Management response template

**UNDP management response template**

**Final Evaluation of the Joint Regional Project “Fostering dialogue social cohesion, in and between, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro and the Republic of Serbia”**

Date: 16 December 2021

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| **Evaluation recommendation 1. The FET recommends to continue with regionally-focused support to improving social cohesion, focusing on three countries (BiH, Montenegro and Serbia)**  The FET recommends continuing with the regional support to social cohesion that was available through the regional DFF. The initial step should be to carry out in-depth conflict sensitive situation analysis and identify core issues and challenges to social cohesion in three countries for the follow up intervention.  The FET recommends to expand the DFF Small Grants Facility, supporting innovative social cohesion initiatives with a clear regional focus and impact. The DFF should consider other topics that are relevant for the region and for building social cohesion. For example, addressing the adverse effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on social cohesion, considering environment as the topic by exploring opportunities to move to a clean, circular economy or working on restoring biodiversity and considering regional priorities (with reference to social cohesion, stability and regional perspective). | | | | |
| **Management response: The recommendation is accepted** | | | | |
| **Key action(s)** | **Completion date** | **Responsible unit(s)** | **Tracking\*** | |
| **Comments** | **Status**  **(initiated, completed or no due date)** |
| 1.1 A new joint regional project, focusing on elements of social cohesion, is currently being prepared for funding by the Peacebuilding Fund. | March 2022 | UNDP Serbia  UNESCO (regionally) | Funding is pending. | initiated |

