Evaluation of GPI project “Addressing social disparity and gender inequality to prevent conflicts in new settlements in Bishkek”

2020

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**ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| AATS | Automated attendance tracking system |
| BHU | Bishkek Humanitarian University |
| DLC | Difficult Life Circumstances |
| FGD | Focus group discussion |
| FGP | Family Group Practitioners |
| ICT | Information and communications technology |
| KAE | Kyrgyz Academy of Education |
| KSMI | Kyrgyz State Medical Institute for Retraining and Further Training |
| LSG | Local Self Government |
| LCPC | Local Crime Prevention Center |
| MoES | Ministry of Education and Science |
| MoH | Ministry of Health |
| MLSD | Ministry of Labor and Social Development |
| MTA | Municipal Territorial Administration |
| NSC | National Statistics Committee |
| PBF | Peace Building Fund |
| PHC | Public Health Committees |
| ROI IPF | The "Roza Otunbayeva Initiative" International Public Foundation |
| UNDP | United Nations Development Program |
| UNFPA | United Nations Population Fund |
| UNICEF | United Nations Children's Fund |
| UNODC | United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime |

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# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. INTRODUCTION, BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

1.1 Introduction

This document presents the results of the Final Evaluation of the project “Addressing social disparity and gender inequality to prevent conflicts in new settlements in Bishkek” (herein referred as to the “Project”) supported by the PBF and managed jointly by UNFPA- UNICEF-UNODC and their 14 partners. The purpose of the evaluation was to assess the extent to which and under what circumstances the project has strengthened peace through improving leadership skills of women, girls and community members and through enhancing partnership with the local service providers, as well as their access to the social services.

The objectives of the evaluation were:

1. To assess the relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, and sustainability of the project’s results
2. To assess the adequacy and quality of partnership/cooperation between different stakeholders and of the use of the UN joint implementation mechanism
3. To identify the extent to which gender mainstreaming and human rights perspectives were incorporated into project’s activities
4. To assess the impact of the project to peacebuilding
5. To identify lessons learnt and capture best practices that could be applied in the future activities and similar project

The evaluation covered the implementation and results of the project during the period January 2018 – December 2019.

It was intended to provide an evaluation of joint project initiatives at community level, at the level of 10 project target new settlements in Bishkek:

1. Ak Ordo MTA №3
2. Ruhiy Muras MTA №6
3. Ak Bata MTA №21
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8. Kalys Ordo MTA №16
9. Jenish MTA №14
10. Kolmo/Bugu Ene Bagysh MTA №14

1.2 Background

The project “Addressing social disparity and gender inequality to prevent conflicts in new settlements in Bishkek” (herein referred as to the “Project”) started its implementation in January 2018 with the aim to *prevent social unrest and associated violence in new settlements of Bishkek resulting from broader triggers and fault lines associated with exclusion and marginalization*. The project was supported by the PBF and managed jointly by UNFPA- UNICEF-UNODC and their 14 partners and had an initial timeline of two years with a budget of USD 1,993,410.00.

The project was implemented in 10 new settlements of Bishkek and was intended to contribute to the implementation of the National Development Strategy of the Kyrgyz Republic between 2018 and 2040, the National Strategy of the Kyrgyz Republic for achieving gender equality until 2020, and the National Plan of Action for achieving gender equality in the Kyrgyz Republic from 2018 through 2020.

The project document outlined two outcomes:

Outcome 1: *Women and girls are more effectively engaged in decision-making and serve as agents of change for local improvements that give citizens a stake in a positive future within their communities.*

Outcome 2: *Relevant state bodies/service providers identify the most vulnerable groups and engage excluded women and girls in inclusive decision-making platforms to increase access to gender-sensitive social services*

The project applied the following inter-linked theory of change:

(1) IF socially marginalized women and girls in new settlements build leadership skills and organize across the community AND they engage in inclusive gender-responsive platforms to amplify women and girl’s voices in claiming their rights as citizens THEN women and girls can contribute to constructive mechanisms to address mounting tensions BECAUSE authorities will take action in response to women-led conflict prevention initiatives AND women and their families in the new settlements will gain a greater sense of belonging and greater confidence in the State.

(2) IF organized voices of women and girls, on behalf of their different family groups and communities in the new settlements effectively engage and coordinate with local authorities, THEN the risk of social tension and conflict will be mitigated BECAUSE women and girls will establish unifying dialogue across fissures in the new settlements, and with local authorities.

1.3 Context

The first new settlements appeared from the 1990s onwards as agricultural reforms and land privatization pushed rural population into the city[[1]](#footnote-2). The most significant number of new settlements occurred after the so-called “Tulip Revolution” of March 2005. Shortage of land and housing, unemployment and poverty drove rural migrant groups to seize vacant plots or to rent low-costing accommodation on the outskirts of Bishkek[[2]](#footnote-3).

According to official data, by the end of 2016, there were 49 new settlements in the capital with a total population of more than 220 thousand people[[3]](#footnote-4), which is a quarter of the total permanent population of Bishkek. According to numerous reports[[4]](#footnote-5), the development of infrastructure in new settlements and living conditions in these settlements cannot be considered as sufficient, prosperous and do not meet the minimum requirements of economic, social and cultural standards.

According to the 2017 Ombudsman special report, the existing contrasts in the socio-economic development of districts create favorable conditions for the growth of social tensions and conflicts and affect the overall security of the city. At the same time, progress in solving above mentioned problems of new settlements over the years of their existence is insignificant, many issues including the availability of basic infrastructure and access to basic social services remain acute despite their systematic coverage in media, publications of non-governmental organizations and annual Ombudsman reports during 2014-2015.

1. METHODOLOGY

The evaluation methodology was qualitative. Given the timing and timeframe of the evaluation, the research team focused on gathering experience through three basic research methods: desk research, focused group discussions, and in-depth interviews.

Desk research was based on existing project’s documentation, secondary information and statistical data related to the subject. The list of shared documents included IRF project document, project’s logical framework, PBF progress reports, baseline and endline reports, Peace and Conflict analysis report, FGP’s needs assessment report, NSC Victimization report, project’s booklets, training materials, and output harvesting forms. Additional relevant documents were identified in the course of interviews with project’s partners and relevant staff of UNFPA, UNICEF and UNODC.

Overall 8 FGDs were conducted in the framework of the evaluation. FGDs were formed not by their linkage to the target communities, but in accordance to their group affiliation and experience/expertise. In this line, the evaluation team has conducted 3 FGDs with the service providers and 5 FGDs with representatives of the general population.

Twenty eight semi-structured interviews (face-to-face and telephone) with key informants (86% women): representatives of UN agencies, implementing partners (IP), governmental officials and project participants (see Appendix 1 for the list of interviewees). and project participants (see Appendix 1 for the list of interviewees). The list of interviewees was developed and validated with the project’s implementing agencies and partners.

1. EVALUATION FINDINGS

3.1 Relevance

Based on stakeholder interviews, focus group discussions, and review of project’s documents, there is compelling evidence that the project is extremely consistent with and tailored to the needs and expectations of final beneficiaries and partners. The opinion of representatives of all implementing partners and beneficiaries of the project is that the project is timely since it allowed preventing social tensions from escalating into a violent conflict against the state and local authorities though the creation of multi-stakeholder platforms for dialogue about what community problems need immediate reaction and what interventions are most appropriate to address these issues.

All interventions were formulated, designed, and implemented on the basis of a series of needs assessments meetings with local population in new settlements. The needs assessments were carried out in project’s target new settlements at least twice: by youth and women activists.

The project’s interventions have a firm foundation in a wide range of surveys and assessments that have informed the design and implementation of activities to meet the needs and expectations of beneficiaries and partners. Thus, some of the initiatives were also based on the results of Peace and Conflict Analysis prepared in the framework of the project.

Project’s initiatives were closely aligned with key national development strategies, including the National Development Strategy of the Kyrgyz Republic for 2018-2040, the National Strategy on Gender Equality for 2012-2020, the National Action Plan on Gender Equality for 2018-2020, the concept for a Youth Policy in Kyrgyzstan for 2020-2030, the Concept of the National Digital Transformation Program “Digital Kyrgyzstan” for 2019-2023. The project activities are also strongly reflective of global priorities, including the SDGs and UNSC Resolution 1325.

3.2 Effectiveness

In general, the targets set to achieve the planned outputs and overall outcomes have been met.

It was initially planned to conduct a Peace and Conflict Analysis (PCA) that would be used to inform all project components and interventions as well as to identify agents of change in the new settlements. The PCA report was produced with the delay when most activities were already planned and started. However, several meetings were organized to tailor project interventions in 2019 with the results of PCA among IPs and UN agencies.

One of the major barriers in projects implementation was high turnover rate of governmental and local officials. Another problem faced concerned the mobility and working conditions of the community population.

There is no measured empirical evidence to claim that the project’s interventions change the dynamics of power in relationships between duty-bearers and right-holders. Despite the fact that the baseline and end-line studies revealed that the local authorities became more open to local initiatives and people were generally more satisfied with the social services, many representatives of implementing partners pointed out that it was too early to make empirical assessments on this regards and more work on professional development of local authorities was needed.

3.3 Efficiency

Whilst the purpose of the project is relevant to solving the problems in new settlements, the timeframe in which to do so was grossly inadequate. The project timeframe, however, was beyond control of implementing agencies. Due to the magnitude and scale and the deep-rooted nature of the children’s, youth, and women’s lack of empowerment problem in Kyrgyzstan, it does not appear that the project is sufficiently designed to fully address the structural and institutional root causes of inequality.

One of the most productive results of the project was that the implementing partners and beneficiaries were able to mobilize additional funding to support their initiatives. For example, women and youth activities raised money through crowdfunding and received stimulation grant from the City Development Agency. Some initiatives were funded from the City plan budget and some were included in the 2020 budget. Overall, the activists accumulated more than $14 000 from 10 communities and more than $17 000 from the Mayor’s Office for their activities.

Flexibility in the project management has allowed implementing partners to assume ownership and leadership for results achievement. It allowed to identify and respond to the emerging needs on time and overcome obstacles in project implementation.

A number of innovative monitoring procedures were used to track the progress such as Outcome harvesting; Matrix of results, Lessons learned exercises. However, not all implementing partners used such tools.

3.4 Partnerships and Cooperation

Regular coordination meetings with all relevant stakeholders (representatives of governmental and local authorities, community activists and general population) were held quarterly (at least once in 3 months) during which the partners reported about their achievements and learned about the progress of other organizations. These coordination meetings allowed to harmonize the project implementation plan and reduce the overburdening of project stakeholders who were involved in multiple project initiatives.

Bishkek City Mayor’s Office has been actively involved in coordination and supported all project’s initiatives.

All partners agreed that despite the fact that the project involved many implementing partners who worked on different spheres of community development, the project team was able to build efficient mechanism of cooperation and partnership. The following partnership principles were used:

* Setting clear objective: stakeholders reported that clear objectives were set from the very outset of the project.
* Combining most effective initiatives: Establishing successful partnership with competent stakeholders with whom they continue to work on other interventions increased the effectiveness of cooperation. Partnership was built on four fronts: developing agencies, government, civil society and local population. There is also evidence that the collaborations and partnerships established during the course of the project are continuing.
* Effective communication strategy: communication and public relations intended to build cooperative mechanisms between the project partners and to help to involve broader audience.

There are some missed opportunities in a joint communication strategy that would help to strengthen partnership and have better visibility of the project achievements. Communicating as One project could facilitate teamed-up strategic dialogue with national partners as well as provide better shared and clear understanding of the project goals of the project. For example, only few stakeholders used one project hashtag (#Yntymaktuu Konushtar) but the use of it was also not on a systematic and consistent basis. Some initiatives were perceived as initiatives of a particular organization or development agency.

3.5 Human rights and gender

The project had positive results in promoting active and meaningful participation by all stakeholders, identification and exploration of the existing inequalities, forms of discrimination, violations of law and human rights needs via the victimization survey, needs assessments, situation analysis, peace and conflict analysis, inter-disciplinary and community meetings and etc.

The project activities were formulated and carried out by the children, youth, and women activists in close cooperation with local authorities. Involving most vulnerable groups of community population such as children, youth, and women is a human rights issue. Involving children, youth, and women fulfills the right to be involved in decision-making and recognizes their full citizenship. Engaging youth encourages children, youth, and women to become active community members who will be more likely to vote and be engaged in the democratic process[[5]](#footnote-6)

3.6 Sustainability

Sustainability was one of the most challenging subjects within the project. This was due to the high turnover among service providers. Thus, turnover was an issue for the partners in all components of the current project where the trained social pedagogues, medical staff, police officers, and etc. were leaving their positions. This is due to low income, and high emotional burnout among helping profession workers, failure to retain and transfer institutional knowledge (when employees leave, the knowledge and memory is also lost), high frustration and uncertainty and no clear responsibilities and roles, low level of cooperation among the interdisciplinary teams. Nevertheless, the evaluation team found extensive evidence, where the project’s support for its partners has contributed to implementing partner sense of ownership and good prospects for long-term effects.

Despite these evidences, it is difficult to state that the measures that were taken within the project are ensuring that gains are sustainable. There are a number of factors that go beyond the project control, such as vulnerabilities associated with violence, conflict, political and social instability, as well as high turnover among duty-bearers. In addition, the state planning, budgeting is not flexible and not secured. There is also a risk in regards to managing and maintaining the assets and equipment. There is no guarantee how the equipment, repaired offices, office furniture, interactive map will be updated, maintained.

3.7 Impact to peacebuilding

As the current project was funded by UN PBF the research team referred to the PBF 2017-2019 Strategic Plan in order to evaluate the project’s impact on peacebuilding. The PBF Strategic Plan aimed at contributing to sustaining peace and expanding its support from “exclusively post conflict instrument to support preventive action and focus on root causes as well as peacebuilding.”[[6]](#footnote-7) In addressing these priority areas PBF focuses on “inclusion, access, equality and rights, as the key elements relevant to 2030 Agenda. The priority areas of the current projects that are in line with the focus of PBF are as following:

* Dialogue and coexistence: building and/or strengthening national capacity to promote peaceful coexistence and non-violent resolution of conflicts – this may include democratic governance and conflict prevention and management measures and policies.
* Peace dividends: supporting efforts to generate immediate peace dividends for the population at large, in this case provision of equitable access to social services.
* Re-establishment of basic services: re-establishing essential administrative services and related human and technical capacities.

3.8 Good practices and lessons learned

Lessons learned:

* It was initially planned to conduct a Peace and Conflict Analysis (PCA) that would be used to inform all project components and interventions as well as to identify agents of change in the new settlements. The PCA report was produced with the delay when most activities were already planned and started. It is important to secure time sufficient not only to conduct the research that would serve as the base for all project activities but also enough time should be allocated to the discussion of the research results.
* Electronic single/common database is still missing, though paper-based registry with digitalized recording and reporting forms was established to track the most vulnerable children and to monitor progress of his/her status of being in DLC at the level of school, social protection and health. The absence of such a common e-database leaves some children behind and does not facilitate the work of the interdisciplinary team to monitor the referral system and track whether the child in DLC received the needed support and help. The process of creation of the national electronic database of children in DLC has started and is led by Vice Prime Minister.
* Before integrating any initiatives that are addressing the system level problems it is crucial to include in the training and development process the decision-makers from each relevant ministry or agency. Without the inclusion and involvement, it is difficult to integrate the new developments from the bottom or middle levels. Thus, there were difficulties in integration of the developments done within the education, social protection components that requested approbation and up-scaling. But without the support of the decision-makers these activities were not able to go beyond just information and training level – not being able to be institutionalized and make changes at the system level.

