**Management Response Template**

**UN Joint Programme “Leave No One Behind”**

Date: 14 April 2020

Prepared by:

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| **Evaluation recommendation 1.** In order to ensure that all LGUs have achieved a basic level of progress linked to the planning, budgeting and monitoring of social care services and provision, targeted support and encouragement should be provided via LNB to those LGUs that do not yet have a Social Care Plan under preparation, in order that the plans’ drafting be achieved in 2020.Principal Addressees (R1): LNB, MHSP, SSS, LGUs, National Agency for Support of Local Self Governance |
| **Management response:**The recommendation is in line with LNB’s ongoing work and annual plan. MHSP has requested LNB to provide technical support to LGUs to develop Social Care Plans. While so far 16 LGUs (??) have developed their social care plans with LNB’s support, it is planned to extend LNB’s assistance to 17 additional LGUs to develop and implement Social Care Plans. LNB’s assistance is in synergy with similar interventions implemented by UN Agencies and other donors which have to date supported 38 LGUs to develop Social Care Plans and it is expected that by end of 2020/mid 2021 all LGUs (61) have finalized and endorsed their social care plans. In addition to support for development of social care plans, LNB capacitates LGUs to implement them including development of related budget briefs with a view to facilitate the budget planning for social care services from government at central and local level helping to push forward the change agenda with the focus on support to the most vulnerable, and promote sustainability of capacities and resources. |
| **Key action (s)** | **Time frame** | **Responsible unit (s)** | **Tracking** |
| **Comments** | **Status** |
| 1. Continue to provide technical support for the elaboration of the Social Care Plans of 17 other municipalities in close cooperation with other partners and duty bearers acting at central and local level and in *coordination and synergizing with the EU program on social inclusion.*
 | April - December 2020 | UNDP, UNICEF | LGU’s response to LNB support might be affected by current COVID-19 crises. | Ongoing |
| 1. Continue to provide technical support and capacity building to all LGUs and enable them to assess, plan and budget the measures for social care services targeting the most vulnerable communities and on how to address their needs through the Social Fund financing.
 | September- May 2021 | UNDP, UNICEF, SSS, LGUs | N/A | To begin upon the end of the COVID-19 emergency |
| **Evaluation recommendation 2.** Sustained policy dialogue with the partners is essential to expedite decision-making in each of the three areas identified\*. The functionality of the systems is central to the long-term success of the LNB programme and its intended development results/goals. Failure to operationalise the systems substantially hampers the monitoring of social inclusion.Principal Addressees (R2): LNB, MHSP, INSTAT\* Three identified areas: * Final inter-agency agreement for operational monitoring linked to the SIPD.
* Establishment and functioning of the Statistical Indicators and Integrity Group (SIIG).
* Functioning of the Social Protection MIS component module for local social services.
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| **Management response:**This recommendation is key in addressing the functionality of the social inclusion monitoring system, which only in the last year has marked some limited progress since its launch in 2016 (SILC 2017-2018 baselines released in 2019). LNB is committed to technically support and capacitate MHSP as the lead agency and other institutions (MoFE, MoESY, MoJ and MoC and INSTAT) at central level responsible for operational monitoring and evaluation linked to the Social Inclusion Policy Document (SIPD). The support aims at capacitating them to implement the Social Inclusion Policy Document 2016-2020. Capacity needs assessment of the responsible institutions and subordinate Agencies and Departments (MADs) will feed targeted capacity building activities along with other actions which will be integrated in LNB’s work plan following consultations with SDC and donors for the remaining period to enable functionality of the social inclusion monitoring system. In addition, UNDP management will seriously take up this recommendation in the development of the consolidation phase 2 of LNB, which will primarily aim at building up and consolidating the achievements of the current phase, consolidate the revised structures and contribute to full-fledged Social Care and Social Inclusion reform. A functional monitoring system would define and establish a process of assessment of the country’s performance and the efficiency of its social care services and social inclusion system. The operationalization of the social inclusion monitoring system in line with the Social Inclusion Policy Document will be a priority of this project phase. |
| **Key action (s)** | **Time frame** | **Responsible unit (s)** | **Tracking** |
| **Comments** | **Status** |
| 1. Revise the work plan of the current phase to address capacity building needs for establishment and functioning of the Statistical Indicators and Integrity Group (SIIG) with the participation from the core government institutions with responsibilities for social protection, employment and enterprise development, health, education, housing, justice and human rights. Support MoHSP to formalize SIIG membership and functions through a Ministerial Order and support induction training for the core and non-core appointed members on the SIIG functions and tasks.
