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The Russian Federation-UNDP Trust Fund for Development

Strengthening capacities for sustainable development finance in the Commonwealth of Independent States region

Annual report 2021

Endorsed by Ms. Monica Rijal

UNDP Deputy Resident Representative in the Kyrgyz Republic

— DocuSigned by:

Bishkek, 2021

The Russian Federation-UNDP Trust Fund for Development (TFD) Project Annual Narrative and Financial Progress Report

Project title:	Strengthening capacities for sustainable development finance in the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) region
Atlas Project ID:	00107048
Implementing partner:	The Ministry of Economy of the KR, the Russian- Kyrgyz Development Fund, the Eurasian Development Bank
Project budget:	USD 1 200 000 UNDP – Russian TDF
	USD 120 000 EDB (parallel funding)
	USD 91 000 UNDP (co-funding)
	USD 17 000 UNDP (additional co-funding due to the project extension)
Co-financing attracted since project start:	0
Project start and end date:	November 2017 – October 2020
	Project extended: November 2020 – March 2022
Reporting Period:	January - December 2021
Date of the last Project Board meeting:	December 24 th , 2022
SDGs supported by the project:	1 (1.4.); 5 (5 a); 8; 9; 12; 17.
	The list is on page 3

ACRONYMS

CIS - Commonwealth of Independent States

Council - the Council on the formation of a list of priority investment projects

EDB – the Eurasian Development Bank

KR – the Kyrgyz Republic

RKDF - the Russian-Kyrgyz Development Fund

SDG - Sustainable Development Goals

SEIG - Social Economic Inclusive Growth

UNDP - United Nations Development Program

Contribution to the Achievement of the SDGs

All these completed project activities, directly and indirectly, contribute to the implementation of the SDGs.

Goal 1. End poverty in all its forms everywhere (1.4 By 2030, ensure that all men and women, in particular, the poor and the vulnerable, have equal rights to economic resources, as well as access to basic services, ownership and control over land and other forms of property, inheritance, natural resources, appropriate new technology and financial services, including microfinance).

Goal 5. Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls. (5.a Undertake reforms to give women equal rights to economic resources, as well as access to ownership and control over land and other forms of property, financial services, inheritance and natural resources, in accordance with national laws).

Goal 8. Promote inclusive and sustainable economic growth, employment and decent work for all.

Goal 9. Build resilient infrastructure, promote sustainable industrialization and foster innovation

Goal 12: Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns

Goal 17: Revitalize the global partnership for sustainable development

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

"Strengthening capacities for sustainable development finance in the Commonwealth of Independent States region" is a regional project. The project's objective is to raise awareness and strengthen the capacities of ministries and governmental agencies, national financial institutions, business entities and entrepreneurs in dealing with international financial institutions' projects in the Commonwealth of Independent States countries (Armenia, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, and Tajikistan, including clients of the Eurasian Development Bank).

The achievement of the following **results** supports this objective:

- Building capacity for preparation and implementation of investment development projects in the Kyrgyz Republic;
- Building capacity of the CIS member-states in accessing new development finance sources.

The following **two activities** s contribute to the achievement of these results:

Activity 1. Technical assistance to the Kyrgyz Republic in the identification, preparation and implementation of bankable projects for financing from the Russian-Kyrgyz Development Fund.

Activity 2. Technical assistance in project preparation for potential financing from the International Financial Institutions to governmental and business entities in Armenia, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, and Tajikistan, including clients of the Eurasian Development Bank.

After the presidential elections and referendum in January 2021, the new structure and composition of the government have been approved in the Kyrgyz Republic. As a result of this, the implementing partner, the Ministry of Economy has undergone restructuring 2 times: in January 2021, it has been merged with the Ministry of Finance, and in October 2021, the Ministry has been separated from the Ministry of Finance. Due to this, the internal restructuring of the Ministry of Economy has been taking place throughout 2021, which affected negatively to some extent the project implementation due to the changes in focal points and delayed decision-taking processes by the Ministry. When the 1st restructuring started in January 2021, the focal point from the Ministry of Economy halted the implementation of the project activities under Activity 1 from January to the second half of April 2021. At the end of April 2021, the new focal point has been appointed from the Ministry of Economy and the project implementation has been resumed in May 2021. This resulted in the delay of implementation of some project activities: the recruitment of individual consultants to develop the feasibility studies and identification of new business projects were planned to take place in the first quarter of 2021 but work on these activities have been resumed only in May 2021. This restructuring has also affected the functioning of the Council for the formation of a list of priority investment projects as the composition of the Council has been changed due to the abolition of some governmental positions. This impacted the timely holding of the meeting of Council.

