Final Evaluation of the Project
"Fostering dialogue and social cohesion in and between Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro and Serbia"

July 2021

Evaluation information		
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	February 2021	July 2021

Executive summary

INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

The project Fostering dialogue and social cohesion in and between Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH), Montenegro and Serbia -Dialogue for the Future (DFF or the Project) has been designed to address diminishing trust among different peoples in and between Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro and Serbia by creating more spaces for constructive dialogue between various communities, between citizens and their highest elected leaders, thus promoting peaceful coexistence, increased trust, and genuine respect for diversity. This joint UN project, implemented by UNDP, UNICEF and UNESCO was set up as a multi-country and multi-agency project, funded via the Peacebuilding Fund's (PBF) Immediate Response Facility with a total budget of $4,183,992.51. The DFF's outcome has been *Stability and trust in the region, and especially in Bosnia and Herzegovina, are enhanced*.

The Project included three outputs: Output 1.1. Different groups in the region, and youth in particular, acquire and practice skills to help break stereotypes and constructively interact across divides; Output 1.2: Citizens from different groups jointly identify and implement actions that can promote social cohesion in the region, especially in Bosnia and Herzegovina and Output 1.3: Policy recommendations to improve social cohesion in the region are effectively advocated for and endorsed by authorities and relevant stakeholders.

The regional DFF has identified and prioritized the following main target groups: adolescents (10 -18) and youth (18-30), women and young women, primary and secondary school teachers and journalists and editors in various media outlets in the region.

The final evaluation (FE) has been implemented to assess the achievements of the Regional DFF in an inclusive way and determine its overall added value to social cohesion and peacebuilding in the three participating countries.

The *objective of the final evaluation* was to examine the joint UN regional project's contribution to social cohesion and peacebuilding results and assess and capture its intended and unintended its results, and also generate evidence and findings, identify the lessons learned and prepare recommendations for the future programming, hence, to ensure more substantive integration of social cohesion priorities for the region.

This report presents findings, conclusions and recommendations from the independent regional DFF evaluation commissioned by the UNDP Bosnia and Herzegovina, in capacity of Lead Convening Agency, and undertaken from February to July 2021.

The *primary users* of the evaluation's findings and recommendations are participating UN Agencies (UNDP, UNICEF, UNESCO), Peacebuilding Fund, national authorities from three participating countries and members of the Joint Programme Board, and key national and international development partners.

EVALUATION METHODOLOGY

The Final Evaluation Team (FET) followed a theory-based and utilization-focused methodology and reflected the essentials of the contribution analysis (CA) intending to establish credible causal claims about the Project's interventions, its results and changes. The evaluation applied a mixed-method approach to enable gathering of qualitative and quantitative information through a well-balanced combination of desk research and interviews with key informants, at various levels of analysis.

The scope, complexity, and the period covered by the evaluation required an analytical approach deriving from UNDG evaluation practices, OECD DAC evaluation guidelines and international experience. This approach served to identify challenges or obstacles that affected the progress and contribution towards the achievement of outcome, while also suggesting a more substantive – follow-up analysis, when points of break in the contribution were identified. The process considered the following areas of analysis: DFF's relevance, progress towards the achievement of its outputs and contribution to outcome (effectiveness) and its implementation framework (efficiency); transformation that DFF made (impact) and sustainability of these efforts. The evaluation analyzed if the Project considered conflict-sensitivity and followed gender mainstreaming and the "no-one is left behind" principle. The findings served to define conclusions and prepare recommendations.

The evaluation analyzed primary and secondary data through a causality model, identifying challenges or obstacles that affected the progress under outcomes. The FE benefited from triangulation of the collected information and other evidence at different stages of the process

FINDINGS

The final evaluation has presented the following findings, responding directly to the evaluation criteria

Relevance

The FET finds that the project was highly relevant to the challenges that all three countries are facing, and in particular to the circumstances of a post-war generation that has grown up with entrenched ethnic divisions. Therefore, the Project design sought to build linkages and cooperation across groups through dialogue on social cohesion and joint efforts to address and implement social cohesion priorities[1].

Identification of the problem and needs of targeted groups addressed by the project followed a bottom-up process of collaboration and involvement of policy makers and representatives of the stakeholders from the high-level governing structures[2] and civil society organizations and other target groups through analysis and consultations that were organized in all participating countries[3]. The analysis[4] for example, indicated that the youth in the participating countries have been dissatisfied with developments and politics in their countries, showing a lack of trust in public institutions. The youth, especially the post-war generations, have been isolated from other ethnic groups[5]. They have been educated in separated systems, receiving largely nationally-centred and excluded content from media[6]. These educational challenges, low political activism and participation opportunities and the overall marginalization created a favourable environment for growing ethnic and nationalistic political narratives among the youth; nevertheless, they (the youth) are eager to discuss common future opportunities. Using these findings, the DFF adopted a "contact-based reconciliation" approach, committing to substantial and sustained investments in initiatives and opportunities to allow members of different constituents – particularly youth – to come together and work towards shared goals and visions[7]. Broadening contact is an essential prerequisite for reconciliation to take root.

The DFF addressed the need to creating opportunities for dialogue and cooperation based on common interest and respect, supporting inclusive and participatory initiatives and facilitating participatory democracy. Design of the regional DFF dialogue platforms followed tested models and best practices from the previous phases of the DFF's initiatives. Particularly important has been participation of a wide range of social groups and the planned creation of linkages between local platforms and the political leaderships in three countries.

The authorities from all three countries recognized the importance of the DFF to "create more spaces for constructive dialogue and cooperation between countries and communities"; the ultimate objective according

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[1] One of the key elements in the project's theory of change is that reducing division among the major ethnic groups and reducing the marginalisation of other social groups are closely related objectives that can be pursued jointly.

[2] This included the Presidency of BiH and Presidency of Serbia; Ministry of foreign Affairs of Montenegro and other representatives of the state structures

[3] The Presidency of Bosnia and Herzegovina initiated the first, country-wide and joint Dialogue for the Future (DFF) peacebuilding Program (2014-2016), followed by the DFF's second phase (2018-2019). The political leaders from the region, during the Brdo-Brijuni Summit recognized "the DFF Program and encouraged its expansion into Southeast Europe". The underlying principle has been that the investments in social cohesion, national and regional dialogue and mediation capacities lay the foundations for sustaining peace, even in the challenging settings of some of the participating countries.

[4] More details are available in researches that the Project Team was using: Youth study southeast Europe 2018/2019, Miran Lavrič, Smiljka Tomanović and Mirna Jusić, Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung, 2018 and Balkan Barometer 2018 and 2019, Public Opinion Analytical report, Regional Cooperation Council, May 2019.

[5] Ibidem, surveys

[6] Balkan Barometer 2018 and 2019, Public Opinion Analytical report, Regional Cooperation Council, May 2019,

[7] Project document Fostering dialogue and social cohesion in and between Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH), Montenegro and Serbia (Dialogue for the Future), submitted to the PBF

to these opinions is to ensure economic benefits, and also promote peaceful coexistence and increase trust between countries[8]. In addition, the Project was closely aligned to the social cohesion priorities of the BiH, Montenegro and Serbia, as reflected in various policies and strategies, and had strong links to the Sustainable Development Goals (particularly SDG16 on 'peaceful and inclusive societies') and the UN Development Assistance Framework for the three countries. The Project reflected the UN Secretary General's Sustaining Peace agenda[9], and contributed to the priorities from the Regional Cooperation Council (RCC) strategy SEE 2020 "Jobs and Prosperity in a European Perspective". Also, the reference has been the EU Strategy for the Danube region (covering among other the DFF's three countries).

The Project was responsive and flexible during the entire period of implementation. The partners highlighted the reaction of the DFF teams in the participating countries over COVID19 pandemic. UN Agencies promptly mobilized capacities to design appropriate measures and ensure timely implementation. Pro-active role of the DFF teams and UN Agencies in participating countries in responding to challenges (and emerging priorities) were the main factor that contributed to DFF flexible and agile response during the implementation.

However, rebuilding trust and tolerance over time is a long-term endeavour. The short-term nature of the project funding was, therefore, a limitation in the design, with too short duration of the intervention to expect changes in attitudes.

Leaving no-one behind

DFF has considered the SDGs during its design stage and followed gender equality and gender mainstreaming in its activities. The Project has considered the principle "leaving no-one behind" from its design throughout implementation, by establishing a people-centered processes and following a holistic approach that prioritized building stability and trust by investing in social infrastructure. The DFF worked on a cohesive society[10] which is characterized by resilient social relations, a positive emotional connectedness between its members and the community, and a pronounced focus on the common good'." Therefore, the DFF in partnership with the line ministries of education in BiH, for example, addressed the need of the most vulnerable groups (Roma, rural pupils) to have access to online learning opportunities during the COVID-19 pandemic. These efforts enabled their access to education, contributing to social cohesion.

The DFF has considered gender equality and mainstreamed gender during its implementation, working on policy, organizational and individual levels to ensure gender mainstreaming. The Project enabled that the conclusions and identified priorities from the Regional Dialogue for Women have been reflected into the drafts of upcoming Women's Entrepreneurship Strategy and the Gender Equality Action Plan in Montenegro and the Strategy for Gender Equality in Serbia. Responding to the recommendations of the Regional Dialogue for Women, held in Montenegro in February 20219, the Project developed a customized online mentoring platform for women (www.we-mentoring.com), connecting girls and women from different spheres of the societies from three countries in their learning efforts in leadership, civic activism and entrepreneurship, among others. At the level of individuals, 7,594 girls and women benefitted, either through participation in capacity building or community projects, contribution to joint identification of priorities or implementation of cross-border and community projects.

Efficiency

Despite some identified weaknesses, the FET finds that management mechanisms, including implementation modalities, organizational structure, and the role of each UN agency under the DFF Project have been generally conducive to the achievement of planned results. Also, timely implementation of activities and availability of financial and human resources have contributed to overall efficiency. The DFF is designed as a multi-country joint UN initiative; steering and management mechanisms have been rather complex and challenging to coordinate.

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[8] KII notes, national partners.

[9] https://www.un.org/peacebuilding/news/secretary-generals-remarks-peacebuilding-commission

[10] Conceptual framework of social cohesion used by the project, as defined in Social Cohesion Radar by Bertelsmann Institute, full report available at. https://www.bertelsmann-stiftung.de/en/publications/publication/did/social-cohesion-radar/

The Immediate Response Facility of the UN Peacebuilding Fund provided support to this multi-country initiative. The Project total budget has been $4,183,992.51. Individual country funding included $1,933,293.40 in BiH; $946,335.30 in Montenegro and $1,304,363.81 Republic of Serbia. In budgetary terms, at the time of final evaluation, budget execution was 97%.

The DFF established a **Joint Programme Board (JPB)** as a steering and decision-making body planned to facilitate high-level commitment and ensure regular communication and exchange of information on strategic priorities with the partners. Also, the JPB remained involved in the implementation and the primary decision-making authority, responsible for the overall DFF's performance. The **Strategic Advisory Board (SAB),** composed of Resident Coordinators of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro and Serbia, as well as Heads of participating UN agencies from each participating country has been established. Its role has been to ensure coherence in implementation and approach among participating country teams. The SAB was meeting before the JPB's meetings. DFF Project Teams and UN Agencies in two participating countries (Montenegro and Serbia) have decided to establish the **National Coordination Body (NCB),** an informal coordination body, established to steer country level implementation, expanded in membership as compared to JPB, but with overlapping membership in JPB because MFA and Presidency JPB members were also members of NCBs in both countries. Although not planned in the original Project document, the NCB have been meeting regularly, playing an important role in endorsing plans and activities at the country-level. Despite positive effects to involve more relevant institutions, besides those represented in the JPB (e.g., members of the Presidents' offices from Serbia and BiH and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Montenegro), it is difficult to distinguish between the role of the JPB and NCB. The NCB emphasized the importance of the DFF's national level activities. The FET finds that this has negatively affected regional perspective; the analysis of the progress reports and primary data shows that the main results have been at the country level; although important, regional level results have been less evident.

At the operational level, the DFF recruited a **Joint (Regional) Project Coordinator (JRPC)** for efficient planning and delivery of results, ensuring satisfactory quality of deliverables within the approved work plans and the budget. The JRPC, based in UNDP BiH, was coordinating activities with the Joint Implementation Team.

The work planning has been participatory, and included annual work plans for the overall DFF and detailed country annual work plans. The DFF Project teams planned financial and human resources for implementation of activities timely, following work plans and ensuring that the whole approved budget has been delivered. The DFF's monitoring system has been established, serving as the main reference in the reporting of results; the Project was preparing regular annual and half-yearly results-oriented However, the outbreak of COVID-19 negatively affected DFF implementation, slowing implementation of some country-based and regional activities, most notably the Small Grants Facility, the cross-border youth social entrepreneurship platform (UPSHIFT). Different capacity building components have been re-scheduled and adjusted to on-line delivery. The JPB adopted the presented no-cost extension that was approved for a nine-month period[11].

Communication with the institutional partners/ authorities and beneficiaries has been generally functional and facilitated efficient implementation. Coordination of activities and exchange of information between DFF's project teams and other initiatives of UN participating agencies was generally established.

Effectiveness

The Project is successful in delivering planned results, even overachieving in some areas of intervention, also confirmed under the positive changes in relevant statistical indicators.

Table 1 **Overview of Output level results by target group and component**

Output	Target set for 4 countries in 2018	Achieved in 2021
Output 1: Capacity building Adolescents and youth	1,000	1,213 (808 girls and 395 boys)

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[11] The Project has substantiated this claim with a signed Project Revision page, confirming that an extraordinary 9-month extension has been granted in April 2020, in light of the delays caused by the Covid-19 pandemic

Women	200	246
Teachers	200	675 (608 women and 67 men)
Media professionals	120	108 (70 women, 38 men)
Output 2: Identification of priorities and support for joint action on social cohesion Dialogue events Participants in dialogue events Direct beneficiaries of cross-border grants	20 600 in BiH n/a	19 1,667 (1,036 women and 631 men) 7,847 (5,129 women and 2,718 men)
Output 3: Policy recommendations	5	46 individual recommendations integrated in 5 sectoral documents. Policy inputs provided into additional 6 sectoral documents.

This success is even more apparent when set against a complex and challenging environment and sensitive topics- peacebuilding, stability and social cohesion. Moreover, the overall DFF intervention and objectives align with the regional and national development priorities and support the EU accession process for the participating countries. DFF has been addressing adverse effects and limitations caused by the COVID-19 pandemic by providing substantive support to the stakeholders in defining and implementing needs-based solutions.

The regional approach under the DFF added value to partner countries and organizations, following positive cooperation practices (DFF small grants facility) and creating a solid learning basis by codifying generated knowledge and facilitating exchange of experience. Through its regional approach, the Project confirmed that regional cooperation reduces social tensions and strengthens regional stability, as the crucial precondition for achieving sustainable development goals and contributing to social cohesion. Regional DFF has accurately identified components and established areas of intervention under these components. There is demand (from the partners and beneficiaries) for the services that the Project tested to continue.

DFF has produced unintended results in different areas of its intervention. For example, the Small Grants Facility integrated cross-border learning and mentoring from experienced to less experienced CSO partners, improving their capacities in project management and adaptation to digital delivery.

<u>**Impact**</u>

The DFF's efforts resulted in increased capacities[12] of the targeted youth to engage in dialogue and positive transformation in their communities, being also able to deconstruct ethnic stereotypes and nourish acceptance of diversity. Also, young girls and women have enhanced advocacy and leadership capacities through interactions, training programs and thematic dialogues (on social cohesion). Interviews with beneficiaries additionally confirmed these findings[13]. The participants became even more aware of cultural diversity, recognizing advantages of the diversity, but according to the end-line survey, more of them are ready to cooperate with other ethnic groups[14].

There is evidence that the Project managed to activate some vulnerable groups and create multiplicative effects. For example, the workshop and progress reports indicated that "the UPSHIFT workshops included more than 25% of participants who were people with disabilities (compared to no more than 10% previously)[15]. The partners

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[12] Results of the on-line survey

[13] KII notes, national partners

[14] End-line survey results,

[15] Report from the Upshift workshop, organized in Montenegro by the Innovation Lab Creactivator, in partnership with the Ministry of Education, Directorate of Youth and Sports

stated that, these participants, including vulnerable groups, continued engaging in other community-level initiatives[16].

The FET finds that the DFF produced (unintended) results, generating impact on improved performance and resource mobilization capacities. For example, the organizations and institutions that benefited from the DFF Small Grants Facility were exposed to the practical know-how and exchange of experience with the partners from other countries. They have gained experience in applying and implementing grants/ grant funded projects. The grant beneficiaries reported a better understanding of the opportunities/ benefits from networking and cooperation among the countries. Based on the primary data analysis and interviews with the beneficiaries, the FE finds the DFF increased capacities of these institutions to participate and benefit from the possible other, especially EU grants.

The FET finds that eleven sectoral policy documents have been targeted by the project's policy recommendations work. For example, in BiH the DFF communicated priorities elicited in youth dialogues in the country to the Ministry of Civil Affairs and supported the development of youth programming guide (policy tool/ instrument) and assessment of the Gender Action Plan (policy decision), integrating the perspective of social cohesion. The DFF reports indicated policy inputs (46 individual dialogue recommendations) for policy decisions and policy development in five sectoral documents in Montenegro, such as those on public administration, youth, gender equality and women entrepreneurship[17]. The stakeholders confirmed these policy results.

The DFF brought to the policy agenda the need to work on civic education reform in partnership with the Ministry of Education, Science, and Technological Development in Serbia. The assistance resulted in the reform of the civic education curricula (as a policy tool) tested through training for teachers. The FET finds another example of policy influence, as the DFF team is bringing to the agenda the need to review Volunteering Law, reflecting the recommendations from youth dialogues. These inputs, according to the stakeholders from Serbia[18], will serve for the revision of the National Youth Strategy of the Republic of Serbia.

Sustainability

Design and implementation of the DFF have been participatory, with the involvement of national stakeholders in different capacities (as beneficiaries or participants in initiatives, partners during the implementation or involved in strategic steering of initiatives). The national partners clearly stated strong sense of ownership over the processes and results under the DFF's initiatives; additionally, the survey reconfirmed that the actual involvement and sense of ownership among the stakeholders, from newly adopted educational curricula at the University, to community results and individual improvements of abilities to embark in policy dialogue. However, the political will and commitment of governmental institutions to cooperate and work together on social cohesion should be sustained to enable continuous improvement of the situation and facilitate the project's impact.

The Project has been steadily addressing capacity needs to facilitate social cohesion, remove barriers and enable more effective communication and cooperation among beneficiaries (represented through different target groups). Training programs were comprehensive, while the DFF's capacity development approach has been balanced, focusing on strategic priorities of partners (such as authorities, CSOs, educational institutions) concerning various aspects of social cohesion.

Regional DFF has been working to enhance policy processes in participating countries, identifying priorities, defining recommendations, and advocating for their adoption. The national partners stated that DFF provided "valuable inputs and technical support to identify policy recommendations and bring policy decisions forward thus initiating the policy improvement process". These results and inputs are important, especially if considered in the context of participating countries, with limited experience in participative policy making processes.

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[16] Key informants' interviews

[17] DFF Progress Report, 2020 and draft Progress Report 2021; also interview with the stakeholders.

