



POST PROJECT EVALUATION FOR THE UNITED NATIONS DEMOCRACY FUND

EVALUATION REPORT

**UDF-17-768-KYR
Advancing Gender Justice with Community Broadcasters
in Kyrgyzstan**

Date: 12 April 2022

Acknowledgements

The evaluator would like to thank the Association of legal entities Community Mass Media Association (the Community Mass Media Association), the members of the Community Mass Media Association and Demge-Dem (Implementing partner), who took the time to share their experiences and information with the evaluator. In particular, the evaluator would like to thank the team of the Community Mass Media Association team - Aizada Kalkanbekova, Project Manager and Executive Director of the Community Radio "Suusamyр FM", the Association's Executive Director, Nazira Dzhusupova who had the task of Project Assistant, and the Implementing Partner "Demge-Dem" for their assistance, information, and logistical support. All errors and omissions remain the responsibility of the author.

Author

This report was written by Rakhat Talkanbaeva.

Disclaimer

The views expressed in this report belong to the evaluator. They do not represent those of UNDEF or of any of the institutions referred to in the report.

Map of Community multimedia centers in Kyrgyzstan¹



¹ Community multimedia centers that were visited during the evaluation are marked in yellow.

Acronyms

CMC	Community multimedia center
CSO	Civil Society Organization
DAC	Development Assistance Criteria
GALS	Gender Action Learning System
GIZ	Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit
GBV	Gender Based Violence
IT	Information Technology
MoU	Memorandum of Understanding
KIIs	Key informant interviews
NGO	Non-governmental organization
OECD	Organization for Economic Development and Cooperation
ToT	Training of Trainers
UNDEF	United Nations Democracy Fund
UNEG	United Nations Evaluation Group
USD	United States Dollar

Table of contents

I. Executive Summary	5
II. Introduction and Development Context	9
(i). The project overview and evaluation objectives	9
(ii). Evaluation methodology	10
(iii). Development context	11
(iv). Project Strategy and Approach	15
(v). Gender strategy	16
(vi). Summarised Project Results Framework	16
III. Evaluation Findings	18
(i). Relevance	18
(ii). Coherence	20
(iii). Effectiveness	21
(iv). Efficiency	25
(v). Impact	28
(vi). Sustainability	31
(vii). UNDEF added value	33
IV. Overall Assessment and Final Thoughts	35
(i). Conclusions	35
(ii). Recommendations	36
(iii). Lessons Learned	37
Annex 1: Evaluation questions	38
Annex 2: Documents reviewed	40
Annex 3: List of people interviewed	42

I. Executive Summary

“Advancing Gender Justice with Community Broadcasters in Kyrgyzstan” (UDF-17-768-KYR) was a 30-month project (including six-month extension) implemented from 1 January 2019 to 30 June 2021, supported by the United Nations Democracy Fund (UNDEF) with a USD 165,000 grant. The project aimed to strengthen the transformative role of community media (3 community radio and 24 community multimedia centers) to support Kyrgyzstan in its efforts to reduce gender-based violence (GBV) and to promote positive role models for women in their respective communities. The project targeted journalist, local activists, and local community throughout Kyrgyzstan.

The main objective of this stand-alone post-project evaluation was to independently evaluate the success of the project in achieving its goals and to generate conclusions, recommendations, and lessons learned that can be applicable to other similar UNDEF-supported projects in the future. The evaluation was conducted from November 2021 to March 2022 (including field visits from February 6 to February 11, 2022) and focused on key elements of UNDEF’s standard evaluation criteria: 1) relevance, 2) coherence, 3) effectiveness, 4) efficiency, 5) impact, 6) sustainability, and 7) UNDEF value added.

The evaluation consisted of a desk review of the project related documents, field visits to six communities² and direct observations, an examination of quantitative data and qualitative information including the measurement of project indicators, and in-depth interviews were also conducted during the evaluation process (more details can be found in Annex 3).

Results

Based on UNDEF’s standard evaluation criteria, the evaluator’s overall assessment concludes that the project was very successful in achieving its goals and meeting the mandate of UNDEF.

Relevance: The project was relevant to the actual needs of Kyrgyzstan and bridged a gap in the media landscape in Kyrgyzstan. Overall, the project outcomes, as designed, were adequate and aligned with the mandate and strategic aims of the donor (UNDEF), the grantee (the Community Mass Media Association), and the local implementing partner (Demge-Dem). The main providers of knowledge, information, intermediaries between local communities and local authorities in the implementation of the project

² Suusamyrla of Djail district, Kazarman of Toguz-Toro, Baetovo of Ak-Talaa district, Kulanak, and Naryn city of Naryn district, and Barskoon of Djeti-Oguz district.

were community multimedia centers, which are an integral part of community life, particularly in remote regions of the country. This fact gave the project more significance and relevance, since in Kyrgyzstan the local community tends to trust the community media more than other media³, and as was confirmed by project beneficiaries during interviews.

Moreover, the high level of gender-based violence in Kyrgyzstan indicated that the project's objectives responded to the needs of not only the local community, but also the state as a whole. Improving the quality of journalism around GBV issues is the first step to ensuring productive informational materials on these issues. The project was able to get all stakeholders, including the government interlocutors, to focus on specific facts and data-driven analyses and feed into a constructive democratic approach to finding concrete solutions to rights issues. The project had a consistent, strategic approach to gender: women's rights were clearly an issue that the Community Mass Media Association intended to highlight. Therefore, the project design had a logical sequence of actions and met the needs of Kyrgyz society.

Coherence: The goals of the project were in line with the Community Mass Media Association's mission, values and efforts to promote local development and citizen rights in the most remote areas of Kyrgyzstan. The organization had demonstrated expertise in training management and the mobilization of local actors even though this was its first project for the promotion of gender equality for the organization. The project was largely in line with the goals of UNDEF and Kyrgyzstan's support to promote gender equality and reduce violence at the local level and was fully in line with the efforts of the state.

Effectiveness: The project was effective in achieving its planned objectives despite changes in the way of implementation. All the planned activities were carried out. Journalists who received training and met the evaluators displayed a good understanding of the role which media can play in the promotion and protection of human rights and in democratic dialogue. Activists also demonstrated awareness of the role of women in democratic development and noted that local community who had undergone training or participated in anti-GBV campaigns gained an understanding of this issue. It is worth noting that the effectiveness of the activities increased with the involvement of a gender expert in the process of project implementation. The project raised the public's awareness of the importance of evidence-based reporting, the higher-than-ever standards journalists have to respect when covering gender-based issues,

³ <https://soros.kg/wp-content/uploads/2017/12/Otchet-Mediapredpochtleniya-naseleniya-KR-8-volna.pdf>.

The level of trust in the media averaged 6.6 out of 10 points in the republic.

and communication channels were opened with other important actors, such as civil society activists and representatives of local self-governance. Moreover, due to the broad engagement of the local authorities and stakeholders, more than half of the recommendations regarding gender-based violence presented at both local and national levels were realized during the implementation of the project. In addition, the materials prepared within the framework of the project (a manual for journalists, 11 TV programs, radio stories, etc.) were appreciated among the beneficiaries of the project for their utility in applying the received knowledge and information in practice.

Efficiency: The project was executed efficiently. Resources were appropriately allocated, and standards for accounting and accountability of partners were respected. Target indicators were surpassed, and activities were tailored to fit the needs of project participants. The project team and its partner were highly organized, made communication-oriented decisions, and was able to address challenges as they arose to resolve problems that the project faced.

Impact: The project had a positive impact on both participants and communities. The landscape of community media in Kyrgyzstan has improved as a direct result of this project. The use of visual aids and infographics during training activities, in turn, influenced the quality of conclusions and analyses of journalists. Local communities have been able to contribute to the scope of the project, and subsequent stories have led to increased dialogue between citizens through community media.

Sustainability: The project contributed to establishing a mass of journalists and local activists aware of human rights reporting and of the challenges of human rights issues based on gender reporting. As a result, the sustainability that was achieved was virtually entirely related to the training activities for journalists and activists associated with community media entities. This is a testimony to the quality of the training provided, as the project's beneficiaries confirmed: Today, the trained 14 women leaders, 140 women and journalists are "agents of change" who transfer the knowledge gained during the project to their colleagues and the local community. Moreover, sustainability has been enhanced by more systematic engagement among the range of key stakeholders and the attention of the government to GBV issues.

UNDEF's support had added value: Foreign funding of NGOs is regularly a matter of controversy and concern in Kyrgyzstan, especially as it relates to media engagement. UNDEF's support was definitely valuable as it provided a neutral, credible, and legitimate source of funding. The UNDEF funding allowed for activists, journalists coming from very different regions, political views, and social backgrounds to meet and

work together, without a priori, and achieve results from productive and meaningful collaborations.

Conclusions

The project has achieved its goal - to provide local communities with the opportunities and skills necessary to change the consciousness of citizens and the grassroots civil society groups the ability to address issues emphasizing the role of women in their target communities. The project increased the capacity of local women activists, journalists and community members through dialogues, raised awareness of the need to prevent gender-based violence in local communities, provided gender-sensitive information among civil activists, journalists, community members represented by elders and youth through community media, and built the linkage between local authorities and the project's stakeholders to reduce GBV in the target communities.

The success stories collected by the project indicate that in most of the communities covered by the project, dialogues were held between citizens and representatives of local self-government and other key institutions, and that the contribution and participation of the public are now effectively considered in decision-making processes concerning these settlements through the involvement of community multimedia centers and radio.

Moreover, one of the success factors of the project was the involvement of a gender expert mid-way, which demonstrates that the project was very flexible to changes and challenges during the implementation process.

Despite these achievements, the project had some omissions, such as: The project did not include an assessment of knowledge and satisfaction with learning in all trainings, in order to understand the level of "increased knowledge". In addition, there was a lack of survey data measuring the impact of the 11 TV programs and 200 radio stories produced by the project. Therefore, it was difficult to measure how much reflection on these stories has led to "perception changes, attitudes" of the target group (planned to cover 40,000 people for radio stories and 200,000 people for 11 TV programs). However, the evaluator, on the basis of independently gathered first-hand evidence, also established that the project generated positive impact and the project was able to collect 16 stories of how these programs, radio stories affected the beneficiaries.

