

Closure Stage Quality Assurance Report

Form Status: Approved

Overall Rating:	Highly Satisfactory
Decision:	
Portfolio/Project Number:	00058413
Portfolio/Project Title:	The Lebanese Expatriate Project, Live Lebanon, phase I
Portfolio/Project Date:	2009-10-01 / 2021-03-31

Strategic

Quality Rating: Exemplary

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

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

Evidence:

After the 2018 evaluation, the project identified new strategies and worked on them. Based on the work done and the main achievements, a decision was taken to close the current project and open an engagement facility to ensure that the project is facilitating innovative thinking among all portfolios.

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

- 3: The project responded to at least one of the development settings as specified in the Strategic Plan (SP) and adopted at least one Signature Solution .The project’s RRF included all the relevant SP output indicators. (all must be true)
- 2: *The project responded to at least one of the developments settings1 as specified in the Strategic Plan. The project’s RRF included at least one SP output indicator, if relevant. (both must be true)*
- 1: While the project may have responded to a partner’s identified need, this need falls outside of the UNDP Strategic Plan. Also select this option if none of the relevant SP indicators are included in the RRF.

Evidence:

The Live Lebanon experience was a prime example of points 1, 2, 4 and 5 of the UNDP Strategic plan as it is a project that is well researched - research has been conducted on Lebanese diaspora and their ability and willingness to contribute to development in their home country. It is also a forward-looking plan in its innovation, which reaches out to new donors, who perhaps have a more vested interest in their home country than traditional donors and the project also breaks free from the traditional developmental framework by adopting a unique approach that targets a niche section of donors.

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Relevant

Quality Rating: Exemplary

3. Were the project's targeted groups systematically identified and engaged, with a priority focus on the discriminated and marginalized, to ensure the project remained relevant for them?

- 3: *Systematic and structured feedback was collected over the project duration from a representative sample of beneficiaries, with a priority focus on the discriminated and marginalized, as part of the project's monitoring system. Representatives from the targeted groups were active members of the project's governance mechanism (i.e., the project board or equivalent) and there is credible evidence that their feedback informs project decision making. (all must be true)*
- 2: Targeted groups were engaged in implementation and monitoring, with a priority focus on the discriminated and marginalized. Beneficiary feedback, which may be anecdotal, was collected regularly to ensure the project addressed local priorities. This information was used to inform project decision making. (all must be true to select this option)
- 1: Some beneficiary feedback may have been collected, but this information did not inform project decision making. This option should also be selected if no beneficiary feedback was collected
- Not Applicable

Evidence:

The project's interventions were always taking into consideration the priorities and feedback of the beneficiaries. Moreover, all implemented projects were identified by municipalities and in close coordination with the communities.

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

- 3: *Knowledge and lessons learned from internal or external sources (gained, for example, from Peer Assists, After Action Reviews or Lessons Learned Workshops) backed by credible evidence from evaluation, corporate policies/strategies, analysis and monitoring were discussed in project board meetings and reflected in the minutes. There is clear evidence that changes were made to the project to ensure its continued relevance. (both must be true)*
- 2: Knowledge and lessons learned backed by relatively limited evidence, drawn mainly from within the project, were considered by the project team. There is some evidence that changes were made to the project as a result to ensure its continued relevance. (both must be true)
- 1: There is limited or no evidence that knowledge and lessons learned were collected by the project team. There is little or no evidence that this informed project decision making.

Evidence:

The project ensured that the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Goodwill Ambassadors were aware of the project's activities. A representative from the Ministry, as well as the concerned municipality, were following up closely with the project during the implementation phase.

In addition, bi-weekly meetings took place between the programme and the project to discuss strength/weakness, challenges, problems and achievements. The outcome of the meeting was always the adaptation to lessons learned. For example, the importance of crowdfunding and new tools and approaches to be used.

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

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

Evidence:

Based on the evaluation and lessons learned, the project changed the approach and moved implementing small scale projects to large scale projects.