[18] KII notes, national partners, Serbia

RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendation 1: The FET recommends to continue with regionally-focused support to improving social cohesion, focusing on three countries (BiH, Montenegro and Serbia)

Recommendation 2: Enhance the understanding of the social cohesion in the region through involvement of authorities, CSOs, Academia and other structures

Recommendation 3: Consider longer timeframe for the new regional social cohesion initiative

Recommendation 4: Enhance the use of social media to communicate activities and results

Recommendation 5. The FET recommends that DFF supports regional networking and horizontal exchange of know-how among the experienced CSOs with the newly participating organizations

Recommendation 6: The next DFF should strengthen gender mainstreaming efforts and further expand "leaving no-one behind" principle

Recommendation 7: Participating agencies (UNDP, UNICEF and UNESCO) should work to strengthen steering and advisory structures and ensure its strategic guidance for DFF implementation, through regular meetings and involvement of senior level representatives.

Recommendation 8: The FET recommends that the UNDP, UNICEF and UNESCO in BiH, Montenegro and Serbia explore and work on new partnerships and diversification of funding opportunities.

Recommendation 9: The FET recommends that participating UN Agencies, in partnership with the national stakeholders, prepare clear and practical sustainability strategy under and perform regular analysis of risks and assumptions

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1   List of acronyms

CSO	Civil Society Organization
DAC	Development Assistance Committee
EQ	Evaluation Question
FE	Final Evaluation
FET	Final Evaluation Team
IRF	Immediate Response Facility
JP	Joint Project
JPB	Joint Programme Board
KII	Key informant interview
NCB	National Coordination Board
OECD	Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development
PBF	Peacebuilding Fund
RYCO	Regional Youth Cooperation Office
SGF	Small Grants Facility
ToC	Theory of Change
UN	United Nations
UNCT	United Nations Country Team
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNESCO	United Nations
UNPBSO	United Nations Peacebuilding Support Office
UNSCR	United Nations Security Council Resolution
WB	Western Balkans
YPS	Youth, Peace and Security

2 Background

2.1 Socio-economic situation in the region

Three Western Balkan countries, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro and Serbia, involved in the project, share common history during socialist Yugoslavia. They face similar transitional challenges, starting with violent conflicts during Yugoslavia's dissolution and complex transformation processes towards democratic governance and market economy. This situation is further affected by a plethora of enduring challenges. The unfavourable demographic trends, modest economic growth, high unemployment, high risks of poverty and social exclusion remained pressing issues for all three countries. Gender inequalities are still very prominent, manifested in the critical domains of societal life (political, economic participation, access to assets, resources, markets) including intimate private relations (high prevalence of domestic violence).

In 1999, the EU launched the Stabilization and Association Process (SAP). This framework defined relations with three countries in the region. The Stability Pact has been established as a broader initiative involving leading international players; it evolved into the Regional Cooperation Council in 2008. The 2003 European Council in Thessaloniki reaffirmed that all SAP countries were potential candidates for EU membership. The EU commission reaffirmed this 'European perspective' by adopting the Western Balkans Strategy and the Sofia Declaration following the EU-Western Balkans Summit of 17 May 2018 in the Bulgarian capital.

Figure 1: Recession in the Western Balkans that COVID-19 caused
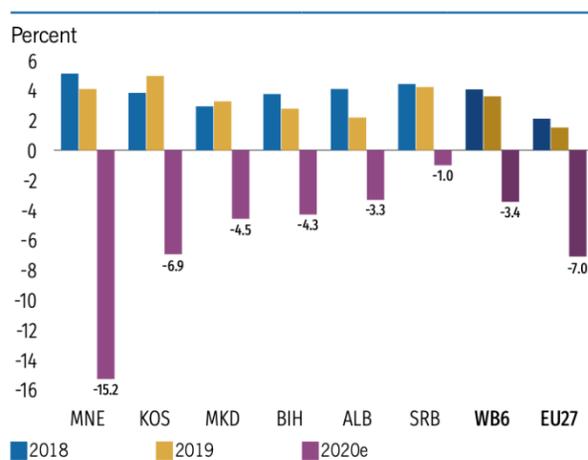
Figure 2: The economic contraction of all components of demand
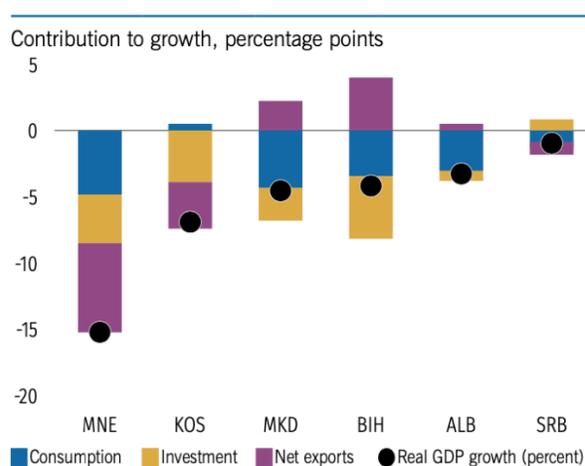
Source: The World Bank Data- WESTERN BALKANS REGULAR ECONOMIC REPORT NO.19

In the period since armed conflict in the region, the countries have been working on reforms in different sectors, reconfirming commitment to EU integrations.[19] However, in spite of the progress and proclaimed goals, the region is backsliding when it comes to the quality of democracy, rule of law, but also inter-ethnic relations[20]. The situation seems to worsen in light of the COVID-19 pandemic that brought in economic crises and negative trends in socio-economic indicators. Montenegro endured 90% 'collapse' in tourism,

[19] Defence and Security Committee, Sub-Committee on Transatlantic Defence and Security Cooperation, *Key challenges to maintaining peace and security in the Western Balkans,* p. 1

[20] The countries are recording decline on all governance indicators, as per World Bank World Wide Governance Indicators 2018-2020 https://info.worldbank.org/governance/wgi/

and the projections estimate 15.2 contraction of the economy. In Serbia though, this contraction was 1% and in BiH 4.3.[21] Previous gains in employment rates, poverty reductions have been almost wiped out.

One of the main consequences was that after several years of continuous improvement of labour market indicators, the COVID-19 pandemic swiftly reversed the progress. The job loss in the whole Western Balkans disproportionally affects younger people.

Figure 3:Employment dynamics in the region	*Figure 4: The impact of the COVID-19 on main sectors*
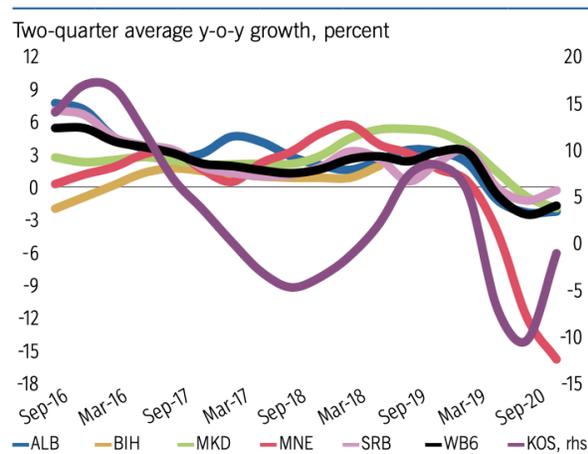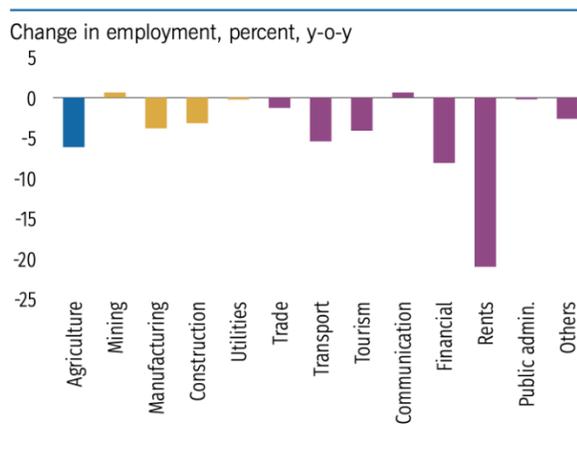
Source: World Bank Group, Western Balkans Regular Economic Report, no. 19, 2021

In the case of Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH) the socio-economic and protracted political crises combined with governance challenges have emphasized its need for structural reforms, especially when it comes to the large public sector. The World Bank report finds that BiH's unfavourable demographics and difficult politics could also exacerbate lingering effects of the pandemic.[22] Montenegro is relying heavily on tourism, hence its recovery depends on the dynamics of the pandemic. Also, this country is struggling with very unfavourable debt-to-GDP ratio. Elections in 2020 brought in significant political transformation on a personal and structural level, as the Government was for the first time in three decades formed without until then predominant Democratic Party of Socialists. Serbia experienced relatively modest recession (1%) and the Government spent almost 13% of GDP in order to support the economy.

2.2 *Reflections on social cohesion*

Social cohesion is often described as the "society's immunity to shocks and crises". Studies have found that social cohesion breaks down under various combinations of pressures. The absence of social cohesion is often a condition for conflict and violence. At the same time, conflict and violence impact the dynamics of social cohesion and fragmentation.[23] In general terms, "a cohesive society[24] is characterized by resilient social relations, a positive emotional connectedness between its members and the community, and a pronounced focus on the common good'. Its integral dimensions of trust in people, trust in institutions, civic participation, acceptance of diversity, as well as solidarity and voluntarism are anti-dotes to rising tensions and social divides. Responsive, inclusive and resilient institutions are central to sustainable

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[21] World Bank Group, *Western Balkans Regular Economic Report*, no. 19, 2021, p.4

[22] World Bank Group, *Western Balkans Regular Economic Report*, no. 19, 2021, p.58

[23] Religion, Peacebuilding and Social Cohesion in Conflict-affected Countries, Research Report, University of Denver, 2014

[24] As defined in Social Cohesion Radar by Bertelsmann Institute, full report available at. https://www.bertelsmann-stiftung.de/en/publications/publication/did/social-cohesion-radar/

development and peaceful societies. When societies are more cohesive and channels of dialogue, cooperation and interaction are multiple and multi-layered, efforts to promote hate and highlight differences will not succeed[25]. The political dynamics between the three countries remain fragile, with tensions flaring up on bilateral or trilateral levels, especially during the electoral campaigns. Glorification of war criminals continues, coupled with persistent hate speech and divisive narratives, most prevalent through the social media channels[26]. A state of "negative", rather than "positive" peace[27] is prevalent. The study on *Evaluation of EU Peacebuilding in Western Balkans* notes that "the consolidation of peacebuilding efforts – particularly on governance and rule of law issues, and on dealing with the legacies that the wars left behind – is a fundamental prerequisite for moving from 'negative peace' connected to the absence of war, to 'positive peace' that is linked to the removal of the systemic root causes of structural violence"[28]. Furthermore, the European Union (EU) has defined the enlargement process as 'an investment in peace, security and stability in Europe: the prospect of EU membership has a powerful transformative effect on the partners in the process, embedding positive democratic, political, economic and societal change[29]. . Serbia became EU candidate country in 2021[30]. One of the main political factors that hinder negotiations are reforms in the field of rule of law and 'normalization' of relations with Kosovo* (UNSCR 1244). Bosnia and Herzegovina struggles with its complicated constitutional composition and non-functional public administration. Montenegro entered a period of political transformation burdened with ethnic tensions, protests and political blockades.

Such political and socio-economic context is not a fruitful ground for social cohesion to prosper. However, social cohesion and the willingness to work collectively toward shared goals, is crucial for preventing conflict, sustaining peace and promoting reconciliation. It can help overcome polarization and identity-based differences that flourish in the periods of political and socio-economic turmoil[31].

Data on social cohesion in the Southeast Europe[32] indicate that social cohesion is low to moderate in Montenegro and moderate to high in Serbia, while the 2020 Social Cohesion Report for BiH[33] found that "across Bosnia and Herzegovina, intergroup relations are lukewarm, although there are some areas with alarmingly high levels of tension."

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[25] UNDP Guidance on Social Cohesion, 2020. Full text available at: https://www.undp.org/publications/strengthening-social-cohesion-conceptual-framing-and-programming-implications

[26] Dedicated article on hate speech in social media: https://www.media-diversity.org/ethnic-hate-speech-and-narratives-of-divide-in-the-western-balkans/

[27] According to the Global Peace Index, 'positive peace' refers to the presence of attitudes, institutions and structures that create and sustain peaceful societies. The features of such societies include a well-functioning government, equitable distribution of resources, the free flow of information, good neighbourly relations, high levels of human capital, respect for human rights, low levels of corruption, and a sound business environment. https://www.visionofhumanity.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/GPI-2021-web-1.pdf

[28] Available at: https://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/STUD/2018/621816/EPRS_STU(2018)621816_EN.pdf

[29] European Commission, Press release: Enlargement Package: Commission Publishes Reports on the Western Balkans Partners and Turkey, Brussels, 17 April 2018

[30] European Commission, 2020 Communication on EU Enlargement Policy, p. 3

[31] This derives from the analysis of some of the critical studies, such as UNDP's Strengthening Social Cohesion - Conceptual framing and programming implications. Also, more details in the analytical document Political Crises, Social Conflict and Economic Development Edited by Andrés Solimano, 2015, Edward Elgar Cheltenham, U K • Northampton, MA , USA

[32] Based on 2017 European Quality of Life Survey

[33] SCORE BiH 2020 is a quantitative study of Social Cohesion, Reconciliation and Resilience in Bosnia and Herzegovina implemented by SeeD in partnership with the Bosnia and Herzegovina Resilience Initiative (BHRI), funded by USAID/OTI and implemented by IOM

2.3   The context of the target groups

Young men and women (aged 15 to 30) are an essential resource for the Western Balkans (WB), especially as the primary support to modernization, reforms and EU accession[34]. The various documents indicated that youth favour modernization and EU membership, perceiving the EU as a source of higher employment, a better future and travel opportunities[35]. In addition, young men and women are more concerned about unemployment, attributing success to good education. There is a growing paradigm that youth are "social capital" worth investing in rather than as "a social problem to be solved."

Still, despite ongoing political and economic transformation of their societies, youth- post-war generation is growing up substantially isolated from other ethnic groups, with separate education systems and consuming largely segregated content from both traditional and new media. Combined with low quality education, with particularly deficiencies around critical thinking, problem solving and communication skills, this makes them vulnerable to ethno-nationalist political narratives. At the same time, the youth are stating there has been enough discussion about past conflict and preferred to discuss future issues, including collaboration around sports, culture and arts[36]. These challenges are affecting the opportunities that the EU integration perspective and related reforms could bring to the region.

Youth participation is a fundamental principle of youth development: the more active young people are, the stronger their civil awareness and the more varied their set of skills will be[37]. However, youth in three countries have shown limited interest in community or politics-related initiatives and activities, being largely dissatisfied with the level of democracy[38]. Young people generally do not trust political parties, and most feel under-represented by them. The resulting disengagement and lack of interest are a challenge for the positive transformation of any society.

Youth mobility among the WB countries is considered to positively impact productivity, generate more jobs, and reduce the skills mismatch. However, deeply ingrained prejudices and stereotypes among the ethnic groups (including youth) on the one hand, and a lack of clear information about labour rules in neighbouring countries and difficulties with the mutual recognition of degrees, hinder such mobility. The SEE 2020 strategy finds[39] that labour market liberalization has not advanced much. Although conditions for intra-regional mobility exist, finding a job in the region is not easy or does not offer sufficient incentives.

The socio-economic challenges for the participating countries are affecting the availability of jobs and decreasing employment opportunities, especially for the vulnerable groups[40]. The youth, women and the low-educated are among the worst affected labour market participants and have high inactivity rates[41]. The figures indicate that nearly 26 % of the region's young people are inactive, meaning they are not in

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[34] 2020 Enlargement Package and An Economic and Investment Plan for the Western Balkans and details on countries- EU BiH Report https://ec.europa.eu/neighbourhood-enlargement/sites/default/files/bosnia_and_herzegovina_report_2020.pdf; EU Serbia report https://ec.europa.eu/neighbourhood-enlargement/sites/default/files/serbia_report_2020.pdf and EU Montenegro report https://ec.europa.eu/neighbourhood-enlargement/sites/default/files/montenegro_report_2020.pdf

[35] Youth Studies SEE 2018/2019 by Fredrich Ebert https://www.fes.de/en/youth-studies/ and details available at 2020 Enlargement Package and An Economic and Investment Plan for the Western Balkans

[36] More details are available at Youth Studies SEE 2018/2019 by Fredrich Ebert https://www.fes.de/en/youth-studies/

[37] Some of the main references could be: Youth and Adolescents Development, UNICEF Serbia- https://www.unicef.org/serbia/en/adolescent-and-youth-development; and World Youth Report 2020 on "Youth Social Entrepreneurship and the 2030 Agenda"- Chapter 2 Youth Development and Participation https://www.un.org/development/desa/youth/wp-content/uploads/sites/21/2020/07/2020-World-Youth-Report-FULL-FINAL.pdf

[38] Some of the references could be http://media.cgo-cce.org/2017/02/cgo-cce-youth-social-ornament.pdf or http://projects.ff.uni-mb.si/cepss/index.php/youth-studies/.

[39] SEE 2020 Strategy Study on Labour Mobility, https://www.rcc.int/pages/86/south-east-europe-2020-strategy

[40] *The 'Western Balkans Labour Market Trends Report 2021', produced by the World Bank; more details available at:* https://documents1.worldbank.org/curated/en/574191590681152239/pdf/The-Economic-and-Social-Impact-of-COVID-19-Labor-Markets.pdf.

[41]*Ibidem, The 'Western Balkans Labour Market Trends Report 2021', produced by the World Bank;*

employment, education, or training. Moreover, high youth unemployment varies across the region, being estimated at 33.6% in 2020 (1.6% more than in the same period in 2019)[42].

Table 2 Youth unemployment in the participating countries, 2017-2020

	2017	2018	2019	2020 (e)
Bosnia and Herzegovina	45.8	38.8	33.8	n/a
Montenegro	31.7	29.4	25.2	36.0
Serbia	31.9	29.7	27.5	26.3

Source: World bank/ national statistical offices

Education systems have been slow to adapt to the changing labour markets, leaving the youth with an inadequate set of skills. Furthermore, civic education, media and information literacy, critical for the formation of open-minded and active generations, are lacking from mainstream curricula. Teachers across the three countries also do not have the resources or access to methodologies necessary to deliver this content in the classroom.

Women's empowerment and gender equality. Studies[43] have shown that societies with higher levels of gender equality and women's empowerment enjoy more stability. In the Western Balkans region, patriarchal gender norms are dominant. Across the seven EU candidate countries and potential candidates, men still outnumber women by three to one among the members of national parliaments. At the current rate of change, it will take another 17 years to achieve gender balance in the combined parliaments of all seven countries, according to the European Institute for Gender Equality[44].

Media. The recent years have seen a surge in divisive rhetoric and sensationalist media reporting in all three countries. As important tools in shaping public opinion and perceptions, the media play a key role in bridging the divides. Experts[45] agree that "for reconciliation to be fully integrated in the regional societies' development today, 30 years after the war, it is necessary that particularly the media become carriers of different narratives that promote and support reconciliation, intercultural understanding, and dialogue".

3   Dialogue for the Future - introduction to the project

The joint regional project "Fostering dialogue and social cohesion in and between Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro and Serbia (Dialogue for the Future- DFF)" has been designed to contribute to trust-building and stability by providing structured opportunities for dialogue and action, as well as policy recommendations on common social cohesion priorities in and among Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, and Serbia. Although originally designed to include implementation in Croatia as well, the project was implemented only in the three aforementioned countries.