Best practice:

One of the methods that was unique for this project is that it was promoting inclusive approach at different levels among different stakeholders. This was done during the organization of the regular meetings among the implementing partners and the agencies, series of meetings were organized with the LSG at all stages of the project, beneficiaries of the project were participating in the implementation of diverse initiatives together with the representatives of LSG, beneficiaries were participating during the assessments of the needs, as well as the development of protocols, and other documents. Adherence to this inclusive approach allowed building shared leadership and arranging networks at horizontal level among different groups within the community and LSG.

The project’s interventions have a firm foundation in a wide range of needs assessment meetings conducted by community activists with the help of IPs as well as large scale research such as Peace and Conflict Analysis, Victimization survey, and Health Behavior in School-Aged Children study.

The implementing partners and Agencies designed their initiatives in line with the national priorities and used them as a motivation mechanism to ensure active participation of the duty-bearers.

According to the implementing partners as well as partners from LSG one of the most useful and innovative solutions that were provided to the target communities were ICT solutions that were intended to address at least two crucial root causes of social tensions in suburban areas: dissatisfaction with social services and low trust to state and municipal authorities. These ICT solutions included Interactive Maps, Automated attendance tracking system (AATS), E-registry of new primary entrants, and “My community policing officer” mobile application.

1. RECOMMENDATIONS

Policy Level Recommendations

* Review the system of rewarding and promoting employees to improve the retention rate of civil servants. High turnover rate in different level of governance was not only recognized as the main barrier in project implementation but also poses serious challenge to service delivery and economic growth in the country[[7]](#footnote-8). The policy recommendations on how to enhance retention should be based on the analysis of the factors causing employee turnover in the public service.
* Review the existing political, legislative, and regulatory frameworks, for provisions that may hinder the introduction of public security work. For this, sufficient support is necessary to change the emphasis of the public policies away from considering the police, courts, and prisons to be the primary mechanisms for reducing crime and promote community-based efforts in crime prevention that proved to be effective in the framework of the current project.

Donor Level Recommendations

* Provide adequate time for implementation of such ambitious, multi-stakeholder and system/institution-based interventions. Participatory approach to project design requires lengthy preparatory phase during which community mobilizers work with community groups to help them identify their needs, priorities and to develop a joined plan of activities.

Project Level Recommendations

* Continue working with government and partner institutions that were involved in the project to develop plans to mainstream best practices and lessons learned within the institutions and across networks.
* The joint communication strategy needs to be developed and agreed upon by all project partners (including representatives of relevant ministries) at the beginning of project implementation to improve corporate communication. This communication strategy needs to address the needs of all project team members and improve overall project visibility.
* The joint monitoring plan should be developed with participation of all project stakeholders (including representatives of relevant ministries) at the beginning of the project to ensure that all parties understand the process, prepare their monitoring report in one unified format and contribute to the finalization of joint monitoring report to donor organizations. The baseline-endline studies and other monitoring assessments should be designed to measure the direct influence of the project interventions and control for the effects of other projects.

# INTRODUCTION, BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

## 1.1 Introduction

This document presents the results of the Final Evaluation of the project “Addressing social disparity and gender inequality to prevent conflicts in new settlements in Bishkek” (herein referred as to the “Project”) supported by the PBF and managed jointly by UNFPA- UNICEF-UNODC and their 14 partners. The purpose of the evaluation was to assess the extent to which and under what circumstances the project has strengthened peace through improving leadership skills of women, girls and community members and through enhancing partnership with the local service providers, as well as their access to the social services.

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## 1.2 Background

The project “Addressing social disparity and gender inequality to prevent conflicts in new settlements in Bishkek” (herein referred as to the “Project”) started its implementation in January 2018 with the aim to *prevent social unrest and associated violence in new settlements of Bishkek resulting from broader triggers and fault lines associated with exclusion and marginalization*. The project was supported by the PBF and managed jointly by UNFPA- UNICEF-UNODC and their 14 partners and had an initial timeline of two years with a budget of USD 1,993,410.00.

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The project document outlined two outcomes:

Outcome 1: *Women and girls are more effectively engaged in decision-making and serve as agents of change for local improvements that give citizens a stake in a positive future within their communities.*

Outcome 2: *Relevant state bodies/service providers identify the most vulnerable groups and engage excluded women and girls in inclusive decision-making platforms to increase access to gender-sensitive social services*

The project applied the following inter-linked theory of change:

(1) IF socially marginalized women and girls in new settlements build leadership skills and organize across the community AND they engage in inclusive gender-responsive platforms to amplify women and girl’s voices in claiming their rights as citizens THEN women and girls can contribute to constructive mechanisms to address mounting tensions BECAUSE authorities will take action in response to women-led conflict prevention initiatives AND women and their families in the new settlements will gain a greater sense of belonging and greater confidence in the State.

(2) IF organized voices of women and girls, on behalf of their different family groups and communities in the new settlements effectively engage and coordinate with local authorities, THEN the risk of social tension and conflict will be mitigated BECAUSE women and girls will establish unifying dialogue across fissures in the new settlements, and with local authorities.

Under outcome 1, the aim of the project was (1) to develop women's and girls' skills to build social partnership with LSG to initiate community projects and engage in constructive advocacy and (2) to improve management capacity of community groups representing and involving women and girls.

The following key activities were supported to achieve these results:

* Participatory, gender-responsive peace and conflict analysis, and victimization survey
* Capacity building of adult and young women to develop and implement community led initiatives and social media outreach
* Capacity building program for Women’s Committees to represent the interest of women and girls, and strengthening of security and conflict resolution in the new settlements
* Institutional capacity strengthening and building of the Public Health Committees (PHC) in order to facilitate women’s access to health care in new settlements

In addition to the capacity building of women and youth and community based organizations, under outcome 2, the project has equipped service providers (1) with innovative registration processes and tools to identify the most vulnerable groups and (2) with better skills to provide integrated equitable conflict and gender-sensitive social services to women, children, and adolescents.

The following activities were supported to reach the results:

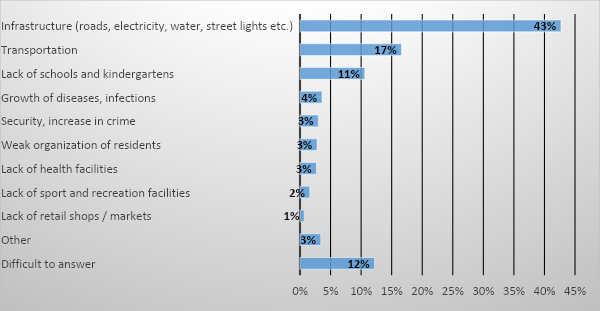
* Support of local authorities in gender and conflict sensitive analysis as well as developing innovative tools for identification of vulnerability and disparities in selected new settlements
* Innovative solutions for the new settlement population registry and development of a system for tracking the quality and efficiency of the identification, reference and case management for those in need of social support
* Ensuring equitable access to school education for those who are out of school and at risk of dropout, particularly adolescent girls
* After-school life skills and sports programs, which bring together family, school and community to increase well-being and build capacities to promote non-violent relationships of girls, boys and families, in order to address grievances
* Strengthening of the network of primary healthcare providers in settlements and outreach on available medical services and related procedures for emergency aid
* Capacity building of local authorities and law enforcement bodies to deliver community-oriented policing services that are professional, conflict and gender-sensitive and inclusive
* The provision of legal aid to women and other vulnerable groups

## 1.3 Context

The first new settlements appeared from the 1990s onwards as agricultural reforms and land privatization pushed rural population into the city[[8]](#footnote-9). The most significant number of new settlements occurred after the so-called “Tulip Revolution” of March 2005. Shortage of land and housing, unemployment and poverty drove rural migrant groups to seize vacant plots or to rent low-costing accommodation on the outskirts of Bishkek[[9]](#footnote-10).

According to official data, by the end of 2016, there were 49 new settlements in the capital with a total population of more than 220 thousand people[[10]](#footnote-11), which is a quarter of the total permanent population of Bishkek. According to numerous reports[[11]](#footnote-12), the development of infrastructure in new settlements and living conditions in these settlements cannot be considered as sufficient, prosperous and do not meet the minimum requirements of economic, social and cultural standards. Thus, for example, a survey conducted in new settlements by SIAR Research & Consulting together with the Expert Consulting Agency in 2014[[12]](#footnote-13) A revealed that 43% of residents identified a lack of infrastructure in new settlements as one of the most important problems. 17% of respondents mentioned the problem of transportation because often public transportation does not reach their place of living. 11% of respondents noted that the absence of schools and kindergartens are a problem. Due to a lack of registration systems, most of the residents of new settlements cannot send their children to schools (Figure 1).

*Figure 1. Problems faced by residents of new settlements*



Many residential buildings in new settlements are located in areas that are not safe to live in. Security of residence also remains as one of the significant problems for residents since many buildings were built on illegally occupied land plots and they are not still registered and legalized. Some families need state support since they are at constant risk of eviction.

New settlements are often depicted in public media as «time bomb» that can explode any time due to the increasing social tension that originated from several triggers such as land disputes, limited access to water, and other scarce resources[[13]](#footnote-14). According to Sanghera[[14]](#footnote-15) the city administration lacks sufficient capacity to meet the demands of population in new settlements “...often resorting to rhetorical promises to placate them. Empty rhetoric, however, has often only fueled a cycle of further anger, resentment, distrust, and protests”[[15]](#footnote-16). Thus, for example, Heathershaw stated in 2012: “Of around 500 protests which have taken place in Bishkek this year approximately 50% were of a social-economic character, usually demanding the provision of basic utilities and services. Many of these protests – including some of the largest – involved groups from the new settlements on the edges of Bishkek”.[[16]](#footnote-17)

According to the 2017 Ombudsman special report, the existing contrasts in the socio-economic development of districts create favorable conditions for the growth of social tensions and conflicts and affect the overall security of the city. At the same time, progress in solving above mentioned problems of new settlements over the years of their existence is insignificant, many issues including the availability of basic infrastructure and access to basic social services remain acute despite their systematic coverage in media, publications of non-governmental organizations and annual Ombudsman reports during 2014-2015.

# METHODOLOGY

The evaluation examined the expected outcomes and outputs outlined in the logical framework and reviewed the overall coherence of interventions carried out in the framework of the project.

Logical framework

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Project’s outcomes** | **Project’s outputs** |
| **Outcome 1:** Women and girls are more effectively engaged in decision-making and serve as agents of change for local improvements that give citizens a stake in a positive future within their communities. | **Output 1.1:** Women and girls acquire skills to build social partnerships with local authorities to initiate projects and engage in constructive advocacy campaigns with stakeholders |
| **Output 1.2:** Community groups representing and involving women and girls improve their ability to govern in order to promote women's empowerment and equal access to services |
| **Outcome 2:** Relevant state bodies/service providers identify the most vulnerable groups and engage excluded women and girls in inclusive decision-making platforms to increase access to gender-sensitive social services | **Output 2.1:** Innovative processes and tools to identify the most vulnerable groups are available in selected new settlements  Note: by “innovative” we understand processes and tools that were introduced for the first time in the setting within the framework of the project. |
| **Output 2.2:** Education, health, social workers, law enforcement and legal professionals gain better skills, tools and opportunities to deliver conflict-sensitive, gender-sensitive, integrated and equitable social services to women, children and adolescents in new settlements |

## Evaluation Questions

Overall 30 questions were included across the 8 different dimensions.

*Relevance*

1. To what extent were the design of the intervention and its results relevant to the needs and priorities of the beneficiaries?
2. To what extent is the intervention consistent with key national development strategies, including in the area of peacebuilding, gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls?
3. How relevant the TOC and assumptions of the project in practice?
4. Does the geographical selection of pilot areas effectively support the programme objectives?

*Effectiveness*

1. To what extent have the expected results of the project been achieved on both outcome and output levels (according to the results framework)?
2. What are the reasons for the achievement or non-achievement of the project results? Has the project achieved any unforeseen results, either positive or negative? For whom? What are the good practices and the obstacles or shortcomings encountered? How were the obstacles overcome and are there recommendations for how the good practices could be scaled-up?
3. How well did the intervention succeed in involving and building the capacities of rights-holders, duty-bearers as well as the project partners?
4. To what extent have the strategies and approaches been innovative for achieving project results?
5. Was there any measurable impact of the programme intervention on the target groups on both outcome and output levels?
6. To what extent is the programme changing the dynamics of power in relationships between duty bearers (local authority, healthcare, security and education providers, social workers, *kvartal’nye*) and right holders (children, youth, active women)?

*Efficiency*

1. Have resources (financial, human, technical support, etc.) been allocated strategically to achieve the project outcomes?
2. To what extent does the management structure of the intervention support efficiency for programme implementation and achievement of results?
3. To what extent are the monitoring mechanisms in place effective in measuring and informing management of the project performance and progress towards the targets?
4. To what extent was the monitoring data objectively used for management action and decision-making?
5. What strategies and approaches were used in order to achieve project objectives?

*Partnerships and Cooperation*

1. To what extent were stakeholders properly engaged and informed?
2. To what extent the project implementation took into consideration and benefited from the UN joint implementation mechanism?
3. What kind of partnership mechanisms were in place and how effective were they?

*Human rights and gender*

1. To what extent are human rights considerations included in the project development and implementation?
2. To what extent are gender considerations included in the project development and implementation?

*Sustainability*

1. What is the likelihood that the benefits from the project will be maintained for at least 5 years after the project phase out?
2. To what extent the intervention succeeded in building individual and institutional capacities of rights-holders and duty-bearers to ensure sustainability of benefits?
3. How effectively has the project generated national ownership of the results achieved, established partnerships with relevant stakeholders and developed national capacities to ensure sustainability of efforts and benefits?
4. To what extent has the exit strategy been well planned and successfully implemented?

*Impact to peacebuilding*

1. What is the impact of the project to peacebuilding?
2. What is the impact of the involvement of local leaders, youth, women and communities to sustain peace in the target new settlements?
3. How did working with the service providers affect the peace in the target new settlements?
4. To what extent has the project been catalytic in addressing some of the root causes of conflicts, tensions and gender and other inequalities?

*Lessons learned and best practice*

1. What are the lessons learnt from the completed project?
2. What are the best practices that could be applied in the future activities and similar projects?

## Data collection and analysis tools

The evaluation methodology was qualitative. Given the timing and timeframe of the evaluation, the research team focused on gathering experience through three basic research methods: desk research, focused group discussions, and in-depth interviews.

### Desk research: review of documents and secondary data.

Desk research was based on existing project’s documentation, secondary information and statistical data related to the subject. The list of shared documents included IRF project document, project’s logical framework, PBF progress reports, baseline and endline reports, Peace and Conflict analysis report, FGP’s needs assessment report, NSC Victimization report, project’s booklets, training materials, and output harvesting forms. Additional relevant documents were identified in the course of interviews with project’s partners and relevant staff of UNFPA, UNICEF and UNODC.