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Principled**Quality Rating: Satisfactory**

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

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

Evidence:

The Live Lebanon project team is keen to ensure that women are actively involved in the volunteering activities. Moreover, the interventions implemented target women as much as they target men.

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No documents available.			

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

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

Evidence:

The project was categorized as low risk through the SESP. However, the project was executing impact assessments as deemed required.

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

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

Evidence:

The project was categorized as low risk through the SESP. Yet, the project ensured the grievance mechanisms are in place to address any harm affecting beneficiaries.

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No documents available.			

Management & Monitoring**Quality Rating: Exemplary**

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

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

Evidence:

Monitoring was done throughout the year on a bi-weekly basis, as well as on an annual basis. The latter consists of an annual review report prepared by the project manager.

In addition, Monitoring field visits were conducted by the programme officer to ensure that the activities are implemented as per the contracts. Field monitoring reports were drafted and action was taken if necessary, in addition to following up visits. Furthermore, reports to donors were drafted to highlight that the activities are implemented as well as the impact of the project and visibility of the donors.

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

- 3: *The project's governance mechanism operated well, and was a model for other projects. It met in the agreed frequency stated in the project document and the minutes of the meetings were all on file. There was regular (at least annual) progress reporting to the project board or equivalent on results, risks and opportunities. It is clear that the project board explicitly reviewed and used evidence, including progress data, knowledge, lessons and evaluations, as the basis for informing management decisions (e.g., change in strategy, approach, work plan.) (all must be true to select this option)*
- 2: The project's governance mechanism met in the agreed frequency and minutes of the meeting are on file. A project progress report was submitted to the project board or equivalent at least once per year, covering results, risks and opportunities. (both must be true to select this option)
- 1: The project's governance mechanism did not meet in the frequency stated in the project document over the past year and/or the project board or equivalent was not functioning as a decision-making body for the project as intended.

Evidence:

Yes, the project's governance mechanism was functioning as intended as there are bi weekly meetings between the programme and the project as well as ad hoc meetings when necessary. Furthermore, two Goodwill Ambassadors meetings took place where the main achievements and challenges were discussed and the strategy going forward was debated and decided. Moreover, board meetings with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs were taking place.

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

- 3: *The project monitored risks every quarter and consulted with the key stakeholders, security advisors, to identify continuing and emerging risks to assess if the main assumptions remained valid. There is clear evidence that relevant management plans and mitigating measures were fully implemented to address each key project risk and were updated to reflect the latest risk assessment. (all must be true)*
- 2: The project monitored risks every year, as evidenced by an updated risk log. Some updates were made to management plans and mitigation measures.
- 1: The risk log was not updated as required. There was may be some evidence that the project monitored risks that may affected the project's achievement of results, but there is no explicit evidence that management actions were taken to mitigate risks.

Evidence:

The project board, responsible for the overall guidance and supervision of the project implementation, included representatives from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Goodwill Ambassadors. Due to this formation and since all the members represent solid pillars for the implementation of the projects, they all were fully involved in the implementation of the project and were aware of the progress achieved. In addition to the official annual reporting to the project board, unofficial communication was open all the time to ensure effective communication and a risk log on ATLAS is regularly updated. This risk log helped the project manager submit the necessary risk-related issues to the Project Board.

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Efficient

Quality Rating: Exemplary

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

- Yes
- No

Evidence:

The Programme as well as the project team were taking all necessary measures to mobilize resources to ensure the project's sustainability. Several campaigns to raise funds were done including but are not limited to events, one-to-one meetings with the private sector, one-to-one meetings with individuals, and awareness in universities. Funds have been mobilized to ensure proper project management and the achievement of the intended results.

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

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

Evidence:

The procurement plan was carefully prepared at the beginning of each year according to the annual work plan. Monitoring of the implementation of the procurement plan was being done in order to ensure a timely delivery of services/goods required for the successful implementation of the project's activities.