The initial intervention Dialogue for the Future: Promoting Social Cohesion and Diversity was launched in 2014 in Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH), following discussions between the United Nations Secretary-General and Bosnia and Herzegovina's Presidency. In 2015, at the Brdo-Brijuni Summit in Budva, Montenegro, the region's leaders recognized the DFF project's a meaningful peacebuilding initiative, that merits the second phase focusing on building social cohesion in local communities in both entities of BiH and encouraged its

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[42] Western Balkans Regular Economic Report No.19 Subdued Recovery, ref to:
https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/bitstream/handle/10986/35509/Subdued-Recovery.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y

[43] As reported in Social Cohesion Radar of the Bertelsmann Foundation.

[44] Data for 2021 available at https://eige.europa.eu/gender-statistics-western-balkans-and-turkey

[45] As found in the report by the Aspen Institute Germany https://www.aspeninstitute.de/wp-content/uploads/2021-Supporting-Reconciliation-Processes-in-the-Western-Balkans.pdf

expansion into South-East Europe. During the second phase of the BiH-focused project[46] (2017-2019), the United Nations Country Teams (UNCTs) in BiH, Montenegro, and the Republic of Serbia worked with institutional and civil society stakeholders to design a joint regional project.

The DFF outcome has been Stability and trust in the region, and especially in Bosnia and Herzegovina, are enhanced. This outcome is further organized around three outputs:

Output 1.1. Different groups in the region, and youth in particular, acquire and practice skills to help break stereotypes and constructively interact across divides.

Output 1.2: Citizens from different groups jointly identify and implement actions that can promote social cohesion in the region, especially in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Output 1.3: Policy recommendations to improve social cohesion in the region are effectively advocated for and endorsed by authorities and relevant stakeholders.

The graph below shows the linkages between outputs, main components of the project, with indication of functional leadership provided by the participating UN agency:
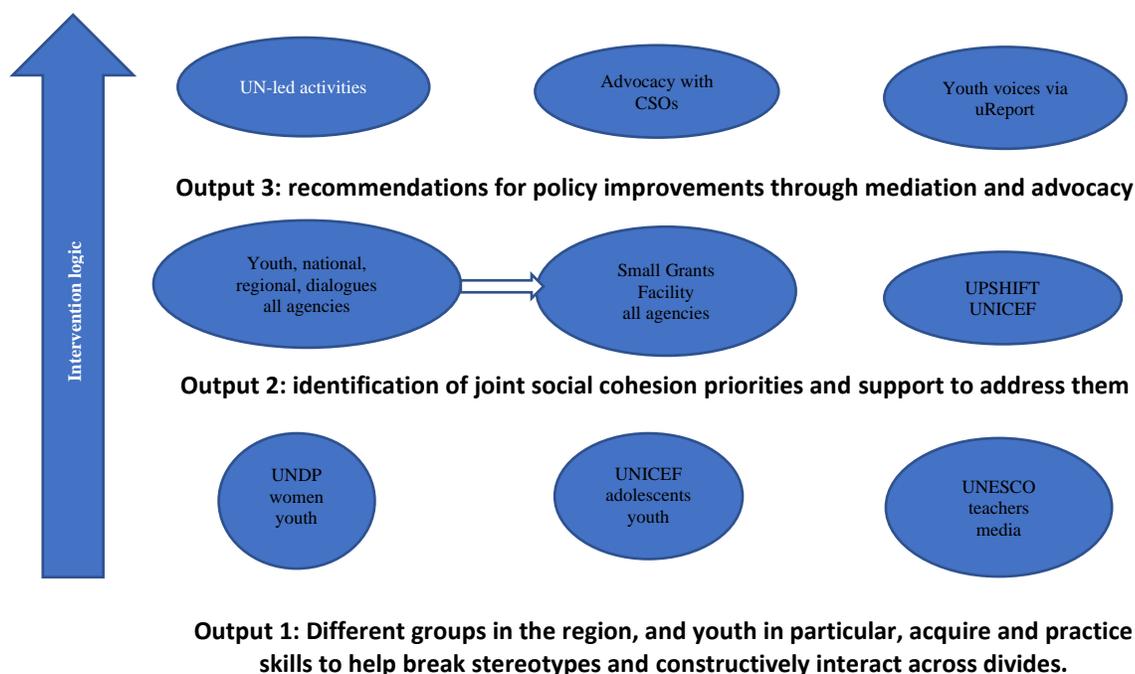
The regional DFF has identified and prioritized the following main target groups:

Adolescents (10 -18) and youth (18-30) received targeted skill building to partake constructively in dialogue and decision-making processes, becoming active contributors to positive transformation in their communities, fight stereotypes and nourish acceptance of diversity.

Women and young women have been targeted with leadership and advocacy skills training, and the Project strived to empower them to become the leaders of change in their communities.

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[46] The critical analysis of the Dialogue for the Future 2 has been presented through its final evaluation report, from May 2020

Teachers: Primary and secondary school teachers participated in learning seminars to enhance their skills in teaching media literacy, inter-modular civic education and Learning to Live Together concept. Additionally, the teachers from the primary and secondary have benefited from a World Heritage in Young Hands kit, a teaching guide to sensitize young people to the importance of preserving their local, national and world heritage.

Media: DFF targeted journalists and editors in various media outlets in the region, capacitating them to promote media literacy and amplify positive storytelling, fighting biased and prejudicial reporting.

This phase of the DFF is a UN joint (UNDP, UNESCO and UNICEF as implementing agencies) and regional (covering Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia and Montenegro) initiative that has been implemented in the period from January 2019 until April 2021.

The Immediate Response Facility of the UN Peacebuilding Fund provided support to this multi-country initiative. The Project total budget has been $4,183,992.51. Individual country funding included $1,933,293.40 in BiH; $946,335.30 in Montenegro and $1,304,363.81 Republic of Serbia.

3.1   *The DFF Theory of Change*

The national partners (representatives from the BIH Presidency and the Presidency of Serbia and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Montenegro and of Serbia) were counterparts and partners for the project, being continuously informed and consulted during the design process. The conflict analysis within the design process recognized that despite nearly three decades after the of armed conflicts in the region, there is a need to address diminishing trust among various ethnic groups. This premise served as the starting position to define the Theory of Change (ToC), following the logic that "peace emerges out of a process of breaking down isolation, polarization, division, prejudice and stereotypes between and among groups"[47]. The ToC has been based on the *Reflecting on the Peace Practice (RPP)*[48] methodology.

To summarize, the ToC followed the hypothesis that *if* members from different (ethnic) groups in the region, and especially youth, are sufficiently capacitated to engage in constructive dialogue and provided structured opportunities to identify social cohesion priorities and communicate them to their elected leaders and relevant institutions through dialogue platforms, and address them through joint projects and activities, *then* this will ensure broad-based participation and create partnerships across the four countries in pursuit of commonly identified priorities *because* skill-building for constructive dialogue, identification of common social cohesion priorities and joint action to address them will help break down barriers among various groups and help build a sense of connectedness and understanding, which are requisite in resilience to conflict.

Furthermore, the ToC stated that *if* public institutions and media outlets promote and embrace content that reinforces greater social cohesion, *then* this will improve connectedness and enhance trust among various (ethnic) groups, ensuring institutional sustainability for proposed measures and offsetting negative media rhetoric, *because* changing individual and group perceptions of the other through dialogue, skill-building and joint problem solving, and removing institutional barriers to social cohesion through political endorsement and policy change recommendations can contribute to durable peace and stability in the region.

The Project worked toensure capacity development of members from different (ethnic) groups in the region, especially youth, enabling them to engage in constructive dialogue, serving also to identify cohesion priorities, communicate them to their elected leaders through dialogue platforms and implement these priorities. The efforts for enhanced media literacy, objective and positive reporting served to reinforce greater social cohesion and enhance trust among various (ethnic) groups. At the same time, political

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[47] Ibidem, Reflecting on Peace Practice -A Resource Manual

[48] https://www.cdacollaborative.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/01/Reflecting-on-Peace-Practice-RPP-Basics-A-Resource-Manual.pdf

endorsement for policy changes and reforms contributed to removing institutional barriers to social cohesion and contributing to durable peace and stability in the region.

These deliverables are linked with a set of intermediate project accomplishments, including:

- Established and tested methodology for dialogue

- Enhanced capacities for dialogue among the stakeholders, and especially the youth

- Demonstration of the value of inter-group dialogue across the countries and broad-based partnership in pursuit of commonly identified priorities.

- Identified joint social cohesion priorities presented through projects and implemented

- Improved educational approaches in the schools and at universities

- An alternative to the dominant media narrative

- Improved public policies that contribute to social cohesion

- The representatives of governments (policy makers and technical staff) more engaged in social cohesion priorities

The **DFF's outcome "Stability and trust in the region, especially in Bosnia and Herzegovina, are enhanced"** links with these intermediate outcomes. Practically, stability and trust in the region require collaboration among different groups and at different levels in the region, increased confidence among ethnic and social groups, and between communities and elected leaders at various levels together with increased social cohesion through a reduction in ethnic divisions and reduction in the marginalization of other social groups, such as people with disabilities and Roma.

A key element in the Project's theory of change is that reducing division among the major ethnic groups and reducing the marginalization of other social groups are closely related objectives that the Project can pursue jointly. Therefore, the Project envisaged active engagement of institutional partners (Presidency offices in BiH and Serbia, foreign ministries in Montenegro and Serbia, government agencies in all three countries), contributing to ownership of results, sustainability and impact. In addition, support for policy recommendations arising from in-country and regional dialogue platforms has been planned through political diplomacy by the participating UN agencies and advocacy campaigns by civil society organizations and youth groups.

4   Evaluation purpose, objective and scope

4.1   Purpose of the final evaluation

The final evaluation has been implemented to satisfy a two-fold purpose:

- to assess the achievements of the Regional DFF in an inclusive way and

- to determine its overall added value to social cohesion and peacebuilding in the three participating countries.

UNDP Bosnia and Herzegovina has managed and coordinated this evaluation on behalf of all partners that participated in the DFF implementation (UNDP, UNICEF and UNESCO).

At the same time, information, findings, lessons learned, and recommendations generated by the evaluation will be submitted to the Joint Programme Board, Peacebuilding Fund, UNDP, UNICEF, UNESCO and other relevant stakeholders to inform future programming.

4.2   Objectives of the final evaluation

The ToR defined the objective of the final evaluation as "to examine the joint UN regional project's contribution to social cohesion and peacebuilding results", based on the project results framework, as well as other monitoring data collected during the evaluation. The Final Evaluation Team (FET) also assessed and captured intended or unintended results and developments.

Additionally, the FET assessed the extent to which the planned Project specific outcomes and outputs have been achieved, looking into the overall DFF's performance and results in three participating countries (Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro and Republic of Serbia).

Specifically, the FET reviewed, evaluated and made recommendations regarding the implementation of the project components related to support to dialogue and collaborative actions around jointly identified priorities; empowerment of adolescents and youth for constructive engagement and leadership; inter-cultural dialogue; objective media reporting and positive storytelling, and promotion of the social and political empowerment of young girls and women.

The FET reviewed and analyzed the Project's processes, innovations, strategic partnerships and linkages in the specific regional context, that proved critical in producing the intended outputs and the factors that facilitated and/or hindered the progress in achieving the outputs, both in terms of the external environment and risks, as well as internal, including: weaknesses in the design, coordination, management, human resource skills, and resources. Under the impact criteria, the FET analysed the effects and DFF's impact on its target groups, including those benefiting from 19 implemented grants.

Finally, the FET assessed how has the Project adjusted its implementation strategy and approach to respond to new circumstances imposed by the COVID-19 pandemic.

4.3   Scope of the final evaluation

The scope of the final evaluation relates to results, timeframe, geography and organization.

Results. The FET has assessed if and to what extent the planned outputs had been achieved, contributing together with other initiatives to progress under its outcomes. Part of these efforts included the analysis of the DFF's processes, innovations, strategic partnerships and linkages in the specific regional context that proved critical in producing the intended outputs

Timeframe. The final evaluation covered the entire period of implementation of the regional DFF initiative (January 2019 to April 2021). The FET considered PBF supported results and efforts from earlier years, when justified and required- e.g., if interpretation of the current DFF results and context involves this analysis.

Geography. The main focus of the evaluation geographically were the three participating countries (Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro and Republic of Serbia)

Organization. The FET examined the steering and management structures established for the DFF implementation.

5   Methodology for the final evaluation

The framework for the FE has been set in the Terms of Reference (ToR), and following its provisions, the evaluation has developed a tailor-made methodology. The main reference for the evaluation methodology

remains OECD/DAC Evaluation Criteria[49]; the FET adhered to UN Evaluation Group (UNEG) Norms and Standards[50], and UNEG Guidance on Integrating Human Rights and Gender Equality in Evaluation[51].

The evaluation methodology has been designed to ensure that the principles of *leaving no one behind*, *human rights-based approach* and *gender equality* are considered and analyzed throughout the process.

5.1 Evaluability analysis

The FET performed an evaluability assessment[52], measuring the extent to which the Project could be evaluated in a reliable and credible fashion[53]. During the desk review phase, the FET assessed the nature of DFF design, answering the question if it is possible to evaluate it as it is described at present (Annex 5 DFF Evaluability Checklist).

Under the Project design the FET analysed different aspects (Clarity, Relevant, Plausible, Validity and reliability of the intervention logic, among other). The analysis indicates DFF's outcome has been formulated as "Stability and trust in the region, and especially in Bosnia and Herzegovina, are enhanced", reflecting the efforts of the Project. This outcome represents intended changes in development conditions in the region and has been set at the high level, requiring joint work of many partners. Therefore, credible attribution of development changes to the DFF may be challenging or even impossible to establish; this has been also recognized in the Terms of References.

The FET finds that the outputs are well-established and linked to the outcome. The initial analysis indicates that the regional DFF project was highly relevant to the challenges facing three countries in the region (BiH, Montenegro and Serbia) and particularly to the circumstances of a post-war generation that has grown up with entrenched ethnic divisions. The validity of the DFF's intervention logic remained high throughout its implementation- a brief situation assessment indicates that the problems and challenges continue to affect social cohesion and peace building processes within the region.

To address these challenges, the FET has developed a tailor-made methodology, that covered the overall DFF's results framework, its outputs and activities that contributed to its outcome. The proposed methodology has been based on the contribution analysis (CA), adjusted for the evaluation of complex programs[54] focusing to make credible causal claims about interventions and their results[55].·

Concerning the availability of information, the DFF provided a full set of documents, including DFF Project Document, Annual Progress Reports, other Reports including commissioned studies and research reports, meeting minutes and other documents. The FET finds that the indicators have been well-established under

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[49] Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development / Development Assistance Committee (OECD/DAC), Network on Development Evaluation, Better Criteria for Better Evaluation Revised Evaluation Criteria Definitions and Principles for Use, 2019, available at: https://www.oecd.org/dac/evaluation/revised-evaluation-criteria-dec-2019.pdf

[50] http://www.unevaluation.org/document/download/2787

[51] http://www.uneval.org/document/download/1294

[52] Rick Dr. Davis "Planning Evaluability Assessments, A Synthesis of the Literature with Recommendations, Report of a study commissioned by the Department for International Development (DFID)", Working Paper 40, October 2013- this document served as the basis for evaluability assessment

[53] This is the OECD DAC definition; also, this definition has been adopted by Including IFAD, UNODC, OECD, SIDA, ILO, DFID, NORAD and NDC

[54] Line Dybdal, Steffen Bohni Nielsen, Sebastian Lemire (Ramboll Management Consulting and Aarhus, Denmark): "Contribution Analysis Applied: Reflections on Scope and Methodology", The Canadian Journal of Program Evaluation Vol. 25 No. 2 Pages 29–57 ISSN 0834-1516

[55] John Mayne: „Contribution analysis: Coming of age?" from Evaluation, 2012, Sage Publication, DOI: 10.1177/1356389012451663.
Also, where a paucity of data necessitates a quick assessment of a contribution, this should be carried out using appropriate evaluation methodologies that identify contributions at the outcome level and ascertain the plausibility of causal relationships between activities and outcomes.

all elements of the DFF's chain or results. The baseline data are available for all indicators. Some of the baseline data has been in the form of international, national and subnational statistics, with partially available disaggregated data. The data is being collected for all indicators and this was at sufficient frequency. The DFF provided disaggregated data for most of the indicators, especially those that were under direct Project's responsibility

Importantly, the DFF carried out baseline and endline survey among the grant beneficiaries and endline survey among target and control groups[56] to identify perceptions regarding other ethnic groups, willingness to cooperate across borders, formulate priorities and communicate/ address them to the officials. The sampling process was clear and the survey instruments available. However, the FET did not have access to the raw data but only selected relevant items. The FET finds that there are no significant data missing. Furthermore, the time series data available has been available for the pre-project years.

The regional DFF project did not include previous mid-term reviews or analysis. However, the FET had access to final evaluation reports for the projects Dialogue for the Future I and II implemented in BiH.

However, the extraordinary circumstances brought about by COVID-19 created a range of challenges for evaluative work as discussed in sections below. For the moment, it is worth noting that the new context made it impossible for the evaluation team to conduct in-person meetings with the DFF Project Team and other stakeholders in the participating countries. Still, use of online interviews, and use of tailor-made questionnaires provided a solid platform for primary data collection.

A brief gender analysis at the inception stage has been carried out to develop the hypothesis around reflection of gender in the data and reports, gender analysis of the operational environment i.e., socio-political and cultural barriers for gender equality and existing progress. This was done in the context of actual usefulness of the DFF final evaluation, as indicated in the ToR.

In general, the evaluability assessment results served as the basis for formulation of its final evaluation approach, including specific elements of the evaluation framework.

This final DFF evaluation followed the provisions and envisaged objectives from the ToR. The evaluation examined the stated DFF outcome and outputs, including their relevance to current national and regional contexts (e.g., three countries and broader region) including EU accession priorities and international commitments. The analysis reflected if and to what extent DFF contributed to development priorities in general and social cohesion and peacebuilding in particular in the participating countries, by identifying changes over the period being evaluated and assess the progress considering available baseline information. The evaluation analyzed the efficiency of DFF implementation/ management arrangements.

In addition to identifying achievements, the evaluation identified synergies, enabling factors, gaps, overlaps and missed opportunities.

5.2   The FET approach to evaluation criteria

The FET has followed the evaluation criteria from the ToR (relevance, coherence, effectiveness, efficiency, impact and sustainability) while the analysis of the peacebuilding and cross-cutting issues has been considered throughout the evaluation process (while analysing relevance, achieved results, institutional arrangements, impact and sustainability). The FET analyzed if the DFF adequately used results-based management to ensure a logical chain of results and establish a monitoring and evaluation framework and the efforts and quality of data collected and analyzed.

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[56] The DFF did not include the control group to compare with the intervention group- rather, baseline and end-line survey included same group, that benefited from the Project's support.

5.3   Evaluation Questions

The TOR included a total of 37 evaluation questions that the final evaluation team analyzed and proposed seven key evaluation questions, using also sub-questions to ensure that all areas indicated under the TOR are considered and covered. The FE report answered these questions using specific, objectively verifiable indicators (OVI) generated for each EQ to assess the current situation, delivery of outputs and progress towards the intended outcomes[57].