As it has been reported in Annual report 2020, in November 2020 following the political instability after the parliamentary elections that took place in October 2020, the Russian Federation has decided to temporarily stop the direct financing by the Russian-Kyrgyz Development Fund. This has impacted the review and processing of the projects that have received support in the development of feasibility studies under the UNDP project and have been submitted to the RKDF in 2020. The review and decision-making process of newly submitted projects by the RKDF have been halted until the start of financing. The direct financing by the RKDF has been resumed only in July 2021.

Nevertheless, the project has managed to successfully implement and complete most of the project activities, which are:

- The project continued its support in implementing the national mechanism for the identification of potential business projects. In 2021, 21 new business project applications had been submitted for technical assistance to develop or improve the quality of the feasibility studies for these projects, and as a result of the review of these applications by the Council for the formation of a list of priority investment projects, 11 new business projects with a total requested funding amount of 17 mln. USD have been approved to receive this technical support;
- The financing of 4 business projects (total financing amount of all projects is 1,255,000 USD) have been approved;
- Several capacity-building measures have been implemented to strengthen the capacities of the clients of the RKDF and the EDB (both business and second-tier banks). 434 people have been trained, out of which 204 were women;
- To promote the responsible and "green" financing and to enhance the knowledge on these subjects, 2 interventions to support the clients of the EDB on implementing ESG practices in their activities have been undertaken: a) research has been conducted to analyze and summarize the best world practices and methodologies of international financial organizations in the field of responsible investments, taking into account ESG factors and b) support in developing individual recommendations on the implementation of ESG practices in the banks' activities, has been provided to the second-tier bank-partners of the EDB. The report with the results of the research on ESG became a key element in the preparation of the ESG session at the Second Eurasian Congress held by the EDB on December 2, 2021.

The UNDP project was due to be closed in December 2021. Within Activity 2 of the project, the implementation of the cooperation framework for targeted support to the preparation of quality bankable projects for EDB's lending has been planned for 2021. Unfortunately, due to the non-identification of a viable investment project, this intervention has not been implemented. On 21.12.2021, the UNDP received an official letter from the EDB, signed by the Deputy Chairman of the Management Board of the EDB, Mr. Iaroslav Mandron, in which the EDB has informed UNDP that the EDB received a request from a Kyrgyzstan company on the development of feasibility studies of the construction of small hydropower station in the Kyrgyz Republic. Thus, the EDB requested the Project Board to consider the prolongation of the project with the aim of co-financing feasibility studies for this potential investment project.

On December 25th, 2021, the virtual joint Sustainable Inclusive Economic Growth (SEIG) Cluster Project Board meeting took place. Taking into account the request of the EDB for the project extension, several decisions specific for the Project "Strengthening capacities for sustainable development finance in the CIS region" have been endorsed, including the technical extension of the project from January 1st – March 31st, 2022 and preparation of the materials on the extension of the project beyond March 2022 to the Project Board and the Steering Committee of the RF-UNDP Trust Fund if the co-financing mechanism for the development of feasibility study with the EDB is be implemented or to prepare the final report if no further extension of the project is requested.

The planned budget for 2021 was 709,642 USD, the actual utilization was 418,268 USD (59%).

2. RESULTS

The following results have been achieved and challenges faced during the reporting period within Activity 1. Technical assistance to the Kyrgyz Republic in identification, preparation and implementation of bankable projects for financing from the Russian-Kyrgyz Development Fund

Action 1.1. Support to the strategic programming of development operations by the government

