle bigger projects on infrastructural improvements, play a better role in attracting investments and stimulating business development, which is partly due to improved capacities as a result of the trainings provided;
-   One of the mayors interviewed in the FBiH mentioned that the training he received, helped him to manage the multitude of demands coming from all sides much better. As a side effect of the training he developed an informal network with 6 other mayors who participated in the same training and who meet on a regular base to exchange experiences. In addition, he phones them and others often for advice. Regarding his staff that was trained on the new real rights law, he mentioned that this was so important to them that the two people who participated in the training municipality organised a small internal training for their staff afterwards to further disseminate the information. Having seen the benefits of the training for himself and his staff, the mayor is convinced of its importance to improve performance. He summarised his views by saying: "knowledge is cheap, ignorance is expensive".

- Another mayor mentioned that after his staff had received a training on public procurement a few years ago, he never received any queries from higher level anymore regarding the public procurement in his municipality. Staff that were trained in complaint handling performed so well afterwards that they were requested to become member of the national complaints handling commission.
- Councillors who participated in a training course on municipal budgets and financial affairs that was organised by the AMC in FBiH, called the training unit afterwards to ask for more training materials for their peers in the municipal council who asked for it after they were told by the councillors about this training.
- The head of the training department of the CSA in the RS and member of the TC in the RS mentioned that he recently visited several HRM officers at the municipal level and they were indeed using the HRM forms and reports that they received during their training two years earlier.
- Partly because the RS government acknowledges the importance of training through the work of the TSLSGE, it has recently become compulsory for sector ministries to provide training to relevant LSGEs when they introduce new laws that affect the function or mandates of the LSGs. Most of these ministries use the TSLSGE system to provide these trainings (see box 3).
- All municipal mayors and heads of departments the evaluator talked to during the evaluation are willing to contribute from their limited municipal budget to the TSLSGE from next year onward. They wouldn't do so if the training modules offered would not have a positive effect on the performance of their employees. When asked, they said that they could easily justify that decision to their constituencies.

Box 3   MALSG cooperation with other RS ministries and government agencies

The Ministry of Administration and Local Self-Government of the RS at the beginning of the year (prior to the meeting of the RS Training Commission) send out a questionnaire to all RS ministries and government agencies / institutions asking them what training programmes they need or want to organize for the LSG in the RS. This became a good practice and thus far the MALSG delivered the following training programmes to the RS LSGs in cooperation with other RS ministries or agencies:
1. Population politics (with Ministry of Family, Youth and Sports)
2. Crisis management and Risk Assessment (with the RS Civil Protection Administration)
3. Traffic Safety in LSG and Application of Traffic Safety Strategy – drafting of municipal action plans (RS Agency for Traffic Safety)
4. Registration of business entities / companies and Application of software – data base of business entities (with Ministry of Industry, Economy and Mining and APIF – Intermediary Agency for IT and Financial Services)
5. Application of PIMIS Software for Public Investments' Management (with Ministry of Finance).

Source: Interview with MTS Project staff

These examples are of course just snapshots of the impact the training programmes had and although they all point in the right direction regarding the effect of the training provided, they can't provide enough evidence to come to a well justified opinion about the effectiveness of the project. To do so would require a wide scale implementation of the training impact assessment methodology (in its simplified version).

2.4   Effectiveness of the MTS support to the Training Systems for Local Self-Government Employees

While it was difficult to assess the effectiveness of the training provided, it was easier to assess whether the support provided by the MTS II project has contributed to the establishment of an effective and sustainable Training System for LSGEs in both entities.

All partners in the TSLSGE agree that it would, in the present BiH context, not have been possible to set up a well operating training system for LSGEs in both entities that is demand driven, delivers high quality and relevant training courses to LSG staff and councillors in a very cost-efficient manner without the support of the MTS project. It played an important catalytic role in bringing the different partners together, in creating a collective vision and in turning that vision into reality. It assisted the partners with technical support to develop, test and operate not only the various training modules but more so with the instruments and mechanisms that turn a package of training modules into a training system, like:

-    The establishment and formalisation of both coordinating bodies;
-    The annual and multi-annual training needs assessment;
-    The annual planning and monitoring cycle;
-    The quality assurance mechanisms (like trainer selection process, procurement regulations, uniform training standards, training review tools);
-    The revision of the relevant legislative framework in both entities;
-    All supporting mechanisms like, job descriptions, rule books, internal procedures, etc.

The development of these instruments and mechanisms was all done in a highly participatory manner, enhancing maximum ownership of these processes by the implementing partners. As a result of all these efforts, the drafting of the follow up Training Strategies for the period 2016-2020 can be done with minimal support from the MTS.

As a result, the training systems are known in the LSGs, they have an entity wide coverage and are able to cover the most important subjects on which training is required. The cooperation between the implementing partners, between the AMCs and the LSGs they represent and between the entity level institutions (especially the CSA and MALSG and the LSGs) has improved a lot. While the AMCs struggle to play a meaningful role in the interest of their members, their image is uplifted by the good quality training they are able to provide to their member municipalities.

Another positive spinoff of the project is that it has contributed to an enhanced understanding at both LSG and entity level of the importance of a good HRM and performance management system at the local level. From the interviews it became clear that a lot still needs to improve, but at least, partly through the involvement of the project, the relevant legislation is gradually changing, which results in a better defined status of LSG staff and their rights for training. The importance of a modern HRM system is increasingly acknowledged by managers at the local level and as a result, their attitude toward training is gradually changing.

2.5   Sustainability of the Training Systems for Local Self-Government Employees

The objective of the MTS is not only to support the establishment of an effective training system for LSGEs in both entities, but also to ensure that these training systems are sustainable and can therefore continue to function in a similar way as they are doing now without external support and have the

ability to renew themselves to respond to changing circumstances or to new demands for training. The evaluation addressed three important aspects of sustainability: institutional, organisational and financial sustainability.

Institutional sustainability.
Institutional sustainability refers to the formal and informal norms and values in society that regulate the interaction between actors. They can be classified as being sustainable when they are shared among actors and well anchored in formal or commonly accepted rules and regulations.