5.4   Data collection methods and instruments

The evaluation collected data for this evaluation from various sources including DFF related documents, key informant interviews and secondary data sets.

The final evaluation followed approaches described below:

5.4.1   Document review

The evaluation has started with an initial review of the documents provided by the DFF and participating UN Agencies and accessed via open sources[58].

These include many different levels and types of documents, such as[59]:

▪ Strategic - e.g., The Secretary-General's Peacebuilding Fund 2017-2020 Strategy[60], the South East Europe 2020 Strategy[61], EU Enlargement Programme and Investment Strategy for Western Balkans[62], Cross-Border Cooperation Programs and Strategies[63],

▪ Country level - e.g., UN Agencies Country Programs, EC Progress Reports, EU Accession, other development/ sectoral strategies; indicators

▪ Project – DFF Documents and Progress Reports and other DFF-related documents

▪ Presentations and other documents - delivered by DFF partners at various events

▪ Meeting records - conference proceedings and minutes

The FET has benefited from the MAXQDA software support, coding the documents related to specific evaluation criteria and using them to answer specific questions.

5.4.2   Primary data collection- key informants' interviews

The FET has prepared specific interview guides to ensure systemic and uniform collection of data (Annex 1), asking (open-ended) questions and offering also opportunities for a more in-depth discussion about specific points related to DFF's implementation and results. The FET discussed forward-looking opportunities and recommendations for the future interventions related to social cohesion and

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[57] These evaluation questions, judgement criteria, indicators and evidence, following all the questions from the ToR have been presented in the evaluation matrix in the Annex 3

[58] A full list of documents consulted during the evaluation have been provided in Annex 2

[59] The FET analyzed and reviewed other secondary data sets, including aggregated data on different governance, gender and other indicators for three participating countries and the Western Balkan region. This included information from governments and other reliable sources (e.g., EU reports, OECD-SIGMA reports, CSOs, think tanks, other development partners, etc.). Some of the main regional-level references have been the World Bank analysis , the NATO Parliamentary Assembly report and reports of other development partners and institutions .

[60] https://www.un.org/peacebuilding/sites/www.un.org.peacebuilding/files/documents/sg_pbf_strategic_plan_2017-2019_june2018.pdf

[61] https://www.rcc.int/pages/62/south-east-europe-2020-strategy

[62] https://ec.europa.eu/neighbourhood-enlargement/countries/package_en

[63] https://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/en/funding/ipa/cross-border/

peacebuilding. The FET prepared brief interview notes, systemize, and bring together all data from the primary data collection in the evaluation matrix.

The **key informants' interviews** served to as tools to collect evidence-based, reliable, solid, and comprehensive information about the DFF. The COVID-19 pandemic has had severe impact on the overall situation in the region (and broader) and posed strict limitations to the mobility of the FET, preventing and limiting in-person meetings. Therefore, the FET had online interviews with the stakeholders, including senior officials and key stakeholders. In addition, group interviews have been used as a tool for interviews with UN Agencies and DFF Project Teams, national institutions or organizations that were involved in the implementing activities. This method was particularly useful for organizational teams as they enable complementarity of information and save time for repeating information which often happens when individual interviews are conducted with the teams engaged in the same organization or project.

The **focus group discussions** have been organized with the beneficiaries, women and youth from participating countries.

Sampling: The FET selected interlocutors for Key Informant Interviews (KIIs) purposefully from among the projects' key stakeholders, using stratified random sampling. This selection has been made by dividing beneficiaries into subgroups (strata) based on their gender, the nature of their involvement in the DFF implementation under specific outputs or the types of activities. The FET selected samples proportionally from the total number for each stratum.

The primary data collection process was organized between May and June 2021 and included consultations with 76 stakeholders (61 women and 15 men), through on-line interviews.

The Table 2 provided a detailed overview of the type of stakeholders, with the majority being representatives of Civil Society Organizations (CSOs), followed by UN Agencies (Heads of Agencies, DFF Project Staff, Monitoring and Evaluation Officers) and national authorities and beneficiaries.

Table 3 Stakeholders interviewed during the Final evaluation

Types of stakeholders	Total number interviewees	#Male	#Female
UN Agencies	20	8	12
Government	13[64]	3	10
Academia	4[65]	2	2
Beneficiaries (including CSOs)	40[66]	5	35
Total	77	18	59

The time constraints for this evaluation and the COVID19 restrictions prevented the FET from meeting with representatives of groups which were often left behind. The FET was using meetings with the CSOs for proxy information about those "whose voice is normally not heard on Project-related issues".

In addition, the FET organized six focus group meetings, two in each country, (August 2021), with the youth and women that benefited from the Project. In total 26 beneficiaries participated in the focus group

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[64] The representatives of governments and authorities included 3 (1 female 2 male) from BiH, 7 (6 female and 1 male) from Montenegro and 3 (female) from Serbia

[65] Two representatives from Serbia (1 male and 1 female), one from BiH (male) and one from Montenegro (female)

[66] The beneficiaries included 19 participants from BiH, 12 from Montenegro and 8 from Serbia

meetings: in Bosnia and Herzegovina, 9 participants, 5 women and 4 youth (2 girls and 2 boys), in Montenegro 8 participants 3 women and 5 youth (3 boys and 2 girls) and in Serbia 9 participants, 3 women and 6 youth (2 boys and 4 girls).

The FET prepared transcripts from all in-person interviews and established a sound coding system, following the evaluation criteria, using MAXQDA software during the analysis.

5.5   Data analysis

The scope, complexity, and the period covered by the evaluation required an analytical approach deriving from UNDG evaluation guidelines and international practices. The evaluation team analysed collected information and the Results Matrix through a causality model as a part of the overall contribution analysis complementing it with appropriate analytical approaches[67].

The FET used a mixed-method approach to gather qualitative and quantitative information to answer specific evaluation questions. The FET based desk research on collecting and analysing the secondary data, primarily DFF related documentation, annual progress reports and annexes. The FET collected primary data through in-person interviews following well-established data collection tools, and gained a more in-depth analysis of the overall DFF implementation.

The FET applied data triangulation (for checking the results obtained from the research (desk analysis and primary data from interviews). The rationale for using this approach was to increase the credibility and validity of the findings, and enabled to collect a more detailed and balanced picture of the DFF and its results. The research experience of our team members enabled the FET to map out an explain the details and complexity of the Project. The qualitative research software and the coding system enabled easier analysis and cross-examination, identifying convergence, inconsistency and contradictions.

5.6   Limitations

The final evaluation included a primary data collection phase (comprising of on-line interviews), designed to collect in-depth information about the status DFF outcome and respective outputs and complement the initial findings from the desk review. This phase also enabled to identify links between different issues impacting on achievement of the DFF outcome, and broader, the progress towards greater social cohesion. However, this evaluation included limited time for primary data collection. Still, the need to combine in-person interviews and in different countries and organize interviews with different stakeholders' groups resulted in extending this process to four weeks in total. The final list of key stakeholders for interviews has been agreed in cooperation with the DFF teams, while the involvement and importance of the stakeholders in the DFF design and implementation development and implementation[68] has been the main determining criteria. Although the evaluation team discussed DFF related issues with the representatives of different authorities, some of the local counterparts were not in the position to reflect on the cooperation and results appropriately.

The DFF's effectiveness needed to be considered assessing the extent to which the Project contributed to or is likely to contribute to progress towards "greater stability and trust in the region and particularly in BiH". However, it was challenging to determine "specific extent of the contribution" that the DFF made to this outcome; rather, the FET was using results and analysis from different research and opinions reviews (for example, recent UNDP report Youth Perceptions on Peace in the Western Balkans, 2021) to identify and justify this contribution[69]. Considering requirements from the ToR, and request for the length of the

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[67] The FET supported it with timeline analysis and conflict analysis to the extent required.

[68]   A detailed list of interviewed people is provided in the Annex 4 to this document.

[69] For example, experts from the Faculty of Political Sciences from Sarajevo and Belgrade; also https://shared-futures.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/Shared-Futures-Youth-Perceptions-on-Peace-in-the-Western-Balkans.pdf

evaluation report as well as the timeframe for the final evaluation, it would have been highly challenging to extract "the most important" achievements contributing to the behavioural level- outcome changes (removal of barriers and stereotypes, changes in the perception of the "others", enhanced feeling of trust and security) and validate their contribution. The assessment of effectiveness and performance of DFF relied on the indicators provided in the DFF Results Framework and the UN agency contributions through the reported results. The indicators were in the majority of cases relevant, informing the analysis of contribution to the outcome. The effectiveness was also assessed considering other requirements from the ToR.

The assessment of efficiency has been mainly focused on management processes and structures; the FET has been analysing meeting minutes from different coordination forums and using interviews with some of the members of these various bodies at different levels. However, the FET based conclusions on the professional experience and judgement, and basic provisions of development assistance.

Sustainability and impact are ex-post measures and ideally, measuring these dimensions require a time-period between two to five years after the completion of the initiative. Still, this was ToR requirement and the evaluation team carried out context analysis and forecasted possibilities to create impact and opportunities to ensure sustainability. However, changing realities of the Western Balkans countries, and frequent policy/ political reorientation as well as effects of unplanned external developments (e.g., the effects of the COVID-19 and its possible extension; progress in the negotiations with the EU; protracted tensions regarding the governance structure in BiH or negotiations between Serbia and Kosovo*) could considerably affect and compromise these conclusions.

5.7   Ethical considerations

The FET was aware of the OECD DAC ethical considerations for development evaluations[70] and United Nations Ethical Guidelines[71]. The evaluation followed ethical considerations in selecting interviewees, interacting with them, and respecting their personal and institutional rights. The FET requested informed consent from stakeholders before asking any questions related to the DFF evaluation. To obtain consent, the FET members briefly explained the reasons and objectives of the evaluation and the scope of the questions. Stakeholders had the right to refuse or to withdraw at any time.

The FET also ensures respondents' privacy and confidentiality, as the disclosure of confidential information may seriously jeopardize the efficiency and credibility of the evaluation process. Therefore, the FET is responsible for exercising discretion in all matters of the final DFF evaluation, not divulging confidential information without authorization. The FET members respected informants' right to provide information in confidence; the team also made ensure that sensitive information cannot be traced to its source so that the key informants are protected from reprisals. Original data, including interview records and notes from interviews, will be retained in confidential files until completion of the evaluation. After the final report is accepted, the data and files will be permanently deleted.

The FET is fully independent, unaware of any conflicts of interest for this work. During the evaluation process, the FET followed the principles of impartiality, credibility, and accountability.

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[70] https://www.oecd.org/development/evaluation/qualitystandards.pdf
[71] United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG), UNEG Ethical Guidelines for Evaluation- UNEGFN/CoC, 2008.

6   Presentation of findings

The final evaluation has presented the following findings, responding directly to the evaluation criteria and questions detailed in the scope and objectives section of the report and are based on evidence derived from data collection and analysis methods described in the methodology section of the report.

6.1   Relevance

The analysis has been carried out with the intention to evaluate regional DFF's relevance at any point during the life-cycle. The FET assessed the particular area of involvement and the validity of the DFF's intervention logic, including if the Project addressed the identified priorities of the institutional partners and needs of the target groups from the participating countries (as the target beneficiaries). The FET also analysed whether the DFF targeted values and benchmarks remained valid and achievable during the implementation. In addition, the FET assessed internal and external coherence of the DFF.

- **The DFF's peacebuilding objectives have been relevant to the needs of beneficiaries from the region: adolescents and youth, women and young women, teachers and media -journalists and editors in various media**

The Project has been designed 25 years following the end of armed conflicts in the region with the objective to build the trust among various ethnic groups. Its specific approach was based on the (social cohesion and peacebuilding related) priorities and identified needs, that followed a bottom-up process of collaboration and involvement of policy makers and representatives of the stakeholders through consultations organized in all participating countries[72]. In addition to consultations, the DFF needs analysis has been based on perception surveys[73] showing that the youth in the participating countries expressed dissatisfaction with developments and politics in their countries, and a lack of trust in public institutions. The youth, especially the post-war generations, have been isolated from other ethnic groups. They have been educated in separated systems, receiving largely nationally centred and exclusivist content from media. These educational challenges, low political activism and participation opportunities and the overall marginalization created a favourable environment for growing ethnic and nationalistic political narratives among the youth[74]. Despite these challenges, the youth showed eagerness to discuss the future and their opportunities[75].

This analysis served for the regional DFF to adopt a "contact-based reconciliation" approach. The Project committed to, in cooperation with the partners, make substantial and sustained investments in initiatives and opportunities to allow members of different constituents – particularly youth – to come together and work towards shared goals and visions[76]. This approach facilitated policy recommendation that broadening contacts (among youth and other groups) could be essential prerequisites for reconciliation to take root[77].

Young people from all three countries share the views that the DFF's support has been relevant[78], increasing their capacities and providing opportunities to constructively interact with peers across borders.

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[72] Reference to the Meeting minutes notes from the consultations during July 2018 for the formulation of the regional DFF . These consultations included also the representatives of youth CSOs from the original four countries.

[73] More details are available in researches that the Project Team was using: Youth study southeast Europe 2018/2019, Miran Lavrič, Smiljka Tomanović and Mirna Jusić, Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung, 2018 https://www.fes.de/en/youth-studies/and Balkan Barometer 2018 and 2019, Public Opinion Analytical report, Regional Cooperation Council, May 2019,.

[74] Youth study southeast Europe 2018/2019, more at https://www.fes.de/en/youth-studies/

[75] Ibidem, youth studies

[76] Project document Fostering dialogue and social cohesion in and between Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH), Montenegro and Serbia (Dialogue for the Future), submitted to the PBF

[77] Reconciliation After Violent Conflict- a Handbook, Editors: David Bloomfield, Teresa Barnes and Luc Huyse, Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance 2003

[78] Interviews with beneficiaries – key informants

For example, the youth from Serbia recognized that DFF was unique initiative that enabled them to meet for the first time young people from other ethnicities[79], and understand that they shared same problems and concerns[80] The young people from BiH had experience in communicating and interacting with youth from other ethnicities[81]. Still, they recognized that regional DFF enabled meeting, communicating, agreeing and disagreeing with youth from other countries[82], concluding-that young people from all these countries are equal[83]. The youth from Montenegro stated that DFF's added values have been facilitation of interactions and communications with young people from other countries, also recognizing its support to skills development in problem-solving, critical thinking and leadership[84].

The DFF also addressed the need for increased trust and tolerance, supporting dialogue and cooperation based on recognized and agreed common priorities. In this context, the DFF facilitated 19 dialogue platforms with participation of 1,667 people, that built on tested models and best practices from the previous (only BiH) phases, activating a wide range of social groups to participate in local activities and interact with ministry representatives. Complementary to this, the Project addressed the ad-hoc challenges of some vulnerable groups. For example, the DFF in partnership with the line ministries of education in BiH addressed the need of Roma and students in rural areas, to have access to online learning opportunities (for all students). Another example could be production of the audio book of tales and fables[85] that followed easy to read standards for children with disabilities[86]. These activities contribute to cohesion in the society, "working towards the well-being of all its members, fighting exclusion and marginalisation, creating a sense of belonging, promoting trust, and offering its members the opportunity of upward social mobility[87]."

The Project has been aligned with the priorities of authorities from all three countries, as they have recognized the importance to "create more spaces for constructive dialogue and cooperation between countries and communities[88]. Following this priority and building on the experience from the previous BiH-based DFFs[89], the political leaders from the region, during the 2015 Brdo-Brijuni Summit recognized "the DFF project and encouraged its expansion into Southeast Europe"[90]. As in the previous phases of BiH-only project, the multi-country DFF linked investments in human rights, the rule of law, inclusive socio-economic priorities and accountable institutions with efforts towards building social cohesion and decreasing ethnic tensions (thus preventing conflict). The underlying principle has been that the investments in social cohesion, national and regional dialogue and mediation capacities lay the foundations for sustaining peace,

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[79] One of the interviewed young people stated "previously, I was quite determined regarding ethnicity: I was listening how different we are from other ethnic groups. But the Project helped me to meet young people from other countries and ethnic groups and understand our similarities. We need to interact more- finally, we all share the same origins from Yugoslavia".

[80] KII national partners, youth.

[81] Some of these experiences have been captured through the DFF1 and DFF2

[82] KII national partners

[83] Kii notes, national partners

[84] One of the participants in the UPSHIFT events stated that "Previously, I was quite stubborn. Now I understand better how things work, and that the best solution is not necessarily one that I've proposed, but one that connects people with different opinions."

[85] The book was initially released as illustrated hard copy version and included fairy tales and fables from domestic authors.

[86] The partners stated that more than 300 children with disabilities have already received illustrated book of fairy tales and fables in audio format

[87] Perspectives on Global Development 2012- Social Cohesion in a Shifting World, OECD Development Centre, https://doi.org/10.1787/22224475

[88] KII notes, national partners.

[89] The Presidency of Bosnia and Herzegovina initiated the first, country-wide and joint Dialogue for the Future (DFF) peacebuilding Program (2014-2016) , followed by the DFF's second phase (2018-2019), with a more streamlined approach to a specific geographic region and efforts to enhance skills for young opinion makers to "lead dialogue platforms and be recognized as a contributor to positive change in the community" .

[90] https://www.predsednik.si/up-rs/uprs-eng.nsf/pages/49BCA5070E69D383C1257EA50031BFB0?OpenDocument

even in the challenging settings of some of the participating countries[91]. **The DFF was working with recognized and well-received civil society actors, giving additional credibility to the activities undertaken, and has forged innovative and promising partnerships.** This was most evident through the cross-border Small Grants Facility which enabled partnerships between public cultural institutions and CSOs, regional development hubs and youth rights organizations.

The CSOs emphasized that the project's objectives were relevant to their needs. They emphasized the efforts of the Project to facilitate progress "towards post-conflict societies", recognizing relevance of the DFF initiative to create links between young people facing common problems and challenges for the entire region[92]. Partners representing educational institutions recognized that the Project set the basis to introduce intercultural education, dialogue and contents in the formal education, stating that communication among universities and academia has been initiated and this process needs to continue. Stakeholders working with youth and children outlined the importance of information and communication literacy among young people, supported by the project.

- **The Project has been relevant to the priorities of the participating countries, UN's peacebuilding mandate and the SDGs, in particular SDG 16 and other commitments of the participating countries**

Despite differences, the strategic priorities for all three countries are to further enhance institutions capacities at all levels and create services for citizens that would lead to greater social inclusion and social cohesion and facilitate EU accession process[93]. The countries, however, develop at different speeds and exhibit differences in their governance culture and approach to implementation of policies and priorities. Still, the priorities have been to continue implementing fundamental democratic, rule of law and economic reforms, reflecting core European values. These efforts could be the main force to push for accelerated economic growth, social cohesion and social convergence[94].

The regional DFF is aligned with the UN Secretary General's Sustaining Peace agenda, supporting progress towards sustainable peace in the Western Balkans (one of the key UN Member States areas of concern for peacebuilding and implementation of UN priorities)[95]. In addition, the UN has a vital role to play in many critical areas, one of them being reconciliation[96] (simultaneously recognizing that the persistence of a serious trust-deficit is contributing to limited space for the expression of clear commitments to reconciliation, in particular, in BiH). The relevance of DFF is increased with the adoption of new UN Sustainable Development Frameworks in project countries, which distinctly recognize social cohesion as a priority area.