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| **Evaluation recommendation 2. Enhance the understanding of the social cohesion in the region through involvement of authorities, CSOs, Academia and other structures**  The FET recommends exploring opportunities to expand activities to enhance understanding of the social cohesion among the stakeholders, partners and citizens. This could include public advocacy activities, public discussions and awareness events.  Some of the areas could be enhancing capacities of government bodies, CSOs and academia to advocate for social cohesion priorities in the policy-making processes and enhancing capacities to competently engage in policy dialogue and planning in the priority areas. | | | | |
| **Management response:** The recommendation is not accepted. The social cohesion priority is part of UNSDFs in all three countries and will be part of larger programming in each country. Promoting social cohesion as a concept in each country is too large a commitment for each UNCT. | | | | |
| **Key action(s)** | **Completion date** | **Responsible unit(s)** | **Tracking** | |
| **Comments** | **Status (initiated, completed or no due date)** |
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| **Evaluation recommendation 3. Consider longer timeframe for the new regional social cohesion initiative**  Achieving measurable changes in the target groups/ population attitudes and perceptions requires time and coordinated efforts of authorities, civil society and other national and international development partners. Therefore, the FET recommends that UN Agencies plan a new initiative considering a more extended timeframe (e.g., from five to ten years).  Considering complexity and sensitivity of social cohesion, the FET recommends a flexible implementation approach with organized mid-term review, and adjusting i.e. fine tuning the intervention to reflect changes in the environment. | | | | |
| **Management response: The recommendation is valid and accepted** | | | | |
| **Key action(s)** | **Completion date** | **Responsible unit** | **Tracking** | |
| **Comments** | **Status (initiated, completed or no due date)** |
| 3.1 Consultation meetings among DFF participating agencies are initiated and will continue, including Peacebuilding Fund, to find the most adequate framework for follow-on projects. | December 2022 | RCO BiH, Montenegro, Serbia |  | Initiated |
| **Evaluation recommendation 4. Enhance the use of social media to communicate activities and results**  The FET recommends sending social cohesion messages to the broader audience -youth- using most appropriate communication tools and channels. Some of the new platforms such as Tik Tok, Instagram, Twitter, Twitch, etc. | | | | |
| **Management response**: **The recommendation is partially accepted** | | | | |
| **Key action(s)** | **Completion date** | **Responsible unit** | **Tracking**  **Comments** | **Status (initiated, completed or no due date)** |
| 4.1 The DFF’s Facebook page accounts for 10,000 followers in all three project countries. The participating UN agencies will continue to post relevant content, as appropriate, using this and other social media channels. | December 2022 | Communications Staff of RCOs and DFF agencies |  | Initiated |
| **Evaluation recommendation 5.**   **The FET recommends that DFF supports regional networking and horizontal exchange of know-how among the experienced CSOs with the newly participating organizations**  Considering the capacities of partner institutions including CSOs in in the region, DFF should consider a long-term, needs-based capacity development approach under all its components. It is important to include knowledge tests at the end of each training program to assess immediate improvements in skills and knowledge.  In addition to delivery capacity development support, the Project should consider networking and exchange of knowledge and know-how among the experienced CSOs and newly awarded/ selected organizations. | | | | |
| **Management response**: The Recommendation is not accepted, given that regional networking and horizontal exchange of know-how is part of core activities implemented by DFF agencies in regional projects and also given the fact that DFF project ended. | | | | |
| **Key action(s)** | **Completion date** | **Responsible unit** | **Tracking comments** | **Status (initiated, completed or no due date)** |
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| **Evaluation recommendation 6. The next DFF should strengthen gender mainstreaming efforts and further expand “leaving no-one behind” principle**  The DFF should continue fighting exclusion and marginalisation, creating a sense of belonging, promoting trust, and offer marginalized groups the opportunity to benefit from different activities.  Also, gender equality should remain one of the priority thematic areas for the DFF’s support, especially that gender differences remain in all spheres, preventing achievement of greater social cohesion. | | | | |
| **Management response: The Recommendation is valid and accepted** | | | | |
| **Key action(s)** | **Completion date** | **Responsible unit** | **Tracking**  **Comments** | **Status (initiated, completed or no due date)** |
| 6.1. Gender mainstreaming and ‘leaving no one behind’ principle are part of the essential imperatives in all programming design processes, including the new regional project being prepared. | December 2023 | UNDP Serbia  UNESCO (regionally) |  | Initiated |
| **Evaluation recommendation 7.**  **Participating agencies (UNDP, UNICEF and UNESCO) should work to strengthen steering and advisory structures and ensure its strategic guidance for DFF implementation, through regular meetings and involvement of senior level representatives.**  It is also important to ensure that national stakeholders from non-governmental structures participate in these structures.  To avoid challenges with implementation of joint UN initiatives (decentralized management and UN-agency specific focus) it is recommended to strengthen the mandate of regional management team, and ensure direct management lines with the country level teams.  The FET recommends to intensify joint planning through preparation of Annual/ Bi-annual Work Plans (WPs), setting the basis for holistic and integrated implementation. | | | | |
| **Management response: The Recommendation is not accepted, as future joint regional project does not involve all DFF agencies.** | | | | |
| **Key action(s)** | **Completion date** | **Responsible unit** | **Tracking**  **Comments** | **Status (initiated, completed or no due date)** |
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| **Evaluation recommendation 8.** **The FET recommends that the UNDP, UNICEF and UNESCO in BiH, Montenegro and Serbia explore and work on new partnerships and diversification of funding opportunities.**  The need for additional funding, especially in the post-COVID-19 recovery, will increase. The FET recommends that UNDP, UNICEF and UNESCO explore other funding opportunities for new social cohesion initiatives. | | | | |
| **Management response: The Recommendation is partially accepted provided that currently there is only donor (PBF) in the peace building area.** | | | | |
| **Key action(s)** | **Completion date** | **Responsible unit** | **Tracking**  **Comments** | **Status (initiated, completed or no due date)** |
| 8.1 A follow-up project initiative is being drafted in BiH, where DFF can continue to build on the gains made over several years of UN agencies’ work. | April 2022 | RCO BiH, UNICEF, UNDP and UNESCO BIH |  | Initiated |
| **Evaluation recommendation 9.**  **The FET recommends that participating UN Agencies, in partnership with the national stakeholders, prepare clear and practical sustainability strategy under and perform regular analysis of risks and assumptions**  At the current stage of development of social cohesion related systems, structures and capacities within three countries, it is important to consider and provide a longer-term and needs-based capacity development assistance. It is especially important to continue work on the development of capacity for policy making and implementation.  The role of the national stakeholders in the implementation of DFF could not be overstated- it is recommended to enhance and ensure genuine involvement of national partners in all activities, from planning to implementation of interventions within social cohesion framework.  The FET recommends to UNCTs of participating countries to expand its partnership with CSOs, media and academia. | | | | |
| **Management response: The Recommendation is not accepted as the new joint regional DFF project has not been initiated, involving participating UN agencies.** | | | | |
| **Key action(s)** | **Completion date** | **Responsible unit** | **Tracking**  **Comments** | **Status (initiated, completed or no due date)** |
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\* Status of implementation is tracked electronically in the ERC database.