

**SECRETARY-GENERAL'S PEACEBUILDING FUND
PROJECT DOCUMENT TEMPLATE**



United Nations
Peacebuilding

PBF PROJECT DOCUMENT

Country(ies): Montenegro	
Project Title: Enhancing citizens' trust in institutions and building resilient communities.	
Project Number from MPTF-O Gateway (if existing project):	
PBF project modality: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> IRF <input type="checkbox"/> PRF	If funding is disbursed into a national or regional trust fund (instead of into individual recipient agency accounts): <input type="checkbox"/> Country Trust Fund <input type="checkbox"/> Regional Trust Fund Name of Recipient Fund:
List all direct project recipient organizations (starting with Convening Agency), followed by type of organization (UN, CSO etc.): UNDP (Convening agency) UNICEF UNESCO	
List additional implementing partners specify the type of organization (Government, INGO, local CSO): Prime Minister's Cabinet, local self-governments, CSOs, Ministry of Human and Minority Rights, Ministry of Culture and Media, Ministry of Education, Ministry of Youth and Sports, the Protector's Institution, Parliament, academia, media.	
Project duration in months^{1 2}: 24 months Project expected start date: January 2024 Geographic zones (within the country) for project implementation: five local municipalities and nationwide (Montenegro)	
Does the project fall under one or more of the specific PBF priority windows below: <input type="checkbox"/> Gender promotion initiative ³ <input type="checkbox"/> Youth promotion initiative ⁴ <input type="checkbox"/> Transition from UN or regional peacekeeping or special political missions <input type="checkbox"/> Cross-border or regional project	
Total PBF approved project budget* (by recipient organization): UNDP: US\$ 1,157,875 UNICEF: US\$ 1,025,595 UNESCO: US\$ 378,459 Total: US\$ 2,561,929 <i>*The overall approved budget and the release of the second and any subsequent tranche are conditional and subject to the PBSO's approval and subject to availability of funds in the PBF account. For payment of second and subsequent tranches the coordinating agency needs to demonstrate expenditure/commitment of at least 75% of the previous tranche and provision of any PBF reports due in the period elapsed.</i>	
Any other existing funding for the project (amount and source):	

¹ Maximum project duration for IRF projects is 24 months, and for PRF projects – 36 months.

² The official project start date will be the date of the first project budget transfer by the MPTF-O to the recipient organization(s), as per the MPTF-O Gateway page.

³ Check this box only if the project was approved under the PBF's special call for proposals, the Gender Promotion Initiative

⁴ Check this box only if the project was approved under the PBF's special call for proposals, the Youth Promotion Initiative

PBF 1st tranche (70%): UNDP: US\$ 810,512 UNICEF: US\$ 717,917 UNESCO: US\$ 264,921 Total: US\$ 1,793,350	PBF 2nd tranche* (30%): UNDP: US\$ 347,362 UNICEF: US\$ 307,679 UNESCO: US\$ 113,538 Total: US\$ 768,579	
Provide a brief project description (describe the main project goal; do not list outcomes and outputs): <p>The project aims to transform the potentially negative effects of a lack of trust and the existence of divisive narratives and hate speech, gender-based violence and violence against and among children and young people in present-day Montenegro into favourable outcomes – engaging the community, especially disenfranchised groups, in dialogue and positive exchanges, thus contributing to building a shared vision of common good, increased inter-community and institutional public trust and greater community resilience to divisions and hate speech (outcome 1). At the same time, the project aims at strengthening institutions by supporting them to be responsive to the results of the inclusive dialogues, reflecting communities’ shared demands and in a participatory manner to adopt, enforce and account for inclusive, gender-responsive, rights-based, people- and child-centred social cohesion policies and actions at the local and national levels (outcome 2).</p>		
Summarize the in-country project consultation process prior to submission to PBSO, including with the PBF Steering Committee, civil society (including various or selected women and youth organizations), and stakeholder communities (including women, young people and marginalized groups): <p>The project was designed through a consultative process through which many stakeholders were involved. Institutional partners involved include the Office of the Prime Minister and seven relevant ministries – the Ministries of Justice, Education, Public Administration, Foreign Affairs, Youth and Sports, Culture and Media, Human and Minority Rights, and the Interior. The project benefited from consultations with IOM, UN Women, and OHCHR, as well as international organizations implementing relevant programmes in the country, such as the British Embassy, the Council of Europe, EBRD, EU Delegation, NDI, OSCE, US Embassy and the Regional Youth Cooperation Office. The development of the project proposal included consultations with CSOs and potential beneficiaries, including the CSOs active in child rights, adolescent development, youth engagement and policy, gender equality, rights of persons with disability, academia representatives, and children, adolescents and young people themselves. The consultations were also held with representatives of the Union of Municipalities and the Protector for Human Rights and Freedoms. The project also reflects inputs from citizens gathered through the PBF-funded Dialogue for the Future (2019–2021) project and various consultations with citizens and civil society organized during various workshops on the UN strategic documents, including CCA, UNSDCF, CPDs and the Voluntary National Review (VNR), as well as other national documents in Montenegro.</p>		
Project Gender Marker score⁵: <u>GEM 2</u> Specify % and US\$ of the total project budget allocated to activities in pursuit of gender equality and women’s empowerment: 41.96% and US\$ 1,074,864.33. Please refer to the budget for a breakdown per activity. Briefly explain through which major intervention(s) the project will contribute to gender equality and women’s empowerment ⁶:		

⁵ **Score 3** for projects that have gender equality as a principal objective and allocate at least 80% of the total project budget to Gender Equality and Women’s Empowerment (GEWE)

Score 2 for projects that have gender equality as a significant objective and allocate between 30% and 79% of the total project budget to GEWE

Score 1 for projects that contribute in some way to gender equality, but not significantly (less than 30% of the total budget for GEWE)

⁶ Please consult the **PBF Guidance Note on Gender Marker Calculations and Gender-Responsive Peacebuilding**

<p>The project underscores the pivotal role of gender equality in ensuring social cohesion. By actively empowering girls and boys, women and men, decision and opinion makers, the project is challenging the prevailing narratives of gender-based hate speech, violence, sexism and misogyny, and fosters girls' and women's significant contributions and participation in the civic and political spheres (output 2.3). By building the capacities of both women and men in key influential roles, including politicians, policymakers and opinion leaders, the project seeks to pave the way for more inclusive, gender-sensitive approaches, emphasizing safeguarding of progress in achieving gender equality and countering any gender equality backlash. The project approach mainstreams gender-quality principles, and all activities are based on gender-sensitive approaches.</p>	
<p>Project Risk Marker score⁷: <u>1</u></p>	
<p>Is the project piloting new approaches: Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Does the project design incorporate climate, peace, and security-related considerations:</p> <p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p>	
<p>Select PBF Focus Areas which best summarizes the focus of the project (<i>select ONLY one</i>)⁸: 2.2</p> <p>If applicable, SDCF/UNDAF outcome(s) to which the project contributes:</p> <p>Outcome 4: By 2027, all people, especially the vulnerable, will benefit from improved social cohesion, the increased realization of human rights and the rule of law and accountable, gender-responsive institutions</p> <p>Sustainable Development Goal(s) and Target(s) to which the project contributes:</p> <p>SDG 16 – Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions, SDG 5 – Gender equality, SDG 10 – Reduce inequality within and among countries, SDG 4 – Quality education</p>	
<p>Type of submission:</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> New project</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/></p>	<p>If it is a project amendment, select all changes that apply and provide a brief justification:</p> <p>Extension of duration: <input type="checkbox"/> Additional duration in months (number of months and new end date):</p> <p>Change of project outcome/ scope: <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Change of budget allocation between outcomes or budget categories of more than 15%: <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Additional PBF budget: <input type="checkbox"/> Additional amount by recipient organization: USD XXXXX</p> <p>Brief justification for amendment:</p> <p><i>Note: If this is an amendment, show any changes to the project document in RED colour or in TRACKED CHANGES, ensuring a new result framework and budget tables are included with clearly visible changes. Any parts of the document which are not affected, should remain the same. New project signatures are required.</i></p>

⁷ **Risk marker 0** = low risk to achieving outcomes

Risk marker 1 = medium risk to achieving outcomes

Risk marker 2 = high risk to achieving outcomes

⁸ **PBF Focus Areas** are:


(1.1) SSR; (1.2) Rule of law; (1.3) DDR; (1.4) Political dialogue;


(2.1) National reconciliation; (2.2) Democratic governance; (2.3) Conflict prevention/management;

(3.1) Employment; (3.2) Equitable access to social services;

(4.1) Strengthening of essential national state capacity; (4.2) Extension of the state authority/local administration; (4.3) Governance of peacebuilding resources (including PBF Secretariats).

PROJECT SIGNATURES:

Recipient Organization(s) Ekaterina Paniklova [REDACTED] <i>UNDP Resident Representative in Montenegro</i> Date & Seal	Representative of National Authorities Milojko Spajić Prime Minister Government of Montenegro Date & Seal 
Recipient Organization(s) Juan Santander [REDACTED] <i>UNICEF Representative in Montenegro</i> Date & Seal	
Recipient Organization(s) Siniša Šešum [REDACTED] <i>Head of UNESCO Antenna Office in Sarajevo</i> Date & Seal 08. December 2023	

Head of UN Country Team Peter Lundberg [REDACTED] <i>UN Resident Coordinator in Montenegro</i> Date & Seal 	Peacebuilding Support Office (PBSO) Elizabeth Spehar [REDACTED] Assistant Secretary-General for Peacebuilding Support Date & Seal 20/12/2023 [REDACTED]
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I. Peacebuilding Context and Rationale for PBF Support (4 pages max)

- a) A brief summary of gender-responsive **conflict analysis findings** as they relate to this project.

Montenegro is an upper middle-income country, which regained its independence in 2006. It has the smallest population in the Western Balkans with an estimated 620,000 people and is classified as a very high human development country.⁹ The 2023 Gender Equality Index stood at 59.3, below some of its neighbours and the EU average of 68.6, but at a level comparable to some EU member states. According to its constitution, Montenegro is a secular, ecological and multicultural state, with people of many nationalities and religions living together.

EU accession is the primary driver of reforms. As an EU candidate country since 2012, Montenegro has opened all the EU negotiation chapters and provisionally closed three of the 33 chapters. The pace of progress has slowed due to the slow implementation of rule-of-law reforms, which take centre stage in the new EU accession methodology. Montenegro adopted the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, which has strong synergies with the EU accession process, through the National Strategy for Sustainable Development (2016–2030).

In that context, challenges to social cohesion have been identified as the key risk factors to sustainable prosperity and stability for all in Montenegro's society. The multiple challenges to social cohesion in Montenegro include:

Power has been concentrated into the executive branch, supported by a public administration that is perceived as mostly politicized. This is despite the Constitution of Montenegro guaranteeing the separation of powers and judicial independence. The judiciary and the prosecution service have also been perceived as vulnerable to political interference, and concerns have been expressed that the law is not being applied equally to all, even with recent improvements. The parliament has struggled to perform its functions fully due to frequent boycotts by parties across the political divide. National minorities, except for Roma and Egyptians, are mostly represented in the government and parliament.

A consequence of this perceived politicization is declining levels of trust in public institutions. National opinion polls conducted by CEDEM¹⁰ show that trust in the four key state institutions – the president, parliament, government and judiciary – has been low but around a nine-year average of 39%. Trust was highest in the Serbian Orthodox Church (47.3%), then in the education (47.2%) and health systems (45.9%). The Balkan Barometer poll found similar levels of trust in 2022 for the parliament, government and judiciary, with 25%, 28% and 26% of respondents, respectively, tending to trust or totally trust these institutions. While legal and strategic governance frameworks are in place in many areas, the main challenge lies in implementation. There is a need to address capacity and data gaps; laws need to be applied equally to all, and adequate resources are required, alongside stronger internal and independent accountability mechanisms to monitor the implementation of legislation and policies.

Montenegro remains a predominantly patriarchal society with patriarchal values related to gender roles and stereotypes affecting acceptance of and respect for diversity. Despite women making up the majority of the population, research shows that gender equality is yet to be fully accepted among the public, including civil servants, most of whom believe that men are better leaders than women, and that gender equality is being overly imposed while not resulting in substantial improvement for women and the society as a whole. Furthermore, 73% of public policy and sector strategy documents do not address gender equality in any way nor do they integrate any principles of gender equality.¹¹ About 60% of citizens still believe that, for the benefit of the children, it is preferable for a man to work and for a woman to dedicate herself to the family, while one

⁹ For more information, please refer to the 2022 Human Development Report (HDR), where Montenegro is ranked as 49 out of 190 countries.

¹⁰ For more information, please see the CEDEM historical poll results at <https://www.cedem.me/wp-content/uploads/2023/05/Prezentacija-MAJ-2023-FINALE-23h-ENG.pdf>

¹¹ National Gender Equality Strategy 2021–2025, <https://www.gov.me/dokumenta/41e3ee6a-757a-4684-9763-9fee5e933afd>

in two citizens believes that successful women professionals inevitably neglect their families.¹² This is also reflected in the political representation of women, where only 17 out of 81 members (20%) of the currently constituted parliament, after the 2023 election, are women. And those women who decide to engage in political life, according to the 2021 UNDP study, face significant impediments, with the same study finding that 7 out of 10 women politicians reported some form of violence against them, while 9 out of 10 have been discriminated against.¹³

The prevalence of violence among and against children and young people is high, with 66% of children estimated to experience some sort of violent discipline at home.¹⁴ Peer violence at school and outside of school – bullying – appears to be a growing trend.¹⁵ Several consecutive European Commission Reports for Montenegro emphasized that gender-based violence and violence against children are issues of concern, with an overall weak institutional response. Lack of an adequate and efficient institutional and whole-of-society response may pose a risk to social cohesion, as the norm within the social fabric becomes more deeply characterized by harmed rather than cohesive relationships.

The situation has been worsening in the atmosphere of existing political polarization and exposure of children and young people to divisive narratives and hate speech in the media and in public and political life. New generations of children and young people are growing up in an environment that is characterized by peer violence as one of the two issues that they face on a daily basis.¹⁶ This has been recognized by the Government of Montenegro, which has identified a clear need for a more effective response to these challenges through the Council on Rights of the Child, chaired by the prime minister.¹⁷

Various groups are yet to benefit from sustainable development on an equal footing with others. Members of these groups experience marginalization and discrimination, exclusion, negative attitudes and prejudice, and do not have full awareness and access to their rights. A late-2022 national NGO survey found an increase in perceptions of discrimination, with 67% of the respondents believing that discrimination is present in Montenegro, an increase from 57% in 2020. Discrimination on the grounds of political belief was believed to be highest in 2022. The same survey found an exceptionally high degree of discrimination towards members of the LGBTQI+ communities and very high ethnic distancing towards the Roma and Egyptian populations.¹⁸ Human rights institutions in Montenegro have been established but need strengthening.

Hate speech and divisive narratives are widely present in most public discourses and are most pronounced against Roma and Egyptians, followed by women, LGBTQI+ persons, the poor, persons with disabilities and political opponents. Although exact data on hate speech is not available, people have been arrested and convicted for hate speech and hate crimes. A 2022 opinion survey by an NGO found that hate speech is perceived to be occurring online and comes mostly from politicians. It is also present on TV, at sporting events and in daily conversations, including in schools. Divisive narratives and hate speech are common in the public discourse and little constructive dialogue is taking place; compromise legislation is rare.

¹² For more information, please refer to the UNDP survey on attitudes and perceptions of civil servants on gender mainstreaming in the public sector, accessible at: <https://rodamapa.me/assets/documents/stavovi-2021.pdf>

¹³ For more information, please refer to the UNDP study on violence against women in politics, accessible at: <https://www.undp.org/cnr/montenegro/publications/istrazivanje-o-nasilju-nad-zenama-u-politici>

¹⁴ Statistical Office of Montenegro (MONSTAT), UNHCR, UNICEF, Multi Indicator Cluster Survey 2018 (MICS), link: <https://www.unicef.org/montenegro/en/reports/multiple-indicator-cluster-survey-2018>

¹⁵ Research on peer violence from the Bureau for Education, 2021/22 may be accessed at: <https://wapi.gov.me/download/c46caea9-074f-44e6-b414-6be77f29ea3c?version=1.0>

¹⁶ Since 2019 in multiple U-Report polls and focus groups, adolescents and young people flagged mental health and peer violence as the two most important issues they face daily, which was further exacerbated after COVID-19.

¹⁷ In May 2023, the government adopted an urgent package of measures/action plan for preventing and suppressing violence among children and young people, upon discussion within the Council of Rights of the Child. The package is a result of inclusive dialogue among relevant stakeholders who aspire to and demand an environment in which children feel safe and secure, and contribute more strongly to the realization of quality conditions for their growth and development, above all in educational institutions, but also more widely (please see: <https://www.gov.me/dokumenta/1ecfd69b-a8e0-4186-adc0-111b59b36850>)

¹⁸ For more information, please refer to the CEDEM survey Patterns and Degree of Discrimination in Montenegro, accessible at: <https://www.cedem.me/wp-content/uploads/2023/02/2023-03.02.-eng-1-1-1.pdf>

A 2021 regional perception survey, Shared Futures, found that young people in Montenegro express a high acceptance of hate speech; 42% of those surveyed believe that expressing hate should be permissible (44% of male and 40% of female respondents).¹⁹

The increasing use of divisive rhetoric and narratives has negatively impacted the state of social cohesion. This was noted by the UN Secretary-General's Special Adviser on the Prevention of Genocide, who visited Montenegro in late 2021 and highlighted the risks of the growing polarization in society.²⁰ In recent years, divisions between those who are or are perceived to be Montenegrin and strongly support independence and those who are or are perceived to be Serbian and pro-Serbia have become more pronounced, resulting in hate speech and some hate crimes. Some rallies by members of these groups have resulted in several individual cases of violence, with concerns expressed about some instances of excessive use of force and inadequate action by the police.

The media has amplified some of these issues. According to a 2020 study,²¹ established Montenegrin media outlets usually do not create hate speech in their editorial content. However, the comment sections on their online platforms spread hate speech and are not adequately moderated. Online and social media networks, both domestic and from the region, occasionally produce and spread hate speech and disinformation, and are easily accessible in Montenegro. Comments frequently contain offensive speech against ethnic, religious and minority groups and personal insults against political or ideological opponents. Montenegro's media landscape is pluralistic, with coverage by the national broadcaster increasingly balanced and diverse. However, the overall media scene is polarized, with strong influence from and wide viewership of media from neighbouring countries, which use divisive narratives and hate speech in the local language. The presence of women's voices, representation of women's rights issues and women from discriminated groups in the media is low.

Political dialogue to address these key challenges the country faces is limited. The public participation of citizens at the national and local levels is guaranteed in law and mostly practised through NGOs. Children, adolescents and young people are largely not perceived as rights holders with the potential to participate in public processes and reforms. Only a few young people are trying to influence government decisions.²² Institutions consider young people passive, while young people say they lack knowledge and information about opportunities to be involved in decision-making processes.²³ Only 4% of citizens, mostly young people, know about and use the e-Participation portal, while 62.1% are unfamiliar with it.²⁴

While Montenegro has established various platforms for policy dialogue and citizen engagement, including councils chaired by the prime minister, youth participation mechanisms and local engagement initiatives, these existing mechanisms often suffer from limited capacity, outreach and effectiveness, with only a small percentage of the population actively participating in public discussions and decision-making processes, highlighting the need for more inclusive and accessible mechanisms for broader participation. Namely, the state has institutionalized several platforms for policy dialogue with citizens and civil society organizations – the Council for Sustainable Development chaired by the prime minister, the Council for Rights of the Child chaired by the prime minister, the Ombudsperson's advisers, the Education Centre of the Parliament fostering child participation in the work of the parliament through democratic workshops, the European Union

¹⁹ For more information, please refer to the UNDP survey Shared Futures: Youth Perceptions on Peace in the Western Balkans, accessible at: <https://www.undp.org/eurasia/publications/shared-futures-youth-perceptions-peace-western-balkans>

²⁰ For more information, please refer to the public statement of the Special Adviser: <https://montenegro.un.org/en/160494-social-cohesion-and-fighting-hate-speech-heart-visit-special-adviser-prevention-genocide>

²¹ Bogdanović, Milica. Political and economic foundations of hatred, propaganda and disinformation-spreading media and communications in Montenegro, Montenegro Media Institute, 2020.

²² Regional Cooperation Council, Balkan Barometer Public Opinion, 2022, link: <https://www.rcc.int/pubs/139/balkan-barometer-public-opinion-2022>

²³ For more information, please consult the UNDP survey on needs of young people and assessment of local youth policies in 15 (of 23) municipalities in Montenegro, link: <https://www.undp.org/cnr/montenegro/publications/istrazivanje-potreba-mladih-i-procjena-lokalnih-omladinskih-politika-u-15-crnogorskih-opstina>

²⁴ For more information, please consult the UNDP Report on e-Government and satisfaction of citizens and business community on current e-services, link: <https://www.undp.org/cnr/montenegro/publications/ocjena-zadovoljstva-postojecim-i-identifikacija-potreba-za-novim-e-uslugama-istrazivanje-sa-gradanima-i-biznis-zajednicom>

accession working group which includes civil society organizations, and others. Although other institutional mechanisms enable citizens' participation, such as public consultations about draft laws, strategies or policies, public debates, participation in local community meetings, or through civil society organizations, these are used by very few people. A Balkan Barometer report from 2022 indicated that only 3% of respondents in Montenegro reported taking part in public discussions.³⁷ The same survey found that 33% of respondents discuss the government's decisions only with friends and acquaintances, and 39% do not discuss it at all.²⁵ Even though there are mechanisms for child and youth participation through the government's Council on the Rights of the Child, the Educational Centre of the Parliament, schools parliaments, the Protector's Institution, and CSOs including youth-led CSOs, the Union of High School Students, the National Youth Network, etc., they are often insufficiently capacitated and do not have universal outreach, geographical coverage or the scope. The Ministry of Youth and Sports has established youth clubs and centres in 11 of the 25 municipalities, but with low capacities, undefined funding and programming, as well as insufficient outreach. Youth NGOs are invited to participate in policy development through public discussions, for example, on the Youth Strategy or the Law on Young People. Out of the 81 members of parliament, only five were considered young by Montenegrin law (under 30) when elected. More widely available and child- and adolescent-friendly mechanisms are required, with a more robust feedback loop to ensure wider participation.

A participative approach played a central role in the development of the project, as it actively involved a diverse range of stakeholders, including children, young people, CSOs, government representatives, representatives of the international community, experts and other relevant parties. This collaborative method ensured that multiple perspectives, insights and ideas were considered and incorporated into the project's formulation, leading to a more robust and well-rounded outcome. Namely, various stakeholders were consulted in the process of the project design, who highlighted the overall issues of normalization of gender-based violence against and among children and young people, divisive narratives, hate speech, a lack of constructive dialogue, pessimism and a lack of trust in institutions as significant threats to social cohesion. They also recognized that gender-based hate speech and misogyny were very present and led to the silencing of women's voices and to women pulling back from public participation spaces.

Violence among and against children and young people has been identified by all consulted stakeholders as an issue of serious concern. Consulted stakeholders have also noted the crucial role of politicians, the media and other opinion makers in combating hate speech and divisive narratives. It was also noted by participants of consultations that schools have been recognized as insufficiently safe places due to various forms of violence against and among children and young people, hate speech, sexism and a lack of capacities of school staff to respond to it. Diversity is not respected and parents, teachers and other influential figures should be empowered to become role models to a greater extent and to influence the nurturing of the values of respect and diversity.

Existing youth participation structures often struggle to engage a larger number of young people in their activities. Additionally, the leadership models within these youth structures are occasionally seen as merely formal rather than genuinely inclusive leadership geared towards the common good. Dialogue and action across sectors and harnessing the resources and power of all citizen groups and institutions, such as academia, cultural institutions, sports and intergenerational dialogue, were recognized as an important avenue of action. The importance of focus on and engagement at the local level was stressed, as well as relevant and regular data collection and the utilization gap.

Several past initiatives signal that this approach of facilitating local dialogues and designing *social cohesion pledges* is a potentially effective method for mobilizing public engagement and collaborative envisioning and action towards social cohesion. Firstly, experience from the Dialogue for the Future project (2019–2021) has shown the willingness of citizens and institutions to discuss and collaborate around the concept of social cohesion and its elements. Focused and well-crafted dialogues have proved a powerful tool for collaborative diagnostics and envisioning a shared future. What this project brings as a new element, besides

²⁵ Balkan Barometer, <https://www.rcc.int/balkanbarometer/publications>

the scope and focus on local communities, is very strong feedback loop and accountability mechanisms, including pledges at the local and national levels.

One of the recent examples of a similar process was the one led by the Municipality of Pljevlja, where local engagement of people and crowdsourced ideas were successfully elevated to the national level through the National Sustainable Development Council, culminating in a national roadmap for a just transition. The government also has recent positive experience with participatory development of SDG pledges through an inclusive process, which was presented at the 2024 SDG Summit. Furthermore, through the ReLOaD²⁶ and similar projects focused on working with local communities, a palpable inclination towards local collaboration processes has emerged, especially when these are paired with incentives, such as support for implementing those initiatives executed through the Social Cohesion and Inclusion Lab. Several municipalities in Montenegro have joined the global Strong Cities Network²⁷ – dedicated to combating polarization and hate speech, which shows the awareness and readiness of the local government to tackle these critical issues.

- b) A brief description of how the project aligns with/supports **existing** governmental and UN **strategic frameworks** and how it ensures **national ownership**.

This initiative aims to foster social cohesion by empowering targeted communities, especially children, young people, women and civil society, through inclusive civic engagement and cooperation with national and local institutions by advocating for the adoption and implementation of evidence- and rights-based policies. In Montenegro, the underrepresentation of specific demographic groups such as women, young people and children, as well as civil society in the political arena, can be attributed to several systemic, cultural and socio-economic factors that create obstacles to their full participation in building social cohesion. Prevailing gender stereotypes, traditional roles and economic inequality may be impeding women's active participation and leadership in political processes.

Moreover, the potential of young people is often overshadowed by high unemployment rates and an educational system that may not be sufficiently equipping them for civic engagement. Furthermore, children's participation is often marginalized due to their perceived incapacity for meaningful contribution and due to legal frameworks that do not fully recognize their agency. Despite being vital for bridging the gap between citizens and the government, civil society organizations may be constricted by restrictive policies and limited resources, including project-based financing dependency, thereby reducing their efficacy in advocating for inclusive social cohesion. The historical and cultural context, characterized by ethnic diversity and past conflicts, further complicates the inclusive participation of all societal segments in cohesion-building efforts, necessitating targeted strategies and policies to ensure equitable representation and involvement in the political discourse.