 | May - December 2020 | UNDP, MoHSP, MoFE, MoESY, MoJ and MoC and INSTAT | N/A | Ongoing |
| 1. Facilitate an inter-agency effective dialogue under the guidance of the SIIG co-chairing institutions (MoHSP and INSTAT) to drive the implementation of initiatives and reforms of SIPD and in compliance with the current Employment, Skills and Social Policy sector IPMG.
 | September 2020 - January 2021 | UNDP, MoHSP, MoFE, MoESY, MoJ and MoC, INSTAT, IPMG | N/A | Ongoing |
| 1. Include conclusions and recommendations on capacity building the in the development of the consolidation phase of the programme
 | May 2021 | UNDP, SDC, PSC | N/A | Not started |
| **Evaluation recommendation 3.** Further technical support and encouragement should be provided via LNB to the LGUs to operationalize the MIS module for social services, and to the SSS to consolidate the process and also its capacities for analytical review of the data generated.Principal Addressees (R3): LNB, SSS, LGUs |
| **Management response:**Relevance of this recommendation is recognized to capacitate LGUS to operationalize the MIS module for social services. To this purpose, LNB is committed to technically support and capacitate MHSP to ensure the functioning of the Social Protection MIS component module for local social services by providing training and capacity support to 61 LGUs and 12 regional SSS on the use the MIS for social care services as data analysis for socials services planning, budgeting and quality assurance.   |
| **Key action (s)** | **Time frame** | **Responsible unit (s)** | **Tracking** |
| **Comments** | **Status** |
| 1. Ensure the functioning of the Social Protection MIS component module for local social services and continue to provide training and capacity support to 61 LGUs on the use the MIS for social care services.
 | September 2020 – May 2021 | UNICEF, MoHSP, SSS, LGUs | N/A | Started |
| 1. Capacitate the SSS on how to mentor the LGUs to populate the MIS with data, to analyse generated data and use it for better services planning, budgeting and quality assurance.
 | Third quarter 2020 | UNICEF | Postponed due to emergency situation | Not started |
| **Evaluation recommendation 4**: Sustainability strategies to support the full transfer of the results and their sustained operation by the partners should be developed via LNB in consultation with the relevant partners. While it is foreseen that a follow-up LNB phase may be undertaken, which could support partners to consolidate operation of the outputs/results, it is necessary to ensure that all of the first phase results are embedded within the partner organizations prior to the completion of the first phase in May 2021. Draft sustainability strategies to be achieved in 2020.Principal Addressees (R4): LNB, MHSP, MFE, MEYS, INSTAT, SSS, National Agency for Support of Local Self Governance |
| **Management response:** Ensuring sustainability of LNB’s investments and effects and the scaling-up of successful practices and innovations remains a constant concern and effort of LNB participating agencies, which have based their support to beneficiary partners at central and local level through (cross- and inter-) institutional partnerships and processes in order to better respond to their identified needs. LNB has developed a series of tools, knowledge products and methodologies with a multiplier effect potential for enhancement of capacities at local level contributing to improvement of services and strengthening of civic participation, transparency and good governance. (i.e. development of Local Action Plans, design of budget briefs).Additional support will target their internalization in beneficiaries’ practices of work to ensure sustainability of results and functional systems.  |
| **Key action (s)** | **Time frame** | **Responsible unit (s)** | **Tracking** |
| **Comments** | **Status** |
| 1. Involve public agencies (responsible ministries ASPA, ASCAP, National Agency for Support of Local Self Governance, SSS, LGUs) not only during project development phase and accounting their needs, but also in joint implementation of activities to encourage inert-institutional cooperation and communication, know-how exchange, innovative ways of knowledge transfer and sustaining developed and established systems at these institutions. Share the tools produced for the implementation of the policy and legal framework, the generated and tested models of social integrated services, and the capacity building resources (including methods, curricula, materials, etc.) through CDs and on-line (project’s/UNDP website, MOHSP website and ASPA’s website) to facilitate free access to civil servants and partners.
