

UNITED NATIONS DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME

**PROJECT DOCUMENT**Georgia

Project Title: Study and Research on Election Media Coverage for the 2021 Local Self-Government Elections in Georgia.

Project Number: 00135456, **Output number:** 00126685

Implementing Partner: UNDP

Start Date: 3 May 2021

End Date: 2 May 2022

PAC Meeting date: 10-Aug-2021

Brief Description

This EU-UNDP project aims at promoting a transparent, credible and balanced media environment during the 2021 Local-Self Government Elections in the country. This will be achieved through implementing evidence-based assessment of media performance via comprehensive and qualified media monitoring (MM), raising journalists' awareness on professional reporting, and enhancing public discussions on media coverage of electoral developments.

UNDP started supporting CSOs in elections media monitoring since 2010. The proposed action builds on the success of previous iterations of MM and is meant to further improve dialogue among the target and beneficiary groups. The increased knowledge among the stakeholders of the media's election reporting strengths and weaknesses will contribute to the improvement of media professional standards.

Specific results of this project include: enhancing pluralism in elections coverage and professionalism of the media in comparison with previous years through: a) an accurate evidence-based account of media coverage of political/election subjects through monitoring activities of Georgian media (including social) during 2021 Local Self-Government Elections; b) protection of the media from undue political influences through widely publicizing the monitoring findings; and c) increasing pluralism of media space and balanced media performance that will allow public to make informed decisions during the elections and getting involved into the public debates.


The project contributes to:

UNSDCF 2021-2025 Outcome 1/CPD 2021-2025 Outcome 1: By 2025, all people in Georgia enjoy improved good governance, more open, resilient and accountable institutions, rule of law, equal access to justice, human rights¹, and increased representation and participation of women in decision making
CPD 2021-2025 Output 1.1) Inclusive national and local governance systems have greater resilience and capacities to mainstream gender, ensure evidence-based and participatory policymaking, map and address inequalities and deliver quality services to all.

UNDP Strategic Plan 2018-2021: Outcome 2. Accelerate structural transformations for sustainable development/2.2.2 Constitution-making, electoral and parliamentary processes and institutions strengthened to promote inclusion, transparency and accountability
Output 00126685: GEN2 (Gender equality as a significant objective)

Total resources required:		386,753.86USD
Total Resources allocated:	European Union	376,932.22USD equivalent of 317,000EUR per UNXRATE for Aug-21: 0.841
	UNDP TRAC:	9,821.641 Equivalent of 8,260 per UNXRATE for Aug-21: 0.841
Unfunded:		0 USD

Agreed by:

UNDP

Anna Chernyshova Resident Representative, a.i.
Date: 12-Aug-2021

I. DEVELOPMENT CHALLENGE

Georgian media enjoys broad public outreach and social influence, which require higher level of responsibility and greater demand for professional standards. Elections are the flashpoints for the media, putting its professionalism and impartiality to the test. Responsible practice of professional journalism is crucial especially during election campaign coverage as it empowers the electorate.

Therefore, supporting media's free and objective performance during election cycles is essential for free and credible elections and democratic governance, while the evidence-based media monitoring provides the general public with benchmarks to judge the fairness of the process.

The contemporary Georgian media, in a nutshell, could be described as "pluralistic but polarized". World's four most renowned organisations that measure media freedoms and development – IREX, Reporters without Borders, Freedom House and OSCE/ODIHR – are unanimous in characterizing the Georgian media: "The media environment is pluralistic but partisan", according to the Freedom House latest report¹. "Georgia's media are pluralist but still very polarised" – as per the Reporters without Borders' World Press Freedom 2021 Report². "Georgia has a pluralistic media scene ... [B]ut the media's political connections and polarisation reached its peak in the [electoral] period [in 2018] – reported IREX in its last edition of the Media Sustainability Index (2019)³. In its final assessment of Georgia's Parliamentary elections 2020, the OSCE/ODIHR reported that "[T]he diverse and pluralistic media were polarized along political lines and business interests"⁴.

High level of polarisation and political affiliation could not but negatively affect the degree of professionalism and sustainability of the media. Following the previous similar local elections in 2017, OSCE/ODIHR election observation mission reported that "important challenges concerning the financial sustainability and independence of the media persist". As per Media Sustainability Index measured by IREX, the overall score of Georgian media gradually decreased from 2.63 (in 2014) to 2.25 (in 2019).

Georgia's press freedom ratings have improved over the last few years. With the Press Freedom Index by Reporters Without Borders the country stands at 60th place, as in 2020, retaining positive tendency in comparison with previous years - 61st in 2018, 69th in 2017; 104th in 2012 and 120th in 2008. The EU/UNDP relevant media monitoring initiatives could be partially attributable to the positive trend through the following activities: building the media monitoring capacities for the civil society organizations (CSOs) by refining their watchdog skills, raising Georgian journalists' awareness on professional reporting, and increasing access to information and transparency on ownership and financial flaws in media by promoting relevant legislative amendments.

During the previous phase of 2020 Parliamentary elections media monitoring, Georgia continued to enjoy pluralistic and mostly free media environment and multiple opportunities were available for the major contestants to present their views through the media in various formats. The OSCE/ODIHR noted in its final report, that "the partisan editorial coverage of the main national private broadcasters, lack of debates between the ruling party and main opponents, and the confrontational tone of the campaign coverage significantly reduced the voters' opportunity to make an informed choice"⁵. The lack of in-depth reporting reduced the coverage of elections to "superficial reporting of daily campaign activities and accusations

¹ Freedom in the World 2021. Accessed on 07 May 2021:

<https://freedomhouse.org/country/georgia/freedom-world/2021>.

² World Press Freedom 2021. Accessed on 7 /May/2021: <https://rsf.org/en/ranking>.

³ <https://www.irex.org/sites/default/files/pdf/media-sustainability-index-europe-eurasia-2019-georgia.pdf> p. 9. Accessed on 7 / May/ 2021. The 2021 report by IREX is expected to be published soon.

⁴ Report of ODIHR Limited Election Observation Mission on Parliamentary Elections in Georgia, 2020. <https://www.osce.org/files/f/documents/1/4/480500.pdf> Accessed on 7 May 2021.

⁵ Ibid.

made by the main political parties”⁶. The findings of the 2020 Media Monitoring conducted by partner CSOs fully coincided with the findings cited above.

A number of positive changes were observed during the 2020 Parliamentary Elections. The coverage of the election subjects became less polarized in online publications, journalists showed higher sensitivity about gender stereotypes and hate speech, while radio stations tried to keep balance between political subjects in their news programmes, that otherwise were superficial, poor in original content and left a lot to be desired.

The main challenge remains to sustain the achievements and help to regulate political temperatures in the run up to next local elections.

It is critically important that the democratic transition towards free and fair state respecting rule of law and human rights is not compromised. Open, professional and impartial media certainly has a vital role in terms of promoting a level playing field among electoral subjects.

The proposed action should further improve dialogue among the target and beneficiary groups putting special emphasis on regional media. The increased knowledge among the stakeholders of the media's election reporting strengths and weaknesses will contribute to the improvement of media professional standards. This is especially important for the regional/local media outlets who come under focus during local elections.

The EU policy documents and instruments – such as the Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms; Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union; the Association Agreement – refer to the need of ensuring freedom of the media in the context of human rights and fundamental freedoms to strengthen respect for democratic principles, the rule of law and good governance and to contribute to consolidating domestic political reforms. They encourage proper implementation of the broadcasting legislation and ensuring freedom of speech and expression, call for promoting exchange of views and bringing legislation in full compliance with European standards with a view to future participation in international instruments of regulatory framework, including the progressive approximation with the EU framework.

Current proposal addresses key issues related to the above through addressing the media challenges from multiple perspectives in the run up to the upcoming local elections of 2021. The proposed activities include strengthening the media monitoring practices and publicising the findings. In fact, this is also believed to contribute to equal access to the media for all political subjects during the election campaign.

In the previous media monitoring iteration gender representation - both in terms of equality among the male and female candidates as well as gender-sensitivity in the campaigns of electoral subjects - was one of the important elements of the research. The findings of consecutive monitoring periods revealed that newsroom managers and journalists at broadcast stations as well as many online publications are increasingly aware of gender sensitivities and make genuine efforts to stop spreading gender stereotypes. However, some print editions at national level are still carrying gender stereotypes and are not willing to revise their style. After the adoption of Temporary Special Measures (TSM) or gender quotas by the Georgian Parliament before the 2020 Parliamentary elections, the representation of women in the legislature increased. It is believed that the same TSM should increase the gender balance in local councils too. Therefore the “gender component” of the research will be further maintained in the 2021. Monitoring gender representation in the media during elections has an added value too – findings of the 2020 MM on gender have been used by other researchers for awareness raising purposes during the “16 Days of Activism against Gender-based Violence” in the framework of UN Women’s Generation Equality campaign.

⁶ Ibid.

The monitoring methodology for this topic has been developed before the 2020 MM iteration. Media monitors will again undergo awareness-raising seminar on gender problematics with the involvement of the UN Joint Programme for Gender Equality in Georgia and a local expert.

It is likely that closer to the election period the political temperatures will rise, and media may again become highly polarized. It is crucially important to sustain earlier efforts and further raise the awareness of media outlets on the importance of unbiased and professional media coverage so that they can better function as neutral and fair mediators between the public and authorities, thus, encouraging public involvement in statehood building.

The MM was undertaken on several iterations covering both national and local elections. This promoted provision of reliable and independent data of the election-related products of selected media sources from the point of view of their content trends and balance of coverage. Based on the 2020 monitoring cycle, it was deemed important to present the monitoring results considering the context, i.e. in relation to the country's general media environment of the day. The user-friendliness of the reports and presentation were also considered including infographics and other visualization techniques. It was also decided to shorten the period between the monitoring cut-off date and the actual presentation of the results to make it more relevant for media. The reports were also strengthened from the qualitative components point of view. This helped informing the discussions on following subjects: political neutrality of journalists and their ability to reflect all important opinions across the political spectrum; the ability of journalists to set the agenda for news and the level of professional and neutral evaluation of the issues included in the news report; self-censorship; information flow; spin doctoring; black PR; propaganda; types of hidden advertisement; hate speech; gender stereotype, etc. The relevant EU/UNDP initiatives have demonstrated the interest to improve the news coverage as a result of the MM results.

Airing of balanced and neutral information during the election-related coverage without missing any particular important topics shall be promoted again through organizing the MM exercises in the selected media sources the results of which will be actively discussed and debated over. The project will aim at enhancing public debate on media's performance during the election cycles through public presentations that are usually actively covered by media itself. The project activities will address the identified problems through promoting the formation of free environment for journalists and the improved access to information for public in general.

Political developments that followed the 2020 Parliamentary elections prompted UNDP to extend the MM operations to post-electoral period – February and March 2021. Against the background of heightened political tensions and the boycott of the Parliament by major opposition political parties, the post-electoral MM phase was meant to establish to which extent media was able to contribute to national dialogue and peaceful resolution of the crisis. It also helped to better understand challenges facing the media and identify how to address them in the future.