It supports the implementation of the **2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development**, which was translated into one of the key umbrella Montenegrin national strategies – the **National Sustainable Development Strategy**. The strategy has been coordinated by the National Sustainable Development Council, one of the main national multi-stakeholder platforms that brings together a diverse array of stakeholders – policymakers, the scientific community, CSOs, citizens, children, young people, experts and the international community – and is anchored by the Office for Sustainable Development in the General Secretariat of the Government. The initiative goes hand-in-hand with the Council's efforts to strengthen its coordination role and enable all relevant stakeholders to proactively get involved in defining solutions to new developments and social challenges in the country through, inter alia, thematic working groups and the sustainable development discussion platform *Dialogues for Development*.²⁸

²⁶ For more information on ReLOaD, please visit: <https://www.undp.org/montenegro/projects/reload2-1>

²⁷ For more information on the Strong Cities Network, please visit: <https://strongcitiesnetwork.org/>

²⁸ More information on the sustainable development institutional setup and initiatives can be found at the links: <https://www.gov.me/en/article/national-council-for-sustainable-development-holds-its-36th-session>; <https://www.gov.me/en/article/institutional-framework-for-sustainable-development-established>; <https://napmontenegro.me/en/>

Also, the current **United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (UNSDCF)**, developed through government and UN collaborative design, prioritizes social cohesion, people-centred governance, the rule of law and human rights (Strategic Priority 3) and related dimensions under each of the outcomes, specifically in Outcome 4: “By 2027, all people, especially the vulnerable, are benefitting from improved social cohesion, the increased realization of human rights and the rule of law and accountable, gender-responsive institutions.” The project contributes to four outputs of Outcome 4:

- a) Output 4.1: The capacity of the justice system and the national human rights institution enhanced to strengthen the rule of law and provide justice to all, especially to the most excluded or at risk of being excluded, in line with international human rights obligations.
- b) Output 4.3: The civic space expanded and citizens’ capacities enhanced to meaningfully participate in decision making, to demand accountability for realization of human rights and effective implementation of anti-discrimination and gender equality policies, with a particular focus on women, young people and the most vulnerable.
- c) Output 4.4: Improved legislative frameworks, policies and capacities of key stakeholders to effectively combat violence against women, children and the elderly, gender-based violence and other harmful practices.
- d) Output 4.5: Key stakeholders are empowered to engage in dialogue to promote the values of equality, diversity, trust and empathy and to counter hate speech, sexism and divisive narratives, for a more equal and cohesive society.

The statement of Montenegro’s commitment to the implementation of Sustainable Development Goals given at the United Nations 2023 SDG Summit includes the adoption of comprehensive measures based on the analysis of the root causes and manifestations of hate speech to prevent and effectively solve this problem, with a special focus on gender-based hate speech, sexism and misogyny, in both the virtual and real world.²⁹ This pledge prioritizes working together on preventing hate speech and promoting a culture of respect, tolerance and inclusion, where diversity is celebrated and discriminatory behaviour is actively discouraged. It also recognizes that, through the full implementation of the laws, a systemic approach will be assured in raising awareness of gender equality and preventing gender-based discrimination with a focus on the actions of the public administration, the economy, the media, NGOs and the education system. Montenegro’s address to the 2023 United Nations General Assembly stressed that the rule of law is a key to unlocking the country’s economic potential and improving living standards.³⁰

The project synergizes with multiple international frameworks, such as the Women, Peace and Security (WPS) and the Youth, Peace and Security (YPS) agendas, both emphasizing the pivotal roles of women and young people in building resilient societies. It also aligns with the Secretary General’s Strategy on Hate Speech and the UN’s agenda for sustaining peace, advocating for global peace and countering hate speech by fostering inclusivity and unity. The Pathways for Peace report further supplements the project’s aims. Moreover, the initiative adheres to the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the 2023 Guidance Note of the Secretary-General on Child Rights Mainstreaming, ensuring a systematic approach in order to uphold child rights, sustain development and promote peace. The project underscores the importance of cultural diversity and intercultural dialogue as pivotal elements for fostering social cohesion and sustainable development. In doing so, it aligns with the objectives of the **UNESCO Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expression**, a document that is not only EU-binding but also forms the basis for reporting under Chapter 26 of the EU Acquis, which the country has ratified. At its core, intercultural dialogue thrives on cultural diversity. This form of dialogue encourages inclusive interactions between different cultural groups, urging participants to actively listen and appreciate various viewpoints, even if they diverge from their own beliefs.

²⁹ Statement of Montenegro’s commitment to the implementation of Sustainable Development Goals, presented by the President of Montenegro, Jakov Milatović, at the UN 2023 SDG Summit held in New York on 18–23 September 2023.

³⁰ Presidential Address to the United Nations General Debate, 78th Session.

The project also aligns with Montenegro's constitutional, legal and policy framework. **The commitments of the current government, reflected in the prime minister's inaugural speech**, are in line with critical elements of the proposal, such as reducing divisions and polarization, access to justice for all, open, digital and citizen-centred governance, gender equality, inclusion, prevention of child and gender-based violence, child protection and development, youth development and partnership with civil society.

This initiative also aligns with the Ministry of Education's current reform, addressing critical challenges such as quality and inclusiveness in children's education and wellbeing. While emphasizing social cohesion, it aims not only to enhance the quality of education but also to ensure that children develop into active contributors to a harmonious and democratic community. The intervention aligns with the 2022 National Statement of Commitment for the Future of Education in Montenegro, developed for the UN Secretary-General's Transforming Education Summit, which underscores transformative steps towards quality, inclusive education amid the global educational crisis, ensuring alignment with top global political agendas.

The initiative aligns with Montenegro's strategic developments for children and young people, including the Government's Strategy on Realization of Child Rights 2019–2023 and the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare's forthcoming Strategy on Child Violence Prevention and the Strategy on Social and Child Protection. Additionally, the Ministry of Sport and Youth has produced the draft Youth Strategy 2023–2027, which addresses such issues as youth participation, hate speech and violence, underscoring youth leadership. The initiative not only builds upon these collaborative efforts but also supports the National Council on Child Rights in fostering child and youth participation in decision-making processes and executing actions to prevent violence among children and young people.³¹

The project emphasizes the crucial role of gender equality in bolstering social cohesion, aligning with the Gender Equality Strategy which underscores women's political empowerment and societal harmony. It adheres to the subsequent Gender Equality Action Plan, ensuring that gender equality components are integrated into all national policies by various bodies, such as the Parliamentary Committee for Gender Equality. This strategy guarantees that gender disparities are inherently addressed and prioritized, fostering an environment where all individuals feel recognized and valued, thus enhancing social unity. Moreover, the project collaborates with key government gender equality mechanisms, such as the Department for Gender Equality and the Council for Gender Equality of Montenegro, enhancing its strategic alignment and impact.

The project, aligning with the Public Administration Reform and Digital Transformation Strategies, emphasizes the utilization of modern platforms for enhancing citizen engagement and ensuring that community voices are amplified and included in the digital sphere. Tethering to the Open Government Partnership Plan of Action, it aims to create citizen-centric participation tools, emphasizing local-level involvement to foster community ownership and responsibility, thereby enhancing social cohesion.

Finally, it aligns with Montenegro's draft Media Strategy (2022–2026), with a focus on combating hate speech and disinformation through legal means and global platform collaborations, while promoting media and information literacy. The strategy, featuring initiatives such as the formation of a network and the National Council for Media Literacy, aims to empower citizens and fortify social cohesion by creating an informed and critically engaging populace, resilient against divisive elements.

- c) A brief explanation of how the project fills any strategic gaps and complements any other relevant interventions, PBF-funded or otherwise. Also provide a brief **summary of existing interventions** in the proposal's sector by filling out the table below

Social cohesion dimensions, such as trust in institutions and citizen engagement, as well as elements that can influence the social fabric, such as divisive narratives, hate speech and gender-based and violence against and

³¹ Government Action Plan on Prevention and Elimination of Violence among Children and Young People, adopted at the last session of the National Council on Child Rights, held on 26 May 2023.

among children and young people, are addressed by various existing initiatives, focused on certain entry points. This project adds value to the existing projects and approaches by introducing platforms for needs-driven and focused dialogue on common interests and solutions for improving the resilience of citizens and trust in institutions and social cohesion, thus enabling a collaborative and shared vision of the common good. Unlike other projects that focus primarily on single aspects of social cohesion, this project broadens its horizon, navigating through comprehensive, holistic lenses. Most initiatives have tackled issues, such as gender equality, economic disparity or community development, in isolation. Conversely, this project threads these components together considering various aspects – civic, social, political and cultural – of social cohesion. By addressing these intertwined aspects simultaneously, it promises a more systemic impact, reducing the likelihood of disjointed, isolated progress that might inadvertently marginalize other crucial elements of society.

The project also actively addresses both the local and national levels, surpassing typical strategies that prioritize one of the two. Local efforts are vital for crafting plans that align with community needs and cultures. Conversely, a national approach ensures overarching policies and resources to support these local initiatives. This dual focus guarantees that the project not only impacts communities directly but also propels widespread national change, providing a balanced approach often absent in more narrowly focused projects. Also, unlike projects that might cater predominantly to specific demographics or sectors, this initiative broadens its reach, ensuring that voices from varied socio-economic, age and cultural groups are not only heard but are integral in shaping the project's trajectory. This inclusivity fortifies the initiative with diverse perspectives, innovative solutions and a collective ownership that is indispensable in sustaining social cohesion in the long run.

Other projects, including those supporting dialogue platforms, have shown that people-to-people and people-to-institution dialogues are very powerful and insightful tools for both participation and social listening purposes. What this project adds is a comprehensive and efficient approach that will ensure a feedback loop and institutional accountability, and a response to citizens' recommendations through concrete mechanisms such as local and national pledges, the Council for Sustainable Development, the Council for the Rights of the Child, and other local- and national-level bodies, as well as the Social Cohesion Innovation Lab. Additionally, capacity building of all the involved actors will be ensured. In the process, the role and value of the UN as a facilitator of such dialogues will be strengthened.

Perhaps one of the most discerning features is the establishment of a feedback loop mechanism, which is often overlooked or not thoroughly embedded in similar projects. This is not merely a tool for accountability but a dynamic channel that allows the project to be adaptive, resilient and genuinely reflective of the evolving needs and insights of the communities it serves. The feedback loop is not just a retrospective tool but a proactive one, ensuring that strategies are not static but are continuously refined, enhancing the project's relevance and efficacy through its duration. The project is a tool for shortening the gap and strengthening connections between people and high-level decision makers.

The project also provides tools for the citizens to be agents of change and contribute to the realization of the shared vision. By adding empowerment and capacity building of people and institutions to support the realization of the shared vision, the project enables comprehensive and sustainable change and promotes tools and spaces for the culture of dialogue and collaboration for the common good. The project aims to elevate its social impact by nurturing intercultural dialogue through the enrichment of the cultural and creative sectors. It intends to expand its reach through collaboration with public cultural institutions, such as museums, to promote arts education, thus fostering creativity and innovation. This strategic move lays the foundation for a deeper appreciation of cultural diversity, further amplifying its societal influence. The existing interventions with children and young people will be further enhanced and innovative approaches built, so that new generations are empowered and capacitated with skills and competencies to promote and embrace diversity, solidarity and social cohesion.

While working with different stakeholders and across sectors and institutions, the project will nonetheless ensure internal coherence, through a well-integrated, unified strategy whereby various elements of the project

are synergistically aligned, ensuring that policies, actions and objectives consistently support and reinforce each other.

A summary of the existing interventions in the proposal's sector is annexed at the end of the project document.

II. Project content, strategic justification and implementation strategy (4 pages max plus Results Framework Annex)

- a) A brief **description of the project** focus and approach – describe the project’s overarching goal, the implementation strategy, and how it addresses the conflict causes or factors outlined in Section I (must be gender- and age-responsive).

A limited window of opportunity to develop a social cohesion intervention in Montenegro is currently open, as the country is accelerating the EU accession process. The political and social situation currently make a conducive environment for the United Nations to engage together with the state institution in strengthening social cohesion in the country. There is a general understanding by state representatives that polarization is harming the society and that ensuring social cohesion and equal opportunities is the political choice of the people of Montenegro, and the one they are mandated by the people to follow and deliver.³² There are no guarantees that this window of opportunity will stay open in the period to come.

The intervention in the area of social cohesion also builds on “the urgency to use the current momentum to make the case for Montenegro’s swift EU integration”, much of which is in direct correlation with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.³³ Investing in social cohesion and strengthening trust among people and between the people and institutions, which are the ultimate outcomes of this intervention, also strengthen accountability in the society and put pressure to deliver on much-needed reforms related to EU integration and to the 2030 Agenda. The existing and the developing institutional setup, along with the opportune political and geopolitical moment, complemented with the strategic positioning of the United Nations as a trusted and partner of choice, make the environment in Montenegro conducive for implementation of this initiative.

The project will support interventions in the two dimensions of social cohesion – horizontal and vertical.³⁴ For a society to be truly cohesive, it requires both the horizontal dimension – ensuring peer understanding and connectivity among varied groups – and the vertical dimension – guaranteeing trust in and support from the governing institutions. The horizontal dimension of social cohesion encompasses relationships, networks, shared values and identities that foster a sense of belonging among a society’s members. It centres on interactions ranging from peer-to-peer to community-to-community, underscoring the importance of trust, mutual respect and understanding across various societal groups, irrespective of ethnicity, religion, age, gender or socio-economic status. The project will support the strengthening of the horizontal dimension in the sense of having people – regardless of their personal and social characteristics – come together with the inputs to the system and thus recognize common interests and agency that can be addressed by the system.

The vertical dimension of social cohesion revolves around relationships and trust between citizens and key institutions. It evaluates how fairly and effectively these institutions cater to the citizens’ interests, emphasizing equal service access, equitable resource distribution and transparent governance. The project will contribute to fortifying the vertical dimension of trust in institutions in the sense of supporting the system’s performance with regards to its responsiveness and accountability, thus gaining people’s confidence. This will be ensured through active engagement of the legislative branch of government at the local and national levels, independent human rights institutions, civil society and the media towards better oversight and monitoring of the government’s commitments and accountabilities to the people. The project logic relies on Easton’s classical model of a cohesive political system³⁵ as adjusted and shown below.

³² Speech of the President of Montenegro to the General Assembly 2023, available at: <https://media.un.org/en/asset/k1z/k1z60brlep>

³³ Statement of Mr. Miroslav Lajcak, EU Special Representative for Belgrade–Pristina Dialogue and other Western Balkan regional issues, available at: <https://twitter.com/MiroslavLajcak/status/1705256116781830232>

³⁴ Dragolov, G., Ignácz, Z., Lorenz, J., Delhey, J., Boehnke, K., & Unzicker, K. (2013). “Social Cohesion in the Western World: What Holds Societies Together: Insights from the Social Cohesion Radar”. Springer. This book gives an in-depth overview of social cohesion’s different dimensions and how they interact in various societies.

³⁵ Easton, David. (1957). “An Approach to the Analysis of Political Systems”. *World Politics*. Vol. 9, No. 3, 383–400.

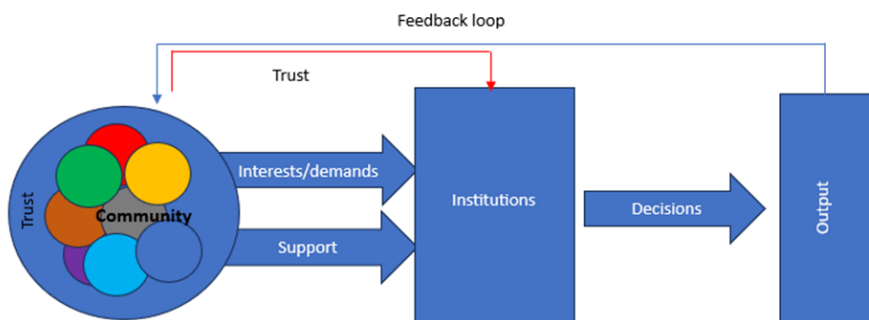


Figure 1: Model of a cohesive political system that responds to community inputs

For a political system to be effectively “functional” and socially coherent, several conditions must be met: **1) members of the community need to be able to recognize common interests that transcend the existing divisions; 2) they need to perceive themselves as active agents, thus believing that they have “the right” to demand that the institutions act upon their interests, as well as to organize and act towards the common good; 3) they need to have efficient and effective support or the platform to voice joint demands; 4) the institutions need to be receptive of the articulated demands; and 5) translate them into decisions and outputs that affect the community in a positive, socially cohesive manner.**

This logic was translated into the project structure, as the project aims to improve trust in institutions and strengthen the feedback loop when it comes to institutional responsiveness to the needs and ideas of citizens, and reduce polarization, violent behaviour and hate speech.

The project aims to translate the potentially negative effects of a lack of trust and the existence of divisive narratives, violence and hate speech into favourable outcomes – engaging the community, especially disenfranchised groups in dialogue and thus contributing to building a shared vision of the common good, horizontal and vertical public trust and resilience (**Outcome 1**). At the same time, the project aims at strengthening institutions by supporting them to be responsive to the results of the inclusive dialogues reflecting communities’ shared demands and in a participatory manner adopt and enforce inclusive, gender-responsive, rights-based, and people- and child-centred social cohesion policies (**Outcome 2**).

Several factors hinder meaningful dialogue and the development of a shared vision for the greater good (**Outcome 1**). Members of the society face different challenges to effectively engage: a sense of disempowerment among individuals is present, along with the lack of robust communication platforms, being the two most pronounced. Additionally, there is a shortfall in monitoring and overseeing the country’s international obligations and implementing domestic legal frameworks related to social cohesion. While the Constitution and national regulations ensure citizens’ participation, many do not utilize available platforms such as public discussions and online tools.

Under Outcome 1, the project builds the capacity of different priority groups to engage effectively through innovative, inclusive dialogue platforms to be introduced through the project at both the local and national levels. Priority groups for these empowerment initiatives include women, children, young people, the media professionals, parents, caregivers, teachers, political stakeholders, marginalized communities, academics and religious figures, with local and national institutions playing a pivotal role in the execution. To empower diverse groups for dialogue for the common good, the project will include four types of activities.

First, the capabilities of both women and men, especially #NextGen, progressive and empathetic leaders, will be strengthened to champion civic engagement, human rights and social cohesion, ensuring leadership that promotes the common good.

Second, significant emphasis will be placed on using the existing platforms in schools, local and national self-governances and parliaments, the Ombudsperson and CSOs, and designing new methodologies for child, adolescent and youth participation to enable them to actively contribute to dialogues and pledges at both the local and national levels, recognizing them as integral agents for social cohesion. Children, adolescents and young people play a vital role in promoting social cohesion efforts. They often act as “bridges” that help foster cooperation among divided communities and societies, all working towards improving the wellbeing of every child.

Third, young people possess the potential to drive positive change as advocates for a culture of peace and open dialogue, and they are also vulnerable to being affected by or drawn into conflicts and violence if their needs are disregarded and their voices remain unheard.³⁶

Fourth, civic education programmes will be strengthened and expanded to equip children, caregivers and educators with core values and skills for fostering peaceful and inclusive communities. School-based interventions will build on the existing civic education curriculum and broaden its scope to include the meaningful involvement and participation of students and provide them with multiple opportunities – through other subjects/regular teaching and extra-curricular activities, to develop their social, emotional and peaceful conflict resolution skills. Also, peaceful inter-personal conflict resolution programmes will be introduced in schools and community settings to help children, adolescents, young people and caregivers to increase resilience and enhance their skills and capacities to apply core values and competencies, leading to peaceful and inclusive societies.

Finally, as the *fifth* activity, integration of the comprehensive UNESCO Media and Information Literacy framework³⁷ into the educational system, through teachers’ empowerment, will further foster informed and critical thinking among pupils, ensuring a well-rounded approach to dialogue and understanding, especially relevant in the digital age, relevant for social cohesion and democracy. Learning of these skills across curricula aims to empower the youngest citizens of Montenegro to combat disinformation, misinformation and hate speech, thus contributing to quality and inclusive education, education for non-violence and peace education (**Output 1.1**).

To foster inclusive dialogue around the shared goal of societal wellbeing, four essential activities are being introduced. The pilot Local Community Resource Groups and Civic Dialogues will nurture open conversations, offering valuable insights for the creation of ***social cohesion pledges at both the local and state levels***. At the same time, academia will facilitate discussions between students and diverse stakeholders, thus emphasizing youth engagement in building social trust.

Building on the dialogues, the establishment of the Social Cohesion Innovation Lab will encourage community-led solutions through both online and offline channels and support community-based programmes aimed at preventing violence, hate speech and divisive narratives. This will also provide an opportunity for equipping children, young people and parents/caregivers with the knowledge and skills to build resilience and access preventive and outreach programmes and justice mechanisms, with a vision for its scaling-up nationwide. The Social Cohesion Innovation Lab will provide a hub of technical support for the implementation of solutions through sense-making and human-centred, gender-responsive and child-sensitive design methodologies. Among the supported projects, at least one third will include gender equality initiatives.

Through a co-design approach with CSOs, children, adolescents, young people, women, families and other community members, these programmes will be delivered through outreach programmes and community initiatives in selected municipalities. The sustainability of ideas piloted through small grants will be explored

³⁶ These efforts align with UN Security Council Resolution 2427, which urges the global community to incorporate children as rights holders and child participation and protection into all relevant initiatives related to conflict prevention, resolution and post-conflict situations. It underscores the importance of strengthening the resilience of children, their families and their communities, as well as promoting universal education and fostering peaceful, inclusive societies to achieve sustainable development.

³⁷ Based on the UNESCO Media and Information Literacy Handbook for Elementary Schools in Montenegro, and other MIL-related materials

through linking them with other partners and local and national institutions and infrastructures that can support and scale up their potential. Particular attention will be focused on supporting solutions and programmes which foster inter-cultural dialogue, embracing diversity, prevention of hate speech, divisive narratives and violence among children and young people. The Social Cohesion Innovation Lab will also focus on establishing a digital platform to build digital capacities and enablers for enhancing social cohesion.

While the themes of the dialogues will be driven by the needs of the specific communities, the project will invite them to address hate speech against different groups, specifically. Lastly, the work with the Young Reporters initiative will champion the voices of adolescents, particularly those from marginalized backgrounds, ensuring their active contribution to public discussions on social cohesion (**Output 1.2**).

On the **supply side of the system**, the project will strengthen the capacities of national and local institutions to respond to the demands made by the community and articulated in participatory dialogues by adopting and monitoring the implementation of inclusive, gender-responsive, rights-based and people- and child-centred policies, i.e. the **Local and National Social Cohesion Pledges**, as the commitments of the local and national authorities, formulated based on the interests and demands articulated by various communities through participatory dialogues (**Outcome 2**). If the relevant institutions can perform in such a manner, including through strengthened mechanisms for monitoring and addressing hate speech, divisive narratives and violence, it is expected that their behaviour will trigger an increase of trust in institutions, which, in turn, counters divisive narratives, hate speech and, more generally, violent behaviour.

The project will focus on institutions at both the local and national levels, in order to build up their capacities for all phases of participatory decision making – development, adoption and implementation.

While participation in decision making is already enabled in Montenegro through several institutional mechanisms, the response and involvement of citizens remain low. The project aims to introduce innovative dialogue methodologies, complementing existing institutional mechanisms, to design and implement **Social Cohesion Pledges**. These pledges represent commitments by the authorities, formulated based on the interests and demands articulated by various communities through participatory dialogues. This will be executed by reinforcing current institutional structures and leveraging the inherent competencies of these institutions for the planned interventions.

Strengthening of the capacities of the Parliament of Montenegro and selected local parliaments, particularly focusing on women parliamentarians, and fostering child and youth participation, will support the addressing of the critical challenges related to social cohesion by enhancing oversight of policies and practices by children, young people and women in particular. This initiative ensures inclusive representation, fosters democratic accountability, empowers children and young people in decision making, aligns with international commitments, builds lasting capacity, promotes collaboration across government levels, and ultimately contributes to sustained positive impacts on policies affecting Montenegro's social unity and stability. In these ways, the project also further enhances links between the local and national levels and improves the feedback loop and accountability for the response to the needs of local communities.

The project supports the engagement and strengthening of existing stakeholders, including the Protector of Human Rights and Freedoms³⁸ and CSOs, to closely monitor and empirically analyse the underlying causes, facilitating the development of effective countermeasures, and to provide recommendations for more accountable actions.

The Protector's and NGOs' institutional capacity and mechanisms for research and independent monitoring of hate speech, violence and divisive narratives, including the spread of mis-/dis-information, both online and offline, will be strengthened to be capacitated to better monitor the effective implementation of international commitments and the national framework fostering social cohesion, incidences and threats to social cohesion

³⁸ The Protector of Human Rights and Freedoms – the Ombudsperson. For more information about the institution and its structure please visit <https://www.ombudsman.co.me/index.php>.

and compliance with ethical codes of conduct by representatives of different branches of power and the media. Special consideration will be given to improved advocacy and collaborative action in preventing gender-based hate speech, which frequently occurs towards women leaders and politicians (**Output 2.1**).

While it is clear that low levels of social cohesion and public trust, on one side, and divisive narratives, on the other, are widely present in Montenegrin society, the empirical evidence explaining and identifying the root causes behind these phenomena is missing. A Knowledge, Attitudes and Practices (KAP) research/nationally representative public perception survey on the stances of the general public will be conducted before and following the project implementation in order to establish the prevalence of divisive narratives, hate speech, violence, etc., and then to assess and measure the impact of the project to inform, design and implement targeted social and behavioural change strategies and actions, that will support civic participation, a culture of dialogue and a collaborative vision.

To overcome threats to social cohesion and to support creating a strong, cohesive society in the country, it will be important to unpack what lies behind the low level of social cohesion in certain communities and which behavioural interventions on social cohesion do and do not work. Identifying whether the low levels of social cohesion are, for example, a matter of customs or are the matter of moral, descriptive or injunctive norms, and what are the individual characteristics of those people expressing opposition towards social cohesion, are crucial in successful building social cohesion. That is why this project intends to invest in scientifically based behavioural interventions and their scaling-up in the form of social investments. Through behavioural insight research, which will be focused on the cognitive, social, emotional and psychological factors of behaviours, evidence will be generated which will enable stakeholders to gain an understanding of how people make decisions and why they behave in certain ways, and situations to social cohesion, including how a change in their behaviour may be achieved.

The project will also initiate a comprehensive multi-platform communications and promotion campaign specifically aimed at promoting social cohesion targeting the main sources of hate speech, violence and divisive narratives. The intervention will not only counteract divisive narratives and the normalization of hate speech and violence that is present in every pore of society including in schools, but will also lay the foundations for fostering and sharing culture norms rooted in trust, dialogue and a shared, common vision. Furthermore, intervention will enhance the media's capacities and capabilities through introducing the principles of solution journalism and assist in the formation of a national multi-stakeholder media coalition, ensuring that the public is consistently informed with evidence and insights on social cohesion.