Recommendations

Based on the above, to strengthen similar projects in the future:

- The evaluator recommends that the grantee should design a monitoring system, which makes consistent use of baseline and target surveys, when there are qualitative indicators, such as "demonstrated a change in perception", "the role of women has changed", to clearly assess and understand to what extent these target indicators have been achieved.
- The evaluator recommends that the grantee should in the future involve a gender expert already at the design stage for similar gender-oriented projects. Gender mainstreaming was successful due to the involvement of a gender expert mid-way.
- The evaluator recommends to the grantee to keep in touch with trained women leaders, 140 women, local representatives, and journalists who had participated in various project activities, to use this network to sustain the project's results.

II. Introduction and Development Context

(i). The project overview and evaluation objectives

The project was carried out from 1 January 2019 to 30 June 2021, including a six-month extension, with a total grant of USD 165,000. The project was designed by the Association of legal entities Community Mass Media Association (the Community Mass Media Association), a Kyrgyz Non-Governmental Organization (NGO) based in Bishkek city. It partnered with Demge-Dem, an NGO based in Osh city, Osh district.

This project aimed to strengthen the transformative role of community media (3 community radio and 24 community multimedia centers⁴) to support Kyrgyzstan in its efforts to reduce gender-based violence (GBV) and to promote positive role models for women in their respective communities. The project covered all regions in Kyrgyzstan, where the Community Mass Media Association members were located, namely 27 target communities, and worked with key stakeholders, including journalists, women activists, rural women, as well as local government officials, and used three integrated outcomes

⁴ The purpose of the multimedia centers is to improve access to information among the populations of municipalities. The multimedia center does not broadcast through FM, like community radios, but broadcasts through the loud-speakers and prepares materials of different formats (texts, videos, photos, and audio) for posting on internet sites.

focused on raising awareness and building capacities of stakeholders including support for the dialogues.

The main objective of this stand-alone post-project evaluation was to independently evaluate the success of the project in achieving its goals and to generate conclusions, recommendations, and lessons learned that can be applicable to other similar UNDEF-supported projects in the future.

(ii). Evaluation methodology

The evaluation was conducted from November 2021 to March 2022 (5 months). The evaluation focused on key elements of UNDEF's standard evaluation criteria: 1) relevance (focus on project design and time), 2) coherence (focus on the extent to which the project was compatible with other projects and programs in the country, sector, or institution), 3) effectiveness (focus on outcomes), 4) efficiency (focus on output delivery and project management), 5) impact (focus on short-term outcome effects and long-term demonstrated change), 6) sustainability (focus on the viability of the initiatives and continuing civic engagement), and 7) UNDEF value added (focus on the unique position of UNDEF funding provided to the project)⁵.

The evaluation strategy used a triangulated approach (key informant interviews, field observations, and desk review). This ensured the gathering of evidence and perspectives from multiple sources and a triangulation of findings. Additionally, the evaluation produced lessons learned from the project. The overall project performance, the outputs in relation to the inputs, the financial management, and the implementing timetable were considered.

After a comprehensive desk review, the evaluator visited the following six communities in five districts to conduct in-depth interviews and direct observations:

1. Suusamy, Djail district;
2. Kazarman, Toguz-Toro district;
3. Baetovo, Ak-Talaa district;
4. Kulanak, Naryn district;
5. Naryn city, Naryn district;
6. Barskoon, Djete-Oguz district.

⁵ A more detailed break-down of evaluation questions can be found in the Annex 1 "Evaluation Questions."

The evaluator collected data through the interviews between November 2021 and February 2022. 46 key informant interviews (KIIs) were conducted with representatives of state authorities, local self-governance bodies, and local communities. Among them, 12 representatives of local authorities, and 5 local deputies took part in the interviews from the target communities (more details can be found in Annex 3). All interviews were transcribed and analyzed through the generation of emerging themes to identify and present the key findings highlighted in the evaluation report.

The evaluation adopted a transparent, inclusive, participatory and results-based approach to collect, analyze and report on findings and recommendations. It assessed the rationale and justification for the project as well as the outputs, outcomes and impacts achieved. The evaluator also assessed the sustainability of the intervention including mechanisms and strategies put in place to ensure that the benefits transcend the end of the UNDEF grant. The formulation of questions during the interviews and meetings always included a gender mainstreaming approach, both in terms of project participants and topics of focus and outputs.

(iii). Development context

Kyrgyzstan is a country that has assumed international obligations to eliminate all forms of discrimination against women⁶, and over the decades of its sovereign history has distinguished itself in the region as a democratic state that recognizes and supports human rights.

Moreover, Kyrgyzstan became the first country in the Central Asian region where parliament had adopted laws "On state guarantees of equal rights and equal opportunities for men and women"⁷ in August 2008 and "On protection and prevention from family violence"⁸ in April 2017. In order to implement the Law of the Kyrgyz Republic "On Protection from Family Violence", the State Agency of Local Government and Interethnic Relations issued an order dated January 15, 2021, to create Committees on Prevention of Family Violence.

Furthermore, to implement a National Strategy of the Kyrgyz Republic to achieve gender equality until 2020 each municipality, district administration, and the Government

⁶ The Kyrgyz Republic joined the resolutions of the Legislative Assembly of the Jogorku Kenesh of the Kyrgyz Republic dated January 25, 1996 N 320-1 and the Assembly of People's Representatives of the Jogorku Kenesh of the Kyrgyz Republic dated March 6, 1996 N 257-1

⁷ <http://cbd.minjust.gov.kg/act/view/ru-ru/202398>

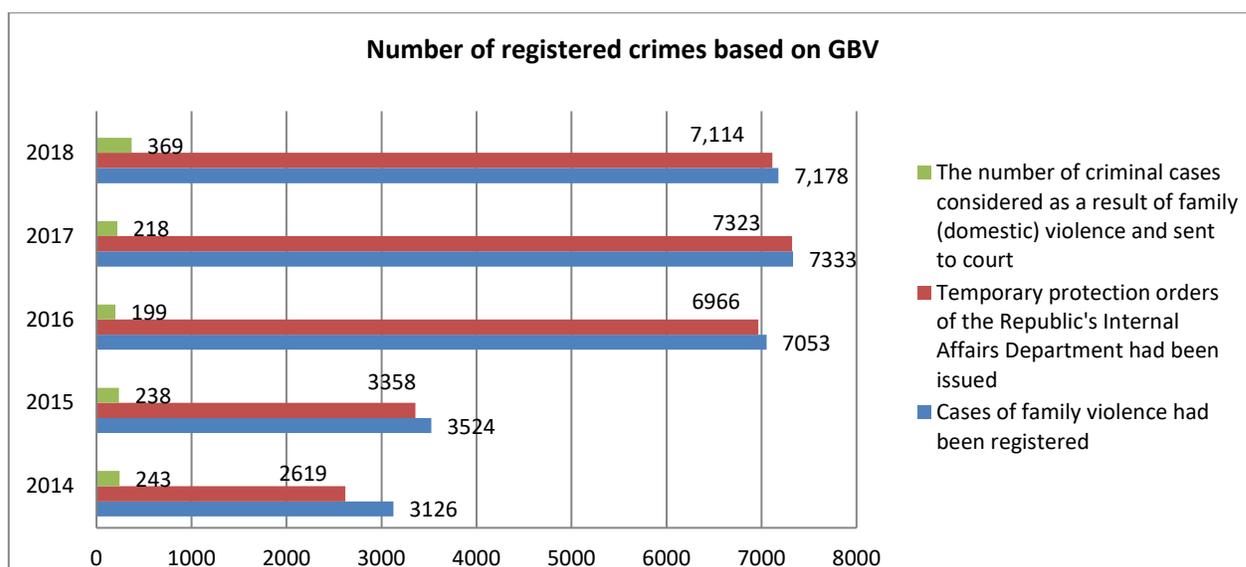
⁸ <http://cbd.minjust.gov.kg/act/view/ru-ru/111570>

of the Kyrgyz Republic developed plans to prevent domestic violence in the Kyrgyz Republic⁹.

However, despite the legislative framework and international obligations, gender-based violence has always occurred and is growing every year. Thus, according to the National Statistical Committee of the Kyrgyz Republic, the number of gender-based violence in the Republic has been growing since 2014¹⁰. For example, the number of criminal cases filed in court due to domestic violence in 2014 was 243, and this number of cases increased to 369 in 2018.

There was also an increase in the issuance of temporary protection orders due to domestic violence by almost 3 times: in 2014 the number was 2,619, then by the end of 2018 – 7,114 (Figure 1). This trend was also being monitored for the registration of cases of family violence in law enforcement agencies.

Figure 1. Number of registered crimes based on GBV



Source: data of the National Statistical Committee of the Kyrgyz Republic

Moreover, it should be noted that the pandemic in 2020 had a negative impact on the decrease of violence in Kyrgyzstan. As a result of quarantine, the problem of family violence had worsened. Women, who were isolated had a hard time with their

⁹ <https://www.gov.kg/ru/post/s/plan-srochnykh-meropriyatiy-po-predotvrashcheniyu-semeynogo-nasiliya-v-kyrgyzskoy-respublike>

¹⁰ <http://www.stat.kg/ru/statistics/prestupnost/>

husbands, with feudal vestiges of consciousness. They were subjected to violence and psychological pressure from their husbands and there was an increase in domestic violence in 2020, the number of reports increased by 1,874, of which reports from women increased by 1,680 cases, and reports from men increased by 194 cases¹¹.

In addition, patriarchal ideas prevailed in Kyrgyz society and gender discrimination was present, as the media always tolerated human rights violations or stigmatization of women's issues, such as the showing of the movie "Kelin (Bride)", in which a little girl was forcibly married off, or when journalists broadcasted patriarchal messages, allowing gender stereotypes and stigmatization in their published materials. The headline from an article of Radio Azzatyk dated May 28, 2019, offers such an example: "Six children abandoned by Kyrgyz women in Moscow were delivered to Bishkek."¹² In this headline, the accusation against mothers having "abandoned" children was clearly felt, while there was no mention of the fathers of the children in the article, and there were no reasons or assumptions given why these women could not take care of their children while abroad. However, after the public's vehement condemnation, the headline was changed to a more neutral tone.

Accelerating progress toward gender equality and women's empowerment in the Kyrgyz Republic remains the challenge of gender mainstreaming; the polarization of public opinion regarding women's rights issues; the decline in women's participation in the political system; and radicalization and religious extremism¹³. This tendency is aggravated by media content and messaging based on negative stereotypes. There is demand for high-quality media programming that raises GBV awareness and promotes more positive role models for women in Kyrgyz society.

