ASM-06037 - Quality Assurance - Closure

Procedure Year: 2024

Procedure Rating: Exemplary

Procedure Status: Approved

Procedure Name: ASM-06037

Procedure Department: CO - Albania - Tirana

Procedure Type: Closure

Record Owner: Entela Lako

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Portofolio/Project Type: Project

RELATED PORTFOLIOS/PROJECTS (1)

NAME	PORTOFOLIO/PROJECT NAME	DEPARTMENT	STATUS	ATLAS PROJECT NUMBER	START DATE	END DATE
00120786	EU4Schools phase I-UNDP-ALB-00120786	CO - Albania - Tirana	Financially Closed	00126861	4/1/2020	12/31/2024

Approval Information

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Approved By: Francisco ROQUETTE <francisco.roquette@undp.org>

APPROVAL HISTORY

STEP NAME	DATE	STATUS	ASSIGNED TO
Submitted for Approval	2024-07-10 07:11:40	Approved	Francisco ROQUETTE
Approval Request Submitted	2024-07-10 06:45:32	Started	Entela Lako

QA Questionnaire:

Strategic | Status: Complete | Quality Rating: Exemplary

1. Did the project pro-actively identified changes to the external environment and incorporated them into the project strategy?

- (selected) 3: The project team has identified relevant changes in the external environment that may present new opportunities or threats to the project's ability to achieve its objectives and the assumptions have been tested to determine if the project's strategy is still valid. There is evidence that the project board has considered the implications, and documented any changes needed to the project in response. (all must be true)
- 2: The project team has identified relevant changes in the external environment that may present new opportunities or threats to the project's ability to achieve its objectives. There is some evidence that the project board discussed this, but relevant changes may not have been fully integrated in the project. (both must be true)
- 1: The project team may have considered relevant changes in the external environment since implementation began, but there is no evidence that the project team has considered changes to the project as a result.

Evidence (Enter a short explanation or upload a document that provides evidence for your response)

The programme has periodically and closely monitored the external factors potentially affecting the programme and has documented them.
The biggest external factor affecting the project strategy after COVID-19, was the war in Ukraine and the continuous Exchange Rates fluctuations. Albania was impacted by the energy supply crisis and the power supply disruption. The Government of Albania

(GoA) declared the state of Emergency for Energy; while the price and provision of energy to families and small businesses was guaranteed by the GoA, mid and big businesses had to secure their own energy supply, paying market prices. In addition, price and supply of construction raw materials (iron, cement, fuel etc.), was destabilized due to the supply chain disruption. The price hike limited the availability of these materials. As such, some contractors submitted requests for increasing costs of civil works and amending the timeframe for project implementation. UNDP Albania carried market research to investigate the impact on the availability and price of construction materials.
The exchange rates of Albanian Lekë (ALL) to Euro/USD fluctuated substantially, with ALL gaining strength vis-a-vis EUR and USD compared to previous years of programme implementation. These fluctuations impacted the programme's budget and its implementation:
1) USD – As the base currency for UNDP, expenses are converted into USD based on the UN Operational Rates of Exchange rates (UN ORE), effective on the date of their transactions;
(ii) EUR – as the base currency for financial reporting to the donor, expenses are converted from USD to EUR based on the UN ORE rates, effective on the date the EU contributions were received by UNDP;
(iii) ALL – The base currency of all contracts with local contracts in Albania.
The programme identified and mitigated the implementation risks through careful monitoring, planning, and a proactive approach to minimize negative impacts.

2. Was the project aligned with the thematic focus of the Strategic Plan?

- (selected) 3: The project responds at least one of the development settings as specified in the Strategic Plan (SP) and adopts at least one Signature Solution and the project's RRF includes at all the relevant SP output indicators. (all must be true)
- 2: The project responds to one of the three areas of development work as specified in the Strategic Plan. The project's RRF includes at least one SP output indicator, if relevant. (both must be true)
- 1: While the project may respond to a partner's identified need, this need falls outside the UNDP Strategic Plan. Also select this option if none of the relevant SP indicators are included in the RRF.

Evidence (Enter a short explanation or upload a document that provides evidence for your response)

The programme was linked to several sustainable development goals and aimed to support national and local governments in reducing further social and economic losses, and to accelerate the recovery process through educational facility repairs and reconstruction.
By delivering its objectives, the programme contributed to achievement of the targets set within the Sustainable Development Agenda 2030, more specifically: SDG 4 "Quality education", SDG 9 "Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure", SDG 10 "Reduced Inequalities", SDG 16 "Peace, justice and strong institutions" and SDG 17 "Partnership for the Goals".