### Focus group discussions (FGDs).

Overall 8 FGDs were conducted in the framework of the evaluation. FGDs were formed not by their linkage to the target communities, but in accordance to their group affiliation and experience/expertise. In this line, the evaluation team has conducted 3 FGDs with the service providers and 5 FGDs with representatives of the general population.

Focus group discussion with duty bearers/service providers examined the experience of service providers in the relevant project’s activities and their evaluation of the relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, and sustainability of the project’s results. The FGDs were conducted with the following categories of service providers: social pedagogues, MTA and neighborhood committee representatives.

Focus group discussion with representatives of community population explored the beneficiaries’ attitudes on service provisions in their commutes and on the existing triggers of conflict in their communities in order to identify which peacebuilding triggers were addressed by the project and which are still remaining. In total, 5 FGDs were undertaken with key groups of beneficiaries, including: women activists in one settlement, young activists in two settlements, and school students in two schools.

While conducting FGDs in the communities the evaluation team was sensitive to involve target groups separately (children, youth, women, etc.), as they could freely express their opinions. 2 focus groups were conducted with young people and school children: one with those who were involved in activities implemented by the project and one - with those who were not involved in project measures. Such breakdown allowed to triangulate / verify the data collected through different methods.

During recruitment, the potential respondents were given information about the evaluation and their rights as participants. The research team contacted individuals who gave their initial informed consent to participate in the survey. In case of FGDs with children, the informed consent was sought first from parents for child participation in FGDs with the help of the schoolteachers and then the researchers sought to obtain assent from a child.

All respondents were selected through the non-probability sampling strategy, namely, availability (convenience) sampling method with the help of project representatives and community activists. The size of groups within FGDs varied from 5 to 12 participants. On average, the focus group discussions lasted 70 minutes. Refreshments and snacks were provided during the discussions.

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### In-depth interviews

Twenty eight semi-structured interviews (face-to-face and telephone) with key informants (86% women): representatives of UN agencies, implementing partners (IP), governmental officials and project participants (see Appendix 1 for the list of interviewees). The list of interviewees was developed and validated with the project’s implementing agencies and partners.

The interviews were guided by an interview guide based on the approved inception report. The research team started interviews with responsible staff of UN agencies that provided a thorough overview of the initiatives that were carried out under their supervision and guidance. Later implementing partners have shared with more detailed information about their projects. The shortest interview lasted 30 minutes whereas the longest lasted for 4 hours and the average time for the interview was about 105 minutes.

For the in-depth interviews selection of respondents were carried out with the means of judgment sampling. Only those informants with high level of knowledge and competence about project’s activities were invited to participate in the evaluation. The list of eligible candidates for interviews were compiled and validated with the project’s partners.

The main data collection period was carried out in November and December, 2019, the end of the fiscal year that coincided with reporting and accounting period for the most of the project’s stakeholders and participants. This constituted difficulties and resulted in delays with the data collection and analysis phases.

**General ethical rules**

The research team strictly adhered to ethical research principles and practices during the data collection process.

During recruitment and at the beginning of the interview or FGD, researchers informed respondents about

1. the purpose of the evaluation,
2. who conducts evaluation,
3. how the information would be used,
4. how the information would be stored,
5. the duration of the interview or discussion,
6. the guarantee of confidentiality of information and the fact that their names would not be indicated in the reports.

In addition, the respondents were informed about the voluntary nature of their participation and that their decision whether to participate, including dissent or unwillingness to participate, was respected. Participants were informed that consent was negotiable and that they could withdraw at any point without any negative consequences. The interviewer obtained explicit oral consent from participants to publish a final report from the research. The interview and FGDs were conducted only with those individuals who gave their verbal informed consent to participate after they have received the above information about the study.

All field notes, researchers’ memos and audio recordings were securely stored and coded in a way that the respondents were not identifiable. Once the final evaluation report is submitted and accepted, the researchers would delete all collected data from their computers.

**Limitations**

The evaluation faced the following limitations:

* The evaluation may have a positive bias as most interviewees and respondents to the evaluation were active members of project’s initiatives.
* Not all stakeholders were able or willing to participate in the final evaluation. Several interviews were not conducted due to respondents being too busy, high level of turnover among some of the stakeholders such as MTA, KSMI, Mayor Hall, Ministries.

**Structure of the Report**

Following this introduction, Chapter 2 presents the main findings of evaluation and lessons learned are discussed in Chapter 3; lastly, Chapter 4 illustrates conclusions and recommendations.

# EVALUATION FINDINGS

This section presents the main evaluation findings for each specific EQ (Evaluation question). As explained, these findings are based on a desk-review of relevant documents; semi-structured interviews (face-to-face and telephone) with key project’s stakeholders; and FGDs with duty bearers/service providers and with representatives of community population

### 3.1 Relevance

**EQ 1. To what extent were the design of the intervention and its results relevant to the needs and priorities of the beneficiaries?**

Based on stakeholder interviews, focus group discussions, and review of project’s documents, there is compelling evidence that the project is extremely consistent with and tailored to the needs and expectations of final beneficiaries and partners. The opinion of representatives of all implementing partners and beneficiaries of the project is that the project is timely since it allowed preventing social tensions from escalating into a violent conflict against the state and local authorities though the creation of multi-stakeholder platforms for dialogue about what community problems need immediate reaction and what interventions are most appropriate to address these issues.

*There are leaders and youth groups in new settlements who know how to mobilize the local population, how to assess their needs and how to communicate and work together with local authority. It is very important to have a dialogue and not to protest against them.*

All project's participants indicated that conflict potential among community residents (for example, land disputes) and violence against state and local authorities in these settlements was high and fueled by limited access to basic social services and increasing distrust in local authorities. According to the representatives of local authority, they operate with a limited budget that is not sufficient to address very urgent issues in new settlements, and under such conditions they have to be more productive. However, the demands of residents are constantly increasing, and more residents are becoming unhappy and believe that the local authority was not doing more to respond to their complaints. Therefore, according to the opinions of project’s implementing partners, it is becoming more important than ever that local authorities empower local people and make them less dependent on them as a main source of assistance by sharing with residents the responsibility for improving the social and economic conditions in their community and encouraging them to do more for themselves.

The research conducted beyond the scope of the present project on the role of women and youth in decision making process at community level revealed that women and youth in Kyrgyzstan are rarely involved in such processes[[17]](#footnote-18). The gap between the local authority and women as well as young residents resulted in a lack of self-confidence in their ability to improve the situation in their communities and forced people to channel their energy toward more destructive behavior such as participation in violence against state, political unrest and extremist actions[[18]](#footnote-19). To address this problem, the project equipped local authorities with necessary skills on how to develop effective partnership with the vulnerable groups of the local population and facilitated the opportunity for women and youth to assume leadership roles and gain skills and practical experience in changing the life in their communities.

All interventions were formulated, designed, and implemented on the basis of a series of needs assessments meetings with local population in new settlements. The needs assessments were carried out in project’s target new settlements at least twice: by youth and women activists.

The project’s interventions have a firm foundation in a wide range of surveys and assessments that have informed the design and implementation of activities to meet the needs and expectations of beneficiaries and partners. Thus, some of the initiatives were also based on the results of Peace and Conflict Analysis prepared in the framework of the project. In the interviews, however, few respondents have mentioned that the Peace and Conflict Analysis (PCA) was disseminated late when the majority of their activities were already planned. It should be noted here, however, that several meetings were organized to tailor project interventions in 2019 with the results of PCA among IPs and UN agencies.

All of the interventions were designed based on the results of situational analysis studies that were conducted by all implementing partners. Information for the analysis was collected from various groups of the general population in new settlements, local authorities, neighborhood committee’s representativesand representatives of authorities at different levels. In most of the activities, the beneficiaries themselves identified the key issues and developed a plan on how these issues have to be addressed. These measures demonstrate the use of inclusive approach and participation in decision-making.

Most of the project’s activities went beyond the territories of the new settlements and were conducted in all raions of Bishkek. This was an informed decision since, according to the in-depth interviews, most of the activities required systemic changes. Thus, for example, the project aimed to employ the community policing approach that proved to be successful in one of the raions of Bishkek. The concept of community policing assumes close relationships between community residents and law enforcement that enables to prevent crimes and to promote community safety.

**EQ2. To what extent is the intervention consistent with key national development strategies, including in the area of peacebuilding, gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls?**

The Project is well aligned and coherent with the key national development strategies, including in the area of peacebuilding, gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls.

In particular, project’s initiatives were closely aligned with key national development strategies, including the National Development Strategy of the Kyrgyz Republic for 2018-2040 that prioritizes human capital development, and stresses on the importance of people’s initiatives to develop their own communities.

By developing women and youth leadership, the project contributes to the realization of National Strategy on Gender Equality for 2012-2020, the National Action Plan on Gender Equality for 2018-2020, and the concept for a Youth Policy in Kyrgyzstan for 2020-2030.

The introduction of innovative registration process and tools to identify the most vulnerable groups, development of Interactive Map and other ICT tools produced in the framework of the project are in line with the Concept of the National Digital Transformation Program “Digital Kyrgyzstan” for 2019-2023.

The project activities are also strongly reflective of global priorities, including National Action Plan on Implementation of UNSCR 1325 for the period 2018-2020 approved with the Government Decree 334-p on 21 September 2018. The key directions of the NAP are strengthening participation of women in decision-making processes relating to sustaining peace, and strengthening interaction of local governments and civil society in preventing conflicts and risks of violence against women and girls. The project simulates residents of the new settlements to analyze, plan, advocate and resolve priority issues in their communities in close cooperation with LSG. Such initiatives result in social services improvement and effective ways of handling grievances of community residents.

Since the project simulates residents of the new settlements to participate in the process of analysis, planning and solution of their priority issues, it contributes to the implementation of the “Concept of the development of Bishkek City till 2025.

The shift to community policing is enshrined in a number of official documents such as the Law of the Kyrgyz Republic “On crime prevention in the Kyrgyz Republic” and the Regulation on collaborative mechanism of relationship between the Department of the Interior with Civil Society Institutions (PPKR of 30 July 2015 No547). The design of the communication strategy for outreach in new settlements was in line with the Decree of the Government of the Kyrgyz Republic “On the mechanisms of interaction between the internal affairs bodies of the Kyrgyz Republic and civil society institutions,” as well as Emergency Measures Plan to Prevent Abuse and Violence against Children for 2019-2020. The activities of Women’s committees and Crime Prevention Centers are enshrined in the Law of the Kyrgyz Republic “On protection from family violence” and Law of the Kyrgyz Republic No. 179 of Nov. 17, 2016, on Amending Legislative Acts of the Kyrgyz Republic (Family Code of KR, Criminal Code of KR.

From the national level perspective, the health care initiatives are in line with the decree No. 371 of the Ministry of Health of the Kyrgyz Republic dated May 21, 2018.

Case management related activities were conducted in accordance with the State decree #391 “On the procedure for identifying children and families in difficult life situations”[[19]](#footnote-20) dated on 22 June 2015. One of the cores implementing partners of UNICEF Kyrgyzstan in this initiative was Center for Social and Psychological Counseling, Trainings and Education “Umut” within BHU. The “Umut” center has a team of specialists/trainers who had previous experience of working with UNICEF on case management scheme for children and families in difficult life situations.

**EQ3. How relevant the TOC and assumptions of the project in practice?**

All stakeholders acknowledged that the theory of change was relevant for all communities and that it became the basis for articulating the project’s strategy. According to one stakeholder the theory of change was relevant, however difficult to be achieved and to show tangible results in less than 2 years. Implementing partners had only 1 year and 1 month for education component, whereas the changes required system level interventions that take more time and resources.

The results of the Baseline Survey and the Peace and Conflict Analysis confirmed the assumption of the project and revealed that lack of documents for houses, distrust of people towards government and police, low satisfaction of people on social services and absence of dialogue platforms remain important in new settlements.

**EQ4. Does the geographical selection of pilot areas effectively support the program objectives?**

According to the opinions of the most project’s stakeholders, the geographical selection of pilot areas effectively supported the project’s objectives. In addition, research conducted by a number of scholars and practitioners confirmed that the population in new settlements are social excluded and continues to constitute a source of conflict in Kyrgyzstan. Victimization and Peace and Conflict Analysis showed that women and girls in new settlements constitute particularly vulnerable group of population who are denied their rights to participate fully in social, economic and political life in their communities. Compared to other parts of Bishkek, they are more likely to experience domestic violence; to feel insecure in their communities, and their access to public services is more limited. Under such conditions, women and girls are easily vulnerable to manipulation of informal women groups organized into mob-like structures that promote intolerance and dissent.

The sites were selected jointly with the Mayor's Office based on the criteria, which was agreed and shared with UN agencies. Since implementing partners were selected after the selection of project sites, some representatives of implementing partners could not explain how and why the new settlements were selected.

### 3.2 Effectiveness

**EQ5. To what extent have the expected results of the project been achieved on both outcome and output levels (according to the results framework)?**

Based on stakeholder interviews, focus group discussions, review of program documents and indicators, it is evident that, in general, the targets set to achieve the planned outputs and overall outcomes have been met.

Outcome 1 - Women and girls are more effectively engaged in decision making and serve as agents of change for local improvements that give citizens a stake in a positive future within their communities.

*Output 1.1. Women and girls gain skills to build social partnership with local authorities to initiate community projects and engage in constructive advocacy with stakeholders*

*Output 1.2. – Community groups representing and involving women and girls improve their management capacity to promote women empowerment and equal access to services*

It was initially planned to conduct a Peace and Conflict Analysis (PCA) that would be used to inform all project components and interventions as well as to identify agents of change in the new settlements. The PCA report was produced with the delay when most activities were already planned and started. The delay in submitting the PCA report was due mainly to the fact that it took more time to collect and analyze the data. As was mentioned earlier, that several meetings were organized to tailor project interventions in 2019 with the results of PCA among IPs and UN agencies.

Through training and mentorship program, the project allowed the development skills of more than 160 local adolescents, youth, and women activists to assess and prioritize the needs of local population, to collect necessary information and to develop program that tackle identified problems, design and carry out advocacy campaign strategy and report about their activities to all relevant stakeholders (Output 1.1.).

The capacity of community groups that represent and involve children, women, and young people is strengthened and enabled them to promote women's empowerment and equal access to services more effectively (Output 1.2.). Thus, for example, 10 Women's Committees are now functioning in all target new settlements that aim to unite women and facilitate their active participation in decision-making processes, including public safety and the prevention of violent acts against women and girls. Such initiatives allowed adolescents, women, and young people to be more actively engaged in school and community affairs (Outcome 1).