 | September 2020 – May 2021 | UNDP, MHSP, ASPA, ASCAP, National Agency for Support of Local Self Governance, SSS | N/A | Ongoing |
| 1. Map the best practices established and main results achieved and disseminate them through an effective communication strategy and a wrap up workshop to encourage learning and information sharing and knowledge transfer for the respective partners at local and central level. In partnership with Uni of Tirana, develop an online repository at Faculty of Social Work to be accessed by students graduating in social work and practicing social workers.
 | Third/Fourth quarter 2020 | UNICEF | N/A | Not started |
| 1. Conduct consultations with LGUs to identify ways to stimulate their ownership of achieved results in management and delivery of social services and a better take up. Develop the network of Social Welfare Directors of the supported LGUs to stimulate regular knowledge sharing and practices exchange.
 | Third/Fourth quarter 2020 | UNICEF | N/A | Not started |
| **Evaluation recommendation 5**: LNB team, supported as relevant by the UN partner agencies, should undertake a detailed review and as necessary revision of the indicators, baseline and target data utilized in the LNB programme performance framework (comments on the indicators and targets, and the relevance of the progress status data is provided by the evaluator in Annex 6).Principal Addressees (R5): LNB and UN partner agencies |
| **Management response:**This is a valid point. The log frame matrix was developed in a participatory process with all relevant stakeholders and included outcomes, outputs and indicators elaborated in support to the vision of an overall inclusive Albania in line with the SDGs, and with Albania’s aspiration for EU accession. Taking this recommendation into account, UNDP will carefully work on the revision of indicators include the revised log frame in the annual work plan for the 4th year and present it to the upcoming PSC for endorsement. |
| **Key action (s)** | **Time frame** | **Responsible unit (s)** | **Tracking** |
| **Comments** | **Status** |
| 1. Revise the log frame indicators based on available data and submit for approval at the upcoming PSC meeting. Review the work plan and report against the revised log frame indicators.
 | September – November 2020 | UNDP/LNB team & UN partner agencies, PSC | N/A | Not started |
| 1. Update the Performance Monitoring Framework with missing information, and revised baselines and targets.
 | September – November 2020 | UNDP/LNB team | N/A | Not started |
| **Future perspective (LNB - Phase 2)** |
| **Evaluation recommendation 6**: It is important for LNB to continue its efforts to support the government to strengthen the function and delivery operations (effectiveness/ efficiency) of the recently established set of state financing mechanisms for social inclusion and social care services.Primary Addressees (R6): LNB, MHSP, MFE, MEYS |
| **Management response:**This recommendation contributes to consolidating and sustaining the newly established financing mechanisms for social inclusion and social care services. LNB is committed to support the relevant public institutions to assess the functionality, efficiency and effectiveness of the current financing systems versus needs at local level and capitalize on the findings for the design of phase 2 of LNB. The LNB will strengthen the collaboration with the EUD to leverage and harmonize overall functionality, efficiency and effectiveness of the financing mechanisms. |
| **Key action (s)** | **Time frame** | **Responsible unit (s)** | **Tracking** |
| **Comments** | **Status** |
| 1. Assess jointly with the government partners the progress status of state financing mechanisms for social inclusion and social care services and the needs for its consolidation in order to use the assessment output as a source information for the background, objectives strategies and activities of the project document for the 2nd phase.