The programme responded to – Build resilience to shocks and crises- development area and incorporated one of the signature solutions- enhance national prevention and recovery capacities for resilient societies.

The project was linked to GOA-UN programme of Cooperation for sustainable development 2022-2026.
Output 2. Education: Educational institutions have improved infrastructure, services, and tools to offer inclusive learning and skills to boys and girls, especially from vulnerable groups.
It was also linked with the GoA reconstruction plan and PDNA assessment as well as the National Strategy on Education.

Relevant	Status: Complete	Quality Rating: Exemplary

3. Are the project's targeted groups, and particularly those marginalized, vulnerable and left further behind (LNOB), being systematically engaged, with a priority focus on the discriminated and marginalized, to ensure the project leaves no one behind (LNOB) and remains relevant for them?

- (selected) 3: Systematic and structured feedback was collected over the project duration from a representative sample of beneficiaries, with a priority focus on the discriminated and marginalized, as part of the project's monitoring system. Representatives from the targeted groups were active members of the project's governance mechanism (i.e., the project board or equivalent) and there is credible evidence that their feedback informs project decision making. (all must be true)
- 2: Targeted groups were engaged in implementation and monitoring, with a priority focus on the discriminated and marginalized. Beneficiary feedback, which may be anecdotal, was collected regularly to ensure the project addressed local priorities. This information was used to inform project decision making. (all must be true to select this option)

1: Some beneficiary feedback may have been collected, but this information did not inform project decision making. This option should also be selected if no beneficiary feedback was collected

Not Applicable

Evidence (Enter a short explanation or upload a document that provides evidence for your response)

Systematic and structured feedback was collected over the past year from a representative sample of beneficiaries, with a priority focus on the discriminated and marginalized, as part of the project's monitoring system. As per the programme's well-defined strategy, different targeted group, including local government, local service providers of education, children, students and their families in the areas affected by the earthquake, teachers and academic staff, and local communities, were engaged throughout implementation stages. This ensured through an important implementing pillar of the programme, the Build Back Together, thanks to which consultation meetings and monitoring visits were organised in which participated respectively 665 and 321 participants (618 women and 368). Moreover, satisfaction surveys were completed from 253 people (out of 321 people participating in the monitoring visits); 89.33% were very satisfied with the results of the programme.

Link: https://app.powerbi.com/view?r=eyJrIjoiZTE1M2Q1NzctZTdjOC00NzUwLWE3ODktZTJiZWU3YWQyYTg0IiwidCI6ImIzZTVkYjVlLTI5NDQtNDgzNy05OWY1LTc0ODhhY2U1NDMxOSIsImMiOjh9&pageName=ReportSection

4. Did the project generate knowledge, and lessons learned (i.e., what has worked and what has not) and has this knowledge informed management decisions to ensure the continued relevance of the project towards its stated objectives, the quality of its outputs and the management of risk?

3: Knowledge and lessons learned from internal or external sources (gained, for example, from Peer Assists, After Action Reviews or Lessons Learned Workshops) backed by credible evidence from evaluation, corporate policies/strategies, analysis and monitoring were discussed in project board meetings and reflected in the minutes. There is clear evidence that changes were made to the project to ensure its continued relevance. (both must be true)

2: Knowledge and lessons learned backed by relatively limited evidence, drawn mainly from within the project, were considered by the project team. There is some evidence that changes were made to the project as a result to ensure its continued relevance. (both must be true)

1: There is limited or no evidence that knowledge and lessons learned were collected by the project team. There is little or no evidence that this informed project decision making.

Evidence (Enter a short explanation or upload a document that provides evidence for your response)