Moreover, the strong focus of the Project on enabling structured opportunities for dialogue (among youth only, thematic for all target groups and regional settings) and support to youth's engagement in public processes is aligned with PBF's Guidance on Youth and Peacebuilding[97] given that "exclusion, whether real

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[91] KII national partners

[92] KII national partners – "The problems of young people are almost identical in all three countries, and this helped the people to understand that regardless of their religion, background or else, they have the same problems and they face the same challenges".

[93] The recent EC progress reports under the enlargement framework recognized that all three countries continued to declare EU membership as their strategic goals, also highlighting the need for additional political focus and increase of human and institutional capacities for EU accession. The documents recognized the need to ensure that all citizens, without discrimination and on an equal footing, have access to fundamental social and economic rights.

[94] Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions- Enhancing the accession process - A credible EU perspective for the Western Balkans, Brussels, 5.2.2020- COM(2020) 57 final.

[95] https://www.un.org/peacebuilding/news/secretary-generals-remarks-peacebuilding-commission

[96] https://news.un.org/en/story/2012/07/416212-visit-ban-notes-importance-normalized-relations-between-kosovo-and-serbia- Ban Ki Moon's key messages from his July 2012 visit to the Western Balkans

[97]
https://www.un.org/peacebuilding/sites/www.un.org.peacebuilding/files/documents/pbf_guidance_note_on_youth_and_peacebuilding_2019.pdf

or perceived, is a critical root cause of violent conflict."The FET finds that the DFF through its underlying objective to enhance stability and trust in the region, and especially in BiH affirms one of the pillars for the achievement of SDG[98]; namely, stability and trust (ensured through effective, accountable and inclusive institutions and policies and active youth and society) are essential to achieving the SDGs[99]. The 2030 Agenda recognizes the need to build peaceful, just and inclusive societies that provide equal services and protection of human rights, based on effective rule of law and good governance at all levels and on transparent, effective and accountable institutions[100].The partners also recognized links between the DFF and SDGs, especially stating that the Project was aligned with SDG 16 concerning the creation of peaceful societies. The partners stated that this goal, and associated indicators and targets were analyzed during the design stage[101], highlighting as relevant the targets 16.6[102], 16.7[103], 16.10[104] and also 16. a[105] and 16. b[106] . SDG 16 is closely interlinked with other SDGs. Without peace, justice and inclusion, achieving goals such as ending poverty, ensuring education, promoting economic growth can be difficult or impossible. For instance, the Project also contributed to SDG 17 for its efforts to build and strengthen regional partnerships, and the SDG 5 under the component for empowerment of women, as well as SDG 4 (Quality Education). Some of the partners highlighted relevance of the DFF to other SDGs, ensured through different initiatives implemented under the DFF's framework[107].

The FET finds that the that DFF is contributing to the reform efforts in the participating countries, especially for the implementation of the governance and public administration priorities from the Political criteria and rule of law chapters, also contributing to transparent and accountable institutions under the fight against corruption framework (Chapter 23: Judiciary and fundamental rights). It reflected the mitigation measures recommended through the European Commission (EC) screening reports[108], focusing to strengthen institutions their mandates (including a legal basis) to ensure capacities at all levels and cooperation and exchange of information between the stakeholders.[109] Besides, the Project is aligned with the priorities from the Chapter 22 Regional policy and coordination of structural instruments, as the EU's main tool for investing in sustainable and inclusive socio-economic growth.

The DFF is contributing to the priorities from the Regional Cooperation Council (RCC) strategy SEE 2020 "Jobs and Prosperity in a European Perspective" (based on the 2020 European Strategy on Growth)[110]. The key reference has been the pillar Integrated Growth: promotion of regional cooperation and policies that are non-discriminatory, transparent and predictable. Also, the DFF contributed to other pillars, namely, *Inclusive Growth* (placing greater emphasis on developing skills and inclusive participation in the economic,

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[98] http://sdg.indikatori.rs/media/1539/icons8-microsoft-excel-48

[99] Interactive dialogue 5- Building effective, accountable and inclusive institutions; more details available at: https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/8161Interactive%20Dialogue%205%20-%20Institutions%20and%20Governance.pdf

[100] Transforming our World: The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, para 35., https://www.un.org/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=A/RES/70/1&Lang=E

[101] KII_05 and KII_15

[102] Develop effective, accountable and transparent institutions at all levels

[103] Ensure responsive, inclusive, participatory and representative decision-making at all levels),

[104] Ensure public access to information and protect fundamental freedoms, in accordance with national legislation and international agreements

[105] Strengthen relevant national institutions, including through international cooperation, for building capacity at all levels, in particular in developing countries, to prevent violence and combat terrorism and crime

[106] Promote and enforce non-discriminatory laws and policies for sustainable development

[107] The KII notes provided opinions that DFF is aligned with the SDG 5 which is on gender equality, and SDG 16 on peace building, security and the strong institutions. According to this opinion, the SDG 10 which is found in equality, could be the reference.

[108] https://www.mei.gov.rs/upload/documents/skrining/screening_report_chapter_10.pdf

[109] More details are available at: https://ec.europa.eu/neighbourhood-enlargement/

[110] https://www.rcc.int/pages/86/south-east-europe-2020-strategy

social and health affairs) and *Governance for Growth* (enhancing the capacities to strengthen the rule of law and reduce corruption, among other).

The EU Strategy for the Danube region (covering among other the DFF's three countries[111]), has been also policy reference for the DFF. Particularly, the DFF contributed directly to the Priority Area 10 (PA 10) and its objective to strengthen institutional capacity at local, regional and national level, involve civil society in public governance and strengthen cooperation among institutions and population (from the region)[112]. The Program contributed to the PA9: people and skills, especially addressing the challenges related to youth inclusion and participation in the society and involvement in decision making processes[113].

- **The DFF did not introduce changes to its intervention logic during implementation. Its objectives and areas of intervention remained relevant throughout the implementation.**

The FET finds that the overall Project intervention logic has been and remained relevant from the start of the initiative. The reconciliation among the Western Balkans countries remained one of the priorities[114]. The EU WB Strategy stated that that respect for the rule of law and minority rights is of paramount importance for the democratic[115], economic and social development of the countries of the Western Balkans, also recognizing the role of education and of a free and independent media to overcome the disputes of the past and enhance democratic values[116]. The partners (especially from civil society organizations) stated that DFF's assistance should continue, recognizing its unique and comprehensive support to facilitate youth communication remove ethnic and that addresses the needs and demands of the beneficiaries"[117], expressing also concerns about the influence of political agendas to the sustainability of achieved results - in their opinions, the political structures are using the "divided societies" for short-term gains, while not showing genuine commitment to break these patterns.

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[111] https://danube-region.eu/about/the-danube-region/ Three accession countries are Serbia, Montenegro and Bosnia and Herzegovina

[112] https://capacitycooperation.danube-region.eu/

[113] https://peopleandskills.danube-region.eu/youth-dialogue-macroregional-strategies-week-register-now/

[114] EU Strategy for Westren Balkans 2018. https://ec.europa.eu/info/publications/eu-western-balkans-strategy-credible-enlargement-perspective_en

[115] Still, the analysis of the Worldwide Governance Indicators (WGI) showed uneven development and differences among the participating countries, with negative trend on the most relevant indicators for the scope of the DFF initiative

[116] European Economic and Social Committee "Economic and social cohesion and European integration of the Western Balkans – challenges and priorities (exploratory opinion)", Rapporteur: Andrej ZORKO (SI-II), Co-rapporteur: Dimitris DIMITRIADIS (EL-I) https://www.eesc.europa.eu/en/our-work/opinions-information-reports/opinions/economic-and-social-cohesion-and-european-integration-western-balkans-challenges-and-priorities-exploratory-opinion#:~:text=el-,en,-fr

[117] KII- CSOs

Figure 5 Political stability and absence of violence indicator for the DFF countries, 2015-2019
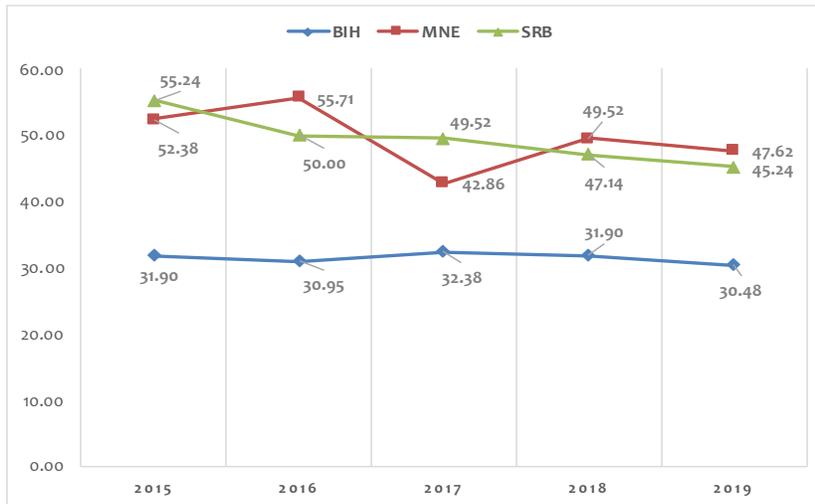
Source: Worldwide Governance Indicators

This is strong evidence that the efforts are required among all the countries to improve the pillars of the governance system, as prerequisites for greater social cohesion. Thus, the support (and especially know-how) available through the DFF remains highly relevant to the region.

Figure 6 Voice and accountability indicator for the DFF countries, 2015-2019
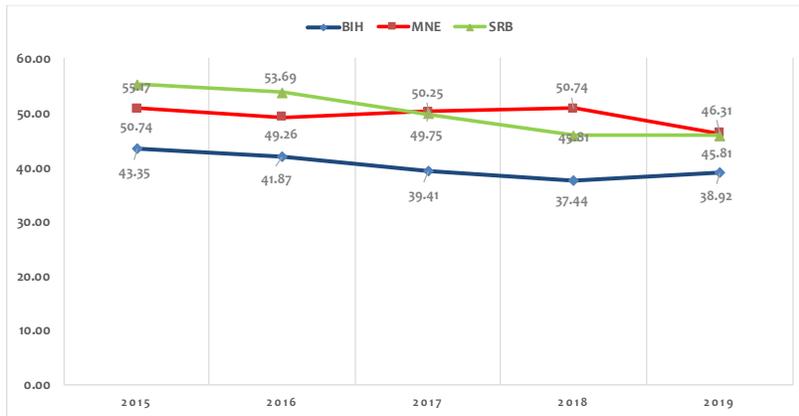
Source: Worldwide Governance Indicators

Also, the recent RCC's Balkan Barometer- Public Opinion confirms the strong feeling of insecurity at the regional level, as 50% of the participants feel insecure. Bosnia and Herzegovina have been perceived as the region's most insecure country concerning illegal possession and use of weapons, with 64% feeling threatened. The RCC's analytical report concludes that "the fact that residents who effectively feel unsafe twice outnumber those that do feel safe in this economy is alarming and calls for action[118]". At the same time, almost two-thirds of the population in Montenegro and Serbia are satisfied with the security situation in their neighbourhoods (63% and 61%, respectively), making them the region's runaway leaders in this category.

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[118] https://www.rcc.int/balkanbarometer/publications

Figure 7: How threatened do you feel by illegal possession and misuse of weapons in your neighbourhood (as in crime, domestic violence, celebratory shooting, etc.)

	I feel very threatened	I feel threatened	I do not feel threatened at all
Albania	15	34	51
Bosnia and Herzegovina	18	40	35
Kosovo*	16	40	44
Republic of North Macedonia	8	36	43
Montenegro	8	29	63
Serbia	8	36	49
Western Balkans	14	36	49
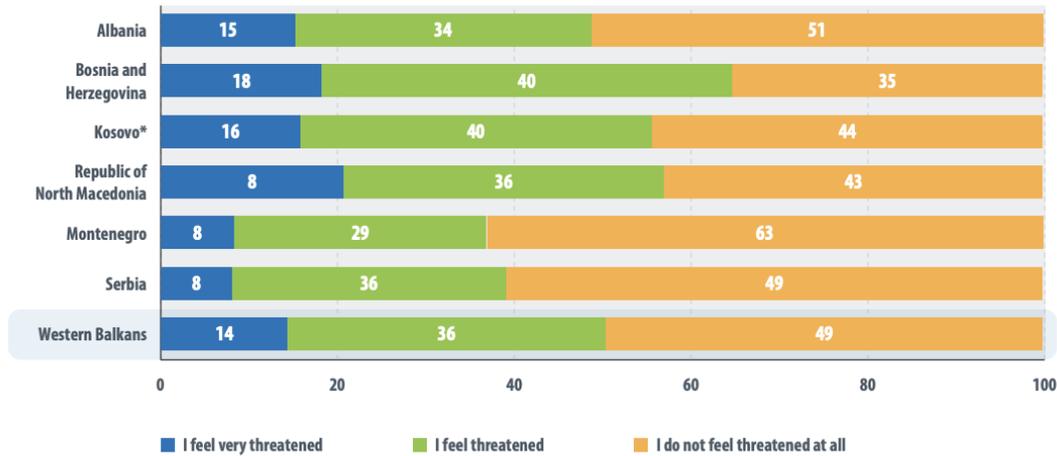
Source: Balkan Barometer 2021, snapshot

The partners recognized that the support under the DFF has been well-articulated to ensure its lasting relevance for the participating countries[119]. They have recognized that the DFF Program has been within the UN peacebuilding mandate and mandates of participating UN Agencies. UN has been established to prevent conflicts; still, it was not enough to send peace keeping forces and prevent the physical conflict, but also to work on building social cohesion thus working with all men and women (and especially young people), on economic and social topics[120].

The actual involvement of the authorities in the regional DFF project has been satisfactory. The representatives of the President's office from Serbia, the BIH Presidency and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Montenegro have been active through the (country-level and regional) steering mechanisms. The authorities have been involved and benefited from capacity development support; highly important has been the DFF's support for policy analysis and preparation of inputs and recommendations for policy reforms in the areas that could improve social cohesion in the region.

OVERALL FINDING

The DFF was highly relevant to the challenges that all three countries face, particularly to the circumstances of a post-war generation that has grown up with entrenched ethnic divisions. The underlying principle has been that the investments in social cohesion, national and regional dialogue, and mediation capacities lay the foundations for sustaining peace.

The Project was responsive to the needs of its target groups (adolescents and youth, women, teachers and media). It addressed the need of the youth in the participating countries who expressed dissatisfaction with developments and politics in their countries, showing a lack of trust in public institutions, confirming that ethnic distance exists and recognizing low political activism and limited employment and participation opportunities. The DFF adopted a "contact-based reconciliation" approach, working on initiatives and opportunities to bring together target groups, especially youth, to work towards shared goals and visions.

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[119] KII national partners

[120] KII national partners

The Project was working to create more spaces for constructive dialogue and cooperation between countries and communities. Particularly important has been the emphasis on the participation of a wide range of social groups and the planned creation of linkages between local platforms and the political leaderships in the participating countries.

DFF aligned its intervention with regional and national strategic priorities to enhance social cohesion and rebuild trust and stability in the participating countries. Therefore, the Project remains relevant and valid for the participating countries.

The Project was closely aligned to the social cohesion priorities of the BiH, Montenegro and Serbia, as reflected in various policies and strategies, and had strong links to the Sustainable Development Goals (particularly SDG16 on 'peaceful and inclusive societies') and the UN strategic priorities for the three countries.

6.2 Coherence

- **Some extent of coherence, coordination of activities and exchange of information between DFF's teams and other UN initiatives has been generally established.**

The UN Secretary-General Peacebuilding Fund has emphasized the need for a more coherent strategy across the UN system, and efforts to advance funding and enhance activities that contribute to social cohesion. The FET finds that the degree of internal communication across DFF project teams in different countries and participating agencies was good throughout the implementation period. The UNDP Office in Bosnia and Herzegovina played an important role in promoting internal coherence. However, the decentralised management structure and the UN Agencies mandates and country specific activities affected coherence and cooperation.

The DFF Project teams have generally established coordination of activities and exchange of information with other initiatives of UN participating agencies in the participating countries. There was a good level of day-to-day information exchange, coordination, and interaction between the DFF Program Teams and UN Agencies' activities. The main focus was on a functional level of coherence and pragmatic exchange of information, although limited to national coordinators. The UN agencies highlighted the need for the improvement in the follow up phase, with the focus on more cross-country exchange of information.

However, the higher-level strategic coherence between the DFF's activities and implementing UN Agencies in participating countries varied. For example, UNICEF and UNESCO have generally ensured complementarity and coherence, using DFF as a vehicle to additionally support their core activities (e.g., UNESCO's training to media, or UNICEF's UPSHIFT initiative). However, UNDP has been challenged to ensure complementarity and coherence with other initiatives, resulting that DFF has been implemented more as a stand-alone initiative[121].

The regional DFF has been working on a broader coordination and cooperation. For example, the DFF has cooperated with the Regional Youth Cooperation Office (RYCO) in exchanging information and communicating messages towards wider public[122]. The cooperation with OSCE has been established regarding participation and volunteerism of young people. The DFF has been in regular coordination and communication with RCC`s Western Balkans Youth Lab project. These coordination and cooperation efforts contributed to organization of the first (informal) donor coordination meeting on youth development[123].

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[121] KII notes, UN Agencies

[122] Some respondents stated that this cooperation was limited and not institutionalized due to political reasons- "The cooperation with RYCO could have been more substantive; however, the RYCO cooperates with Kosovo UN 1244. The DFF had an agreement not to overlap and some sort of recommendation from the highest level that we should be different in that regard so that people shouldn't get confused"- KII notes

[123] https://www.rcc.int/events/1419/wbyl-first-informal-donor-coordination-meeting-on-youth-agenda

However, the authorities (especially in Serbia) showed some reluctance to embark and support explicitly spelled out peacebuilding related activities, primarily due to political agenda. Still, they are recognizing the importance of regional cooperation and support to social cohesion in the region and in participating countries.

- **The DFF has been flexible and responsive to stakeholders needs and participation during its implementation**

Examples of flexibility and responsiveness during DFF implementation are numerous; still, the partners highlighted the reaction of the DFF teams in the participating countries over COVID19 pandemic. UN Agencies promptly mobilized capacities[124] to design appropriate measures and ensure timely implementation of planned activities[125].

Pro-active role of the DFF teams and UN Agencies in participating countries in responding to changes, challenges and emerging priorities in the areas of intervention have been the main factor that contributed to DFF flexible and agile response during the implementation[126]. The Project has established and maintained an active dialogue with the main stakeholders under its outputs. Knowledgeable and experienced staff from the DFF project team, according to the grantee partners,[127] contributed to this process, ensuring well-targeted and flexible assistance. Decision making based on needs of beneficiaries has been some of the main tools contributing to responsiveness and flexibility during the implementation.

The DFF (including its teams in all participating countries) was flexible and responsive in addressing the COVID19 pandemic and its implications by aligning the intervention to the new circumstances, digitizing activities, launching, and utilizing innovative platforms and podcasts. The Project decided to use online opportunities for the majority of its activities, adapting events, meetings, surveys to new (online) formats. For example, through skill building programme UPSHIFT youth were supported to lead initiatives for community development and the program was digitized, first in the world, to ensure continuity, while all supported Programs were amplified with digital tools and formats (such as video galleries, podcasts and a web platform with youth media content). Also, the DFF in Bosnia and Herzegovina was flexible in supporting the most vulnerable groups (Roma, rural pupils) and ensuring equal access to online learning for all students[128]. This DFF's response to learning disruption due to COVID-19 in BiH has been implemented in cooperation with line ministries of education.