*We have built a good relationship with the Bishkek city council, with its Budget committee. The advocacy campaign was very difficult. For example, creative activity centers for children in Ak Telek. The young activists had an idea to open such a center in the building of old Feldsher–Midwife Points [FAP], that was closed. There are no clubs in their settlement and there were no places where children could study. Young activists were late. The tender for the building was published and the building was given to someone who planned to open a private kindergarten.*

*Another example is Ak Ordo. The youth group has conducted a smart advocacy event. About 200 residents came to the meeting, 2 deputies of Bishkek council, and representatives of rayon administration. The problem was the electrical transformers and the number of poles. Since there were not enough poles, the power lines began to sag and got torn. In addition, the electric transformers did not function well and electricity was not distributed properly. And as a result, they do not have electricity in winter. People were very unhappy and screamed during the meeting. This event took place at the end of November. The deputies budgeted the purchase of electric transformer and poles and in August they installed them. Our guys personally knew the deputies, communicated with them. It was a very interesting experience.*

Outcome 2 – Relevant state bodies/service providers identify the most vulnerable groups and engage excluded women and girls in inclusive decision-making platforms to increase access to gender-sensitive social services

*Output 2.1. Innovative registration processes and tools are available in selected new settlements to identify the most vulnerable groups*

*Output 2.2. – Education, health, social workers, law enforcement bodies and lawyers have better skills, tools and opportunities to provide integrated equitable conflict and gender-sensitive social services to women, children and adolescents in new settlements*

Output 2.1 'Innovative registration process and tools are available in selected new settlements to identify the most vulnerable groups' has been transformed into quazi Information and Referral Point at the level of urban municipality. The lack of coordination of initiatives on digitalization and piloting of various databases did not allow to establish 'one-stop-shop' linking between municipal and central levels datasets.

The project equipped the service providers with the tools that allowed to identify the vulnerable group of population. One of the objectives of this project was to review the existing system of identification, recording, and reporting of children, women, and families in difficult life circumstances (DLC). In order to achieve this goal, the BHU trainers conducted four joint meetings with the specialists of the MSLD at the district level who are working with children and families in DLC, medical staff, juvenile inspectors, MTA administration representatives, social pedagogues and other relevant institutions such as representatives of women’s and youth committees from the target communities. These meetings were intended to ensure that the individual family plans and individual child protection plans are implemented. During the meetings this interdisciplinary team members discussed and agreed on the cooperation terms, responsibilities and case management algorithms.

Overall, 53 specialists in charge of work with families in difficult life situation (DLS) were trained, coached, supported and equipped to identify children and families in DLS. At the beginning of the project 23 families were identified as DLC and the target value was to increase the number by 20%. The number of identified children and families significantly exceeded the target: overall 140 families with 840 children were identified as in DLS.

There is compelling evidence, that the project has provided women activists with an opportunity to take part in the decision-making process and organize joint work aimed at solving local problems in close partnership with the government. Overall, women and youth activists have designed and implemented 20 advocacy campaigns and 20 interventions in communities. The examples of successful advocacy campaigns that were conducted in the framework of the project include advocacy for construction of the sidewalks in Ak Ordo, road renovation in Jenish, and construction of the of the second school in Kolmo. Most of the community initiatives were about construction of the playgrounds for children, gravel roads, street lighting and clearing of the draining system.

Local women and youth initiatives received co-funding from the local government and community members. Overall, the activists accumulated more than $14 000 from 10 communities and more than $17 000 from the Mayor’s Office for their activities.

The project has used innovative approaches to visualize community problems, vulnerabilities, and needs through the development of an Interactive Map. This map contained the data from the Peace and Conflict Analysis. Although the map was produced with significant delay, LSG has highly valued this initiative and Bishkek City Mayor’s Office and has assumed the responsibility for the systematic update of the information in the map.

Representatives of implementing partners and sampled beneficiaries believed that the implemented activities allowed local authority to gain necessary skills to offer gender- and conflict- sensitive social services (Outcome 2.2.). Many respondents indicated that before the project nobody understood the importance of partnership between local authority and population. The project has demonstrated that such partnership is possible and that it could be beneficial to both sides. However, there is limited measured empirical evidence to claim that the social services provided by local authorities became gender- and conflict- sensitive.

The project has successfully supported the initiative of the Ministry of Education and Science that ensured equitable access to school education for those who are out of school and at risk of dropout. Thus, electronic registration/enrollment in school – to provide transparent and equitable access to education in the target communities, this registration allowed to lower the possibility of corruption. The neighborhood committee representatives were directly included in facilitation of the registration process in opening access in obtaining required documents (birth certificate, certificate of residence address registration and etc.). They were provided with mentorship support through consultations via WhatsApp group (as a Hotline) to provide support in obtaining required documents to children to be included in the electronic registration system.

The implementation of the Electronic enrollment system in school is intended to solve several priority tasks in providing every child with free access to education through: minimization of the corruption schemes during the enrollment of 1st graders; provision of access to general educational institutions and creation of comfortable conditions for every child; monitoring of the enrollment process and procedures, planning of placement of children, automatic data collection and processing, transparent and convenient enrollment procedure.

The access to the Automated attendance tracking system (AATS) is now available for parents who can obtain this information about their children via Telegram (in order not to monetize the process), the school teacher has an access to her/his class attendance rate, the director and the social pedagogues have access to the overall attendance rates. There is an internal protocol of actions to be taken on attendance to identify and react. The system also allows to report, providing disaggregated data by sex, age, class attended and etc.

The project implemented after-school life skills and sports programs to increase well-being and build capacities to promote non-violent relationships. Thus, the "Line Up Live Up" programme aimed at crime prevention amongst youth was successfully implemented 6 schools. This is a unique sports-oriented course that consists of 10 lessons that are aimed to build important life skills that help to cope with stresses and interpersonal conflicts and reduce antisocial behavior of young people.

As a result of the project, the network of the primary health care providers in settlements has been strengthened. The series of training increased the knowledge of FGPs staff in the field of adolescent health in order to form skills of effective preventive work, for the effective provision of medical and social preventive services. For the initiation of Policy framework to improve Adolescent Health, it was crucial to initiate the process, since these types of services are not existing within the current health system. After the introduction of Family Medicine, the speciality “Adolescent Health provider” disappeared and functions of these providers were delegated to family health professionals without introduction of relevant context into their curriculum. This resulted in the interruption of adolescent friendly service provision specifically to adolescents. To catalyze the process, package of initiatives was initiated within 10 new settlements through this project. Knowledge of primary health care providers was built on a) provision of reproductive health services to adolescents; b) screening of on potential use of drugs; c) identification and management of adolescents with mental disorders, including with depression, psychoactive reaction to the use of drugs, suicidal behavior. All training modules were incorporated into post-graduate training curriculum for primary health care providers and relevant clinical standards were approved as a national clinical standards for the national use. This project contributed to the conduction of the analysis in the area of Adolescent health as well. Health behavior school children survey provided data which is used for advocacy and planning.

MOH is now drafting a five years plan (2021- 2025) to improve the health outcomes of women, children and adolescents based on the review of the current situation, identified gaps and bottlenecks. The first time after the independence, the Adolescent Health is prioritized within the health sector strategy.

All community FMCs and FGPs were provided with necessary equipment and tools from the standard list of medical equipment approved by MoH. The medical staff of FGP has also undergone training on positive thinking. Furthermore, the Republican Center for Health Promotion has drafted regulations on the organizational structure of Public Health Committees (PHC). PHCs are in place and active. They are equipped with tonometers and are trained to test the blood pressure and submit the data to the FGP. The PHC staff received training on family planning, reproductive health, safe motherhood, responsible parenthood, prevention of family violence, and on communication skills.

The project's activities enhances the delivery of community-oriented policing services that are professional, conflict and gender-sensitive and inclusive. Situational analysis of crime enabled to develop and promote the Crime Prevention Plans for 3 raions of Bishkek (Lenin, Pervomai and Oktyabr raions). All plans were approved by raion akims and the heads of raion internal affairs office. Crime prevention centers and Committees for the prevention of domestic violence have been established in the new settlements, and a referral mechanism for cases of victims of gender-based violence has been introduced.

Communication plan for city police on crime prevention and child abuse was developed and launched in pilot areas. Information materials were designed jointly by an implementing partner and representatives of law enforcement agencies. «My community policing officer» mobile application was created. District police officers and juvenile inspectors received training on communication skills and communication skills with the population.

In people's perceptions, all these interventions have brought positive changes to the community. Thus, the baseline and endline survey showed that the overall level of satisfaction of citizens with the police in 10 new settlements has increased from 3,34 to 3,62 points on a 5-points rating scale. In addition, young community activities who took part in FGDs recognized significant changes in the security component: the installation of live street cameras, street lighting, police patrol cars in the streets of new settlements. Due to this security related interventions the focus group participants believed that the incidence of crimes (robbery, theft, fighting) decreased in their communities and the overall sense of security increased in their communities. Furthermore, as a result of the established referral mechanism, more than 10 women were referred to crisis centers and NGO for legal and psychological support.

The project strengthened the provision of legal aid to women and other vulnerable groups. Thus, four offices were opened for lawyers to provide free legal advice to the public. This was an additional achievement of the project, and effective sustainability strategy on provision of free legal aid including vulnerable groups of population. They are located in the buildings of the administrations of the Lenin, Oktyabr and Sverdlovsk raions, and one is in the building of the Department of Social Development in the Pervomai raion. Lawyers provide free consultations to citizens on a daily basis. At least two lawyers work in each office: one male and one female lawyer. The lawyers have adequate training in handling cases on gender-based violence.

Bus of Solidarity was held in all 10 pilot new settlements that helped residents to get free consultations on different areas including legal aid, land issues, matrimonial rights, social protection issues, etc. Residents in pilot new settlements had an opportunity to receive free consultations from the representatives of the Bishkek City Mayor’s Office, the State Registration Service, the Ministry of Internal Affairs, state notary offices, the Bar Association and other specialized organizations and departments.

**EQ6. What are the reasons for the achievement or non-achievement of the project results? Has the project achieved any unforeseen results, either positive or negative? For whom? What are the good practices and the obstacles or shortcomings encountered? How were the obstacles overcome and are there recommendations for how the good practices could be scaled-up?**

There has been a delay in launching innovative registration process and tools to identify the most vulnerable groups in new settlements. Such delay was caused by the dysfunctional municipal database(s) including e-data exchange with registration service system to which digitalized social case management processes were planned to be linked. After series of discussion with local authorities, it has been decided to establish a Single referral point, that allowed people to assess their needs, learn about services that they are eligible to receive and find out about the referral procedures from the relevant provider.

As was noted earlier, there have been delays in finalization of the Peace and Conflict Analysis and Interactive Map that had to be constructed based on the PCA results. The delay in submitting the PCA report was due mainly to the fact that it took more time to collect and analyze the data. All IPs and UN agencies were briefed about the preliminary PCA results during the coordination meeting and that several meetings were organized to tailor project interventions in 2019 with the PCA results.

One of the major barriers in projects implementation was high turnover rate of governmental and local officials. Many officials were changed during the implementation of the activities and some – when the project was about to finish. Many implementing partners had to explain and motivate new officials to participate in the project several times. One of the representatives of implementing partners believed that the most effective and sustainable results were achieved in the areas with a stable MTA staff. In addition, some problems occurred in the work with service providers. Thus, for example, school administrations were not always ready to accept children as equal partners and discuss school issues with them.

According to the opinion of representatives of implementing partners, the fact that MTAs do not have their own budget also hindered the project implementation. Financing of expenses for the maintenance of MTA is carried out at the expense of the budget of the city of Bishkek in accordance with the estimated costs approved by the raion administration of the Bishkek Mayor's Office. Such system does not allow to respond to the needs of local population in a timely manner.

*One problem we encountered is when we tried to solve one of the land issues. MTA did not have money; they did not have money even for the topographical survey. We had to organize the meeting with raion administration. The raion authority gave us the money. MTA is dependent. Mayor's Office, raion administration, MTA – such three steps system is not mobile and does not allow to react promptly.*

The project has involved the partners who had vast experience in conducting similar activities. They have rich experience in mobilizing the local population in their activities. However, some complained that it was very hard to work with residents in new settlements and indicated that the people there were in the beginning “very emotional” and aggressive.

*At first, when we started the Project, we felt that they were aggressive. And they changed {their attitudes and behavior at the end of the project} and told us that they know {how to solve community problems}: to whom they should refer to and what procedures are.*

Another problem faced concerned the mobility and working conditions of the population. Many people in new settlements could not participate in the activities because they worked from the early morning to very late at nights with no days off. In addition, many had to leave the new settlement for labor out-migration or they found jobs in different parts of Bishkek. Thus, some implementing partners had to recruit and train their community members two times.

**EQ7. How well did the intervention succeed in involving and building the capacities of rights-holders, duty-bearers as well as the project partners?**

Based on collected data, the project succeeded in building the capacities of rights-holders, duty-bearers as well as the project partners.

A series of training sessions were conducted with right-holders that equipped activists with necessary skills for effective engagement in decision-making process. All training was accompanied with coaching that allowed to reflect on their performance more in detail after the training. Almost everybody who participated in training had opportunities to use the acquired knowledge and skills in practice though joint work aimed at solving local problems in close partnership with government and under the close guidance of representatives of implementing partners. To measure the effect of project’s interventions on knowledge, attitudes and behavior of activists, the focus group discussions were held with two groups of right-holders: those who were involved in the project and those who were not. The FGDs with children showed that those who were involved in project’s activities, know more about their rights and conflict resolution strategies (some indicated that they used these strategies in practice); were much more gender sensitive and confident; and more eager to hold a pro-active position in the life of their schools and their communities. The FGDs with young people and women activists revealed that the project managed to form a core of local population who is skilled to identify the local problems, to build partnership relations with the local authority, to design effective advocacy campaigns, and to present the results of their work to local population. For some children and young people involvement in the project’s activities was a life-changing experience. Thus, for example, one of the participants of the FGD with young leaders who is a school student states that before project participation experience her father did not allow her to leave the house. They only place she was allowed to go was school. But when the project implementing partners introduced the purpose of the project, she was able to demonstrate to her parents they can trust her and her self-esteem increased and parents started supporting her leadership and other abilities. What she has obtained from the participation in the trainings and other project activities is one of the valuable and can be referred to as power-from-within - it is when a person obtains more personal sense of strength or agency.

From what was observed during the focus groups discussions with the youth and women’s groups as well as during the key interview informants it can be concluded that there was a power dynamic shift (perception level) within their communities due to their joint experience of developing and realizing initiatives as well as due to the training sessions that significantly influence on the change of general social norms in regards to conflict resolution and participation within the target communities. In regards to the interactions with the LSGs participants of the focus groups with youth and women’s groups reflected on the changed practice and attitude for possibility to cooperation and finding solutions. Particularly, here one needs to emphasize that new communication channels and practices were established that promoted more horizontal relationship with shared power/leadership[[20]](#footnote-21) among duty-bearers and rights-holders in the target communities (perception level). This type of more democratic/shared leadership style of leadership position might be established via creation of conditions that promoted collective learning of both representatives within the community as well as LSG. During the interventions individuals in groups interacted in a dynamic and constructive process and collectively led one another in order to achieve common goals during the training sessions as well as during the realization of joint initiatives (street lighting, gravelling the road, installation of workout equipment, including organization of sport events). The positive changes were reflected among the participants of the focus groups discussions with neighborhood committee’s representatives and women activists who emphasized that networking as well peer learning were one of the most empowering aspects in building horizontal relationships and achieving common goals that were set within the project.