Lessons learned were presented in the progress reports and final report prepared by the programme.
In addition, lessons learned contributed to improvements in the EU4Schools Phase II implementation. Some of the lessons learned were:
- It is necessary to account for longer application time for building permits, in order to avoid applications for permit extension in case delays happen during the project implementation.
- Demolition of existing facilities by the municipalities was typically not sufficient for the contractors to start working. An additional demolition and debris removal process was often needed in all sites where new schools were built.
- Coordination with municipalities so as to complete the required procedures for electrical, water and sewer connections needs to start well in advance, so that no delays happen because of missing electricity or water connection. For example, the completion of the civil works at the "Derede" Kindergarten in Krujë Municipality were delayed by two months. Same for the testing and commissioning of "Haxhi Qira" Kindergarten and 9-year school in Krujë Municipality which was postponed due to the delay in connecting the power supply of this educational facility with the main electrical grid.
- Attending site visits and pre-bid conference by the bidders prior to submission of bids should be strongly encouraged to enable them to get more realistic estimation of the anticipated costs.
- During the consultation process there was a high interest for participation on the part of students and teachers, though Covid-19 limitations do not allow for large group gatherings. A video presentation was prepared and shared prior to the consultation meeting with all parties invited in the meeting. This allowed for the participants (children, students, teachers, parents, and local authorities) to review the project proposals and provide insightful feed-back in the consultation events.

5. Was the project sufficiently at scale, or is there potential to scale up in the future, to meaningfully contribute to development change?

- [x] 3: There was credible evidence that the project reached sufficient number of beneficiaries (either directly through significant coverage of target groups, or indirectly, through policy change) to meaningfully contribute to development change.
- [ ] 2: While the project was not considered at scale, there are explicit plans in place to scale up the project in the future (e.g. by extending its coverage or using project results to advocate for policy change).
- [ ] 1: The project was not at scale, and there are no plans to scale up the project in the future.

Evidence (Enter a short explanation or upload a document that provides evidence for your response)

The EU4Schools integrated programme has reached 11 municipalities in Albania - all the municipalities affected by the earthquake. The programme has impacted, directly or indirectly, more than 1 million Albanians or about one third of the Albanian population. In addition, the programme generated trust, leading not only to its second phase, but also enabling the funding of two new similar projects, namely: CIS and CERS. Its transparency portal, the monitoring system, data collection, analysis and quality assurance were selected as a flagship project by the UNDP's Crisis Academy.
Moreover, the Build Back Together of the programme, is being voluntarily used by some of the impacted Municipalities which with the EU4Schools operates, to guarantee participation and inclusion in all their infrastructure projects.
In addition, the programme reaches out to the Albanian audience thanks to its transparency portal www.eu4schoolsportal.al.

Principled	Status: Complete	Quality Rating: Exemplary

6. Were the project's measures (through outputs, activities, indicators) to address gender inequalities and empower women relevant and produced the intended effect? If not, evidence-based adjustments and changes were made.

- [x] 3: The project team has systematically gathered data and evidence through project monitoring on the relevance of the measures to address gender inequalities and empower women. Analysis of data and evidence were used to inform adjustments and changes, as appropriate. (both must be true)
- [ ] 2: The project team had some data and evidence on the relevance of the measures to address gender inequalities and empower women. There is evidence that at least some adjustments were made, as appropriate. (both must be true)
- [ ] 1: The project team had limited or no evidence on the relevance of measures to address gender inequalities and empowering women. No evidence of adjustments and/or changes made. This option should also be selected if the project has no measures to address gender inequalities and empower women relevant to the project results and activities.

Evidence (Enter a short explanation or upload a document that provides evidence for your response)

The programme had a comprehensive and detailed monitoring system, and regularly gathered data and evidence on the relevance of measures to address gender issues. Women and girls were consulted at all stages of the project cycle in order to identify potential gendered risks and design prevention/mitigation strategies. Thanks to this system, women not only were engaged, but they sustained the majority of all the participants. In addition, the infrastructural designs of targeted facility had a keen focus on women and girls' specific needs. Construction companies were encouraged to involve more women in their processes.

7. Were social and environmental impacts and risks successfully managed and monitored?

- [x] 3: Social and environmental risks were tracked in the risk log. Appropriate assessments conducted where required (i.e., Environmental and Social Impact Assessment (ESIA) for High risk projects and some level of social and environmental assessment for Moderate risk projects as identified through SESP). Relevant management plan(s) developed for identified risks through consultative process and implemented, resourced, and monitored. Risks effectively managed or mitigated. If there is a substantive change to the project or change in context that affects risk levels, the SESP was updated to reflect these changes. (all must be true)
- [ ] 2: Social and environmental risks were tracked in the risk log. Appropriate assessments were conducted where required (i.e., Environmental and Social Impact Assessment (ESIA) for high/substantial-risk projects and targeted assessments for moderate risk projects as identified through SESP). Relevant management plan(s) developed, implemented, and monitored for identified risks. Select this option for SESP exempted projects and/or categorized as low risk through the SESP.
- [ ] 1: Social and environmental risks were tracked in the risk log. For projects categorized as High or Moderate Risk, there was no evidence that social and environmental assessments completed and/or management plans or measures development, implemented or monitored. There are substantive changes to the project or changes in the context but SESP was not updated. (any may be true)