A positive change towards a shared vision will be encouraged by active promotion of culture and appreciation of diversity among different communities in the country. The **power of culture** should be more systematically harnessed for strengthening social cohesion, building on its soft power and fundamental vocation as a joining force. In that perspective, respect for cultural diversity should be understood as an asset for cohesion and stability. In order to reduce communities' vulnerability to external shocks and to strengthen social cohesion, fostering of the safeguarding and transmission of culture and heritage values, identities and memory is critical, notably by expanding upon museums and heritage sites as places of knowledge and promotion of the common good. Cultural diversity gives an opportunity of exploring other cultures, traditions, arts and beliefs. Acknowledging and promoting cultural diversity with a human rights-based approach can facilitate intercultural dialogue, strengthen social cohesion and protect the rights of overlooked groups (**Output 2.2**).

In alignment with the Women, Peace and Security agenda, the initiative not only recognizes but also fosters women's significant contributions in the political sphere. By building the capacities of both women and men in key influential roles, including politicians, policymakers and opinion leaders, the project seeks to pave the way for more inclusive, gender-sensitive approaches in line with the core principles of Resolution 1325, emphasizing the crucial involvement of women.

Having in mind the rise in gender-based hate speech targeting women politicians (also recognized in the latest Ombudsperson's report³⁹ and in UNDP research⁴⁰), which demotivates women from entering the political and public spheres, as well as women having only 17 of the 81 seats in the new parliament,⁴¹ it becomes crucial to safeguard and advance progress in gender equality and women's participation in the public and political spaces.

Globally, it is acknowledged that significant progress has been made in advancing women's rights and gender equality, particularly since the adoption of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action in 1995. However, concern is expressed regarding an emerging backlash against these achievements, characterized by well-organized campaigns seeking to exert control over women's sexuality and bodily autonomy. The importance of collective action, solidarity and strategic alliances across nations and generations to dismantle patriarchal structures and promote gender equality is emphasized. It is stressed that gender equality is integral to human rights and dignity and is crucial for justice, development and peace. There is a call for the engagement of men and boys as allies, support for women's rights defenders and ensuring that the United Nations amplifies their voices. Ultimately, the ongoing fight for gender equality is underscored, along with the necessity for continued collective efforts⁴² (**Output 2.3**).

The project adheres to a carefully crafted sequencing logic, commencing with activities at the grassroots level to ensure a locally driven and community-based approach before progressing to the national level, thereby expanding their sphere of influence. Initially, the project focuses on enhancing the capacities of targeted groups, equipping them for constructive dialogue and building resilience to social cohesion risks. Consequently, local dialogues will be deployed, resulting in local social cohesion pledges and plans. The results of the local dialogues will then be elevated to the national level through national dialogue platforms and will result in national government commitments for implementing social cohesion measures. Throughout each phase, the project will deploy various tools to facilitate implementation, including the Social Cohesion Innovation Lab, a comprehensive communication campaign, behavioural research, cultural and media and information literacy programmes, digital tools and platforms, etc.

The project management will include consultations and information not only about the progress of the activities but also about the main "products" which will be than in the further stages.

UNDP, UNESCO and UNICEF will directly coordinate when it comes to local, national and school-based interventions and programmes to either work in different venues for programmes that are not compatible or complementary, or to design schedules which follow a logical approach for programmes that are complementary to each other. This approach was already taken during the "Dialogue for the Future" programme where UNESCO and UNICEF programmes were delivered in different schools and/or communities, apart from several programmes that directly linked to each other.

³⁹ https://www.ombudsman.co.me/docs/1681285008_finalizvjestaj_12042023.pdf

⁴⁰ Women face significant challenges in taking part in political life, with a 2021 UNDP study finding that 7 out of 10 women politicians reported some form of violence against them, while 9 out of 10 had been discriminated against. <https://www.undp.org/montenegro/blog/violence-against-women-politicians-cost-doing-politics-or-unacceptable-burden>

⁴¹ The 2014 amendments to the Electoral Code require that at least one in every four individuals on election lists be from the "less represented sex", effectively meaning women. Moreover, a rule ensures that if a female candidate declines a mandate for any reason, she can only be replaced by another woman. This safeguards against post-election pressures where women might be urged to relinquish their seats to male candidates. Despite these measures, Montenegro's proportional electoral system and fragmented parliament hinder the goal of achieving at least 40% representation by women by 2030, as outlined in the National Sustainable Development Strategy. Female politicians also contend with challenges such as party biases during candidate selection, societal pressures and increasing online harassment.

⁴² <https://hdr.undp.org/content/2023-gender-social-norms-index-gsni#/indicies/GSNI>

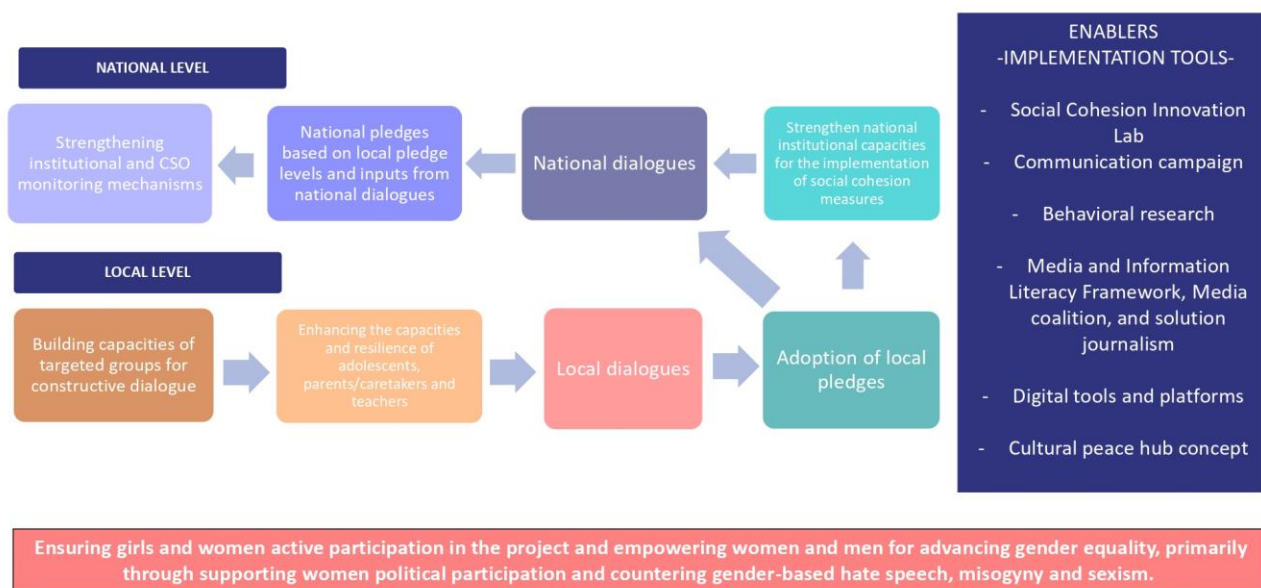


Figure 2: Project sequencing and logics

- b) Provide a **project-level ‘theory of change’** – explain the assumptions about why you expect the project interventions to lead to changes in the conflict factors identified in the conflict analysis. What are the assumptions that the theory is based on? Note, this is not a summary statement of your project’s outcomes.

IF

communities, with a focus on children, young people, women and civil society are educated in human rights and civic participation and empowered for meaningful dialogue,

AND IF

children, young people, women, teachers, caregivers, the media and civil society are equipped with the skills and competences to embrace and promote diversity, recognize, prevent and become more resilient to violence, hate speech and divisive narratives,

AND IF

intercultural dialogue, shared values and respect for diversity are promoted through civic, educational, media and cultural initiatives,

AND IF

national and local government institutions are responsive to inputs from civic dialogues and adopt and implement people-centred and gender-responsive policies and programmes that foster social cohesion,

AND IF

local and national parliaments, the Protector and CSOs are capacitated to generate robust evidence and monitor social cohesion trends and strengthen oversight and call for accountable institutional actions,

THEN

the people and institutions will be able to build a shared vision of the common good that will further advance social cohesion, strengthen a culture of peace and contribute to the sustainable development, based on trust, respect of diversity and resilience to divisive narratives, hate speech and violence.

Programmatic approach

- Support targeted communities across societal groups to recognize common interests and demands, and engage in meaningful dialogues about their future.
- Support meaningful participation of children, adolescents and young people, including through youth organizations and CSOs, to contribute to local and national dialogues.
- Strengthen existing and provide innovative platforms for interest articulation of different communities that will facilitate and enable discussion in a participatory, open manner, respecting and thriving on diversity.
- Support relevant local and national institutions to be responsive to the results of citizens' dialogues and aggregate them into coherent, inclusive, gender-responsive, people- and child-centred policies that foster social cohesion.
- Support the building of institutional monitoring systems capable of yielding timely and evidence-based responses to social cohesion threats, including divisive narratives, violence and hate speech.
- Support decisive resistance to normalization of any kind of hate speech, gender-based violence and violence against and among children and young people.
- Support children, adolescents, teachers and parents through school-based programmes focusing on peaceful conflict resolution, socio-emotional skills (empathy, tolerance) and community initiatives.
- Support integration of the Media and Information Literacy concept into formal education, ensuring an integrated approach, crucial for cultivating informed, critical and engaged citizens.
- Promote cultural diversity, human rights and a culture of peace, ensuring that equality and multiculturalism are strongly pronounced among citizens.

Assumptions

- **Capacity for Empowerment:** It is assumed that communities, especially children, young people, women and different groups possess the desire to engage in meaningful and inclusive civic engagement and dialogue.
- **Responsive Institutions:** It is assumed that national and local institutions have the willingness to respond to the outcomes of inclusive dialogue and to implement evidence- and rights-based policies.
- **Positive Policy Impact:** It is assumed that implementing evidence- and rights-based policies, particularly those focused on social cohesion, will have a positive impact on society.
- **Public Trust:** It is assumed that increased civic engagement, dialogue and responsive policies will lead to increased public trust in the government and institutions.
- **Mitigation of Polarization:** It is assumed that by engaging in inclusive dialogue and implementing policies that encourage social cohesion, the country can effectively mitigate polarization within society.
- **Countering Divisive Narratives:** It is assumed that a shared vision and inclusive dialogue can effectively counter divisive narratives. It is also assumed that the strategies and interventions aimed at countering divisive narratives will be effective in reducing their influence on society. This includes the belief that well-designed messaging, awareness campaigns and community efforts can successfully challenge and diminish the impact of divisive narratives.
- **Countering Normalization of Violence:** It is assumed that promoting social cohesion will contribute to reducing the normalization of violence in society, especially gender-based violence and violence against and between children and young people.

- **Sustainable Development:** It is assumed that the advancement of social cohesion and the building of a shared vision will contribute to sustainable development in the country.
- **Gender Equality and Inclusivity:** It is assumed that the empowerment and inclusion of women and gender-diverse individuals in civic engagement and dialogue processes are essential for achieving social cohesion and sustainable development. This includes the recognition of the unique challenges faced by these groups and the implementation of gender-responsive policies and practices to address them.
- **Children and Young People as Holders of Rights and Agents of Change:** Recognition of children and young people as holders of rights and agents of change who are empowered and capacitated to foster social cohesion at the community and national levels.
- **Culture of Peace:** It is assumed that fostering a culture of peace and appreciation of cultural diversity is a positive force to counter discrimination, prejudice and violence, while promoting dialogue, multiculturalism, peace and stability.

c) **Provide a narrative description of key project components** (outcomes and outputs)

OUTCOME 1: *Diverse social groups in targeted communities are empowered and actively engage in dialogue to contribute to building a shared vision of the common good, respect for diversity, public trust and resilience to divisive narratives and violence.*

- *Output 1.1: Improved capacities of children, adolescents, young people and women for meaningful civic engagement and inclusive dialogue, upholding and advancing human rights, including cultural rights, and countering violence, hate speech and divisive narratives;*
- *Output 1.2: Targeted groups and communities participate in creating a shared vision for the common good through local and national dialogue platforms.*

OUTCOME 2: *Based on participatory dialogue, national and local institutions initiate adoption of inclusive, gender-responsive, rights-based, people- and child-centred policies and strengthen oversight to enable consensus on a shared vision of the common good and enhancement of trust.*

- *Output 2.1: Local and national institutions facilitate inclusive, people-centred dialogue to adopt Social Cohesion Pledges and effectively implement and oversee human rights and social cohesion policies and measures that respond to the recommendations and solutions identified through dialogues.*

Output 2.2: Public communication and advocacy and policy making based on evidence and latest knowledge on social cohesion threats and public trust in institutions, in order to counter divisive narratives, hate speech and violence, and foster a culture of peace and appreciation of cultural diversity.

- *Output 2.3: Targeted institutions have capacities to ensure girls' and women's public and political participation and to help counter hate speech, violence, sexism, misogyny and the backlash related to gender equality.*

Table overview of Outcomes, Outputs and Activities

OUTCOME 1 <i>Diverse social groups in targeted communities are empowered and actively engage in dialogue to contribute to building a shared vision of the common good, public trust, respect for diversity and resilience to divisive narratives and violence.</i>	OUTCOME 2 <i>Based on participatory dialogue, national and local institutions initiate the adoption of inclusive, gender-responsive, rights-based, people- and child-centred policies and strengthen oversight to enable consensus on a shared vision of the common good and enhancement of trust.</i>
Output 1.1:	Output 2.1: Local and national institutions facilitate inclusive, people-centred dialogue to adopt Social Cohesion Pledges and effectively develop, implement and oversee human-rights and social cohesion policies and measures that respond to the recommendations and solutions identified through dialogues
Activity 1.1.1 - Enhance capacities of women and men, #NextGen, <u>progressive and empathetic</u> leaders for meaningful civic engagement, leading for the common good, advancing and safeguarding human rights, promoting social cohesion and gender equality achievements (UNDP)	Activity 2.1.1 - Strengthen local and national institutional capacities and tools for the participatory development, adoption and implementation of social cohesion pledges (UNDP and UNICEF)
Activity 1.1.2 - Support children, adolescents and young people, including through youth organizations and CSOs, to contribute to local and national dialogues and local and national Social Cohesion Pledges as active citizens and agents of social cohesion (UNICEF)	Activity 2.1.2 - Strengthen the capacities of the Parliament of Montenegro and selected local parliaments for improved oversight and contribution to dialogue on social cohesion, including active participation and engagement of children and young people in the work of the local and national parliaments (UNICEF and UNDP)
Activity 1.1.3 - Enhance the skills, capacities and resilience of children, adolescents, parents/caregivers and teachers through civic education programmes, caregivers' support and peaceful conflict resolution to apply core values and competencies, leading to peaceful and inclusive societies (UNICEF)	Activity 2.1.3 - Strengthening institutional capacity and mechanisms for research and independent monitoring of hate speech, violence and divisive narratives, including the spread of mis-/dis-information, both online and offline (UNICEF and UNDP)
Activity 1.1.4 - Introduction of a comprehensive Media and Information Literacy concept in schools, based on the UNESCO Media and Information Literacy Handbook for Elementary Schools in Montenegro, and support establishment of the Resource Centre for Media and Information Literacy (UNESCO)	
Output 1.2: Targeted groups and communities participate in creating a shared vision for the common good through local and national dialogue platforms	Output 2.2: Public communication and advocacy and policy making based on evidence and the latest knowledge on social cohesion threats and public trust in institutions, in order to counter divisive narratives, hate speech and violence, and foster a culture of peace and appreciation of cultural diversity
Activity 1.2.1 - Establish pilot Local Community Resource Groups and Civic Dialogues for Social Cohesion that are to foster open dialogue and provide	Activity 2.2.1 - Build national capacities for evidence-based social cohesion policy making by using behavioural insights and nationally

inputs to local and state institutions in developing social pledges (UNDP)	representative public perception surveys before and after the project to measure the impact and to inform, design and implement targeted social and behavioural change strategies and actions (UNICEF and UNDP)
Activity 1.2.2 - Support academia-facilitated thematic dialogue platforms between students and diverse social actors, including decision makers, to address youth participation, respect for diversity and trust within society-related topics (UNESCO)	Activity 2.2.2 - Launch a multi-platform communications and advocacy initiative to counter divisive narratives and normalization of hate speech and violence, and support a culture of trust, dialogue and a collaborative vision (UNDP, UNICEF)
Activity 1.2.3 – Establishment of a Social Cohesion Innovation Lab to drive online and offline community-led solutions (UNDP and UNICEF)	Activity 2.2.3 - Strengthen the capacities of the media through the concept of solution journalism and support the setting-up of the National Multi-Stakeholder Media Coalition (UNESCO)
Activity 1.2.4 - Support the Young Reporters initiative aimed at promoting quality and continuous participation of adolescent girls and boys, including those from marginalized groups, in the public debate on social cohesion (UNICEF)	Activity 2.2.4 - Promotion of culture and appreciation of diversity among citizens and communities (UNESCO)
	Output 2.3: Targeted institutions have capacities to ensure girls and women’s public and political participation and to help counter hate speech, sexism, misogyny and the backlash related to gender equality
	Activity 2.3.1 - Strengthen decision makers’ and opinion makers’ capacity with knowledge and skills to achieve and uphold advances in gender equality and counter gender-based divisive narratives, hate speech and violence (UNDP)
	Activity 2.3.2 - Strengthen the capacities of women politicians through capacity building of Women’s Clubs in the national and local parliaments (UNICEF and UNDP)

The project is designed with a meticulously planned sequence that starts at the grassroots level, ensuring a bottom-up, community-centric approach before gradually advancing to the national level, thus expanding its reach and impact, as can be seen in Figure 2:

- The project commences by engaging with five local communities directly. This approach ensures that the project is rooted in the specific needs, concerns and dynamics of each community. At this stage, the project’s primary focus is on building the capacities of targeted groups within these communities.
- However, while the dialogue topics are customized to align with community needs, the project team subtly encourages discussions on hate speech. By doing so, they prompt the groups to address this critical issue that may be affecting their community, thereby fostering awareness and potential solutions.
- To empower the groups at the local level for meaningful and constructive exchange, the project team invests in capacity-building activities. These activities prepare community members to engage in constructive dialogues on topics that are tailored to address the unique challenges and aspirations of their communities and result in adoption of the Local Social Cohesion Pledges.
- The same sequential approach is maintained when transitioning from the local to the national level. The project begins by empowering communities, then facilitating dialogues that incorporate the perspectives of these empowered groups at the national level.

- The empowerment phase focuses on equipping local communities with the skills, knowledge and confidence to participate actively in discussions at the national level. This process ensures that the voices of marginalized communities are heard and considered in broader national dialogues.
- Following empowerment, the project facilitates dialogues at the national level, drawing on the experiences and insights of the empowered community groups. These dialogues aim to create a space for open and constructive discussions on key issues, including those related to social cohesion and hate speech leading to the adoption of the National Social Cohesion Pledges.
- The sequential approach culminates in advocacy and monitoring activities. With the input and perspectives gathered from both the local and national levels, the project team can advocate for policies, initiatives or changes that promote social cohesion and combat hate speech. Monitoring ensures that the impact of these efforts is assessed and that adjustments are made as needed.
- Throughout each phase of the project, various tools and resources are deployed to facilitate implementation. These include the Social Cohesion Innovation Lab for innovative solutions, a comprehensive communication campaign to raise awareness, behavioural research to inform strategies, support for media and information literacy, digital tools and platforms for efficient management, and the introduction of a cultural peace hub concept to foster inclusivity and cultural understanding.
- Project management includes ongoing consultations and information sharing not only about the progress of activities but also about the main “products” or outcomes that will be developed in later stages of the project. This ensures that stakeholders are well-informed and engaged throughout the project’s lifecycle.



Figure 2: Project sequencing and logic

DESCRIPTION OF ACTIVITIES

OUTCOME 1:

Diverse social groups in targeted communities are empowered and actively engage in dialogue to contribute to building a shared vision of the common good, public trust, respect for diversity and resilience to divisive narratives and violence.

Output 1.1: Improved capacities of diverse groups with a focus on children, adolescents, young people and women for meaningful civic engagement and inclusive dialogue, upholding and advancing human rights and countering violence and harmful narratives.

Activity 1.1.1 Enhance capacities of women and men, #NextGen leaders for meaningful civic engagement, leading for the common good, advancing and safeguarding human rights and gender equality achievements (UNDP)

#NextGen Leaders is a comprehensive training and mentoring initiative designed to be a catalyst for change, nurturing young community leaders, local opinion shapers and a broader spectrum of societal stakeholders, by equipping them to navigate and address the modern challenges of divisive narratives, gender-based hate speech, polarization and social exclusion in a conflict-sensitive manner. The programme will empower a minimum of 50 individual young people, women and men, civil society groups and organizations, academia, the media, youth and women's networks and local opinion makers to become key agents of change in their communities and organizations for countering divisive narratives and hate speech, advancing gender equality and human rights and freedoms, including on how to ensure accountability of institutions for social cohesion pledges. The strong focus of the #NextGen programme will be on building awareness and capacities for being ahead of the curve when it comes to backlashes linked to gender equality and women's rights.

This will be achieved through a civic education curriculum on empathetic and ethical leadership and advocacy, gender equality and countering divisive narratives. The programme will help build a new generation of leaders who stand for social good and collaboration, claim their rights and keep institutions accountable. The curriculum will be developed in close collaboration with CSOs, youth clubs and centres, academia and experts active in the field, and build upon cross-sector and inter-generational knowledge and lessons learnt, and will be implemented through training in the academic and non-formal education sectors.

To ensure and enable inter-generational solidarity and knowledge exchange, the training programme will be complemented with a **mentoring programme**, which will enable experience and knowledge exchange, not just from older and more experienced to younger persons, but also vice-versa – connecting the vibrant and innovative ideas of the young generations of #NextGen leaders with the richness of experiences and knowledge of more experienced social activists, experts, cultural creators, etc.

The #NextGen leaders will also participate in dialogues and the Social Cohesion Innovation Lab, as well as communication campaign activities (Activity 2.2.2).

Activity 1.1.2 Support children, adolescents and young people, including through youth organizations and CSOs, to contribute to local and national dialogues and Local and National Social Cohesion Pledges as active citizens and agents of social cohesion (UNICEF)

The aim of this intervention is to capacitate children, adolescents and young people with the necessary knowledge and skills to become more active and civically engaged, which would allow them to participate in various activities such as those outlined in Activities 1.2.1 and 1.2.3 (dialogues and innovation projects), thus contributing to development and implementation of Local and National Social Cohesion Pledges (Activity 2.1.1).

In the selected municipalities, children, adolescents and young people will be capacitated to act as agents of change and promote civic and democratic principles and values, as well as in the social and political arena by showcasing the principles and values of transparent and constructive dialogue, gender equality and community

mobilization in building open and **inclusive societies and institutions**. This will be achieved through fostering meaningful participation of boys, young people and women at the school, community and national levels.⁴³

To achieve this goal, boys, girls, adolescents, young people and women, and specifically those from the most disadvantaged groups and communities, will be empowered and provided with the capacities and skills to meaningfully participate in school and youth parliaments and clubs, and policy and democratic dialogue, including in the monitoring of laws, policies and rights at the local, national and cross-country levels, and thus contribute to the country's rule of law and social cohesion agenda. At the same time, they will be equipped with knowledge on their rights and mechanisms to access justice and seek remedy in the case of violations of their rights. Also, expanding opportunities to engage with the Parliament and relevant Committees – and particularly the Women's Club of the Parliament would be essential – to leverage their statutory power and bring pressing concerns and solutions into public forums and to create a platform where children, adolescents and young people may express their views and opinions freely, engage in civic activism, elaborate and discuss the most pressing human rights concerns regarding social cohesion, and act as an active contributor to democratic dialogue, evidence-based policy making, budgeting, monitoring of results, and building open and inclusive societies. Thematic dialogues will be organized on social cohesion, peace building, countering hate speech, promoting civic values, and open and inclusive societies through strengthening the network of School Student Parliaments, participation in parliamentary dialogues, the activities of the Protector's Institution, CSOs, etc.

In cooperation with CSO partners, training modules will be developed and delivered through trained youth club staff and peer educators. CSO partners supporting Roma, children with disabilities and LGBTIQ+ adolescents and young people will be directly involved to ensure equity, diversity and fair representation. Through this activity 500 adolescents and young people will be trained and engaged, with more than 2,000 indirect beneficiaries.

Activity 1.1.3. Enhance the skills, capacities and resilience of children, adolescents, parents/caregivers and teachers through civic education programmes, caregivers' support and peaceful conflict resolution to apply core values and competencies, leading to peaceful, and inclusive societies (UNICEF)

The aim of this key intervention is to strengthen the foundations of social cohesion through promoting and supporting civic education and capacity and skills building for key stakeholders/individuals – children and adolescents, teachers and parents/caregivers – to acquire the necessary skills and competences to increase resilience to threats to social cohesion. Social cohesion will be fostered from the bottom up, thus complementing to the development and implementation of Local and National Social Cohesion Pledges and overall national institution-building processes. To ensure long-term and sustainable implementation of the actions conducted through this intervention, the results, experience and lessons learned from this initiative will be used as a basis for formulating relevant policy- and programme-level interventions in the new Education Reform Strategy and new strategies in the domain of: Early childhood development; Child protection; and the National Strategy on Youth, thus anchoring the support for social cohesion.

- ***Promote civic education and empower teachers and students to act as peace educators*** – within the broader concept of ***civic education***, the implementation of the Social and Emotional Skills Programme, will be expanded and consolidated, with, among other things, human rights knowledge and competencies, including empathy, tolerance, integrity, gender equality and teamwork, as a most powerful mechanism for building resilience, the prevention of violence and strengthening social cohesion. In cooperation with the Ministry of Education, Bureau of Education and primary and

⁴³ In line with the Universal Declaration on Human Rights, the Convention on the Rights of the Child, the Convention on Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women, the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, the European Convention on Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms, the Generation Unlimited, the 2030 SDGs, relevant EU directives and strategies and Montenegro's EU accession agenda, the social, economic, and political inclusion of girls, boys, adolescents, young people and women will be the focus of all actions, irrespective of age, sex, disability, race, ethnicity, origin, religion, economic or other status. Ultimately, the proposed action will reinforce the country's commitment to the Sustainable Development Goals, and primarily SDG 16 to 'Promote just, peaceful and inclusive societies', and to support developing country achievement of the 2030 Agenda, by taking concrete actions to address the key challenges faced by girls, boys, young people and women.

secondary schools, the project will build on the very successful Social and Emotional Skills Programme implemented by UNICEF, to train teachers and students to act as social cohesion and peace educators. With the overarching programme already present in over 60% of Montenegrin schools, this approach can be realistically implemented in a relatively short timeframe. The programme will draw on the extensive experience of the OHCHR on human rights education in formal and informal settings, and good practices from the region. In addition to this, in cooperation with the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Justice and the National Centre for Mediation, teachers' capacities will be strengthened to implement the Peaceful Conflict Resolution and mediation programmes among and with children in selected schools, as an important means to contribute to the overall school ethos and social cohesion, and with a view to scaling up the intervention. Through this activity, at least 125 teachers will be trained, thus directly reaching at least 5,000 students who will benefit from the programme.