Looking at the institutional sustainability of the two trainings systems, it becomes clear from interviews with the main players in these training systems that a lot has been achieved over the last few years to create a solid foundation for future institutional sustainability. The process to achieve this was, if one looks at it in hindsight, done in an incremental and appropriate way to maximise collective ownership. Through the lengthy consultation process which resulted in the drafting of the two training strategies, the project not only created a solid work plan for the second phase, but more importantly it created a common vision and shared purpose among the partners as well as a basic level of trust between the partners that was essential for the establishment and legitimacy of the two coordination bodies. These bodies and their rulebooks were only formalized at a moment when they were already internalised and accepted by the implementing partners. This implies e.g. that even though the coordinating bodies have no formal say over the AMCs as non-governmental organisations in the training system, the AMCs will most likely respect their authority because they were actively involved in the constitution of these coordinating bodies.

At the same time, the governmental institutions involved in the process, have been working on a continuous small step by small step revision of the legal framework related to the status of government staff working at the LSG level and by doing so strengthening the institutional foundation for the TSLSGE, while they are at the same time , according to the opinion of the evaluator, supported in their efforts to change the legislation and secure funding for the training of staff at the LSG level by the success of the project and the support it receives from its international partners.

Given the complex socio-political context of BiH, this is the maximum that could have been achieved in terms of creating institutional sustainability of the project, and it is, as mentioned earlier, exemplary for the way in which institutional reform in such a complex setting can be achieved and is therefore something that all the partners in this project can be truly proud of.

Organisational sustainability.
Organisational sustainability is achieved when each of the partners in the training system is able to play its role and functions adequately, continuously and without external support. Normally this would entail the financial sustainability of an organisation as well, but that is assessed separately in this evaluation report.

The evaluation discussed with each of the six main actors (the two training coordination bodies, the CSA in the FBiH, the MALSG in the RS and the two AMCs) their present capacities to continue playing their role and function in the TSLSGE without external technical support.

The CSA in the FBiH stated that it had sufficient capacity to carry out the 11 core tasks that were identified by the evaluator as being important to play their role in the TSLSGE effectively (see for a list and scores of each of the five of the 6 actors annex 5). The only aspect on which it would like to receive additional technical assistance would be the development of a workable training assessment

methodology. For the development of new learning tools and training modules it would possibly need external support, but it would be able to organise and manage that itself if sufficient funds are available.

The MALSG in the RS stated that in general it would be capable to carry out these functions as well, especially once the training unit is established and equipped with qualified staff. Functions on which it would be pleased to continue receiving external support are:
- The development of a workable training assessment methodology;
- The development of strategies and policies for the TSLSGE;
- The accreditation of service providers,
- The development of new learning tools and training modules (including e-learning); and
- Linking up with international networks.

The MALSG also mentioned that with sufficient funding available it would be able to manage and organise most of tasks on its own as well.

The training coordinators of the AMCs in both entities mentioned that they as individuals had the knowledge and skills to implement most functions, but that this was not institutionalised in their organisations, partly because the training units consist only of one permanent staff member. This makes them very vulnerable as it creates low organisational stability and sustainability. Due to a lack of staffing (and funding) the organisations were not able to cover all the subjects for which there is an interest from councillors, and they can't reach out to all municipalities with their specialised training modules (i.e. only the induction training is implemented entity wide). Similar to the CSA and MALSGs they would need additional technical support to develop a workable training assessment methodology. On other aspects the two AMCs recorded a different score (see annex 5).

The Training Coordination Body in the FBiH was only recently formalized, but has functioned informally already for a few years. It is almost complete in its membership except for the AMC secretariat to take up its seat in the TCB. It members were very positive about the capacity building support it had received so far from the MTS project, but they had the feeling that they were not yet ready to carry out all its functions without the technical support of the MTS. This was partly related to the fact that formally the TCB falls under the FBiH Ministry of Justice, which facilitated the establishment of the TCB but did so far not provide any practical support to the TCB e.g. to cover its operational costs. The members felt that as a result, the TCB doesn't have enough agency or leverage to address potential bottlenecks adequately or to reprimand its members (the CSA and AMC) if they would not deliver according to plan or expectations. Up to now, the leverage of the MTS (and UNDP) ensured that decisions have been made, but the members were not sure that the TCB could generate that same leverage after the end of the project. There were several specific functions on which it would need additional technical support for:
- Training impact assessment (especially for AMC provided training);
- The development of advanced learning tools;
- Improving its capacity to monitor and guarantee quality assurance of the training provided;
- Networking
- Improving leadership
- Additional marketing of TSLSGE amongst LSG managers
- Monitoring and proposing adjustments to the co-financing model.

The Training Commission in the RS seems to be better embedded in the institutional setting, according to one of the members who was interviewed. It has been functioning already for a longer period and the relationship with its parent Ministry the MALSG is more functional. Once the co-financing model is working and the training unit in the MALSG is established and staffed and adequately funded, the TC

could ensure that the TSLSGE will continue as before or even gradually improve its performance in terms of number and quality of training offered. Similar as the other partners, it would like to see the MTS to hand over a feasible training impact assessment methodology.

Financial sustainability.
The MTS started to address the long term financial sustainability of the TSLSGEs already in the early stages of the second phase of the project, back in 2012, knowing that this would be the most significant policy process to be undertaken by the project and also the most complex[10]. At a time when both entity governments are experiencing critical budgetary shortages, securing commitment for additional funding, or budgetary redistribution, has been and continues to be a major challenge.

In both entities a working group on financial sustainability was established (in 2012 in the RS and in 2013 in the FBiH) in which the entity governments, the AMCs and the municipalities themselves were represented. The MTS facilitated and supported the work of these working groups through the provision of analytical papers that present comparative international models, assess current levels of spending by municipalities, and propose different formulas to ensure local funding of the municipal training system past 2015. The project insisted on a formal settlement of this process through legal codification in the FBiH, where the working group was appointed by the Government Decision, and final model also approved by the FBiH Government.

As a result of these efforts, major progress was made in 2013 in the RS in terms of securing the system's financial future through the introduction of direct changes to the Law on Local Self-Government, as proposed through the project. The amendments in question contain the following:
- All local government employees are both entitled and duty-bound to participate in training and development activities;
- Training will take place under the auspices of the training system's institutional framework (a Training Commission appointed by the Government is explicitly mentioned) and in line with the training strategy;
- The MALSG will adopt and publish an annual training plan;
- All mayors are obliged to develop and adopt training plans for their municipalities;
- All local governments will set aside funds for training.