As a part of the political agreement between the ruling Georgian Dream party and the opposition, reached with the mediation of EU and US, and in response to the opposition's demands for snap Parliamentary elections, the ruling party committed itself to support such elections if it would fail to obtain at least 43 % of valid votes in local elections in October 2021. This converts local elections into a "referendum" regarding snap parliamentary elections and increases the likelihood of intensive post-electoral political processes. In light of the above, it is proposed to plan post-electoral media monitoring in order to evaluate whether or not local and national media offer balanced and pluralistic coverage, whether they instigate to political confrontation or promote a peaceful dialogue to build a consensus around most important national and local issues.

Other than thematic monitoring, UNDP intends to research which topics are most intensively covered by the media in pre- and post-election periods. The 2020 post-election MM showed that local media outlets were mostly concentrated on local issues, while national media was concentrated mostly on political topics

of the day. This element of the analysis should reveal to which extent both the national and regional/local media are able to become a platform for public discussions on the issues considered as “most important”. This will also give the researchers an opportunity to assess the ability of the media to create its own agenda by comparing the most discussed topics in the media with the index of the “most important national issues” published by the CRRC / Caucasus Barometer every year⁷.

II. STRATEGY

The strategy of this project builds on the premise that proper media monitoring and the publicity of its findings sensitize media sources towards the need of ensuring non-biased and balanced coverage and contributes to helping electorate make informed choice in upcoming elections. The findings, to be discussed publicly are meant to facilitate open discussion among the wide range of stakeholders such as public in general and CSOs, specialized and media experts as well as political parties. This should help identify and correct biased tendencies. It should also stimulate further public debates as a necessary pre-requisite for democratic processes.

The provision of proper MM and the publicity of its findings should sensitize various media sources under the review towards the need of ensuring objective and balanced coverage. The findings, to be discussed publicly are meant to facilitate open discussion among the wide range of stakeholders such as public in general and CSOs, experts in media and elections, as well as political parties. This should help identify and correct biased tendencies as it had been the case on multiple occasions during previous rounds of MM. It should also stimulate further public debates as a necessary pre-requisite for democratic processes.

The CSOs that will perform pre- and post-elections monitoring of the relevant media sources are being hereby identified from the pool of organizations the capacities of which were built under previous EU/UNDP project. The CSOs will perform the monitoring and be actively engaged in presenting the results along with EU and UNDP, which will facilitate adequate environment for holding professional and unbiased monitoring. The CSOs will be able to independently apply various tools of media monitoring as well as produce and disseminate professional assessments of the media.

The planned initiation of the MM will signal various media sources to be better prepared for a professional coverage of elections. In other words, those media sources will have enough time prior to elections to consider the ways of improving on neutrality and balance in their coverage. This also underlines the fact that the MM is in fact provided more as an informative and stocktaking rather than criticizing tool of Georgian media.

During the discussions, the representative from the respective CSOs will present the key findings and invite relevant civil society or media experts to further debate on those.

The proposed activities are as follows:

- The action will revisit the methodology of media monitoring and will facilitate its adaptation to obtain reliable and independent data of the electoral broadcasts of the selected TV stations, online publications, social media, print media and radio broadcast. The presented data will meet the international standards and good MM practices as acquired from previous capacity building iterations. It will contribute towards improved monitoring framework and recognition of the relevant standards of coverage by major players.
- Media outlets will be selected using a mix of methodologies. For the traditional broadcast media, monitors will analyse nine regional and five national TV broadcasters. Criteria for the selection of regional

⁷ The latest research conducted by CRRC containing the list of most important national issues can be seen here: https://www.ndi.org/sites/default/files/NDI%20Georgia_December%202020%20Poll_ENG_FINAL.pdf

TV stations will be: a) station is based in a regional centre; b) station regularly produces its own news programmes. Georgian Public Broadcaster will be one of the five national stations monitored, while four others will be selected on the basis of ratings. During the pre-election period both regional and national TV broadcasters will be monitored. Given the difference in impacts of the national and regional broadcasters after the voting day, only five national TV stations and Ajara TV of the GPB will be monitored during the post-election period. Monitoring of TV talk shows traditionally will start only after the elections are called.

- There will be selected six regional radio stations that are producing their own daily local news programmes. In addition, six national radio stations will be selected for the monitoring based on a) production of own original news programme, coverage area (potential audience).

- Criteria for the selection of regional newspapers are: a) to be published regularly at least once a week, without long interruptions, b) to be a commercial enterprise (not financed by a municipality). All seven important national newspapers that have political content will be selected for the MM.

- As for the internet publications, their ratings will be established by using ALEXA and SimilarWeb analytics tools, as well as based on a feedback from focus group of prominent media experts. For the monitoring of social network sites, CrowdTangle analytical tool will be used by the monitors who have been granted access by the Facebook especially for this research at the request of UNDP. Monitors will analyse about 100 sources of information every day. This includes the most viewed Facebook pages of media outlets, political figures, political parties and open Facebook groups, as well as articles shared within those groups. CrowdTangle and BuzzSumo analytics allow identifying mostly viewed/engaged Facebook pages in real-time, as the index of their popularity change rapidly during the course.

- The partners of the Project are CSOs established in Georgia. Namely, Georgian Charter of Journalistic Ethics (GCJE), which will perform the TV news and talk shows, online and social media monitoring; and Internews, which will provide for printed media and radio monitoring, while Caucasus Research Resource Centers (CRRC) will perform the monitoring of a topic of mutual agreement with EU Delegation. Their fundamental media monitoring capacities have already been built within the previous rounds of similar joint undertakings by EU and UNDP as well as through training and consultancy provided by "Memo 98", a Slovak organization, which has contributed the media monitoring methodology. A trainer in MM from Memo-98 will help the CSOs to refresh the methodology and adapt it to new conditions on the ground. Capacities for social media monitoring methodology have been built in 2020. A number of CSOs are monitoring social network sites in Georgia, however, the methodology designed by the group of monitors and applied for the MM of 2020 Parliamentary elections can be considered as the most informative among them. In addition, the financial and management viability of the partner CSOs has been assessed by external auditors within during the 2020 round of media monitoring cycle. The assessment identified that the organizations have sufficient structures and instruments on the ground to cope with the tasks assigned to them.

- In order to further increase the capacity of the CSOs/media monitors to better orientate themselves to electoral processes, which will probably constitute a considerable volume of news/debates, they will undergo training in electoral cycle and the latest electoral rules and processes.

- A standard agreement will be established between UNDP and the partners following UNDP rules and regulations. In view of the record and experiences, the CSOs will be exempt from competitive procurement process and shall be selected directly. The agreement with the partner CSOs will be covering the costs of salaries, office rent, office services and consumables, Internet and communication expenses, purchase of media archival services, TV/radio ratings, etc. To be eligible under the Agreement, costs under the CSO budgets shall be verifiable and traceable to the activities, will comply with the requirements of national tax legislation, be incurred during the duration of the action, and be necessary for the implementation of the action.

- Exact number of the media sources including the social media as well as the monitoring timeframe including the start and end-date of both pre- and post-election MM operations will be determined prior to the actual commencement of the media monitoring as a standard practice. During the pre-election period, which will last for 5.5 months, the following number of media will be monitored: 14 national and regional TV stations for news and talk-shows; 12 radio stations (both national and regional); 15 national and regional newspapers; 15 national and regional online publications; around 70 social network sites and up to 5 national TV stations for thematic research. In the post-election period, which will last for 2.5 months, there will be monitored 5 TV stations (4 national and Ajara TV), 7 national newspapers and 8 national online publications. These figures are indicative while exact numbers will be determined on the basis of the selection criteria described above.

During the post-election period only national TV news, TV talk shows, print and online publications will be monitored. The same methodology will be applied as in pre-election period with some necessary modifications and adjustments. The number and regularity of pre-election monitoring reports and their respective presentations to the public will be determined prior to the commencement of the MM in consultation with CSOs. There will be one presentation of post-election MM findings organized shortly before the termination of monitoring period.

- The news and talk-shows coverage will be analysed and evaluated based on the methods agreed with the selected CSOs, and the findings will be presented by the monitoring organizations and discussed by the above mentioned stakeholders with regards to a) quantitative balance among political subjects, b) political neutrality of journalists and their ability to reflect all important opinions across the political spectrum (content analysis), c) whether and how the politicians in power are using administrative resources during the pre-election period, d) types of hidden advertisement, e) ability of journalists to set the agenda for news and the level of professional and neutral evaluation of the issues included in the news report, f) how the election outcome is perceived taking into account post-electoral developments in 2020. The methodology applied in the pre-electoral period will be replicated in the post-electoral period with possible minor modifications. The MM shall also attempt to look at the media coverage through the gender lenses and for that the parallel ongoing UNDP gender project staff capacities and resources will be employed.

The regular discussions will provide media companies with the necessary analysis of the coverage of electoral subjects and issues and provide them with a better understanding of the gaps and ways to overcome them in the interests of becoming more impartial and professional.

UNDP will ensure the broadest possible involvement of the stakeholders in the ongoing processes.

The project start date is 3 May 2021 as indicated in article 2.2 of the Special Conditions. After the official start date administrative staff will be recruited, media monitors trained, monitoring methodology updated, and media outlets identified for the media monitoring. The following activities will be implemented during the Project:

1. Adjusting MM methodology to new conditions, including developing of criteria for selection of media outlets to be monitored;
2. Training of senior monitors;
3. Notifying media representatives on the launch of MM (June 2021) and on the post-electoral phase of monitoring (January 2022) / holding of online meetings with media managers/producers before the start of each phase of monitoring;
4. Monitoring of media coverage of the pre- and post-electoral periods for 2021 local elections cycle (June-November 2021 and February-March 2022);

5. Developing MM reports of the 2021 elections and disseminating them to a wide range of stakeholders: one interim MM report (shortly before the voting day) and one final MM report (after the second-round voting day in November 2021);
6. Developing post-election MM report (March or April 2022);
7. Organizing of presentations of respective MM findings.
8. Organising final seminar for the monitors on good practices and lessons learned from MM.

With the pre-electoral phase of the monitoring starting in June 2021 and ending on the second-round voting day, November 2021, the post-electoral monitoring will start at the end of January 2022 / beginning of February 2022 and will last for two months.

III. RESULTS AND PARTNERSHIPS

3.1/ Expected Results

This EU-UNDP project will focus on promoting a transparent, credible and balanced media environment during the 2021 local Self-Government Elections in the country. This will be achieved through implementing evidence-based assessment of media performance via comprehensive and qualified media monitoring (MM), raising journalists' awareness on professional reporting, and enhancing public discussions on media coverage of electoral developments.