One MTA representative mentioned that less than a third of the new settlement population took part in project’s activities and usually these were the most active community representatives. Some community activities had quite a heavy workload. Furthermore, most of the implementing partners mobilized the local population through the neighborhood committee’s representatives and MTA (specialist on social issues). Thus, the pool of potential participants was limited to the social network of neighborhood committee’s representatives and the same people were involved in different interventions the project carried out. According to the opinion of representatives of implementing partners this helped to strengthen the capacity of local population and to tackle complex problems and avoid duplication of work of different implementing partners. According to the opinion of a representative of one implementing organization, this also resulted in high competition among the implementing partners and tension as the beneficiaries were selecting the most interesting or beneficial initiatives and ignoring the least.

*At some point we realized that some young females were members of women initiatives groups, youth groups, and some were also members of the Public Health Committees. It seems to be a duplication but in reality, it strengthened the project.*

A number of training was also conducted with duty-bearers on planning and budgeting, including gender-sensitive planning and budgeting. One of the key messages of the training was that it is the responsibility of local authorities to develop partnership relationships with the local population. The representatives of MTA pointed out that the project helped to mobilize more people and ideas for solving the community problems and to build a more trustworthy relationship with people in their communities. Furthermore, the project has enabled to form a network of experts that provide social services to the population. Thus, MTAs social workers have established a WhatsApp group where they share their expertise and/or they seek professional advice from their colleagues. In addition to the soft skills, the project also provided necessary equipment to various circles of service providers in the area.

Victimization survey that was conducted by KR NSC could also be considered as a capacity building for NSC, the staff of which was introduced to the new methodology on crime prevalence assessment. The survey provided comparative analysis (Bishkek vs. new settlements) of the frequency, characteristics, and consequences of criminal victimization.

The project has expanded the opportunities and improved the access of adolescents to quality services at the level of primary health care on issues of the use of psychoactive substances, drugs and mental health of adolescents. The series of training was intended to increase the knowledge of medical staff from the FGP in the new settlements in the field of adolescent health. These training helped to form skills of effective preventive work, for the effective provision of medical and social preventive services. Preventive services were also initiated with the introduction of blood pressure monitoring to be conducted by Public Health Committees among residents in 10 target new settlements.

Training sessions were provided for health providers on provision of youth-friendly health services for adolescents with the focus on reproductive and sexual health and rights; training on how to use a screening tool for the identification of the adolescents who are in the risk groups to use drugs , to identify and manage adolescents with mental disabilities with the referral to the specialized care if it is needed.

Within the mentorship program the social pedagogues underwent series of training: (1) Mental and behavioral disorders due to the use of new psychoactive substances among children and adolescents. Early detection using the CRAFFT screening tool; (2) The culture of communication between a social pedagogue and children and their parents; and (3) Joint development of the protocol.

The project included capacity building and mentorship program for social pedagogues. It is important to mention that out of 21 social pedagogues only 1 had an education background as a social pedagogue. Prior to the project execution, there was no clear job description with the clear roles and responsibilities of social pedagogues even though this position was introduced since 2012. The mentorship program for social pedagogues was provided by BHU specialist who was mentor working on strengthening the capacity of social pedagogues in target 21 schools within 10 target communities, that included the development of the protocol on the algorithm of working with non-attending students. In this regard the task was to strengthen the potential of social pedagogues in target schools for timely response for every non-attending student identified by AATS and working with children in DLC.

The mentorship program was based on the needs assessment of the social pedagogues. Thus, in order to provide support in strengthening the capacity of social pedagogues at the very first meeting with the social pedagogues the following issues and tasks were identified:

* MoES did not approve terms of responsibilities of the social pedagogues that were developed in accordance with the revisions of the national legislation and regulations of social pedagogues under another project (Sapattu Bilim). This uncertainty led to frustration and unclear position and responsibilities of the social pedagogues. The mentorship program included this issue as one of the tasks to lobby the approval of the developed functional description of social pedagogues by the MoES. Number of meetings were initiated with the MoES representatives. In September 2019 the functional description of social pedagogues was approved by the MoES.
* Not consistent and not agreed reporting documentation. Every social pedagogue has different types of reporting documents and formats (different number of files recorded and different documentation management, many duplicating documents). This in turn has an effect on challenges with the monitoring and control processes, overload of some of the social pedagogues, uncertainty, and etc. To solve this problem the mentorship program included an analysis of the existing documentation management in 20 target schools, conducted discussions and jointly developed a nomenclature files for documentation that included minimum required number of documents to be reported and monitored for the standardization of the reporting.
* Normative and regulatory framework. As the majority of the social pedagogues are having diverse background there was a need to organize training to improve legal literacy among social pedagogues, as well as to create a database of legal acts and regulations to be used by social pedagogues with the explanation which regulation, law, decree, document has a legal force. Electronic version of all required and relevant documents and regulations was provided to all social pedagogues from 20 target schools.

The developed protocol of actions for social pedagogues was provided to the Kyrgyz Academy of Education (KAE) and it provided a supporting letter for the approbation of the tool in all schools of the Bishkek city. MoES representatives shared their concern whether the protocol of actions for social pedagogues that was developed within the project that targeted vulnerable communities would not work in the other schools of Bishkek, like gymnasiums, or private schools. However, they assured that there is a high possibility of the protocol being officially endorsed by the MoES after additional piloting in other areas of the country.

BHU trainers were working primarily with the social workers, neighborhood committee representatives and conducted training on case management that consisted of several aspects: prevention of burnout and stress management; introduction to the basics of case management; identification of the categories of children who can be classified as being in difficult life situation, needs assessment of the child and the family; working with documents - individual family plans and individual child protection plans; eco-map for conducting an assessment of the access of the existing social infrastructure and resources within the community that can be used to provide support to the child and family. In addition to training the BHU team of trainers provided mentorship support. After the training BHU trainers organized joint visits together with social workers, neighborhood committee representatives in order to demonstrate in practice how to work with the case management with the families. These visits were part of mentorship program that was intended to reinforce knowledge with practice. Different categories of families in DLC were selected in order to demonstrate different case management schemes – over all 15 families in difficult life situations were visited, and provided necessary information and counseling assistance. During the project implementation period under this component 80 cases of children in DLC were identified using the case management.

In addition to the training and mentorship program to support the social workers, neighborhood committee representatives within MTA during the mentorship program process, the BHU team drafted, tested a guidance for specialists in social work on the implementation of measures to provide a family in a DLC with appropriate assistance of relevant services. The guidance for specialists in social work helped to get a visual presentation of the process of social support for families in DLC. The guidance demonstrates them when and what to do in specific situations, and shows an algorithm for working with families in DLC. This guidance for specialists in social work was also intended to address the issues of high level of turnover of employees. Even though this algorithm is developed there is no proof who it works in real life situations, especially having weak support from the interdisciplinary team.

The project has contributed to capacity building of implementing partners too. First of all, their network of potential partners has widened. For some it was the first project in new settlements and the first peace-building project experience. FTI has conducted Peace-building training and involved some partners in Peace and Conflict Analysis research that enabled partners to develop peace and conflict analysis skills.

**EQ8. To what extent have the strategies and approaches been innovative for achieving project results?**

Although some partners admitted that they have carried out the initiatives that they previously undertook in different projects in the past, all respondents indicated that the strategies and approaches were innovative for achieving project results. Thus, many claimed that the project’s design was complex and integrative. Many community level problems were addressed and tackled from different angles.

According to the implementing partners as well as partners from LSG one of the most useful and innovative solutions that were provided to the target communities were ICT solutions such as Interactive Maps, Automated Attendance Tracking System (AATS), electronic enrollment system in the target communities, and “My community policing officer” mobile application.

**EQ9. Was there any measurable impact of the program intervention on the target groups on both outcome and output levels? AND EQ10. To what extent is the program changing the dynamics of power in relationships between duty bearers (local authority, healthcare, security and education providers, social workers, neighborhood committee’s representatives ) and right holders (children, youth, active women)?**

There is no measured evidence to claim that the project’s interventions change the dynamics of power in relationships between duty-bearers and right-holders. Despite the fact that the baseline and end-line studies revealed that the local authorities became more open to local initiatives and people were generally more satisfied with the social services, many representatives of implementing partners pointed out that it was too early to make empirical assessments on this regards and more work on professional development of local authorities was needed.

*It is not possible to change the duty-bearers in one year and, especially, when there is a high turnover. This was too ambitious aim of the project.*

### 3.3 Efficiency

**EQ11. Have resources (financial, human, technical support, etc.) been allocated strategically to achieve the project outcomes?**

Whilst the purpose of the project is relevant to solving the problems in new settlements, the timeframe in which to do so was grossly inadequate. The project timeframe, however, was beyond control of implementing agencies. Due to the magnitude and scale and the deep-rooted nature of the children’s, youth, and women’s lack of empowerment problem in Kyrgyzstan, it does not appear that the project is sufficiently designed to fully address the structural and institutional root causes of inequality.

Most opinion of representatives of implementing partners and beneficiaries of the project is that the finances were managed efficiently and in transparent way. However, according to the opinions of few implementing partners, some IPs had more resources for community initiatives than others. IPs that operated with small budgets had difficulties in recruiting residents to their activities and had to explain constantly the residents why some organizations were able to organize training outside Bishkek and/or gave more money for the community projects.

Some problems within the financial management system led to the delayed results. A few organizations had to use their own financial resources to implement the activities. Later these expenses were to be reimbursed by the development agency upon a series of approvals. This created potential risks to partners with reimbursement.

*We first execute all activities and then they give us money. We have already submitted the report. Right now, we are waiting for the second tranche… This is very inconvenient. In the case of our own salary, no problem, we can wait. And sometimes we can use our own money. But when it comes to small grants, then we deal with big amounts… And, you now, the agency examines our reports for about a month, then they should be improved in different places.*

One of the most productive results of the project is that the implementing partners and beneficiaries were able to mobilize additional funding to support their initiatives. For example, women and youth activities raised money through crowdfunding and received stimulation grant from the City Development Agency. Some initiatives were funded from the City plan budget and some are included in the 2020 budget. Overall, the activists accumulated more than $14 000 from 10 communities and more than $14 000 from the Mayor’s Office for their activities.

**EQ12. To what extent does the management structure of the intervention support efficiency for program implementation and achievement of results?**

Flexibility in the project management has allowed implementing partners to assume ownership and leadership for results achievement. It allowed to identify and respond to the emerging needs on time and overcome obstacles in project implementation.

*It was a very short term and we were all in a hurry. But there was flexibility and freedom. And it was good since it allowed to solve urgent needs. All initiatives were supported.*

**EQ13. To what extent are the monitoring mechanisms in place effective in measuring and informing management of the project performance and progress towards the targets? AND EQ14. To what extent was the monitoring data objectively used for management action and decision making? AND EQ15. What strategies and approaches were used in order to achieve project objectives?**

The implementing partners and development agencies have monitored mostly the process of project implementation on a regular basis (input and output level indicators). Regular planned and ad-hoc meetings with all project stakeholders were organized to discuss the progress, achievements and difficulties in implementation. A number of meetings were organized by women and youth activists in the communities where they discussed their work and set up future actions. These meetings were facilitated by implementing partners. The results of the meetings were objectively used for management action and decision-making.

*We [representatives of implementing partners] participated and helped to facilitate the events. They [ women and youth activists] did everything themselves. They [ women and youth activists] organized midterm evaluation and defined what they did and what they could not do, what went OK and what went bad. They [women and youth activists] monitored the entire process.*

A number of innovative monitoring procedures were used to track the progress such as Outcome harvesting; Matrix of results, Lessons learned exercises. However, not all implementing partners used such tools. All implementing partners have submitted reports on their activities, but the frequency of submission of progress reports was not consistent with the outcome level indicators for all partners due different scope of work that was performed. These separate monitoring activities carried out by IPs led to increased workload on the key project stakeholders, especially social workers at the municipality offices, neighborhood committee’s representatives and local female leaders who were helping in the mobilization process of these events.

Baseline and end-line research allowed to tackle some indicators that measured the project's outcomes and impact. According to the research results the overall level of satisfaction with the quality of social services has increased, the number of complaints have dropped, the attitudes about the role of women and youth in decision-making process and conflict prevention and resolution has become more visible and more socially valuable, and other positive changes.

As it was indicated in the baseline report, a number of other activities implemented by other development agencies were carried out in the same new settlements at the same time. In order to measure the direct impact of the project, the study might have employed quasi-experimental design that requires surveys in both the intervention area and a control area both before and after the project. This would allow to control for the effect of extraneous factors that influence the evaluation results.

### 3.4 Partnerships and Cooperation

**EQ16. To what extent were stakeholders properly engaged and informed?**

Regular coordination meetings with all relevant stakeholders (representatives of governmental and local authorities, community activists and general population) were held quarterly (at least once in 3 months) during which the partners reported about their achievements and learned about the progress of other organizations. These coordination meetings allowed to harmonize the project implementation plan and reduce the overburdening of project stakeholders who were involved in multiple project initiatives.

**EQ 17. To what extent the project implementation took into consideration and benefited from the UN joint implementation mechanism?**

UNFPA Kyrgyzstan served as lead agency for the coordination of the project and was responsible for cross monitoring of activities to ensure that UNFPA, UNICEF and UNODC activities complemented each other and did not overlap. The project was closely coordinated with UN Peacebuilding projects.

**EQ18. What kind of partnership mechanisms were in place and how effective were they?**

All partners agreed that despite the fact that the project involved many implementing partners who worked on different spheres of community development, the project team was able to build efficient mechanism of cooperation and partnership. The following partnership principles were used:

* Setting clear objective: stakeholders reported that clear objectives were set from the very outset of the project. The project’s outcomes, outputs and planned initiatives were presented and discussed with representatives of implementing partners and local authority.
* Combining most effective initiatives: Establishing successful partnership with competent stakeholders with whom they continue to work on other interventions increased the effectiveness of cooperation. Partnership was built on four fronts: developing agencies, government, civil society and local population. There is also evidence that the collaborations and partnerships established during the course of the project are continuing.

All implementing partners have wide experience in conducting similar projects and they used the strategies that proved to be effective earlier. They shared their best practices and innovative approaches and tools with other partners during regular coordination meetings. Matrix of results and lessons learn tools and coordination plan were developed before all activities started.

*We entered the settlement at the same time and conducted the first meetings with the population together. It was a very good coordination approach. We did everything together: we introduced the projects and explained its aims, we told that it was a big project in 10 settlements, that 12 partners were involved and that every implementing partner would carry out their own activities. And we stressed that FTI is responsible for women’s leadership, and that our [IPF ROI ] target group is 8-20 year-old youth.*

* Effective communication strategy: communication and public relations intended to build cooperative mechanisms between the project partners and to help to involve broader audience.