In June 2014, the FBiH Government adopted the Decision on Financial Sustainability of Training for Local Governments Employees and Elected Officials, as per the proposal of the Working Group. The endorsed financial sustainability model is based on the principles of economic redistribution of already existing funds in local governments and solidarity. The FBiH AMC's categorization of municipalities and cities as per their budgets was used, so that poorer local governments would contribute proportionally less money per trainee than richer ones. The model foresees minimal annual contributions by municipalities and cities for the Training System. To familiarize all the mayors with the Decision, five promotional meetings were organized in the period from November 2014 – January 2015.

All people interviewed, including the mayors of several municipalities agree to the system of co-funding and since the contribution of the municipalities is in the initial period only nominal (50 KM per trainee in the RS and between 140 and 7000 KM as a lump sum contribution per municipality for the whole year in the FBiH), they are willing and able to contribute. According to these mayors it will mean in practice that they just have to reallocate some part of the annual training budget as a contribution to the TSLSGE.

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[10] Most of the information presented in this paragraph comes from the 2012/2013/2014 annual reports of the MTS project and was verified during interviews with the main stakeholders.

Nevertheless, while the systems for co-financing were in place and approved by the end of 2014 in both entities and announced to the municipalities, and the municipalities can afford these costs, they have not been implemented in 2015 in neither of the two entities.

In the RS there is no elaboration on how the amounts per municipality will be determined, how and to whom the training would be paid for, etc. Also the law didn't envisage any bylaw related to the actual collection of contributions and without the clear legal regulation or the bylaw on these procedures there is no legal basis for the Ministry or the Government to introduce any financial obligation to the municipalities.

Therefore the MALSG plans to use the provision of the law just as an argument for a voluntary funding mechanism, which will be institutionalized through trilateral agreements between the MALSG, the RS AMC and each municipality. The model was promoted to the mayors and there were no negative comments, some were very supportive. 55 out of 64 municipalities who responded to a survey conducted in the municipalities on whether they are ready to finance the training system showed that:
- 17 (31%) answered yes,
- 25 (45%) answered maybe if other municipalities accept,
- 7 (13%) said no and
- 6 (11%) cannot respond to the question at this moment.

This means that MALSG and the RS AMC need to make decision on how to introduce the model, whether to e.g.:
- Sign the agreement only with those who are ready to finance and offer them extra training and leave those not ready to fund the system only with those trainings funded from the RS budget, or
- Further promote the model and try to increase the support, or
- Opt for some solidarity mechanism and provide some municipalities with training free of charge.

This is perhaps an area where the MTS project could have pushed a bit harder since the introduction of these co-financing systems will now only take place after the end of the project in 2016 and therefore the project cannot monitor or assist in its actual introduction and implementation.

While the government bodies should by now be able to cover the structural and operational costs of the training through their core budgets combined with the municipal contributions, the AMCs face a more difficult situation. Even if the co-financing model is introduced in 2016, they will not be able to cover the remaining structural costs (like salaries of staff and office costs) from their own core budget since they generate at the moment not enough income. It is beyond the scope of this evaluation to evaluate why this is so, but it is clear that the training provided by the AMCs will come to an end without additional external funding.

2.6   Project Management

The most important aspects of project Management have been touched upon already as part of the earlier paragraphs. A few aspect that haven't been mentioned explicitly but are worth to mention are summarized below:
- The project management adhered to UNDP's internal quality assurance standards throughout the whole MTS project implementation;
- Reporting was timely and of good quality;
- The communication with the project board was proactive and it involved the project in all important decision-making processes;

- It was highly responsive to the needs of the implementing partners;
- It gradually decreased its technical assistance to the implementing partners in line with their own internal capacity growth;
- It managed to achieve some synergy with other projects in and outside UNDP (examples are Embassy of Switzerland / UNDP ILDP and EU / UNDP LOD project and OSCE's "local first" project);
- Through the establishment of a local governance and local development donor coordination group, in which UNDP plays a facilitating role, there is an improved level of cooperation and synergy of related support interventions.

3.   Conclusions and recommendations

What than can we conclude from all this information?

First of all the most important conclusion. Given the complex socio-political context, which obstructs almost every initiative for institutional progress in Bosnia and Herzegovina and the initial reluctance of the potential partners to even start to try tackling the problem of the lack of a systematic training system for Local Self-Government employees and elected officials, the MTS project has been able to achieve a small but significant initial institutional reform, which generates more cooperation between the various levels of government, between the same institutions in both entities and between the administrations and representative organisations of local governments. With support of the MTS project, the implementing partners have been able to set up a Training System for Local Self-Government Employees that is:
-    Responding to the training needs of staff at local self-government level and the needs of entity level ministries that work at local level;
-    Delivers high quality training in a cost efficient manner that is relevant and practical;
-    Institutionally and legally well anchored in the government systems in the two entities and therefore in principle sustainable.

One may therefore conclude that the project has achieved its major objective within the timeframe and budget ceilings provided.

What explains the success of the project, what are some relevant lessons learnt? Several internal and external factors have contributed to this success:
1.   Within a context where almost every proposed change is drawn into an ethnic-political contest, the aim of setting up a training system for local self-government staff, was and is as such politically not contested or sensitive. It is by most stakeholders seen as a technical matter that can fit in any political agenda. As soon as the project or the TSLSGE touched upon more sensitive issues, like the introduction of an improved HRM system or the improvement of performance management at the Local Self-Government level, something that is definitely needed in order to increase the impact of the training efforts, it was not able to make much progress.

2.   The MTS project started from a problem solving perspective and not from an institutional reform perspective. It wanted to solve the lack of systematic good quality training. It did not, as an external agent, come with a preconception of an already defined institutional solution. It analysed the problem together with its partners during the first phase of the project, first creating ownership of the problem, and only later on, together with these partners come to the solution of setting up a training system with a coordinating body at its apex.

3.   From the initiation of the MTS project, it adopted a process approach, meaning that it was flexible in defining its activities, which were defined in response to the needs of the partners, as long as they contributed to the overall objective or outcome of the project, it had a learning by doing attitude: let's develop and test a solution or training module, if it work we can replicate it if not it will be discarded.