Specific results of the intervention include: a) an accurate evidence-based account of media coverage of political/election subjects through monitoring activities of Georgian media (including social) during 2021 Local Self-Government Elections; b) protection of the media from undue political influences through widely publicizing the monitoring findings; and c) increase in pluralism of media space and balanced media performance that will allow public to make informed decisions during the elections and getting involved into the public debates. The project will strive to deliver 2 outputs.

Output 1/ Evidence based assessment of the quality of the coverage of Georgian Local Self-Government Elections 2021 by national media via comprehensive media monitoring during and after elections.

The proposed activities under this output are as follows:

1.1/ Conducting media monitoring of major media sources (TV – news and talk shows, internet, social media, print and radio against the most relevant electoral subjects and key topics during the 2021 local elections;

- * 14 Georgian TV channels will be monitored within 5 months before the 2021 local elections;
- * 12 radio stations will be monitored for 5 months prior to the 2021 local elections;
- * 15 regional and national newspapers will be monitored within 5 months prior to 2021 local elections monitoring;
- * 15 regional and national online news portals will be monitored within 5 months prior to the 2021 local elections monitoring;
- * approximately 70 social network sites will be monitored for analysis per day.
- * 5 national TV stations (news and talk-shows) will be subject of thematic monitoring for 2 months prior to 2021 local elections.
- * 5 national Georgian TV channels will be monitored during 2 months after 2021 local elections;
- * 7 national newspapers will be monitored during 2 months after the 2021 local elections.
- * 8 national online publications will be monitored during 2 months after the 2021 local elections.

1.2/ Developing and distributing media monitoring reports and recommendations;

1.3/ Raising public awareness on media monitoring findings through organising relevant presentations and discussions: 3 public and 1 closed (for media representatives only) discussions/presentations organized. 1 post-election MM report produced.

1.4/ Organising an informative meeting with local media representatives before the monitoring;

1.5/ Conducting media monitoring of TV news and talk shows for the perception of outside influence on electoral processes;

1.6/ Promoting the bilingual online data-base – mediamonitor.ge

Methodology of Monitoring

The informed dialogue involving representatives of Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) and media experts will be ensured with an aim to raise awareness of media professionals and general public as to what represents positive and negative media practices. Specific methodology and criteria will be established to monitor electoral broadcasts. Three CSOs will perform a quantitative and qualitative analysis of news, political and elections related talk shows and other programmes aired during prime time. The information will include a range of indicators, such as: airtime given to different candidates, frequency of mentioning, tone of coverage, equal treatment, “hate speech” and others. The indicators will be agreed upon in details between UNDP and the CSOs prior to the actual start of the monitoring.

The thematic TV monitoring will capture media’s perceptions of foreign influences on Georgian electoral processes. While the details of the methodology will be a function of the topic to be monitored, it will consist of both quantitative and qualitative components.

The obtained statistical data will be presented at the various discussion fora and analysed accordingly. The project will encourage understanding of the role and duties of impartial and professional media in democracy. To the extent possible, more active collaboration will be established with journalists and media professionals while adjusting the methodology to the latest realities as well as in producing media analysis based on monitoring results, in preparing better visualizations of the data and wider use of social media to disseminate the findings.

The MM reports and findings will be placed online at the interactive and easily accessible information platform <http://www.mediawatch.ge> which has been maintained by UNDP after the completion of the previous undertakings. The data is organized in the user-friendly manner to provide an opportunity for media experts and most importantly for an average user to filter the information customized to their own interest. As there is no statistical data or alternative monitoring data available, this platform will give the opportunity for various interested stakeholders – Georgian public, media, authorities, CSOs, international organizations as well as all other interested players abroad – to view the results and make conclusions about the media situation in the country. The platform allows the stakeholders to track appropriate tendencies in Georgian media.

The proposed platform will promote the concept of media monitoring among local and international stakeholders. This should contribute to the achievement of its overall objective of fostering transparent and balanced media environment during the local elections. Through raising the profile of the project, the platform will expose Georgian media outlets to the increased public attention and subsequent debates.

The platform will complement the information used through the traditional means of communication by representing an easy and user-friendly reference point for fresh results. Cross-referencing will be ensured by placing appropriate links both at the social networks and at the platform. In addition, where necessary UNDP country office, will use the Facebook and Twitter accounts to promote the awareness on MM and provide additional updates and references with appropriate references to the EU role.

All CSOs will have a common list of MM subjects, which will be developed prior to the commencement of the monitoring. Based on the previous experience, the list should be maintained as a living document providing an opportunity to add or remove subjects during the monitoring process following any possible changes to the electoral landscape.

The list of media outlets and the current important topics to be monitored are developed and coordinated with EU Delegation prior to the initiation of the monitoring.

For the post-electoral phase of monitoring both the list of subjects (political entities monitored) and media outlets will be reviewed based on new political realities. During two weeks prior to the start of the post-electoral monitoring operations, monitors will gain adapt the methodology and the database.

UNDP's role will be assuring implementation of and coherence between agreed activities towards achievement of identified results. UNDP will ensure that activities are implemented in conformity with agreed principles, budget, workplan and in line with EU's requirements as sets out in the General Conditions and UNDP rules and regulations.

In view of the nature of the 2021 elections reasonable efforts will be made to cover regional media.

Beyond screening individual channels, the project will also produce an overall picture of media power that the political parties actually possess based on quantitative data. It will look at how each party is being reflected/promoted/portrayed in the media across the board, not only at one particular channel.

In addition, if by the time of launching the media monitoring a legislative framework is amended, the project will factor it into the monitoring including by adapting the methodology accordingly.

Output 2/ Enhanced capacities of CSOs in implementing evidence-based oversight of media performance in the context of elections.

The following activities will be carried out under this output:

2.1/ Training / retraining the CSO media monitors according to the latest methodology;

2.2/ Updating the methodologies of media monitoring of various media segments, including social media, by extending monitoring activities to key political / social topics (such as gender equality, influence of foreign powers, most important current political topics) and adapting it to the latest situation on the ground

In order to further increase the capacity of the CSOs/media monitors and adapt the methodology to the changing context, they will undergo training. The training on the methodology will be performed by Rastislav Kužel of Memo-98, a Slovak media research organization with more than 20 years of experience of research and history of collaboration with the UN agencies, EU / European Commission and OSCE/ODIHR in the field of elections-related media monitoring. During the training course the consultant will illustrate the latest developments in media analysis, international principles and best practices in the analysis of election campaigns and media coverage of elections.

The consultant will provide training to the groups of media monitors split by media segments. He will cover general aspects of the media analysis during elections, the basic benchmarks for a valid and reliable media monitoring operation and the international principles regarding freedom of expression and elections. The training look into the most sensitive, challenging and disputable questions related to the media monitoring of the elections. This includes: the definition of the tone of coverage, how to monitor government officials taking an active part in the election campaign, how to update the analysis forms, if needed, how to tackle qualitative issues regarding the journalistic professional standards and ethical codes, how to define the sensitive matters of dangerous/hate speech and disinformation, and finally reflect on the scope, scale and approach of a feasible social network sites (SNS) monitoring. The scope of this part of the training will be to tackle the most problematic issues related to the monitoring and possible ways to address them.

The current Covid-19 crisis and related constraints dictate to deliver training in a **remote online** mode, while the high number of monitors engaged in the project suggest to adopt a **'training-of-trainers'** model.

The main thematic blocks the training curriculum will be built upon the following topics:

1. International principles on freedom of expression and elections
2. Media monitoring during elections

3. Media and journalistic standards and election coverage & women and elections
4. Media monitoring: sensitive and challenging issues
5. Monitoring social network sites

3.2/ Resources Required to Achieve the Expected Results

The total required funding for activities proposed under this project amounts to USD 386,753.86, including USD 376,932.22 (equivalent of EUR 317,000) and USD 9,821.64 UNDP TRAC funds (equivalent of EUR 8,260).

The project staff is recruited in May and July 2021, media monitors are trained, monitoring methodology is updated and media outlets are identified for the media monitoring using UNDP's TRAC resources, project activities from May 3, 2021 will be funded by EU funds.

Required material and human resources, are listed below. Respective costs are spelled out in Annex III- Budget of the Action.

Project equipment and other project running costs

The Project budget includes the following costs:

- Human Resources.
- Cost of IT and telecommunication.
- Office costs, including office rent, stationery supplies for operation of the office.
- Web-site upgrade, maintenance, publications, translation of publications and interpretation of events.
- Visibility activities (as spelled out in the Communication and Visibility Plan)

List of staff directly attributed to the project:

While the section below provides a brief description of the respective positions, section VII on Governance and management arrangements of the project includes a detailed explanation for each; detailed costs per each position are also spelled out in the budget (Section VII Multi-Year Workplan).

1. Project Manager (SB4/MID – 100%) – Programmatic and administrative oversight and internal controls, coordination and supervision of institutional relations with the Project beneficiaries, communication and reporting to the EU Delegation
2. Project Administrative Finance Assistant (SB3/MID – 50%) – responsible for technical support in financial, contractual and organisational matters.
3. UNDP Democratic Governance (DG) Team Leader (NoB – 20%) – responsible for quality assurance of the project, supporting the Project Board, facilitating coordination within UNDP, other UN agencies and concerned stakeholders. The DG Team Leader will complete monthly timesheets reflecting actual time spent on the given project.
4. UNDP DG Programme Associate (G6 - 20%) – responsible for providing administrative advice and supporting project implementation from the Country Office. S/he will provide administrative, contractual and reporting related support to ensure compliance of administrative processes with respective UNDP rules and regulations, and the respective Country Office Standard Operational Procedures. The DG Programme Associate will complete monthly timesheets reflecting actual time spent on the given project.
5. UNDP Communications Analyst (NoB – 10%) – provides advice on all communications-related matters and supports the project in the implementation of its Communication and Visibility Plan. S/he also liaises directly with the communications team of the EU Delegation to Georgia. UNDP

Communications Analyst will complete monthly timesheets reflecting actual time spent on the given project.

6. UNDP Operations/Finance Analyst (NoB - 10 %) - provides assistance and advice, as well as financial clearance to the projects on finance related matters, such as, providing advice to projects on Financial matters, such as budgeting, expenses tracking, financial transaction, project level reporting at CO level. The time spent to project implementation will be backed with supporting document – timesheet.

For these causes, the project staff would require permanent coordination (including meetings), communication and exchange of documentation with both the project partners and UNDP throughout implementation of the Action. The project will rent the space. To the extent possible, based on the experience of previous years, the project will apply the cost-effective solution of cost-sharing the office space with other projects of UNDP. The project will receive some office equipment and furniture from the previous UNDP projects. Two portable computers and a printer will be purchased for the project staff.

The project will cover staff communication costs (e.g. telephone/internet).

3.3/ Partnerships

The MM will be performed through the Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) whose fundamental capacities have already been built within the previous rounds of similar joint undertakings by EU and UNDP, media experts and professionals will also be actively involved during the public presentations that are planned to be regularly organized.