Evidence (Enter a short explanation or upload a document that provides evidence for your response)

Social and environmental risks were identified in the Description of Action, Section 7, and they were properly tracked in the risk log and effectively managed and mitigated. The risk log in Atlas and Quantum systems was regularly updated. The programme was deliberate in reviewing all SES risks, which are in line with the Albanian law and best practices. For instance, rubble generated due to destruction or damage caused by the earthquake are referred to as "Construction and Demolition Waste" (C&D Waste). The programme implemented the EU Construction & Demolition Waste Management Protocol in the post-earthquake reconstruction process.
Inert waste was disposed of on local available dumpsites and landfills, using it as much as possible to improve the sites, or to use it as cover materials. Hazardous waste and special waste were treated and disposed of separately and according to their hazard potential.

8. Were grievance mechanisms available to project-affected people and were grievances (if any) addressed to ensure any perceived harm was effectively mitigated?

- (selected) 3: Project-affected people actively informed of UNDP's Corporate Accountability Mechanism (SRM/SECU) and how to access it. If the project was categorized as High or Moderate Risk through the SESP, a project -level grievance mechanism was in place and project affected people informed. If grievances were received, they were effectively addressed in accordance with SRM Guidance. (all must be true)
- 2: Project-affected people have been informed of UNDP's Corporate Accountability Mechanism and how to access it. If the project is categorized as High Risk through the SESP, a project -level grievance mechanism is in place and project affected people informed. If grievances have been received they are responded to but face challenges in arriving at a resolution. Select this option for SESP Exempted projects.
- 1: Project-affected people was not informed of UNDP's Corporate Accountability Mechanism. If grievances were received, they were not responded to. (any may be true)

Evidence (Enter a short explanation or upload a document that provides evidence for your response)

The EU4Schools programme was designed to mitigate the negative impacts of the November 2019 earthquake. EU4Schools was implemented by UNDP Albania, yet a close partnership was formed with the Government of Albania and 5 impacted Municipalities, to better address all issues and concerns occurring during the implementation phase.
Based on the analysis of the programme's objectives and activities, no direct impacts were anticipated. Construction related activities were carried in close partnership and with the legal permissions provided by the central and local government.
In regard to all other activities, a team of community coordinators was established to guarantee all community raised issues were gathered, noted and addressed by the partnership with Government of Albania. Nevertheless, there were established mechanisms to address any unforeseen grievances:
1) EU4Schools community coordinators team, based on the principle of "Build Back Together" and through established activities, involved the community (direct and indirect beneficiaries) in all the construction phases. Consultation meetings were organised with beneficiaries prior to the approval of the technical designs to reflect their needs and opinions. Place checks were organised as civil works were about to complete. Based on satisfaction surveys carried when civil works were completed, their level of satisfactions is measured.
2) The EU4Schools transparency portal offers abundant information on all activities, costs, and contractors of the programme. Through the portal, all interested parties can write to UNDP Albania and require more information or address a complain.
3) All parties who want to be anonymous UNDP whistleblowing mechanism which can address all potential grievances without retaliations towards the whistle-blower.

Management & Monitoring	Status: Complete	Quality Rating: Exemplary

9. Was the project's M&E Plan adequately implemented?

- (selected) 3: The project had a comprehensive and costed M&E plan. Baselines, targets and milestones were fully populated. Progress data against indicators in the project's RRF was reported regularly using credible data sources and collected according to the frequency stated in the Plan, including sex disaggregated data as relevant. Any evaluations conducted, if relevant, fully meet decentralized evaluation standards, including gender UNEG standards. Lessons learned, included during evaluations and/or After-Action Reviews, were used to take corrective actions when necessary. (all must be true)
- 2: The project costed M&E Plan, and most baselines and targets were populated. Progress data against indicators in the project's RRF was collected on a regular basis, although there was may be some slippage in following the frequency stated in the Plan and data sources was not always reliable. Any evaluations conducted, if relevant, met most decentralized evaluation standards. Lessons learned were captured but were used to take corrective actions. (all must be true)

1: The project had M&E Plan, but costs were not clearly planned and budgeted for, or were unrealistic. Progress data was not regularly collected against the indicators in the project's RRF. Evaluations did not meet decentralized evaluation standards. Lessons learned were rarely captured and used. Select this option also if the project did not have an M&E plan.