4.   The MTS project had a strong focus on creating local ownership of the problem, of the solution and the process. It took a leading role when necessary, but it did not take the ownership out of the hands of its partners, who felt to be in control. When necessary, it accepted certain

delays because the formalisation or endorsement of decisions taken by the TSLSGE by the respective governments often took longer than anticipated. Local ownership is critical for a project like this one and needs to be established before the outcome can be handed over successfully and the partners are willing and able to accept such responsibility. Pushing harder for handing over certain aspects of the project earlier would most likely have damaged the sense of ownership. Seeing that the partners are presently actively contributing to the next phase of the Training Strategies in both entities while they know that the project will come to an end is proof of a high sense of local ownership.

5. The project did not focus all its energy on one "change agent" but worked with multiple change agents, from different sections in society and with different strengths and weaknesses. As a result it did not only spread the risk of partners not living up to the expectations, it also created an internal sense of mutual accountability among the partners.

6. UNDP (and Sida) were reliable and trustworthy partners in the project, delivering according to what was agreed upon, finding the right people to do certain jobs and meeting all basic quality standards.

An important side effect or spin off of the MTS project is the fact that, even though this cannot fully be attributed to the project, the importance of training of local government employees is now more acknowledged across all levels of government. In addition, even though there still is some resistance, the need to upgrade the HRM systems of Local Self-Government, including the integration of a Performance Management System has become more evident and is more and more recognized.

These are, according to the evaluator, very important lessons learnt for UNDP as to how it can support institutional reform and capacity development in a complex socio-political setting and it would be worthwhile to document them and share them with other countries/UNDP offices since it is not often that such successes are achieved.

While achieving its major objective is within reach, there are a few minor issues on which the MTS project could have performed better, some of which can still be rectified within the last three months of the project:

1. Partly due to the fact that no clear outcome success indicator were defined explicitly in the project document of the MTS phase 2 and therefore also not monitored systematically, the MTS project did so far not draft an exit strategy that is endorsed by the project board. Although it is rather late, this is something that the project management should still do before the end of the year as there are several issues that would require some continuous support after the project comes to a formal end, which need to be integrated in the UNDP planning for 2016 (see below).

2. The MTS project is not able to prove that the training of LSGEs has a positive impact on their performance and therefore on the functioning of the LSGs. This doesn't mean that it is not the case, it only means that there is a lack of information to make such a judgement. The evaluation can therefore also not draw a final conclusion regarding the effectiveness of the project. Qualitative information from both beneficiaries, trainers and supervisors that was collected during the evaluation indicate that there is a positive relation between the training provided and improved performance, but that information is not substantial enough to make a well informant judgement on its effectiveness.

A Training Impact Assessment mechanism has been drafted, but it has, besides one test run, not been implemented on a larger scale mainly because it is in its present format too sophisticated and costly to implement. Without a workable training impact assessment methodology, the training cycle is not complete, which means that there is:

d. No complete feedback mechanism available that will provide information that can be used to further improving the quality of the training modules,

e. There is no monitoring mechanism that can provide information on the potential factors at the local self-government level that may either enhance the impact of the training or contravene its impact. If that information would be available, the partners would be able to make a stronger case for additional funding for training and for the necessary review of the HRM practices at local level and at the same time they would be able to convince the managers of local staff with hard evidence that training is necessary and helps to improve performance;

f. It is difficult for UNDP (and Sida) to provide qualitative evidence of the success of their efforts and investments.

All implementing partners see the need for such an instrument and would like the project to augment the existing one. This should not be too difficult and it could according to the evaluator still be achieved before the end of the project. The existing Training Impact Assessment mechanism is solid and several elements of the first three steps are already integrated in the monitoring system. The last step, i.e. the "Return on Investment" element is however not really useful in practice and too complicated and should be replaced with a simpler module that assesses the actual use of the newly acquired knowledge and skills in practice. This should be based on a combination of qualitative and quantitative data from both the trainees and their supervisors, combining a standard feedback mechanism with a sample of in-depth reviews. Most of the work to collect the data could be integrated in the contracts of trainers, who will thus become the main data collectors for such feedback and therefore not put an extra burden on the training units.

3. Regarding the sustainability of the Training Systems for Local Self-Government Employees a lot has been achieved as was mentioned in the previous chapter, especially regarding their institutional sustainability. While it is impossible to predict the possible impact of the wider political context on the future of the TSLSGEs, at least the legal and institutional framework is solid and sound, and the partners are able to adjust it to evolving circumstances in the near future if necessary.

Regarding the organisational sustainability of some of the partners/institutions in the Training Systems it is not sure whether all of them have sufficient capacity to continue their function at the same level as now without additional external technical support.

The CSA in the FBIH and the MALSG in the RS are now well capable of providing the same quality and quantity of training to their LSGEs after the project has come to an end, especially once the training unit in the MALSG is well established and staffed and a well-functioning training impact assessment mechanism is in place. Regarding the development of new training modules or the upgrading of existing ones they might require external expertise, but they are well capable of organising that themselves.

The Training Coordination Body in the FBiH and the Training Commission in the RS are still immature and they do not yet have the legitimacy or the leadership they should have in order to take the training system to a higher level or to lobby successfully for more resources from

either the government or external sources. While they need to earn that position themselves, a continuation of a low level of hands technical support provided by UNDP, focussing on improving leadership, high level quality assurance, finalizing and operationalising the next phase Training Strategies and monitoring and comparing (as an external agent) the implementation of the co-financing strategies in both entities would be very useful. This does not have to be in the format of a continuation of the MTS project however if other ways of providing such support are possible.

The co-financing models in both entities are ready in their final form and legally approved. They will only be put to the test once the external funding for the implementation of the actual training modules has come to an end. The government partners have had sufficient time to prepare themselves for this situation (and they even got an extra year to do so), so the evaluation sees no reason why the external funding for running the regular training programme (besides the training programme of the AMCs as argued below) should continue after 2015.