The partners of the project (responsible parties) are CSOs established in Georgia. Namely, **Georgian Charter of Journalistic Ethics (GCJE)** will perform the TV news and talk shows, online and social media monitoring; **Internews-Georgia** will provide for printed media and radio monitoring, while **Caucasus Research Resource Center (CRRC) - Georgia** will perform the monitoring of media perceptions of outside influence on Georgian electoral processes. Their fundamental media monitoring capacities have already been built within the previous rounds of similar joint undertakings by EU and UNDP as well as through training and consultancy. However, they will undergo additional training in order to update monitoring methodology. Capacities for updating media monitoring methodology will be sought beyond the country borders. Based on the experience of the last 10 years Rastislav Kuzel of a Slovak CSO, Memo-98, is best positioned to advise Georgian media researchers in the updating of media monitoring methodology.

Financial and management viability of the partner CSOs was recently assessed by external auditors. The assessment identified that the organizations have sufficient structures and instruments on the ground to cope with the tasks assigned to them.

UNDP will ensure the broadest possible involvement of the stakeholders in the discussions on the results of MM.

3.4/ Risks and Assumptions

Management of operational risks and assumptions will be delivered through the construction and regular updating of risks and issues logs, escalation of identified gaps in performance, performance reporting, minutes of meetings and Project Board and an adequately skilled and fully resourced project management function. Detailed list of risks and measures of their mitigation is presented in the Risk Log below:

P = probability; I = Impact; Scores are based on a scale from 1 (low) to 5 (high).

#	Description	Date Identified	Type	Probability & Impact	Countermeasures Management response	Owner
1	Negative reaction by some media outlets due to unfavourable findings on their	May, 2021	Political	P=3 I=2	Individual meetings with these media outlets will be held to explain in details the rationale behind the existing results. Also,	Project Manager

#	Description	Date Identified	Type	Probability & Impact	Countermeasures Management response	Owner
	performance.				during the implementation of the project, such media outlets will be informed timely so that they are aware and are availed with an opportunity to react.	
2	COVID-19 outbreak may force print media outlets to shut down again and go online.	May, 2021	Operational	P = 1 I = 1	Those print publications which go online will be monitored using the monitoring methodology designed for internet publications.	Project Manager
3	Public health authorities issue restriction on organising in-person events.	May, 2021	Operational	P = 3 I = 2	Events will be partly or entirely held on-line in accordance with the sanitary regulations in place.	Project Manager
4	Local elections are postponed due to the pandemic.	May, 2020	Political	P = 1 I = 4	Project duration and activities will be adjusted in consultation with the EU Delegation to Georgia	Project Manager

As for the assumptions, it is expected that the project activities will successfully address the identified problems. The media monitoring (MM) will contribute to keeping media outlets more accountable to public and the principles of fairness and objectivity. As previous MM experience has proven, most of media outlets are particularly alert during the MM cycles. Thus, it is expected that the action will succeed to promote local media's free and professional operation during the upcoming elections in Georgia.

3.5/ Stakeholder Engagement

The project will directly benefit Georgia-based journalists and other representatives of mass media outlets (TV, internet, print and radio), social media, media associations, international and local civil society organizations (CSOs), students of academic institutions, voters.

CSOs, media experts and professionals will be actively involved. The involvement of public in general will also be sought not only through informing them about media findings, but also through their participation in presentations and debates to the extent possible. All stakeholders will be invited to actively contribute to the programme implementation, and thus relevant steps will be taken to promote broad based ownership of the programme achievements by the beneficiaries. Where possible, for the purposes of raising politicians' awareness about the importance of cooperating with the media, they will be invited to the presentations and more targeted information dissemination tools will be used.

The proposed initiative has been discussed with the CSOs to be involved in the media monitoring while monitoring initiative itself is well known to local and international stakeholders. Overall, there is a highly positive attitude towards the planned monitoring. Moreover, it is considered of an utmost importance during the electoral cycles.

EU and UNDP's facilitation in building consensus about promoting fair and impartial media, as a basis for a consolidated democracy, is also appreciated by the concerned stakeholders as the organizations stand as neutral parties to the process. EU and UNDP will serve as active facilitators and involve all available resources to reach consensus with all stakeholders.

The established reputation of the organizations in front of representatives of civil society, media, other organizations and public in general, will be used for the benefit of the proposed project and will guarantee close involvement of these stakeholders in the processes.

EU and UNDP have established positive working relations with local and international partners within and outside of the project scope.

3.6/ Knowledge

Some of the specific knowledge products that will be produced by the project include:

- Media monitoring reports (TV, radio, press, online and social media) disseminated through mediamonitor.ge website as well as on data carriers.
- Training materials for media monitors.

3.7/ Sustainability and Scaling Up

Ensuring sustainability of the initiative will remain the highest priority for UNDP. The experience and lessons learned of the previous interventions will feed into the sustainability strategy of this project. The sustainability strategy aims at a) consolidating institutional capacity of implementing partners to conduct media monitoring independently, and b) accumulating intellectual resources by developing and adapting media monitoring methodologies and creating a research reports and other materials. The sustainability element has already been applied as the time has come when CSOs will be able to provide the monitoring independently (except the social media monitoring component as noted above).

The project aims to reach sustainable results through promoting openness and transparency. As the previous interventions has showed, the media practices improved considerably after the contributions made through the several cycles of MM. Thus, it is expected that such practices will be further sustained and consolidated. The culture of holding structured and evidence-based debates will also be promoted through the presentation events to be organized within the project based on the quantifiable findings. The action should also be contributing to the stable nature of political processes in the country as when the MM subjects are aware that they are also the part of the monitoring process, their respective pre-electoral activities have higher chances of more responsible conducts and approaches MM will further hone the local CSO research skills in general. In addition to building on the institutional capacities of the CSOs, which have been developed within the previous similar interventions, the project will mobilize to the extent possible the same media monitors individually that were involved before. Media monitors will be empowered with a specific skill that will help them to be engaged in future monitoring activities of other type, i.e. not only related to the elections. Through special training sessions they will gain knowledge of media research tools which will also enable them to participate in media research projects and operate independently in future. The MM reports can also serve for the academic research of Georgian media. The project shall also contribute to more stable nature of professional reporting by media by getting such coverage more into the habit.

The project will aim at sustaining the results and products through its focus on capacity building/development of CSOs. The provided knowledge on media monitoring techniques and practices will remain within the public at large. The website and public presentations will be used to provide such information to the public based on the MM reports. At the same time, the CSOs can be used as a resource for future media monitoring as well as for the knowledge transfer to other (e.g. regional) organizations.

The project will build on the reputation that it gained among the academic circles and journalism educators who already use media monitoring reports from previous years in their courses. Based on the interest, more CSO representatives will be engaged to expose them with basic media monitoring capacities that they can apply for future similar initiatives. To make this element more sustainable, some monitors (and monitoring coordinators) will be recruited from among the educators at journalism faculties of various Tbilisi-based universities. They will learn the methodology and acquire skills of media monitoring and will be able to transfer it further to their students.

It is expected that as a result of the project interventions, the CSOs will be able to generate additional financial resources as their respective capacities will be strengthened.

The project will make sure that its activities and interventions promote gender equality and the empowerment of women. To this effect, close attention will be paid to ensuring that women are pro-actively involved in the development and implementation of the project activities, equally benefit from the results, are fairly represented in different consultative processes and discussions, and that qualified female

experts are recruited where possible. Additionally, gender-segregated data would be collected/presented where applicable.

IV. PROJECT MANAGEMENT

4.1/ Cost Efficiency and Effectiveness

Costs incurred in project implementation will focus only on those actions required to carry out media monitoring.

To accomplish this, the project will seek to complement and build upon the results of the previous chapters of media monitoring (use the same media monitors as much as possible, use and update the existing database, use the same web-platform to publicise monitoring results).

The resources will be primarily used for:

- Training of media monitors in updating monitoring;
- Media monitoring operations;
- Update and further development of MM database.

All the envisaged project activities will be carried out and results achieved through appropriate use of available resources and value-for-money analysis during all procurement procedures.

Additional information on project management and staff is available in Sub-Section 3.2 “Resources Required to Achieve the Expected Results” and Section VIII “Governance and Management Arrangements”.

V. RESULTS FRAMEWORK

Intended Outcome as stated in the UNSDCF 2021-2026/CPD 2021-2025 Programme Results and Resource Framework: UNSDCF 2021-2025 Outcome 1/CPD 2021-2025 Outcome 1: By 2025, all people in Georgia enjoy improved good governance, more open, resilient and accountable institutions, rule of law, equal access to justice, human rights¹, and increased representation and participation of women in decision making

CPD 2021-2025 Output 1.1) Inclusive national and local governance systems have greater resilience and capacities to mainstream gender, ensure evidence-based and participatory policymaking, map and address inequalities and deliver quality services to all.

Outcome indicators as stated in the Country Programme Document 2021-2025 Results and Resources Framework, including baseline and targets:

1.1. (UNSDCF indicator 1.1) [National SDG 16.6.2.5] Rule of law index; **Baseline** (2019): percentile rank 62.02; **Target:** >63

1.2. (UNSDCF indicator 1.2) [National SDG 16.6.2.2] Voice and accountability index; **Baseline** (2019): percentile rank 53.20; **Target:** >54

1.3. (UNSDCF indicator 1.6.1) [National SDG 5.5.1] Proportion of seats held by women in national parliaments and local governments; **Baseline** (2019). a) Women in Parliament 14.8% (22 women). b) Women in local governments 13.5% (277 women); **Target:** a) < 20%; b) < 20%.