The partners acknowledged the efforts of the DFF teams to counterbalance the effects of the COVID-19, stating that "the priority was not to lose or compromise the quality of results"[129]. However, despite the efforts to continue with activities and use on-line benefits and opportunities, the partners recognized that the specific areas of DFF's intervention and sensitive issues that were addressed required direct, face to face interactions (thus, could not be easily replaced by on-line tools). Still, they tried to additionally benefit from this situation in the sense that they invited more participants than initially planned. The beneficiaries report that UN teams were flexible to adjusting to these different conditions[130].

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[124] KII national partners

[125] Notes from the meetings with the RGs; also, KII national partners

[126] KII notes- national stakeholders KII_01, KII_04, KII_07

[127] KII notes

[128] KII notes, UN Agencies

[129] KII notes, national partners

[130] One of the interviewed participants stated that they have reduced some activities- building one art residence instead of two, as originally planned. They have used the funds for transport, COVID-19 testing and other necessary prerequisites for the Program to work during the pandemic. This beneficiary recognized that the DFF was sufficiently flexible and considerate to allow these adjustments.

Other examples of DFF's flexibility have been ensured through modifications of the training programs as response to requests of the participants to address some of the priority topics[131]. Also, support to CSOs and other stakeholders has been generally on-demand basis, adjusted to the needs of the individuals from the partners' organizations[132].

OVERALL FINDING

The DFF has been well-aligned with the core activities of UNICEF and UNESCO in the participating countries. However, UNDP had challenges to ensure coherence with other activities within its portfolios in participating countries. Furthermore, the Project ensured adequate flexibility and responsiveness during its implementation, especially in light of the COVID-19 context.

6.3 *Gender mainstreaming and leaving no-one behind*

- **The DFF has considered gender equality and mainstreamed gender during its implementation**

Most stakeholders perceived UN Agencies as steadily promoting gender equality in the participating countries through activities at the national and local levels.[133] Thus, the FET finds that the DFF's efforts in the area of gender mainstreaming have been along these lines and activities, as the Project has been working on policy, organizational and individual levels to ensure gender mainstreaming. For example, the DFF enabled that the conclusions and identified priorities from the Regional Dialogue for Women have been reflected into the drafts of upcoming Women's Entrepreneurship Strategy and the Gender Equality Action Plan in Montenegro and the Strategy for Gender Equality in Serbia, Sustainable Development Strategy and Anti-discrimination Strategy.

The Project developed and customized the online mentoring platform for women www.we-mentoring.com. Its ultimate purpose is to connect girls and women from different spheres of the societies from three countries in their learning efforts in leadership, civic activism and entrepreneurship, among others. The DFF, through the Small Grants Facility, supported selected organizations to further advance gender equality and women's empowerment in their activities, from already mentioned support to inclusion of blind and visually impaired women, supporting women's entrepreneurship and learning to highlighting the contribution to culture of female artists[134].

At the level of individuals, the DFF has been effectively addressing capacity development needs on gender-mainstreaming and equality among various groups of beneficiaries in the participating countries. For example, gender equality has been introduced as a separate module under the framework of socio-emotional skills training for adolescents in Montenegro while youth dialogues in BiH included a distinct module on gender equality[135]. Similarly, the curricula on women's empowerment for leadership focuses on gender equality and participation, social cohesion, advocacy and Program design and implementation. Additionally, the DFF delivered capacity development support in all three countries, focusing on gender equality and participation, social cohesion, advocacy and leadership, Program design and implementation[136].

However, some of the Interviewed national partners expressed limited insight and knowledge of gender-sensitive practices and were unaware of the links between gender equality and peacebuilding and security[137], highlighting the importance of other aspects and support provided under the DFF (over gender

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[131] KII notes- KII_14

[132] KII notes, CSOs and beneficiaries.

133 The portfolio of activities/ initiatives of UN Agencies in the participating countries.

[134] The analysis of the cross-border initiatives approved and supported through the Small Grants Facility.

[135] Key informants' interviews, National Partners and UN Agencies

[136] Key informants' interviews and also Program related documents

137 KII notes- national partners

issues). Although they stated that DFF addressed gender equality, they could not justify or explain these conclusions beyond evidence of equal participation in training programs or other events.

The DFF results framework included some gender sensitive indicators, but mainly related at gender participation[138]. However, the Project did not include gender-sensitive indicators to measure gender transformation, lasting changes in the power and choices of women over their own lives, while tackling the root causes of inequality. For example, the opportunity existed to identify perception, understanding, and challenges to the achievement of gender equality in the broader peacebuilding and social cohesion framework- through post-training evaluation questionnaires or through surveys on the links between for example, peacebuilding and gender equality.[139]

- **The DFF Program followed the "leaving no-one i behind" principles**

The DFF team stated that the Project has considered principle "leaving no-one behind" from its design throughout the implementation[140]. The DFF has established a people-cantered processes, following a holistic approach that prioritized building stability and trust by investing in social infrastructure. The partners recognized that the DFF's overarching focus on various groups (women, teachers and media), particularly youth, has been important to avoid these groups being left behind[141].

For example, during the pandemic the DFF in partnership with the line ministries of education in BiH addressed the need of the most vulnerable groups (Roma, rural pupils) to have access to online learning opportunities (for all students). Another example could be production of the audio book of tales and fables[142] for children with disabilities; the book followed easy to read standards[143]. The initiatives that the SGF supported have followed the "leaving no one behind" principle. For example, the Tuzla's Association of Visually Impaired (BiH), the Municipal association of blind persons of Belgrade and the Union of the Blind of Montenegro implemented activities for strengthening blind women to combat violence, discrimination and gender inequality while 84 visually impaired persons (50 women and 34 men) in all three countries attended learning workshops[144].

The FET finds that cross-border cooperation initiatives ensured "unique experience for youth", confirming that diversity of identities and respect and tolerance were promoted through these initiatives, ensured through involvement of partners and beneficiaries from the design stage throughout the entire equally conflict sensitive and inclusive implementation. The FET finds that particularly important for the young people was the opportunity to connect with peers from other countries, enabling them to understand "they are not alone in a problem and that they can potentially come up with some suggestions, solutions, or help each other with their experience". This initiative also enabled minorities to share their experience; such an example has been participation of Roma youth in some events.

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[138] Indicator 1.1.1 Number of people (teachers, youth, women, journalists and editors, sex- and gender-disaggregated) from participating 3 countries with increased knowledge and skills to bridge social divides or Indicator 1.2.2 Total number of dialogue platforms (gender balanced) bringing together political leaders and various stakeholders from the 3 participating countries in joint discussions on how to strengthen social cohesion in the region.

139 The analysis of the Results and Resources Framework and the reports.

140 KII- UN Agencies

141 KII notes, national partners and UN Agencies

142 The book was initially released as illustrated hard copy version and included fairy tales and fables from domestic authors.

143 The partners stated that more than 300 children with disabilities have already received illustrated book of fairy tales and fables in audio format

144 https://ugov-tuzla.org.ba/dokumenti

"I find out that I can advocate and crowdfund for all my ideas even if I am not part of any organization, and that motivated me to be proactive in my community and to start a change. Thank you for the chance" was shared by a 25-year-old Romani woman who participated in capacity-building in Serbia"[145].

The FET finds that conflict sensitivity and no harm principle have been generally followed during the DFF implementation. The partners stated that the Project was always checking with the dialogue participants to what extent they feel comfortable to share ideas, what they want to share, but at the same time to enable genuine dialogue and exchange of ideas. The partners stated that DFF's sensitivity has been evident in facilitating dialogue with young people and respecting their opinions and their views[146.]. Besides, the long-lasting experience of the partner organisations in working with the sensitive groups, their skilled and trained staff, additionally contributed to ensure conflict sensitivity and implementation of no harm principle. They recognized some activities had "conflict" potentials, thus, potentially stimulate negative emotions; still, the professionals have introduced different options to prevent negative sentiment and potentially challenging situation. For example, some joint youth activities introduced "SOS" cards to enable youth to raise the card and leave discussion if feeling uncomfortable or bad; at the same time, follow up support to these individuals has been provided. This approach has been effective for creating safe space for young people to talk about their experiences, without causing pain[147.]

OVERALL FINDING

The Project has considered "leaving no-one behind" principle while activating marginalized and vulnerable groups.

The DFF implementation included efforts to mainstream gender and ensure gender equality in its activities. The Project has generally supported efforts towards sustainable gender transformation through practical activities and inputs for policy reforms. The DFF has given attention to gender equality and gender mainstreaming in all activities, facilitating gender transformation.

6.4 Efficiency

The DFF established a **Joint Programme Board (JPB)** as a steering and decision body planned to facilitate high-level commitment and ensure regular communication and exchange of information on strategic priorities with the partners. Also, the JPB remained involved in the implementation and the primary decision-making authority, responsible for the overall DFF's performance (e.g., reviewing and endorsing work plans, analysing implementation progress and annual reports, approving substantial changes). The JPB included the UN Resident Coordinators from Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro and Serbia, and designated representatives of the Presidencies of Bosnia and Herzegovina and Serbia and Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Montenegro, as well as Heads/Representatives of UNICEF, UNDP and UNESCO for the participating countries.

The establishment and existence of JPB has been critical to ensuring commitment, and generating high-level political support to sensitive issues under the DFF. However, political changes in the participating countries[148] affected the JPB and its functioning[149]. Participants of the "Brdo-Brijuni" summit in 2015 who recognized the importance and expressed willingness to embark on this regional peacebuilding initiative have been discharged (Serbia and Bosnia and Herzegovina). These political dynamics have affected genuine

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[145] DFF Progress reports, more info at: https://en.bfpe.org/active-women-active-society-the-first-seminar-held-within-the-dialogue-for-the-future/

[146] KII national partners

[147] KII notes, implementing partners and organizations.

[148] Presidential elections in Serbia and changes in the Presidency of Bosnia and Herzegovina

[149] Kye informants' interviews, national partners

involvement and national ownership of the DFF at the strategic level[150]. Still, the JPB was meeting regularly during the first year of DFF's implementation (in 2019, two meetings, one in Sarajevo in April 2019 and the second in Podgorica in November 2019). However, the COVID-19 affected opportunities to organize JPB meetings and the last meeting was organized on-line in April 2021.

In addition, the Project document envisaged establishment of the **Strategic Advisory Board (SAB),** composed of Resident Coordinators of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro and Serbia, as well as Heads of participating UN agencies from each participating country. Its role has been to ensure coherence in implementation and approach among participating country teams. The SAB was meeting before the JPB's meetings.

DFF Project Teams and UN Agencies in two participating countries (Montenegro and Serbia) have decided to establish the **National Coordination Body (NCB),** as an additional country-level coordination and steering mechanism. The NCB brought together representatives of the relevant Governmental ministries and agencies, and DFF-participating UN Agencies. Although not planned in the original Project document, the NCB have been meeting regularly, playing important role in endorsing plans and activities at the country-level. Despite positive effects to involve more relevant institutions, besides those represented in the JPB (e.g., members of the Presidents' offices from Serbia and BiH and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Montenegro), it is difficult to distinguish between the role of the JPB and NCB. The NCB emphasized the importance of the DFF's national level activities. The FET finds that this has affected regional perspective; the analysis of the progress reports and primary data shows that the main results have been at the country level; although important, regional level results have been less evident.

At the operational level, the DFF engaged a **Joint (Regional) Project Coordinator (JRPC)** for efficient planning and delivery of results, ensuring satisfactory quality of deliverables within the approved work plans and the budget. The JRPC, based in UNDP BiH as the Convening Agency, has also been in charge of coordinating activities with the Joint Implementation Team, composed of the three joint (national) project coordinators from each participating country. Also, all common activities have been under the JRPC's responsibility[151].

The leading agency at the country level (UNDP for BiH and Montenegro and UNICEF for Serbia) have engaged the **Joint (National) Project Coordinators (JNPC),** responsible for the overall coordination and implementation of the DFF's activities in the respective participating country. Non-lead UN Agencies at the country office level have also designated staff for implementation of the DFF's activities[152].

Justification for this DFF's management and steering structures has been to reflect both country-specific and 'regional' perspectives, ensuring "stock-taking and partnership at political and programmatic levels.[153] The FET finds that these structures have been highly complex to provide strategic coherence across main components, delivering results and communicating uniformly these results. Also, ensuring balance and links between regional effects and country-specific results has been challenging to achieve.

Despite some identified weaknesses,[154] the FET finds that management mechanisms, including implementation modalities, organizational structure, and the role of each partner under the DFF have been generally conducive to the achievement of planned results. Also, timely implementation of activities and

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[150] KII- national partners and UN Agencies

[151] These common activities included joint communications strategy, regional baseline/end line public perception study, independent final evaluation of the Joint Programme, organization of regional dialogue platforms. The Coordinator has also been responsible for consolidation of the inputs of all agencies for narrative reporting to the donor.

[152] The UN Agencies in the participating countries assisted the DFF in all operations aspects including support to financial management and payments, procurement of goods and services, management of human resources, and organizations of logistics and transportations. Charges to the DFF have been prorated on the basis of the actual amount of time that UN staff provided support to the Project. The FET finds this approach has been cost-efficient, and the use of resources has been optimized.

[153] KII UN Agencies

[154] KIIs notes DFF Project Teams, UN Agencies and KII notes- national stakeholders.

availability of financial and human resources have contributed to overall efficiency. The partners that participated in implementation of activities but also grantees appreciate DFF and UN Agencies as implementing partner for "its level of flexibility, swift decision making and technical abilities."[155] They have emphasized good relations with the DFF Project teams and representatives of UN Agencies, stating "they (DFF/ UN Agencies) have dealt with requests fast, effectively strengthening partnerships."[156.]These implementation capacities (technical abilities of the DFF Project teams and operational capabilities) and strong partnership served among other factors, to the achievement of results but also to strengthen national ownership.

However, the COVID-19 severely affected DFF implementation, delaying and slowing implementation of some country-based and regional activities, most notably the cross-border Small Grants Facility, the cross-border youth social entrepreneurship platform (UPSHIFT). Different capacity building efforts for the target groups and beneficiaries have been re-scheduled and adjusted to on-line delivery. The JPB adopted the presented 9 months no-cost extension and budget revision request, followed by signatures of UN representatives as well as endorsement from institutional partners and submitted to the donor[157]. The nine-month extension has been approved, allowing the Project to continue its efforts, together with partners in government and civil society, and "overcome the adverse impact of the pandemic on the very social cohesion fabric this Project seeks to enhance within and across countries and peoples"[158].

- **The DFF Project has well-established management system for timely implementation of activities and achievement of results.**

The FET finds that the **work planning** has been complex and participatory: DFF work planning included annual results-oriented work plans for the overall DFF and detailed country annual work plans, providing a sound basis for scheduling of activities, resource allocation, budget control, and attainment of objectives. By the decision of the first Joint Programme Board meeting (organized with some delays in April 2019), the Joint Annual Work Plan and the Communications Strategy have been approved. Still, the JPB recognized the "complexity of the intervention across the three countries and the initial delays in implementation[159]", suggesting to set the Joint Annual Work Plan to a 24- month timeline[160], also indicating the need for detailed annual country work plans. The FET finds that these country level work plans have been prepared and updated during the entire implementation. The overall and country-level work plans defined relationship, roles and responsibilities during the implementation, and partners have been consulted during preparation and informed about planned activities[161]. Adding to these findings, the partners stated that the DFF (country-level) work plans served also to coordinate activities, especially effectively serving as tool for coordinating efforts related to capacity development and training[162].

Pro-active role of the DFF Joint (Regional) Programme Coordinator and DFF Joint (National) Country Coordinators together with the teams, in responding to changes, challenges and emerging priorities in the areas of intervention have been the main factor that contributed to DFF flexible and agile response during the implementation[163]. The DFF/ Project Teams have established and maintained an active dialogue with the main stakeholders in their respective countries. Knowledgeable and experienced staff from the DFF

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[155] KIIs notes –

[156] KIIs notes

[157] Meeting minutes from the second Joint Programme Board Meeting, held in Podgorica, Montenegro, on 12 November 2019.

[158] Ibidem, meeting minutes

[159] First PBF meeting minutes, April 2019

[160] The Board requested that the 24-month timeline be communicated to the Peacebuilding Support Office in the semi-annual report- ref to the meeting minutes JPB, April 2019

[161] KII national partners

162 KII notes with the national stakeholders

163 KII notes- national stakeholders

Project teams, according to the partners,[164] contributed to this process, ensuring well-targeted and flexible assistance.

Effective decision making based on needs of beneficiaries has been some of the main tools contributing to responsiveness during the implementation. For example, the training programs have occurred as response to requests of the participants to address some of the priority topics such as policy making and analysis, advocacy, gender mainstreaming or self-representation.[165]. Also, mentoring support has been on-demand basis, adjusted to the needs of the participants staff and grantee organizations to facilitate easier adoption of new knowledge.

The FET finds **monitoring and evaluation (M&E)** had dual focus, to assess progress towards the outputs and outcomes and monitor implementation of work plans (including sequencing of activities), achievement of outputs and assessing progress towards outcomes, has contributed to DFF efficiency. The Results Framework (RF) has been established as the main reference for monitoring.

The FET finds that the adopted indicators and the overall RF served to facilitate tracking of performance under all Program outcome and outputs and enable reporting on results. The RF provided baselines established during the inception phase of the Project (deriving from the analytical work and the DFF Project Teams and baseline surveys) and end-of-the Program and annual targets, under each of the indicators. The analysis of the DFF reports and information collected from the DFF Project Teams confirmed that data and accompanying sources of verification for all indicators have been adequate and available.

The FET finds that the DFF ensured transparency and impartiality even in the cases when its deliverables have been used as sources of verification. Data-bias has been prevented either by using the external expertise (for example external experts carried out baseline and end-line surveys; external experts carried out training evaluation and prepared reports) or by designing data collection tools ensuring that deliverables could be used as valid data-sources for verification of progress.

The DFF Project Team has been preparing regular **annual and half-yearly reports**. The reports followed most common practice to incorporate and present both financial and content related information, being supplemented by required attachments. The annual reports provided more substantive review of the status of outputs and outcome, using indicators to measure the extent of the achievement of targets. It also provided overview of expended resources, problems encountered, and conclusions if the Program is expected to be completed on time and within budget.

The DFF Project document (approved proposal) included a brief analysis of the situation under each of the elements of the intervention logic, including review of key challenges and possible risks. Detailed analysis of risks has been presented in the Part III Project management and coordination- part C Risk management. However, the Project did not provide information and updates on risks and risk management.

In practice, risks should be established at the level of outputs (or outcomes), analysing their likelihood to threaten the achievement of the respective outputs or progress towards the outcome. This approach could be instrumental in defining specific risks, and also formulating adequate and implementable risk management approaches. For example, the mitigation strategy for the high-likelihood risk *"Change in representation at the highest political level"* has been only that *"RCs and PDU will remain in constant liaison to ensure uninterrupted engagement"*. This risk-mitigation statement did not provide with whom the RCs and PDU should maintain "constant liaison" nor how to ensure "uninterrupted engagement". Also, the FET finds that the presented risk *"complicated coordination/ management structure and agency administrative procedures are delaying implementation"* is inadequate, as risks are generally outside of the direct Project's control. Therefore, this could be more a precondition required to start implementation.