Evidence (Enter a short explanation or upload a document that provides evidence for your response)

Monitoring was based on two principles: (i) achievements of all targets and key performance indicators as set by the programme's logical framework, and (ii) successful implementation of the two implementing pillars of EU4schools, "Build Back Better" and "Build Back Together".
A data collection system was created using Sharepoint and Power BI; Insights and analytics of the raw data were later shared with the public through the EU4Schools transparency portal. The Transparency Portal structure includes information about the integrated Programme and presented in various categories of content including the following elements: (i) home, (ii) about the portal, (iii) progress update, (iv) questions and answers, (v) gallery, (vi) programme data, and (vii) feedback.
Monitoring was carried internally by the EU4Schools team and by UNDP Albania as the responsible body for the successful implementation of the programme.
An external evaluation was carried for the activities of EU4Schools Phase I, which found that:
- The EU4Schools Programme fully integrates and translates the vision and principles of the GoA as presented in the Post Disaster Needs Assessment report related to the recovery process after the earthquake as well as the nine principles as defined during the International Donor Conference in February 2020, into a practical and realistic approach.
- The Programme's Monitoring and Evaluation system is the backbone of the Programme and ensures optimal efficiency and transparency. Detailed guidelines and procedures have been developed regarding implementation and monitoring of progress.

10. Did the project's governance mechanism (i.e., the project board or equivalent) function as intended?

3: The project's governance mechanism operated well, and was a model for other projects. It met in the agreed frequency stated in the project document and the minutes of the meetings were all on file. There was regular (at least annual) progress reporting to the project board or equivalent on results, risks and opportunities. It is clear that the project board explicitly reviewed and used evidence, including progress data, knowledge, lessons and evaluations, as the basis for informing management decisions (e.g., change in strategy, approach, work plan.) (all must be true to select this option)

2: The project's governance mechanism met in the agreed frequency and minutes of the meeting are on file. A project progress report was submitted to the project board or equivalent at least once per year, covering results, risks and opportunities. (both must be true to select this option)

1: The project's governance mechanism did not meet in the frequency stated in the project document over the past year and/or the project board or equivalent was not functioning as a decision-making body for the project as intended.

Evidence (Enter a short explanation or upload a document that provides evidence for your response)

Due to its nature, the integrated programme has a Steering Committee (PSC) and a Joint Coordination Group.
The PSC included representatives from the Delegation of European Union in Albania as the donor, the Albanian Government/relevant Ministries, the municipalities benefiting for the programme as the final beneficiaries, UNDP and UN office. It was gathered as per the plan, to clear activities of the programme for the given period, and to take/approve strategic decisions. Minutes were administered in the files.
A Joint Coordination Group was also active, which ensured adequate coordination of all the involved partners and stakeholders.

11. Were risks to the project adequately monitored and managed?

3: The project monitored risks every quarter and consulted with the key stakeholders, security advisors, to identify continuing and emerging risks to assess if the main assumptions remained valid. There is clear evidence that relevant management plans and mitigating measures were fully implemented to address each key project risk and were updated to reflect the latest risk assessment. (all must be true)

2: The project monitored risks every year, as evidenced by an updated risk log. Some updates were made to management plans and mitigation measures.

1: The risk log was not updated as required. There was may be some evidence that the project monitored risks that may affected the project's achievement of results, but there is no explicit evidence that management actions were taken to mitigate risks.

Evidence (Enter a short explanation or upload a document that provides evidence for your response)

Risk were reviewed every six months. After two reviews, the likelihood and impact of the risks foreseen, were updated twice. The review was carried based on the evidence provided during implementation (documents, conclusion of partnerships meetings and consultations and findings of monitoring activities). Revision of the external risks were carried based on research and findings provided by the important and reliable international and national institutions.

Efficient	Status: Complete	Quality Rating: Exemplary

12. Adequate resources were mobilized to achieve intended results. If not, management decisions were taken to adjust expected results in the project's results framework.

- (●) Yes
- ( ) No

Evidence (Enter a short explanation or upload a document that provides evidence for your response)

The programme mobilised funds to achieve intended results. Mainly funds were sourced form EU and UNDP following the respective procedures. Successful implementation of the Programme insured grants from 3 other donors, specifically Government of Croatia, Government of the United Kingdom and Government of Denmark, to support Albanian citizens and government in accelerate the recovery process after the earthquake of November 26th, 2019, and to improve education outcomes.