Applicable Output(s) from the UNDP Strategic Plan: UNDP Strategic Plan 2018-2021: Outcome 2. Accelerate structural transformations for sustainable development/2.2.2 Constitution-making, electoral and parliamentary processes and institutions strengthened to promote inclusion, transparency and accountability

Project title and Atlas Project Number: Study and Research on Election Media Coverage for the 2021 Local Self-Government Elections in Georgia/ project 00135456

Result	Intervention logic	Indicators	Baseline (June 2020)	Targets (May 2021)	Sources and means of verification	Assumptions
Overall objective: Impact	1/ Transparent, balanced and credible media environment promoted during and after the 2021 local elections in Georgia.	1/ Degree of objective elections media coverage	Media offers a pluralistic but biased coverage of electoral processes:	1/ More balanced and impartial coverage of elections as compared to previous elections (2020 Parliamentary elections).	1/ Reports by domestic and int'l EOMs and int'l human rights advocacy groups.	<p>The project keeps Georgian media outlets more accountable to public and the principles of balanced and impartial reporting. As previous media monitoring (MM) experience showed, most of media outlets are particularly alert during the MM cycles. Thus, it is expected that the action will succeed to promote professional and unbiased coverage of Georgia's local elections by regional and national media in 2021.</p> <p>Partner CSOs possess and nurture necessary qualifications to implement impartial and professional monitoring of pre-election media activities, identify challenges, provide recommendations on mitigation measures.</p>

Result	Intervention logic	Indicators	Baseline (June 2020)	Targets (May 2021)	Sources and means of verification	Assumptions
Specific objective/ Outcome	1/ Pluralism in elections coverage and professionalism of the media enhanced in comparison with previous years.	1/ Level of bias at monitored media outlets	1/ Private media outlets demonstrate sharp polarisation and clear bias, and at times spread or amplify mis- or disinformation narratives, while the public broadcaster does not always ensure editorial independence and impartiality.	1/ The polarization and the spread of disinformation narratives in media is decreased through the provision of more professional and balanced coverage compared to previous (2020) election campaign.	1/ MM reports; reports by various international and domestic observer groups on elections, including OSCE/ODIHR, NDI/CRRC research reports (if media's performance is analysed); Media freedom and media development indices published by Freedom House, Reporters without Borders and IREX; Reports by media experts.	It is assumed that media community (journalists, media managers, media owners), electoral subjects and other stakeholders show interest in MM reports as in previous years and actively engage in presentations and subsequent public discussions of MM findings/recommendations. Acknowledgement of impartial character of MM and robustness of the methodology will lead to the acceptance of the MM results and will prompt the media professionals to improve reporting standards.
Outputs	1/ Evidence based assessment of the quality of the coverage of Georgian local elections 2021 by national media via comprehensive media monitoring during and immediately after elections.	1.1.a/ # of national and regional TV stations monitored during pre-election period for 2021 local elections. 1.1.b/ # of regional and national radio stations monitored during pre-election period for 2021 local elections. 1.1.c/ # of regional and national print outlets monitored during pre-election period for 2021 local elections. 1.1.d/ # of regional and national online publications monitored during pre-election period for 2021 local elections. 1.1.e/ # of sources from social networks analysed before 2021 local elections. 1.1.f/ # of TV stations subject of Thematic Media Monitoring during pre-election period for 2021 local elections. 1.1.g # of TV stations monitored after 2021 local elections. 1.1.h/ # of print outlets monitored after 2021 local elections.	1.1/a No TV stations are monitored. 1.1.b/ No radio stations are monitored. 1.1.c/ No print outlets are monitored. 1.1.d/ No online outlets are monitored. 1.1.e/ No Social Network sites are monitored. 1.1.f/ No thematic monitoring is conducted. 1.1.g/ No TV stations are monitored 1.1.h/ No print outlets are monitored after 2021 local elections.	1.1.a/ 14 Georgian TV channels will be monitored within 5 months before the 2021 local elections; 1.1.b/ 12 radio stations will be monitored for 5 months prior to the 2021 local elections; 1.1.c/ 15 regional and national newspapers will be monitored within 5 months prior to 2021 local elections monitoring; 1.1.d/ 15 regional and national online news portals will be monitored within 5 months prior to the 2021 local elections monitoring; 1.1.e/ approximately 70 social network sites will be monitored for analysis per day. 1.1.f/ 5 national TV stations (news and talk-shows) will be subject of thematic monitoring for 2 months prior to 2021 local elections. 1.1.g/ 5 national Georgian TV channels will be monitored during 2 months after 2021 local elections;	1.1-1.2/ MM and project reports; Quantitative and qualitative assessment reports produced as a result of the media monitoring (MM) as well as through other media reports such as OSCE/ODIHR (if engaged in election monitoring), NDI (multiple times per year), etc.	Some media outlets might be unhappy about their performance results. Thus, negative PR of the project and its experts may follow. In such case, public campaign will be intensified, and individual meetings held with respective media to explain in more details the rationale behind existing results. In case of continued performance, other communication strategies not involving the concerned media outlet will be applied.

Result	Intervention logic	Indicators	Baseline (June 2020)	Targets (May 2021)	Sources and means of verification	Assumptions
		<p>1.1.i/ # of online publications monitored after 2021 local elections.</p> <p>1.2/ # of Media Monitoring reports produced</p> <p>1.3/ Availability of on-line data analysis tool on the www.mediamonitor.ge for the findings of MM 2021 (Yes/No).</p> <p>1.4/ # of public presentations for the dissemination of the findings of MM among media community, electoral subjects, academia & wider public.</p>	<p>1.1.i/ No online publications are monitored after 2021 local elections.</p> <p>1.2/ No media monitoring reports are produced currently.</p> <p>1.3/ Website is operational but in anticipation of MM results for local elections 2021.</p> <p>1.4/ No presentation of media monitoring findings is conducted.</p>	<p>1.1.h/ 7 national newspapers will be monitored during 2 months after the 2021 local elections.</p> <p>1.1.i/ 8 national online publications will be monitored during 2 months after the 2021 local elections.</p> <p>1.2.1/ 2 pre-election MM reports produced.</p> <p>1.2.2/ 1 post-election MM report produced.</p> <p>1.3/ Mediamonitor.ge website provides on-line data analysis of findings of MM 2021.</p> <p>1.4/ 3 public and 1 closed (for media representatives only) discussions/presentations organized</p>	<p>1.3/ Mediamonitor.ge website</p> <p>1.4/ Project reports; media coverage of MM presentations.</p>	
Activities	<p>1.1/ Conducting media monitoring of major media sources (TV – news and talk shows, internet, social media, print and radio against the most relevant electoral subjects and key topics during and after the 2021 local elections.</p> <p>1.2/ Developing and distributing media monitoring reports and recommendations.</p> <p>1.3/ Raising public awareness on media monitoring findings through organising relevant presentations and discussions.</p> <p>1.4/ Organising an informative meeting with local media representatives before the monitoring.</p> <p>1.5/ Conducting thematic media monitoring (theme of MM to be coordinated with EU Delegation prior to commencement of data collection).</p> <p>1.6/ Promoting the bilingual online data-base – mediamonitor.ge</p> <p>1.7/ Training and retraining the CSO media monitors according to the latest methodology.</p> <p>1.8/ Training of CSO media monitors on electoral processes.</p> <p>1.9/ Updating the monitoring methodology and adapting it to the latest situation on the ground.</p>			<p>Factors outside project management's control that may impact on the output-outcome linkage.</p> <p>Another wave of COVID-19 pandemic may impede conducting of the elections as planned.</p>		

VI. MONITORING AND EVALUATION

Monitoring Plan

Monitoring Activity	Purpose	Frequency	Expected Action	Partners
Track results progress	Progress data against the results indicators in the RRF will be collected and analysed to assess the progress of the project in achieving the agreed outputs.	In conjunction with publishing MM reports.	Slower than expected progress will be addressed by project management.	
Monitor and Manage Risk	Identify specific risks that may threaten achievement of intended results. Identify and monitor risk management actions using a risk log. This includes monitoring measures and plans that may have been required as per UNDP's Social and Environmental Standards. Audits will be conducted in accordance with UNDP's audit policy to manage financial risk.	Annually	Risks are identified by project management and actions are taken to manage risk. The risk log is actively maintained to keep track of identified risks and actions taken.	
Learn	Knowledge, good practices and lessons will be captured regularly, as well as actively sourced from other projects and partners and integrated back into the project.	At the end of the Project	Relevant lessons are captured by the project team and used to inform management decisions.	
Annual Project Quality Assurance	The quality of the project will be assessed against UNDP's quality standards to identify project strengths and weaknesses and to inform management decision making to improve the project.	Once during the Project lifetime	Areas of strength and weakness will be reviewed by project management and used to inform decisions to improve project performance.	Project Board Members
Review and Make Course Corrections	Internal review of data and evidence from all monitoring actions to inform decision making.	After the release of the first MM Report	Performance data, risks, lessons and quality will be discussed by the project board and used to make course corrections.	
Project Report	A progress report will be presented to the Project Board and key stakeholders, consisting of progress data showing the results achieved against pre-defined annual targets at the output level, the annual project quality rating summary,	At the end of the project (final report)		

Monitoring Activity	Purpose	Frequency	Expected Action	Partners
	an updated risk long with mitigation measures, and any evaluation or review reports prepared over the period.			
Project Review (Project Board)	The project's governance mechanism (i.e., project board) will hold regular project reviews to assess the performance of the project and review the Multi-Year Work Plan to ensure realistic budgeting over the life of the project. Closer to the end of the project, the Project Board shall hold an end-of project review to capture lessons learned and discuss opportunities for scaling up and to socialize project results and lessons learned with relevant audiences.	Once during the Project lifetime.	Any quality concerns or slower than expected progress should be discussed by the project board and management actions agreed to address the issues identified.	Project Board Members

Workplan:

#	Activities (2021-2022)	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May
1	Recruitment of the project administrative personnel.													
2	Identifying the most relevant outlets for media monitoring of 2021 local elections.													
3	Updating media monitoring methodology by adapting it to the latest situation on the ground. Training of senior media monitors.													
4	Training of CSO media monitors													
5	Organising informative meetings with media representatives before the start of pre- and post-election MM phases.													
6	Monitoring of media coverage of the 2021 local elections (pre- and post-electoral periods).													
7	Developing MM reports of the 2021 local elections and disseminating them among a wide range of stakeholders (2 reports on pre-election period and 1 report on post-election report on MM).													
8	Organising presentations about relevant MM findings.													
9	Organising final seminar for the monitors on good practices and lessons learned from MM. Based on the epidemiological situation this event may be held on-line.													
10	Publication of election MM findings													

VIII. GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT ARRANGEMENTS

8.1/ Governance arrangements

The project will be implemented under UNDP Direct Implementation Modality (DIM) in accordance with UNDP rules and regulations. UNDP will be responsible for the achievement of results and the use of resources. As such, it will bear the overall accountability for delivering the project in accordance with its applicable regulations, rules, policies and procedures.

The project will be implemented with the team composed of the Project Manager and Administrative and Finance Assistant (part-time). Project assurance will be provided by the UNDP Georgia Democratic Governance portfolio.

UNDP will establish partnership with three Responsible Parties – The Georgian Charter of Journalistic Ethics, Internews-Georgia and Caucasus Research Resource Centre – Georgia, to carry out activities of the project. Responsible Parties will implement the activities specified in the Section III, Results and Partnerships, on behalf of the UNDP on the basis of a written agreement using the project budget. All three Responsible Parties are directly accountable to UNDP in accordance with the terms of their agreement with UNDP.