This would be achieved through community media – which had to connect people in local communities – and opportunities for women and community members to participate in community dialogues. Thus, during the implementation of the project, 11 TV programs and 200 radio stories were prepared, to share some of the main characters' achievements after suffering violence: Some built a satellite, and others

¹¹ According to data from the National Statistical Committee. <http://www.stat.kg/ru/statistics/prestupnost/>

¹² <https://rus.azattyk.org/a/29966905.html?fbclid=IwAR0icZJ0W20L0mOXgPbCIVvRXPWZYFvf6GSXOCOugpZiVBLspn-WOsYTT-Y>

¹² The Kyrgyz Republic joined the resolutions of the Legislative Assembly of the Jogorku Kenesh of the Kyrgyz Republic dated January 25, 1996, No. 320-1 and the Assembly of People 's Representatives of the Jogorku Kenesh of the Kyrgyz Republic dated March 6, 1996, No. 257-1

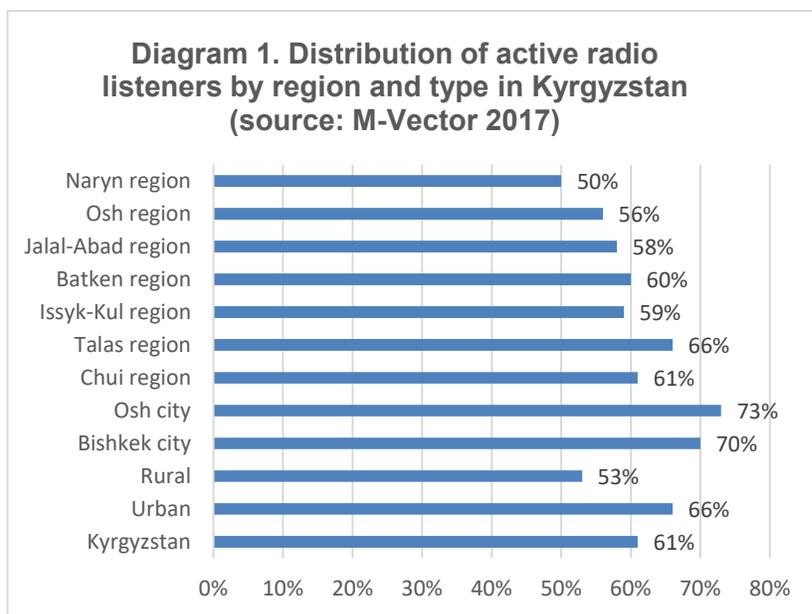
¹² <http://cbd.minjust.gov.kg/act/view/ru-ru/202398>

¹² <http://cbd.minjust.gov.kg/act/view/ru-ru/111570>

¹³ National review of the Kyrgyz Republic on the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and the Beijing platform for action progress and challenges, 2019

engaged in IT programming, livestock breeding, all of which are not traditional occupations for girls and women in Kyrgyz society.

It should be noted that Kyrgyzstan was the first country in Central Asia where community media broadcasters have emerged and are actively developing since 2007. At the beginning of 2020, 1,800 economic entities were registered as mass media and 126 as independent TV and radio companies in Kyrgyzstan¹⁴. On the annual World Press Freedom Index, Kyrgyzstan's ranking has improved by three places to 79th place in 2021, as was reported by the international organization Reporters without Borders»¹⁵.



A research study¹⁶ conducted in 2017 by M-Vector¹⁷ on "Media preferences of Kyrgyzstan" (diagram 1), shows that 66% of the urban population and 53% of the surveyed rural population prefer to listen to the radio. The reason for the lower level of radio listening in the regions of the Republic, which are remote from the economic centers of the country, can be explained by the lower

representation of radio broadcasting and low radio signal. The number of radio stations in the big cities (Osh, Bishkek) is 2-3 times higher than the number of radio stations in the other regions of the Republic.

Thus, community media are of great importance not only for a certain region, but also for the whole Republic, as the events, problems and achievements of rural residents remain aloof from the nationwide information flow. The reason for this is the

¹⁴ <http://www.stat.kg/ru/news/sredstva-massovoj-informacii-i-knigoizdanie-cifry-i-fakty/>

¹⁵ <https://rsf.org/en/2021-world-press-freedom-index-journalism-vaccine-against-disinformation-blocked-more-130-countries>

¹⁶ <https://internews.kg/glavnye-novosti/issledovanie-mediapredpochteniya-naseleniya-kyrgyzstana-8-ya-volna-2017-god/>

¹⁷ M-Vector is one of the leading regional research and consulting companies, which works in Central Asia countries: Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, and Turkmenistan

weak coverage of the ongoing problems in the media due to the peculiarities of the geographical area. The majority of community media are in remote and mountainous locations. The insufficient amount of regional news in the general flow of information significantly narrows the information field of the whole country. At the same time, the existence of an open, inclusive, and democratic society is unthinkable without free access to information for the population. Therefore, community media are a useful alternative to information transmitters in remote regions of the Republic. They provide local residents with alternative channels of access to information through various channels. This helps to complement the national and regional information available to local residents.

Another development problem faced by the community broadcasters today is financial sustainability. Community Media Centers (CMCs) rely on financial support from a variety of sources, which may include donor assistance, grants, membership fees, sponsorship or advertising. However, it should be noted that the issue of financing is not only a matter of further organizational and institutional development of community radio. One of the possible ways to reduce tension, in addition to grant support from international donors, provision of advertising services, sponsorship or donations, and listener membership fees, is the development of self-financing for community radio stations, and multimedia centers.

(iv). Project Strategy and Approach

The goal of the project *Advancing Gender Justice with Community Broadcasters in Kyrgyzstan* was to strengthen the transformative role of community media (public radio and community multimedia centers), to support Kyrgyzstan in its efforts to reduce gender-based violence and promote positive role models for women in their respective communities.

The project had worked directly with journalists and activists, representatives of community media centers and community radio, most of whom were women living in rural areas. The actual direct beneficiaries were 153 journalists, 14 women leaders, 140 women activists, and 1,400 rural women, who benefited from capacity building activities. Moreover, the project brought together 47 local officials with other stakeholders for dialogue sessions.

The indirect beneficiaries targeted by this project were the audience of two TV channels and the viewers of 11 TV programs produced by the project - about 2,000,000 people. In addition, it was estimated that about 208,000 members of the 27 target communities would familiarize themselves with 200 radio stories.

(v). Gender strategy

During the evaluation of this project, there had been deliberate focus to ensure that gender diversity was integral to measuring project impact, bearing in mind that it was also central during the project design and implementation. The project had been conscious of the gender dimension by guaranteeing the following:

- All data collected through the project was disaggregated by sex.
- All project activities (round tables, training activities, community meetings) promoted the participation of women, men and activists.
- All the project activities included the violence prevention issue.
- The project promoted positive role models for women in their respective communities and ensured the reduction of GBV.

(vi). Summarised Project Results Framework

The logical diagram that follows is based on the project logic as set out in the project document.

Outcome 1: Strengthened capacity of key stakeholders, journalists, women activists, and rural women to produce and disseminate gender-sensitive community information		
Outcome indicators	Planned and achieved outputs	Assess ment
1.1: 100% of 14 TOT women activists become knowledgeable on ways to change the gender norms in their communities through community media and delivered their assigned tasks (1.3 training of 140 women, 2.1 production of community radio programs, 2.2 anti-GBV campaigns, and 3.2 community level dialogues).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 14-woman activists became knowledgeable on ways to change the gender norms in their communities through 3-day Training of Trainers in Bishkek; • 14 TOT women trained 140 women who demonstrated their increased knowledge (by 54%) and also participated in production of community radio programs; • 200 radio stories and 11 TV programs were produced with participation of women; • 25 anti-GBV campaigns were conducted with a total of 1,957 participants; • 14 community level dialogues were held. 	Achieved
1.2: 90% (135) of 150 community/traditional journalists increased their level of knowledge on GBV and gender equality and have produced their plan for gender coverage, and top 20 completed their media products and disseminated them.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 6 training activities for 153 journalists on gender sensitive-media content and techniques implemented (planned: 150); • Increased knowledge of journalists on gender sensitive-media content and techniques demonstrated - according to the results of two training surveys: the first training January 18-19, 2010, in Bishkek, the participants increased their knowledge by an average of 27%, the second training held in Osh during February 15-16, 2020, the participants increased their 	Achieved

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> knowledge by 31%; 20 of the most interesting applications on the topic of gender equality were selected for mini-grants and completed their media products. 	
1.3: 80% (112) of trained rural women (140) demonstrated their increased knowledge on GBVs and gender equality and community media activities and participated in planned community level media activities: media production (2.1); campaigns (2.2); and local dialogue meetings (3.2).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 153 people (151 were rural women) took part in the training activities of the project. These women participated as respondents in community media audio stories and in local meetings. 	Achieved
Outcome 2: Increased public awareness regarding gender-based violence and the situation of Kyrgyz women		
2.1: (1) 40,000 people in remote communities listened to 200 radio stories; (2) 200,000 people watched the 11 TV programs across the country, and demonstrated their perception changes.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 200 radio reports were prepared; 208 000 people in remote villages listened to 200 radio programs and increased their knowledge on GBV and gender equality (planned 40,000); 11 special TV report/stories produced and at least 2,000,000 people watched across the country (planned 200,000). 	Achieved
2.2: 80% (1,000) of targeted participants of the media campaigns (50 x 25=1,250) who had participated in the 25 community media campaigns demonstrated their increased knowledge regarding gender/GBV issues.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 25 community media conducted a video show, each media showed 4-5 videos; In 25 villages, 1957 people took part in the video viewing (about 78 people in each village) and they became aware of gender/GBV issues after the campaign events. 	Achieved
Outcome 3: Strengthened formal engagement between activists, media and local authorities on gender-based violence and gender equality		
3.1: At least one recommendation in each community level action plan is implemented by one of the participating stakeholder groups (total 14 community dialogues).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 14 action plans to prevent gender-based violence were developed with 75 recommendations; 71 recommendations out of 75 were implemented, which is 95% of the implementation (planned 14 recommendations had to be implemented from 14 action plans). 	Achieved
3.2: 50% of the issues identified at the national level round tables (6) are followed up by community stakeholders and implemented.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 6 round tables were held from March 2021 to June 2021; 86% of recommendations were implemented by stakeholders (11 recommendations in total) at the national level. (Planned 50%). 	Achieved

III. Evaluation Findings

According to the project's final narrative report submitted by the Community Mass Media Association (the implementing agency), successful results have been achieved under all 3 project outcomes set in the Project Document. This evaluation looked closely at these assessments made by the implementing agency to validate and explain them further regarding the project's relevance, coherence, effectiveness, efficiency, impact, sustainability, and the added value of UNDEF.