• The project continued its support in implementing this national mechanism for the identification of potential business projects. Within the framework of this national mechanism, during the reported period, 1 meeting of the Council for the formation of a list of priority investment projects founded under the Ministry of Economy was held in October 2021. Twenty-one new business project applications have been submitted and the Council approved 11 business projects with the total requested funding amount of around 17 million USD from Jalalabad, Batken, Talas, Osh and Chui regions of the country to receive the technical assistance in the preparation of feasibility studies. As it has been reported in previous years, the business sector from the regions is underdeveloped, underfinanced, and had low business operating capacities. Therefore, the project had aimed at identifying more projects from the regions. Also, it is noteworthy to mention once again, that in order to meet the demand of the business sector from the regions, in 2020 the RKDF had decreased the minimum amount of direct financing in regions to 100,000 USD per project. Most of the 11 projects that were endorsed to receive the technical support were from the regions where the business scale and the needed amount of financing were lower: the applications' requested amounts range from 200,000 to 500,000 USD. The projects with the biggest requested funding amounts (2.5 million-10 million USD) come from Chuy and Jalal-Abad region. The approved business projects are in the following sectors: a) medical services b) production of the juices; c) poultry farming; d) cattle farming and production of dairy products; e) clothing production.

Action 1.2. Preparation of the high priority projects for RKDF financing

- The consulting company, which was recruited to provide support in developing the feasibility studies has continued its work. In August 2021, additional 4 new individual consultants have been recruited to provide support in the development of feasibility studies of projects. Since the launch of the project, in total, the project provided support in the development of feasibility studies of 18 business projects. The status of these projects is as follows:
 - a. **Financing is approved** 4 projects with a total amount of 1,255,000 USD. The approved projects: the production of smart water meters; the expansion of the cattle farming and launching the diary production; modernization of the brick factory; the launching of the second sewing factory. The owner of one of the approved projects (the production of smart water meters 400,000 USD) has decided not to take the financing after the loan has been approved due to the changes in the business environments that became unfavorable for the project implementation.
 - b. In the process of review by the RKDF: 9 projects are in the process of review by the RKDF. It is noteworthy to mention that there are 3 projects (832,000 USD) with the requested financing in local currency. Due to the unavailability of financing in local currency from the RKDF, the review and decision-making process has been halted until the RKDF resolves the issue of financing in local currency.

- c. **Rejected by the RKDF**: 1 project with a total requested funding amount of 4 mln. USD.
- d. **Withdrawn by the project owners:** 3 projects didn't comply with the requirements of the RKDF and 1 project withdrew its application due to the impact of COVID-19 on its business (tourism sector).
- During the COVID-19 pandemic, as part of these measures to support the economy in order to minimize the impact of the crisis on the business, the RKDF has developed new loan products based on the cluster approach in the following areas: development of dairy production; development of meat processing; development of aquaculture. As part of the promotion of the RKDF loan product for the cluster development of dairy production, upon the request of the RKDF, the project provided support in the delivery of the capacity building measure for the dairy farming entities to gain knowledge on key aspects of dairy farming activities, as well as to receive information on the development opportunities of their farms through the financing of the RKDF. The training consisted of theoretical training with the delivery of the practical part of the training at real demonstration farms. The representatives of the RKDF made a presentation and held a Q&A session on different aspects of access to the financing of the RKDF. The total number of participants trained is 57, out of which 24 participants were women. The Guide on Diary farming for farmers has been developed and has been widely disseminated. The Guide includes brief information on the RKDF products and contacts, relevant to the farmers, and practical information, guidelines, and contacts on dairy farming.

Справочник для фермера - Российско-Кыргызский Фонд развития (rkdf.org)





• The project provided support in strengthening the capacities of the RKDF's bank partners in the implementation of the RKDF credit lines. The training aimed at strengthening the capacities of the bank employees to conduct the financial analysis of the SMEs and large businesses is in the process of delivery. As a result of this, the participants will obtain knowledge on how to apply instruments of financial analysis to evaluate the financial standing of a real company in different industries and how to assess and manage risks. The banks and business sector will benefit from raising the banks' abilities to finance SMEs and large businesses. The trainings are being conducted for 600 employees of 14 bank-partners of the RKDF, located in 7 oblasts of the country and Bishkek. The training is being conducted by Ernst & Young Academy Kazakhstan.