The AMCs in both entities are not yet able to continue playing their role in the TSLSGE at the same level as they are doing now without a continuation of external financial and technical support. Even if the co-financing models are implemented as planned per the 1st of January 2016, they will not generate enough funds for the AMCs to recover all the costs involved in planning, organising and implementing the trainings for elected officials, especially not in 2016 when they face extra costs due to the induction training they have to organise for the newly elected councillors. In addition, partly because they lack adequate staffing of their training units, they will not be able to do much more than run the present training programme as they lack capacity to develop new modules, collect feedback from trainees and scale up the programme to include even more elected officials.

The Embassy of Sweden and the Embassy of Switzerland are discussing a possible follow up support programme for the AMCs in both entities that would include support to the training units of the AMCs. Even if that is successful and approved, it will most likely start only by mid-2016, which would cause serious problems for the AMCs in terms of retaining the present training coordinators and prepare for the induction training of councillors at the end of 2016. Besides that, they would lose most of their institutional memory if they would have to recruit new coordinators once the funding is approved.

It is therefore recommended that UNDP and the Embassy of Sweden discuss as soon as possible how this funding and technical support gap could be bridged. Table 4 below presents an overview of aspects and activities that could be included in a phasing out strategy and plan of one year. Looking at the number of activities to be completed and the related work load, this could be done by two advisors (one based in Sarajevo and one in Banja Luka) who will have a small operational budget to conduct these activities and a small budget for an external consultant to revise the training impact assessment methodology.

Table 4   Building blocks for a MTS phasing out strategy and related activities

Elements and activities	Deadline
1. Develop outcome success criteria (based on the three sustainability dimensions described above) and a detailed phasing out strategy	Before the end of 2015
2. Revise the training impact assessment methodology and assist the TCB and TC (and/or CSA, MALSG and AMCs) with the initial implementation (with the support of a consultant)	Early – Mid 2016
3. Assist the two AMCs with drafting a strategy to make their training activities organizationally and financially sustainable within 3 years.	Early 2016
4. Provide capacity building support to the two AMCs in the areas identified above, including the planning for the next round of induction training of elected officials.	Throughout 2016
5. Assist the TCB and TC with translating the 2nd phase Training Strategies into realistic work plans.	Early 2016
6. Monitor the implementation of the co-financing strategies and provide technical assistance if required.	Throughout 2016
7. Provide leadership training and other technical support to the TCB and TC.	Throughout 2016
8. Draft a compendium of all tools and instruments developed by the MTS for each entity and hand these over to the TCB and TC.	Mid 2016
9. Compile a lessons learnt paper (and use other means of communication to present the success of the MTS project) and disseminate and if possible organize a regional workshop.	Late 2016
10. Review and monitor the integration of the Disaster Risk Reduction into the Training Strategies	End 2015 and 2016

4.   Concept for possible follow-up direction

Besides the minimum follow up technical support that UNDP should continue to provide to the implementing partners in the TSLSGE after the end of the formal project period as described above, it could consider other options for follow up activities as well.

The objective of UNDP's "Integrated Local Development Approach" is to "enable transformation of local governments into development-conducive and people-centred governance services add to the stock of locally generated jobs and investments and contribute to improved quality of life and social inclusion"[11]. In its policy paper on Integrated Local Development in Bosna and Herzegovina 2014-2020 it identifies the introduction of sound human resource management at the local level as one of the key priorities related to the improved governance and management of Local Self-Governments. Specific focus on performance management, training for local government staff and overall motivation and employee accountability is needed[12].

It correctly identifies sound human resource management as a key area since it is cross-cutting and underpinning the other potential intervention areas like economic and social development and environmental management. Especially in resource poor environments it is even more important to make optimum use of the limited human resources available.

UNDP, through the implementation of the MTS project and other Programmes like the Integrated Local Development Project and the Reinforcement of Local Democracy Project has gained substantial experience working directly with Local Self-Governments in both entities in BiH. Based on its solid reputation, its perceived neutrality and the network that UNDP has built up through its involvement in the TSLSGEs in both entities, strengthening the HRM systems al local self-government level could be an area for UNDP to become involved in even though a "return on investments" might be much more difficult to achieve. As mentioned above, it is a politically sensitive area and there are most likely no quick wins, but on the other hand the legal framework is increasingly facilitating such improvements and (partly as a positive spin off from the MTS project) more and more people at entity and local level realise the importance of sound HRM for improved service delivery.

If UNDP would consider to study the possibility to initiate such an intervention, it would be a good starting point to review the introduction of the minimum HRM standards' in the 20 pilot municipalities that were implemented under the MTS project and see what has actually been implemented and is still used after more than one year or if it has not been implemented why not. In addition it would of course be important to discuss with OSCE why it stopped prematurely with a similar initiative.

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[11] UNDP (2013): UNDP policy paper. Integrated Local Development in Bosna and Herzegovina 2014-2020; a joint approach to realising the potential of each locality. Page 3

[12] Ibid page 5

Annex 1   Terms of Reference for the MTSII Final Project Evaluation

Title: International Consultant for Final Project Evaluation Project/Sector: Municipal Training System Project / Rural and Regional Development Sector Reporting to: Rural and Regional Development Sector Coordinator Duty Station: Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH) Duration: August - September 2015

BACKGROUND

Purpose

The purpose of the Final Project Evaluation (FPE) is to provide an impartial view of the second phase of the Municipal Training System Project (MTS II) relevance, quality performance, management and achievements. In this regard, an International Final Project Evaluation Consultant (hereinafter: the Consultant) will be recruited.

Objective

The FPE will identify and assess a number of elements to determine the project's a relevance, performance, results, impact and sustainability of project's achievements.

Background Information

The second phase of the Municipal Training System Project is aimed at contributing to professional and competent BiH local governments, able to effectively manage development processes and deliver quality services to their citizens. The MTS II focuses on further strengthening of the functional and policy capacity of the Training System for Local Self-Government Employees in BiH and supports its affirmation as an effective public mechanism for carrying out the local governments` capacity development agenda country-wide, as defined within the entity Training Strategies 2011 - 2015. The Project also supports the design and delivery of priority and demand-driven training programmes for both local government elected officials and employees.

The MTS II project is an integral pillar of the UNDP Local Governance Programme, which aims to contribute to improvement of governance, focusing on advancing local government know-how so as to better position local authorities to tackle and overcome development challenges, whilst improving citizens services. The project is funded primarily by the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida) and implemented in partnership with the BiH Ministry of Justice, the FBiH Ministry of Justice, the RS Ministry of Administration and Local Self-Government, the entity civil service agencies and entity associations of cities and municipalities.