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

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

Evidence:

Live Lebanon along with other projects, which include for example LHSP (Lebanon Host Communities Support Project) and programmes like Energy and Environment consistently closely coordinate with each other and with UNDP's offices in the North, South, Bekaa, Mount Lebanon and Beirut to maximize results that can be delivered with given resources.

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Effective**Quality Rating: Exemplary**

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

- Yes
 No

Evidence:

The Live Lebanon Project has been in existence since 2009 and has been achieving the expected results and targets. Through its 4 themes (Health, Green, Prosperous and Youth) it reached out to almost all factions of society, thereby not only delivering its expected outputs but going one step further by reducing the risk of marginalization of any faction of society, which in turn helps maintain social cohesion.

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No documents available.			

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

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

Evidence:

Regular reviews included bi-weekly meetings and regular field visits as well as Minutes of Meeting of the field visits. The monitoring field visits included recommendations for future action and/or alert our attention to certain issues that need follow-up. Follow up was done in the bi-weekly meetings. In addition, there was the Annual Project Report and Annual Project Review, the latter which assesses the performance of the project and helps develop the Annual Work Plan, while the former summarizes results achieved against pre-defined annual targets at output level.

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No documents available.			

17. Were the targeted groups systematically identified and engaged, prioritizing the marginalized and excluded, to ensure results were achieved as expected?

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

Evidence:

The targeted groups were engaged throughout the entire process. When the call for proposal was launched by the Ministry of Interior and Municipalities, potential target groups submit their proposals. Once the period set to submit the proposal is over, sustainable projects which would have an important beneficiary base were preliminarily selected. To make sure that the projects were truly needed, Live Lebanon team planned field visits to all the projects that were selected based on the proposals. After the visits, a second selection took place and sustainable projects were identified. The team afterward started working on securing the funds needed for the implementation. Once funds are mobilized, another field visit was carried out to follow up on the need of the project. The target groups become involved in the implementation of the project and in some cases they had even involved to cover a part of the cost of the project.

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Sustainability & National Ownership**Quality Rating: Exemplary**

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

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

Evidence:

Both the stakeholders and national partners along with the UNDP country office were involved in the decision-making, implementation, and monitoring processes.

In the project identification phase, the national stakeholders participated in the assessment of their needs and the selection of the projects. As for the decision making phase, the donor participated in deciding which projects they want to fund based on the region and the campaign. The monitoring throughout the implementation and after the completion of the project was done by both National stakeholders, donor, and UNDP team.

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19. Were there regular monitoring of changes in capacities and performance of institutions and systems relevant to the project, as needed, and were the implementation [arrangements](#)⁸ adjusted according to changes in partner capacities?

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

Evidence:

To cope with the capacity changes of the relevant national institution, the project responded to the shifts by holding several meetings with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The latter designated a new focal point with whom the project was working on developing a new framework for cooperation.

On the implementation level, Live Lebanon coordinated closely with the municipalities and the concerned ministries to ensure its work is in accordance with any shifts that may have occurred.

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

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

Evidence:

Since 2009, Live Lebanon managed to raise funds through the GWAs and crowdfunding to implement more than 67 projects. Many of the projects were innovative solutions tackling pressing problems in Lebanon. Live Lebanon also gained over the years a great deal of visibility in the media and social media, engaging with the Diaspora and citizens especially through the volunteering program. The team brought onboard stakeholders from private & public sectors and NGOs working together. The initiative managed to stay relevant for the period of a decade by smartly and swiftly adapting to changes, crisis, and technology. During the last months, it has been piloting new technologies such as blockchain and impact investment.

To ensure the sustainability of the achievements, we developed Phase II under the framework of Engagement Facility. The Engagement Facility will build on the achievements of Live Lebanon and enable UNDP to rapidly provide innovative solutions to pressing problems focusing on reducing poverty and helping vulnerable communities especially during the time of crisis. The response will be framed around two objectives: Providing alternative finance modalities and making an impact in a smart and efficient manner where it is mostly needed.

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QA Summary/Final Project Board Comments