

United Nations Development Programme



MINUTES OF THE E-LPAC

Sustainable Cities Initiative within the framework of Country Investment Facility- Georgia Project/Output 00112205/0011082

Date: 18 April 2022

The main objective of the project was to develop a solution oriented national platform in order to kickstart a country-wide transformation of cities/towns, towards greater sustainability and resilience in line with the 2030 development agenda. The platform intended to bring together engaged citizens, technology providers, local authorities, service providers and the private sector to co-design, test and co-implement solutions to persisting urban challenges.

Project Details

Timeframe: 2018 – 2019/20

Budget: USD 500,000

Additional resources mobilized/pooled:

UNDP Innovation Facility - USD 150,000 for 2 initiatives,

Czech-UNDP Partnership for SDGs - USD 130,000 for 2 initiatives and

UNDP Georgia mainstream programming in the amount of USD 148,000 dedicated to innovative activities within respective projects.

Implementation Modality: DIM

Implementing Partner: UNDP

The project reports were electronically shared by the Innovation Specialist to programme staff for their review and possible comments. The email notification was sent out (respective list of recipients is provided below) on Monday, 11 April 2022. Deadline for submitting the comments and questions was Friday COB, 15 April 2022.

In addition to **Country Investment Facility Georgia** final brief, it should be noted that CIF provided flexible arrangements for programming and focused on the consolidation of UNDP Georgia experimentation stream of activities under a single umbrella as per UNDP Georgia Innovation Portfolio Update 2019

The facility piloted about 13 initiatives with the majority embedded in CO programming in partnership with the sister UN agencies; and tested over 10 innovation approaches (human centered design, Foresight, behavioral insights, games, positive deviants, etc (ROAR Innovation Portfolio Inputs 2019)

City experimentation sandbox of Rustavi with the first local governance based Innovation Hub implemented an independent portfolio of initiatives prioritizing youth education, entrepreneurial ecosystem development and employment, along with the action-based participation models, collaborative design of services, and academia, public and private sector partnerships.

In terms of the internal arrangements, CIF allowed for the establishment of the first model of UNDP Georgia Innovation Facility with the defined approach and a core team structure represented by an Innovation Specialist, Behavioral Expert, Data Expert and temporary operational Support.

The team conducted mapping of the possible entry points for alternative solutions through UNDP portfolios, and designed the approach for Embedding Alternative Approaches in Programming.

Post-CIF developments:

The experience of Rustavi has informed the design of regional urban initiatives, including the regional **Mayors for Economic Growth Programme funded by EU** with the unorthodox approach to implementation, incorporating user-centered design and foresight in local problem solving.

Partnerships: the choice of local emerging partners were justified:

- [Orbeliani platform became Rustavi Innovation Hub partner in alternative financing](#) with UNDP supporting its crowdfunding platform in 2019. **Within little over a year Orbeliani got access to USAID funding of 900,000** for 5-year nation-wide Civic crowdfunding for citizen engagement initiative, upscaling our work of integrating digital solutions for participatory action and access to alternative funding at the local level for entrepreneurial ecosystem development with 10 fold increase in funding.
- In 2021 the artificial intelligence startup [Pulsar AI](#) working with Rustavi Hub on Rustavi Chatbot, became the first Georgian startup to be acquired by the US digital automotive merchandising platform SpinCar.
- In 2022 [Futures Laboratory](#), working on entrepreneurial skills development and start up acceleration with Rustavi, launched Innovation and Entrepreneurship Institute (UGFL) - a new global partner of UC Berkeley (SCET - The Sutardja Center for Entrepreneurship & Technology (SCET) at the University of California Berkeley).

Traditional partnerships continue with the sister agencies, like UNFPA and UNICEF, as well as Istanbul Regional Hub; as well as academia - Business and Technology University (BTU).

Czech-UNDP Partnerships for SDGs further continues to support experimentation space in Rustavi, and a 2 year **Research for Policy roundtable** series for knowledge exchange and evidence-based policy making. The roundtable convened in September 2021 dedicated to [public sector innovation at the local governance level](#), reflected regional outlook to urban experimentation, the positive feedback both from the Mayor of the City, as well as local partners from Bolnisi, one of **the 3 municipalities where Rustavi Innovation Hub is transferring their experimentation know-how.**

Rustavi Innovation Hub – is a self-sustaining unit with unique expertise within Georgian’s local governance space for public sector innovation, expanding its donor and partnership base for urban transformation in Rustavi and beyond.

Service line of Alternative Data Research (micro-narratives) continues supporting regional and CO programming.

Conclusion:

The project did not qualify for internal audit exercise, however both operational and financial activities are completed, and with no additional comments, LPAC recommended the project for closure.

List of recipients of the E-LPAC

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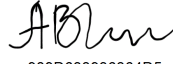
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