DESCRIPTION OF RESPONSIBILITIES

Scope of work

To determine the project's relevance, performance, results, impact and sustainability of achievements, the main questions to be answered in the FPE are:

- Were the project's objectives and outputs appropriate and relevant to the needs of the country?
- Were the project's actions to achieve the outputs quality, effective and efficient?
- To what extent has the project created local ownership over the training system and its functions?
- To what extent are the results sustainable? Will the outputs lead to benefits beyond the lifespan of the project?
- What are the positive or negative, intended or unintended, changes brought about by the project interventions?

- How could project results be further sustainably projected and expanded, having in mind the broader local government agenda of BiH?
- What are, if relevant, after-project possible priority interventions and general recommendations, which could further ensure sustainability of project's achievements and contribute to development of local governance in Bosnia and Herzegovina?

The consultancy will take a broad overview of the project area by gathering perceptions, aspirations, feedback and data from relevant partners and stakeholders for objective analysis and conduct of the evaluation.

The evaluation will look to underline the key factors that have either facilitated or impeded project implementation; the appropriateness of skill sets among project participants and the continued need for knowledge transfer and skills to maintain the momentum of activities already set in motion. To this end, the evaluation will examine the overall performance and impact of project components.

Proposed methodology

The proposed methodology consists of a preliminary desk review of project materials and deliverables and review of existing information relevant to the project context, followed by field visits and final evaluation report write up.

The Consultant is required to evaluate the UNDP MTS II Project Document, progress, annual and mid-term evaluation reports, key project deliverables and other relevant documents. The briefing kit will be prepared by the UNDP/MTS II. The Consultant is expected to meet the UNDP Country Office management for an initial briefing and the debriefing at the end of the assignment. S/he is expected to interview the MTS II project team, partners as well as other stakeholders as needed. To assess project performance, approach and modalities, the Consultant will meet representatives of the FBiH Ministry of Justice, the RS Ministry of Administration and Local Self-Government, entity Civil Service Agencies, both Associations of Municipalities and Cities, Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency and training beneficiaries. S/he will also meet with representatives of other agencies active in the field of local governance to assess their cooperation and level of synergies with the MTS II, if needed.

During these meetings, it would be important to record and accumulate inputs necessary not only for the project evaluation, but for potential follow-up interventions in the field of local governance as well. The Consultant will propose a work plan to be approved by the MTS II project team. The Consultant is expected to prepare a report highlighting in particular recommendations.

The expected duration of the assignment is up to 20 days (11 days in Bosnia and Herzegovina), with the consultancy period to take place in September 2015.

The final evaluation report will capture the feedback by key project partners and stakeholders as well as observations and conclusions by the Consultant. The report will also contain a concept note on the possible follow up direction and interventions in the field of local governance, which would meaningfully build on the current project achievements, to ensure full sustainability of the project's results, but also contribute to further development of local governance in BiH.

Tasks

The consultancy is divided into 3 principle tasks, as follows:

Task 1 – Desk review

The Consultant will conduct a detailed review of all relevant documents produced during the project implementation, produced both, by the project team, as well as by the training system institutions. Documentation includes, but is not limited to: project document; project annual work plans; project reports; decisions and rule-books issued by the training system institutions; annual training plans; data on training programmes delivered during the project; summaries of the reports on training strategies'

evaluation and other documents as decided in consultations with the project team. The Consultant will also check out the web portals of the training system institutions.

Upon review of documentation, the Consultant will submit a detailed work plan for the evaluation process, including: a list of interlocutors; tentative dates and locations of visits planned; interview questions and proposed list of participants and date for the validation session.

During the desk review the Consultant will focus on evaluating the project baseline, indicators and targets, as well as the relevance, quality and adequacy of project approach versus its objectives and the output.

Task 1 will not exceed 6 days.

Task 2 – Evaluation

Upon the approval of the work plan by the MTS II project team, the Consultant is expected to carry out the evaluation of the second phase of the MTS project, via direct interviews with stakeholders and beneficiaries from cities/municipalities. Apart from individual interviews, if considered useful in terms of data collection and time management, the Consultant may conduct a focus group meeting with some 10-12 project beneficiaries.

Once the interviews are completed, the Consultant will analyse data and information collected (qualitative and quantitative) and draft evaluation report including main findings and a concept for a possible follow-up direction.

Report shall seek to assess project progress, efficiency and adequacy; process and level of success of partnership building; the quality of project deliverables and the level of training system institutions' ownership and effectiveness of its principal structures. The evaluation will also capture the efficiency of project organisation and management with respect to its size and composition, organisational structure and personnel management. The draft report will contain the positive or negative, intended or unintended, changes brought about by the project and identify factors which facilitated or impeded the realization of intended objectives. A particular attention will be paid to the sustainability of the project achievements beyond the lifespan of the project.

The draft evaluation report will be submitted to the MTS II project team for initial review. Subsequently, a validation session will be organised with up to 10 stakeholders, to ensure that final report to be produced dully reflects their opinions. The MTS II will provide support to the Consultant in organization of meetings, interviews and validation session.

The minimum structure of the evaluation report is the following:
1. Executive summary;
2. Introduction;
3. Methodological approach;
4. Evaluation findings;
5. Conclusions and recommendations;
6. Concept for possible follow-up direction;
7. Annexes.

Task 2 will not exceed 10 days.

Task 3 – Submission of the final project evaluation report

Following the validation session, the Consultant is expected to prepare a final project evaluation report, capturing findings and recommendations on both the project approach and performance. Suggestions

and comments gathered during the validation session will be taken into consideration. Also, any observations that may arise from the evaluation will be incorporated into the final report.

In addition, the Consultant is expected to particularly focus at the sustainability aspect of the project, analyse the level of training system institutions' ownership and capacity to fully take over processes established during the project implementation.

Finally, s/he will provide a concept for possible follow-up direction.

Task 3 will not exceed 4 days.