- Per the request of the Ministry of Economy, the project supported the holding of the competition for the development of media materials among the representatives of mass media, aimed at raising awareness of the population on issues in the field of access to financing for the sustainable development of IFIs. Several publications have been released by the journalists covering the topic of access to finance, thus contributing to the improvement of the financial literacy of the population.
 - Particular emphasis: how to get a loan from the RKDF a conversation with the fund expert <u>Особый акцент: как получить кредит в РКФР — беседа с</u> экспертом фонда - 17.03.2021, Sputnik Кыргызстан
 - о <u>Репортаж инвестиционное финансирование РКФР.МР3 / Облако Mail.ru</u>

The following results have been achieved and challenges faced during the reporting period within Activity 2. Technical assistance in project preparation for potential financing from the International Financial Institutions to governmental and business entities in Armenia, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, and Tajikistan, including clients of the Eurasian Development Bank.

Action 2.1. Cooperation framework for targeted support to the preparation of quality bankable projects for EDB's lending

• The challenge faced with the delivery of this activity was in the identification of a viable investment project for which the support in the development of the feasibility study should be provided. Though potential projects have been identified by UNDP CO Belarus and the EDB office in Tajikistan, unfortunately, they didn't result in the submission of applications.

On December 21, 2021, the EDB sent an official letter to UNDP CO Kyrgyzstan, informing that the EDB received a request from a Kyrgyzstan company for providing support in the development of feasibility studies of the construction of a small hydropower station in the Kyrgyz Republic and, requested for an extension of the project with the aim of the co-financing feasibility studies for this potential investment project. The technical extension of the project until March 31st, 2022 has been endorsed by the SEIG cluster project board to allow the project to review the request for the development of feasibility studies and prepare necessary materials on the extension of the project beyond March 2022 to the Project Board and the Steering Committee of the RF-UNDP Trust Fund if the co-financing mechanism for the development of feasibility study with the EDB is to be implemented.

In January 2022, a joint meeting was held with representatives of the EDB, UNDP and the applicant to discuss the request of the applicant. At the moment, the EDB is working on the development of the ToR for the feasibility studies, and UNDP is expecting to receive it in March 2022.

Action 2.2. Capacity development for financial intermediary operations

• As it has been reported in the annual report of the previous year, the assessment of the needs of the second-tier banks (clients of the EDB) to strengthen their capacities has been conducted in 2020. Per the results of this needs assessment, 18 fields of the banks' activities have been identified as areas to focus on. Per these recommendations, the trainings on 14 various subjects have been conducted to 5 partner banks of the EDB in the last quarter of 2021 in online and offline modes. The priority directions for training included risk management and compliance, the development of credit scoring models, digital marketing, process optimization, IT and information security, the performance management. 159 participants of 5 banks located in Belarus, Kyrgyzstan, Armenia have been trained. 95 were women. 2 companies from the Russian Federation and Georgia have been recruited through

the tendering process to conduct these trainings. Below are the links to some of the training conducted in online mode.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nuTq0tjpnZU&feature=youtu.be

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vrD0AOP_luo

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0xKeTzHk6o4



The sustainability goals and thus also environmental, social and governance (ESG) principles have already been increasingly pursued in global capital investments in recent years. The ESG considerations are rising in importance in banking as well. The banks fully understand their need for comprehensive and credible ESG strategies to participate in and benefit from the accelerating growth of sustainable finance. Nevertheless, despite the rapid growth of this global agenda, many issues remain to be addressed by the financial sector, especially in the CIS region, as standards for ESG investments have not yet been fully defined by regulators and investors. To support the bank-partners of the EDB in promoting the ESG agenda in their activities, the project provided support to 10 financial institutions located in Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Belarus, Russia and Armenia to assess the implications that ESG factors may have on their business model and core operations to map and prioritize the key functions to be addressed (e.g. investment processes, product governance, risk controls, etc.) based on already publicly available regulatory guidelines and market trends. An international consultant conducted a comprehensive analysis of open and closed data of the banks on the implementation of responsible investment practices and ESG factors in their activities through the desk research and interviews and developed individual recommendations for the implementation of ESG practices for each of the banks, taking into account the best world practices and methodologies in the field of responsible investment, taking into account ESG factors.



Action 2.3. Knowledge management to improve the accessibility of development financing

• Research to analyze and summarize the best world practices and methodologies of international financial organizations in the field of responsible investment, taking into account ESG factors, has been conducted. The report with the results of the research became a key element in the preparation of the ESG session at the Second Eurasian Congress held by the EDB on December 2, 2021.

