

Management response template

UNDP management response

External Mid-Term Review of 'The Provincial Governance and Public Administration Performance Index (PAPI)' Project

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Evaluation recommendation 1. *Several recommendations exist for structural simplification and depth of information collected, including expanding the sample size and deepening the question layers in the sub-dimensions of Participation, Public Services, and Accountability*

Management response:

- We note that the bigger the sample size is, the less data variation we will have. We hope that in the next phase of PAPI, if funding allows, we will be able to expand the sample size and revamp the methodology to survey in more communes.
- The PAPI questionnaire is updated annually to ensure that information collected and measured stays relevant. For indicators used directly for PAPI calibration, revisions are carefully made after several years to allow index stability. The 2018 PAPI introducing two new governance dimensions and replaced some indicators.
- We note the importance of justifying quantifiable indicators by raising WHY questions more often. Given the time limit for each survey and given the fact that not all possible explanations can be anticipated to lay out for respondents to choose, we also encourage deeper qualitative studies by think-tanks and research institutions using PAPI data, while we do our best to capture more of the WHY.

Key action(s)	Completion date	Responsible unit(s)	Tracking*	
			Comments	Status (initiated, completed or no due date)
1.1 Revise 2020 PAPI survey questionnaire	July 2020	GPT		Initiated
1.2				
1.3				

Evaluation recommendation 2. *It is recommended that the Vietnam Fatherland Front (VFF) takes a more formal stand with PAPI at the central level. This could be in the form of written correspondence acknowledging the involvement of the Centre for Research and Training of the Vietnam Fatherland*

Front (VFF-CRT) in the PAPI process. Also, the VFF is expected to include more PAPI findings in its regular reports to the National Assembly.

Management response:

- We are aware of the benefit of engaging further with VFF at the central level to deepen the policy advocacy of PAPI at central level. We will work further with the Consortium of CECODES and the VFF-CRT to engage the VFF and VFF-CRT more deeply as recommended.
- It is encouraging that, during the briefing of the mid-term review team, the VFF-CRT representative noted the recommendation, and said he would report to VFF leaders about the suggestion that VFF could utilize PAPI data formally to report to relevant agencies, as a way to strengthen their oversight roles.

Key action(s)	Completion date	Responsible unit(s)	Tracking	
			Comments	Status (initiated, completed or no due date)
2.1 Engage senior leaders of VFF in PAPI Advisory Board	December 2019	Governance and Participation Team (GPT), UNDP Viet Nam	Mr. Nguyen Huu Dung, the Standing Vice President of VFF attended the 2019 PAPI Advisory Board	Completed
2.2				
2.3				

Evaluation recommendation 3. *Support should be given to the Ho Chi Minh National Academy of Politics (HCMA) to achieve its aim to create formalized curricula on PAPI to use in its training courses, considering the deep and long-term implications of such an effort.*

Management response:

- We will work further with the HCMA to advocate for the inclusion of PAPI within the Academy’s executive training courses, as we have been engaging with them over the past eight years.
- We note that curriculum development requires financial resources. We will work with the HCMA to explore potential funding resources (as we did work with the Embassy of Belgium earlier).

Key action(s)	Completion date	Responsible unit(s)	Tracking	
			Comments	Status (initiated,

				completed or no due date)
3.1 Integrate PAPI in Executive training course of HCMA	Dec 2019	Governance and Participation Team (GPT), UNDP Viet Nam	PAPI concept and findings were integrated in session on “facilitating government” by Deputy Prime Minister Vuong Dinh Hue on 29 August 2019 at HCMA’s executive training course for executive government officials	Completed
3.2				
3.3				
Evaluation recommendation 4. Provincial level action research and diagnostic workshops should continue				
<p>Management response:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ We will work further with relevant national partners to conduct action research to identify what works, what does not work and why in provinces’ efforts to improve their performance in governance, public administration and public service delivery. ➤ We appreciate the suggestion that we should reengage with the Training Centre for Elected Representatives that we once were engaged with to guide People’s Councils on how to use PAPI data for their queries at provincial, district and commune meetings. If additional funding were available, elected representatives will be another important target for deeper diagnostics of PAPI findings so that they can use the data to substantiate their query sessions with local governments in decision-making. 				
Key action(s)	Completion date	Responsible unit(s)	Tracking	
			Comments	Status (initiated, completed or no due date)
4.1 Conduct at least 10 Provincial PAPI diagnostic workshops after the launching of PAPI 2019 report	December 2020	Governance and Participation Team (GPT), UNDP Viet Nam		Initiated