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164 KII notes
165 KII notes

- **Communication with the partners has been generally functional and facilitated efficient implementation. The beneficiaries and partners expressed positive opinion concerning cooperation with the DFF, planning and delivery of activities and the quality of deliverables.**

Implementing and grantee organizations indicated that cooperation and communication with relevant UN Agencies (from the DFF) has been well-established, based on mutual trust and respect[166] For example, some of the implementing partners highlighted that the cooperation with DFF has been strategic but of a smaller-scale (stating previous experience with larger scale initiatives). Still, the partners involved in the implementation of small grants, for example, stated they have never had such intensive communication as with this program office, almost on a daily basis. The stakeholders stated that that DFF Project Team has been highly dedicated, always available, concluding that "this cooperation has been great"[167]. The partners have in general positive opinion about the synergies and complementarity between the DFF and the development priorities in their respective countries. All participants indicated correspondence between the DFF with the strategic priorities of their respective organizations. For example, relevant ministries and other public institutions recognized that some of the training programs contributed to their strategic goals and institutional reform needs.

The partners stated that support from the DFF teams has been timely and adequate. For example, DFF team assisted with reporting procedures (that were user-friendly and results oriented) and implementation of communication and visibility plans (UN staff provided them with when it comes to visibility and communications). The fact that UN staff was present during the events was very positively evaluated by implementing partners[168], also being flexible enough concerning the review and adjustments of activities due to COVID-19 pandemic. Identifying positive experience and practices ensured through the DFF and codifying knowledge generated through these initiatives created a solid learning basis, a mechanism for spreading know-how. The learning experience is inherently linked with the enhanced abilities of the partners to "work at new scales and in new types of formal and informal networks", while addressing common problems and issues in the specific area of work related to peacebuilding and social cohesion.

The partners stated that COVID-19 pandemic caused number of challenges, as they needed to comply to epidemiological standards and ensure protective equipment: this has created additional costs and affected timelines in implementation, but the DFF showed high degree of understanding and flexibility. Several implementing partners reported too excessive communication with UN agencies that took a lot of time. Three monitoring missions for short period, negotiations about every change in the Program and changes were numerous due to the COVID, waiting for approvals - all that slowed down Program implementation and created excessive administrative work. With regards to this, there were several very critical voices.[169] Another problem was an excessive amount of communication that was required from the implementing partners.[170]

OVERALL FINDING

The participating UN Agencies have been generally efficient in the delivery of the regional DFF project. The management mechanisms and monitoring system have been well-established, and competent

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[166] KII national partners-.

[167] KII national partners

[168] KII notes- partners: "They were always present. In the official parts of the program as well as in unofficial gatherings and socializing breaks, they were always here and they supported us.")

[169] For example, statements have been: "We have lost a lot of time on administration, responding to the emails and pointless waste of time on Zoom joint meetings (conferences). Huge resources were invested in presenting ourselves and our Programs among each other in a few minutes. We didn't find any meaning in such meetings. It seemed that they were organized just to meet some sort of formal requirements."

[170] ``The very idea that it is necessary to printout every e mail that is being exchanged was pretty meaningless. And there was a bunch of mails that we received. We had an impression that they are sending us emails in order to fulfil some sort of formal requirements, not because they are genuinely interested in what we are doing. ``

technical teams have been in place. The FET finds that these elements, together with the strong partnership and technical capacities, have been critical factors that contributed to its effectiveness and flexible and responsive implementation. However, the complex steering structure and focus on country-specific activities, and deliverables affected the Project's regional nature.

The Project received an extraordinary 9-month extension, bringing it to 27 months of joint implementation in the three countries. Still, the complexity of the DFF's areas of intervention related to the social cohesion framework requires a well-planned approach and long-term commitment and investments. The DFF's implementation timeframe has put pressure on the team to focus on activities and delivery of results over building systems, mechanisms and capacities for social cohesion.

6.5   Effectiveness

The FET analysed relationship between the achieved results under DFF outputs and its outcome, reflecting on the extent to which the attainment of DFF's outputs contributed to progress under outcome, thus, answering evaluation questions 5.

- **Measured by positive changes in relevant statistical indicators, DFF has been effective in delivering results and making credible contribution to the achievement of progress under its outputs, contributing to outcome.**

The in-depth analysis of the DFF effectiveness has been based on its aggregated progress and monitoring reports, the work plans, and other prepared analytical reports and documents. The interviews with stakeholders served to validate findings.

Table 4 **Overview of Output level results by target group and component**

Output	Target set for 4 countries in 2018	Achieved in 2021
Output 1: Capacity building Adolescents and youth Women Teachers Media professionals	1,000 200 200 120	1,213 (808 girls and 395 boys) 246 675 (608 women and 67 men) 108 (70 women, 38 men)
Output 2: Identification of priorities and support for joint action on social cohesion Dialogue events Participants in dialogue events Direct beneficiaries of cross-border grants	20 600 in BiH n/a	19 1,667 (1,036 women and 631 men) 7,847 (5,129 women and 2,718 men)
Output 3: Policy recommendations	5	46 individual recommendations integrated in 5 sectoral documents. Policy inputs provided into additional 6 sectoral documents.

Output 1.1. Different groups in the region, and youth in particular, acquire and practice skills to help break stereotypes and constructively interact across divides.

The FET finds that DFF has been generally *effective in delivering capacity support and programs*. For example, in BIH, 24 youth participated in a several months long training program focused on leadership,

advocacy, public policy, project preparation and fund-raising. Also, 84 women from 28 municipalities completed learning seminars on leadership, advocacy, public policy and self-representation. Three UPSHIFT workshops trained 106 adolescents (34 boys and 62 girls), funding 10 local projects. In Montenegro, the DFF involved 589 adolescents (381 girls, 208 boys) in training in socio-emotional skills. Working with the Diplomatic Academy of the Foreign Ministry, the Project delivered a capacity development programme for 49 (43 women, six men) young diplomats and civil servants from 10 state institutions, focusing on social cohesion. The Regional Dialogue for Women gathered 83 participants (79 women and four men), mapped recommendations and tailored priorities for action. A total of 67 women participated in offline and online capacity-building seminars. In addition, three regional UPSHIFT workshops were held, gathering 146 youth (100 girls, 46 boys) from all three countries, who developed 30 projects.

The DFF also supported work on civic education (CE) reform. For example, in Serbia, the Project was organizing training programs for teachers aligned with the reformed CE curriculum, the online platform with CE resources and five regional centres of the National Association of Civic Education Teachers and Associates (NACETA). The DFF supported two hackathons that fostered cross-border cooperation and delivered series of educational seminars for 155 women. Some of the topics included women's leadership, gender equality, social cohesion, human rights.

The DFF has been working on *strengthening academic cooperation and partnerships*. These efforts have included Faculties of Political Sciences in Sarajevo, Belgrade and Podgorica. Working through an interdisciplinary approach, the DFF contributed to the development of a strategic framework for integration of Media and Information Literacy competencies concept in formal and non-formal education and introduced core competences of this model into a training curriculum for primary and secondary schools' teachers and librarians. The DFF, in partnership with the Faculty of Political Science (FPS) in Podgorica, prepared and delivered capacity building programs for teachers, gathering 67 participants. These efforts included cooperation between the FPS, the Agency for Electronic Media and the Parents Association of Montenegro, resulting in an online workshop, "Safe surfing online", for 154 children aged 10 to 15. Furthermore, 24 future journalists, first-year students of the Media Studies and Journalism study program attended a two-day workshop, learning about tools necessary to verify content and visual equipment on web portals and social media networks. In cooperation with the Parents Association of Montenegro, the project team prepared social media-live lectures for parents and awareness-raising video tutorials on child internet safety-related topics.

The DFF organized training programs on intercultural dialogue and tolerance for teachers and librarians have and continued with the thematic dialogue platform. Moreover, ten teams from three Universities in Serbia supported by ten mentors worked on critical thinking and public advocacy campaigning skills development. The crown of this activity was implementing two students' initiated public campaigns encouraging students to donate and advocating for improving access of the disabled persons to public facilities. Thirty young women from different social backgrounds attended women's leadership, gender equality, social cohesion, human rights, project development, public advocacy programs.

Output 1.2: Citizens from different groups jointly identify and implement actions that can promote social cohesion in the region, especially in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

In Montenegro, three youth dialogues and **national dialogue platforms** identified joint social cohesion priorities and recommendations to address them. In Serbia, DFF organized three youth dialogue and national dialogue platforms with 450 youth, CSO, and high-level decision-makers who shared their recommendations for better societies. In addition, the Project organized UPSHIFT in-community and virtual boot camps and mentorship with thirty youth teams reaching 18,000 peers and leading the development of their neighbourhoods.

The FET finds that regional DFF has been effective in **selecting and delivering cross-border projects**. Through 13 dialogue events, the Project sought identification of joint social cohesion priorities which were

validated at the Regional Dialogue Platform in early December 2019, informing the 7 priority themes of the cross-border Small Grants Facility, resulting in 19 funded cross-border projects, which reached over 7,500 direct beneficiaries.

In BiH, eight cross-border projects were completed, involving civil society, cultural institutions and secondary schools, and reaching 2,524 direct beneficiaries (1,438 women and 1,086 men). In Montenegro, partners implemented five cross-border grants, ensuring benefits for 4,200 people (2,940 women and 1,260 men). In addition, the DFF prepared recommendations from dialogue events, mainstreaming them into relevant UN and government documents. Six cross-border projects were completed in Serbia, reaching 688 (445 women and girls and 243 men and boys).

The DFF supported the Regional Platform for Youth in BiH that took place in February in an online format, gathering 92 persons (73 women, 19 men), focusing specifically on youth agency and leadership, especially in cross-border cooperation, supported through the Project. In addition, the Project organized and delivered a Regional Platform for Media, involving 90 journalists, editors and media employees (43% female). The platform resulted in a Media Pledge, advocating for the ethical and objective role of the media in advancing social cohesion.

In collaboration with colleagues from Podgorica and Sarajevo, the Faculty of Political Science in Belgrade hosted 101 (19M; 82F) participants at the online thematic dialogue platform "Importance of Media and Information Literacy for Social Cohesion and Dialogue". This event gathered representatives of relevant ministries, members of project teams and participants from the workshops conducted in three countries (teachers, librarians, journalists and students). The Regional Thematic Dialogue for Teachers presented the results of the Project's work on integrating media and literacy in university curricula and supporting civic education reform. The partners signed the "Declaration on the Importance of MIL and Social Cohesion".

Output 1.3: Policy recommendations to improve social cohesion in the region are effectively advocated for and endorsed by authorities and relevant stakeholders.

The project successfully mainstreamed 46 individual dialogue recommendations into 5 sectoral documents in Montenegro, such as those on public administration, youth, gender equality and women entrepreneurship. Also, these inputs have been used for formulation of the new United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework for Montenegro, UNDP Country Programme Document, and for formulation of the joint COVID-19 response. In Serbia, youth perspectives were reflected in the UNCT's COVID-19 Socio-Economic Impact Assessment in Serbia, National Strategy for Digital Skills, National Strategy for Prevention of Violence Against Children and the Impact Analysis of the Law on Volunteering. The project also facilitated advocacy activities in cooperation with the Minister for Human and Minority Rights and Social Dialogue to present recommendations for improving the position of women in Serbia. Recommendations will be included in the Strategy for Gender Equality, Sustainable Development Strategy and Anti-discrimination Strategy. In Serbia, five policy papers on women empowerment with recommendations and advocacy tools were developed and presented at a dialogue event with the Minister for Human and Minority Rights and Social Dialogue. In BiH, the Project successfully introduced the new, inclusive and digital approach to curricula for the "Society/Culture/Religion" (SCR) course, delivered in primary schools in Canton Sarajevo (and most of the country). The DFF designed the course to strengthen positive self-image and behaviour, thus contributing to students' social integration and adopting ethical habits and behaviours. Additionally, the project provided inputs to the youth programming guide of the Ministry of Civil Affairs, relying on the 2021 UN Youth, Peace and Security Guide, as well as supported assessment of the Gender Action Plan through the prism of UN 1325 and social cohesion lens.

The FET prepared a comprehensive table that analysed intervention logic (this included the overall results chain, outcome and outputs) and respective indicators under each of the elements, striving to establish credible links to the extent possible between specific results and reported progress under the DFF outputs and its outcome. The FET reflected on changes measured by proposed indicators and analyse the extent to which targets have been achieved. In the cases of missing information, the FE worked to collect other information and link reported results with outcomes.

Table 5: Detailed analysis of the DFF's effectiveness

Outcome	Indicators (including benchmarks)
Outcome 1: Stability and trust in the region, and especially in Bosnia and Herzegovina, are enhanced.	**Indicator 1.a Rank of Bosnia and Herzegovina in the Global Peace Index** Baseline: 89 out of 163 Target: Improved ranking **Indicator 1.b Percentage of youth indicating higher levels of trust towards other ethnic groups in the region** Baseline: Low overall level of trust between youth of different ethnicities Target: 50% of surveyed youth, particularly in BiH (including youth who are direct beneficiaries) report increased trust towards other ethnic groups in the region **Indicator 1.c Level of collaboration to address mistrust and social divides between citizens from different groups in the participating countries, with their peers in Bosnia and Herzegovina** Baseline: Low overall levels of cross-country collaboration addressing mistrust and social divides (BiH vis-à-vis neighbouring countries) Target: Increased level of cross-country collaboration to address mistrust and social divides between citizens, manifested, through at least 20 sustainable social cohesion partnerships generated as the result of the Project. **Indicator 1.d Level of media literacy of participating countries in the Media Literacy Index.** Baseline: Bosnia and Herzegovina ranking 25th; Croatia ranking 44th place, Montenegro ranking 28th place and Serbia ranking 31st place. (2018) Target: Increased ranking of participating countries. **Indicator 1.e % of young people who believe that reconciliation in the region is enhanced, and the region is a safe and peaceful place.** Baseline: n/a Target: 10% increase by the end of project

Comments on Outcome	Comments on Indicators (including benchmarks)
The FE found that the project intervention logic is solid, with evident links among the elements of its chain of results. However, the FE finds that DFF's **Outcome - *Stability and trust in the region, and especially in BiH, are enhanced*** could be more appropriate as an impact level objective. This conclusion is based on the definition that impact shows "changes in the lives of women and men resulting from the interventions of governments and other stakeholders"[171]. Unlike this high-level statement, the outcome could answer the question "What government and other counterparts do differently (partly as a result of UN's efforts). Still, in the absence of impact objective, the FE assessed progress on the outcome indicators, bearing in mind that enhancing stability and trust and peacebuilding are long term processes, influenced by plethora of factors.	There are five indicators to measure progress under the outcome. The first (1.a) is the Global Peace Index (GPI) which covers 99.7 per cent of the world's population, using 23 qualitative and quantitative indicators from highly respected sources, and measures the state of peace across three domains: the level of Societal Safety and Security; the extent of Ongoing Domestic and International Conflict; and the degree of militarization. GPI for BiH is relevant to measure stability in the country. The FE analysed GPI for Serbia and Montenegro as well, as it is useful to follow changes in these countries. However, the evaluation is primarily based on the changes of GPI in BiH. Outcome indicator 1b is relevant to measure if and to what extent trust in the region has been enhanced, focusing on youth as one of the main target groups. The DFF used baseline and end-line surveys to identify youth perception of trust towards other ethnic groups. This indicator is relevant to reflect on and measure enhanced trust and removal of social divides among the groups and participating countries. The DFF planned and carried out baseline survey to identify perception on collaboration, and trust among grantees and dialogue platform participants. **The FE finds that more specific variables should have been foreseen in the evaluation matrix since the baseline/endline survey included only approximative variables that could be used for measuring this indicator.** The Media Literacy Index (1c) measures the potential for resilience to 'post-truth', 'fake-news' and their consequence. This indicator is relevant to measure stability and to some extent reflect on the trust in the region. This indicator, that represents global rankings, is complex and set ambitiously; thus, the Project has limited opportunities to affect changes under this indicator. The FE will use additional sources- e.g., primary data through interviews and group interviews to collect perception about capacity development of beneficiaries). Outcome indicator 1e is highly relevant and interlinked to indicator 1b (covering almost the same area). The results/ progress under this indicator was to be analysed together with variables related to the new circumstances in the region, related to political changes, changes in political narratives, COVID-19 among other. **However, the endline survey did not include a variable that can be used for measuring the change on this**

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[171] UNDP, 'Handbook on Planning, Monitoring and Evaluating for Development Results', ibid, p.56.

	indicator. **The endline study should have been designed to better correspond to outcome indicators.**

Validation of progress under the Outcome 1

The outcome to be contributed to by this project was *Stability and trust in the region, and especially in BiH, are enhanced.*

In order to measure progress in contributing to achieving the outcome 5 outcome indicators were planned. The first **1.a** was rank in the *Global Peace Index*. The target was to improve the ranking from 2018. At the time, MNE was 58th, SRB 54th and **BiH 89th** among 163 countries. According to the 2020 data[172] the target had been achieved in Serbia and BiH, but not in MNE. MNE dropped from 58th to 69th place. Serbia progressed to 51st and BiH to 79th place. This means that Serbia ranks among countries with high state of peace and Montenegro and BiH are in the category of medium. **However, since the target value was to improve BiH's ranking, we can confirm that it has been achieved.**

The second indicator (**1.b**) was the percentage of youth indicating higher levels of trust towards other ethnic groups in the region. In 2017 the baseline result was low overall level of trust between youth of different ethnicities. The target was to achieve at least *50% of surveyed youth, particularly in BiH (including youth who are direct beneficiaries) report increased trust towards other ethnic groups in the region.* The source was Baseline/endline survey conducted by IPSOS. The survey does not contain the exact variable "trust towards other ethnic groups in the region. It contains three other relevant variables – degree of agreement with the statement that "The life in multicultural society has more positive than negative aspects". The study found that 80% of respondents in BiH agree with this statement regardless of the sample group. The available report doesn't contain breakdown by age and country. The results show higher percentage of agreement with this statement among women, youth and adolescents in the treated groups (85%) than with the control group (68%). However, there is no difference among grant beneficiaries in the baseline and endline study – 83%. The second variable that can be used to assess this indicator is the degree of agreement with the statement "I do not feel comfortable in the company of people of different ethnic origin or religion than mine". The results show that less women, youth and adolescents from the treated group agree with this statement (6%) than from the control group (10%). However, the % increased among grant beneficiaries in the endline study (9%) compared to the baseline (4%) which goes contrary to the expectation. Though methodologically not justified, the change can be also measured by the variable "As a result of participating in DFF activities, would you state that your trust in other ethnic groups has a) decreased, b) stayed the same, c) increased. The endline survey showed that 47% of youth believes that their trust in other ethnic groups has increased as a result of DFF project. **All considered, the data is not conclusive enough to be able to determine if the target is achieved or not.**

The third indicator (**1.c**) was the level of collaboration to address mistrust and social divides between citizens from different groups in the participating countries, with their peers in Bosnia and Herzegovina. In 2017 the baseline data showed low overall levels of cross-country collaboration addressing mistrust and social divides (BiH vis-a-vis neighbouring countries). The target for 2021 was increased level of cross-country collaboration to address mistrust and social divides between citizens, manifested through at least 20 sustainable social cohesion partnerships generated as a result of the Project. The qualitative data confirms that this indicator has been achieved along with the information that as a result of the program at least 20 sustainable social cohesion partnerships were generated. The endline survey showed that there is a broad interest in working with other ethnic and social groups to address issues pertaining to trust building. Grant beneficiaries who participated in the survey believe that regional cooperation can lead to improved interethnic relations and reduce divisions and mistrust. Although the differences are not statistically significant, it is noticeable that

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[172] Available at: https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/GPI_2020_web.pdf

grant beneficiaries from Serbia are more inclined to regional cooperation, both in baseline and endline studies. **Having the above in mind we can conclude that the target has been achieved.**

When it comes to the outcome indicator (**1.d**) Level of media literacy of participating countries in the Media Literacy Index, the baseline data for 2018 was Bosnia and Herzegovina ranking 25th, Montenegro ranking 28th place and Serbia ranking 31st place. The target was to increase ranking. Unfortunately, the target was not achieved. The ranking in 2021 for Montenegro was 32nd, Serbia 29th and BiH 34. **This means that the target could not be achieved.** Having in mind number of literacy capacity building activities in the projects, this indicator might not have been suitable for the evaluation on the outcome level.