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В рамках исследования: «Анализ лучших мировых практик и методологий ответственного инвестирования с учетом ESG-факторов»

The project evaluation

The project evaluation has been conducted by an international consultant. The final version of the report is under review by the Senior Management of UNDP. Once cleared, the evaluation report will be shared with the project stakeholders. The evaluation results will also be presented at the Project Board meeting planned for March 2022.

3. PROJECT RISKS

Updated Risk Log

#	Description	Date Identifie d	Туре	Impact & Probab ility	Counter-measures / Mngt response	Owner	Last Update	Statu s
1	Limited awareness on businesses on the investment opportunities and available capacity support	Septemb er 2017	Operati onal	P = 3 $I = 3$	The project will ensure wide information sharing on the available capacity-building opportunities via reaching out to local partners and business networks.	Project Developer		
2	Economic volatility affecting IFI budgets	Septemb er 2017	Financi al	P = 2 I = 4	The project will strengthen the financial understanding and vigilance of stakeholders in the CIS via targeted capacity building. It is assumed, that this would help them diversify their approaches and avoid excessive reliance on any individual IFI	Project Developer		
3	Poor coordination of various actors due to complex project design	Septemb er 2017	Operati onal	P = 2 I = 4	The project manager will be responsible for ensuring efficient communication among all project actors. UNDP Country Office in Kyrgyzstan will support Activity 1 in Kyrgyzstan given its well- established cooperation modalities and communication lines with national stakeholders.	Project Developer		

4	COVID-19 impacts the operations and the financial solvency of businesses.	March 2020	Financi al	P = 3 I = 5	The RKDF reduced the minimum loan amount to 100,000 USD for the projects from the regions. New credit products with favorable terms have been introduced.	Project Coordinat or	Decembe r 2021	reduci ng
5	USD foreign currency fluctuations.	June 2020 February 2022	Financi al	P = 3 I = 5		Project Coordinat or	February 2022	increa sing
6	COVID-19: Restrictions on mass gatherings and travels;	March 2020	Operati onal	P = 4 I = 5	Where possible, to conduct the activities in online mode; Ensure all basic safety precautions against COVID-19.	Project Coordinat or	Decembe r 2021	reduci ng
7	Political instability due to elections (parliamentary, presidential). The changes in the Government after the presidential elections and referendum	Septemb er 2020/ January 2021 January 2021	Politica 1	P = 3 I = 5	Introduce regular consultations on the implementation of project activities with all involved actors. The political and social-economic situation will be closely monitored to ensure timely response and mitigation of potential risks.	Project Coordinat or	Decembe r 2021	no chang e

4. LESSONS LEARNT

- Ownership of the project implementation by the partners: Greater commitment and ownership of the process by partners is a key factor in the success of the project implementation. This continued to be significantly affected by the restructuring of the governmental structures that have been ongoing throughout 2021. The internal restructuring of the Ministry of Economy, the frequent change of mid-level and senior-level focal points from the Ministry of Economy has been an ongoing challenge for the project implementation. The limited institutional memory in a context of low government official capacity to implement, monitor, and report undermined progress on improving the enabling environment for business development. Such a level of ownership by the governmental partners in any initiative will most likely negatively affect its sustainability and effectiveness.
- Adapting the internal credit appraisal procedures to the target group: The review process of the project from the moment the project has been submitted to the RKDF until the decision taking takes place is long. In spite of the concessional terms of financing from RKDF, the long review process might negatively impact the decision of the businesses to take the loans from the RKDF: the business environment can change making the project concept is not relevant for the implementation, etc. Taking into account that the RKDF's minimal financing amount is 100,000 for certain regions of the country, the RKDF might consider adapting the specialized credit appraisal procedures appropriate to SME financing for smaller financing amount ranges.
- *Importance of going beyond finance to improve development impact:* One of the projects has decided not to take the loan after the loan has been approved. This was due to the changes in the business environment, unfavorable for the project implementation. This shows the importance to improve the investment climate in providing support to the private sector in accessing finance. The IFIs private sector experience can greatly inform the overall regulatory discussion of a sector in a country and facilitate dialogues of the private sector with the Government to contribute to the enabling environment.