(i). Relevance

The project was relevant to the actual needs of targeted communities and the Republic as a whole. From the point of view of the social and economic significance of the project, it cannot be denied that the issue of reducing gender-based violence is still critical. The state spends currently funds as high as 1.6 million soms (ca. USD 20,000)¹⁸ for the investigation of a case of domestic violence¹⁹. At the same time, as previously noted, the level of domestic violence in Kyrgyzstan is increasing every year. Undoubtedly, the project overall goal was relevant and in line with the objectives and policies of the Kyrgyz state. In this connection, carrying out preventive work, capacity building activities, raising awareness about supporting women, changing perceptions not only of women's roles, but also of men, and involving stakeholders in addressing violence issues meets not only the needs of local communities, but also the priorities of the state. All these activities were carried out to a greater or lesser extent in the 27 communities targeted within the framework of the project.

Moreover, the project outcomes, as designed, were adequate and aligned with the mandate and strategic aims of the donor (UNDEF), the grantee, and the local implementing partner (Demge-Dem). The project focused on the issue of promoting women's human rights and democratic values, topics which are central to the mandate of UNDEF, through the media. It is so important that women from rural areas had the opportunity to be heard through the media and to participate directly in public life, as aimed for by the project's first outcome "Strengthened capacity of key stakeholders, journalists, women activists, and rural women to produce and disseminate gender-sensitive community information", and the third outcome 'Strengthened formal

¹⁸ https://www.kg.undp.org/content/kyrgyzstan/ru/home/library/womens_empowerment/domestic-violence.html

¹⁹ In 2012, with the participation of the Ministry of Internal Affairs, an assessment of the cost of considering 1 case of murder committed on the basis of family violence was carried out. Thus, it was found that the state spent about 1.6 million soms on the work of specialists: the departure of the task force, investigation, judicial, medical examination, the work of a judge, prosecutor, transportation, maintenance of the guilty person, execution of punishment.

engagement between activists, media and local authorities on gender based-violence and gender equality'. The project's outcome 2 aimed at informing the local community through trained journalists to provide adequate information on violence prevention. In general, the project design had a logical sequence of actions and met the needs of Kyrgyz society.

Furthermore, the project was directly relevant to the mandate of the grantee, the Community Mass Media Association. Community media play an important role in disseminating not only information for remote regions, but also in building the capacity of local communities. Through their broadcasts, community media can convey the needed and useful information to local communities. This was especially reflected during the COVID-19 pandemic when people were forced to stay at home. As the interviewed beneficiaries of the project noted, they often listened to local radio and received local news about the situation in their community through multimedia centers.

In this context, there was a need in Kyrgyzstan to provide more gender-sensitive information and conscious opposition to gender stereotypes not only to representatives of remote local communities, but also of the media. In this case, the project's activities to train journalists were highly relevant. The training of local activists on violence prevention also showed its timely relevance, which in turn implemented 14 plans to prevent violence through engagement of stakeholders of the target communities.

Overall, the project activities were also directly related to the project objectives and met the needs of the local community to increase the capacity of journalists, activists, to raise awareness about gender-based violence and to provide gender-sensitive information not only through journalists, but also through local women activists, to engage stakeholders in the reduction of GBV. It is worth noting that the project covered those target communities that were remote and there were no other donor-funded projects in these communities.

It is also important to emphasize that the interviewed people gave numerous examples of how 200 radio reports and 11 TV programs produced by the project were in demand among local communities during the COVID-19 pandemic. GBV became much more serious because of the pandemic, as people stayed at home and violence became invisible. Community media became extremely important to link people disseminating necessary information and helping to support each other. At that time, listening to the radio, women could expand their knowledge in the field of their rights. Thus, the epidemiological situation of Covid-19 in Kyrgyzstan made the implementation of the project even more relevant.

(ii). Coherence

The project's coherence was strong at internal and external level.

Since 2013, when the Community Mass Media Association was created to improve the media landscape and provide access to information in remote areas of the Kyrgyz Republic, it has been actively involved in regional development projects, as well as supporting the process of democratization and the protection of human rights. It is undeniable that the project objectives were in line with the Community Mass Media Association's intervention areas and its efforts to reduce GBV and protect citizen rights in most remote areas of Kyrgyzstan. Moreover, the project objectives were in harmony with the mandate of the project's implementing partner "Demge-Dem", which since 2020 has not only focused on highlighting women's issues and human rights but has also promoted the positive roles of women in Kyrgyz society.

Furthermore, the project was also able to integrate with national programs that create committees for the prevention of family violence at the community level. The local committees on prevention of family violence were established in communities on a voluntary basis²⁰ to promote the prevention of domestic violence, as well as violations of the rights of women and girls in the family. In this regard, the project was also able to interact effectively with these "new" established committees: Members of the Community Mass Media Association worked with representatives of these committees to raise awareness about preventing violence against an elderly woman in Barskoon. Gender expert Ms. A. Ormonova provided training on the establishment and functioning of a committee on prevention of family violence in Suusamy, as previously there was no such committee in Suusamy.

Moreover, in line with the National Strategy of the Kyrgyz Republic to achieve gender equality until 2020, the members of the Community Media Association were able to integrate with the implementation of this strategy at the local level through providing support for events, holding round tables, etc.

Based on stakeholder interviews conducted by the evaluator, it is clear that the objectives of the project were fully in line with the various efforts of the government and other stakeholders. They agreed that the capacity building, increasing awareness of local community, the engagement of stakeholders to ensure the reduction of GBV, and

²⁰ The local committee on prevention of family violence is a permanent collegial body established on a voluntary basis bringing together representatives of state authorities, members of the local community and representatives of civil society for interaction and cooperation on prevention of family violence, violation of rights of women, children, elderly and disabled citizens.

the protection of human rights of their communities were so important that it made all initiatives relevant and needed.

It should also be noted that UN Women, OSCE, UNDP and GIZ are working on the issues of reducing GBV and achieving gender equality in Kyrgyzstan. However, these agencies did not work in these remote communities targeted by members of the Community Media Association.

(iii). Effectiveness

Overall, the project was able to successfully achieve its goal of strengthening the transformative role of community media (community radio and community multimedia centers) supporting Kyrgyzstan in its efforts to reduce gender-based violence (GBV) and to promote positive role models for women in their respective communities.

The Association signed memorandums of mutual cooperation with 8 target communities and with the Ministry of Culture, Information and Tourism of the Kyrgyz Republic on cooperation and implementation of joint activities.

The project produced the outputs foreseen in the Project Document. The evaluator concluded that the expected results of Outcome 1 ‘Strengthened capacity of key stakeholders, journalists, women activists, and rural women to produce and disseminate gender-sensitive community information’ were largely achieved. The project capacitated not only 14 trained leaders, journalists, but also the local community and local authorities to become active on the issue of reducing gender-based violence in Kyrgyzstan.

Thus, training activity was conducted for 14 activists, after which the trained activists conducted discussions, round tables for a wide range of people, in particular for 940 youth. The 14 activists from different regions of the Republic were able to conduct training for their communities, using the obtained knowledge, in particular GALS²¹ (new methodology for Kyrgyzstan). A total of 1,957 people attended campaigns against the prevention of violence (of which 72% female, 28% male), which also included 290 local activists and 47 representatives of municipalities. In addition, 153 journalists (of which 99% female, 1% male) from the print and electronic media were trained as planned by the Community Mass Media Association to build their capacity for media reporting from a women right’s perspective.

²¹ The Gender Action Learning System (GALS) is a community-led empowerment methodology to promote more harmonious and violence-free relationships in families and communities.

«What I liked most about this Project was that I was taught the GALS method. Today I try to apply this knowledge at home, even in relation to my husband. For example, I used to do everything at home on my own, namely: in the morning I heated the house, fed the children, cooked, and my husband just got dressed, waited for me on the street and then was nervous that I was doing everything for a long time. After the training, I explained to my husband that we could share household chores. At first it was hard for my husband to accept it, but now he's used to it and we do everything together». **Aizat Tumonbaeva, CMC of Kulanak**

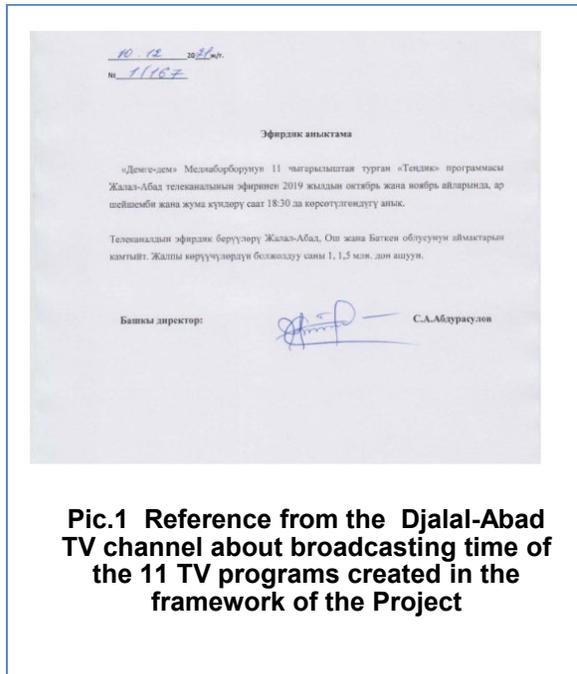
The training activities of journalists and activists to provide gender-oriented information using GALS methodology in Kyrgyz were not only relevant, but also effective according to the feedback participants provided to the evaluator. Despite the fact that the project did not conduct pre- and post-tests in all training activities, the interviewed persons noted a high level of satisfaction with the training and were motivated to use the acquired knowledge on the prevention of gender-based violence. The trained journalists also made progress in reporting about women's issues in 48 published articles.

Moreover, the project was effective in reaching out to members of local communities throughout the Republic, because all 27 members of the Association were involved in the project activities, further publishing materials on the website of the Association, which were prepared on the basis of the training.