In targeted schools and communities, include parents/caregivers to ensure a holistic approach to peacebuilding, non-violent approaches and promoting empathy and tolerance. Montenegro is the first country in Europe to implement the [Parenting for Lifelong Health for Teens](#) programme through a pilot training course in 2023. The programme seeks to establish nurturing caregiver–teenager relationships and reduce the risk of violence against children and teenagers in and outside the home. It also promotes values such as empathy, tolerance and resilience, and thus is very complimentary to the socio-emotional skills programme in schools. The programme will be deployed through schools and the sessions will be held in schools, to ensure a holistic approach to peaceful conflict resolution, and promotion of empathy and tolerance. By including teachers, adolescents and parents/caregivers, we ensure that teenagers receive all the support needed. It will be delivered together with experts from Bangor University (UK) who delivered the pilot programme, and local CSOs who have already trained facilitators for the programme. Through this activity, 20 new facilitators, 300 parents and 300 adolescents will be trained, with more than 2,000 indirect beneficiaries.

Activity 1.1.4 Introduction of a comprehensive Media and Information Literacy concept in schools, and support establishment of Resource Centre for Media and Information Literacy (UNESCO)

The activity envisages enriching educational curricula with the tailored UNESCO Media and Information Literacy Handbook for Elementary Schools in Montenegro, which will strengthen integration of media and information literacy in teaching practices. This implies tailored capacity building of teachers and librarians, in order to increase critical thinking and build resilience of young people on divisive narratives and the consequent challenges.

Acknowledging education as a powerful tool to combat disinformation, misinformation and hate speech, this activity strongly supports the development of education responses that promote, protect and uphold international human rights, also contributing to quality and inclusive education, education for non-violence and peace education. The tailored capacity building of teachers and librarians is envisaged in the targeted municipalities, also including introduction of the **comprehensive Media and Information Literacy concept** in elementary schools and scaling-up in high schools, based on the *UNESCO Media and Information Literacy Handbook for Elementary Schools in Montenegro*, produced in partnership with the Montenegro Media Institute, as well as other relevant UNESCO MIL content. In partnership with the Ministry of Education, the project will target teachers and librarians in higher grades of elementary schools, and all grades of secondary schools, employing a cross-curriculum learning method to ensure greater impact in terms of the application of a structured and effective pedagogical approach, which promotes interculturalism and respect for diversity, and teaches media literacy. The activity's final objective is for teachers to gain ownership of the MIL concept and integrate it into everyday classroom work with students. Sustainability of the intervention is ensured through replication in the classrooms for generations to come.

In order to institutionalize the process, the activity will support the establishment of the **Resource Centre for Media and Information Literacy** as an integral part of the public university. This Resource Centre would serve as a foundational hub for educators, including media and information literacy educators, university professors and field experts to provide essential teaching materials and expertise in the field of media and

information literacy, with the aim of ensuring high quality in the teaching and academic research processes. Furthermore, the targeted university educational programmes will be enriched with tailored educational materials aimed at strengthening the competencies of both teachers and young men and women related to the media and information literacy, with a particular focus on respect for diversity and freedom of expression. The activity will be implemented in collaboration with the Ministry of Culture and Media and the Ministry of Education, and in partnership with the University of Montenegro's Faculty of Political Science, the Montenegro Media Institute and other relevant institutions and CSOs.

OUTPUT 1.2: Targeted groups and communities participate in creating a shared vision for the common good through local and national dialogue platforms.

Activity 1.2.1 Establish pilot Local Community Resource Groups and Civic Dialogues for Social Cohesion that are to foster open dialogue and provide inputs to local and state institutions in developing social pledges (UNDP and UNICEF)

To strengthen the ability for informed and inclusive vertical dialogue on social cohesion at the local level and provide community-based data for the design of Social Cohesion Pledges (under Activity 2.1.1), this project will provide support to local communities and local authorities across two core strands.

Firstly, local 'Community Resource Groups' (CRGs) will be established in each of the five selected municipalities, consisting of local administration, parliament, community, civil society, women groups, the media, young people, children and political and other actors. These groups will be provided with technical capacities focusing on human rights, child-centred planning, inclusion, conflict sensitivity and social cohesion, as well as operational capacities, to enable them to collaboratively design open and participatory dialogues and use *sense making and other innovative methodologies* to construct forward-looking, collaborative visions of their communities. To ensure the sustainability of this open dialogue format, the lessons learned during the establishment of the CRGs will lead to the design of a training programme for local and national public servants on diversifying tools and methodologies for ensuring collaborative local platforms and meaningful citizen participation in decision-making processes, to be embedded in the capacity development framework of the Human Resources Administration.⁴⁴ Special attention will be paid to ensuring gender-responsive design of the methodology for the dialogues, as well as subsequent social cohesion pledges/measures.

Secondly, the CRGs and local government will be supported to take the lead in conducting local multi-stakeholder Civic Dialogues focusing on social cohesion with broader sections of society – including women's groups, the media, children, adolescents, young people, political and other actors, marginalized groups, political representatives, academics, religious actors and entrepreneurs, amongst others, to ensure that all elements of society have the opportunity to engage in these dialogues. Leveraging the capacities provided to the CRGs, the dialogues will focus on envisioning the future of their communities and governance structures to respond to the opportunities and challenges raised during the dialogues. Planned to be conducted in five targeted pilot municipalities across three regions, the exercise will capture broadly representative views of Montenegrin society and serve as a social listening and idea crowdsourcing platform to feed into Local Social Cohesion Pledges and Plans. To ensure the inclusivity, sustainability and transparency of these dialogues, the in-person elements will be supplemented by a digital platform (see Activity 1.2.3), where comments can be added to discussions and all the outcomes are shared.

The methodology and dialogues will also integrate good practices and lessons learned from similar platforms organized through the multi-country Dialogue for the Future project (2019–2021), which deployed successful participatory methodologies and people-to-people and people-to-decisionmakers dialogue. The dialogues, using carefully designed methodology for participatory and collaborative exploration of social cohesion challenges

⁴⁴ The governmental institution in charge of training of local and national civil servants. <https://www.gov.me/uzk>

and related recommendations, generated a plethora of valuable insights and programmatic and policy recommendations. They convened citizens and institutional representatives from various communities and sectors, who considered these events as a rare opportunity for genuine, deep and meaningful conversation compared to other, short and more technical opportunities for participation or dialogue.

Although the dialogue topics will be tailored to suit the unique requirements of each community, hate speech and divisive narratives, as one of the key challenges that the project addresses, will be one of the discussion topics. Dialogues will foster awareness and constructive discussions around the issue of hate speech within these communities, promoting understanding and cooperation.

The dialogues will be designed and implemented through full ownership and participation of local actors, and the project will aim to explore local processes and structures, where the dialogues could be embedded as a long-term tool and space for dialogue among people and between people and the local authorities, and for collaborative design of tailored solutions which reflect the local needs and realities.

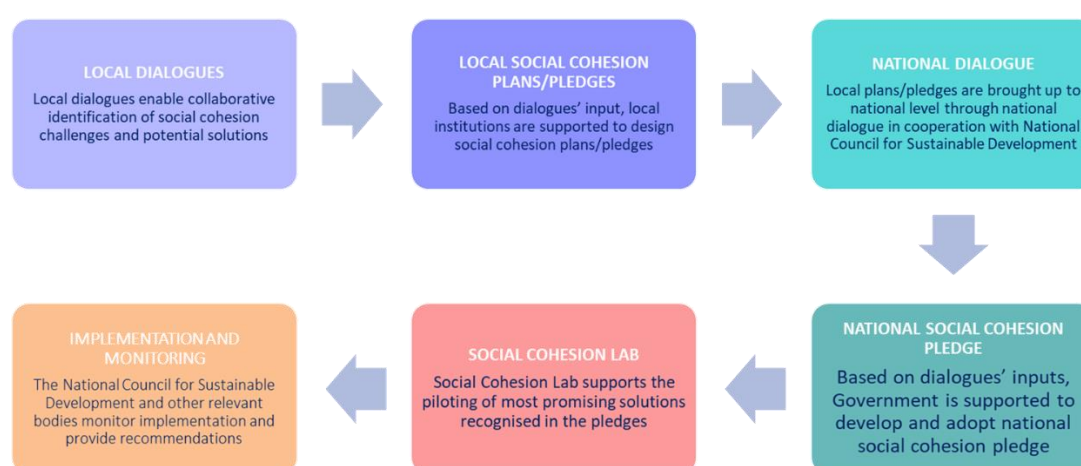


Figure 3: Process of creating a shared vision for the common good through local and national dialogue platforms

Activity 1.2.2 Support academia-facilitated thematic dialogue platforms between students and diverse social actors, including decision makers, to address youth participation, respect for diversity and trust within society-related topics (UNESCO)

Piloting of the thematic dialogue platforms (TDPs) at the level of academia to provide a dedicated space for students (from across the country) where they can raise and discuss issues that are important to them and their future in terms of inclusion, safety, respect for diversity and equality, contributing to social cohesion. Among others, social cohesion is understood as the social networks and norms of exchange and credibility that arise from connections between individuals. When attending higher education institutions, students go through a process of socialization, hence it is vital that they acquire core values that underpin social cohesion. Consequently, higher education institutions can affect social cohesion by promoting a culture of academic integrity, by facilitating a sense of community and by creating a diverse environment. The project's collaboration with **academia** is observed as a long-term peacebuilding investment, bearing in mind that it remains a solid institutional development partner.

The project will benefit from the cooperation framework with the University of Montenegro established under the Regional Dialogue for the Future project. Partnering and collaboration with the university ensures the building of a collaborative academic infrastructure and a knowledge-sharing platform contributing to the sustainability of the project goal. Namely, the project will directly engage the university on developing

educational content on transferable skills and active citizenship for improving teachers' competencies in education about peace, contributing to social cohesion and tolerance among students and to more inclusive societies. Furthermore, the university will establish an academic-level dialogue mechanism, with the aim of facilitating thematic dialogue platforms between students and diverse social actors, including decision makers.

Academia will facilitate thematic dialogue platforms and support students to voice their needs and concerns and to look for solutions. The thematic dialogue platforms will host relevant stakeholders, including decision makers, to discuss topics relevant to students, ranging from academic challenges to equality- and trust-building across society. These dialogue opportunities will contribute to greater youth participation and engagement in decision-making processes in a positive and constructive manner. More specifically, the young people participating in these forums will consequently participate and contribute to the high-level dialogues involving decision makers at the national level (linking to Output 2.1).

The TDP methodology will be fully developed, and the activity implemented in a participatory manner and the activity implemented with academia and students and will serve as a setting for future generations to remain engaged.

Furthermore, the particular topics, recommendations and concerns raised and concluded during the TDPs will feed into the national dialogue platforms (under Activity 2.1.1). This process will ensure that the voices of young women and men are being heard by relevant actors and will enable subsequent follow-up action.

Activity 1.2.3 Establishment of a Social Cohesion Innovation Lab to drive online and offline, community-led solutions (UNDP and UNICEF)

The Social Cohesion Innovation Lab will be established, with the core objective being to build trust and resilience within communities and with institutions, by turning ideas solicited through Civic Dialogues (see Activity 1.2.1) into impact through collaboration. By leveraging digital technologies, grant opportunities and the enhancement of knowledge and capacities to enhance social cohesion, the Social Cohesion Innovation Lab will support community trust and resilience, building support for: a) the design of community projects and their piloting; and b) the establishment of a digital platform for dialogue and knowledge sharing, and a digital backbone for all activities in this project. The Lab will be designed centrally as a programme consisting of a set of tools and collaborative design activities that will be implemented at the local level, in cooperation with all communities, depending on their local resources. The Lab will be designed as a programme that will aim for sustainability through its integration into local infrastructures such as innovation hubs, business incubators,⁴⁵ youth and community centres, universities and schools, which will be leveraged for hosting, integrating and sustaining the SCIL programme at the local level.

a. Design and support the piloting of community projects in schools, communities and local government to turn their ideas into an impact.

The Social Cohesion Innovation Lab will provide a hub of technical support for the implementation of solutions through sense-making and human-centred, gender-responsive and child-sensitive design methodologies. This will include: innovation challenges; the provision of technical support and guidance; piloting programmes and solutions with a high impact and scale-up potential; and workshop support. Besides support to the national and local authorities to implement the most promising solutions, the Lab will host innovation challenges and will provide small grants to encourage grassroots implementation of programmes and solutions identified through local dialogues and social cohesion pledges. Among the supported projects, at least one third will include gender equality initiatives. Sustainability of the ideas piloted through small grants will be explored through linking them with other partners and local and national institutions and infrastructures that can support and scale up their

⁴⁵ There is a Technological Innovation Hub (Tehnopolis) in Nikšić, and an Innovation Accelerator in Podgorica tied to the state university. There are also a number of creative spaces and small accelerators that are privately owned. Incubation support services are present in three cities in Montenegro.

potential. Particular attention will be focused on supporting solutions and programmes which foster inter-cultural dialogue, embracing diversity, prevention of hate speech, divisive narratives and violence among children and young people.

To ensure the full inclusion of children and young people in the delivery of social cohesion impact, an UPSHIFT⁴⁶ model will be implemented through the Lab in at least five selected local communities. This is to ensure that children, adolescents and young people in schools and local communities will be empowered to initiate projects and innovative solutions (including digital ones) to address topics identified by children, adolescents and young people via dialogue platforms. The programme will be implemented through schools and through local communities, with the support of experienced CSO partners and responsible ministries. This approach allows children, adolescents and young people to act directly as rights holders and change makers and to become more civically engaged while still having the support of an environment they feel comfortable in.⁴⁷ It also allows for projects to be developed at the school level and the community level, and even through cooperation between different schools and different municipalities, with a perspective of scaling up at the national level.

Previous experiences with the UPSHIFT model show that 66% of participants were girls, and at least one of the thematic topics to be addressed will be focused on gender equality, addressing patriarchal attitudes and violence against girls. Through the Social Cohesion Innovation Lab, children, adolescents and young people can also connect with other groups working on similar issues – such as women and disadvantaged groups. The programme will be implemented in at least five local communities with more than 5,000 beneficiaries.

Human-centred design and design thinking methodologies will also be used to develop conflict-sensitive and violence prevention programmes for children, adolescents and young people, and their families. Through a co-design approach with CSOs, children, adolescents, young people, women, families and other community members, these programmes will be delivered through outreach programmes and community initiatives in the selected municipalities. This kind of intervention will strengthen the resilience of these groups, improve their sense of belonging to a community and produce a shared vision, while increasing trust in institutional support, and strengthening both horizontal and vertical cooperation. A total of 300 children and adolescents and 300 family members will be reached.⁴⁸

Also, the inter-sector capacities, including those of the CSO sector, will be strengthened so that they are equipped with the knowledge and skills to provide integrated support to children, adolescent girls and boys and young women, to effectively manage strong emotions, prevent divisive narratives and hate speech, cope with adversity, communicate their needs, and navigate the existing societal polarization and normalization of violence, without resorting to violence. This will assure the sustainability of the above interventions, ensuring that the system will be able to continue supporting the needs of children, adolescents, young people and their families, as well as their communities. One hundred professionals from various sectors and CSOs will be reached.

The ideas solicited and recommendations developed under Activity 1.2.1 will be connected to the designated and broader innovation and the design capacities found in society, including the private

⁴⁶ UPSHIFT is a social innovation programme for young people aged 10–24. UPSHIFT uses Human-Centred Design to build young people's skills and aims to develop professional and transferable skills through experiential learning practices. It was piloted in Kosovo, Montenegro and Vietnam, and is currently operational in 46 countries. It is run by the UNICEF Office of Innovation.

⁴⁷ In the Analysis of Youth needs that preceded the project design, children, adolescents and young people flagged the education system as the institution in which they have the second highest level of trust.

⁴⁸ In line with the conclusions from the last session of the Council on Child Rights, held on 26 May 2023, where the Action Plan for the Prevention and Elimination of Violence Among Children and Young People was adopted, as an immediate country response to the increased incidence of hate speech, divisive narratives and violence among children, adolescents and young people, which has been recognized as a direct threat and trigger for social cohesion.

sector and academia, and for collaboration across targeted municipalities and schools under the Social Cohesion Innovation Lab umbrella.

b. Digital platform for dialogue and knowledge sharing

The Social Cohesion Innovation Lab will also focus on establishing a digital platform to build digital capacities and enablers for enhancing social cohesion. The core output will be the establishment of an online ‘Social Cohesion Platform’ (SCP) to bring together all dialogue and knowledge generation activities under the project. Hosted through a partnership between the Lab and a nationwide entity, the platform will be a public-facing online interface for social cohesion efforts.

The first element of the platform will host an interactive dialogue interface whereby activities conducted in Activity 1.1.1 can be engaged online. The platform will host the outcomes of the dialogues and enable online engagement and discussion on their formulation and implementation. The Lab will support local governments and Community Resource Groups to manage the dialogues hosted on the platform to ensure a direct connection to their work and leverage its cross-municipality position to ensure the sharing of common challenges and opportunities across selected municipalities. Engagement through the online platform will be complemented with the engagement and reach out to young people and other groups through the innovative U-Report communication tool.

The SCP will also serve as an online ‘Knowledge and Innovation Hub’. This hub will build trust by ensuring transparency and open access to information and pledges generated through the project and beyond on social cohesion efforts. It will also build the capacities of communities and the government by hosting online capacity-building activities focused on creating healthy digital and information ecosystems, promoting social cohesion, and sharing stories of the impact and challenges uncovered during the implementation of Social Cohesion Pledges, ensuring gender mainstreaming of the design and content. The recommendations of expert and community dialogues (Activities 1.2.1 and 2.2.2), pilot initiatives, child, adolescent and youth participation (Activity 1.1.2), the monitoring of divisive narratives, violence and hate speech (Activity 2.1.3) and Social Cohesion Pledges (Activity 2.1.1) will be hosted in the Hub together with the public feedback on dialogue efforts and technical guidance on developing innovative solutions generated by the SCIL (Activity 1.2.3). The Hub will also bring together data and knowledge generated through the project activities, including dialogues, research and monitoring interventions.

Activity 1.2.4 Support the Young Reporters initiative aimed at promoting quality and continuous participation of adolescent girls and boys, including those from marginalized groups, in the public debate on social cohesion (UNICEF)

Through this project, the Young Reporters’ innovative political and civic activism will be continued, as so far it was only initiated through one youth dialogue with political leaders before the national parliamentary elections. Also, within this project, the Young Reporters will promote the project’s key actions and messages among young people by reporting about the project’s youth-involving activities on social media – e.g. Instagram and TikTok stories. They will bring the voices of young people participating in this project to the media. Namely, during the recent national pre-election campaign in 2023, Young Reporters⁴⁹ organized a public debate,

⁴⁹ The Young Reporters initiative is aimed at promoting quality and continuous participation of young people, including those from marginalized groups, in the public debate on child rights issues. They have been well-known as youth activists on media and information literacy in the country since 2018. Some of their major achievements in the previous years include winning the UNESCO Global Media and Information Literacy Award in 2019 and production of the #MyLife movie with the voices of young people from all over Montenegro about their challenges, which were one of the 10 finalists of the Prix-Jeunesse 2022 International Festival of Children’s TV. With the national public service TVCG, Young Reporters produced a TV news programme for adolescents – Wadada News Montenegro. Also, they were quite active during the COVID-19 pandemic, promoting fact-checking of all information and a culture of non-violent online communication among young people.

#YouthAskingPoliticians, to discuss how each political party/bloc would address the key child rights issues (poverty, violence, mental health, quality of education and the climate crisis) if they become part of the new government. Young Reporters will be supported to organize public dialogues with representatives of the new government (ministers, the prime minister) to follow up on the pre-election promises to children and young people with a focus on fostering social cohesion, preventing and countering hate speech, divisive narratives and violence. In this way, a new and original model of child and youth political and civic participation will be piloted in the country with support from UNICEF, acting as a neutral UN agency for children that is helping to open up space for regular dialogue between children, young people and politicians in the public debate and media. Young Reporters will have social media campaigns (with the focus on TikTok as a predominantly youth channel), PR activities to promote initiatives that result from the Social Cohesion Innovation Lab; they will promote Local and National Social Cohesion Pledges and organize events to have their voices heard on the main threats and challenges to social cohesion, and solutions which will input the Social Cohesion Pledges and monitor institutional follow-up.

OUTCOME 2: *Based on participatory dialogue, national and local institutions initiate adoption of inclusive, gender-responsive, rights-based, people- and child-centred policies, and strengthen oversight to enable a consensus on a shared vision of the common good and the enhancement of trust.*

Output 2.1: Local and national institutions facilitate inclusive, people-centred dialogue *to adopt Social Cohesion Pledges* and effectively implement and oversee human rights and social cohesion policies and measures that respond to the recommendations and solutions identified through dialogues.

Activity 2.1.1 *Strengthen local and national institutional capacities and tools for the participatory development, adoption and implementation of social cohesion pledges (UNDP and UNICEF)*

The activity will be initiated with support for the cabinets of the prime minister and the president to design, adopt and communicate a National Pledge/Call for social cohesion action as a set of principles for opening the local and national consultation process. With this pledge, which contributes to implementation of the National Strategy for Sustainable Development and sustainable development goals, the president and the prime minister will showcase the country's clear political will to engage in the social cohesion process and call political and religious leaders, academia, media, CSOs and citizens to foster dialogue and social cohesion in the country.

At the local level, Community Resource Groups (CRGs) will be the primary agents in formulating Local Social Cohesion Pledges, as well as children, adolescents and young people (Activity 1.2.2). These pledges will be grounded in the insights gained from dialogues established under Activity 1.1.1. To ensure a robust accountability framework, these pledges will be submitted for discussion and subsequent adoption by local self-governance. Throughout the implementation phase, the LRGs will carry out ongoing monitoring responsibilities, bolstered by resources and support from the Social Cohesion Innovation Lab that will support local communities and citizen initiatives (Activity 1.1.3). Through this process, the CRGs will be empowered to seek for the sustainability and institutionalization of such participatory local dialogue platforms that will serve to further inclusive community development.

At the national level, recommendations and pledges initiated at the local level will be channelled into national dialogues. These dialogues will be administered under the auspices of the National Council for Sustainable Development (NCSD)⁵⁰ under the already existing "Dialogue for Development" platform of participatory and cross-sector expert and policy discussions. The NCSD's specialized thematic groups will take the helm in co-leading these national discussions, thereby securing government buy-in and commitment to the localized

⁵⁰ The Council for Sustainable Development (CSD) has been a cornerstone of multi-stakeholder collaboration for 18 years. Recently revamped with UNDP support, the CSD aims to be more inclusive, proactive, and effective. Hosted within the general secretariat of the government and chaired by the prime minister, it functions through five thematic groups. It serves as a vital platform for an inter-sector approach to achieving the 2030 Agenda and includes a diverse range of stakeholders – governmental bodies, civil society, academia, experts and the international community.

pledges. Since the NCSD is one of the biggest and most inclusive governmental multi-stakeholder platforms which guides the expert and inter-sector approach to the achievement of the 2030 Agenda, and includes governmental stakeholders, civil society, academia, experts and the international community, it is the perfect institutionalized dialogue and policy platform to embed this dialogue process in.

To further cement this initiative, the NCSD and its thematic groups will undergo targeted capacity building, covering areas such as social cohesion training, transparency and meaningful participation, policy coherence, and inclusion methodologies, equipping them to coordinate and monitor implementation of the local pledges on a national scale. They will be supported to develop packages of measures to respond to the Local Social Cohesion Pledges, which will be mainstreamed through the existing policies or adopted by government as new interventions. Depending on the recognized issues and solutions, other institutions and government councils, such as the Council on Child Rights and the Council on Gender Equality, can be invited to coordinate and monitor the recommendations from the Local Social Cohesion Pledges and exposed to capacity-building activities.

Corroborated through the NCSD, but also gender equality and child rights councils, Local Social Cohesion Pledges would be communicated via institutionalized national dialogues and translated into National Social Cohesion Pledges backed by an action plan/package of measures adopted by the government and supported by the president, which will be then monitored by the parliament, civil society and other oversight mechanisms.

The online platform developed as a complementary dialogue tool under Activity 1.1.3 will be used for online monitoring of the implementation of pledges at both the local and national levels. Thus, the process will ensure that inputs from local dialogues resulting in the adoption of local pledges are taken into account, translated into national pledges with concrete measures and put into practice – and that citizens have real-time information on the status of the implementation of the measures, and will provide a feedback mechanism to the relevant authorities.

Activity 2.1.2 Strengthen the capacities of the Parliament of Montenegro and selected local parliaments for improved oversight and contribution to dialogue on social cohesion, including active participation and engagement of children and young people in the work of local and national parliaments (UNICEF and UNDP)

The national parliament and local parliaments in five targeted municipalities will be supported to contribute to the dialogues on social cohesion priorities and the implementation of the related recommendations and pledges. Parliaments, as the bedrock of the representative democracy in Montenegro, have a decisive role in fostering multicultural dialogue and countering divisive narratives. This role will be strengthened through capacity-building activities, including workshops and sensitization sessions and training on social cohesion, the role of parliaments in countering hate speech, violence and building trust in institutions, etc. Parliaments will be supported to build upon the existing mechanisms such as thematic committees' sessions to discuss social cohesion recommendations and pledges. They will be supported to fulfil their role as a national dialogue and consensus-building platform, which ideally positions them to lead an inclusive, whole-of-society dialogue. By doing so, assistance will be provided in generating new thinking in the national and local parliaments, which will enable building of a vision for the common good and improving the overall trust in the state. Moreover, their oversight function will be strengthened through advancing the capacities of the standing thematic committees, in charge of:

- Human rights and freedoms
- Gender equality
- Education, science, culture and sports, and culture
- The political system, public administration and the judiciary

Also, child and youth participation in parliamentary sessions aimed at accelerating social cohesion, initiating national dialogue on challenging issues, as well as issues of common interest, such as promoting positive social behaviours, embracing diversity and positive social and public narrative, applying peaceful conflict resolutions, the prevention and elimination of hate speech, divisive narratives and violence in its various forms, will be supported through active collaboration with the Educational Centre of the Parliament of Montenegro. A particular focus will be put on the participation of underrepresented groups, including representatives of civil society organizations (CSOs) in the work of the local and national parliaments.

The project will aim to strengthen the capacities of the Educational Centre's staff to deliver age-, gender- and conflict-sensitive education modules for children and young people aimed at empowering and equipping them with the knowledge and skills to foster social cohesion and contribute to building a society of trust and shared values of peace, prosperity and development, capable of preventing hate speech, divisive narratives and violence. A specific module on social cohesion will be developed, piloted and evaluated in order to be integrated into the regular curriculum of the Educational Centre of the Parliament. In this way children, adolescents and young people will be equipped with the skills and capacities to take a proactive role and initiate public and parliamentary dialogue at the national and local levels around challenging topics which are triggering societal polarization and tensions, and will act as a role model for parliamentary members and other duty bearers in society in fostering social cohesion and overcoming societal polarization.