 | 2021 onwards | UNDP, MHSP, MFE, MEYS, SDC | The current COVID-19 crisis is expected to affect funding for the established financial mechanisms.  | Ongoing |
| **Evaluation recommendation 7**: It is important for LNB to continue to support consolidate the structures and processes for monitoring, evaluation and quality assurance of social service provision.Principal Addressees (R7): LNB, SSS |
| **Management response:**This is a valid point. Institutional development and capacity building of SSS and LGUs for monitoring, evaluation and quality assurance of social service provision will continue to be supported beyond finalization of the phase 1 of LNB programme. The next phase will build upon successful experience to address the need for further support (notably to SSS) to consolidate the national/ regional structures and processes for monitoring, evaluation and quality assurance of service provision. An integrated and structured approach will be followed, addressing institutional needs. ASPA will be an actor and factor in this process.  |
| **Key action (s)** | **Time frame** | **Responsible unit (s)** | **Tracking** |
| **Comments** | **Status** |
| 1. Develop a tailored (ToT) curriculum for SSS and deliver training on regional structures and processes for monitoring, evaluation and quality assurance of service provision. (UNDP)

Elaborate protocols for monitoring, evaluation and quality assurance of social service with clear lines of responsibility and accountability. (UNICEF) | 2021 onwards | UNDP, UNICEF, SSS  | N/A | Start with the commencement of the new project  |
| **Evaluation recommendation 8**: It is important for LNB to continue to support the development of social care models, notably to strengthen the take-up of service integration and the operation of a multi-service approach to social service delivery, and in the development of models and financing mechanisms for the sharing of social services between two or more LGUs.Principal Addressees (R8): LNB, SSS, LGUs, National Agency for Support of Local Self Governance |
| **Management response:** LNB is engaged in mapping the best practices in social care models and relevant financing mechanisms developed and implemented so far at local level with its support or other donors and disseminate them for further scale up at the end of phase 1 of the programme and provide further support for their consolidation and expansion in new LGUs in phase 2 of the programme. *The documentation and dissemination of the best practices are very important. Wherever possible these learnings should influence the national system and the social services delivery so that these best practices become an Albanian standard for the benefit of the Albanian people.* |
| **Key action (s)** | **Time frame** | **Responsible unit (s)** | **Tracking** |
| **Comments** | **Status** |
| 1. Plan support for the consolidation and scaling up of best practices in social care models and financing mechanisms.
 | 2021 onwards  | UNDP, MoHSP, SSS, LGUs | N/A | Not started |
| **Evaluation recommendation 9:** Supporting networking, knowledge sharing, peer to peer support, and the capitalization of experiences and results achieved so far: (1) between the different advocacy forums developed via LNB, so as to operate within regional and/or national networking platforms; (2) between the LGUs; (3) between social service providers.Principal Addressees (R9): LNB |
| **Management response:**LNB has supported so far networking, knowledge sharing and peer to peer support through a series of mechanisms introduced at local/central level: All these mechanisms will be documented and reviewed in the final report and resources will be allocated not only to consolidate them in phase 2 of the programme, but expand their use and availability by various partners.  |
| **Key action (s)** | **Time frame** | **Responsible unit (s)** | **Tracking** |
| **Comments** | **Status** |
| 1. Document the networking and knowledge sharing mechanisms established in end of phase 1 of LNB.
 | July-December 2020 | UNFPA; UNICEF | N/A | Ongoing |
| 1. Discuss with the key partners the capitalization of experiences and results achieved in supporting networking, knowledge sharing and peer to peer support. Build upon and scale up in phase 2 of LNB.