There are some missed opportunities in a joint communication strategy that would help to strengthen partnership and have better visibility of the project achievements. Communicating as One project could facilitate teamed-up strategic dialogue with national partners as well as provide better shared and clear understanding of the project goals of the project. For example, only few stakeholders used one project hashtag (#Yntymaktuu Konushtar), but the use of it was also not on a systematic and consistent basis. Some initiatives were perceived as initiatives of a particular organization or development agency. One of the partners captured it as following:

*…in March 2018 we [representatives of an implementing partner] conducted presentation of the project to the representatives of the municipality authorities. Then the implementation phase started in June 2018. For about 7-8 months it was not clear what each partner wanted from the LSG. There was resistance from their [LSG] side as it was too much for them. There were too many implementing partners. The project looked fragmented. In addition to that, other UN Agencies had their own initiatives in the same area, for example, UNDP.*

The time constraints represented the major challenge in the project in which 15 organization deliver different project components simultaneously in 10 communities. The majority of IPs did not encounter any problems with project coordination. Furthermore, many IPs indicated that this was the most efficiently coordinated project that they have ever taken part in. Only one IP representative mentioned that they had to reschedule their events because of the time conflict with the events of another organizations. However, it should be noted, that such overlaps were very rare and occurred towards the end of the project (in December) when everybody was in a hurry to complete their work.

*We [implementing partners] had unequal conditions in the project. When we planned our activities, the representatives neighborhood committees would tell us that they cannot come to our events because other organizations had planned something else at the same time. And this was a problem. We had to reschedule our events several times. This is a problem of poor coordination. I am very unhappy because it was very difficult for us to organize some events.*

It should be also noted here that the number of the project documents, leaflets, presentations, reports were language inclusive, thus they were available in Russian, Kyrgyz and English languages. This helped to promote better understanding among stakeholders and widened the audience coverage.

**3.5 Human rights and gender**

**EQ19. To what extent are human rights considerations included in the project development and implementation?**

The project had positive results in promoting active and meaningful participation by all stakeholders, identification and exploration of the existing inequalities, forms of discrimination, violations of law and human rights needs via the victimization survey, needs assessments, situation analysis, peace and conflict analysis, inter-disciplinary and community meetings and etc.

The project activities were formulated and carried out by the children, youth, and women activists in close cooperation with local authorities. Involving most vulnerable groups of community population such as children, youth, and women is a human rights issue. Involving children, youth, and women fulfills the right to be involved in decision-making and recognizes their full citizenship. Engaging youth encourages children, youth, and women to become active community members who will be more likely to vote and be engaged in the democratic process[[21]](#footnote-22)

**EQ20. To what extent are gender considerations included in the project development and implementation**?

The gender considerations were included in all project initiatives. Thus, for example:

1. All stakeholders have undergone a series of gender related training that continues throughout the project.
2. Through training, mentoring programs and organization of public awareness raising and advocacy campaigns, the project created a trust-based network that gives women and youth the needed encouragement to implement their plans for community development. Overall, about 160 women and youth activists took part in training sessions designed to develop conflict resolution, leadership, project designing, and advocacy skills. The gender composition of the youth groups was almost even: out of 106 members 46 girls were girls (abut 4-5 girls per settlement) and 60 were boys (about 6 boys per settlement. Community representatives (youth and women activists) were given an opportunity to organize joint work aimed at solving local problems in close partnership with the government. Some of the initiatives were co-funded by the government, project funds as well as through crowd funding.
3. The project has strengthened and built institutional capacity of Women's Committees and Public Health Committees that are comprised predominately by women: out of 162 members, 8 were men. Clearly further work is required to involve more men in solving women’s and health related issues in the communities.
4. Committees for the prevention of domestic violence have been established in the new settlements, and a referral mechanism for cases of victims of gender-based violence has been introduced. As a result of the established referral mechanism, more than 10 women were referred to crisis centers and NGO for legal and psychological support.
5. A gender-sensitive case management mechanism and Protocol of Actions for Social Pedagogues were developed by social pedagogues from 21 pilot schools. One of the remarkable results of the project was that thank during the project implementation, the social pedagogues managed to prevent six cases of attempted suicide (female students) and 1 case of attempted sexual abuse in the communities.

### 3.6 Sustainability

**EQ21. What is the likelihood that the benefits from the project will be maintained for at least 5 years after the project phase out?**

Sustainability was one of the most challenging subjects within the project. This was due to the high turnover among service providers. Thus, turnover was an issue for the partners in all components of the current project where the trained social pedagogues, medical staff, police officers, and etc. were leaving their positions. This is due to low income, and high emotional burnout among helping profession workers, failure to retain and transfer institutional knowledge (when employees leave, the knowledge and memory is also lost), high frustration and uncertainty and no clear responsibilities and roles, low level of cooperation among the interdisciplinary teams. Nevertheless, the evaluation team found extensive evidence, where the project’s support for its partners has contributed to implementing partner sense of ownership and good prospects for long-term effects.

The project had contributed to long-term processes such as the design of new policies and regulations. Thus, MOH is drafting a five years plan (2021- 2025) to improve the health outcomes of women, children and adolescents based on the review of the current situation, identified gaps and bottlenecks. The results of this project guided the working group of the MOH in the prioritization of activities with focusing on the most vulnerable groups of adolescents. Republican Center for Health Promotion has drafted regulations on organizational structure of Public Health Committees (PHC). In cooperation with Bishkek Mayor's Office education department, the implementing partners drafted model regulation on school self-governance and regulation on city’s committee of leaders. Crime Prevention Plans for 3 raions of Bishkek were approved by raion akims and the heads of raion internal affairs office. The functional description of social pedagogues was approved by the MoES. The project has piloted and adapted the training materials for the development of the curriculum for the postgraduate courses for family doctors and nurses at the Kyrgyz State Medical Institute for Retraining and Further Training (KSMI). Introduction of the curriculum for the medical services to adolescents and youth at the KSMI has been institutionalized. Such training will be made available for the medical staff and nurses of the country.

There is evidence that the project has implemented adequate mechanisms to ensure the sustainability of the project by collaborating with strategic partners and promoting a network of relevant stakeholders. Thus, for example, strong networks among community activists, local authority and civil society institutes were built. Wide network of stakeholders was created to deliver community oriented policing service that comprise the representatives of the following structures: Jogorku Kenesh, Ministry of Internal Affairs, Ministry of Justice, Center for Coordination of State-guaranteed Legal Aid, Mayor's Office, raion administration, MTA, Bar Association. Some stakeholders have formalized collaboration. For example, the Bar Association of Kyrgyzstan and six Bishkek MTAs (No. 3, 6, 14, 16, 20 and 21) concluded a memorandum of joint activities to provide state-guaranteed legal advisory assistance free of charge to the residents of new settlements in Bishkek. An agreement has been concluded between akimiats, the Bar Council and the Center for Coordination of State-guaranteed Legal Aid (CCSGLA) under the Ministry of Justice of the Kyrgyz Republic. Four offices were opened for lawyers to provide free legal advice to the public. Lawyers provide free consultations to citizens on daily basis.

There is also a core group of women and youth activists who are inspired to continue carrying out the new activities. As a result, for example, the youth in Kalys Ordo has officially registered their organization “Kalys Ordo Kelechegi”. Youth groups in Enesai, Ak Tilek, Ak Bata are going to register their NGO as well.

As an unforeseen result research team can refer to the initiative that was supported by some of the members of the working groups who joined their efforts and were organized into an Association of Adolescent Health. The association is registered and focuses on promotion of prevention measures addressing the psychological, social and development aspects of adolescents.

Prospects for sustainability of project's activities is strongly and well founded on enhancing capacities of community-based organizations that will continue the work after project completion. Thus, 10 Women's Committees are functioning and 3 of them are officially registered by the end of the project. The capacity of the committees was strengthened though provision of office equipment, office repair, and through development of the Practical Guide “Women’s committee in promoting peace and stability”. Community prevention centers and Committees for the prevention of domestic violence have been established in the new settlements, and a referral mechanism for cases of victims of gender-based violence has been introduced. Two Community prevention centers are officially registered. PHCs were equipped with tonometers and are trained to test the blood pressure and submit the data to the FGP.

Women and youth activist groups have an opportunity to intensify their future advocacy capacity through active dissemination of the main findings of the Peace and Conflict Analysis, Conflict Map, Victimization survey, Situational Analyses and Needs Assessment in new settlements, and Health Behavior in School-Aged Children research results can be used as an advocacy tool in promoting policy level changes.

The audience for capacity interventions has been broadened, through organizing Community based Spartakiada Yntymaktuu Kanushtar that is planned to unite not only 10 pilot new settlements but all new settlements in Bishkek.

The multiplier effect was ensured through strengthening cooperation with school administration and Physical Education teachers on Line Up Live Up programme.

Although the project has produced a numerous measures to guarantee the sustainability of the results, it is difficult to state that the measures that were taken within the project are ensuring that gains are sustainable. There are a number of factors that go beyond the project control, such as vulnerabilities associated with violence, conflict, political and social instability, as well as high turnover among duty-bearers. In addition, the state planning, budgeting is not flexible and not secured. There is also a risk in regards to managing and maintaining the assets and equipment. There is no guarantee how the equipment, repaired officers, officer furniture, interactive map will be updated, maintained.

**EQ22. To what extent the intervention succeeded in building individual and institutional capacities of rights holders and duty bearers to ensure sustainability of benefits?**

Capacity Building can be defined as strengthening knowledge, confidence, and skills that minimizes an over-dependency on outside experts and, thus, guarantees the sustainable results. The following capacity building activities were conducted in the framework of the project:

* + Training among women and youth activists on leadership, community needs prioritization and communication skills that equipped activists with necessary skills for effective engagement in decision-making process. The FGDs with young people and women activists revealed that the project managed to form a core of local population who is skilled to identify the local problems, to build partnership relations with the local authority, to design effective advocacy campaigns, and to present the results of their work to local population. As a result, women and youth activists have designed and implemented 20 advocacy campaigns and 20 interventions in communities. The examples of successful advocacy campaigns that were conducted in the framework of the project include advocacy for construction of the sidewalks in Ak Ordo, road renovation in Jenish, and construction of the of the second school in Kolmo. Most of the community initiatives were about construction of the playgrounds for children, gravel roads, street lighting and clearing of the draining system. Local women and youth initiatives received co-funding from the local government and community members. Overall, the activists accumulated more than $14 000 from 10 communities and more than $17 000 from the Mayor’s Office for their activities.
  + During the project realization phase school students had gone through series of trainings that included the topics on leadership, conflict mediation, communication skills, gender and human rights. FGDs with children revealed that all participants became the school parliament members after they participate at the project activities. All participants were able to share their opinions openly, were confident in expressing their thoughts and attitudes, they believed that they were knowledgeable enough to lead other peers. In particular, they have indicated that they have developed a number of initiatives that reduced the level of racketeering in their school.
  + MTA and neighborhood committee representatives have undergone training on how to work with youth groups and undertake joint initiatives to promote peace and harmony in their communities. In the opinion of project’s participants, these training enabled to establish new communication channels and practices that promoted more horizontal relationship with shared power/leadership among duty-bearers and rights-holders in the target communities. During the interventions individuals in groups interacted in a dynamic and constructive process and collectively led one another in order to achieve common goals during the training sessions as well as during the realization of joint initiatives (street lighting, gravelling the road, installation of workout equipment, including organization of sport events). The representatives of MTA also confirmed that these training were very useful in their work and pointed out that the project helped them to mobilize more people and ideas for solving the community problems and to build a more trustworthy relationship with people in their communities. Furthermore, the project has enabled to form a network of experts that provide social services to the population. Thus, MTAs social workers have established a WhatsApp group where they share their expertise and/or they seek professional advice from their colleagues.
  + All duty-bearers of the case management as a modern social work approach received training, coaching and on-the-job technical assistance throughout the project course. The project equipped the service providers with the tools that allowed to identify the vulnerable group of population. BHU trainers conducted four joint meetings with the specialists of the MSLD at the district level who are working with children and families in DLC, medical staff, juvenile inspectors, MTA administration representatives, social pedagogues and other relevant institutions such as representatives of women’s and youth committees from the target communities. Overall, 53 specialists in charge of work with families in difficult life situation (DLS) were trained, coached, supported and equipped to identify children and families in DLS. At the beginning of the project 23 families were identified as DLC and the target value was to increase the number by 20%. The number of identified children and families significantly exceeded the target: overall 140 families with 840 children were identified as in DLS.
  + Social pedagogues underwent series of trainings such as on mental and behavioral disorders, early detection using the CRAFFT screening tool, and on effective communication between a social pedagogue and children and their parents. After the training, the social pedagogues managed to prevent six cases of attempted suicide (female students) and 1 case of attempted sexual abuse in the communities.
  + The project has piloted and adapted the training materials for the development of the curriculum for the postgraduate courses for family doctors and nurses at the Kyrgyz State Medical Institute for Retraining and Further Training (KSMI). Introduction of the curriculum for the medical services to adolescents and youth at the KSMI has been institutionalized. Such training will be made available for the medical staff and nurses of the country.
  + The series of training increased the knowledge of FGPs staff in the field of adolescent health in order to form skills of effective preventive work, for the effective provision of medical and social preventive services. As a result, about 86% of primary healthcare workers have started providing adolescent-friendly services for the first time and were able to identify health risks among adolescents.

**EQ23. How effectively has the project generated national ownership of the results achieved, established partnerships with relevant stakeholders and developed national capacities to ensure sustainability of efforts and benefits?**

In addition to relevance of project interventions to the needs and expectations of final beneficiaries and partners, these strategies have resulted in strong ownership and support across all relevant stakeholders. Thus, for example, the Bishkek City Mayor’s Office has been actively involved in coordination and supporting the project’s initiatives including co-financing of Sport Games “Peaceful settlements” and including it in its plan. MOH is developing National plan to improve Adolescent health within the National health strategy 2030. The Ministry of Interior supported introduction of police communication strategy. MTAs approved all advocacy plans in 10 new settlements and some ideas generated by community activists were incorporated into the development plans of rayon and city administration.

**EQ24. To what extent has the exit strategy been well planned and successfully implemented?**

Having a clear exit strategy from the start of a project is essential since this strategy enables to mitigate against negative impacts on the project completion time on the part of partners and beneficiaries. A number of actions were foreseen by the project to avoid negative impacts of project completion. Thus, for instance, the project has built the capacities of the community activists in needs assessments and prioritization, formulating of joint solutions, design of advocacy campaigns. The project has motivated community activists to take social responsibility in solving the problems in the new settlements. The agreement was reached that the PHCs would continue their work with the support of Bishkek Centre for Health Promotion (BSHP). The Ministry of Education and Science plans to upscale E-registry of new primary school entrants nationwide and 15 schools expressed their interest in installing AATS after it was demonstrated in one of the project’s pilot schools.

### 3.7 Impact to peacebuilding

**EQ25. What is the impact of the project to peacebuilding?**

As the current project was funded by UN PBF we referred to the PBF 2017-2019 Strategic Plan in order to evaluate the project’s impact on peacebuilding. The PBF Strategic Plan aimed at contributing to sustaining peace and expanding its support from “exclusively post conflict instrument to support preventive action and focus on root causes as well as peacebuilding.”[[22]](#footnote-23) In addressing these priority areas PBF focuses on “inclusion, access, equality and rights, as the key elements relevant to 2030 Agenda. The priority areas of the current projects that are in line with the focus of PBF are as following:

* Dialogue and coexistence: building and/or strengthening national capacity to promote peaceful coexistence and non-violent resolution of conflicts – this may include democratic governance and conflict prevention and management measures and policies.