13. Were project inputs procured and delivered on time to efficiently contribute to results?

- (●) 3: The project had a procurement plan and kept it updated. The project quarterly reviewed operational bottlenecks to procuring inputs in a timely manner and addressed them through appropriate management actions. (all must be true)
- ( ) 2: The project had updated procurement plan. The project annually reviewed operational bottlenecks to procuring inputs in a timely manner and addressed them through appropriate management actions. (all must be true)
- ( ) 1: The project did not have an updated procurement plan. The project team may or may not have reviewed operational bottlenecks to procuring inputs regularly, however management actions were not taken to address them.

Evidence (Enter a short explanation or upload a document that provides evidence for your response)

The programme followed the respective procurement plans and the UNDP operational procedures.

14. Was there regular monitoring and recording of cost efficiencies, taking into account the expected quality of results?

- (●) 3: There is evidence that the project regularly reviewed costs against relevant comparators (e.g., other projects or country offices) or industry benchmarks to ensure the project maximized results delivered with given resources. The project actively coordinated with other relevant ongoing projects and initiatives (UNDP or other) to ensure complementarity and sought efficiencies wherever possible (e.g. joint activities.) (both must be true)
- ( ) 2: The project monitored its own costs and gave anecdotal examples of cost efficiencies (e.g., spending less to get the same result,) but there was no systematic analysis of costs and no link to the expected quality of results delivered. The project coordinated activities with other projects to achieve cost efficiency gains.
- ( ) 1: There is little or no evidence that the project monitored its own costs and considered ways to save money beyond following standard procurement rules.

Evidence (Enter a short explanation or upload a document that provides evidence for your response)

The programme prepared Monthly Disbursement Plans to coordinate its expenses. Transparent procedures were applied for all costs related to programme implementation. The programme actively coordinated with other relevant on-going projects and initiatives to ensure complementarity and seek efficiencies wherever possible. In addition, since the programme is implemented in two phases, efficient usage of costs common for both phases was ensured. Practicing of LTA and contracting of external experts were other effective ways foreseen to efficiently usage of costs.

The Office of Audit and Investigation (OAI) of UNDP performed an internal audit of UNDP Albania for the period January 1 to December 31, 2021. The link of the public audit report can be found here: https://eur03.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Faudit-public-disclosure.undp.org%2Fview_audit_rpt_2.cfm%3Faudit_id%3D2451&data=05%7C02%7Ceglantina.gollaj%40undp.org%7Caca7a048e28a439828ce08dc07c7f825%7Cb3e5db5e2944483799f57488ace54319%7C0%7C0%7C638393802648757159%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C3000%7C%7C%7C&sdata=jQOFc4hXkFyfRxdqyI1ArG8TmoOfvBeNny6Gbb4ITj0%3D&reserved=0

An example of disbursement plan is uploaded. Kindly note that this disbursement plan includes information about other sisterlike projects implemented by UNDP Albania.

Effective	Status: Complete	Quality Rating: Exemplary

15. Was the project on track and delivered its expected outputs?

- (selected) Yes
- No

Evidence (Enter a short explanation or upload a document that provides evidence for your response)

The programme has delivered its outputs. Implementation timeline affected by external factors, was an issue. However, the workplan was regularly updated reflecting the delays in accordance with the Government of Albania and European Delegation in Albania.

16. Were there regular reviews of the work plan to ensure that the project was on track to achieve the desired results, and to inform course corrections if needed?

- (selected) 3: Quarterly progress data informed regular reviews of the project work plan to ensure that the activities implemented were most likely to achieve the desired results. There is evidence that data and lessons learned (including from evaluations /or After-Action Reviews) were used to inform course corrections, as needed. Any necessary budget revisions were made. (both must be true)
- 2: There was at least one review of the work plan per year with a view to assessing if project activities were on track to achieving the desired development results (i.e., outputs.) There may or may not be evidence that data or lessons learned were used to inform the review(s). Any necessary budget revisions have been made.
- 1: While the project team may have reviewed the work plan at least once over the past year to ensure outputs were delivered on time, no link was made to the delivery of desired development results. Select this option also if no review of the work plan by management took place.

Evidence (Enter a short explanation or upload a document that provides evidence for your response)

The reporting system is based on data evidence provided by the internal system created using Power BI analytics. Thereafter the annual work plan was updated regularly, and the European Delegation in Albania was informed.