Responsible Parties will perform the following activities:

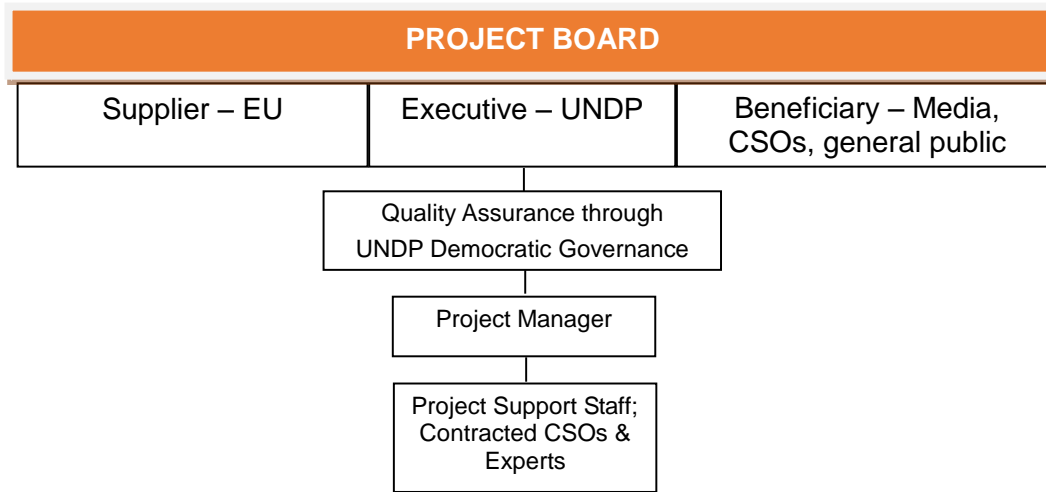
Activity 1.1. Conducting monitoring of major media outlets (TV news and talk-shows, Radio news, press, online media, social network sites) against electoral subjects and key topics. (CGJ, Intenews).

Activity 1.2. Developing and distributing media monitoring reports and recommendations.

Activity 1.5. Conducting media monitoring of TV news and talk-shows for capturing perception of outside influence on Georgian electoral processes (CRRC).

The agreements signed with the partner CSOs will be a Responsible Party Agreement covering the costs of salaries, office rent, office services and consumables, Internet and communication expenses, purchase of media archival services, etc. To be eligible under the Agreement, costs under the CSO budgets shall be verifiable and traceable to the activities, comply with the requirements of national tax legislation, be incurred during the duration of the action, and be necessary for the implementation of the action.

The Project will be coordinated by a **Project Board** composed of representatives from EU and UNDP. Local and international organizations may be invited to the Project Board meetings if technical expertise is needed. A proposed structure is presented in the chart below. The Project Board is expected to provide overall guidance and decision-making support during all phases of project implementation and will grant final approval on sub-grants in case the grant is not incorporated in the project documentation. Due to short duration of the project, the Project Board is proposed to meet once: at the end of the project, although meetings could be called by any of the members at any time to discuss any particular issue of concern.



8.2/ Management arrangements

The key project management functions will be performed by the *Project Manager*. In particular, the *Project Manager* will be in charge of:

- *Administrative oversight and internal controls*, in procurement, recruitment, financial management, administration and human resources processes will be exercised by the Project Manager. The Manager will be responsible to ensure that project implementation is in line with the conditions set forth through the EU-UNDP agreement, and all UNDP rules and regulations are respected throughout project implementation
- *Coordination of institutional relations with the Responsible Parties, project beneficiaries and stakeholders.*
- *Representational tasks* of the project
- *Communication and reporting to the EU Delegation.*

The *Project Manager* will be accountable to the Project Board for achievement of the project objectives. Internally within UNDP, the project manager will report to UNDP DG Team Leader.

The Project Administrative and Financial Assistant will provide technical support in financial, contractual and organisational matters.

Local and international consultants will provide technical expertise to media monitors on updating and adapting monitoring methodology. Where needed, the Project will also engage other UNDP project/s to provide expertise and facilitate implementation of concrete components under the Project.

UNDP DG Team Leader will provide quality assurance for financial matters and reporting and advice project personnel on financial, administrative and reporting procedures.

UNDP Programme Associate will be responsible for providing administrative advice and supporting project implementation from the Country Office.

UNDP Communications Analyst will provide advice on all communications-related matters and supports the project in the implementation of its Communication and Visibility Plan.

UNDP Country Office will support the project in the following areas: human resources management services, financial services, procurement and contracting services as well as with logistics and administration.

IX. LEGAL CONTEXT

This project document shall be the instrument referred to as such in Article 1 of the Standard Basic Assistance Agreement between the government of Georgia and UNDP, signed on 1-Jul-1994. All references in the Standard Basic Assistance Agreement (SBAA) to “Executing Agency” shall be deemed to refer to “Implementing Partner.”

The project will be implemented by UNDP Georgia in accordance with its financial regulations, rules, practices and procedures.

X. RISK MANAGEMENT

1. UNDP as the Implementing Partner will comply with the policies, procedures and practices of the United Nations Security Management System (UNSMS.)
2. UNDP as the Implementing Partner will undertake all reasonable efforts to ensure that none of the [project funds]⁸ [UNDP funds received pursuant to the Project Document]⁹ are used to provide support to individuals or entities associated with terrorism and that the recipients of any amounts provided by UNDP hereunder do not appear on the list maintained by the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1267 (1999).
3. The list can be accessed via http://www.un.org/sc/committees/1267/aq_sanctions_list.shtml. This provision must be included in all sub-contracts or sub-agreements entered into under this Project Document.
4. Social and environmental sustainability will be enhanced through application of the UNDP Social and Environmental Standards (<http://www.undp.org/ses>) and related Accountability Mechanism (<http://www.undp.org/secu-srm>).
5. UNDP as the Implementing Partner will: (a) conduct project and programme-related activities in a manner consistent with the UNDP Social and Environmental Standards, (b) implement any management or mitigation plan prepared for the project or programme to comply with such standards, and (c) engage in a constructive and timely manner to address any concerns and complaints raised through the Accountability Mechanism. UNDP will seek to ensure that communities and other project stakeholders are informed of and have access to the Accountability Mechanism.
6. In the implementation of the activities under this Project Document, UNDP as the Implementing Partner will handle any sexual exploitation and abuse (“SEA”) and sexual harassment (“SH”) allegations in accordance with its regulations, rules, policies and procedures.
7. All signatories to the Project Document shall cooperate in good faith with any exercise to evaluate any programme or project-related commitments or compliance with the UNDP Social and Environmental Standards. This includes providing access to project sites, relevant personnel, information, and documentation.
8. UNDP as the Implementing Partner will ensure that the following obligations are binding on each responsible party, subcontractor and sub-recipient:

⁸ To be used where UNDP is the Implementing Partner

⁹ To be used where the UN, a UN fund/programme or a specialized agency is the Implementing Partner

- a. Consistent with the Article III of the SBAA, the responsibility for the safety and security of each responsible party, subcontractor and sub-recipient and its personnel and property, and of UNDP's property in such responsible party's, subcontractor's and sub-recipient's custody, rests with such responsible party, subcontractor and sub-recipient. To this end, each responsible party, subcontractor and sub-recipient shall:
 - i. put in place an appropriate security plan and maintain the security plan, taking into account the security situation in the country where the project is being carried;
 - ii. assume all risks and liabilities related to such responsible party's, subcontractor's and sub-recipient's security, and the full implementation of the security plan.
- b. UNDP reserves the right to verify whether such a plan is in place, and to suggest modifications to the plan when necessary. Failure to maintain and implement an appropriate security plan as required hereunder shall be deemed a breach of the responsible party's, subcontractor's and sub-recipient's obligations under this Project Document.
- c. In the performance of the activities under this Project, UNDP as the Implementing Partner shall ensure, with respect to the activities of any of its responsible parties, sub-recipients and other entities engaged under the Project, either as contractors or subcontractors, their personnel and any individuals performing services for them, that those entities have in place adequate and proper procedures, processes and policies to prevent and/or address SEA and SH.
- d. Each responsible party, subcontractor and sub-recipient will take appropriate steps to prevent misuse of funds, fraud or corruption, by its officials, consultants, subcontractors and sub-recipients in implementing the project or programme or using the UNDP funds. It will ensure that its financial management, anti-corruption and anti-fraud policies are in place and enforced for all funding received from or through UNDP.
- e. The requirements of the following documents, then in force at the time of signature of the Project Document, apply to each responsible party, subcontractor and sub-recipient: (a) UNDP Policy on Fraud and other Corrupt Practices and (b) UNDP Office of Audit and Investigations Investigation Guidelines. Each responsible party, subcontractor and sub-recipient agrees to the requirements of the above documents, which are an integral part of this Project Document and are available online at www.undp.org.
- f. In the event that an investigation is required, UNDP will conduct investigations relating to any aspect of UNDP programmes and projects. Each responsible party, subcontractor and sub-recipient will provide its full cooperation, including making available personnel, relevant documentation, and granting access to its (and its consultants', subcontractors' and sub-recipients') premises, for such purposes at reasonable times and on reasonable conditions as may be required for the purpose of an investigation. Should there be a limitation in meeting this obligation, UNDP shall consult with it to find a solution.
- g. Each responsible party, subcontractor and sub-recipient will promptly inform UNDP as the Implementing Partner in case of any incidence of inappropriate use of funds, or credible allegation of fraud or corruption with due confidentiality.

Where it becomes aware that a UNDP project or activity, in whole or in part, is the focus of investigation for alleged fraud/corruption, each responsible party, subcontractor and sub-recipient will inform the UNDP Resident Representative/Head of Office, who will promptly inform UNDP's Office of Audit and Investigations (OAI). It will provide regular updates to the head of UNDP in the country and OAI of the status of, and actions relating to, such investigation.

- h. UNDP will be entitled to a refund from the responsible party, subcontractor or sub-recipient of any funds provided that have been used inappropriately, including through fraud or corruption, or otherwise paid other than in accordance with the terms and conditions of the Project Document. Such amount may be deducted by UNDP from any payment due to the responsible party, subcontractor or sub-recipient under this or any other agreement.

Where such funds have not been refunded to UNDP, the responsible party, subcontractor or sub-recipient agrees that donors to UNDP (including the Government) whose funding is the source, in whole or in part, of the funds for the activities under this Project Document, may seek recourse to such responsible party, subcontractor or sub-recipient for the recovery of any funds determined by UNDP to have been used inappropriately, including through fraud or corruption, or otherwise paid other than in accordance with the terms and conditions of the Project Document.

Note: The term “Project Document” as used in this clause shall be deemed to include any relevant subsidiary agreement further to the Project Document, including those with responsible parties, subcontractors and sub-recipients.

- i. Each contract issued by the responsible party, subcontractor or sub-recipient in connection with this Project Document shall include a provision representing that no fees, gratuities, rebates, gifts, commissions or other payments, other than those shown in the proposal, have been given, received, or promised in connection with the selection process or in contract execution, and that the recipient of funds from it shall cooperate with any and all investigations and post-payment audits.
- j. Should UNDP refer to the relevant national authorities for appropriate legal action any alleged wrongdoing relating to the project or programme, the Government will ensure that the relevant national authorities shall actively investigate the same and take appropriate legal action against all individuals found to have participated in the wrongdoing, recover and return any recovered funds to UNDP.
- k. Each responsible party, subcontractor and sub-recipient shall ensure that all of its obligations set forth under this section entitled “Risk Management” are passed on to its subcontractors and sub-recipients and that all the clauses under this section entitled “Risk Management Standard Clauses” are adequately reflected, *mutatis mutandis*, in all its sub-contracts or sub-agreements entered into further to this Project Document.