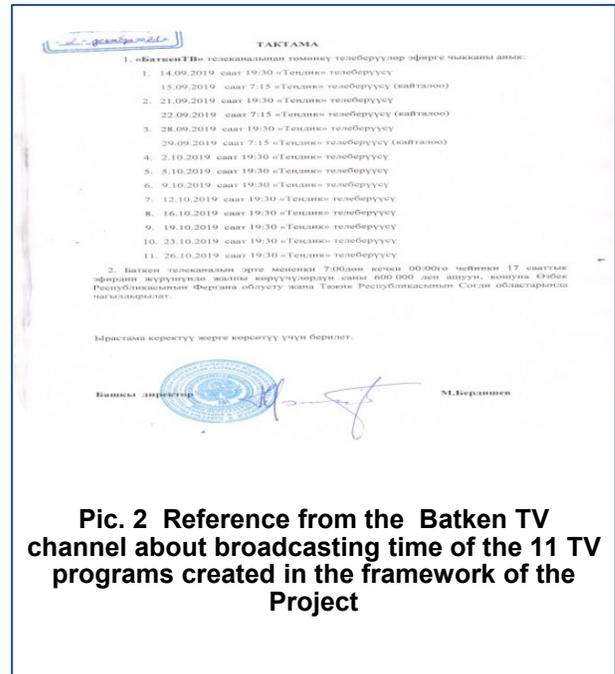
The project also conducted training for 140 female activists. The purpose of the training was to provide rural women with information about stereotypes, about gender and GBV, and about human rights. By the end of the training, 20 participants received an award of appreciation for the best materials on violence prevention.

In terms of Outcome 2: 'Increased public awareness regarding gender-based violence and the situation of Kyrgyz women' 200 pre-recorded radio stories addressing women and human rights issues such as child support, decision making, leadership were produced and disseminated to community groups. They highlighted the status of Kyrgyz women and improved understanding of human rights. In addition, 11 TV programs on women and human rights were broadcasted as planned on 2 TV channels. The programs were supposed to reach 200,000 people. The actual coverage of viewers is unknown, however, according to the latest M-Vector study from 2017 Djajal-Abad TV channel and references from the TV channels on which the programs were broadcasted, the viewer outreach amounts to about 2,000,000 people (Pic. 1).

It is important to note that 11 TV programs were broadcasted at a time when more people could be covered, namely on Batken TV channel at 7.30 pm, and on Jalal-Abad TV channel at 6.30 pm. This is the time when youth, adults return from work,



Pic.1 Reference from the Djalal-Abad TV channel about broadcasting time of the 11 TV programs created in the framework of the Project



Pic. 2 Reference from the Batken TV channel about broadcasting time of the 11 TV programs created in the framework of the Project

school and therefore usually watch TV (Pic.2).

The 11 TV programs were also watched by at least 940 teenagers, who participated in a 16-day campaign against gender-based violence.

In terms of the coverage of radio stories, according to the project document the target was that 40,000 people listened to these stories. According to the data of the National Statistical Committee of the Kyrgyz Republic, the population of the project's target communities is 208,078 people²². It was, however, not possible to track how much these radio stories and 11 TV programs influenced the target population's change in perception.

In this case, the achievement of Outcome 2 'Increased public awareness regarding gender-based violence and the situation of Kyrgyz women' was that the project was able to agree the broadcasting of the TV programs with two (Batken TV and

²² <http://www.stat.kg/ru/statistics/naselenie/>

Jalal-Abad TV) TV channels, which have a large audience coverage, as well as the fact that 200 radio stories were listened to in all 27 target communities during 16 actions against gender-based violence, and round tables covered by the members of the Community Mass Media Association. Moreover, the scripts of these 11 TV programs and 200 radio stories were prepared based on the needs of the people. Namely, success stories of women changing the perception of the role of women in a Kyrgyz patriarchal society were shown in these TV programs, radio stories were prepared about how women can live in harmony with their mothers-in-law, achieve success despite stereotypes (divorced), men can also have rights to maternity leave, alimony, etc. Also, the fact that the Community Mass Media Association and the implementing partner “Demge-Dem” were able to demonstrate their capacity in production of materials that responded to the needs of the project’s beneficiaries.

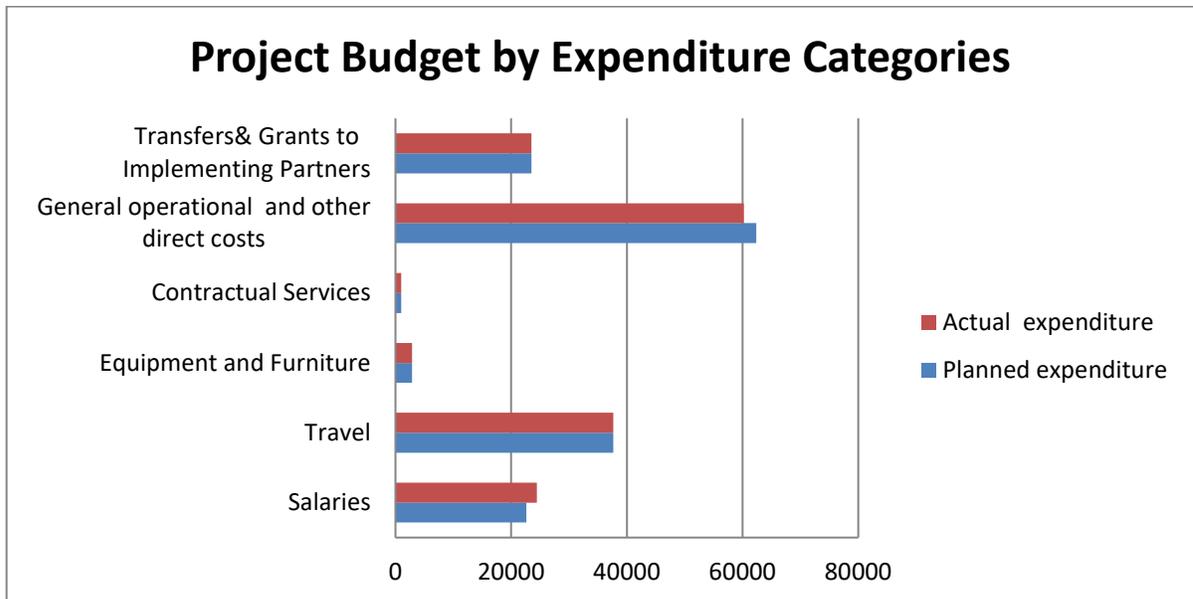
Regarding Outcome 3: “Strengthening official interaction between activists, the media and local authorities on gender violence and gender equality”, 14 local plans to prevent violence in the target communities were produced with a total of 75 recommendations. Of these, 71 recommendations were implemented, which is a 95% implementation rate. Further, 6 national roundtables were held between March 2021 and June 2021 and based on the results of these roundtables, 86% of the recommendations had been implemented at the national level, and the remaining 14% of the recommendations were in preparation for implementation. The factors that contributed to the effectiveness of this outcome were the capabilities of the members of the Community Mass Media Association and the trained activists - such as the mobilization of local stakeholders, engaging youth, and the trusted relationships they maintained with state officials (local deputies, public authorities, and community members), thus bridging the gap between them and the project beneficiaries, and ultimately making the voices – recommendations of citizens heard. Thus, the project was able to make significant steps towards increasing citizen’s trust in state authorities, in particular, regarding issues related to the participation of local authorities in solving problems of gender-based violence and human rights.

Finally, due to the involvement of a gender expert in the implementation of the project, gender mainstreaming became successful across all the components of the project. While the gender balance of the selected journalists was in favor of women journalists, more than a quarter of the published stories tackled serious issues related to women’s rights such as women in the labor market, bodily rights such as maternal leave, and participation of women in public activities. Gender expert R. Sultanova was also able to attract other gender specialists (B. Dosaliev, G.Zhumabaeva, M. Noruzbaeva, A. Ormonova, etc.) to advise the project in terms of conducting discussions with the community, writing journalistic articles, etc.

(iv). Efficiency

The budget as implemented enabled the project to meet its objectives. As there was a reasonable relationship between the project's inputs and outputs, the project's efficiency and cost-benefit ratio were satisfactory. The project's total budget was US \$165,000, and Figure 2 below provides a breakdown by major types of expenditures.

Figure 2. Project Budget by Expenditure Categories

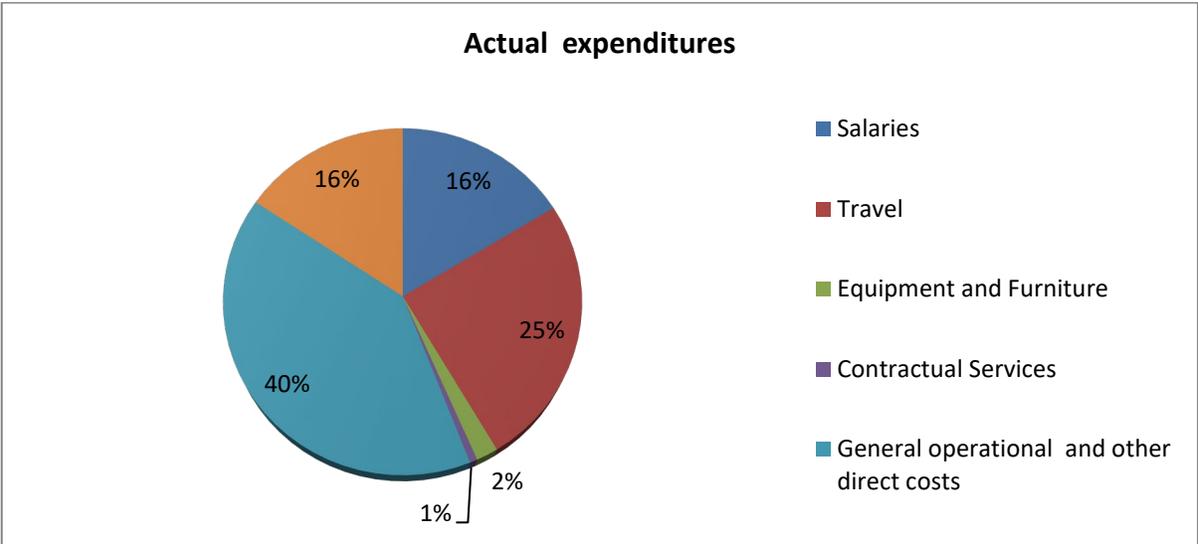


The main expenditure category was “general operational and other direct costs,” which occupied 40% of the budget. Other costs included “travel”, on which 25% of the budget was used, 16% of budget was spent for "salaries", 16% of the budget was directed to "transfers & grants to implementing partners", and equipment/furniture amounted to 2% of expenses, while 1% of budget was spent for contractual services (Figure 3).