Activity 2.1.3 Strengthening institutional capacity and mechanisms for research and independent monitoring of hate speech, divisive narratives and violence, including the spread of mis-/dis-information and gender-based hate speech, both online and offline (UNDP and UNICEF)

National Human Rights Institutions play a key role in monitoring and protecting human rights and advocating for measures that prevent the recurrence of human rights violations, thereby contributing to stronger social cohesion in the country. The Protector for Human Rights and Freedoms in Montenegro – the country's National Human Rights Institution – has a broad legal mandate and is the most trusted public institutions to address human rights concerns. It has the capacity to serve as a platform for discussion involving authorities, civil society organizations and victims of human rights violations. It provides impartial advice to the government and plays an important role in holding elected leaders and government authorities to account.

The project would support strengthening the capacity for monitoring and documenting alleged human rights violations and trends that pose a risk to social cohesion, including instances of discrimination, hate speech, hate crime and violence, as well as capacity for analysis of the root causes and drivers of tension, for early warning, with a specific focus on the exposure of children, young people and women to those phenomena. Support would also be given for effective analysis of the situation, solution-oriented advocacy with decision makers, for effective use of public media and use of more effective communication strategies on the linkage between peace, gender equality and human rights.

The project would build the capacity of the Protector and NGOs to make more strategic use of regional and UN human rights mechanisms for prevention and consolidated action fostering social cohesion. It will support systematic collaboration between NHRIs and civil society organizations in Montenegro for improved advocacy and collaborative action in preventing the main drivers of tension, societal polarization, violence, gender inequality and hate speech. The Protector and CSOs will also be capacitated to better monitor: the effective implementation of international commitments and the national framework that fosters social cohesion; incidences and threats to social cohesion; and compliance with ethical codes of conduct by representatives of different branches of power and the media. Special consideration will be given to improved advocacy and collaborative action in preventing gender-based hate speech, which frequently occurs towards women leaders and politicians.

The monitoring activities will result in a concrete set of recommendations to improve adherence to ethical codes of conduct by parliamentarians, the government and the media, thus preventing polarization, divisive narratives,

violence and hate speech. The Protector will use the existing mechanisms of the Golden Advisers to the Protector and the National Platform for Independent Monitoring of the Rights of Persons of Disabilities, led by the Protector and Organizations of Persons with Disabilities (OPDs), to facilitate participation of disadvantaged groups in monitoring activities. In collaboration with CSOs, participation of young people and diverse disadvantaged groups in monitoring activities will be ensured.

The project will assist the key national institutions in strengthening the mechanisms for monitoring hate speech, gender-based hate speech and divisive narratives. This will be achieved through the introduction of advanced digital tools, analytical methods and social cohesion measurement tools, and by aligning these processes with international best practices.

These activities will leverage the expertise of the OHCHR in monitoring, analysis and early warning, based on the OHCHR's Manual on Human Rights Monitoring, as well as its extensive experience in strengthening the capacities of National Human Rights Institutions. Activities will also draw upon the OHCHR's technical expertise with regard to hate speech and ensuring that any activities carried out under the programme are in compliance with international standards on freedom of expression.

Output 2.2: Public communication, advocacy and policy making, based on evidence and the latest knowledge on social cohesion threats and public trust in institutions, in order to counter divisive narratives, hate speech and violence, and foster a culture of peace and appreciation of cultural diversity

Activity 2.2.1 Build national capacities for evidence-based social cohesion policy making, by using behavioural insights and a nationally representative public perception survey before and after the project to measure the impact and to inform, design and implement targeted social and behavioural change (SBC) strategies and actions (UNICEF and UNDP)

To measure the impact of the whole intervention, as well as to gain important data that will be used for other research and data gathering initiatives within this activity, two rounds of nationally and regionally representative public perception surveys/Knowledge, Attitude and Practices (KAP) studies will be conducted related to social cohesion, public trust and countering divisive narratives, hate speech and violence – one before and one following all the prescribed activities within the action.

The KAP surveys will also provide valuable information that will facilitate design of research and analysis of behavioural insights (BI). The design of the analysis will be led by UNICEF with expert support for data collection and research. It will be designed to be context-specific, gender- and age-sensitive, and will generate important data on key behavioural insights aspects. It will also identify the factors influencing and enabling harmful behaviours, including root cause analysis and identification of current social norms and values that may undermine peace and perpetuate conflict, as well as the potential drivers of positive change. It will indicate the decision-making process that leads to adverse behaviours, and will generate evidence that will help inform the legal and policy frameworks, Social Cohesion Pledges and relevant educational and school-related interventions, including possible changes and amendments in the school curricula. It will imply conflict risk assessments with counterparts and partners to promote the uptake and integration of conflict sensitivity into sector plans, policies and information management systems.

The results of the previously described research will serve as the basis for understanding the roots and main drivers of the existing social divisions. It will also be used as a starting point for a multi-platform public communications and advocacy initiative to counter divisive narratives and support a culture of trust, dialogue and collaborative vision, designed by UNICEF and UNDP, as stipulated in the next activity.

Activity 2.2.2 Launch a multi-platform communications and advocacy initiative to counter divisive narratives and support a culture of trust, dialogue and a collaborative vision (UNDP and UNICEF)

Building on the insights of knowledge, attitudes and practices and research into behavioural insights, this targeted initiative will employ both traditional and digital media to counter divisive narratives and violence, and promote social cohesion. A core component is a series of dialogue TV/podcast shows that will be produced, bringing together politicians, decision makers, citizens, experts and CSOs for a public dialogue on shared values and a vision of the common good, as well as a call to action and expert discussions on countering divisive narratives, hate speech, violence and other threats to social cohesion.

Besides TV shows/podcasts, the campaign will leverage on existing online and offline dialogue spaces to convene experts, academia, positive influencers, diverse multi-stakeholder networks and coalitions to facilitate expert and evidence-based, solution-oriented and forward-looking discussions and messages that will build public trust and a shared vision, a culture of civic values, gender equality and human rights, and prevent and counter the normalization of violence and violent narratives – especially among children and young people – and hate speech, particularly that which is gender-based. Besides podcasts/TV shows and local and national dialogues, where such expert inputs and messaging will be communicated, spaces such as universities, cultural platforms and groups, and community centres will host such discussions. The campaign will also harness already existing networks of people trained and involved through the Dialogue for the Future project, to further expand and interlink networks and motivate people across communities to engage in collective action for the common good.

The campaign will tap into innovative and transformational potentials of digitalization, the media, sports and culture, as mechanisms for sustainable development and make use of intergenerational knowledge exchange and action. To inspire positive and constructive sentiment and willingness for collaborative action across communities, the campaign will use influencers for wider reach and, by using a cohesive narrative (culture, sport and media influencers), will promote positive role models and examples of citizen- and institution-led contributions to the common good, with a special focus on women change makers, including through initiatives supported by the Social Cohesion Innovation Lab (Activity 1.1.3).

Furthermore, the campaign will leverage cultural and sporting events for promoting trust and respect for diversity, tolerance and gender equality. While culture and sports can be powerful unifiers that foster social cohesion and trust, they can also inadvertently serve as platforms for disseminating divisive narratives, violence and hate speech. Therefore, this advocacy and communication campaign will strategically target cultural and sporting events to counter such risks and amplify messages of non-violent communication and actions, diversity, gender equality, tolerance, inclusion and social cohesion.

The campaign will be led by the project and will be realized in strong cooperation with local communities and the main national counterparts.

Activity 2.2.3 Strengthen the capacities of media through the concept of solution journalism and support the setting-up of the National Multi-Stakeholder Media Coalition (UNESCO)

The activity will support strengthening the capacities of journalists through the concept of **solution journalism**, particularly targeting young journalists and students of journalism. The solution journalism approach supports the peaceful and inclusive development of society, news reporting that focuses on the responses to social issues as well as the problems themselves. The objective is to strengthen the capacities and skills of young journalists and media outlets in Montenegro to produce reliable reports that foster public understanding, trust, consensus building and civic engagement, and prevent conflicts.

This approach of identifying the problem and looking for solutions to it, rather than merely highlighting it as a problem, provides opportunities for media professionals to become positive gamechangers, positively affecting what people perceive and how they respond to things/news. The activity will also deal with two important and challenging perspectives of journalism today: first, hate speech targeted at journalists, with the aim of countering the effects on the freedom of expression; and second, hate speech targeted at minority groups, with the aim of

fostering the promotion of diversity, tolerance and interculturalism in the media and society. The activity will empower young journalists to become dedicated promoters of positive narratives and, as such, to actively participate in dialogue with citizens and decision makers, advocating for solutions rather than just emphasizing what is wrong in society.

In line with the Montenegro Media Strategy's recommendations, the activity will support the Ministry of Culture and Media of Montenegro in its efforts related to application of Montenegro's Code of Ethics for journalists. Sustainability and institutional support will be reflected in the setting-up of the **National Multi-Stakeholder Media Coalition** with the aim of encouraging ethical journalism and contextualizing potential harmful content, particularly online. The coalition will involve representatives of journalists' associations, self-regulatory media bodies, media associations, activists, organizations for media and digital literacy, civil society organizations, academic institutions and experts committed to joining the coalition. Social media and digital platforms do not devote enough resources to the moderation of hate speech, nor do they pay adequate attention to the local context and culture when moderating harmful content, leaving room for the negative consequences of such content.

Hence, the primary focus of this coalition is the creation and promotion of a free and healthy online environment for all the citizens of Montenegro, as well as the promotion of social cohesion through digital technologies, especially social networks. The coalition will be committed to advocating for a more adequate and transparent management of harmful content by social media companies, at the same time advocating for the protection of freedom of expression and the promotion of social cohesion through digital technologies, especially social media. The activity will be implemented in partnership with the University of Montenegro's Faculty of Political Science, the Montenegro Media Institute and other relevant institutions and CSOs.

Activity 2.2.4 Promotion of culture and appreciation of diversity among citizens and communities (UNESCO)

The activity will harness Montenegro's rich cultural heritage with the aim of promoting appreciation of cultural diversity among citizens, particularly young men and women, across communities. In collaboration with the Ministry of Culture and Media, the activity will support approaches and programmes that engage citizens, particularly young people, to participate in the promotion and protection of human rights, diversity, equality and a culture of peace. The activity will engage various cultural institutions and public spaces in several arts education-related workshops with young people, offering them new approaches to learn about diversity and the value of a shared cultural heritage, in order to be empowered with skills and values pertaining to peacebuilding. Such locations could be used as peace hubs and a mechanism encouraging citizens' participation, promoting commitment of the society towards respect for diversity. This especially concerns museums, which are spaces for cultural transmission, intercultural dialogue, learning, discussion and training, thus contributing notably to social inclusion and skills for sustainable development. Through learning and enjoying Montenegro's rich cultural heritage, young people will be empowered to promote and respect cultural diversity.

Aside from the capacity-building activities envisaged through schools, the project will also collaborate with cultural institutions on enabling an environment for children and young people to comprehend the benefits of a diversified society and encourage their positive interaction with "the other" and that which is different. These two approaches will complement each other as well as highlight the importance of enhancing synergies between culture and education in fostering a culture of peace and appreciation of cultural diversity. Furthermore, use of emblematic sites and locations is to be explored to promote the values of social cohesion and respect of the rich cultural diversity. This also involves partnership between the United Nations, the President of Montenegro and the Prince of Montenegro in building symbolic urban interventions with the local community of Cetinje, the Old Royal Capital of Montenegro, with a profound symbolism for social cohesion in Montenegro. The intervention revolves around the strong symbolic gesture that invites all countries in the world to "give a piece of their land (stone) as a present for the global peace" and thus contribute towards building a single urban intervention that celebrates global peace. In this way, a culture and cultural heritage, compounded with strong symbolism, the educational component and a positive narrative around it, are to be promoted as powerful

connecting tissues, which can directly contribute to the advancement of reconciliation processes and strengthening of social cohesion in Montenegro. Having in mind that this will be a government-led activity, a strong message of respect for diversity and peace will be conveyed to the citizens of Montenegro as well as regionally/internationally. The activity will initiate intercultural dialogue (at all levels) and promote the notion of unity in the context of the regional and international presentation of Montenegro.

Project beneficiaries will be selected in cooperation with all involved agencies, based on a joint approach to be carefully elaborated and coordinated at the inception phase. For instance, the work of UNICEF and UNESCO with schools will be closely coordinated and aligned so as to ensure maximum efficiency in targeting and optimal absorption capacity. Work with schools will also be coordinated with the Ministry of Education, so as to ensure coverage and adequacy of targeting. Work with young people will be organized so as to maximize the resources and mandates of each agency, thus UNICEF working with adolescents, UNESCO focusing on university students, and UNDP working with young adults.

Output 2.3: Targeted institutions have the capacities to ensure girls' and women's public and political participation and to help counter hate speech, sexism, misogyny and any backlash related to gender equality.

Activity 2.3.1 Strengthen decision makers' and opinion makers' capacities with knowledge and skills to uphold advances in gender equality and counter gender-based hate speech and violence (UNDP)

To counter the normalization of gender-based hate speech, sexism and misogyny, and to advocate for the important role of women in politics and peace and security, the project will work with decision makers and opinion makers to act as allies, advocates and agents of change and demand their accountability for gender equality. This holistic activity, in cooperation with the Ministry of Human and Minority Rights as the main institutional stakeholder, will design and implement a capacity-building programme for leaders, decision makers and opinion makers in the areas of women, peace and security, women's political participation, culture, media and sports, as well as civil society and academia, at both the local and national levels. The activity will include a training programme and workshops, complemented with policy analysis and guidelines for achieving gender equality in the aforementioned sectors. Special attention will be paid to the empowerment and participation of girls, and especially from disadvantaged communities, to participate in training programme and workshops on gender equality, women's role in public and political sphere, women political participation, and their role in building cohesive societies.

Activity 2.3.2 Strengthen the capacities of women to improve their representation in decision-making roles in national politics through capacity building of Women's Clubs in the national and local parliaments (UNICEF and UNDP)

The project will build the capacities of women MPs in the national parliament and selected local parliaments to effectively engage on the priorities of the project, and overall building of a shared vision of the common good and social cohesion priorities, especially those related to gender equality. The capacity building of and engagement with women politicians will strengthen women's leadership on social cohesion.

Moreover, the project will build the capacities of women politicians to uphold the achieved progress and counter any backlash against gender equality through the capacity building of platforms such as Women Clubs,⁵¹ which represents a pan-partisan initiative for inclusive dialogue, leadership and solidarity, formed to connect women leaders of diverse political backgrounds and from all levels of society, which supports networking and

⁵¹ The Women's Club or Women's Group of MPs at the Parliament of Montenegro is a parliamentary body consisting of female members of the Parliament of Montenegro. The goals and principles of the MPs' Group are related to: the promotion of gender equality at all decision-making levels; encouragement of women to participate more in political and public life; improvement of the position of women in all areas of society; and encouragement and advancing of solidarity and humanity, promotion of volunteerism and mutual assistance. www.skupstina.me/en/working-bodies/womens-mp-group

advocating for gender-responsive dialogue and a shared vision of the common good towards gender equality. Still, a lack of support and resources, combined with widespread stereotyping and gender-based violence, have threatened to undo the positive trends achieved. Changing social values and the increasing gender sensitivity of younger men can result in stronger partnerships between male and female parliamentarians on gender equality. Therefore, capacity-building programmes for female and male parliamentarians, at both the national and local levels, on gender equality, countering violence and hate speech, and monitoring of UN mechanisms (CEDAW, CRC and CPRD) will be conducted through the Women's Club Network. This will support the preparation of Women's Club Action Plans informed by inclusive dialogues, with a set of activities from countering harmful stereotypes, to promoting women's representation in political leadership roles, addressing intersectional vulnerabilities and gender-based violence, supporting women's entrepreneurship and healthcare, and recognizing and protecting girls' and women's rights.

Use Annex C to list all outcomes, outputs, and indicators.

d) Project targeting

The project localities will be selected at the inception phase. The project will carefully choose **five out of the 25 municipalities** based on their expressed interest, geographical distribution, demographic diversity and local readiness to absorb and sustain the project activities and results. This selection process aims to maximize the project's impact and reach across Montenegro, while promoting inclusivity and diversity. The first criterion is municipality interest, ensuring their active engagement and ownership of the processes and results. Geographical diversity is another goal, spanning the three regions for wider impact. To reach a substantial population, the capital city of Podgorica and four other municipalities will be chosen strategically from the north and south, recognizing their demographic significance, and thus covering half of the total population (one third of the population lives in Podgorica). Demographic diversity will be ensured, fostering inclusivity. Readiness in terms of supportive and conducive local strategic plans and infrastructures will also be one of the criteria for the selection of municipalities.

In the context of supporting building social cohesion, the project is designed to carefully target relevant groups at both the initiation and the delivery stages, leaving no one behind. By ensuring an inclusive approach, the project aims to foster a sense of unity, mutual respect and understanding across all societal groups.

The criteria for selection, encompassing geographical location (north, south and centre), the urban/rural distinction, gender, age, demographic diversity and both national and local considerations, are crafted to ensure holistic and representative inclusion in the project. To foster genuine social cohesion, it is imperative to consider the diverse elements of the population. In close collaboration with institutional partners, the project will take into consideration the beneficiaries' needs and requirements when engaging them in a particular activity, while trying to ensure continuity and greater impact by engaging the same target groups across the project activities, where applicable. Multiple programmes will allow for continuity and greater impact – media and information literacy programmes and skills and capacity building for children, adolescents and young people will be deployed together in some areas as complementary programmes. Children, adolescents and young people with these newly acquired skills will participate in local dialogues and the development of local pledges. Through the Social Cohesion Innovation Lab, individuals from different groups (children, adolescents, young people, women and journalists) who have been capacitated through other programmes, will have the chance to become more civically engaged and work on community projects. This type of complementarity between programmes will allow for a deeper level of impact, as well as provide more options for continuity and sustainability.

The **geographical criterion**, segmented as the north, south and centre, ensures that the unique needs, experiences and cultures of different regions are recognized and catered for. This geographical inclusivity avoids regional alienation, promoting mutual understanding across various localities.

The **urban/rural distinction** acknowledges that the challenges faced by urban dwellers can significantly differ from those in rural areas. By ensuring representation from both these spheres, the project will ensure that the specific needs and insights of both the urban and rural populations are incorporated.

Gender inclusivity is fundamental, recognizing that both women and men, and those of other gender identities, may experience societal challenges differently. Addressing gender disparities and ensuring balanced representation can help in breaking stereotypes and promoting gender equality, which is a cornerstone of social cohesion. Thus, besides the activities focused on gender equality, all project activities will be based on a gender-sensitive approach, will use gender-sensitive methodologies and will ensure adequate representation of all genders.

Factoring in **age** ensures that the project is sensitive to the needs and perspectives of different age groups, with a special focus on ensuring that the voices and perspectives of children and young people take one of the central places in the project activities. Planned activities with girls, boys and young people will have a special consideration to engage the most disadvantaged, such as Roma, Egyptians and children with disabilities, through outreach and targeted interventions. The project will also ensure effective and full participation of persons with disabilities on an equal basis with others in all project activities, and will ensure that their perspectives, insights and recommendations are reflected in the project outputs.

Lastly, the emphasis on both **national and local** considerations ensures that while the overarching national objectives are met, the unique nuances of local communities are not overshadowed. This balance ensures that larger national strategies are informed by ground-level realities and that local communities feel their voices resonate at higher, decision-making levels.

More specifically, the project will include children, adolescents and young people through empowerment activities in formal and non-formal education settings (1,500 direct beneficiaries and more than 5,000 indirect beneficiaries), and local and national dialogues, including in the Parliament and the Protector's Institution through the existing child/youth participation mechanisms. In order to ensure comprehensive interventions and impact, the project will include parents, caregivers and teachers, and will contribute to their capacity to support the development of relevant skills among children and young people. It will also include both girls and boys and women and men from rural and urban areas, from all three regions, and empower them for leadership and safeguarding gender equality and human rights. The project will also convene and empower media professionals, including local and national ones, and will empower and partner with CSOs, decision makers and opinion leaders.

The project will involve and empower the relevant institutions at the national and local levels, including local governments and institutions that will be selected via an open call. After the application process, the selection will be performed bearing in mind geographical criteria (the south, centre and north), the existence of a local strategic and policy basis, and infrastructure to uphold the project activities and sustain the project results, and demographics.

Besides local self-governments and local parliaments, the project will engage and build on existing work with the Prime Minister's Cabinet as the main institutional partner, the President's Cabinet, the Council for Sustainable Development, the Parliament, and the ministries in charge of human and minority rights, education, justice, youth and sports, culture and media, labour and social welfare. The project will work with the Institution of the Protector for Human Rights and Freedoms, the government's councils on child rights, gender equality and youth, as well as universities and museums and civil society organizations. The project will also work with + MPs from the local and national parliaments, including a specific focus on female politicians.

The project will seek to engage the most vulnerable children and young people through specifically targeted, outreach activities in order to ensure their participation on an equal footing, primarily through cooperation with vulnerable communities and the CSO sector, representing children and young people with disabilities and those belonging to the Roma and Egyptian community.

III. Project management and coordination (4 pages max)

a) Recipient organizations and implementing partners

Agency	Total budget in previous calendar year	Key sources of budget (which donors, etc.)	Location of in-country offices	No. of existing staff, of which in project zones	Highlight any existing expert staff of relevance to project
Convening Organization: UNDP Implementing partners: Prime Minister's Cabinet, Parliament, the Protector's Institution, Ministry of Human and Minority Rights, Local Self-Governments, CSOs	US\$ 10,000,000	Government of Montenegro, EC, GEF, MPTF	Podgorica, Montenegro	50	UNDP has staff specialized in gender equality, local development, youth policy, sustainable development, digitalization, public administration, monitoring and evaluation, and communications.
Recipient Organization: UNICEF Implementing partners: the Prime Minister's Cabinet, Parliament, the Protector's Institution, Ministry of Education, Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare, Ministry of Sports and Youth, Ministry of Justice, local authorities, CSOs, academia, children, adolescents, young people and families.	US\$ 3,461,201	Core funding, public-sector donors (EU, Netherlands), MPTF and the private sector	Podgorica, Montenegro	34	UNICEF has staff specialized in child rights monitoring and evaluation, child protection, education, adolescents and young people, social and behavioural change and communication, who will support the implementation of the project.
Recipient Organization: UNESCO	US\$ 1,000,000	Core funding, EU, Global Environmental	Venice and Sarajevo	10 in Sarajevo	Head of Office, Programme Officer, Programme M&E

Implementing partners: Ministry of Culture and Media, Ministry of Education, academia (e.g. University of Montenegro in Podgorica), CSOs (e.g. Montenegro Media Institute) schools, young people.		Fund, Government of Italy, PBF		and 25 in Venice	Officer, Programme Officer ED and CLT
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Based on broad consultations and analysis by the Resident Coordinator's Office of the UN agency's existing presences, capacities and mandates in promoting social cohesion in Montenegro, and keeping in mind the agency contributions to the UNSDCF, three UN agencies were identified to participate in the design of this joint programme: UNDP, UNICEF and UNESCO.

UNDP works with countries to expand people's choices for a fairer, sustainable future and supports change through structural transformation, leaving no one behind, and building resilience to respond to systemic uncertainty and risk. UNDP works through its six signature solutions on: poverty and inequality; governance; resilience; the environment; energy; and gender equality, leveraging strategic innovation, digitalization and development finance as enablers to further accelerate and scale the results.

Montenegro's journey towards EU accession has been instrumental in driving the achievement of Sustainable Development Goals and the 2030 Agenda, with both processes mutually reinforcing each other. UNDP in Montenegro has been a reliable partner of the state and its citizens, contributing significantly to the creation and implementation of key development policies, fostering inclusive, gender-responsible and green economic development. UNDP has played a pivotal role in driving key reforms in public administration and digitalization, contributing to improvements in institutional capacity, transparency, efficiency and accountability. This is especially true in implementing gender-responsive public administration, public finance management and support for e-governance.

The mission of UNDP in Montenegro is implemented through more than 30 projects delivering four signature solutions: governance; poverty and inequality reduction; environmental sustainability; and gender equality. Collaboration with other UN agencies is another key aspect of UNDP's work, reflected through joint efforts in the development of a social welfare system for the 21st century by enhancing service delivery and increasing participation among marginalized groups such as: women; survivors of gender-based violence; young people; people with disabilities; and elderly individuals.

Promotion of gender equality and empowerment of women has been central to the work of UNDP Montenegro. This effort includes advocating for women's and girls' equal rights, combating discriminatory practices and challenging the roles and stereotypes that affect inequalities and exclusion. UNDP supports the country to fulfil its commitments towards the achievement of gender equality and women's empowerment, while mainstreaming gender equality into every aspect of public administration work.

UNDP has been the convening agency for the Montenegrin component of the Dialogue for the Future project, the first project addressing social cohesion, which ensures knowledge and experience links to this project, both coordination- and content-wise. UNDP will bring in its local and global expertise and experience in social cohesion, gender equality, innovation, data, behavioural science and many other solutions which will be leveraged on.

UNICEF supports Montenegro to implement rights-based, gender-sensitive, disability-inclusive and equity-focused reforms for children, adolescents, young people and women, and contributes to the current national priorities reflected in the EU accession agenda, Montenegro's National Sustainable Development Strategy 2030 and the national SDG targets, while supporting implementation of the pending recommendations of the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC). UNICEF's overall strategic approach in Montenegro is driven by a cross-sector approach to risk-informed programming, combining: a developmental and humanitarian nexus; an equity focus prioritizing vulnerable children left behind in the development process; universal prevention and systems strengthening and institutional capacity development for achieving results at scale, building system capacities to be more resilient; gender transformative programming to address the root causes of gender inequality; high-level advocacy with the government, development partners and civil society organizations (CSOs) to address constraints in the enabling environment; leveraging the influence and resources of the EU, international financial institutions (IFIs) and the private sector to support the child rights agenda; and using the power of evidence to drive change.

UNICEF convenes a broad range of partners, both international and national, around key child rights and youth-related issues and concerns in active partnership with the government, line ministries, Parliament, the Protector, the judiciary, CSOs, academia and the media. Its daily engagement with a wide range of key actors at the community and policy levels will enable UNICEF to bring the voices of various marginalized groups – particularly children, young people and women – into the social cohesion processes in Montenegro, including NGOs led by children, young people and women. Long-term partnerships with the government and civil society in the areas of the promotion, protection and monitoring of child rights, humanitarian response, quality and inclusive education and skill building, child and youth participation, protection of girls and boys from violence and exploitation and any harmful behaviour, extensive work on policy and systematic reform of the youth sector, will largely contribute to the proposed programme outcomes.