17. Were the targeted groups, and particularly those marginalized, vulnerable and left further behind (LNOB), systematically identified and engaged, prioritizing the marginalized and excluded, to ensure results were achieved as expected?

- (selected) 3: The project targeted specific groups and/or geographic areas, identified by using credible data sources on their capacity needs, deprivation and/or exclusion from development opportunities relevant to the project's area of work. There is clear evidence that the targeted groups were reached as intended. The project engaged regularly with targeted groups over the past year to assess whether they benefited as expected and adjustments were made if necessary, to refine targeting. (all must be true)
- 2: The project targeted specific groups and/or geographic areas, based on some evidence of their capacity needs, deprivation and/or exclusion from development opportunities relevant to the project's area of work. Some evidence is provided to confirm that project beneficiaries are members of the targeted groups. There was some engagement with beneficiaries in the past year to assess whether they were benefiting as expected. (all must be true)
- 1: The project did not report on specific targeted groups. There is no evidence to confirm that project beneficiaries are populations have capacity needs or are deprived and/or excluded from development opportunities relevant to the project area of work. There is some engagement with beneficiaries to assess whether they benefited as expected, but it was limited or did not occurred in the past year.
- Not Applicable

Evidence (Enter a short explanation or upload a document that provides evidence for your response)

All target groups were initially categorised following an analysis of the programme activities. For each education facility, all target groups were identified as per particular categories prior to the consultation process. The identification was carried in close partnership with the respective Municipality, the education facility management and any stakeholder/CSO operating in the area. All marginalised and vulnerable groups (Roma, single parents, people with disabilities etc.) were invited to be part of the consultation process so that their needs were also reflected in the project design and implementation of the respective education facility.

Prior to any activity in the impacted education facility, the programme established a relationship with 5 partner municipalities and communities where the programme was implemented, as well as Local and Regional Educational Directorates.

18. If there is a digital or data technology solution in the project: have technology and data risks been addressed specifically for closure, or continued use by partners or UNDP?

- (selected) 3: Yes, a) the implementation and closure followed good practices, such as UNDP's digital standards and data principles; b) technology sustainability risks are addressed: hosting, licenses, intellectual property, data ownership, code documentation, or partner capacity (operations, maintenance and continued improvement); and c) post project scalability has been considered: digital public goods or reusability for other UNDP units. (All must be true)
- 2: Specific technology and data risks have been partially addressed for project closure, next to Standard UNDP sustainability practices and project risk management.
- 1: Standard UNDP sustainability practices and project risk management are applied, but no specific practices to address technology or data risks are followed.
- The project did not utilize a data or digital technology solution.

Evidence (Enter a short explanation or upload a document that provides evidence for your response)

The programme developed an online, publicly accessible Business Intelligence (BI) dashboard to be made available to partners and the public, for showing Action progress. To that end, an internal monitoring system was developed using UNDP licensed software, SharePoint and Power BI, based on UNDP digital standards and data principles. The system is used for internal M&E and management of the integrated Programme, and automatically feeds into external reporting, thus reducing reporting time and improving transparency.
The population and maintenance of the system is done by programme staff.
This system includes:
- The SharePoint database - SharePoint Lists created to store information regarding programme activities, for internal purposes and to furnish the Transparency Portal. This information system is considered as an important platform for collecting information, processing/analyzing information to draw conclusions by the team and analyze the programme performance.
- PowerBI - To create different reports used for internal purposes and to furnish the transparency portal, refreshed in daily basis.
- Smarter ASP.net Hosting Platform - Transparency Portal is developed in ASP.NET (https://www.eu4schoolsportal.al). It is hosted Smarter ASP.net Hosting Platform and in Advance .NET hosting plan is used, paid on a yearly basis, including SSL certificates.
Informative sessions to present this complex system were conducted with colleagues is different COs, as well as those in the SURGE Data Hub and Stabilization Academy.

Sustainability & National Ownership	Status: Complete	Quality Rating: Highly Satisfactory

19. Were stakeholders and national partners fully engaged in the decision-making, implementation and monitoring of the project?