4.3				
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Evaluation recommendation 5. *At the central level, relationships should be strengthened with National Assembly (NA) and information on PAPI shared with the central agencies via a small formal workshop*

Management response:

- We note the importance of these thematic discussions with high-level policymakers at the central level, and PAPI team members do attend such thematic policy dialogues (like discussions on SEDS, SDGs, E-Government, Vietnam Development Forums, the National Assembly thematic discussions for inputs in draft laws like the Law on Public administration, etc.).
- Subject to additional funding, more high-level policy dialogues at the central level could be convened on critical issues of great interest for policymakers. This can be an additional output in the next phase of the PAPI project (after 2021).

Key action(s)	Completion date	Responsible unit(s)	Tracking	
			Comments	Status (initiated, completed or no due date)
5.1 Provide PAPI publications to National Assembly Delegates prior to its plenary session in May 2020	May 2020	Governance and Participation Team (GPT), UNDP Viet Nam		Initiated
5.2 Continue to engage members of the National Assembly in PAPI Advisory Board meeting	December 2019	Governance and Participation Team (GPT), UNDP Viet Nam	Ms. Tran Thi Quoc Khanh, Standing Member of NA's Committee for Science, Technology & Environment attended the 2019 PAPI Advisory Board meeting	Completed,
5.3				

Evaluation recommendation 6. *Members of the Office of the Government (OOG) and the Ideological Commission of the party should be invited to join the PAPI advisory board.*

- **Management response:** We will work further with the Consortium of CECODES-VFF/CRT to engage with more representatives from the Party's commissions, Government agencies, the NA, the VFF in the PAPI Advisory Board.

Key action(s)	Completion date	Responsible unit(s)	Tracking*	
			Comments	Status

				(initiated, completed or no due date)
6.1 Member of OOG to join PAPI Advisory Board	December 2019	Governance and Participation Team (GPT), UNDP Viet Nam	Mr. Ngo Hai Phan, Director General of Administrative Procedures Control Agency of OOG is officially assigned to join PAPI Board. Two of his staff attended the 2019 PAPI Advisory Board meeting	Completed
6.2 Member of the Central Theory Council (CTC) to attend the PAPI Advisory Board meeting	December 2019	Governance and Participation Team (GPT), UNDP Viet Nam	Mr. Dinh Xuan Thao, member of CTC, former member of the NA Steering Committee attended the 2019 PAPI Advisory Board meeting	Completed
6.3				
<p>Evaluation recommendation 7. <i>Inter-provincial sharing of learnings and best practices on policy and action plan development and implementation should be bolstered to help continue the accelerating activity among provinces.</i></p>				
<p>Management response:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ We will work further with provincial governments to foster sharing of good practices and accelerate innovative ideas between provinces through regional workshops when/if the project is further resourced. ➤ We will also advise provincial leaders to organise such sharing and learning events from their own budgets as some provinces (like Da Nang, Quang Ninh and Binh Dinh) have already done. 				
Key action(s)	Completion date	Responsible unit(s)	Tracking	
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7.1 Foster sharing of best practices through at least 10 PAPI 2019 diagnostic workshops	December 2020	Governance and Participation Team (GPT), UNDP Viet Nam	See action 4.1.	Initiated
7.2				
7.3				

Evaluation recommendation 8. *UNDP should set up an M&E system to try and directly capture the degree of implementation of policy responses to PAPI*

Management response:

- We have collected information about provincial responses and document these in annual PAPI reports for a two-fold purpose: (1) to push non-responding provinces to take actions; and (2) to give credit for provinces with proactiveness in responding to their citizens feedback from PAPI. This has been at the results level rather than at the impact level. The current M&E system to document provincial responses in annual PAPI reports and on PAPI website at <http://papi.org.vn/quyet-sach-cua-chinh-quyen-dia-phuong-ve-papi> will be continued.
- We will attempt to collect evidence of actual measures undertaken by provinces in some governance areas. During PAPI diagnostic workshops, provinces often report on current or future measures to help improve some of the PAPI indicators and scores. The PAPI team could check on these measures. That will also help capturing some of the good practices put in place by local governments.
- We will also encourage provincial leaders to provide a link on their provincial website under the theme Provincial Governance Indices to post all diagnostic workshop materials, provincial follow-up action plans/activities and direct to websites of PAPI, PCI, PAR and SIPAP for collective learning and monitoring.
- With more financial resources, as suggested in the MTR report, a more systematic M&E framework to monitor impacts of provincial action plans can be feasible, while we note that to collect information about impact required deeper analysis of contexts, attributes and thorough independent research at national and provincial levels. We understand that the M&E system will help UNDP and its national partners gather good practices to share with poor performing provinces.