Number of the dialogue platforms and means of communication were built during the project with the inclusion of the duty-bearers represented by the MTA employees, specialists on social issues, neighborhood committee representatives and right-holders represented by the youth and women initiative groups from the target communities. It is also worth highlighting the interaction between the school administration and students and their capacity building in promoting non-violent conflict management and dialogue.

* Peace dividends: supporting efforts to generate immediate peace dividends for the population at large, in this case provision of equitable access to social services.

For example, there were efforts to provide peace dividends for the target communities through the provision of equitable access to health, education and social protection. In addition, as an immediate peace dividend, we can refer to the infrastructure initiatives that were led by youth and women initiative groups: road repairs, workouts, children’s playground, street lights, street cameras. However, there are concerns that were shared about the maintenance and sustainability.

* Re-establishment of basic services: re-establishing essential administrative services and related human and technical capacities.

Even though the re-establishment of the basic services were provided within the project it is hard to make an impact evaluation to peacebuilding in regards to the equipment and repair provision to all 6 MTA, including the specialists of social issues and neighborhood, district police and prosecutors received computers, tablets, furniture and repair works, medical equipment for FGP and PHC, electronic registration to school and automated attendance tracking system at school.

**EQ26. What is the impact of the involvement of local leaders, youth, women and communities to sustain peace in the target new settlements? AND EQ27. How did working with the service providers affect the peace in the target new settlements?**

The Baseline Survey and Peace and Conflict Analysis revealed that absence of housing documents of residents, lack of sufficient infrastructure, and low trust to the government and police are the key problems in the communities. These issues often cause resentment among the local population that have the potential to outgrow to violent conflict. A number of initiatives were carried out in the project to reduce these problems, including the following:

* FTI has provided Peace-building training for all project participants to enhance their knowledge and skills to identify and use tools that would could guide towards more sustainable and durable peace
* The project has organized information sharing activities and dialogues on the pressing issues in the communities with the involvement of representatives of different service providers (healthcare, education, police, social care, and etc.), civic social representatives and communities, including men and women. There were also successful advocacy campaigns from bottom up to push improvements in community life. Here it can be highlighted the interaction between the school administration and students and their capacity building in promoting non-violent conflict management and dialogue in their schools.
* The project has strengthened the relationship of population with local authorities and service providers through providing training, necessary equipment, and ICT solutions.
* The red thread of the project was the need to involve women and youth and children in setting priorities, developing joint plans and implementing local initiatives. The community participation in decision making have all potential to improve the quality of the social services and reduce grievances of community residents.
* To prevent possible tension, women’s and youth initiatives have implemented some infrastructure projects that were formulated based on community needs assessment activities, including, but not limited to construction of the playgrounds for children, gravel roads, street lighting and clearing of the draining system.
* The “Line Up Live” program aimed at crime prevention amongst youth was successfully implemented 6 schools. This is a unique sports-oriented course that consists of 10 lessons that are aimed to build important life skills that help to cope with stresses and interpersonal conflicts and reduce antisocial behavior of young people.
* The project has been systematically promoting community policing in practice,

partnering with government agencies and local authorities. Joint plans for public safety and crime prevention have been developed and implemented, which have allowed all parties on the ground to join forces in solving the problems identified by population.

* To extend the access to social services, the project has organized Bus of Solidarity was held in all 10 pilot new settlements that helped residents to get free consultations on different areas including legal aid, land issues, matrimonial rights, social protection issues, etc. Residents in pilot new settlements had an opportunity to receive free consultations from the representatives of the Bishkek City Mayor’s Office, the State Registration Service, the Ministry of Internal Affairs, state notary offices, the Bar Association and other specialized organizations and departments. Furthermore, four offices were opened for lawyers to provide free legal advice to the public. They are

located in the buildings of the administrations of the Lenin, Oktyabr and Sverdlovsk

raions, and one is in the building of the Department of Social Development in the

Pervomai raion. Lawyers provide free consultations to citizens on a daily basis. At least

two lawyers work in each office: one male and one female lawyer. The lawyers have

adequate training in handling cases on gender-based violence.

* The infrastructure initiatives (street lighting, street cameras), security related campaigns, improvement of the referral mechanism to address GBV also provided capacities of service providers in the target communities for resilience. The referral mechanism can be evaluated as a supporting tool to the Government in implementation of the law on prevention of domestic violence. The creation of LCPCs that included women committees and local crime prevention centers had some implication for building peace and security in communities.

**EQ28. To what extent has the project been catalytic in addressing some of the root causes of conflicts, tensions and gender and other inequalities?**

The project team strived to base project activities on the root causes of conflict and use opportunities for peace in the new settlements. One of instruments to identify the root causes of conflict and grievances in new settlements was Peace and Conflict Analysis. Even though the assessment was conducted with delays and the issue of the final version of the analysis was distributed later among partners than expected, partners were presented the preliminary results of the analysis at earlier stages. Some of the project activities strived to consider and base on the preliminary finding of the root causes of conflicts in new settlements. The following table was created to illustrate these efforts. It presents the some of the key issues that were identified in the Peace and Conflict Analysis and provides results that were obtained during the collection of data for the baseline and endline study:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| № | **Key issues/ tensions that have been identified in 10 target new settlements with potential for conflict[[23]](#footnote-24):** | **Comparison of baseline and endline study results[[24]](#footnote-25) as well as the project products that documented the project results/initiatives and evidence documented during the external evaluation** |
| 1 | Dissatisfaction of the population with the access to and quality of state (medical, educational, social) and municipal services provided by the Bishkek City Mayor’s Office and City Hall units. | Indicator 1a: % of the population satisfied with the quality of social services, disaggregated by sex and age    Data from the endline study: total score on a 5-point scale – 3.84 (0.39 points increase in comparison with baseline)  Evaluation in terms of service providers:  - Educational institutions – 3.98 points (0.33 points increase in comparison with baseline)  - Kindergartens – 4.03 points (0.17 points increase in comparison with baseline)  - Medical centers/services – 3.92 points (0.41 points increase in comparison with baseline)  - Law enforcement agencies, police stations – 3.34 points (0.29 points increase in comparison with baseline)  - Sports and cultural and entertainment centers (including libraries) – 4.05 points (0.71 points increase in comparison with baseline)  - Women’s councils, elderly courts, youth councils – 3.74 points (increase in the baseline by 0.45 points).  Data disaggregated by sex: men – 3.88 points (0.44 points increase in comparison with baseline), women – 3.81 points (0.35 points increase in comparison with baseline).    Data disaggregated by age groups:  18-25 years old – 3.81 points (0.15 points increase)  26-30 years old – 3.97 points (0.65 points increase)  31-35 years old – 3.95 points (0.83 points increase)  36-40 years old – 4.01 points (0.74 points increase)  41-45 years old – 3.60 points (0.12 points increase)  46-50 years old – 3, 60 points (0.74 points increase)  51 and above – 3.86 points (0.35 points increase) |
| 2 | Dissatisfaction with the work of MTA (dissatisfaction with quality of consideration of references of the population, MTA’s disinterest in establishment of communication with the population, low level of competence of MTA which is issuing only certificates and documents, but not solving the problems and grievances that are being taken to their consideration). | Data from the endline study:  Indicator 1b: Number of problems that local government bodies have responded to:   * In 2017 – 1482 * For January – June 2018 – 1181   (no information about what kind of responses were provided to the population, no data on what kind of problems were solved by MTA) |
| 3 | Lack of a permanent and effective communication channels between the City Hall, the City Council and residents of new settlements | m, |
| 4 | The population’s distrust of internal affairs authorities (lack of preventive work, presence of corruption elements, failure to solve crimes committed against the residents and their property, lack of channels for communication and interaction with the population and police, frequent rotation/turnover among district police staff in new settlements). | The results of the endline study revealed that there are still challenges with the engagement of the population with the representatives of the internal affairs in the new settlements (the data is disaggregated by new settlement):  Example, in Ak-Ordo new settlement to the question “In what circumstances would you contact or advise other acquaintances refer/address police?”:   |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | | in case of | 2018 | 2019 | | Domestic violence, or any violence against the family members | 93% | 81% | | Sexual violence | 94% | 83% | | Persistent abuse and insults | 91% | 42% |     Where as in Ruhyi-Muras new settlement to the same question respondents indicated the increase of trust in police in certain cases:   |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | | in case of | 2018 | 2019 | | Domestic violence, or any violence against the family members | 6% | 78% | | Sexual violence | 6% | 96% | | Persistent abuse and insults | 96% | 52% | |
| 5 | Absence (in some target new settlements) or insufficient infrastructure development (lack of gasification, provision of electricity, drinking water, street lighting, sewerage system, drainage system, roads, sidewalks for pedestrians, leisure areas, etc.), increases dissatisfaction of the population with the work of local authorities | Number of infrastructure initiatives were supported in all 10 target new settlements (street lighting, gravelling the roads, installation of workout equipment, including organization of sport events, etc.) |
| 6 | Absence of documents for land plots (red books) as a consequence, residents in new settlements lack documents for residential premises (house) and other buildings, which leads to the problems with obtaining identification documents (passport, birth certificates) by residents and their family members. This in turn leads to difficulties with getting access to basic services (medical, social, education and etc.) | Two interventions intended to tackle this issue in order to provide access to the most vulnerable groups to education, medical and social services: case management interventions and electronic registration/enrollment in schools. |

### 3.8 Good practices and lessons learned

**EQ 29. What are the lessons learnt from the completed project?**

Based on the interviews and desk research, focus group discussions the following lessons were learned:

* It was initially planned to conduct a Peace and Conflict Analysis (PCA) that would be used to inform all project components and interventions as well as to identify agents of change in the new settlements. The PCA report was produced with the delay when most activities were already planned and started. It is important to secure time sufficient not only to conduct the research that would serve as the base for all project activities but also enough time should be allocated to the discussion of the research results.
* Electronic single/common database is still missing, though paper-based registry with digitalized recording and reporting forms was established to track the most vulnerable children and to monitor progress of his/her status of being in DLC at the level of school, social protection and health. The absence of such a common e-database leaves some children behind and does not facilitate the work of the interdisciplinary team to monitor the referral system and track whether the child in DLC received the needed support and help. The process of creation of the national electronic database of children in DLC has started and led by Vice Prime Minister.
* Before integrating any initiatives that are addressing the system level problems it is crucial to include in the training and development process the decision-makers from each relevant ministry or agency. Without the inclusion and involvement, it is difficult to integrate the new developments from the bottom or middle levels. Thus, there were difficulties in integration of the developments done within the education, social protection components that requested approbation and up-scaling. But without the support of the decision-makers these activities were not able to go beyond just information and training level – not being able to be institutionalized and make changes at the system level.

**EQ 30. What are the best practices that could be applied in the future activities and similar projects?**

One of the methods that for this project is that it was promoting inclusive approach at different levels among different stakeholders. This was done during the organization of the regular meetings among the implementing partners and the agencies, series of meetings were organized with the LSG at all stages of the project, beneficiaries of the project were participating in the implementation of diverse initiatives together with the representatives of LSG, beneficiaries were participating during the assessments of the needs, as well as the development of protocols, and other documents. Adherence to this inclusive approach allowed building shared leadership and arranging networks at horizontal level among different groups within the community and LSG.

The project’s interventions have a firm foundation in a wide range of needs assessment meetings conducted by community activists with the help of IPs as well as large scale research such as Peace and Conflict Analysis, Victimization survey, and Health Behavior in School-Aged Children. All these assessments have informed the design and implementation of activities to meet the needs and expectations of beneficiaries and partners. Furthermore, the project has invested sufficient effort in building the capacity of project stakeholders that allowed that to make valuable contribution to the project. Thus, all stakeholders have took part in Gender and Peace and Conflict training that were provided throughout the project implementation process.

The implementing partners and Agencies designed their initiatives in line with the national priorities and used them as a motivation mechanism to ensure active participation of the duty-bearers. For example, the initiatives intended to build allies at multi-disciplinary level and strengthened the potential of the duty-bearers and promoted principles of accountability mechanisms effective, accountable and inclusive institutions.

According to the implementing partners as well as partners from LSG one of the most useful and innovative solutions that were provided to the target communities were ICT solutions that were intended to address at least two crucial root causes of social tensions in suburban areas: dissatisfaction with social services and low trust to state and municipal authorities. These ICT solutions included:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Component** | **ICT solutions** |
| LSG | Interactive Maps to be used by the municipal authorities in the target communities to have up to date information on the available infrastructure and issues to be addressed |
| Education | * Automated attendance tracking system (AATS) of students at school to have up to date information on the attendance rates of school students and be able to track attendance of children. Social pedagogues, school directors and teachers were trained how to use the system and work with addressing gender and age specific reasons of dropouts. Parents also have free of charge (via Telegram) access to the up to date information on attendance rates of their children. * Introduction of the electronic enrollment system in the target communities (working in close collaboration with the key service providers: school administration, neighborhood committee representatives, specialist on social issues) |
| Security | “My community policing officer” mobile application |

# CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

## 5.1 Conclusions

Relevance

Based on stakeholder interviews, focus group discussions, and review of project’s documents, there is compelling evidence that the project is extremely consistent with and tailored to the needs and expectations of final beneficiaries and partners. The opinion of representatives of all implementing partners and beneficiaries of the project is that the project is timely since it allowed preventing social tensions from escalating into a violent conflict against the state and local authorities though the creation of multi-stakeholder platforms for dialogue about what community problems need immediate reaction and what interventions are most appropriate to address these issues.

All interventions were formulated, designed, and implemented on the basis of a series of needs assessments meetings with local population in new settlements. The needs assessments were carried out in project’s target new settlements at least twice: by youth and women activists.

The project’s interventions have a firm foundation in a wide range of surveys and assessments that have informed the design and implementation of activities to meet the needs and expectations of beneficiaries and partners. Thus, some of the initiatives were also based on the results of Peace and Conflict Analysis prepared in the framework of the project.

Project’s initiatives were closely aligned with key national development strategies, including the National Development Strategy of the Kyrgyz Republic for 2018-2040, the National Strategy on Gender Equality for 2012-2020, the National Action Plan on Gender Equality for 2018-2020, the concept for a Youth Policy in Kyrgyzstan for 2020-2030, the Concept of the National Digital Transformation Program “Digital Kyrgyzstan” for 2019-2023. The project activities are also strongly reflective of global priorities, including the SDGs and UN Resolution 1325.

Effectiveness

In general, the targets set to achieve the planned outputs and overall outcomes have been met. All implementing partners, however, answered with confidence that they have achieved much more than they initially planned.

It was initially planned to conduct a Peace and Conflict Analysis (PCA) that would be used to inform all project components and interventions as well as to identify agents of change in the new settlements. The PCA report was produced with the delay when most activities were already planned and started.

One of the major barriers in projects implementation was high turnover rate of governmental and local officials. Another problem faced concerned the mobility and working conditions of the community population.

There is no measured empirical evidence to claim that the project’s interventions change the dynamics of power in relationships between duty-bearers and right-holders. Despite the fact that the baseline and end-line studies revealed that the local authorities became more open to local initiatives and people were generally more satisfied with the social services, many representatives of implementing partners pointed out that it was too early to make empirical assessments on this regards and more work on professional development of local authorities was needed.