In general, the project was able to fully implement the planned activities using its financial resources as originally planned. Some funds from the "General operating and other direct costs" category were reallocated to the Consultant Fees section of the "Salaries" category (see the higher actual than planned expenditure, Figure 2). Following the monitoring mission of Ms. Meriza Emilbekova from UN Women to the 3rd Training for the community media journalists in Osh (Output 1.2), it was recommended that the Community Mass Media Association involves a gender expert in organizing

future seminars, round tables and other events. This recommendation led to a reallocation of expenses towards 'Consultant Fees'.

Figure 3. Project's actual expenditures

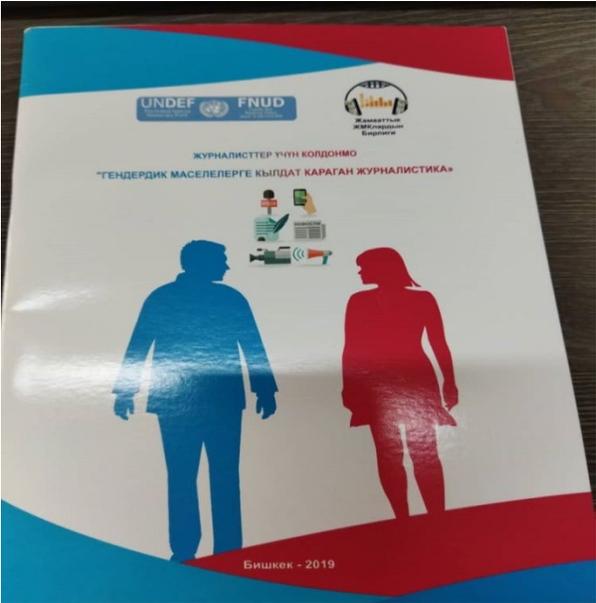


The desk review of the budget-related documentation showed that the budget reallocation had been approved by UNDEF. The grantee was able to optimize the existing resources and reduce the costs of other expenditures to accommodate budget changes.

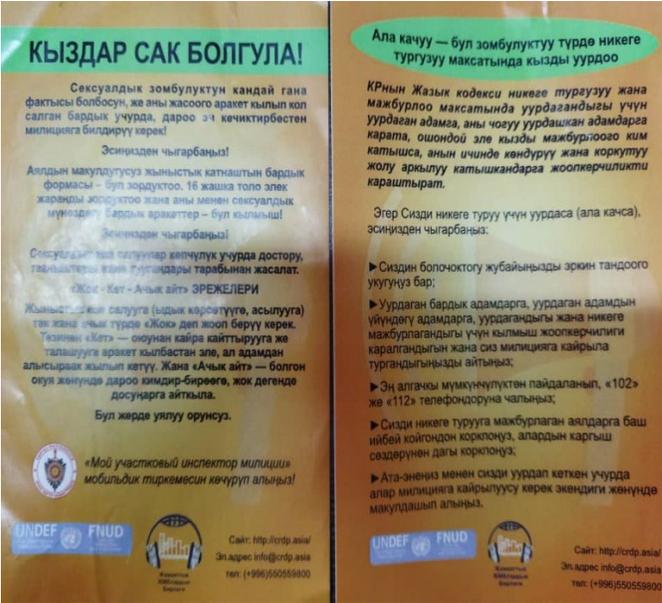
Major revisions were needed to accommodate the change in programming due to the Covid-19 pandemic, for example conducting training activity in the remote regions and hiring additional gender expertise. Based on the field mission and interviews with KII, the additional gender expert was able to fully cope with the task at hand and explain GALS to the participants in a clear manner.

Due to delays caused by the Covid-19 pandemic, a 6-month no cost extension was approved to ensure achievement of all outputs and results. Meanwhile, the Community Mass Media Association had demonstrated competence and flexibility in project management. The organization also managed to involve various groups of women victims of gender-based violence with journalists and partner NGOs to promote women's rights and raise public awareness on gender equality and women's leadership. Furthermore, the project met its objectives in the targeted areas. It is worth noting that the project as implemented accumulated great interest triggering an increased demand for more information on women's empowerment and mechanisms to engage government accountability in human rights violations.

All planned materials and publications were produced in full. Thus, for example, for the first time a manual for journalists on "Gender journalism" was made available in the Kyrgyz language in 290 copies (Pic. 3), as well as 1,020 copies of leaflets on gender security (Figure 4, Pic. 4).

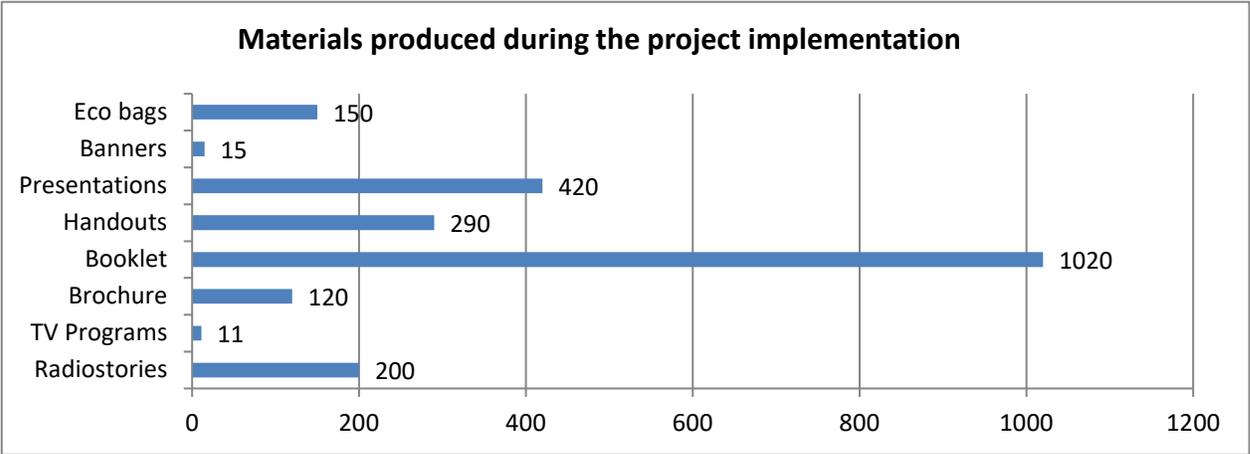


Pic. 3 Manual for journalists on "Gender journalism" in Kyrgyz



Pic. 4 Leaflets on gender security

Figure 4. Materials produced during the project implementation



All the materials produced during the implementation of the project were provided directly to the participants of the training, representatives of local communities. The

grantee also posted all the produced materials (including 11 TV programs, 200 radio stories) on its website <https://ru.kyrgyzmedia.kg/tag/assotsiatsiya-obshhinny-h-smi/> and on the YouTube channel <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=J85qLQ0jDIE>.

It is important to emphasize that the grantee's project reporting materials were well organized, and mid-term and final reports were delivered to UNDEF as expected. The project management team was well qualified. The project team and its implementing partner were highly organized, made communication-oriented decisions, and was able to address challenges as they arose to resolve problems that the project faced.

Close communication with all beneficiaries and active involvement of the project manager as well as other representatives of the implementing agency ensured the smooth operation of the project. No potential for overlap or duplication with similar activities was found within the targeted communities. All interviewed people reported that they felt the expansion of their capabilities and inspiration from the project throughout its duration. They noted the constant, useful communication and support from local activists, representatives of community multimedia centers, and the representatives of the Community Mass Media Association. The implementing partner prepared all TV programs according to the agreements and ensured the broadcasting of these programs on two TV channels without any disruptions.

(v). Impact

The project had a positive impact on all project participants and stakeholders. The project demonstrates that many communities in Kyrgyzstan are interested in accessing information on women's rights and that more efforts are required to ensure respect for the fundamental human rights of all Kyrgyz citizens. The following findings apply in particular to those 27 target communities, in which the members of the Community Mass Media Association are located (pic 5).

Pic 5. Map of the location of members of the Association ²³

²³ The 3 community radios are marked yellow, and 24 community multimedia centers are marked blue.



Moreover, the project had a clear impact on democratization. Certain activities broke taboos and forced the government to take action. The radio shows and articles allowed for more informed public debates, through which affected individuals shared their stories directly with government officials. The case of an orphan girl from Baetovo, Naryn region, who was beaten to death by her then divorced husband was highlighted by CMC representatives, which prompted local authorities to direct their attention to this issue.



Pic. 6 Training for journalists

Journalists (see pic. 6, standing on the right during the workshop) were able to use their newly acquired knowledge to strengthen the quality of their stories, which in turn were more widely read and shared by the public.

"An employee of Aiyl Okmotu (the executive body of a municipality) went on maternity leave after learning from an audio story that fathers can also go on maternity leave. This father was an example for other fathers in the village".
First deputy of head of Ak-Talaa state administration, Naryn oblast, Jylytyrov Ulan

In response to the needs of not only women, but also men in each community, the project tailored radio programs to levels of literacy. The radio audio stories and TV programs included topics such as the importance of respect for fundamental human rights, the role of women in decision making,

contentious issues of women's ownership and child support, and issues of harmful cultural practices which can traumatize women and children. The project was able to collect 16 stories from beneficiaries on how these 200 radio stories and 11 TV programs affected them.

The most direct, physically accessible and explicit impact of the project is presented in 14 local development plans, which were developed following the training of 14 local activists. At the time of this evaluation, of the 75 recommendations of these 14 local plans to prevent violence in targeted communities, 71 recommendations were already implemented, which represents an implementation rate of 95% locally, while 86% of the recommendations implemented were also affecting the national level. Trained women activists are currently trying to attract new donors to further address local issues. For example, one of the 140 trained rural women from Baetovo, Ak-Talinsky district, who was trained during the project implementation, successfully applied for a mini-grant to train local women.

Moreover, civil society, and government authorities in general, have become more actively engaged with each other on prevention of violence matters, particularly in relation to bride kidnapping and homicide cases. In the aftermath of the case of 27-year-old Aizada Kanatbekova, who was kidnapped for forced marriage by several men in broad daylight in the center of Bishkek and killed on April 5, 2021, some of the civil society activists and journalists trained by the project, and women from Bishkek and Osh were outraged by another murder and therefore protested in front of the Interior Ministry building to call for stiffer punishment for bride abduction.²⁴ This was the first protest against bride kidnapping, although several girls had been kidnaped for forced marriage and killed previously²⁵ (such as the case of Burulay, who was reportedly kidnaped and killed by her kidnapper in a regional police station in 2019). This evidence demonstrated the impact of this project and its importance for the further development of the prevention of GBV in Kyrgyzstan.