ANNEX 1**Design & Appraisal Stage Quality Assurance Report**

Form Status: Approved

Overall Rating: Satisfactory

Decision: Approve: The project is of sufficient quality to continue as planned. Any management actions must be addressed in a timely manner.

Portfolio/Project Number: 00135456

Portfolio/Project Title: Media Monitoring 2021

Portfolio/Project Date: 2021-05-01 / 2022-01-31

Strategic Quality Rating: Highly Satisfactory

1. Does the project specify how it will contribute to higher level change through linkage to the programme's Theory of Change?

3: The project is clearly linked to the programme's theory of change. It has an explicit change pathway that explains how the project will contribute to outcome level change and why the project's strategy will likely lead to this change. This analysis is backed by credible evidence of what works effectively in this context and includes assumptions and risks.

2: The project is clearly linked to the programme's theory of change. It has a change pathway that explains how the project will contribute to outcome-level change and why the project strategy will likely lead to this change.

1: The project document may describe in generic terms how the project will contribute to development results, without an explicit link to the programme's theory of change.

Evidence: Linkages to the strategic documents are provided in Section

2: Strategy, as well as Results Framework.

List of Uploaded Documents

#	File Name	Modified By	Modified On
No documents available.			

2. Is the project aligned with the UNDP Strategic Plan?

3: The project responds to at least one of the development settings as specified in the [Strategic Plan¹](#) and adapts at least one [Signature Solution²](#). The project's RRF includes all the relevant SP output indicators. (all must be true)

2: The project responds to at least one of the development settings as specified in the [Strategic Plan⁴](#). The project's RRF includes at least one SP output indicator, if relevant. (both must be true)

1: The project responds to a partner's identified need, but 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 project is linked to SP Outcome 2/Output 2.2.2

List of Uploaded Documents

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No documents available.			

3. Is the project linked to the programme outputs? (i.e., UNDAF Results Group Workplan/CPD, RPD or Strategic Plan IRRF for global projects/strategic interventions not part of a programme)

Yes

No

Evidence: See Results Framework and Cover

List of Uploaded Documents

#	File Name	Modified By	Modified On
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No documents available.

Relevant

Quality Rating: Satisfactory

4. Do the project target groups leave furthest behind?

- 3: The target groups are clearly specified, prioritising discriminated, and marginalized groups left furthest behind, identified through a rigorous process based on evidence.
- 2: The target groups are clearly specified, prioritizing groups left furthest behind.
- 1: The target groups are not clearly specified.

Evidence: Yes, the target groups are clearly defined: Georgia-based journalists and other representatives of mass media outlets (TV, internet, print and radio), social media, media associations, international and local civil society organizations (CSOs), students of academic institutions, voters. See 3.5 Stakeholder engagement

List of Uploaded Documents

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No documents available.			

5. Have knowledge, good practices, and past lessons learned of UNDP and others informed the project design?

- 3: Knowledge and lessons learned backed by credible evidence from sources such as evaluation, corporate policies/strategies, and/or monitoring have been explicitly used, with appropriate referencing, to justify the approach used by the project.
- 2: The project design mentions knowledge and lessons learned backed by evidence/sources but have not been used to justify the approach selected.
- 1: There is little, or no mention of knowledge and lessons learned informing the project design. Any references made are anecdotal and not backed by evidence.

Evidence: The project builds on the lessons learnt from the previous phases of media monitoring (section 2/Strategy)

List of Uploaded Documents

#	File Name	Modified By	Modified On
No documents available.			

6. Does UNDP have a clear advantage to engage in the role envisioned by the project vis-à-vis national / regional / global partners and other actors?

- 3: An analysis has been conducted on the role of other partners in the area where the project intends to work, and credible evidence supports the proposed engagement of UNDP and partners through the project, including identification of potential funding partners. It is clear how results achieved by partners will complement the project's intended results and a communication strategy is in place to communicate results and raise visibility vis-à-vis key partners. Options for south-south and triangular cooperation have been considered, as appropriate. (all must be true)
- 2: Some analysis has been conducted on the role of other partners in the area where the project intends to work, and relatively limited evidence supports the proposed engagement of and division of labour between UNDP and partners through the project, with unclear funding and communications strategies or plans.
- 1: No clear analysis has been conducted on the role of other partners in the area that the project intends to work. There is risk that the project overlaps and/or does not coordinate with partners' interventions in this area. Options for south-south and triangular cooperation have not been considered, despite its potential relevance.

Evidence: UNDP's successful engagement in media monitoring for different elections starting from 2010 makes it unique player in this area. (1/Development Challenge)

List of Uploaded Documents

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No documents available.

Principled

Quality Rating: Satisfactory

7. Does the project apply a human rights-based approach?

- 3: The project is guided by human rights and incorporates the principles of accountability, meaningful participation, and non-discrimination in the project's strategy. The project upholds the relevant international and national laws and standards. Any potential adverse impacts on enjoyment of human rights were rigorously identified and assessed as relevant, with appropriate mitigation and management measures incorporated into project design and budget. (all must be true)
- 2: The project is guided by human rights by prioritizing accountability, meaningful participation and non-discrimination. Potential adverse impacts on enjoyment of human rights were identified and assessed as relevant, and appropriate mitigation and management measures incorporated into the project design and budget. (both must be true)
- 1: No evidence that the project is guided by human rights. Limited or no evidence that potential adverse impacts on enjoyment of human rights were considered.

Evidence: The project is guided by such international human rights documents as: the Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms; Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union. Besides, the project will indirectly facilitate protection of the rights of journalists and media managers, since they will be able to use the MM findings as a shield against an undue political influence. (1/ development Challenge)

List of Uploaded Documents

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No documents available.

8. Does the project use gender analysis in the project design?

- 3: A participatory gender analysis has been conducted and results from this gender analysis inform the development challenge, strategy and expected results sections of the project document. Outputs and indicators of the results framework include explicit references to gender equality, and specific indicators measure and monitor results to ensure women are fully benefitting from the project. (all must be true)
- 2: A basic gender analysis has been carried out and results from this analysis are scattered (i.e., fragmented and not consistent) across the development challenge and strategy sections of the project document. The results framework may include some gender sensitive outputs and/or activities but gender inequalities are not consistently integrated across each output. (all must be true)
- 1: The project design may or may not mention information and/or data on the differential impact of the project's development situation on gender relations, women and men, but the gender inequalities have not been clearly identified and reflected in the project document.

Evidence: Gender equality principles are integrated in the project and data will be disaggregated by sex, whenever possible and feasible (3.7/ Sustainability and Scaling Up).

List of Uploaded Documents

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No documents available.

9. Did the project support the resilience and sustainability of societies and/or ecosystems?

- 3: Credible evidence that the project addresses sustainability and resilience dimensions of development challenges, which are integrated in the project strategy and design. The project reflects the interconnections between the social, economic and environmental dimensions of sustainable development. Relevant shocks, hazards and adverse social and environmental impacts have been identified and rigorously assessed with appropriate management and mitigation measures incorporated into project design and budget. (all must be true)
- 2: The project design integrates sustainability and resilience dimensions of development challenges. Relevant shocks, hazards and adverse social and environmental impacts have been identified and assessed, and relevant management and mitigation measures incorporated into project design and budget. (both must be true)
- 1: Sustainability and resilience dimensions and impacts were not adequately considered.

Evidence: Not applicable for this project.

List of Uploaded Documents

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No documents available.

10. Has the Social and Environmental Screening Procedure (SESP) been conducted to identify potential social and environmental impacts and risks? The SESP is not required for projects in which UNDP is Administrative Agent only and/or projects comprised solely of reports, coordination of events, trainings, workshops, meetings, conferences and/or communication materials and information dissemination. [if yes, upload the completed checklist. If SESP is not required, provide the reason for the exemption in the evidence section.]

- Yes
- No
- SESP not required because project consists solely of (Select all exemption criteria that apply)
- 1: Preparation and dissemination of reports, documents and communication materials
- 2: Organization of an event, workshop, training
- 3: Strengthening capacities of partners to participate in international negotiations and conferences
- 4: Partnership coordination (including UN coordination) and management of networks
- 5: Global/regional projects with no country level activities (e.g. knowledge management, inter-governmental processes)
- 6: UNDP acting as Administrative Agent

Evidence: The project deals with the monitoring of media environment during upcoming 2020 Parliamentary elections and producing of media monitoring reports.

List of Uploaded Documents

#	File Name	Risk Category	Risk Requirements	Document Status	Modified By	Modified On
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No documents available.

Management & Monitoring

Quality Rating: Satisfactory

11. Does the project have a strong results framework?

- 3: The project's selection of outputs and activities are at an appropriate level. Outputs are accompanied by SMART, results-oriented indicators that measure the key expected development changes, each with credible data sources and populated baselines and targets, including gender sensitive, target group focused, sex-disaggregated indicators where appropriate. (all must be true)
- 2: The project's selection of outputs and activities are at an appropriate level. Outputs are accompanied by SMART, results-oriented indicators, but baselines, targets and data sources may not yet be fully specified. Some use of target group focused, sex-disaggregated indicators, as appropriate. (all must be true)
- 1: The project's selection of outputs and activities are not at an appropriate level; outputs are not accompanied by SMART, results-oriented indicators that measure the expected change and have not been populated with baselines and targets; data sources are not specified, and/or no gender sensitive, sex-disaggregation of indicators. (if any is true)

Evidence: Results Framework contains indicators for 3 level of results: impact, outcome and output. The indicators are SMART.

List of Uploaded Documents

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No documents available.

12. Is the project's governance mechanism clearly defined in the project document, including composition of the project board?

- 3: The project's governance mechanism is fully defined. Individuals have been specified for each position in the governance mechanism (especially all members of the project board.) Project Board members have agreed on their roles and responsibilities as specified in the terms of reference. The ToR of the project board has been attached to the project document. (all must be true)
- 2: The project's governance mechanism is defined; specific institutions are noted as holding key governance roles, but individuals may not have been specified yet. The project document lists the most important responsibilities of the project board, project director/manager and quality

assurance roles. (all must be true)

1: The project's governance mechanism is loosely defined in the project document, only mentioning key roles that will need to be filled at a later date. No information on the responsibilities of key positions in the governance mechanism is provided.

Evidence: The project governance mechanism is well described in Section 8/ Governance Arrangements

List of Uploaded Documents

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No documents available.			

13. Have the project risks been identified with clear plans stated to manage and mitigate each risk?

3: Project risks related to the achievement of results are fully described in the project risk log, based on comprehensive analysis drawing on the programme's theory of change, Social and Environmental Standards and screening, situation analysis, capacity assessments and other analysis such as funding potential and reputational risk. Risks have been identified through a consultative process with key internal and external stakeholders, including consultation with the UNDP Security Office as required. Clear and complete plan in place to manage and mitigate each risk, including security risks, reflected in project budgeting and monitoring plans. (both must be true)

2: Project risks related to the achievement of results are identified in the initial project risk log based on a minimum level of analysis and consultation, with mitigation measures identified for each risk.