With UNICEF support, the Prime Minister's Cabinet established a working group, which is composed of representatives of civil society organizations (CSOs), working with children, adolescents, young people and women to provide technical guidance, i.e. expert support for the work of the Council on Child Rights, which is the highest inter-ministerial, inter-sector body for guiding and monitoring integrated work for children, adolescents and young people at the national and local levels. The representatives of civil society organizations participating in the work of this body will take a proactive role in the implementation of different segments of the proposed action; however the project will not be limited to the participation of those CSOs exclusively, in order to ensure transparent and neutral processes. The Young Reporters have founded their own NGO, MiMedia, and UNICEF will further build the capacities of this NGO to support their activities, since it is a unique NGO in terms of the use of media and digital literacy education for promoting innovative civic and political participation by young people in Montenegro.

UNICEF works with adolescents and young people with the support of both the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Sports and Youth, but also through schools, youth clubs, youth centres and youth and parent NGOs. The work through schools will be done with the Ministry of Education, with whom UNICEF has a long-standing partnership and is currently working on multiple programmes. As far as out-of-school programmes are concerned, UNICEF has partnered with all the major youth NGOs in the country, and the implementing partners in this particular programme will be selected through a competitive open call based on their reach and expertise.

UNESCO is the only specialized UN agency with a mandate in culture, based on its six renowned cultural conventions which provide a unique global platform for international cooperation and establish a holistic cultural governance system based on human rights and shared values. For many years, UNESCO has been recognized by the authorities in the country and in the region as a key actor in reinforcing the role of culture at the heart of sustainable development, with a conviction that cultural activities foster social inclusion and dialogue among communities, peace building and reconciliation. The wealth of insight and evidence that shows the power of culture towards more inclusive, creative and sustainable societies is the motivation that led UNESCO's work in promotion of culture as a tool for mutual comprehension and dialogue and enhancing good-neighbourly relations.

UNESCO covers all aspects of education. It has been entrusted to lead the Global Education 2030 Agenda through SDG 4, in accordance with the Education 2030 Framework for Action (FFA). UNESCO is responsible for coordinating the international community to achieve this goal through partnerships, policy guidance, capacity development, monitoring and advocacy.

The organization is also the global leader in promoting Media and Information Literacy (MIL) as a tool for critical civic engagement and sustainable development. The organization believes strongly that enabling MIL for all is one of the most sustainable and effective ways to counter disinformation in the long term and can facilitate the expression of young people's voices, increase their critical thinking and consequently stimulate their civic engagement in democratic discourses.

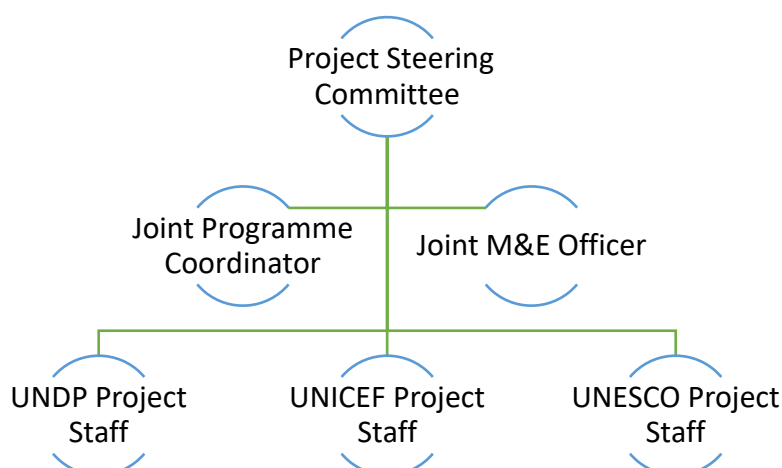
In order to ensure effective and efficient implementation, a consolidated approach and strong collaboration with the participating UN agencies and implementing partners, UNESCO will provide an onsite Project Officer/Coordinator. This person will coordinate the UNESCO component of the joint project, ensure synergies with PUNOs, and establish and maintain collaboration with the implementing partners and beneficiaries in Montenegro. The UNESCO Project Officer/Coordinator will be supported by UNESCO Programme Specialists (education, culture and M&E) during the course of the project.

All project activities will include CSOs as beneficiaries or partners. Local dialogues will include CSOs from the very start – through membership of local resource groups and the design of the dialogue methodology. They will be one of the key participants in the local and national dialogues. CSOs will also benefit from capacity-building activities, while the Social Cohesion Innovation Lab will offer design sessions and support for the implementation of citizen-/CSO-driven solutions. CSOs will be the main partners in the implementation of several activities, such as capacity-building activities, the MIL framework and youth empowerment activities.

b) Governance Arrangements

To ensure project strategy oversight and guidance, a Project Steering Committee (PSC) will be established. The PSC will be co-chaired by the UN Resident Coordinator in Montenegro, and a representative of the Cabinet of the Prime Minister, and will include the UNDP Resident Representative, the UNICEF Representative, and the UNESCO Head of Satellite Office.

The Steering Committee will provide the strategic direction and oversight, and will provide strategic guidance, as well as reviewing the annual work plans, implementation progress and annual reports. The PSC will meet at least once per year. UNDP as the convening agency will serve as the secretariat to the Steering Committee, responsible for sending out invitations to meetings, preparing the meeting agenda and materials, as well as the meeting minutes, all supported by the Joint Programme Coordinator and M&E Officer.



c) **Project management and coordination**

Project management and oversight will be based on the principles of joint UN programming. The PUNOs will ensure effective technical coordination and integration at the local and national levels, setting the criteria for the targeting and selection of beneficiaries (municipalities, communities, and schools), the implementation of activities, facilitate coordination and cross-fertilization of activities among all implementing partners, as well as developing a joint work plan, joint M&E, joint communication and identification of new opportunities and gaps.

The project team will be composed of staff in charge of ensuring overall coordination of the project, and agency-based staff in charge of the implementation of agency-specific activities.

As the convening agency, **UNDP** will engage a Joint Project Coordinator and Joint Monitoring, Evaluation and Reporting Officer, for the purpose of the overall coordination of this joint project.

The overall coordination will be ensured by hiring the above-mentioned **Joint Programme Coordinator (JPC)**, (full-time, 24 months, NPSA 10), who will coordinate implementation of project activities between all three UN agencies. The JPC will act as a point of convergence for all the involved UN agencies, enabling the gathering and dissemination of relevant project-related information. Moreover, the JPC will provide guidance on strengthening synergies and avoiding overlapping between the project activities. The JPC will also ensure that the UN RC Office is kept informed on the main developments and progress of the JP to ensure proper support to the UN Resident Coordinator as the co-chairperson of the PSC.

The role of the JPC will also include oversight of the implementation of the project work plan, as well as contributing to the appraisal processes by providing inputs on the project staff's performances to their direct supervisors. Acting as the main coordinator, the JPC will ensure that the project members from the involved agencies have a point of contact and knowledge sharing on the progress and results of all ongoing activities. The JPC will compile, update and develop narrative and financial reports, based on the inputs from agencies. She/he will support the organization of the Project Steering Committee's sessions and will liaise with the donor for technical and reporting-related matters. The JPC will support the knowledge management and communications aspects of the project. The agency-based project teams and Project Coordinator and M&E Officer will be a compact, joint team, which will meet regularly and exchange all relevant information related to the project activities, dynamics and challenges. The Project Coordinator will convene regular meetings of the team, will facilitate joint workplan development and review, and will collect all the relevant inputs for reporting to the donor and the meetings of the Steering Committee. The JPC will also maintain regular communication and exchange of relevant information with the RCO, including with the dedicated expert staff.

The project will hire a **Joint Monitoring, Evaluation and Reporting Officer** (full-time, 24 months, NPSA 7), who will support the overall M&E activities. The M&E Officer will lead on developing the detailed M&E action plan of the project and, with the support of agency-based M&E staff, will follow through the implementation of the plan. The M&E Officer will ensure a joint and united approach to the monitoring and evaluation of the project. She/he will also support the Joint Programme Coordinator in her/his reporting tasks.

Besides the two coordination positions, the project team will include agency-based staff. The team will consist of designated representatives of **UNDP**, **UNESCO** and **UNICEF**.

The project team will meet on a bi-weekly basis during the inception phase of the project, and at least once a month during the rest of the implementation.

UNDP will engage a **Programme Manager** (full-time, 24 months, NPSA 10), who will be in charge of the UNDP-led activities and liaise with the Joint Project Coordinator and programme staff of other RUNOs. The Programme Manager will ensure timely, efficient and quality implementation of project activities, will manage and develop partnerships and will supervise the UNDP project team.

The project team will also include a **Project Associate** (full-time, 24 months, NPSA 7) who will be in charge of project implementation on a daily basis, contributing to the project reports, and coordinating the production of communication activities and content.

To ensure that the project activities, results and insights are communicated effectively, and to support the design and implementation of the communication campaign, the project team will include a **Communication and Outreach Associate** (part-time, 24 months, NPSA 7).

Besides the three project positions, the project will be supported by UNDP staff in charge of administration and finance, procurement, gender equality, M&E and communications.

The **UNICEF** project implementation team will ensure oversight, coordination, implementation, monitoring and collaborative actions, as follows:

The **Child Rights Monitoring and Evaluation Specialist (CRME – NOC Level)** will oversee the implementation of the UNICEF-related interventions and, together with the Adolescent Development and Participation Officer (ADAP), will coordinate, communicate with, contribute to, and engage with the Joint Project Coordinator and Joint Monitoring, Evaluation and Reporting Officer. This will be UNICEF's contribution to the project.

The **Adolescent Development and Participation Officer (ADAP – NOB Level)** will be responsible for overall coordination of UNICEF's activities, as well as for cooperation with UNDP as the coordinating agency and other UN agencies for the purpose of ensuring well-planned, timely, effective and synergetic implementation of UNICEF and joint activities. The ADAP Officer will work closely with colleagues from Child Protection, Education, Digital Communication, the Social and Behaviour Change Officer and the Programme Associate) in the designing and implementation of activities. The ADAP Officer has a background in education, long-term and extensive experience in systematic reforms of youth policies and practices in the country, as well as continuous direct outreach to a large number of adolescents and young people, with a specific focus on marginalized adolescents and young people. Fifty per cent of the ADAP Officer's monthly salary will be charged to this project throughout the duration of the project, i.e. 24 months.

The **Programme Associate** (GS6 level) is responsible for a range of programme support activities aimed at ensuring smooth and timely implementation of the project in line with both UNICEF's and donors' rules and regulations. Those include project financial management support, monitoring, knowledge management and administrative support. The main tasks include: drafting project documents, work plans, budgets, proposals on implementation arrangements with both NGO and government partners; providing support related to the engagement of individual consultants/institutions; processing project-related payments; preparing periodic or ad-hoc financial reports related to project implementation; preparing progress reports and the final financial report for the donor. Thirty per cent of the Programme Associate's salary will be charged to this project during the 24-month implementation period.

The **Social and Behaviour Change Officer** (NOB level) will oversee: the organizing of research into citizens' knowledge, attitudes and practices; the design and publishing of the key findings and preparation of the key messages related to this research; behaviour intervention design, piloting, monitoring and evaluation. Also, she/he will support public communication related to all the programmatic interventions of this project. Thirty per cent of the monthly salary of the Social and Behaviour Change Officer will be charged to this project.

The **Digital Communication Officer** (NOB level) will oversee the development, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the social media and website strategy and its contents (human-interest stories, videos, photos, etc.). Also, the Digital Communication Officer will oversee the Young Reporters' initiative. *Ten per cent of the monthly salary of the Digital Communication Officer will be charged to this project.*

In line with UNICEF's global requirements and policies, all UNICEF staff, including the specified staff, have knowledge, skills and capacities for mainstreaming gender in all programmes.

In addition, UNICEF will conclude a UN2UN-Transfer-Agreement in the amount of US\$ 100,000 with the UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) to avail UNICEF of its technical expertise in-country, in: strengthening the capacity of the Protector of Human and Minority Rights and Freedoms and civil society to monitor the implementation of human rights instruments for prevention, analysis and early warning; technical advice on prevention of hate speech with full respect for the freedom of expression; support for the design and implementation of human rights education; and technical advice for strategic use of UN human rights mechanisms for monitoring, analysis and advocacy to increase respect for rights and enhance social cohesion. UNICEF and OHCHR will work in synergy in this respect, in line with their mandates.

UNESCO will engage a **Project Officer** (full-time, NOA Project Appointment, 24 months) who will be responsible for overall coordination of the programme activities related to UNESCO: planning and coordination, reporting and monitoring control.

The project will be supported on a part-time basis by the **Programme Specialist for Culture and Education (10%, 24 months)**, and the **M&E Officer** (20%, 24 months) who will oversee the monitoring, evaluation, analytics and reporting of performance and results, providing regular project reports to the Project Officer.

UNDP, UNESCO and UNICEF, as participating UN agencies, will be substantively and financially accountable for the activities designated to them in the project, with strong coordination and coherence in achieving results. They will be individually responsible for: ensuring the timely implementation of the activities and delivery of the reports and other outputs identified in this project document; and contracting and supervising qualified local and international experts, financial administration, monitoring, reporting and procurement for the activities they are responsible for.

d) Risk management

Project specific risk	Risk level (low, medium, high)	Mitigation strategy (including Do No Harm considerations)
Given the high levels of violence and hate speech against female leaders and politicians, they can be especially targeted for the participation in the project	Medium	UN agencies will implement a firm approach in ensuring Human Rights Based approach and gender equality norms are carefully analyzed, environment scanned, prevention measures put in place as well as mitigation measures which will ensure the project is adaptable and responsive to potential backlash and increased violence, divisive narratives and hate speech to women leaders and politicians. This will also be achieved through partnership with Ombudsperson and CSOs by strengthening them to perform real time analysis and monitoring, to increase prevention and resilience to gender backlash, as well as through knowledge exchange and continuous education of women and man, leaders and politicians, on gender equality, gender stereotypes, etc. Also, UN will perform regular scanning of

Project specific risk	Risk level (low, medium, high)	Mitigation strategy (including Do No Harm considerations)
		<p>media, gender equality reports and adjust project, accordingly, and will mobilize communities and leverage partnerships around empowerment and protection of women leaders and politicians.</p> <p>Additionally, to mitigate the risk of female leaders and politicians being targeted due to their involvement in the project, the project will establish several protective measures. Firstly, the project will be led by experienced individuals who can offer guidance to participants, ensuring their safety and well-being. Additionally, a feedback system will be implemented by UN to promptly address any instances of stigmatization or targeting, providing participants with the necessary support and guidance for reporting such incidents.</p> <p>Involved UN agencies will regularly analyze implementation of gender equality norms.</p> <p>The project will adhere to a "Do No Harm" (DNH) approach, ensuring that the work of UN agencies work do not adversely affect inter-group relations while simultaneously prioritizing the protection of beneficiaries, especially women who may challenge negative narratives and face risks and stigma. When required, UN agencies will liaise with partner institutions and local governments to ensure full compliance with the DNH approach, emphasizing the importance of respecting and embracing these principles.</p> <p>Furthermore, project will prioritize confidentiality and anonymity during dialogues to safeguard individuals, particularly women, from potential backlash and targeting. These considerations will</p>

Project specific risk	Risk level (low, medium, high)	Mitigation strategy (including Do No Harm considerations)
		create a protective environment, allowing participants to engage in the project without fear of reprisals or harm.
Prevention and protection of children, adolescents and youth, who participate in the project from any form of violence and exploitation, with specific emphasis on sexual violence and exploitation	Medium	In addition to adhering to a "Do No Harm" principle in working with children, adolescents, and youth, as stated above, the UN will assign a Focal Point to whom any potential threat, suspect or incidence of violence and exploitation of children, adolescents, and youth, can be reported in a confidential manner. In cooperation with experts and child protection stakeholders, FP will pay particular attention to situations when conflicts and violence arise between children, their parents, caregivers, and teachers to ensure referral, guardianship support, independent, impartial, and confidential assistance, including safe channels for support and reporting. The FP will be requested to build up its work on the existing UN Montenegro mechanisms for Prevention of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse These include safe, confidential and accessible 24/7 reporting channels, ensuring all the contractors are aware of and sign up to the zero-tolerance policy for any kind of abusive behavior, reference checking and vetting for former misconduct, supervision and performance appraisals, and termination of contracts in the case of breaking PSEA Code of Conduct. Additionally, in the case of children, all implementing partners are subject to mandatory PSEA assessment, which entails specific training, PSEA referral mechanisms as well as application of victim-centered approach.
Change in representation at the highest political level in the Government	High	RC and Participating UN Agencies will remain in constant liaison with authorities and partners at the expert level to ensure uninterrupted engagement. It is not likely that the

Project specific risk	Risk level (low, medium, high)	Mitigation strategy (including Do No Harm considerations)
		general policy of the Government towards building and supporting social cohesion changes.
Changes or turnover in government/authority counterpart offices that cause delays in or disengagement from implementation	Medium	The UN will continue to engage with authorities and partners at different levels, to ensure strong ownership and sustainability of implementation even in the face of staff changes. The UN has demonstrated repeatedly that it can adapt to personnel changes in government/authorities.
Lack of interest to engage on behalf of the citizens, especially target groups, for example students or members of academia	Low	The team will very clearly communicate the benefits and outcomes of the activities and their involvement. Finally, the project uses innovative platforms that should encourage people to participate.
Lack of cooperation between institutions on local and national level due to political divisions	Medium	The project team will employ neutral third-party position in communication with the political stakeholders and emphasize the shared benefits and common goals that can be achieved through the project. The cost of not taking part can exert a positive pressure on the relevant decision makers to transcend divisions and cooperate.
Weak capacities of the involved institutions, for examples schools to implement Media Literacy Program	High	The project activities are designed having in mind that institutions will need additional support in implementation. That said, it means that trainings, education and empowerment are integral part of the project design.
Participants in the project faced with social, cultural and political pressure because of the involvement in the activities.	Low	Project team will proactively implement “Do No Harm” principle to minimize any negative impacts to the participants and beneficiaries. This will include vigilance and sensitivity regarding social context, including social, cultural and political factors, including stakeholders in project design and planning and continuous seeking of input and feedback so to understand their needs and concerns. Project will incorporate do no harm principles in the design of dialogue methodology and all other activities design. The team will be prepared to

Project specific risk	Risk level (low, medium, high)	Mitigation strategy (including Do No Harm considerations)
		adapt the project as needed based on ongoing feedback.
Delays in project implementation due to personnel changes at local or national level.	Medium	Project team will stay abreast and proactively assess this risk and design mitigation measures.
Delays in project implementation due to the complexity and large number of activities	Medium	To mitigate the risk of delays in project implementation due to the complexity and a large number of activities, the team will work with a comprehensive project plan that includes clear timelines, milestones, and dependencies. Complex tasks will be broken into smaller, manageable sub-tasks, and clear responsibilities to the team members will be assigned. Project leader will make sure everyone understands their roles and responsibilities. In case of any delays, the project team will identify critical activities that are essential for the project's success and prioritize them. Finally, the team will establish a robust monitoring and reporting system to track project progress with regular check-ins and status meetings with team members and stakeholders to review progress and address any emerging issues promptly.

e) Monitoring and evaluation

Monitoring

Organization: All three participating agencies – UNDP, UNICEF and UNESCO – will be involved in the monitoring of the project’s progress. This collaborative approach is essential to effectively achieve the main tasks of the monitoring exercise. This will ensure that the project’s progression is systematically tracked against its objectives, guaranteeing alignment with and adherence to the set goals. This process will not only uphold the desired quality standards but also act as an early warning system, pinpointing potential risks and enabling timely intervention. Effective monitoring will aid the optimal allocation of resources, guaranteeing their efficient utilization, while also offering a transparent feedback mechanism. Additionally, the insights gathered will facilitate informed decision making, creating a repository of lessons learned for future endeavours.

As the convening agency, UNDP will coordinate the M&E tasks, grounded in a preliminary, jointly approved M&E matrix. All three UN agencies will collaborate intensively to oversee the pertinent risks. Effective dialogue and feedback loops between the implementing agencies – UNDP, UNESCO, UNICEF – and their

project teams will be essential. This will help in tracking the predefined risks, spotting emerging threats and confirming the ongoing relevance of risk mitigation strategies. These agencies will collaboratively establish a comprehensive project monitoring and evaluation plan within three months of the project beginning, based on the project results framework presented in Annex C. This plan will specify the types of data required, their sources, the frequency of monitoring activities, assigned responsibilities, methods for analysis and progress reporting, allocation of resources, expenditure tracking and insight into the risks and underlying assumptions. Each participating organization or partner will be tasked with gathering data regarding the beneficiaries and the assistance provided.

Data collection will be efficient and timely, with the aim of consistently measuring progress against the set outcome and output indicators. Should any issues or inefficiencies arise, the insights from the data will guide the introduction of corrective measures or optimizations. The team will use regular national and local administrative data collection, as well as data that stems from the project implementation to measure progress against baseline values. The baseline and endline study will be administered and will employ qualitative and quantitative data collection, with control groups to measure the change produced by the project activities. The collected data will be gender- and age-disaggregated whenever possible.

The regular project staff meetings, involving all participating agencies, play a crucial role in ensuring effective project implementation and fostering a culture of continuous learning and experience sharing. The project staff meetings will provide a platform for all agencies involved in the project to come together and discuss various aspects of project implementation. This includes sharing updates on progress, discussing the challenges faced, lessons learned and brainstorming solutions collaboratively. It promotes real-time learning within the project team, allowing members to draw from each other's experiences and expertise.

In addition to internal project staff meetings, the project team also organizes meetings with key external stakeholders, particularly the government and local communities. These external meetings will create opportunities to explore further cooperation and collaboration, maximize the lessons learned, identify promising practices and good models of practices, propose strategies for increased local and national ownership and sustainability, including the prospective for upscaling promising practices. This could include discussions on how the government or local communities can contribute to the project, in terms of both resources and support. It may also serve as a platform for scaling up and ensuring funding for the initiatives stemming from the local dialogues, pledges and the Social Cohesion Innovation Lab.

These meetings may extend invitations to other donors and development partners who have an interest in or are working on similar initiatives. This multi-stakeholder involvement fosters a collaborative environment where different organizations can coordinate efforts, share best practices and avoid duplication of efforts.

Overall, during the entire implementation of the project, due consideration will be paid to real-time learning, generating lessons learned and capturing opportunities for optimizing project scalability and sustainability by diverse stakeholders, including national or local governments, Parliament, the Ombudsperson, CSOs, children, young people, women, etc. This will be achieved through their proactive, transparent and participative leadership, coordination, participation and engagement in innovation, knowledge generation, real-time learning, capturing promising practices and lessons learned and proposing sustainable modalities for the programmatic and financial scalability of project activities. The pilot initiatives and innovative initiatives specified in the proposal, such as development of Social Cohesion Pledges, innovative solutions deriving from the Social Innovation Lab, empowerment, education, and training activities, etc. will be exposed to real-time learning, monitoring and evidence generation so that examples of best practices are selected and a vision and perspective for its replication and scalability proposed.

For sustainability reasons, the project, based on specific criteria and assessment, will record and promote citizens' initiatives and quality ideas generated through local and national dialogue that are not supported under the Social Cohesion Innovation Lab, but have the potential to be taken up and supported through government/donor funding outside of the PBF project via government/local budgets, private-sector funding and international donor funds. Expanding of Women's Clubs in local parliaments across Montenegro will be recommended by

using lessons learned, knowledge exchange and promising practices from work with existing women parliamentarians at the national and local levels and in the selected municipalities, etc.

The designated budget for the monitoring activities is US\$ 169,970.00, or 6.7% of the total budget, including US\$ 50,000 for the final evaluation, the salary of the Joint M&E officer (100%), the UNESCO M&E Officer (20%), the consultant for monitoring of small grants and KAP baseline and endline surveys. In addition, Activity 2.2.1 will support project monitoring by measuring public perceptions before and following the project implementation in order to establish the prevalence of divisive narratives, hate speech, violence, etc. and to assess, monitor and measure the impact of the project to inform, design and implement targeted social and behavioural change strategies and actions. Also, through research into behavioural insights, evidence will be generated on behaviours pertaining to social cohesion, including how a change in behaviour may be achieved and consequently implementation monitored.

Evaluation

UNDP, as the convening agency, will oversee an independent evaluation, with a designated budget of US\$ 50,000. The evaluation will be carried out in the project's final six months, allowing time for the project teams to reflect on the lessons learned and key accomplishments. Its objective will be to measure the achievement of programme outcomes, extract lessons, inform future initiatives and offer recommendations for enhanced results. The evaluation will consider aspects such as relevance, coherence, efficiency, effectiveness, impact and sustainability. The final report will serve as a vital reference, disseminated among all project stakeholders.

The selected evaluator(s) will work closely with and under the supervision of the Project Evaluation Group, consisting of senior agencies' staff and the project team. The evaluation group will be coordinated by the JPC and M&E Officer.

An independent evaluator(s) with inputs from agency-based M&E staff and the project team will develop the evaluation's detailed methodological approach during the inception phase. This approach and methodology should be consistent with: the Evaluation Norms and Standards of the United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG); UNICEF's Procedure for Quality Assurance in Research; UNICEF's Procedure for Ethical Standards in Research, Evaluations, and Data Collection and Analysis, etc.

The evaluation is furthermore expected to have several positive effects, such as measuring implementation of the country's international commitments on social cohesion, identifying remaining equity gaps and bottlenecks, identifying needed actions towards further progress, and providing opportunities for learning and increasing accountability.

Special measures will be taken to ensure that the evaluation process is conducted ethically and that the participants can freely express their opinions. The information sources will be kept confidential and only known to the evaluators. The Evaluation Team will be responsible for ensuring that the evaluation process adheres to the UNEG Ethical Guidelines, i.e. that ethical conduct in data generation is essential. Particular consideration should be given to the following issues:

- Risks and benefits
- Informed consent
- Privacy and confidentiality
- Conflict of interest of the evaluation informants

The Project Evaluation Group will: validate and confirm the quality and independence of the evaluation, as well as its alignment with the UNEG Norms and Standards, Ethical Guidelines and other pertinent procedures; provide input on quality assurance standards with respect to the evaluation findings and conclusions and the

implementability of recommendations; and contribute to the dissemination of evaluation findings and monitoring of the management response.

f) Project exit strategy/sustainability

Sustainability in the project is of paramount importance given the project's topic and will be ensured through employing several strategies.

First of all, strengthening the knowledge, skills and competences of citizens, organizations and institutions at both the local and national levels to engage in meaningful dialogues around social cohesion is pivotal. By equipping these groups, especially young and disadvantaged individuals of all genders, with the necessary skills and knowledge, the project is making a long-term investment in increasing their knowledge on human rights, fostering a culture of dialogue, equal rights for all and understanding and enabling for greater and impactful agency of children and young people.