The interviewed women project participants gave numerous other examples of the project's positive impact on their self-confidence and skills and described how they contributed to their municipal council's meetings and discussions. They reported being more audacious and persuasive when arguing with colleagues. At the same time, the interviewed men also stated the fact that the radio stories released by the project had an impact on them in terms of what they learned about their rights (e.g., maternity leave, receiving alimony).

²⁴ <https://www.hrw.org/ru/news/2021/04/12/378456>

²⁵ <https://www.bbc.com/russian/news-46282560>

Iskak Tulparov, a resident of the village of Barskoon, said: "Men don't really take care of their health, because only women go to the hospital. Men are ashamed to stand in line with women, but I think the published stories were very useful, because we have to talk a lot about stereotypes in villages and not ignore them."

The quote displayed in the box on this page, which demonstrates that the perceptions and cultural attitudes of beneficiaries have been successfully questioned by the Community Mass Media Association, is one of 16 stories the project collected from among beneficiaries on how they were affected by radio stories and TV programs.

Based on the findings from field mission and interviews with KIIs the project successfully managed to raise awareness on the protection of human rights and women's role in society. The project has built confidence among women, and young people to actively participate in public life. The project has also sensitized journalists, ensuring that gender perspectives will be reflected in media reporting, thus influencing the general public. Focusing on awareness raising activities with young people was probably one of the most influential interventions of the project as it created an environment of tolerance and respect for the human rights of all people and future generations. The project was also able to widely involve stakeholders in addressing issues of violence both at the local and national levels.

(vi). Sustainability

Sustainability of the results of the project can be observed at several levels. The evaluation found evidence of sustainability factors, which have strong potential to support the continuity of all CMCs even after completion of the grant project. Moreover, the Association is stable, since it has not only retained its members, but expanded from 27 to 30 communities, and currently also cooperates with Deutsche Welle.

The representatives of local authorities from those places where the field visits were conducted confirmed that they are still actively cooperating with representatives of the Community Mass Media Association. Local authorities are trying to help them, for example, by allocating premises for a community multimedia center, or some financial resources. With the financial support of the Toguz-Toro district state administration, the roof of the community multimedia center (which is now becoming a community radio²⁶)

²⁶ As previously noted, a multimedia center does not broadcast through FM, like the community radio, but broadcasts through loud-speaker and prepares materials of different formats (texts, videos, photos, and audio) for

was repaired at a cost of 300,000 soms (ca. USD 3,703). This demonstrates the local government's support of the Association's members and interest in their work. The project of the Community Mass Media Association was also able to convey to the local authorities the importance of addressing issues of violence. Municipalities, and district administrations began to develop local plans for the prevention of violence, and allocated funds in the local budget for their implementation. Thus, to date, the Sary-Bulun municipality of Toguz-Toro district had budgeted 70,000 soms (ca. USD 864) for measures aimed at combating the prevention of gender-based violence. This ensured the sustainability of some of the project's activities at the local level, which explains why the evaluator during her field visits and interviews found clear signs of enthusiasm among the members of the local community and authorities.

Interviewed journalists mentioned their continued interest and engagement in covering human rights issues, especially in relation to gender-based violence. Some trained women activists were enthusiastic in describing their "specialization", for example in covering children's rights or women's rights. Thus, 14 trained women act as agents of change, serving as sources of information for the rest of the community, and as trainers of colleagues to ensure the sustainability of the project's activities. To date, the Community Mass Media Association has maintained contact with them, involving them in its activities, such as participation in training, round tables and discussions. Trained journalists publish their gender-oriented articles, using the guidelines developed within the framework of the project. Regarding the 140 trained women activists, the Association has continued to invite them to its events, but the Association has no data on how many of these 140 women remained involved after the completion of the project.

It should also be noted that an information campaign carried out on the importance of women's participation in the process of decision making during round tables, in radio spots, and television programs was one of the reasons for issuing the presidential decree "On holding elections to deputies of Keneshes (councils) of the Kyrgyz Republic" for 2021. The main innovation of these elections was the establishment of a 30% quota for women deputies, because before this decree and the elections in 2021, the proportion of women representatives in local councils decreased with each election. The project had worked to return to the understanding that women, who make up half of the country's population, should be represented in local councils. This ensured the sustainability of some of the project's activities at the central level.

posting on internet sites. Despite the fact that community multimedia centers sound sophisticated by name, in fact, community radios are better equipped and have more technical infrastructure.

At the time of this evaluation, not only domestic violence, but also the general issue of violence against women and girls have been brought under the control of the Cabinet of Ministers²⁷. Moreover, according to the new law of the Kyrgyz Republic "On Local State Administration and Local Self-Government Bodies" dated October 20, 2021,

"The problem of domestic violence and violence against women and girls is in the focus of the Cabinet of Ministers. In 2022, we plan to triple the amount of state funding for combating domestic violence: 25 million soms (ca. USD 308,641) will be allocated within the state social order to conduct a broad educational campaign and to support crisis centers".

Edil Baisalov, Deputy Chairman of the Cabinet of Ministers of the Kyrgyz Republic.

Article 27, paragraph 22, the functions of local self-government bodies prescribe "the implementation of a set of measures for the prevention of and protection from family violence in accordance with the procedure established by law"²⁸. Therefore, the information campaign conducted by the project during the project implementation also ensured the sustainability of some of the project's objectives at the central level.

In spite of the difficulties that remain nowadays to achieve full prevention of violence, and gender equality in Kyrgyzstan, the project was able to contribute its efforts and media resources to improve gender equality.

(vii). UNDEF added value

The project clearly fit into UNDEF's mandate by focusing on specific aspects of democratization and advancement of women's rights. It promoted women's empowerment and public awareness of women's rights and the role of women in public life. The project's activities covered elements of the responsibility of the authorities for preventing violations of human rights and promoting gender equality, which were included in the training activities.

The desk review showed that the implementing agency included UNDEF's logo in all internal and external materials throughout the project and always communicated the fact that UNDEF supported the project. The implementing agency also leveraged its

²⁷ <https://www.kg.undp.org/content/kyrgyzstan/ru/home/presscenter/pressreleases/2021/11/domestic-violence-law-amendments.html>

²⁸ <http://cbd.minjust.gov.kg/act/view/ru-ru/112302>

connections with partners, co-implementers, and other local NGOs to place announcements about each stage of the project and always mentioned UNDEF’s sponsorship. As a result of these efforts, all interviewed people knew that the project was supported by UNDEF.

Moreover, interviews with community leaders and local authorities confirmed that the work that was carried out by the Association triggered significant levels of community involvement and support from major stakeholders. For example, volunteers working for the Association as well as the community advocates given the mandate to speak on behalf of the marginalized were all drawn from a diverse range of population profiles and demographics. This level of involvement attests to the commitment of project participants to human rights and equality as enshrined in UNDEF’s values.

Pic. 7 Participants of training on GALS

Activities of non-profit organizations in Kyrgyzstan have been subjected to regulation since 2014, when deputies initiated a draft law on “foreign agents”, which was inspired by a similar law from the Russian Federation.



According to the law non-profit organizations engaged in "political activities" could receive the status of "foreign agent". Nevertheless, in 2021 the Parliament adopted amendments to the law “On non-governmental organizations,” according to which organizations were required to report on the purposes of funding and sources. As the UNDEF funding did not cause any excessive suspicions or tensions with the government, the project was able to be carried

out smoothly.

Finally, the funding of the project from UNDEF, as previously noted, helped to reach remote regions of Kyrgyzstan, where other donors practically did not work to reduce violence, achieve gender equality and thus had a significant impact on the capacity building of the local community.

IV. Overall Assessment and Final Thoughts

Based on the comments of all those interviewed and the findings above, it is clear that the project was timely and implemented as planned. The evaluator concludes that the project was overall very successful in achieving its goals and meeting the mandate of UNDEF. There is no doubt about the project's overachievements in terms of some of its outputs. The project satisfied all three outcomes and delivered stellar results.

(i). Conclusions

- The objectives of the project met the actual needs of Kyrgyz society in raising awareness of people on the issues of gender-based violence and its reduction.
- The project was consistent with the mandate and strategic goals of UNDEF, the implementing agency, national programs, and external cooperation priorities including the UN's Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework.
- The effectiveness of the project was satisfactory. The activities and results of the project were well thought through and made a significant contribution to the development of targeted local communities.
- Given the supported communities' increased participation in violence prevention activities and the impressive volume of local plans agreed upon and implemented, there can be no doubt that the project has made an effective contribution to the prevention of gender-based violence. The project was able to reach direct beneficiaries, in particular local activists and journalists, and successfully involved them in initiatives to prevent gender-based violence in Kyrgyzstan. The project provided them with relevant information about their rights and helped them establish their network of communication.
- The financial management of the project was adequate and in line with the budget. Approved budget reallocations allowed the project to further enhance its gender-oriented approach.
- In addition to these positive results, the evaluator also found signs of sustainability. 14 trained women remain constantly involved in the activities of the Association. Some of the 140 local women activists trained have put their knowledge into practice. The journalists trained continue to use the GALS methodology when writing gender-oriented articles, a fact that the evaluator could also confirm during numerous interviews. Unfortunately, the project did not include measures for an assessment of the participants' knowledge and satisfaction with learning in all training.

- The project successfully adapted to the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic by providing high-quality activities for participants and by continuously communicating with all participants throughout the pandemic, as well as through the timely involvement of a gender expert.
- The grantee's initially proposed outcome indicators allow for a positive assessment of potential impact in respect of the project's three specific objectives. Due to the lack of survey data measuring the impact on viewers of the TV programs and listeners of radio stories, the project collected a few testimonies to document the impact of these 11 TV programs and 200 radio stories after the end of the project. In addition, the evaluator based on independently gathered first-hand evidence also established that the project generated positive impact.

(ii). Recommendations

Based on the above, to strengthen similar projects in the future:

- The evaluator recommends that the grantee designs a monitoring system, which makes consistent use of baseline and target surveys. Since the project did not initially conduct an "audience survey", it was difficult to assess how the 16 stories collected by the project reflected a picture representative of the "changes in perception, attitudes" of the target group (it was planned to reach 40,000 people through radio reports and 200,000 people via 11 television programs). Moreover, it was not initially prescribed how many people were expected to change their perceptions, that is, whether a certain number or the target community as a whole.
- The evaluator also recommends to the grantee that all training activities of a similar project should include pre- and post-tests or a satisfaction survey questionnaire in order to understand how much the trainees' knowledge has improved. This information will help to measure how the project's results contributed to the objective of 'increasing knowledge'.
- The evaluator recommends that the grantee in the future involves a gender expert already at the design stage of similar gender-oriented projects. Gender mainstreaming was successful due to the involvement of a gender expert mid-way.
- Based on field observations on impact and sustainability, the evaluator recommends to the grantee to keep in touch with trained women leaders, 140

women, local representatives, and journalists who had participated in various project activities, to generate and animate an informal network that keeps the project's results alive.