Deliverables and timeliness

The implementation of the tasks within this ToR will be supervised and quality assured by the UNDP. The following deliverables are expected:

Deliverables	Timeliness and level of effort
Task 1: Desk review ▪ Evaluation of documentation; ▪ Submission of work-plan for evaluation.	Late August 2015 (up to 6 days)
Task 2 – Evaluation ▪ Initial meeting with the project team; ▪ Interviews with stakeholders; ▪ Submission of draft report; ⬜ Validation session.	September 2015 (up to 10 days)
Task 3 – Submission of final project evaluation report • Submission of final report, including recommendations and concept for possible follow-up direction.	September 2015 (4 days)

COMPETENCIES

Core values
▪ Demonstrates integrity and fairness by modelling UN values and ethical standards;
▪ Displays cultural, gender, religion, race, nationality and age sensitivity and adaptability.

Core competencies
▪ Demonstrates professional competence to meet responsibilities and post requirements and is conscientious and efficient in meeting commitments, observing deadlines and achieving results;
▪ Results-Orientation: Plans and produces quality results to meet established goals, generates innovative, practical solutions to challenging situations;
▪ Communication: Excellent communication skills, including the ability to convey complex concepts and recommendations, both orally and in writing, in a clear and persuasive style tailored to match different audiences;
▪ Team work: Ability to interact, establish and maintain effective working relations with a culturally diverse team;
▪ Client orientation: Ability to establish and maintain productive partnerships with national partners and stakeholders and pro-activeness in identifying of beneficiaries and partners' needs, and matching them to appropriate solutions.

Qualifications

Education:	Advanced university degree in economy, social science or related field.
Experience:	At least 10 years of experience in areas of relevance to the consultancy mission, to include: - Extensive project/programme evaluation experience, including evaluation of multi-stakeholder projects in an international setting; - Experience in local government, public administration and local development-related projects (experience with training systems is an asset); - Relevant working experience in BiH and the region, will be considered as advantage. Proven ability to undertake professional research using both quantitative and qualitative methods;
	Strong analytical skills and ability to conceptualize complex and multi-faceted aspects of an issue into a concise and clear-cut assessment conclusion; Excellent drafting and presentation skills; Evaluation experience with UN donor-funded projects is an asset;
Language requirements:	Fluency in English Knowledge of BiH official languages desirable.
Other:	Excellent computer skills (MS Office applications) and ability to use information technologies as a tool and resource.

Award Criteria: The consultancy will be awarded on the basis of both a technical evaluation of the candidate as well as the financial evaluation of the offer.

Applicants are required to submit an application including:
- **Personal CV/P11** including past experience in similar projects and contact details (e-mail addresses) of referees;
- **Financial proposal** indicating lump sum fee for the assignment. The lump fee should contain travel and accommodation costs based on the number of days required in country.

Annex 2   List of people interviewed

UNDP
- Ms. Zahira Virani, UNDP BiH DRR
- Ms. Adela Pozder Čengić, Rural and Regional Development Sector Leader
- Ms. Aida Laković Hošo, Local Governance Team Leader
- Mr. Aleksandar Živanović, UNDP MTS Training Officer RS
- Ms. Vesna Efendić, UNDP MTS Training Officer FBIH
- Mr. Kerim Zujo, DRR officer
- Mr. Samir Omerefendić, Project Manager, UNDP/LOD
- Ms. Marina Dimova, Governance Chief Technical Advisor, UNDO

Entity Governments
- Ms. Samra Ljuca, Head of Training Department, FBiH Civil Service Agency
- Mr. Dalibor Ćopić, Head of Training and Analytics Department of the RS CSA and member of the MTS Project board and member of the Training Commission of the RS
- Ms. Milanka Šopin, Assistant Minister, RS Ministry for Administration and Local Self-Government
- Ms. Miliana Dragojević, RS Ministry for Administration and Local Self-Government
- Mr. Enver Išerić, FBiH Ministry of Justice

Local Self-Governments:
- Mr. Nedžad Zukanović, Mayor of Ključ Municipality and member of Working Group on financial sustainability in FBiH,
- Mr. Predrag Šupljeglav, Head of Department for General Administration, City of Mostar
- Mr. Dragomir Lučić, Municipal Secretary, Kiseljak Municipality and member of TCB FBiH
- Mr. Miroslav Lucić, Assistant mayor of Domaljevac Šamac and member of TCB FBiH
- Ms. Maja H. Jašaragić-Suljanović, training contact person, City of Tuzla
- Mr. Emir Bubalo, Mayor of Konjic Municipality
- Mr. Ejub Miljevic, training contact person, Konjic Municipality
- Mr. Predrag Kovač, Mayor of East Ilidža

Association of Municipalities and Cities
- Mr. Edin Demirović, Program Manager, FBiH Association of Municipalities and Cities
- Ms. Sanja Krunić, Program Manager, RS Association of Municipalities and Cities

Training Providers/consultants
- Mr. Marko Martić, Consultant for the revision of the Training Strategy in the RS
- Ms. Jelena Misita, Director, Revicon
- Mr. Zdravko Miovčić, Director, Eda Development Agency
- Mr. Ermin Cero, Consultant for designing the co-financing models
- Ms. Snežana Mišić Mihajlović, evaluator of the Training Strategies of the FBiH and RS

International and bilateral donors agencies/partners
- Mr. Mario Vignjević, Programme Officer, Swedish Embassy and MTS project board member
- Ms. Alma Zukorlić, National Program Officer, SDC
- Ms. Regula Bäbler, Governance and migration & Development Advisor SDC
- Ms. Ljiljana Perkušić, National Chief, Local Governance Section, OSCE

Annex 3   List of Core and leading questions used in the MTS Final Project Evaluation

1. Have the intended activities of the MTS II project been implemented in accordance with the approved project document and where they completed successfully and in the most efficient way. If so, why or if not so, why not?

1. Have the project activities (as described in the projects results and resources framework) been implemented in accordance with the original work plan and budget?
2. If any deviations have taken place, have these been properly documented, justified and approved by the appropriate authorities?
3. Were the activities of the MTS II project implemented in accordance with UNDP quality standards?
4. Did the implemented activities lead to the intended outputs/results? If not, has this been monitored and has remedial action been taken in order to achieve the results?
5. Could these results, in hindsight, have been achieved in a more efficient or effective way (i.e. faster or with less resources)?
6. Have the assumptions and risks of the project been monitored and when necessary, have adequate remedial actions been implemented to mitigate the impact of these risks? Was in hindsight the risk analysis adequate?
7. What was the quality of the interaction between the various partners in the project? Did every partner fulfil its roles and functions and did they have enough capacities to fulfil their role?
8. Were there any unintended positive or negative results from the MTS II project?
9. In what way has gender equity been mainstreamed in the project design and implementation and is there any evidence that the project has contributed to gender equity in the context of Local Government in BiH?