- (selected) 3: Only national systems (i.e., procurement, monitoring, evaluation, etc.) were used to fully implement and monitor the project. All relevant stakeholders and partners were fully and actively engaged in the process, playing a lead role in project decision-making, implementation and monitoring. (both must be true)
- 2: National systems (i.e., procurement, monitoring, evaluation, etc.) were used to implement and monitor the project (such as country office support or project systems) were also used, if necessary. All relevant stakeholders and partners were actively engaged in the process, playing an active role in project decision-making, implementation and monitoring. (both must be true)
- 1: There was relatively limited or no engagement with national stakeholders and partners in the decision-making, implementation and/or monitoring of the project.
- Not Applicable

Evidence (Enter a short explanation or upload a document that provides evidence for your response)

National counterparts such as the Ministry of Education and Sports, the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of State for the Reconstruction and Reforms' Program (as of July 2022, the Deputy Prime Minister and the Minister for Infrastructure and Energy) and Institute of Construction, were engaged in decision making of the programme through their active participation in the Programme Steering Committee and Joint Coordination Group meetings. Local governments and communities were also involved in monitoring of the programme's implementation through monitoring visits/place check activities.

20. Were there regular monitoring of changes in capacities and performance of institutions and systems relevant to the project, as needed, and were the implementation arrangements8 adjusted according to changes in partner capacities?

- [ ] 3: Changes in capacities and performance of national institutions and systems were assessed/monitored using clear indicators, rigorous methods of data collection and credible data sources including relevant HACT assurance activities. Implementation arrangements were formally reviewed and adjusted, if needed, in agreement with partners according to changes in partner capacities. (all must be true)
- [x] 2: Aspects of changes in capacities and performance of relevant national institutions and systems were monitored by the project using indicators and reasonably credible data sources including relevant HACT assurance activities. Some adjustment was made to implementation arrangements if needed to reflect changes in partner capacities. (all must be true)
- [ ] 1: Some aspects of changes in capacities and performance of relevant national institutions and systems were monitored by the project, however changes to implementation arrangements were not considered. Also select this option if changes in capacities and performance of relevant national institutions and systems were not monitored by the project.
- [ ] Not Applicable

Evidence (Enter a short explanation or upload a document that provides evidence for your response)

The implementing partnership was formed with the central and local governments (Municipalities) impacted by the November 2019 earthquake. Responsibilities of the central and local government were outlined in the respective MoUs. Based on these MoUs, the programme monitored closely the capacity and performance of partner institutions. During 2022, there were changes in the Government of Albania, as a new Deputy Prime Minister was appointed; the new DPM (at the same time serving also as the Minister of Infrastructure and Energy) was also appointed as a member of the Programme Steering Committee. Yet this caused no changes in the capacity and performance of the partner institutions. The programme kept monitoring the partnership to detect as early as possible any changes.

21. Were the transition and phase-out arrangements were reviewed and adjusted according to progress (including financial commitment and capacity).

- [x] 3: The project's governance mechanism regularly reviewed the project's sustainability plan, including arrangements for transition and phase-out, to ensure the project remained on track in meeting the requirements set out by the plan. The plan was implemented as planned by the end of the project, taking into account any adjustments made during implementation. (both must be true)
- [ ] 2: There was a review of the project's sustainability plan, including arrangements for transition and phase-out, to ensure the project remained on track in meeting the requirements set out by the plan.
- [ ] 1: The project may have had a sustainability plan but there was no review of this strategy after it was developed. Also select this option if the project did not have a sustainability strategy.

Evidence (Enter a short explanation or upload a document that provides evidence for your response)

The programme worked to ensure sustainability of its results beyond programme duration. From the very start the programme, MoUs were signed with each of the Municipalities to outline the long-term obligations of partner institutions in the implementation of the Programme, as well as their roles and responsibilities in the operation and maintenance of the newly refurbished facilities. The Municipalities agreed to adhere to the new established standards in education infrastructure facilities and allocate funding for the appropriate maintenance of the new facilities.
The Programme promoted new models of consultative processes with the interested stakeholders, students, teachers and parents' communities, which were adopted by the Municipalities as a new standard for public consultation and stakeholder's engagement.
The recovery within a Build Back Better framework gave the impacted communities the chance to reduce risk not only from the immediate hazard, but also to sustainably reduce future risk, by building safer and more disaster-resilient infrastructure and systems.
The quality of the education facilities repaired/reconstructed was also ensured by the Defect Liability Period (DLP) which guaranteed that all possible defects were repaired into a year from the handover date. In addition, a manual of operations was prepared and handed over to each education facility. Costs of maintenance were calculated and presented to respective Municipalities so that they can budget accordingly. In addition, a study is underway, to develop a new framework for ensuring sustainability of maintenance and operation of education facilities.