Efficiency

Whilst the purpose of the project is relevant to solving the problems in new settlements, the timeframe in which to do so was grossly inadequate. The project timeframe, however, was beyond control of implementing agencies. Due to the magnitude and scale and the deep-rooted nature of the children’s, youth, and women’s lack of empowerment problem in Kyrgyzstan, it does not appear that the project is sufficiently designed to fully address the structural and institutional root causes of inequality.

One of the most productive results of the project is that the implementing partners and beneficiaries were able to mobilize additional funding to support their initiatives. For example, women and youth activities raised money through crowdfunding and received stimulation grant from the City Development Agency. Some initiatives were funded from the City plan budget and some are included in the 2020 budget. Overall, the activists accumulated more than $14 000 from 10 communities and more than $14 000 from the Mayor’s Office for their activities.

Flexibility in the project management has allowed implementing partners to assume ownership and leadership for results achievement. It allowed to identify and respond to the emerging needs on time and overcome obstacles in project implementation.

The implementing partners and development agencies have monitored mostly the process of

project implementation on a regular basis (input and output level indicators). Regular planned and ad-hoc meetings with all project stakeholders were organized to discuss the progress, achievements and difficulties in implementation.

A number of innovative monitoring procedures were used to track the progress such as Outcome harvesting; Matrix of results, Lessons learned exercises. However, not all implementing partners used such tools.

Baseline and end-line research allowed to tackle some indicators that measured the project's outcomes and impact. As it was indicated in the baseline report, a number of other activities implemented by other development agencies were carried out in the same new settlements at the same time. In order to measure the direct impact of the project, the study might have employed quasi-experimental design that requires surveys in both the intervention area and a control area both before and after the project. This would allow to control for the effect of extraneous factors that influence the evaluation results.

Partnerships and Cooperation

Regular coordination meetings with all relevant stakeholders (representatives of governmental and local authorities, community activists and general population) were held quarterly (at least once in 3 months) during which the partners reported about their achievements and learned about the progress of other organizations. These coordination meetings allowed to harmonize the project implementation plan and reduce the overburdening of project stakeholders who were involved in multiple project initiatives.

All partners agreed that despite the fact that the project involved many implementing partners who worked on different spheres of community development, the project team was able to build efficient mechanism of cooperation and partnership. The following partnership principles were used:

* Setting clear objective: stakeholders reported that clear objectives were set from the very outset of the project.
* Combining most effective initiatives: Establishing successful partnership with competent stakeholders with whom they continue to work on other interventions increased the effectiveness of cooperation. Partnership was built on four fronts: developing agencies, government, civil society and local population. There is also evidence that the collaborations and partnerships established during the course of the project are continuing.
* Effective communication strategy: communication and public relations intended to build cooperative mechanisms between the project partners and to help to involve broader audience.

There are some missed opportunities in a joint communication strategy that would help to strengthen partnership and have better visibility of the project achievements. Communicating as One project could facilitate teamed-up strategic dialogue with national partners as well as provide better shared and clear understanding of the project goals of the project. For example, only few stakeholders used one project hashtag (#Yntymaktuu Konushtar), but the use of it was also not on a systematic and consistent basis. Some initiatives were perceived as initiatives of a particular organization or development agency.

Human rights and gender

The project had positive results in promoting active and meaningful participation by all stakeholders, identification and exploration of the existing inequalities, forms of discrimination, violations of law and human rights needs via the victimization survey, needs assessments, situation analysis, peace and conflict analysis, inter-disciplinary and community meetings and etc.

The project activities were formulated and carried out by the children, youth, and women activists in close cooperation with local authorities. Involving most vulnerable groups of community population such as children, youth, and women is a human rights issue. Involving children, youth, and women fulfills the right to be involved in decision-making and recognizes their full citizenship. Engaging youth encourages children, youth, and women to become active community members who will be more likely to vote and be engaged in the democratic process[[25]](#footnote-26)

Sustainability

Sustainability was one of the most challenging subjects within the project. This was due to the high turnover among service providers. Thus, turnover was an issue for the partners in all components of the current project where the trained social pedagogues, medical staff, police officers, and etc. were leaving their positions. This is due to low income, and high emotional burnout among helping profession workers, failure to retain and transfer institutional knowledge (when employees leave, the knowledge and memory is also lost), high frustration and uncertainty and no clear responsibilities and roles, low level of cooperation among the interdisciplinary teams. Nevertheless, the evaluation team found extensive evidence, where the project’s support for its partners has contributed to implementing partner sense of ownership and good prospects for long-term effects.

Despite these evidences, it is difficult to state that the measures that were taken within the project are ensuring that gains are sustainable. There are a number of factors that go beyond the project control, such as vulnerabilities associated with violence, conflict, political and social instability, as well as high turnover among duty-bearers. In addition, the state planning, budgeting is not flexible and not secured. There is also a risk in regards to managing and maintaining the assets and equipment. There is no guarantee how the equipment, repaired officers, officer furniture, interactive map will be updated, maintained.

Impact to peacebuilding

As the current project was funded by UN PBF we referred to the PBF 2017-2019 Strategic Plan in order to evaluate the project’s impact on peacebuilding. The PBF Strategic Plan aimed at contributing to sustaining peace and expanding its support from “exclusively post conflict instrument to support preventive action and focus on root causes as well as peacebuilding.”[[26]](#footnote-27) In addressing these priority areas PBF focuses on “inclusion, access, equality and rights, as the key elements relevant to 2030 Agenda. The priority areas of the current projects that are in line with the focus of PBF are as following:

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Number of the dialogue platforms and means of communication were built during the project with the inclusion of the duty-bearers represented by the MTA employees, specialists on social issues, neighborhood committee representatives and right-holders represented by the youth and women initiative groups from the target communities. It is also worth highlighting the interaction between the school administration and students and their capacity building in promoting non-violent conflict management and dialogue.

* Peace dividends: supporting efforts to generate immediate peace dividends for the population at large, in this case provision of equitable access to social services.

For example, there were efforts to provide peace dividends for the target communities through the provision of equitable access to health, education and social protection. In addition, as an immediate peace dividend, we can refer to the infrastructure initiatives that were led by youth and women initiative groups: road repairs, workouts, children’s playground, street lights, street cameras. However, there are concerns that were shared about the maintenance and sustainability.

* Re-establishment of basic services: re-establishing essential administrative services and related human and technical capacities.

Even though the re-establishment of the basic services were provided within the project it is hard to make an impact evaluation to peacebuilding in regards to the equipment and repair provision to all 6 MTA, including the specialists of social issues and neighborhood, district police and prosecutors received computers, tablets, furniture and repair works, medical equipment for FGP and PHC, electronic registration to school and automated attendance tracking system at school.

Good practices and lessons learned

Lessons learned:

* It was initially planned to conduct a Peace and Conflict Analysis (PCA) that would be used to inform all project components and interventions as well as to identify agents of change in the new settlements. The PCA report was produced with the delay when most activities were already planned and started. It is important to secure time sufficient not only to conduct the research that would serve as the base for all project activities but also enough time should be allocated to the discussion of the research results.
* Electronic single/common database is still missing, though paper-based registry with digitalized recording and reporting forms was established to track the most vulnerable children and to monitor progress of his/her status of being in DLC at the level of school, social protection and health. The absence of such a common e-database leaves some children behind and does not facilitate the work of the interdisciplinary team to monitor the referral system and track whether the child in DLC received the needed support and help. The process of creation of the national electronic database of children in DLC has started and led by Vice Prime Minister.
* Before integrating any initiatives that are addressing the system level problems it is crucial to include in the training and development process the decision-makers from each relevant ministry or agency. Without the inclusion and involvement, it is difficult to integrate the new developments from the bottom or middle levels. Thus, there were difficulties in integration of the developments done within the education, social protection components that requested approbation and up-scaling. But without the support of the decision-makers these activities were not able to go beyond just information and training level – not being able to be institutionalized and make changes at the system level.

Best practice:

One of the methods that was unique for this project is that it was promoting inclusive approach at different levels among different stakeholders. This was done during the organization of the regular meetings among the implementing partners and the agencies, series of meetings were organized with the LSG at all stages of the project, beneficiaries of the project were participating in the implementation of diverse initiatives together with the representatives of LSG, beneficiaries were participating during the assessments of the needs, as well as the development of protocols, and other documents. Adherence to this inclusive approach allowed building shared leadership and arranging networks at horizontal level among different groups within the community and LSG.

The project’s interventions have a firm foundation in a wide range of needs assessment meetings conducted by community activists with the help of IPs as well as large scale research such as Peace and Conflict Analysis, Victimization survey, and Health Behavior in School-Aged Children.

The implementing partners and Agencies designed their initiatives in line with the national priorities and used them as a motivation mechanism to ensure active participation of the duty-bearers.

According to the implementing partners as well as partners from LSG one of the most useful and innovative solutions that were provided to the target communities were ICT solutions that were intended to address at least two crucial root causes of social tensions in suburban areas: dissatisfaction with social services and low trust to state and municipal authorities. These ICT solutions included Interactive Maps, Automated attendance tracking system (AATS), E-registry of new primary school entrants, and “My community policing officer” mobile application.

## 5.2 Recommendations

Policy Level Recommendations

* Review the system of rewarding and promoting employees to improve the retention rate of civil servants. High turnover rate in different level of governance was not only recognized as the main barrier in project implementation but also poses serious challenge to service delivery and economic growth in the country[[27]](#footnote-28). The policy recommendations on how to enhance retention should be based on the analysis of the factors causing employee turnover in the public service.
* Review the existing political, legislative, and regulatory frameworks, for provisions that may hinder the introduction of public security work. For this, sufficient support is necessary to change the emphasis of the public policies away from considering the police, courts, and prisons to be the primary mechanisms for reducing crime and promote community-based efforts in crime prevention that proved to be effective in the framework of the current project.

Donor Level Recommendations

* Provide adequate time for implementation of such ambitious, multi-stakeholder and system/institution-based interventions. Participatory approach to project design requires lengthy preparatory phase during which community mobilizers work with community groups to help them identify their needs, priorities and to develop a joined plan of activities.

Project Level Recommendations

* Continue working with government and partner institutions that were involved in the project to develop plans to mainstream best practices and lessons learned within the institutions and across networks.
  + As the ICT initiatives were acknowledged as the most valuable and feasible achievement it is recommended to upscale such developments in other territories throughout the country. Such initiatives can be partially funded by the state and beneficiaries, whereas implementing partners and development agencies can provide technical support and mentorship.
  + As a recommendation LCPCs can be upscaled as a model for integrated and sustainable approach for promotion of security and peace at community level as a promising referral mechanism for prevention of GBV.
  + There should be a continuation of the maintenance of achieved results, especially those that were related to institutionalization of new mechanisms and approaches (new for the target communities). For example, within the Health and Social Security components, it is recommended to provide additional funds to guarantee sustainability and efficiency of the gains of the project.
* The joint communication strategy needs to be developed and agreed upon by all project partners (including representatives of relevant ministries) at the beginning of project implementation to improve corporate communication. This communication strategy needs to address the needs of all project team members and improve overall project visibility.
* The joint monitoring plan should be developed with participation of all project stakeholders (including representatives of relevant ministries) at the beginning of the project to ensure that all parties understand the process, prepare their monitoring report in one unified format and contribute to the finalization of joint monitoring report to donor organizations. The baseline-endline studies and other monitoring assessments should be designed to measure the direct influence of the project interventions and control for the effects of other projects.

Attachment №1. List of interviewees

Representatives of implementing agencies:

1. Sanjar Alimjanov, UNFPA
2. Samara Papieva, former UNFPA employee
3. Jypara Rakisheva, UNODC
4. Cholpon Imanalieva, UNICEF
5. Mariko Kato, UNICEF
6. Gulsana Turusbekova, UNICEF
7. Nora Suiunalieva, UNICEF

Government of Kyrgyzstan counterparts (national, local level):

1. Chyngyz Tabyldiev, Head of the Office of the Municipal Administration of the Bishkek Mayor's Office for the Lenin Administrative Region
2. Rahat Tologonova, specialist working with social issues at MTA #6, Tunguch

Representatives of implementing partners:

1. Tajikan Shabdanova, PF “Foundation for Tolerance International”
2. Sagipa Jusaeva and Chynara Abdraimakunova, IPF “Initiative of Roza Otunbaeva”
3. Mira Itikeeva, CPC
4. Evgeniya Karpovich, PF “Center for development of democratic processes”
5. Baken Dosalieva, PF “Women Support Center”
6. Tolkun Tulekova, NGO “Association of crisis centers”
7. Timur Shaikhutdinov and Galina Davletbaeva, PU “Civic Union”
8. Atyr Abdrahmanova
9. Kanybek Sarymsakov, PF “Yntymak”
10. Chinara Imankulova, PF AFEW
11. Jyldyz Duishenova, PF “Future of the Country”
12. Association of Health Promotion
13. PF "AIDS Foundation East-West in the KR"
14. Baktygul Jumakulova, Pediatrician, school #64, co-founder of the Association of Adolescent Health
15. Nurjan Musaeva, National consultant – social issues. Worked with the neighborhood committee representatives
16. Nurgul Musaeva, Head of the Department of Social Work and Practical Psychology, Bishkek Humanitarian University
17. Jyldyz Asekova, Bishkek Humanitarian University, Department of Social Work and Practical Psychology
18. Rysbubu Omuralieva, Ak Bata woman activist

Focus group discussions:

1. FGD with social pedagogues
2. FGD with MTA representatives
3. FGD with neighborhood committee representatives
4. FGD with women activists from Ruhiy Muras new settlement
5. FGD with Ak-Bosogo community members, control group
6. FGD with youth activists from new settlements
7. FGD with school students in Intergelpo. School number 57, control group
8. FDG with school students in Ak-Ordo new settlement, school number 96

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2. Sanghera, B. 2011: Illegal Settlements and city registration in Kyrgyzstan and Kazakhstan: Implications for Legal Empowerment, Politics and Ethnic Tensions. OSI Occasional Paper [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
3. <https://ombudsman.kg/files/docs/reports/2016/new-buildings.pdf> [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
4. <https://kaktus.media/doc/362102_jizn_za_chertoy._kak_jivetsia_ludiam_v_novostroykah_vokryg_bishkeka.html>

   <https://ombudsman.kg/files/docs/reports/2016/new-buildings.pdf>

   Sanghera, B. 2010: Why are Kyrgyzstan's slum dwellers so angry? Available at: http://www.opendemocracy.net/od-russia/balihar-sanghera/why-are-kyrgyzstan%E2 %80 %99s-slum-dwellers-so-angry [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
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10. <https://ombudsman.kg/files/docs/reports/2016/new-buildings.pdf> [↑](#footnote-ref-11)
11. <https://kaktus.media/doc/362102_jizn_za_chertoy._kak_jivetsia_ludiam_v_novostroykah_vokryg_bishkeka.html>

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    Sanghera, B. 2010: Why are Kyrgyzstan's slum dwellers so angry? Available at: http://www.opendemocracy.net/od-russia/balihar-sanghera/why-are-kyrgyzstan%E2 %80 %99s-slum-dwellers-so-angry [↑](#footnote-ref-12)
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    and Kazakhstan. Available at: http://cesmi.info/wp/?p [↑](#footnote-ref-14)
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