Key action(s)	Completion date	Responsible unit(s)	Tracking*	
			Comments	Status (initiated, completed or no due date)
8.1 Explore with HCMA to stock-taking their previously conducted PAPI action researches in 33 provinces to produce a policy brief on best practices in provincial governance and degree of provincial implementation	December 2020	Governance and Participation Team (GPT), UNDP Viet Nam		Initiated
8.2				
8.3				

Evaluation recommendation 9. *PAPI's key partners can now consider how the project can sensitively work towards greater impact in terms of policy advocacy at the central government level, while maintaining the integrity of PAPI's research.*

Management response:

- We will proactively invite co-funding partners to attend and speak at PAPI workshops that are funded by the PAPI project (like the national PAPI report launches and provincial action-research activities).
- We will also share information about diagnostic workshops convened and funded by provinces to keep them informed and let them decide to partake in.
- As mentioned above, UNDP will work with CECODES to further engage VFF in policy advocacy using PAPI findings and data. Our future efforts to engage with central players and other relevant organizations who promote good governance will strengthen policy advocacy impacts.

Key action(s)	Completion date	Responsible unit(s)	Tracking	
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9.1 Meet with donors to agree on PAPI team's frequent sharing of diagnostic workshop agendas for funding partners to attend and speak at PAPI workshops in 2020	December 2019	Governance and Participation Team (GPT), UNDP Viet Nam	Australian Embassy attended PAPI workshop in Hanoi in July 2019 and in Binh Duong in August 2019	Completed
9.2				
9.3				

Evaluation recommendation 10. *To fully represent the voice of the people and to recognize the connection of policy development from the central to provincial levels, inclusion of recently emerged thematic issues in the existing survey framework is recommended*

Management response:

- We note that most of the informants wish us to address topical issues of concern for Government officials and the National Assembly delegates (e.g. PPP/BOT/BT infrastructure projects and socialization/privatization of education and healthcare services). The PAPI team has tried to explore possibilities to measure BOT/BT issues in the 2019 PAPI questionnaire but hasn't collected enough supporting materials to see the scope and scale of those projects by province.
- We wish to clarify that PAPI Questionnaire is composed of two main components: questions that make PAPI indicators and the index, and questions that measure hot issues/top concerns among policymakers and the public and helps anticipate policy interventions in draft laws and regulations. We are mindful of expectations, while for sure we need to venture into more topical/sensitive issues that the Government of Vietnam

and National Assembly expect to hear citizen voices (indeed we should feel inspired thanks to additional requests from state officials as such, as it proves that PAPI is a ‘forum’ for policy discussions.).

Key action(s)	Completion date	Responsible unit(s)	Tracking	
			Comments	Status (initiated, completed or no due date)
10.1 Pilot Geographic Information System (GIS) in sampling of PAPI 2020 survey to improve sample representation	November 2020	Governance and Participation Team (GPT), UNDP Viet Nam		Initiated
10.2 Provide PAPI policy paper to the Central Theory Council (CTC) for the drafting of Vietnam 2021-2030 Socio-Economic Development Strategy	December 2019	Governance and Participation Team (GPT), UNDP Viet Nam	Ms. Caitlin Wiesen, UNDP Resident Representative presented PAPI findings at the consultation workshop of CTC on 28 June 2019	Completed
10.3				

Evaluation recommendation 11. *For long term achievement of outcomes and to maintain the independence and reliability of PAPI’s outcomes, international funding partners will need to remain engaged until more innovative funding mechanisms may be considered.*

Management response:

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- We will work closely with our current donors, including the Australian DFAT and Irish Aid to explore potential extension of their funding for PAPI towards 2026 to cover PAPI for at least another government term. We note the importance of an independent/external monitoring tool to monitor how Viet Nam progresses towards a more citizen-centric, growth facilitating governance and public administration system.

Key action(s)	Completion date	Responsible unit(s)	Tracking*	
			Comments	Status (initiated, completed or no due date)
11.1 Submit request for further funding to potential donors for 2021-2025 period	December 2019	Governance and Participation Team (GPT), UNDP Viet Nam	Request was submitted and	Completed

			discussed with DFAT	
11.2				
11.3				

* Status of implementation is tracked electronically in the ERC database.