The introduction of inclusive dialogue mechanisms into the existing local self-governance and national governance tools for citizen engagement, including digital platforms, ensures that conversations around social cohesion are ongoing past the adoption of the Social Cohesion Pledges, easily accessible and that the priorities set by the pledges are embedded in the local and national priorities. Dialogue platforms were used through previous projects, such as Dialogue for the Future, and proved to be a successful and insightful social listening and collaborative tool. The project builds on those experiences and adds sustainability and localization elements to it. These dialogue platforms will differ from previous iterations as they will be more deeply embedded within local communities.

Local resource groups will ensure local ownership, and methodologies will be collaboratively developed with them. Tools for implementing the ideas stemming from these dialogues will be put in place, enhancing their impact and reflection of and response to local realities. Furthermore, robust feedback loops will be established, including local pledges, national dialogues and a digital platform for real-time monitoring and public visibility. These changes will collectively foster genuine dialogue, community-driven change and greater accountability for results. The platforms will be locally embedded, from which the voices will be echoed nationally. This will additionally ensure its sustainability. The dialogues will be designed and implemented through the full ownership and participation of local actors, and the project will aim to explore local processes and structures where the dialogues could be embedded as a long-term tool and space for dialogue among people and between people and local authorities, and collaborative design of tailored solutions which reflect local needs and realities.

Local dialogue and sustainability of the social cohesion plans/pledges will be ensured through Local Resource Groups, which will amplify local ownership of the platforms, processes, tools and results of the project. Showcasing the seamless transition of dialogue from local to national platforms sets a precedent for practices promoting social cohesion, with children and young people at the centre of the processes.

Additionally, by implementing a behavioural change campaign and highlighting commonalities and shared objectives that transcend divisions, the project aims to stimulate a general sense of unity and shared purpose among different groups and communities, led by young people as being integral to the approach. This would facilitate present-day collaboration and foster a long-term mindset shift towards seeing the greater common good.

The project will also aim to ensure sustainability through integration of a school-based curriculum on civic education: socio-emotional skills, parenting programmes, peaceful conflict resolution for students and human rights education. Through the process of development of the comprehensive Education Reform Strategy, the Ministry of Education will aim to integrate the relevant programmes into the strategic priorities related to equity and inclusion and the accompanying budgeted action plans. Education on civil rights and citizens' participation in political processes, which will support better understanding and proactive contribution by children and young people in creating open, inclusive and cohesive societies, will be embedded in the regular programmes and

curriculum of the Protector's Institution and the Educational Centre of the Parliament of Montenegro. Peaceful conflict resolution programmes will be piloted with the potential for upscaling and integrating the programme into the regular budget of the Ministry of Education and Ministry of Justice.

Integral to the project's sustainability is the involvement of its beneficiaries at every stage – from design to execution. Prioritizing broad consultations before project initiation and emphasizing active participation during the planning, implementation and monitoring fosters a sense of ownership among the participants. This, in turn, ensures that they are invested in the project's continued success.

The strengthening of the state and local institutions in fostering citizens' participation, identifying and addressing social cohesion threats and drivers, evidence-based decision making, coordination and monitoring is an essential element of the project which will ensure delivery of well-designed interventions and accountability to citizens. Moreover, using the inputs from the local dialogues in designing state policies will make citizens' requirements a cornerstone for the development of future state policies, enabling more direct representation, particularly of children and young people as future decisionmakers and policymakers, and consequently ensuring the increase of trust in institutions. Sustainability of the interventions will be ensured through carefully designed capacity-building measures aimed at enabling selecting institutions to respond to citizens' needs in a timely manner, as well as by the introduction of various innovative platforms and tools, that will facilitate their decision-making processes long after the project is concluded.

The oversight function of the Parliament of Montenegro and independent monitoring of the Institution of the Protector of Human Rights and Freedoms will be strengthened through the increased capacities of MPs and the Protector's staff, as well as fostering active participation of children and young people through the existing platforms and mechanism for their participation (the Educational Centre of the Parliament, which will embed the curriculum on social cohesion in the regular working curriculum and the Protector's Institution, which will implement the same approach through the mechanism of the Golden Advisers to the Protector).

UN support under the proposed project is strongly aligned with national priorities – including the government's programme for EU accession and the National Strategy for Sustainable Development by 2030 – and contributes to the implementation and monitoring of EU and SDG commitments.

The UN will work with the government on exploring options for mobilizing additional resources for supporting the initiatives stemming from local and national dialogues, as well as scaling up the project activities. Regular communication and coordination with international partners and donors will be one of the mechanisms in order to avoid overlapping, to ensure synergy of actions and to optimize support to the national counterparts and the people of Montenegro. To improve both visibility and engagement, the project will implement a multi-channel approach, establishing a dedicated communication plan. This plan will feature consistent updates and active participation on social media platforms, highlighting the accomplishments, ongoing progress and overall impact. It will ensure that information, especially on innovative and piloted activities, is effectively produced and disseminated to raise awareness on the opportunities offered by the action, and to enable beneficiaries to take advantage of them. The goal is to cultivate transparency and accountability, fostering a collaborative relationship with the PBF, as well as to support complementarities with other peacebuilding-related initiatives, reinforce various activities and facilitate the exchange of best practices.

IV. Project budget

Detailed budget provided in Excel sheet.

Totals				
	UNDP	UNICEF	UNESCO	Totals
1. Staff and other personnel	\$ 329,126	\$ 180,000	\$ 111,000	\$ 620,126
2. Supplies, Commodities, Materials	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
3. Equipment, Vehicles, and Furniture (including Depreciation)	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
4. Contractual services	\$ 500,700	\$ 358,500	\$ 215,000	\$ 1,074,200
5. Travel	\$ 21,400	\$ 4,000	\$ 9,800	\$ 35,200
6. Transfers and Grants to Counterparts	\$ 151,000	\$ 410,300	\$ -	\$ 561,300
7. General Operating and other Costs	\$ 79,900	\$ 5,700	\$ 17,900	\$ 103,500
Sub-Total	\$ 1,082,126	\$ 958,500	\$ 353,700	\$ 2,394,326
7% Indirect Costs	\$ 75,749	\$ 67,095	\$ 24,759	\$ 167,603
Total	\$ 1,157,875	\$ 1,025,595	\$ 378,459	\$ 2,561,929

Performance-Based Tranche Breakdown					
	UNDP	UNICEF	UNESCO	TOTAL	Tranche %
First Tranche:	\$ 810,512	\$ 717,917	\$ 264,921	\$ 1,793,350	70%
Second Tranche:	\$ 347,362	\$ 307,679	\$ 113,538	\$ 768,579	30%
Third Tranche:	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	0%
TOTAL	\$ 1,157,875	\$ 1,025,595	\$ 378,459	\$ 2,561,929	

Annex A.1: Checklist of project implementation readiness

Question			Comment
Planning			
1. Have all implementing partners been identified? If not, what steps remain and proposed timeline	x		Most of the implementing partners have been identified, some are pending confirmation, and some will be selected on a competitive basis through calls for proposals.
2. Have TORs for key project staff been finalized and ready to advertise? Please attach to the submission	x		Attached.
3. Have project sites been identified? If not, what will be the process and timeline		x	The criteria for locations are being developed. In line with it, the project team will suggest five locations and the Project Board will approve/endorse them in the inception phase.
4. Have local communities and government offices been consulted/ sensitized on the existence of the project? Please state when this was done or when it will be done.		x	Pending the above, ongoing process.
5. Has any preliminary analysis/ identification of lessons learned/ existing activities been done? If not, what analysis remains to be done to enable implementation and proposed timeline?	x		Previous project analysis and evaluations (i.e. Regional Dialogue for the Future)
6. Have beneficiary criteria been identified? If not, what will be the process and timeline.	x		
7. Have any agreements been made with the relevant Government counterparts relating to project implementation sites, approaches, Government contribution?	x		Through a joint consultation workshop and bilaterally
8. Have clear arrangements been made on project implementing approach between project recipient organizations?	x		
9. What other preparatory activities need to be undertaken before actual project implementation can begin and how long will this take?	N/A		
Gender			
10. Did UN gender expertise inform the design of the project (e.g. has a gender adviser/expert/focal point or UN Women colleague provided input)?	x		
11. Did consultations with women and/or youth organizations inform the design of the project?	x		
12. Are the indicators and targets in the results framework disaggregated by sex and age?	x		
13. Does the budget annex include allocations towards GEWE for all activities and clear justifications for GEWE allocations?	x		

Annex A.2: Checklist for project value for money

Question			Project Comment
1. Does the project have a budget narrative justification, which provides additional project specific information on any major budget choices or higher than usual staffing, operational or travel costs, so as to explain how the project ensures value for money?		x	No specific budgetary deviations
2. Are unit costs (e.g. for travel, consultancies, procurement of materials etc) comparable with those used in similar interventions (either in similar country contexts, within regions, or in past interventions in the same country context)? If not, this needs to be explained in the budget narrative section.	x		Comparable based on UNDP, UNESCO and UNICEF practices.
3. Is the proposed budget proportionate to the expected project outcomes and to the scope of the project (e.g. number, size and remoteness of geographic zones and number of proposed direct and indirect beneficiaries)? Provide any comments.	x		
4. Is the percentage of staffing and operational costs by the Receiving UN Agency and by any implementing partners clearly visible and reasonable for the context (i.e. no more than 20% for staffing, reasonable operational costs, including travel and direct operational costs) unless well justified in narrative section?			
5. Are staff costs proportionate to the amount of work required for the activity? And is the project using local rather than international staff/expertise wherever possible? What is the justification for use of international staff, if applicable?	x		
6. Does the project propose purchase of materials, equipment and infrastructure for more than 15% of the budget? If yes, please state what measures are being taken to ensure value for money in the procurement process and their maintenance/ sustainable use for peacebuilding after the project end.		x	
7. Does the project propose purchase of a vehicle(s) for the project? If yes, please provide justification as to why existing vehicles/ hire vehicles cannot be used.		x	
8. Do the implementing agencies or the UN Mission bring any additional non-PBF source of funding/ in-kind support to the project? Please explain what is provided. And if not, why not.			

Annex B.1: Project Administrative arrangements for Recipient UN Organizations

(This section uses standard wording – please do not remove)

The UNDP MPTF Office serves as the Administrative Agent (AA) of the PBF and is responsible for the receipt of donor contributions, the transfer of funds to Recipient UN Organizations, the consolidation of narrative and financial reports and the submission of these to the PBSO and the PBF donors. As the Administrative Agent of the PBF, MPTF Office transfers funds to RUNOS on the basis of the signed Memorandum of Understanding between each RUNO and the MPTF Office.

AA Functions

On behalf of the Recipient Organizations, and in accordance with the UNDG-approved “Protocol on the Administrative Agent for Multi-Donor Trust Funds and Joint Programmes, and One UN funds” (2008), the MPTF Office as the AA of the PBF will:

- Disburse funds to each of the RUNO in accordance with instructions from the PBSO. The AA will normally make each disbursement within three (3) to five (5) business days after having received instructions from the PBSO along with the relevant submission form and project document signed by all participants concerned;
- Consolidate the financial statements (annual and final), based on submissions provided to the AA by RUNOS and provide the PBF annual consolidated progress reports to the donors and the PBSO;
- Proceed with the operational and financial closure of the project in the MPTF Office system once the completion is completed by the RUNO. A project will be considered as operationally closed upon submission of a joint final narrative report. In order for the MPTF Office to financially closed a project, each RUNO must refund any unspent balance of over US\$ 250, indirect cost (GMS) should not exceed 7% and submission of a certified final financial statement by the recipient organizations’ headquarters);
- Disburse funds to any RUNO for any cost extension that the PBSO may decide in accordance with the PBF rules & regulations.

Accountability, transparency and reporting of the Recipient United Nations Organizations

Recipient United Nations Organizations will assume full programmatic and financial accountability for the funds disbursed to them by the Administrative Agent. Such funds will be administered by each RUNO in accordance with its own regulations, rules, directives and procedures.

Each RUNO shall establish a separate ledger account for the receipt and administration of the funds disbursed to it by the Administrative Agent from the PBF account. This separate ledger account shall be administered by each RUNO in accordance with its own regulations, rules, directives and procedures, including those relating to interest. The separate ledger account shall be subject exclusively to the internal and external auditing procedures laid down in the financial regulations, rules, directives and procedures applicable to the RUNO.

Each RUNO will provide the Administrative Agent and the PBSO (for narrative reports only) with:

Type of report	Due when	Submitted by
Semi-annual project progress report	15 June	Convening agency on behalf of all implementing organizations and in consultation with/quality assurance by PBF Secretariats, where they exist.
Annual project progress report	15 November	Convening agency on behalf of all implementing organizations and in

		consultation with/quality assurance by PBF Secretariats, where they exist.
End-of-project report covering entire project duration	Within three months from the operational project closure (it can be submitted instead of an annual report if timing coincides)	Convening agency on behalf of all implementing organizations and in consultation with/quality assurance by PBF Secretariats, where they exist.
Annual strategic peacebuilding and PBF progress report (for PRF allocations only), which may contain a request for additional PBF allocation if the context requires it	1 December	PBF Secretariat on behalf of the PBF Steering Committee, where it exists, or Head of UN Country Team where it does not.

Financial reporting and timeline

Timeline	Event
30 April	Annual reporting – Report Q4 expenses (Jan. to Dec. of previous year)
<i>Certified final financial report to be provided by 30 June of the calendar year after financial project closure</i>	

UNEX also opens up the following dates for voluntary financial reporting for Recipient UN Organizations

31 July	Voluntary Q2 expenses (January to June)
31 October	Voluntary Q3 expenses (January to September)

Any unspent balance exceeding US\$ 250 at the closure of the project would have to be refunded and a notification sent to the MPTF Office, no later than six months (30 June) into the year following the completion of the activities.

Ownership of Equipment, Supplies and Other Property

Ownership of equipment, supplies and other property financed from the PBF shall vest in the RUNO undertaking the activities. Matters relating to the transfer of ownership by the RUNO shall be determined in accordance with its own applicable policies and procedures.

Public Disclosure

The PBSO and Administrative Agent will ensure that the operations of the PBF are publicly disclosed on the PBF website (www.un.org/peacebuilding/fund) and the Administrative Agent's website (www.mptf.undp.org).

Annex B.2: Project Administrative arrangements for Recipient Non-UN Organizations

(This section uses standard wording – please do not remove)

Accountability, transparency and reporting of the Recipient Non-United Nations Organization:

The Recipient Non-United Nations Organization will assume full programmatic and financial accountability for the funds disbursed to them by the Administrative Agent. Such funds will be administered by each recipient in accordance with its own regulations, rules, directives and procedures.

The Recipient Non-United Nations Organization will have full responsibility for ensuring that the Activity is implemented in accordance with the signed project document;

In the event of a financial review, audit or evaluation recommended by PBSO, the cost of such activity should be included in the project budget;

Ensure professional management of the activity, including performance monitoring and reporting activities in accordance with PBSO guidelines.

Ensure compliance with the Financing Agreement and relevant applicable clauses in the Fund MoU.

Reporting:

Each receipt will provide the Administrative Agent and the PBSO (for narrative reports only) with:

Type of report	Due when	Submitted by
Bi-annual project progress report	15 June	Convening agency on behalf of all implementing organizations and in consultation with/quality assurance by PBF Secretariats, where they exist.
Annual project progress report	15 November	Convening agency on behalf of all implementing organizations and in consultation with/quality assurance by PBF Secretariats, where they exist.
End-of-project report covering entire project duration	Within three months from the operational project closure (it can be submitted instead of an annual report if the timing coincides)	Convening Agency on behalf of all implementing organizations and in consultation with/quality assurance by PBF Secretariats, where they exist.
Annual strategic peacebuilding and PBF progress report (for PRF allocations only), which may contain a request for an additional PBF allocation if the context requires it	1 December	PBF Secretariat on behalf of the PBF Steering Committee, where it exists or Head of UN Country Team where it does not.

Financial reports and timeline

Timeline	Event
28 February	Annual reporting – Report Q4 expenses (Jan. to Dec. of previous year)
30 April	Report Q1 expenses (January to March)
31 July	Report Q2 expenses (January to June)
31 October	Report Q3 expenses (January to September)
<i>Certified final financial report to be provided in the quarter following the project financial closure</i>	

Any unspent balance exceeding US\$ 250 at the closure of the project would have to be refunded and a notification sent to the Administrative Agent, no later than three months (31 March) into the year following the completion of the activities.

Ownership of Equipment, Supplies and Other Property

Matters relating to the transfer of ownership by the Recipient Non-UN Organization will be determined in accordance with applicable policies and procedures defined by the PBSO.

Public Disclosure

The PBSO and Administrative Agent will ensure that the operations of the PBF are publicly disclosed on the PBF website (www.un.org/peacebuilding/fund) and the Administrative Agent website (www.mptf.undp.org).

Final Project Audit for Recipient Non-UN Organization projects

An independent project audit will be requested by the end of the project. The audit report needs to be attached to the final narrative project report. The cost of such activity must be included in the project budget.

Special Provisions regarding Financing of Terrorism

Consistent with UN Security Council Resolutions relating to terrorism, including UN Security Council Resolution 1373 (2001) and 1267 (1999) and related resolutions, the participants are firmly committed to the international fight against terrorism, and in particular, against the financing of terrorism. Similarly, all Recipient Organizations recognize their obligation to comply with any applicable sanctions imposed by the UN Security Council. Each of the Recipient Organizations will use all reasonable efforts to ensure that the funds transferred to it in accordance with this agreement are not used to provide support or assistance to individuals or entities associated with terrorism as designated by any UN Security Council sanctions regime. If, during the term of this agreement, a Recipient Organization determines that there are credible allegations that funds transferred to it in accordance with this agreement have been used to provide support or assistance to individuals or entities associated with terrorism as designated by any UN Security Council sanctions regime, it will, as soon as it becomes aware of it, inform the head of the PBSO, the Administrative Agent and the donor(s) and, in consultation with the donors as appropriate, determine an appropriate response.

Recipient Non-UN Organization (NUNO) eligibility:

In order to be declared eligible to receive PBF funds directly, NUNOs must be assessed as technically, financially and legally sound by the PBF and its agent, the Multi-Partner Trust Fund Office (MPTF-O). Prior to submitting a finalized project document, it is the responsibility of each NUNO to liaise with the PBSO and MPTF-O and provide all the necessary documents (see below) to demonstrate that all the criteria have been fulfilled and to be declared as eligible for direct PBF funds.

The NUNO must provide (in a timely fashion, ensuring that the PBSO and MPTF-O have sufficient time to review the package) the documentation demonstrating that the NUNO:

- Has previously received funding from the UN, the PBF, or any of the contributors to the PBF, in the country of project implementation.
- Has a current valid registration as a non-profit, tax-exempt organization with a social-based mission in both the country where headquarters is located and in the country of project implementation for the duration of the proposed grant. (**NOTE:** If registration is done on an annual basis in the country, the organization must have the current registration and obtain renewals for the duration of the project, in order to receive subsequent funding tranches.)
- Produces an annual report that includes the proposed country for the grant.
- Commissions-audited financial statements, available for the last two years, including the auditor's opinion letter. The financial statements should include the legal organization that will sign the agreement (and oversee the country of implementation, if applicable) as well as the activities of the country of implementation. (**NOTE:** If these are not available for the country of the proposed project implementation, the CSO will also need to provide the latest two audit reports for a programme- or

project-based audit in the country.) The letter from the auditor should also state whether the auditor firm is part of the nationally qualified audit firms.

- Demonstrates an annual budget in the country of the proposed project implementation for the previous two calendar years, which is at least twice the annualized budget sought from the PBF for the project.⁵²
- Demonstrates at least 3 years of experience in the country where the grant is being sought.
- Provides a clear explanation of the CSO's legal structure, including the specific entity which will enter into the legal agreement with the MPTF-O for the PBF grant.

⁵² The annualized PBF project budget is obtained by dividing the PBF project budget by the number of months of the project duration and multiplying it by 12.

Annex C: Project Results Framework (MUST include sex- and age-disaggregated targets)

Outcomes	Outputs	Indicators	Means of Verification/ Frequency of Collection	Indicator Milestones
<p>Outcome 1: DIVERSE SOCIAL GROUPS IN TARGETED COMMUNITIES ARE EMPOWERED AND ACTIVELY ENGAGE IN DIALOGUE TO CONTRIBUTE TO BUILDING A SHARED VISION OF THE COMMON GOOD, PUBLIC TRUST, RESPECT FOR DIVERSITY AND RESILIENCE TO DIVISIVE NARRATIVES AND VIOLENCE.</p> <p>(Any SDG Target that this outcome contributes to. As relevant, alignment to UNSDCF and/or Strategic Results Framework indicators recommended at the outcome and output levels)</p> <p>Contributes to UNSDCF for Montenegro by 2027:</p> <p>Proportion of population reporting having personally felt discriminated against or harassed</p>		<p>Outcome Indicator 1a</p> <p>The level of meaningful participation of rights holders, especially women and discriminated groups, in selected public processes, supported by the UN (local and national dialogues)</p> <p>Baseline: level 2, as defined by global framework of mandatory UN indicators. Output Indicator Framework – UN INFO Help Centre</p> <p>Target: level 3, as defined by global framework of mandatory UN indicators. Output Indicator Framework – UN INFO Help Centre</p> <p>(UNSDCF indicator 16.4)</p>	<p>Participant evaluation reports from local and national dialogues</p> <p>Project reports</p>	24 months
		<p>Outcome Indicator 1b</p> <p>1c.1 The level of trust in meaningfulness of participation in dialogue platforms disaggregated by sex and age</p> <p>1.c.2 The level of respect for diversity and ability to recognize hate speech and violence disaggregated by sex and age</p> <p>Baseline: to be determined in the baseline survey</p> <p>Target: 10pp improvement</p> <p>Outcome indicator 1c</p>	<p>Baseline and endline survey with project participants that will be adjusted to the groups in method and content</p>	24 months

Outcomes	Outputs	Indicators	Means of Verification/ Frequency of Collection	Indicator Milestones
<p>in the previous 12 months on the grounds of discrimination prohibited under international human rights law, the general population, Roma population – targets – women: <5%, men: <6%, Roma women: <8%, Roma men: <12%</p> <p>Proportion of seats held by women in national and local parliaments and national government – targets – national parliament: 40%, local parliaments: 40%, mayors: 15%, national government: 40%</p> <p>Balkan Barometer: a) Level of tolerance and respect of differences: >36% satisfied; b) Equality before the law – the law is applied to everyone equally: <65% disagrees, >28% agrees; c) Accessibility to public services via digital channels: >38% satisfied; d) Trust in institutions – 1) in the parliament: >46%; 2) in the government: >48%; 3) in the courts and judiciary: >37%; 4) in the Protector: >42% (tending to trust and total trust)</p>		<p>The level of interpersonal trust and solidarity in the society</p> <p>Baseline: to be determined in the baseline survey Target: 10pp improvement</p> <p>Outcome indicator 1d The percentage of people feeling:</p> <p>Engaged/Valued/Heard</p> <p>Baseline: to be determined in the baseline survey Target: 10pp improvement</p>		

Outcomes	Outputs	Indicators	Means of Verification/ Frequency of Collection	Indicator Milestones
<p>World Bank Worldwide Governance Government Effectiveness Index: >55 Voice and Accountability Index: >49 Rule of Law Index: >57</p> <p>Level of establishment of permanent national child rights coordinating mechanism – target – 4 (championing)</p> <p>Percentage of children in conflict with the law subject to a diversion order or a non-custodial measure: 40%</p> <p>Media Literacy Index: 30 points</p> <p>(Any Universal Periodic Review of Human Rights (UPR) recommendation that this outcome helps implementation and, if so, year of UPR)</p>	<p>Output 1.1: Improved capacities of children, adolescents, young people and women, for meaningful civic engagement and inclusive dialogue, upholding and advancing human rights and countering violence, hate speech and divisive narratives</p> <p><i>Activity 1.1.1 – Enhance capacities of women and men, #NextGen leaders for meaningful civic engagement, leading for the common good, advancing and safeguarding human rights, promoting social cohesion and gender equality achievements (UNDP)</i></p> <p><i>Activity 1.1.2 – Support children, adolescents and young people, including through youth organizations and CSOs, to contribute to local and national dialogues and Local and National Social Cohesion Pledges as active citizens and agents of social cohesion. (UNICEF)</i></p>	<p><i>Output Indicator 1.1.a</i> The number of participants with capacities for meaningful civic engagement, advancing and safeguarding human rights and gender equality, disaggregated by age and sex</p> <p>Baseline: 0</p> <p>Targets:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 50 adult members of the general population, with at least 50% female participants <p>500 young people and adolescents, with at least 50% female participants</p>	Reports and participation sheets	24 months
		<p><i>Output Indicator 1.1.b</i> Number of actors capable of delivering socio-emotional skills programmes, disaggregated by sex</p> <p>Baseline: 0</p> <p>Targets:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 125 teachers, with at least 50% female actors <p>300 parents and 300 adolescents, with at least 50% female actors</p>	<p>Reports and participation sheets</p> <p>Agenda of the training</p>	24 months

Outcomes	Outputs	Indicators	Means of Verification/ Frequency of Collection	Indicator Milestones
	<p><i>Activity 1.1.3 – Enhance the skills, capacities and resilience of children, adolescents, parents/caregivers, and teachers through civic education programmes, caregivers’ support and peaceful conflict resolution to apply core values and competencies leading to peaceful, and inclusive societies (UNICEF)</i></p> <p><i>Activity 1.1.4 – Introduction of a comprehensive Media and</i></p>	<p><i>Output Indicator 1.1.c</i></p> <p>Number of educational institutions to have successfully integrated the MIL concept across curricula to increase critical thinking and build resilience of young people on divisive narratives and the consequent challenges</p> <p>Baseline: 0</p> <p>Target: 13 schools in targeted locations</p>	<p>Official records of educational institutions,</p> <p>Reports on educational tools capacity-building activity</p>	24 months

Outcomes	Outputs	Indicators	Means of Verification/ Frequency of Collection	Indicator Milestones
	<i>Information Literacy concept in schools, based on the UNESCO Media and Information Literacy Handbook for Elementary Schools in Montenegro, and support establishment of the Resource Centre for Media and Information Literacy (UNESCO)</i>			

Outcomes	Outputs	Indicators	Means of Verification/ Frequency of Collection	Indicator Milestones
	<p>Output 1.2 Targeted groups and communities participate in creating a shared vision for the common good through local and national dialogue platforms</p> <p><i>Activity 1.2.1 – Establish pilot Local Community Resource Groups and Civic Dialogues for Social Cohesion that are to foster open dialogue and provide inputs to local and state institutions in developing social pledges (UNDP)</i></p> <p><i>Activity 1.2.2 – Support academia-facilitated thematic dialogue platforms between students and diverse social actors, including decisionmakers, to address</i></p>	<p><i>Output Indicator 1.2.a</i> The number of people actively involved in dialogue and contributing to promoting civic space and dialogue, addressing hate speech, violence and divisive narratives, aggregated by age and sex Baseline: 0</p> <p>Targets: - 300 people with at least 50% female participants - 300 decisionmakers, academia and CSOs representatives and young people actively engaged in academia-facilitated thematic dialogues, with at least 50% female participants - 5,000 children, adolescents and young people empowered through UPSHIFT and the Young Reporters platform in five communities, at least 50% of whom are girls</p>	<p>Reports from meetings</p> <p>Activity reports</p> <p>Agendas</p> <p>Presentations</p> <p>Participation sheets</p> <p>Photos</p>	24 months