1: Some risks may be identified in the initial project risk log, but no evidence of consultation or analysis and no clear risk mitigation measures identified. This option is also selected if risks are not clearly identified, no initial risk log is included with the project document and/or no security risk management process has taken place for the project.

Evidence: The project has developed risk log.

List of Uploaded Documents

#	File Name	Modified By	Modified On
No documents available.			

Efficient

Quality Rating: Satisfactory

14. Have specific measures for ensuring cost-efficient use of resources been explicitly mentioned as part of the project design? This can include, for example:

- i) Using the theory of change analysis to explore different options of achieving the maximum results with the resources available.
- ii) Using a portfolio management approach to improve cost effectiveness through synergies with other interventions.
- iii) Through joint operations (e.g., monitoring or procurement) with other partners.
- iv) Sharing resources or coordinating delivery with other projects.
- v) Using innovative approaches and technologies to reduce the cost of service delivery or other types of interventions.

Yes

No

Evidence: Cost efficiency considerations including synergies with other UNDP projects, discussed in section 4.1/ Cost Efficiency and Effectiveness

List of Uploaded Documents

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No documents available.			

15. Is the budget justified and supported with valid estimates?

3: The project's budget is at the activity level with funding sources, and is specified for the duration of the project period in a multi-year budget. Realistic resource mobilisation plans are in place to fill unfunded components. Costs are supported with valid estimates using benchmarks from similar projects or activities. Cost implications from inflation and foreign exchange exposure have been estimated and incorporated in the budget. Adequate costs for monitoring, evaluation, communications and security have been incorporated.

2: The project's budget is at the activity level with funding sources, when possible, and is specified for the duration of the project in a multi-year budget, but no funding plan is in place. Costs are supported with valid estimates based on prevailing rates.

- 1: The project's budget is not specified at the activity level, and/or may not be captured in a multi-year budget.

Evidence: The project budget is detailed, providing breakdown by budget lines and sources.

List of Uploaded Documents

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No documents available.			

16. Is the Country Office / Regional Hub / Global Project fully recovering the costs involved with project implementation?

3: The budget fully covers all project costs that are attributable to the project, including programme management and development effectiveness services related to strategic country programme planning, quality assurance, pipeline development, policy advocacy services, finance, procurement, human resources, administration, issuance of contracts, security, travel, assets, general services, information and communications based on full costing in accordance with prevailing UNDP policies (i.e., UPL, LPL.)

2: The budget covers significant project costs that are attributable to the project based on prevailing UNDP policies (i.e., UPL, LPL) as relevant.

1: The budget does not adequately cover project costs that are attributable to the project, and UNDP is cross-subsidizing the project.

Evidence: The project is funded by EU and does not allow charging of DPC directly. However, UNDP recovers costs indirectly through charging salaries of UNDP Co staff providing services to the project.

List of Uploaded Documents

#	File Name	Modified By	Modified On
No documents available.			

Effective

Quality Rating: Highly Satisfactory

17. Have targeted groups been engaged in the design of the project?

3: Credible evidence that all targeted groups, prioritising discriminated and marginalized populations that will be involved in or affected by the project, have been actively engaged in the design of the project. The project has an explicit strategy to identify, engage and ensure the meaningful participation of target groups as stakeholders throughout the project, including through monitoring and decision-making (e.g., representation on the project board, inclusion in samples for evaluations, etc.)

2: Some evidence that key targeted groups have been consulted in the design of the project.

1: No evidence of engagement with targeted groups during project design.

Not Applicable

Evidence: The project has been developed and will be implemented in consultation with local stakeholders (section 3/results and partnerships).

List of Uploaded Documents

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No documents available.			

18. Does the project plan for adaptation and course correction if regular monitoring activities, evaluation, and lesson learned demonstrate there are better approaches to achieve the intended results and/or circumstances change during implementation?

Yes

No

Evidence: Project Board will serve the purpose of steering the project and making changes if the external factors require so.

List of Uploaded Documents

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No documents available.

19. The gender marker for all project outputs are scored at GEN2 or GEN3, indicating that gender has been fully mainstreamed into all project outputs at a minimum.

- Yes
- No

Evidence: Project is GEN2

List of Uploaded Documents

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No documents available.

Sustainability & National Ownership

Quality Rating: Satisfactory

20. Have national / regional / global partners led, or proactively engaged in, the design of the project?

- 3: National partners (or regional/global partners for regional and global projects) have full ownership of the project and led the process of the development of the project jointly with UNDP.
- 2: The project has been developed by UNDP in close consultation with national / regional / global partners.
- 1: The project has been developed by UNDP with limited or no engagement with national partners.

Evidence: The project has been developed and will be implemented in consultation with local stakeholders (section 3/results and partnerships).

List of Uploaded Documents

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No documents available.

21. Are key institutions and systems identified, and is there a strategy for strengthening specific / comprehensive capacities based on capacity assessments conducted?

- 3: The project has a strategy for strengthening specific capacities of national institutions and/or actors based on a completed capacity assessment. This strategy includes an approach to regularly monitor national capacities using clear indicators and rigorous methods of data collection, and adjust the strategy to strengthen national capacities accordingly.
- 2: A capacity assessment has been completed. There are plans to develop a strategy to strengthen specific capacities of national institutions and/or actors based on the results of the capacity assessment.
- 1: Capacity assessments have not been carried out.
- Not Applicable

Evidence: The project envisages building capacities of local NGOs in certain aspects of media monitoring. HACT Assessments of all responsible parties have been conducted and attached to the project document.

List of Uploaded Documents

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No documents available.

22. Is there is a clear strategy embedded in the project specifying how the project will use national systems (i.e., procurement, monitoring, evaluations, etc..) to the extent possible?

- Yes
- No

Not Applicable

Evidence: No use of national procurement systems envisaged, DIM project.

List of Uploaded Documents

#	File Name	Modified By	Modified On
<hr/> No documents available. <hr/>			

23. Is there a clear transition arrangement / phase-out plan developed with key stakeholders in order to sustain or scale up results (including resource mobilisation and communications strategy)?

Yes

No

Evidence: Exit plan and sustainability considered in section 3.7/ Sustainability and Scaling Up

List of Uploaded Documents

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QA Summary/LPAC Comments

LPAC conducted electronically with the deadline for the submission of the comments by August 10. The project document is in line with the CO and corporate Strategic objectives and is recommended for approval.

ANNEX 2: CAPACITY ASSESSMENTS (HACT MICRO ASSESSMENT) OF RESPONSIBLE PARTIES

CAPACITY ASSESSMENT FOR NGO CRRC-GEORGIA

The cover features a dark blue background with a network of white lines and dots. A prominent white circle with a smaller white dot inside is positioned at the top center. The text is centered and uses a clean, sans-serif font.


MICRO ASSESSMENT REPORT
NNLE CRRC-GEORGIA

Commissioned by United Nations
Development Programme in Georgia
09 July, 2020

AGIC

AG International Consulting
Member of Prime Global
Audit & Business Advisory Services

certified member

 **PrimeGlobal**



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1. Background, Scope and Methodology

Background

The micro assessment is part of the requirements under the Harmonized Approach to Cash Transfers (HACT) Framework. The HACT framework represents a common operational framework for UN agencies' transfer of cash to government and non-governmental implementing partners.

The micro-assessment assesses the IP's control framework. It results in a risk rating (low, moderate, significant or high). The overall risk rating is used by the UN agencies, along with other available information (e.g. history of engagement with the agency and previous assurance results), to determine the type and frequency of assurance activities as per each agency's guideline and can be taken into consideration when selecting the appropriate cash transfer modality for an IP.

Scope

The micro-assessment provides an overall assessment of the Implementing Partner's programme, financial and operations management policies, procedures, systems and internal controls. It includes:

- A review of the IP legal status, governance structures and financial viability; programme management, organizational structure and staffing, accounting policies and procedures, fixed assets and inventory, financial reporting and monitoring, and procurement;
- A focus on compliance with policies, procedures, regulations and institutional arrangements that are issued both by the Government and the Implementing Partner.

It takes into account results of any previous micro assessments conducted of the Implementing Partner.



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Methodology

We performed the micro-assessment from July 02, 2020 to July 09, 2020 at Tbilisi, Georgia.

Through discussion with management, observation and walk-through tests of transactions, we have assessed the Implementing Partner's and the related internal control system with emphasis on:

- The effectiveness of the systems in providing the Implementing Partner's management with accurate and timely information for management of funds and assets in accordance with work plans and agreements with the United Nations agencies;
- The general effectiveness of the internal control system in protecting the assets and resources of the Implementing Partner.

We discussed the results of the micro assessment with applicable UN agency personnel and the IP prior to finalization of the report. The list of persons met and interviewed during the micro-assessment is set out in Annex III.



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2. Summary of Risk Assessment Results

The table below summarizes the results and main internal control gaps found during application of the micro-assessment questionnaire (in Annex IV). Detailed findings and recommendations are set out in section 3. below:

Tested subject area	Risk assessment*	Brief justification for rating (main internal control gaps)
1. Implementing partner	Low	
2. Programme Management	Moderate	
3. Organizational structure and staffing	Low	
4. Accounting policies and procedures	Low	
5. Fixed Assets and Inventory	Low	
6. Financial Reporting and Monitoring	Low	
7. Procurement	Low	
Overall Risk Assessment	Low	

*High, Significant, Moderate, Low



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3. Detailed Internal Control Findings and Recommendations

No.	Description of Finding	Recommendation
1	The IP doesn't have formalized procedures and manuals (financial management, grants management, HR, and etc.).	<i>We recommend to elaborate manuals (Financial management, grants management, HR, and etc.) and fit to existing procedures in the organization.</i>
	Organization prepares specific financial reports which is required by Government regulations and it used to analyze the budget and actual costs. However, there is no a practice for preparation financial reports in accordance with International Financial Reporting Standards, which will be valuable and efficient tool for the management and external users to analyze the overall financial position of the Organization.	<i>We recommend to integrate a practice of preparation financial statements in accordance with International Financial Reporting Standards, which is also valuable and efficient tool for management and external users and provides with opportunity for the assessment of Organization's financial performance.</i>
2	The Organization has not developed accounting policy, which may cause some difficulties in the accounting. These problems may concern one and the same transaction recorded and presented in different ways, as well as uncertainties in reporting and presentation of operations not specific for the Organization.	<i>In accordance with the IFRS the Organization should develop accounting policy and apply regulations elaborated while making accounting records and preparing financial statements complying IFRS. In case of lack of appropriate International Financial Reporting Standard, the Organization should elaborate the mentioned section of the accounting policy itself, which will provide the user with the most important information regarding financial statement of the Organization.</i>