5. FUTURE PLANS

- To complete the ongoing project activities by the end of March 2022.
- The ToR for the feasibility study development to implement the co-financing mechanism with the EDB is in the process of development by the EDB. UNDP expects to receive it by the middle of March 2022. Further on, the project will prepare necessary materials on the extension of the project beyond March 2022 to the Project Board and the Steering Committee of the RF-UNDP Trust Fund if the co-financing mechanism for the development of feasibility study with the EDB is to be implemented.
- Project board meeting to be held in the second half of March 2022

6. PARTNERSHIPS

The support of the previously established partnerships with governmental offices, the RKDF, the business associations has been continued within the reporting period through their participation as members of the Council for the formation of a list of priority investment projects.

7. PARTNERSHIP WITH THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION

The implementation of both components of the project is considered as one of the key areas of partnership with the Russian Federation through the RKDF and the EDB.

In 202, within the framework of Activity 2, the company from the Russian Federation has been selected to conduct trainings for the second-tier banks. Two consultants from the Russian Federation were involved in conducting the research on ESG.

8. COMMUNICATION AND VISIBILITY

The press clipping with links to main publications is in Attachment 10.1.

9. FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

OUTPUT	Budgeted, 2021	Delivered, 2021	The delivery rate, 2021 (%)	Budgeted for the entire project	Delivered since the project start
Output 1: Enhanced capacity of financial institutions and business entities in investment development projects preparation and implementation in the KR.	153,000	148,352	96%	471,500	465,618
Output 2: Enhanced capacity of the select CIS countries in accessing new development finance sources.	438,198	197,566	45%	531,500	291,968
Management.	49,350	45,101	91%	306,000	301,205
GMS	69,094	27,249	39%	88,887	46,812
TOTAL:	709,642	418,268	59%	1,397,880	688,041
TFD	679,394	389,853		1,199,880	906,969
UNDP	30,248	28,416		198,000	198,635

Submitted by Kochkorova Miragul, Project Coordinator

Cleared by Erkinbek Kasybekov, ARR

Date: February 20th, 2022

DocuSigned by: Miragul kochkorova 9A173D29C234A6..

Erkinbek Kasybekov 3E66BB9EAE854CA..

DocuSigned by:

10. ANNEXES

10.1 Media coverage report with links to main publications

Support on development of feasibility study of business projects:

http://www.rkdf.org/ru/novosti/2316 rkfr profinansiruet razvitie molochnogo hozyaystva v chuys koy_oblasti___

https://www.rkdf.org/ru/novosti/novosti_fonda/2252_prodlenie_sroka_predprinimatelyam_kirgizstan a_pomogut_podgotovit_teo_dlya_potencialnogo_finansirovaniya_rkfr

https://www.linkedin.com/feed/update/urn:li:activity:6809064871804579840/

https://www.facebook.com/116487388447179/posts/3999044566858089/?d=n

https://www.mk.kg/social/2021/06/10/predprinimatelyam-kyrgyzstana-pomogut-podgotovit-teo-dlya-potencialnogo-finansirovaniya-ot-rkfr.html

Capacity building

https://banks.kg/news/farmers-of-chui-region-took-part-in-educational-trainings

http://www.rkdf.org/ru/novosti/novosti_fonda/2353_50_fermerov_chuyskoy_oblasti_proshli_treningi _po_vedeniyu_molochnogo_ghivotnovodstva_

https://www.facebook.com/agrolead.org/posts/6906763696002276

https://twitter.com/undpkg/status/1429645213073555462?s=21

https://www.instagram.com/p/CS5skzBoCSh/?utm_medium=copy_link

https://www.facebook.com/undpkg/posts/4203621529733724

https://www.facebook.com/undpkg/posts/3653903224705560

Facebook

Cooperation with the EDB

https://eabr.org/press/releases/eabr-pomog-12-bankam-partneram-iz-armenii-belarusi-i-kyrgyzstanapovysit-svoyu-effektivnost-obespech/

https://www.kg.undp.org/content/kyrgyzstan/ru/home/library/poverty/green-economy.html

UNDP jointly with the Ministry of Investment of the Kyrgyz Republic awarded journalists in a media contest

https://ru.sputnik.kg/20211020/konkurs-joutnalisty-pobediteli-1054291578.html

https://www.facebook.com/116487388447179/posts/4387131668049375/?d=n

10.2 Statistical annex on main results since the project start