(iii). Lessons Learned

During the project evaluation, key lessons have been learned that can help organizations, which have an interest in developing related projects in the same region, particularly in Kyrgyzstan:

- The impact of the project may possibly be greater than reflected in this report, as the grantee did not have enough data available for a comparative assessment by the evaluator. Training, awareness-raising and public dialogue activities on the prevention of gender-based violence remain, however, a relevant area for interventions in Kyrgyzstan. The measurement of the impact of future interventions by such projects on capacity building, awareness-raising, and community dialogue requires initial baselines of knowledge, skills, and perceptions to allow for a demonstration of changes achieved by the end of the project.
- Projects that were conceived, planned, designed, and implemented according to the local communities' needs have a higher success rate. It is undeniable that the design of the project met the needs of the local community. The timely involvement of a gender specialist helped the grantee to achieve even more successful results. The training in the Gender Action Learning System methodology, that was perceived as a success among the project participants, was carried out following the recommendation of a gender expert. The design of certain projects benefits significantly when taking into account local community and expert opinions already at the development stage.
- The Community Mass Media Association built a wide network of Community Multimedia Centers at the local level, garnered citizen trust nation-wide and, as a result, was able to launch an expanded project in a timely and effective manner. In this regard, it is therefore desirable to have a strategy in place for maintaining the existing trained human capital (leaders, activists, journalists) after the end of the project, such as the generation and animation of an informal network to sustain the impact of the project.

Annex 1: Evaluation questions

DAC criterion	Evaluation Question	Related sub-questions
Relevance	To what extent was the project, as designed and implemented, suited to context and needs at the beneficiary, local, and national levels?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Were the objectives of the project in line with the needs and priorities for democratic development, given the context? • To what extent the intervention as designed enhanced community dialogue on GBV? • Should another project strategy have been preferred rather than the one implemented to better reflect those needs, priorities, and context? Why? • Were risks appropriately identified by the projects? How appropriate are/were the strategies developed to deal with identified risks? Was the project overly risk-averse?
Coherence	How well did the project “fit”, i.e., to what extent was the project compatible with other projects and programmes in the country, sector or institution?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To what extent are there synergies and interlinkages between the project and other initiatives carried out by the Implementing Agency? • To what extent is there consistency with other actors’ initiatives in the same context? • To what extent is there complementarity, harmonization and coordination between the Implementing Agency/the project and other organizations/projects working in the same context and on the same issue? • To what extent is the project adding value while avoiding the duplication of efforts?
Effectiveness	To what extent was the project, as implemented, able to achieve objectives and goals?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To what extent has the project’s objectives been reached? • To what extent has the project been implemented as envisaged by the project document? If not, why not? • Were the project activities adequate to make progress towards the project objectives? • Did the project have an effective way to measure the outreach and impact achieved through the 200 radio stories and the 11 TV programs? • Did key stakeholders fully participate in the project? • How effective were the training and capacity development activities with a target group that is already educated and aware (including journalists)? • What has the project achieved? Where it failed to meet the outputs identified in the project document, why was this?

Efficiency	To what extent was there a reasonable relationship between resources expended and project impacts?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Was there a reasonable relationship between project inputs and project outputs? • Did institutional arrangements promote cost-effectiveness and accountability? • “Developed methodological materials for journalists” to what extent have they influenced the impact of the project? • Was the budget designed, and then implemented, in a way that enabled the project to meet its objectives?
Impact	To what extent does the project put in place processes and procedures supporting the role of civil society in contributing to democratization, or to direct promotion of democracy?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What was the extent that the realization of the project objective(s) and project outcomes had an impact on the specific problem the project aimed to address? • Have the targeted beneficiaries experienced tangible impacts? Which were positive; which were negative? • To what extent has the project caused changes and effects, positive and negative, foreseen and unforeseen, on democratization? • Is the project likely to have a catalytic effect? How? Why?
Sustainability	With the way the project has been designed, implemented and created, is it likely to be a continuing impetus towards democratic development?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To what extent has the project established processes and systems that are likely to support continued impact? • Are the parties involved (individual journalists and media organizations) willing and able to continue the project activities on their own (where applicable)?
UNDEF value-added	To what extent was the UNDEF able to take advantage of its unique position and comparative advantage to achieve results that could not have been achieved had support come from other donors?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What was UNDEF able to accomplish, through the project, could not also have been achieved by alternative projects, other donors, or other stakeholders (Government, NGOs, etc.). • Did the project design and implementation of the modalities exploit UNDEF’s comparative advantage in the form of an explicit mandate to focus on democratization issues?

Annex 2: Documents reviewed

UNDEF

- ✓ UDF-17-768-KYR Narrative Progress report (final 19/04/2020)
- ✓ Annex 2.1.1 Radio stories
- ✓ Annex 2.2 Pictures and list of participants
- ✓ Annex 3.2 Talas pictures
- ✓ Annex 3.1 Community level dialog (pictures, list of participants, leaflet)
- ✓ Independent Auditor's report
- ✓ UDF-17-768-KYR Project Closure checklist
- ✓ UDF-17-768-KYR Milestone narrative report 3
- ✓ UDF-17-768-KYR Final Narrative report
- ✓ Travel Report to Central Asia November, 2018
- ✓ UDF-17-768-KYR- Financial Utilization report

The Association of legal entities Community Mass Media Association

- ✓ Project document (budget, agreement, auditor's letter, legal commitments)
- ✓ Brochure of the project "Advancing Gender Justice with Community Broadcasters in Kyrgyzstan"
- ✓ Recommendations of the round tables in Bishkek, Osh, Karakol, Talas, Naryn, Djajal-Abad
- ✓ List of participants of the round tables
- ✓ List of participants of the training activities
- ✓ 14 reports of round tables "We are against violence against women and girls and gender inequality"
- ✓ Report on ToT of 14 leaders 15-16-17 February 2019 (Noruzbaeva M.)
- ✓ Training report for journalists 18-19.01.2021 (Rasulova G.)
- ✓ Training report for journalists 15-16.02.2020 (Rasulova G.)
- ✓ 14 Activist Implementation plans

Other sources

- ✓ National review of the Kyrgyz Republic on the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and the Beijing platform for action progress and challenges, 2019
- ✓ Beijing+25 Review: Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment in Central Asian Economies, 2020
- ✓ Law of the Kyrgyz Republic "On Local State Administration and Local Self-Government Bodies"
- ✓ National Strategy for Achieving Gender Equality in the Kyrgyz Republic (2012-2020)
- ✓ How much does domestic violence cost? Final document on the results of the research project. Bishkek, 2012.

Annex 3: List of people interviewed

#	Name	Position
1.	Aizada Kalkanbekova	Project coordinator
2.	Nazira Dzhusupova	Administrative Assistant, Head of Community Mass Media Association
3.	Kasiet Kubanychbek kyzy	Media Expert
4.	Chyngyz Esengulov	Deputy Minister of Culture, Information and Youth Policy of the Kyrgyz Republic
5.	Guliza Suvanova	Acting director of the Project partner «Demge-Dem»
6.	Gulnaz Kambaraly kyzy	CMC representative Oogan-Taala, Mogol ayil okmoty
7.	Barchyn Mamytbekova	Ak-Taalaa, Baetovo ayil okmoty, Member of the Association of legal entities Community Mass Media Association
8.	Aizat Tumonbaeva	Kulanak ayil okmoty, CMC representative
9.	Chynara Kurmanova	Nookat district, Kulatov ayil okmoty, Member of the Association of legal entities Community Mass Media Association
10.	Rimma Sultanova	Gender expert
11.	Aizat Tumonbaeva	Member of the Association of legal entities Community Mass Media Association
12.	Gulkayir Osmonalieva	Member of the Association of legal entities Community Mass Media Association
13.	Ruslan Eshmanbetov	Deputy of local council (ex-head of municipality)
14.	Dinara Duishekeeva	Barskoon Women's Council
15.	Venera Omurbekova	Social worker of Barskoon municipality
16.	Erkin Zhaparova	Social worker of Barskoon municipality
17.	Nurjamal Eralieva	Local community member of Barskoon
18.	Arsar Bekturova	Deputy of local council, Barskoon
19.	Jypara Sadykkazieva	Head of Naryn TV (winner of the competition)
20.	Nargiza Kapysova	Local community member of Kulanak
21.	Jazgul Kadyralieva	Local community member of Kulanak
22.	Asylkul Abdyrainova	Local community member of Kulanak
23.	Nurina Dondalieva	Local community member of Kulanak
24.	Datkayim Orozakunova	school student of Kulanak, event participants
25.	Jarkynai Esengulova	school student of Kulanak, event participants
26.	Bolot kyzy Albina	school student of Kulanak, event participants
27.	Anara Baltabaeva	Social worker of Kulanak
28.	R. Kalbaeva	Executive secretary of Kulanak municipality
29.	Moorkan Jumabekova	Activist
30.	Barchyn Mamytbekova	Community multimedia center
31.	Ulan Jylytyrov	First deputy head of Ak-Talaa district state administration
32.	Cholpon Akmatbekova	Deputy of the local council

- | | | |
|-----|---------------------|---|
| 33. | Abdyldaev Almaz | Head of Baetovo municipality |
| 34. | Anara Maametova | Sary-Bulun community broadcasters |
| 35. | Raisa Akyltai kyzy | Volunteer of Sary-Bulun community multimedia center |
| 36. | Marlis Oljobaev | Head of Sary-Bulun municipality |
| 37. | Talaibek uulu Damir | First deputy head of Toguz-Toro district state administration |
| 38. | Tatygul Arzymatova | Civil servant of Sary-Bulun municipality |
| 39. | Asylkerim Kydykov | Executive secretary Sary-Bulun municipality |
| 40. | Venera Epeeva | Head of the local council of Sary-Bulun |
| 41. | Aziza Tamchieva | Radio station staff of Suusamyr |
| 42. | Anarbek Kaldykov | Radio station staff of Suusamyr |
| 43. | Nurzat Rayimbekova | Chairman of the Women's Council |
| 44. | Guljamal Akynbekova | Executive secretary of Suusamyr |
| 45. | Nursadan Kulmatov | Local community member of Suusamyr |
| 46. | Jyrgal Bekjanov | Social worker of Suusamyr municipality |