2. Did the activities that were implemented by the MTS II project contribute to capacity development of the LGSEs and if so, did these strengthened capacities actually contribute to the intended change in behaviour of training beneficiaries and of Local Self-Governments and to better managed development processes and improved quality in service delivery of Local Self-Governments?

1. Did the training of LSG employees and elected representatives in the two entities that were implemented as part of the Training System for Local Self-Government Employees, by the project or by the implementing partners, lead to an enhancement of capacities of the trainees and of the LSGs organisations in which they work?
2. Did the enhancement of individual and organisational capacities lead to a change in behaviour of Local Self-Government employees and elected members and to a more effective management of the LSGs and improved service delivery?
3. Has, as a result of the training activities implemented under the TSLSGE and the HRM support to municipalities, the training culture changed at LSG level (performance management, systematic training needs assessment, managers capacities to manage performance, etc.)?
4. What are the main factors (positive and negative) that affected the achievements of the outcomes?
5. What positive or negative, intended or unintended changes were brought about by the project related to the capacities of LSG staff and organisations at local level?

3. Have the structures and functions of the Training System for Local Self-Government Employees been strengthened to the extent that a long-term effective operation of the training mechanisms is guaranteed? Are the outcomes of the MTS II project institutionally, organisationally and financially sustainable?

1. How did the MTS II project define what a "long-term effective operating training mechanism" means, how did it define success in this regard and where success indicators developed? Did the MTS II project design and implement an exit strategy for UNDP and other supporting partners?

2. Was in hindsight, the institutional set up of the Training System for LSG employees as envisaged in the Training Strategies for both entities adequate to implement a country wide high quality and relevant LSG training programme?

3. Does the present institutional set up (including the legal framework) function adequately? What are the bottlenecks, what can be done to improve the institutional set up further?

4. Is the financial model for implementing the Training System for LSG employees for FBiH and RS adequate to cover all related costs, to increase the outreach to full country coverage, to sustain and even upgrade the present training modules and is it viable and realistic? If not, what could be done to achieve this (within and beyond the project lifespan)?

5. A basic pre-condition for achieving sustainability of the project results and outcomes is enhanced local ownership of the Training System for LSGE. To what extent has this been achieved?

6. Have the institutional and organisational capacities of the implementing partners and local self-governments to implement their intended roles and functions as described in the FBiH and RS Training Strategies for LSGEs been raised to the level that they can fulfil their roles and functions adequately and without external support of the MTS II project? If not, what additional support is required?

   This refers in particular to the following actors/stakeholders:
   a. The RS Ministry of Administration and Local Self-Government
   b. FBiH Civil Service Agency
   c. The Association of Municipalities and Cities of both entities
   d. The FBiH training Coordinating Body and RS Training Commission

   Issues that will be addressed under this question are:
   A. The development and maintenance of policies and strategies like an updated LGSE Training Strategy for the coming years, the definition of training standards, accreditation of training providers;

   B. Do the relevant organisations have sufficient individual and organisational capacities to:
   - Successfully manage and implementation the training cycle (plan offer, prepare, implement, monitor and evaluate)
   - Conduct annual and multi-annual planning
   - Conduct regular training needs assessments (annually and multi-annually)
   - Guarantee quality assurance (monitoring) like certification, accreditation and the development of a transparent, open and competitive regulatory framework for the training market
   - Successful networking (national and international)
   - Develop advanced learning tools and renew existing learning tools and methodologies

- Conduct and organise regular Training of trainers
- Ensure good vertical coordination
- Manage co-financing mechanisms adequately
- Ensure a country wide coverage of the TSLSGE
- Availability and use of adequate administrative and communication tools
- Maintenance and development of a Website and e-learning
- Integrate all work processes in daily routines at all levels

7. What could the project have done more or better to achieve long-term sustainability of the TSLSGE and what can be done (by UNDP and/or others) to enhance the sustainability of the TSLSGE after the project has come to a closure?

4. To what extent have internal management processes and external relations of the MTS II project contributed to the successes or failures of the project?

In addition to the above content related questions, the evaluation will therefore collect data to assess the quality of the following processes:
- The overall management approach of the MTS II project;
- the functioning of UNDP quality assurance mechanisms;
- the functioning of decision-making structures and procedures;
- internal communication;
- risk management;
- progress monitoring and the use of monitoring data (including gender disparities);
- synergy with other projects/interventions;
- participation of stakeholders;
- ownership and effectiveness of the partnerships (incl. the functioning of the project board);
- coordination with other development partners in the field of decentralisation/strengthening local governance;
- external communication;
- accountability of the project management;

Annex 4   Self-assessment scores of implementing partners related to their organisational capacity

Aspect of Organisational capacity	FBiH CSA	FBiH AMC	FBiH TCB	RS MALSG	RS AMC
• Successfully manage and implement the training cycle (plan, prepare, implement, monitor and evaluate all trainings)	8	10	8	9	5
• Conduct regular training needs assessments (annually and multi-annually)	10	6	7	8	7
• Assess the impact of training	8	4	5.5*	6	4
• Guarantee quality assurance like certification, and accreditation	10	5	5	6.5	8
• Successful networking (national and international)	10	8	5	7	5
• Develop advanced learning tools and renew existing learning tools and methodologies	8	8	3	5	5
• Conduct and organise regular Training of Trainers courses	10	8	8	6	6
• Manage the financing and administration mechanisms adequately (including the new co-financing system)	8	10	8	8	8
• Ensure a country wide coverage of the training modules offered	8	10	8	8	4
• Use and develop adequate communication tools to partners, members, councillors, etc.	10	10	6	7	9

Note: Scores are between 1 and 10 with one the lowest and 10 the highest score
* This is the average score the TCB gave: 8 for the CSA and 3 for the AMC