 | January 2021 | UNFPA; UNICEF | N/A | Not started |
| **Evaluation recommendation 10:** Supporting networking, knowledge sharing, and the capitalization of experiences and results achieved so far between local and central governments through facilitating the feedback flow from local to central government and follow up mechanisms.Principal Addressees (R10): LNB, National Agency for Support of Local Self Governance |
| **Management response:** This is a relevant recommendation to address in the current phase of LNB and account in its phase 2. Documentation of good practices and results of networking, knowledge sharing and feedback flow mechanisms between local and central governments will take place to identify ways for their consolidation and scale-up.  |
| **Key action (s)** | **Time frame** | **Responsible unit (s)** | **Tracking** |
| **Comments** | **Status** |
| 1. Document and showcase good practices and results of networking, knowledge sharing and feedback flow mechanisms between local and central government
 | Last quarter 2020 | UNICEF | N/A | Not started |
| 1. Identify ways/needs for their support for consolidation and scale-up.
 | Last quarter 2020 | UNICEF | N/A | Not started |
| **Evaluation recommendation 11:** Strengthening and intensifying awareness raising campaigns on social inclusion, particularly access and delivery of social services for marginalized communities.Principal Addressees (R11): LNB, MHSP, SSS |
| **Management response:**The relevance of this recommendation is recognized and will be accounted in the design of phase 2 of LNB. Support for ongoing communication and awareness raising on social inclusion for marginalized communities has been an important component of LNB Programme, which has increased progressively in weight. Efforts will be made to identify innovative and attractive public communication tools. |
| **Key action (s)** | **Time frame** | **Responsible unit (s)** | **Tracking** |
| **Comments** | **Status** |
| 1. Allocate needed resources in support of communication and awareness rising projects for the consolidation of the social services for marginalized communities and showcasing good examples of access and delivery of social services to vulnerable communities with potential of replication.
 | Last quarter 2020 | UNDP, UNICEF, UNFPA, UNWOMEN  | N/A | Ongoing |
| **Evaluation recommendation 12**: Explore with the MHSP and partners the possibilities of health and/or social insurance companies’ contribution to cover costs for social services or to co-share costs.Principal Addressees (R12): LNB, MHSP |
| **Management response:** This recommendation will be accounted in the design of phase of LNB to identify innovative schemes for financing/co-financing social services costs through further coordination with the World Bank and possibly with the EUD. |
| **Key action (s)** | **Time frame** | **Responsible unit (s)** | **Tracking** |
| **Comments** | **Status** |
| 1. Conduct research to explore the European/ international practices regarding the model of cost-sharing for social services in EU Member States (and in Switzerland).
 | 2021 | UNDP, MoHSP, ISS | N/A | Start with the commencement of the new project |
| 1. Conduct consultations with the MHSP, MFE and health and/or social insurance companies the potential and extent of contribution to social services and come up with recommendations as appropriate to include in phase 2 of LNB.
 | 2021 | UNDP, MoHSP, ISS | The current COVID-19 crisis might affect the availability of financial resources for financing/co-financing of social services costs. | Start with the commencement of the new project |
| **Evaluation recommendation 13:** Support CSOs that are interested to do so to transform into social enterprises and benefit from the Social Enterprise Fund.Principal Addressees (R13): LNB, MHSP, MFE |
| **Management response:**This recommendation will be addressed in the design of the phase 2 of LNB through consultations with CSOs community, MHSP and MFE to identify areas of relevant support. |
| **Key action (s)** | **Time frame** | **Responsible unit (s)** | **Tracking** |
| **Comments** | **Status** |
| 1. Conduct consultations with CSOs, interest groups, social businesses, MHSP and MFE to identify specific needs and type of support to enable interested CSOs to transform into social enterprises (i.e. (i) a start-up business plan (ii) the registration procedures to benefit from the Social Enterprise Fund (iii) improvement of legal framework)
 | 2021 | UNWOMEN | N/A | Not started |
| 1. Conduct a survey to map interested CSOs, interest groups, social businesses for conversion into social enterprises and survey existing with CSOs converted into social enterprises to identify their challenges of conversion to tailor the support.
 | 2021 | UNWOMEN | N/A | Not started |
| 1. Support coordination with the Swiss portfolio on VET and Job mediation and/or creation. Possible amendment of the law has to be envisaged.
 | 2021 | UNWOMEN | N/A | Not started |