Outcomes	Outputs	Indicators	Means of Verification/ Frequency of Collection	Indicator Milestones
	<p><i>youth participation, respect for diversity and trust within society-related topics. (UNESCO)</i></p> <p><i>Activity 1.2.3 – Establishment of a Social Cohesion Innovation Lab to drive online and offline community-led solutions (UNDP and UNICEF)</i></p> <p><i>Activity 1.2.4 – Support the Young Reporters initiative aimed at promoting quality and continuous participation of adolescent girls and boys, including those from marginalized groups, in the public debate on social cohesion (UNICEF)</i></p>	<p><i>Output Indicator 1.2.b</i></p> <p><i>Number of Local social cohesion pledges/plans budgeted and funding sources identified and proposals for scale up developed</i></p> <p>Baseline: 0</p> <p>Target: 5</p>		
		<p><i>Output Indicator 1.2.c</i></p> <p>The number of community projects and pilot initiatives which contribute to the implementation of local social cohesion action plans/recommendations from dialogues supported by the SCIL</p> <p>Baseline: 0</p> <p>Target: 10, of which at least a third support initiatives with a gender dimension</p>	<p>Participation sheets</p> <p>Project proposals and evaluations</p>	24 months

Outcomes	Outputs	Indicators	Means of Verification/ Frequency of Collection	Indicator Milestones
		<i>Output Indicator 1.2.d</i> Number of Social innovation lab ideas supported by LSGs, international partners, private sector Baseline: 0 Target: 5	Project report	24 months
Outcome 2: BASED ON PARTICIPATORY DIALOGUE, NATIONAL AND LOCAL INSTITUTIONS INITIATE ADOPTION OF INCLUSIVE, GENDER-RESPONSIVE, RIGHTS-BASED, PEOPLE- AND CHILD-CENTRED POLICIES AND STRENGTHEN OVERSIGHT TO ENABLE CONSENSUS ON A SHARED VISION OF THE COMMON GOOD AND ENHANCEMENT OF TRUST.		Outcome Indicator 2a The number of adopted social cohesion pledges Baseline: 0 Target: 6 (5 local and 1 national) (UNSDCF Output indicator 16.3)		24 months

Outcomes	Outputs	Indicators	Means of Verification/ Frequency of Collection	Indicator Milestones
<p>(Any SDG target that this outcome contributes to. As relevant, alignment to UNSDCF and/or Strategic Results Framework indicators recommended at the outcome and output levels)</p> <p>Contributes to UNSDCF for Montenegro by 2027:</p> <p>Corruption Perception Index score: >63.7</p> <p>Proportion of population reporting having personally felt discriminated against or harassed in the previous 12 months on the grounds of discrimination prohibited under international human rights law: the general population and Roma population – targets – women: <5%; men: <6%; Roma women: <8%; Roma men: <12%</p>				
		<p>Outcome Indicator 2c 2c.1 The level of trust that the institutions targeted by the programme will respond to citizens' recommendations</p> <p>Baseline: To be determined in the baseline survey, disaggregated by gender and age – Target: 10 pp improvement</p>	Baseline and endline survey with project participants that will be adjusted to the groups in method and content	24 months

Outcomes	Outputs	Indicators	Means of Verification/ Frequency of Collection	Indicator Milestones
<p>Proportion of seats held by women in national and local parliaments and national government – targets – national parliament: 40%; local parliaments: 40%; mayors: 15%; national government: 40%</p> <p>Balkan Barometer: a) Level of tolerance and respect of differences; b) Equality before the law; c) Accessibility to public services via digital channels; d) Trust in institutions – 1) the parliament, 2) the government; 3) the courts and judiciary; 4) the Protector – targets – a) >36% satisfied; b) The law is applied to everyone equally <65% disagrees, >28% agrees; c) Accessibility to public services via digital channels >38% satisfied; d1) Trust in the parliament >46%; d2) Trust in the government >48%; d3) Trust in the courts and judiciary >37%; d4) Trust in the Protector >42% (tending to trust and total trust)</p> <p>World Bank Worldwide Governance</p>	<p>Output 2.1: Local and national institutions facilitate inclusive, people-centred dialogue to adopt Social Cohesion Pledges and effectively implement and oversee human rights and social cohesion policies and measures that respond to the recommendations and solutions identified through dialogues</p> <p><i>Activity 2.1.1 – Strengthen local and national institutional capacities and tools for participatory development, adoption and implementation of social cohesion pledges (UNDP and UNICEF)</i></p> <p><i>Activity 2.1.2 – Strengthen the capacities of the Parliament of Montenegro and selected local parliaments for improved oversight and contribution to dialogue on social cohesion, including active participation and engagement of children and young people in the work of local and national parliaments. (UNICEF and UNDP)</i></p>	<p><i>Output Indicator 2.1.a</i> The number of local and national institutions with increased capacities for participatory development, adoption and implementation of social cohesion pledges involved in local and national dialogues.</p> <p>Baseline: 0 Target: 10</p>	<p>Reports</p> <p>Agendas</p> <p>Media reports with links</p> <p>Reports</p> <p>Agendas</p> <p>Media reports with links</p> <p>Reports</p> <p>Participation sheets</p>	24 months
		<p><i>Output Indicator 2.1.b</i> The number of staff members of the Protector’s office and CSO representatives capacitated to make more strategic use of</p>	<p>Reports and participation sheets</p> <p>Agenda of the training</p>	24 months

Outcomes	Outputs	Indicators	Means of Verification/ Frequency of Collection	Indicator Milestones
<p>Government Effectiveness Index: >55 Voice and Accountability Index: >49 Rule of Law Index: >57</p> <p>Level of establishment of permanent national child rights coordinating mechanism – target – 4 (championing)</p> <p>Percentage of children in conflict with the law subject to a diversion order or a non-custodial measure: 40%</p> <p>Level of improvement of migration governance system against the EC recommendations, GCM and GCR: 5 medium- and long-term EC recommendations adopted</p> <p>Media Literacy Index – 32 points</p> <p>(Any Universal Periodic Review of Human Rights (UPR) recommendation that this outcome helps to implement and, if so, year of UPR)</p>	<p><i>Activity 2.1.3 – Strengthening institutional capacity and mechanisms for research and independent monitoring of hate speech, violence, divisive narratives, including the spread of mis-/dis-information, both online and offline (UNICEF and UNDP)</i></p>	<p>regional and UN human rights mechanisms for prevention and consolidated action fostering social cohesion</p> <p>Baseline: 0 Target: 10</p>		
		<p><i>Output Indicator 2.1.c</i></p> <p><i>Progress made in establishing a comprehensive and effective monitoring system for hate speech online</i></p> <p>Baseline: Monitoring hate speech primarily relies on reported or publicly known incidents</p> <p>Target: Robust system for hate speech monitoring established, for regular scanning and analysis of online media and social networks</p>	<p>Project reports</p> <p>Monitoring reports</p>	24 months
	<p>Output 2.2: Public narrative and policymaking informed with evidence and latest knowledge on social cohesion threats and public trust in institutions, and countering divisive narratives, hate speech and violence.</p> <p><i>Activity 2.2.1 – Build national capacities for evidence-based social cohesion policymaking by using behavioural insights and a nationally representative public perception survey before</i></p>	<p><i>Output Indicator 2.2.a</i></p> <p>Number of people reached through the communication campaign</p> <p>Baseline: 0 Target: 5,000</p>	<p>Project reports</p> <p>Media reports with links and web site analytics</p>	24 months
		<p><i>Output Indicator 2.2.b</i></p> <p>The number of journalists applying the principles of solution journalism to produce reliable reports that foster public understanding, trust, consensus-building, civic engagement and prevent conflicts.</p>	<p>Participants’ sheets, activity reports, photos, follow-up reporting</p>	24 months

Outcomes	Outputs	Indicators	Means of Verification/ Frequency of Collection	Indicator Milestones
	<p><i>and after the project to measure its impact and to inform, design and implement targeted social and behavioural change (SBC) strategies and actions (UNICEF and UNDP)</i></p> <p><i>Activity 2.2.2 – Launch a multi-platform communications and advocacy initiative to counter divisive narratives and normalization of hate speech and violence and support a culture of trust, dialogue and collaborative vision (UNDP, UNICEF)</i></p> <p><i>Activity 2.2.3 – Strengthen the capacities of the media through the concept of solution journalism and support the setting-up of the National Multi-Stakeholder Media Coalition. (UNESCO)</i></p> <p><i>Activity 2.2.4 – Promotion of culture and appreciation of diversity among citizens and communities (UNESCO)</i></p>	<p>Baseline: 0</p> <p>Target: 30 (20 students of media and journalism studies and 10 journalists), with at least 50% female participants</p>		
	<p>Output 2.3: Capacity building of targeted institutions to</p>	<p><i>Output Indicator 2.3.a</i></p>	<p>Reports and participation sheets</p>	<p>24 months</p>

Outcomes	Outputs	Indicators	Means of Verification/ Frequency of Collection	Indicator Milestones
	ensure girls' and women's public and political participation and to help counter hate speech, sexism, misogyny and any backlash related to gender equality <i>Activity 2.3.1 – Strengthen decision makers' and opinion makers' capacity with the knowledge and skills to uphold advances in gender equality and counter gender-based hate speech and violence (UNDP)</i> <i>Activity 2.3.2 – Strengthen the capacities of women politicians through capacity building of Women Clubs in the national and local parliaments (UNICEF and UNDP)</i>	<p>The number of decision makers and opinion makers countering the normalization of gender-based hate speech, sexism and misogyny, and advocating for the important role of women in politics and peace and security disaggregated by sex</p> <p>Baseline: 0</p> <p>Target: 50, at least 50% of whom are male</p>	Agenda of the training	
			<p>Reports and participation sheets</p> <p>Agenda of the training</p>	24 months

Project name (duration)	Donor and budget	Project focus	Difference from/complementarity to the current proposal
Strengthening knowledge of the UNCT and partners on developments and incidents of hate speech and advocacy to tackle the phenomenon – ongoing work by the Human Rights Adviser to the UN Country Team and national partners OHCHR	OHCHR, US\$ 114,000	Monitor, report on and analyse incidents and trends of hate speech, online and offline, against individuals and groups and the responses by the state to these on a regular basis; develop key messages in advocacy by the RC and UNCT with partners and the public to counter hate speech	The project will use data gathered by OHCHR analysis of hate speech cases.
Fostering freedom of expression through a strengthened free, independent and pluralistic media, while supporting journalism as a public good with the broadest outreach and tackling disinformation UNESCO (2023–2025)	EU, US\$ 287,300	The project focuses on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • enhancing the commitment and capacities of the media and journalists to abide by professional and ethical standards of journalism and enhancing media accountability; • reinforcing freedom of expression and circulation of accurate information by an increasing rights-based regulation of digital platforms and online media; • adopting Media and Information Literacy (MIL) policies and integrating MIL into formal education to support the MIL skills of citizens, notably young people, to think critically; • empowering media outlets to better cover climate change and environmental issues, through investigative journalism. 	Adoption of the MIL Framework and development of related MOOC within previous phases of the Building Trust in the Media project will enable capacity building of teachers and librarians, in order to increase critical thinking and build the resilience of young people on divisive narratives
Strengthening the role of young people in promoting increased mutual understanding, constructive narrative, respect for diversity and trust UNESCO (2022–2024)	UNESCO core funds, US\$ 30,000	Support to young men and women in order to promote constructive and fact-based narratives, and contribute to building trust, intercultural dialogue, cultural diversity, gender equality and social cohesion in the region. In doing so, the project aims to address the priority conflict drivers of hate speech, divisive narratives, negative gender norms and a deficit of reconciliation within the region.	Previous work with young men and women on active engagement in addressing hate speech and negative narratives, in particular on social media, provided ideas for thematic dialogue platforms within this project proposal.
Fostering intercultural dialogue by enhancing the cultural and creative sectors for increased socio-economic impact (CC4WBs)	EU, US\$ 760,000	The project is focused on improving the performance of the cultural and creative sectors in the Western Balkans, strengthening cultural cooperation within and with the Western Balkans, and enhancing cultural heritage for local development.	Similar to this project proposal, CC4WBs aim to foster intercultural dialogue and reconciliation at the regional level. Arts education activities with museums piloted through the CC4WBs will be scaled up and adapted to this project proposal, and implemented in target locations.

Project name (duration)	Donor and budget	Project focus	Difference from/complementarity to the current proposal
UNESCO (2022–2026)			
Enabling dialogue and collaborative action for countering hate speech and bridging divides UNDP	UNDP Funding Window for Governance, Peacebuilding, Crisis and Resilience (GPCR), US\$ 300,000	The project aims to contribute to sustainable peace and gender equality, through strengthening leadership capacities of key stakeholders, especially women, enabling meaningful dialogue and collaborative action to address gender-based hate speech, misogyny and sexism.	The project enabled local dialogues on gender-based hate speech and served as an excellent social listening platform. Insights and recommendations from the dialogues are integrated into this project proposal. The project also yet again has shown that local dialogues are an excellent means for social listening, awareness raising and soliciting citizens’ ideas and recommendations. The project will also map local resources and potentials for gender-based hate speech monitoring tools, which will inform this project (Activity 2.1.3).
Regional programme “Implementing Norms, Changing Minds” 2019–2023	EU	The Montenegro component is implemented by UNDP. The main objectives related to the adoption of frameworks for addressing gender-based discrimination and violence against women (VAW), aligned with international standards enshrined in CEDAW and the Istanbul Convention, as well as the EU Acquis communautaire; the strengthening of women’s organizations, including through capacity building, to hold governments accountable, advocate for effective implementation, and monitor to prevent and respond to VAW is imperative for addressing the root and structural causes of gender inequality, and violence against women, as one of its most pervasive expressions, requires a transformative change in society and communities’ beliefs and perceptions on discriminatory gender stereotypes; the protection, prevention and response to VAW is closely interlinked with availability and access to comprehensive, coordinated, inter-disciplinary and sustained multi-sector services and its demand from the survivors’/victims’ side.	The project addressed the issue of violence against women and has provided a strong impact and capacity in this area, which can be further leveraged through this project.
Gender EUquality 2023–2025	EU	This upcoming action has been designed to contribute to enhancing capacities to promote gender equality and to introduce gender mainstreaming in the work of the government, offering technical assistance and addressing specific needs. The action is designed to collect evidence, analyse perceptions, policies and	The action will complement the project’s approach of building the capacities of decision makers and opinion makers in the areas of WPS; women’s political participation, media, culture, etc.

Project name (duration)	Donor and budget	Project focus	Difference from/complementarity to the current proposal
		practices, including the role and position of the existing gender equality infrastructure. The action will enhance capacities for gender mainstreaming in the strategic framework and state programmes and development plans, offering technical gender expertise and gender mainstreaming support, that will be informed by gender analyses, guided by tools, methods and knowledge products, assuring dialogue and boosting the political will and commitment of the highest-ranking public officials to assure a gender-mainstreamed approach.	
Creating and increasing resilience to (pre-)violent extremism and improved social cohesion , with regard to citizens returning from foreign conflict zones IOM	EU DG Near and UK, US\$ 200,000	Designed to respond to the needs of Western Balkan governments (Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, North Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia and Kosovo*) to deal with citizens returning from foreign conflict zones, the project is focused on assisting the government authorities to adopt appropriate measures and to develop and implement action plans to provide specialized reintegration, resocialization and rehabilitation assistance tailored to the needs of returnee men, women and children.	The projects will ensure complementarity depending on the locations.
Moving Towards Sustainable Approaches to Preventing Violent Extremism in the Western Balkans, IOM (2022–ongoing)	IOM British Embassy	Aimed at working with young people in the community with providing informal youth organizations with an opportunity to receive seed money for small projects in local communities.	The projects will ensure complementarity depending on the locations.
Improved performance of the rule-of-law institutions regarding handling of war crimes cases and provision of support and services to victims of war crimes, especially victims of conflict-related sexual and gender-based crimes UNDP 2023–2026	EU, € 570,000	The project will step up the provision of expertise and support to better equip the judicial and law enforcement authorities in handling war crimes cases at the domestic level, improve the conditions for regional (cross-jurisdictional/cross-boundary) cooperation in processing these cases, enhance the delivery of support services to victims and witnesses and strengthen the capacity of relevant actors in victim support, which would all enhance efficient and effective victim-centred and human rights-based domestic handling of war crimes. Not least, the project will better equip grassroots actors to raise public awareness of past crimes, including dialogue and exchanges amongst and between a	The project will provide expertise and support to the judicial and law enforcement authorities in handling war crimes cases, and will enable dialogue and exchanges amongst and between a wide range of stakeholders, especially young people and future opinion leaders.

Project name (duration)	Donor and budget	Project focus	Difference from/complementarity to the current proposal
		wide range of stakeholders, especially young people and future opinion leaders in order to contribute to increasing a shared understanding of the crimes committed during the 1990s conflicts on the territory of the former Yugoslavia.	
ReLOaD2 2021–2024 UNDP	European Union, local self- governments, UNDP US\$ 2,000,000.00	<p>The overall objective of the project is to strengthen participatory democracies and EU integration in the Western Balkans by empowering civil society and encouraging young people to actively take part in the decision-making processes, and by improving a supportive legal and financial environment for civil society.</p> <p>The specific objective of the project is to strengthen partnerships between local authorities and civil society in the Western Balkans, by scaling a successful model of transparent project funding of CSOs (LOD methodology) from LGs' budgets, which is aimed at greater civic and youth participation in decision-making processes and at improved service delivery in local communities.</p>	This project will build upon the capacities, knowledge, networks and tools developed through the ReLOaD project in 15 local municipalities. The project will use good practices of small grants allocation and capacity building of CSOs and local self-governments.
Socio-economic empowerment of young women and men through efficient youth services 2022–2024 UNDP	Government of Montenegro UNDP US\$ 171,171.00	The project aims to foster socio-economic empowerment and development of young women and men through efficient and high-quality youth services and programmes. Cross-sector and inter-ministerial cooperation for the implementation of gender-responsive youth policies and programmes at the local and national levels will be improved, together with the efficiency and coverage of gender-responsive services and programmes for youth empowerment at the local level.	The project builds the capacities of local youth services (youth centres and clubs) for youth outreach and empowerment in the areas of hate speech, participation, community-based actions, etc. The activities of this project will build on the youth service infrastructures and capabilities to reach out to young people in local communities, as well as to further build youth service capacities for sustainable youth empowerment, leadership and resilience to hate speech and violence. The project has also supported development of a Strategy for Youth, which envisages social cohesion-related measures, including youth participation in decision making and community life, countering hate speech, including gender-based hate speech, ensuring gender equality and empowerment and thus serves as an excellent policy framework for the implementation of this project.
Expanding the co-creation role of adolescents and young people for the new Strategy for Youth in	UNICEF, US\$ 45,000	Support to the Ministry of Sports and Youth in developing the new Strategy for Youth and Strategy for Sports through technical	The support is focused on creating a policy environment to foster youth inclusion in decision making, and civic participation and engagement through a youth-centred design process. The

Project name (duration)	Donor and budget	Project focus	Difference from/complementarity to the current proposal
collaboration with civil society, public stakeholders and line ministries and in developing cross-sector adolescent- and youth-friendly policies (policy interventions) – ongoing technical support to the Ministry of Sports and Youth UNICEF		support, research, focus groups and the active co-creation role of adolescents and young people	complementarity with this proposal is strong as the draft Strategy for Youth recognizes hate speech, violence, as well as gender equality, sexism and misogyny as priorities. It puts a special focus on youth participation and leadership.
E-services and digital infrastructure as a COVID-19 response measure 2021–2023 UNDP	US\$ 2,200,000 EU-funded project	Development of a national digital infrastructure, platforms for electronic data exchange, online identification and online payments. Development of citizen-centred and gender-responsive electronic services. Raising awareness on the benefits of digital transformation. Cybersecurity initiatives.	The project will leverage on strong experience, knowledge, partnerships and networks in the area of digital services.
Global Drive for Media Freedom and Safety of Journalists, implemented by OHCHR in the region (Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro and Serbia) and globally by OHCHR and UNESCO 2021–2023 OHCHR	The Netherlands US\$ 31,500.00	The project, which is implemented in Montenegro, Serbia and Bosnia and Herzegovina, supports journalists with knowledge and skills to use the UN human rights mechanisms, seeks to support a regional media association to improve the protect of media freedoms, and supports the launch of a campaign on media freedom. The project has a particular focus on female journalists.	The project will rely on the knowledge and networks developed.
Adolescent empowerment and skills-building programme “Opportunities” Until 2026 UNICEF	UNICEF, US\$ 500,000	Through career guidance, on-the-job training and job shadowing, young people and adolescents exercise socio-emotional skills such as empathy, teamwork and creativity in a different environment, with an opportunity to learn how to convey key messages to different societal structures, in this case economic ones, to use and improve their skills, to understand ‘real-world’ ones such as the labour market, and engage with skills and with stakeholders that are often decision makers.	The project addresses the key concerns of young people that are related to economic independence, inactivity and the market of the future, that impacts their mental health and, with them being involved, uncertainty decreases through engagement and active participation, reflecting positively on the impact they make in society.

Project name (duration)	Donor and budget	Project focus	Difference from/complementarity to the current proposal
Leveraging communication, advocacy, risk communication and community engagement to generate and maintain public interest and awareness of child rights issues and promote youth participation in the media and civic space, UNICEF	UNICEF, US\$ 388,811	Generate and maintain public interest and awareness of child rights issues, promote youth participation in the media, quality media production for, about and with children and ethical reporting on child rights issues including support to relevant institutions to strengthen risk communication and community engagement capacities	Through this intervention, UNICEF facilitates interpersonal, community and social media dialogues with children, parents communities and decision makers to influence their perceptions, knowledge, attitudes and/or social norms to favour inclusive, non-violent, human rights-based narratives.
The EU–UNICEF partnership to strengthen the national child protection system for the prevention and protection of children from all forms of violence and exploitation 2022–ongoing	UNICEF core funds and EU, US\$ 356,000	The key envisaged activities will include strengthening the capacity and accountability of the child protection system at all levels and in all sectors (social welfare, health, education, police, and justice) for the prevention and protection of children from violence and exploitation. This will be conducted through development of the new Strategy on Prevention and Protection of Children from Violence and capacity-building trainings to enhance inter-sector collaboration for prevention and provision of a continuum of services to child victims of violence, sexual violence, abuse and exploitation.	The strategy will provide a framework to equitably protect children and young people from abuse, violence and neglect. This will be linked with the government’s cross-sector Action Plan on the Prevention of Violence among Children, Adolescents and Youth from 2023 that would be supported under this proposal and which aims to contribute towards improved safety and social cohesion by drawing on systems-based approaches, community-level interventions and capacity development initiatives.
EU and UNICEF for Early Childhood Development in Montenegro 2020–2023 UNICEF	European Union, € 1,000,000	The overall objective of the action is: Young children (0–6), including children with disabilities, will have improved health and development in order to reach their full human potential. The specific objective is: Young children and their parents/caregivers will benefit from quality, equitable, mutually reinforcing systems of health, education, social and child protection in Montenegro by the end of the implementation period. One of the results is “Parents and caregivers have increased access to knowledge and skills building to offer positive, responsive nurturing” – under this result, policy recommendations were developed for scaling up the Parenting for Lifelong Health for Young Children programme and training of facilitators delivering the programme was organized, as a result of which the programme was implemented in 11 municipalities during 2023.	Through this intervention, further scaling up of the Parenting for Lifelong Health for Young Children parenting programme will be supported, as well as its institutionalization in the national system.
School-based social and emotional learning programmes for personal	UNICEF core funds, € 875,000	The action aims to strengthen the capacities of school professionals to support children and adolescents to develop their	Social and emotional learning programmes are among the most powerful mechanisms, when applied from an early age through

Project name (duration)	Donor and budget	Project focus	Difference from/complementarity to the current proposal
growth, social cohesion and prevention of violence UNICEF		social and emotional skills (empathy, tolerance, integrity, team work, gratitude, creativity, flexibility, etc.). Resources for primary and secondary teachers, as well as for parents, have been developed. In 2023, the programme was expanded to include around 120 of the 250 schools in Montenegro.	to adolescence, for encouraging self-awareness, awareness of other people's feelings and attitudes, thus contributing largely to social cohesion and violence prevention.
Reporting Diversity Network Centre for Investigative Journalism 2020–2024	Centre for Investigative Journalism (with partners)	The action aims to activate the role of civil society in countering divisive narratives and replacing them with positive discourse contributing to the values of respect for human rights and respect for diversity. Among other things, it will conduct monitoring of hate speech online.	Will coordinate in connection with tools that monitor hate speech.
Using education to fight hate speech, Centre for Investigative Journalism and partners (2022–ongoing)	Centre for Investigative Journalism and partners	Education of young people and preparation of publications, with preparation of the manual “Fighting Hate Speech – European Standards and Practice”.	The project targets young people with communication material that aims to outline the difference between hate speech and free speech and, in that sense, complements the efforts of this initiative.
STRONG – Media without hatred and misinformation Media Institute 2022–2023	European Union and Ministry of Public administration € 134,859.59	Regional project aims to build media capacities and empower CSOs through media literacy.	It is complementary to this initiative and focuses on media literacy of CSOs. In this sense, it complements but does not duplicate efforts.
Combating hatred and intolerance in Montenegro 2022–2025 Council of Europe	The European Union and the Council of Europe € 400,000	The objective of the action is to increase the awareness of institutions, of civil society and of the population in Montenegro about hatred and intolerance and related European standards, and to develop a harmonized and effective institutional approach to tackling these issues. The expected outcomes are: -institutions show an overall improved record of reforms to combat discrimination, hatred and racism in line with European standards, better addressing the needs of vulnerable groups and minorities;	These two projects will coordinate in order to ensure complementarity and synergies.

Project name (duration)	Donor and budget	Project focus	Difference from/complementarity to the current proposal
		<p>-people in Montenegro become more aware of the negative effects that hate and racism have on the cohesion of society and are enabled to respond to these challenges in the local context;</p> <p>-Montenegrin institutions and civil society organizations improve their awareness and capacity to react to discrimination and hate-motivated incidents and attacks in line with European standards;</p> <p>-institutions and other local stakeholders are aware of the dangers posed by hate speech to the society and their effects in Montenegro and take initial steps to respond to hate speech in a systemic manner.</p>	