The last outcome Indicator (**1.e**) - % of young people who believe that reconciliation in the region is enhanced, and the region is a safe and peaceful place could not be measured. **There was neither baseline value nor survey question in the endline study that can be used for measuring the change.** Focus groups and desk reviews are inadequate to test if there was a 10% increase by the end of project, as stated in the plan.

Having in mind that enhancing stability, trust and peacebuilding are long term processes, which are influenced by number of factors that cannot be isolated, the FE finds positive changes under most outcome indicators and can conclude that the results on the outcome level are satisfactory.

ANALYSIS OF OUTPUTS	
Outputs	**Indicators and benchmarks**
Output 1.1 Different groups in the countries of the region and youth in particular, acquire and practice skills to help break stereotypes and constructively interact across divides	**Indicator 1.1.a Number of people (teachers, youth, women, journalists and editors, sex-and gender disaggregated) from participating 4 countries with increased knowledge and skills to bridge social divides.**
	Baseline: People not capacitated to support social cohesion in the region.
	Target: 1200 adolescents and youth (10-18 and 18-30 years old), 200 women, 200 teachers (among whom 50% women) and 120 journalists and editors (among whom 50% women)
	Indicator 1.1.b Number of stakeholders who apply the acquired skills and knowledge in their follow-up work as a result of the Project support.
	Baseline: n/a
	Target: At least 50% of all stakeholders (in various target groups) apply the skills and knowledge acquired through the Project in their follow-up work
Comments on Output 1.1.	**Comments on Indicators and benchmarks**

The Output 1.1 is well integrated in the intervention logic and refers to comprehensive capacity development support that the Project provides. The indicators are relevant to measure capacity development results for different stakeholders' groups. Both indicators are quantitative in its nature; however, the indicator 1.1.b is appropriate to measure if the stakeholders are using gained knowledge in their work. If analysed together, these two indicators could adequately measure achievement of output.	1.1.a The target from the approved project document has been slightly revised: the number of adolescents and youth targeted by Project's activities has been reduced from 1200 to 1000. Other figures remained the same. The adjustment could be justified as the initial target planning included activities in four countries. 1.1.b The measurement was supposed to be obtained through endline survey using mixed method approach among all targeted groups (adolescents, youth, media, teachers, women). Endline measurement was supposed to be implemented incrementally following completion of capacity building for the given target group. The FET finds that combination of these two indicators could serve to measure if the groups in the region, and particularly youth, acquire and practice skills to break stereotypes.

Validation of progress under the Output 1.1.

The progress under output 1.1 has been validated using these two indicators.

The first one (1.1.a) was the number of people (teachers, youth, women, journalists and editors, sex-and gender disaggregated) from participating 3 countries with increased knowledge and skills to bridge social divides. The DFF documentation confirmed that 1,213 adolescents and youth (808 girls and 395 boys) and 246 women have been trained. The available desk materials indicated that 675 teachers (608 women, 67 men) and 108 journalists and editors (70 women and 38 men have been trained as well. **These figures confirm that the DFF exceeded significantly established targets[173]; for example, the initial target has been to train two hundred teachers, and the Project involved three times more in training activities.**

The second indicator 1.1.b was the number of stakeholders who apply the acquired skills and knowledge in their follow-up work as a result of the Project support. Although, the baselines have not been established, the FET used interviews with the key informants and results of on-line survey to validate the progress under this indicator. The interviews with the project partners and beneficiaries, participants in capacity development events, showed that all of them apply acquired knowledge in their follow up work. The end-line survey did not include questions that directly provide data for this indicator. Still, the FET used as proxy the closest available question "On a scale of 1 to 5, where one represents the lowest and 5 the highest value, please assess the extent to which the participation in DFF program has resulted in you acquiring specific skills or knowledge for advocating for greater social cohesion in your community." The results show that 73% of surveyed women and 80% of surveyed youth indicate 4 or 5 which are the highest values on the scale of agreement. **The FET finds that capacity development support that the DFF delivered has been generally effective, as the stakeholders apply the acquired skills and knowledge in their follow-up work.**

Output 1.2.	Indicators and benchmarks

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[173] The initial target has been: At least 1600, as follows: (i) 500 adolescents (10 – 18 years old); (ii) 500 young people (18 – 30 years old) among whom 50% women; (iii) 200 teachers, among whom 50% women and (iv), 200 women, 120 journalists and editors

Output 1.2 Citizens from different groups jointly identify and implement actions that promote social cohesion in the region, especially in Bosnia and Herzegovina	**Indicator 1.2.a Total number of people (particularly youth) from participating countries who meaningfully engage in and contribute to identification of social cohesion barriers and priorities for the 3 countries.** Baseline: 600 people in the national platform events in Bosnia and Herzegovina Target: At least 1600 people (among whom at least 800 youth and women) from participating countries engage in and contribute to identification of regional social cohesion barriers and priorities. **Indicator 1.2.b Total number of dialogue platforms (gender balanced) bringing together political leaders and various stakeholders from 3 participating countries in joint discussions on how to strengthen social cohesion in the region.** Baseline: n/a Target: At least 20 broad-based social cohesion dialogue platform events (gender balanced) bringing together political leaders and various stakeholders from 3 participating countries
Comments on Output 1.2.	**Comments on Indicators and benchmarks**
This output is well-elaborated and fits into the DFF chain of results. The FET finds that the proposed indicators are relevant to measure progress and findings from interviews, together with surveys, will serve to validate the progress and actual achievements. The FET strived to identify links, between these indictors and identify examples of "spill-over" effects- to analyse, for example, the extent to which capacity development resulted in increased social cohesion efforts.	Considering the holistic approach for the achievement of social cohesion, the FET finds that proposed indicators that reflect on number of people (particularly youth) who are working on identification and removal social cohesion barriers (in distinct areas of priority for communities) and on dialogue platforms as tools for joint discussion on these priorities could adequately measure progress under this output.

Validation of results under the Output 1.2.

The FET analyzed two indicators to reflect on progress under the Output 1.2, and the overall finding is that achieved progress is satisfactory. The first is total number of people (particularly youth) from participating countries who meaningfully engage in and contribute to identification of social cohesion barriers and priorities for the 3 countries. The Project confirmed that a total of 1,667 participants (1,036 women and 631 men) have contributed by the end of the Project across three countries to joint identification of social cohesion priorities and recommendations to address them

at youth, national and regional dialogue platforms organized within the program. **The target is achieved both, regarding the number of women, and the overall population.**

The second indicator is the total number of dialogue platforms (gender balanced) that would bring together political leaders and various stakeholders from the participating countries in joint discussions on how to strengthen social cohesion in the region. **The FET finds that the DFF has organized 19 (nineteen) dialogue events (youth, national and regional level), being slightly below the targeted 20 (twenty) events**. The DFF reported that three youth dialogues, one national and four regional platform events have been organized in BiH, while in Montenegro it included three youth, one national and one regional thematic platform. The DFF organized four youth, one regional thematic and one national platform in Serbia. Concerning participation, the dialogue platforms involved various stakeholder groups.

Output 1.3.	Indicators and benchmarks
Output 1.3. Policy recommendations to improve social cohesion in the region are effectively advocated for, and endorsed by, authorities and relevant stakeholders.	**Indicator 1.3.a Number of effective advocacy channels (engaging equal numbers of both sexes) leveraging political and public support within participating countries for endorsement of social cohesion policy recommendations.** Baseline: UN agencies in the participating countries have deployed successful advocacy efforts to promote social cohesion. Target: At least 4 interconnected and mutually reinforcing advocacy channels help leverage political and public support for endorsement of social cohesion policy recommendations, including i) UN led discussion with political leaders and policy makers, ii) regional dialogue platform, iii) civil society. **Indicator 1.3.b Number of social cohesion policy recommendations voiced through the regional dialogue platform that are endorsed by authorities and international community and contribute to their effective follow up implementation.** Baseline: n/a Target: At least 5 policy recommendations formally endorsed by authorities and the international community.
Comments on Output 1.3.	Comments on Indicators and benchmarks
This output is well-elaborated and fits into the DFF chain of results. Achieving and strengthening social cohesion is, according to the recent UN analytical report, inevitably linked with the reforms in core governance areas such as inclusive political processes, responsive and accountable	The FE finds that the proposed indicators are relevant to measure progress related to policy reform through preparation of evidence-based conclusions and recommendations.

government, rule of law and access to justice, combatting corruption, as much as working to prevent violent extremism, and addressing the needs of youth (and considering leaving no one behind principle). The reform and revisions of the critical social cohesion (and peacebuilding) policies remain precondition for systemic changes.	The FET finds that these indicators are specific and inherent to the DFF Project. Validation has been done through interviews, together with meeting minutes and records from different events, will serve to validate the progress and actual achievements.

Validation of achievement of Output 1.3.

Concerning the number of effective advocacy channels for leveraging political and public support for greater social cohesion, the FET finds that the DFF has achieved planned progress. For example, the UPSHIFT platform has been established and strengthened, empowering girls and boys (who are not formally organized through CSOs/ NGOs) to voice their concerns on issues in their local communities and act on them, fostering the development of "can-do" attitudes. Furthermore, uReport is another advocacy platform that served to poll youth voices in real time: the summaries and recommendations served for advocacy purposes, as the program has demonstrated in Serbia with considerations to revise the Law on Volunteering. The DFF developed and customized online mentoring platform for women (www.we-mentoring.com), serving to connect girls and women from all walks of life in three countries on their learning journeys in leadership, civic activism and entrepreneurship, among others[174].The project also facilitated advocacy activities in cooperation with the Minister for Human and Minority Rights and Social Dialogue to present recommendations for improving the position of women in Serbia. Recommendations will be included in the Strategy for Gender Equality, Sustainable Development Strategy and Anti-discrimination Strategy.

The DFF has been working and providing social cohesion policy recommendations identified through the regional dialogue platforms; clearly contributing to participatory democracy and civic engagement. The FET finds that the target of (at least) 5 policy recommendations that have been formally endorsed by authorities and the international community has been achieved (although policy changes are intrinsically responsibility of national authorities). Namely, a total of 11 sectoral policy documents have been targeted by the project's policy recommendations. The primary and secondary sources indicate that in Bosnia and Herzegovina, the project communicated priorities elicited in youth dialogues in the country to the Ministry of Civil Affairs and supported the development of youth programming guide and assessment of the Gender Action Plan, integrating the perspective of social cohesion. The project successfully mainstreamed 46 individual dialogue recommendations into 5 sectoral documents in Montenegro, such as those on public administration, youth, gender equality and women entrepreneurship. Also, these inputs have been used for formulation of the new United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework for Montenegro, UNDP Country Programme Document, and for formulation of the joint COVID-19 response. In Serbia, youth perspectives were reflected in the UNCT's COVID-19 Socio-Economic Impact Assessment in Serbia, National Strategy for Digital Skills, National Strategy for Prevention of Violence Against Children and the Impact Analysis of the Law on Volunteering. The project also facilitated advocacy activities in cooperation with the Minister for Human and Minority Rights and Social Dialogue to present recommendations for improving the position of women in Serbia. Recommendations will be included in the Strategy for Gender Equality, Sustainable Development Strategy and Anti-discrimination Strategy.

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[174] https://www.we-mentoring.com/knowledge-base

- **DFF has well-established communication platform, that contributed to delivery of results further supporting the achievement of the DFF's impact**

The FET finds that the DFF had established itself as a brand[175], achieving acclaim and visibility in supporting social cohesion efforts in the participating countries and forging partnerships to mobilise citizens, especially young people, against intolerance and ethnic groups stereotypes.

The DFF's has prepared a sound communication strategy and included directions for its promotional and communication materials elaborated and used during the Project and activities regarding meetings, round table discussions, cooperation with representatives of the CSOs and authorities, collaboration with media, participation in events. The Project's communication efforts included a formal language to address its various audiences: it allowed to communicate the results to the different audiences. Its critical aspect has been bottom-up participation across the various population groups, allowing building bridges and working on social cohesion (and peacebuilding) objectives. The DFF remained effective in communicating messages, despite heightening tensions over the past months.

Table 6: Validation of DFF's communication results

Deliverable/ Activity description	Evaluation findings and validation
Task 1: Producing and disseminating a media advisory (in B/C/MN/S) - up to 4 total	The DFF exceeded the planned target delivering five media advisories. Some of the main achievements have been support to contracts with six organizations to support the implementation of cross-country projects; UPSHIFT for Southeastern Serbia and UPSHIFT 4 Serbia. Also, it included support for the Final Regional Conference – Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia
Task 2: Producing and disseminating a press release, plus simple web and soc. Networks posts (in English and B/C/MN/S) up to 12 total	The DFF exceeded the target, preparing, distributing and executing follow-up activities of a total of 13 press releases. Some of the main references have been: i) Workshop for women, activism and leadership held in Teslić, BiH – "Viva Zene" Association; ii) Workshop for skills for youth and adolescents (CPCD); iii) Media promotion of the competition for the UPSHIFT 4 online workshop for young people – Serbia; iv) Marking International World Peace Day, 21st of September; v) Regional Thematic Dialogue for Teachers – Media and Information Literacy – Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, Serbi; vi) Competition for journalists in covering themes supporting trust and social cohesion within and between Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro and Serbia – Montenegro, Serbia
Task 3: Producing web article / post (in English and B/C/MN/S) - up to 9 total	The DFF reached the target producing a total of 2 web articles, on the topics: i) Regional Dialogue Platform for

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[175] KII national partners and KII UN Project Teams

	Youth; ii) Regional Thematic Dialogue for Teachers and iii) Human interest stories – Montenegro – two in progress
Task 4: Producing a short video story - up to 6 video stories total produced and shared via appropriate channels - up to 8 in total	The Project is meeting the target under this task. The DFF prepared scenarios and implemented all pre-production, production and post-production activities for 10 videos[176]
Task 5: Event preparation, coordination and management - up to 2,5 total	The DFF reached the target, providing support to a total of 4 events (e.g., signing the contract on financial support for the implementation of cross-country projects; Marking World Peace Day, Final Regional Thematic Conference – Sarajevo and Belgrade)
Task 6: Support to engagement of online influencers to ensure contribution to DFF regional programme objectives	The DFF Project Teams identified relevant influencers within the region, to ensure their contribution to achievement of DFF regional programme objectives
Task 7: Support to communicating via social media- developing a social media strategy, taking into consideration all regional digital assets which will be made available for use	In total, 41 Facebook, 35 Instagram and 16 Twitter posts were created and published. Also, 37 Instagram stories were published. The most significant results achieved efforts to promote the International Day of Peace and event realized in the National Museum of B&H.
Task 8: Conduct audience profiling for effective communication	The DFF provided audience profiling to the UNDP DFF PM team.
Task 9: Broker media appearances and placement of positive narratives/stories (produced about and by beneficiaries) in mainstream media outlets	The DFF reached the target and organized 9 TV appearances for Project related representatives. Some of these achievements have been: News - appearance from the event - Regional programme "Dialogue For the Future"; TV show "Sta radite, bre"; TV Prva – Morning show; RTV Krusevac; N1 – Novi dan; BHT 1 – Final DFF Programme results; RTCG - Final DFF Programme results

OVERALL FINDING

The regional DFF has been effective in contributing to trust and stability in the project countries, especially in Bosnia and Herzegovina, expanding the results from two successful previous iterations of Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH)-focused initiatives (2014-2019). Some of the main achievements included delivery and implementation of 19 cross-border grants, that were successfully implemented, having directly engaged over 7,500 persons in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro and the Republic of Serbia. The FET finds that report

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[176] (e.g., 6 video tutorials with step by step guide for filling out Budget and Project proposal forms, produced in Serbian, Bosnian, and Montenegro language; Media and Information Literacy project;, among other)

from the final online meeting of all grantees and partners showed that both grantees and partners went beyond set parameters to implement projects in Covid-19 circumstances. In addition, the DFF secured the integration of dialogue recommendations in 11 sectoral policy documents, ranging from gender equality, women's entrepreneurship, public administration, volunteering, youth, sports and public administration reform.

6.6 Impact

- **The FET finds that the DFF provided policy inputs and ensured results at individual and institutional levels that contributed to an enabling environment for peacebuilding.**

Impact measures the effect of the Project in meeting its outcome. By definition, the latter is beyond the scope of a particular intervention but a positive impact could be expected if the outputs of the Project are achieved so that it helps to meet the wider objective. Impact (as much as sustainability) can only be assessed after certain period upon the end of the Project. However, it is increasingly conventional in final evaluations to anticipate or forecast both impact and sustainability. Therefore, the FE anticipated and assessed possible impact of the DFF, looking at the expected outputs (and deliverables) and the outcome, and assuming possibility of the DFF to contribute to the enhanced stability and trust among the citizens in the region. The table below outlines analysis of DFF's possible impact considering individual, institutional and policy level.

*Table 7 **Analysis of the impact of the DFF on individual, institutional and policy levels***

Impact Individual level	The DFF ensured impact among adolescents (10-18) and youth (18-30) who have increased their capacities to engage in dialogue and participate in decision-making processes. The priority areas included abilities to engage in positive transformation in their communities, deconstructing stereotypes and nourish acceptance of diversity. Also, changes could be expected among young girls and women as they have enhanced advocacy and leadership capacities through interactions, training programs and thematic dialogues (on social cohesion).
	The impact could be expected among the DFF grants beneficiaries, increasing their capacities in the distinct but interrelated spheres related to social cohesion. Methodologically, the end-line survey could serve to measure impact at the level of beneficiaries (individuals)[177].
	The endline survey showed that: i) Confidence in institutions is extremely low, in all target groups and countries; ii) there is a strong interest in working on activities that lead to strengthening trust and improving cooperation with other ethnic and social groups and iii) treated group indicate positive changes in attitudes and an increase in the level of tolerance towards other groups. The end-line survey findings (graph 4) show that participants became even more aware of cultural diversity and how societies in Serbia, Montenegro and BiH are distinctive because of them. These results are somewhat unexpected considering that survey participants experienced and benefited from regional cooperation in the past.

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[177] However, the selection bias is difficult to avoid, as those prone to intercultural dialogue are more likely to participate; hence, the results and differences that the end-line survey shows could be partially associated with this bias and not caused by the project.

Treated Group (Women and Youth) — 65%
Control Group (Women and Youth) — 57%
Grant Benefitiaries Baseline — 50%
Grant Benefitiaries Endline — 69%
Bosnia and Herzegovina — 74%
Serbia — 39%
Montenegro — 66%
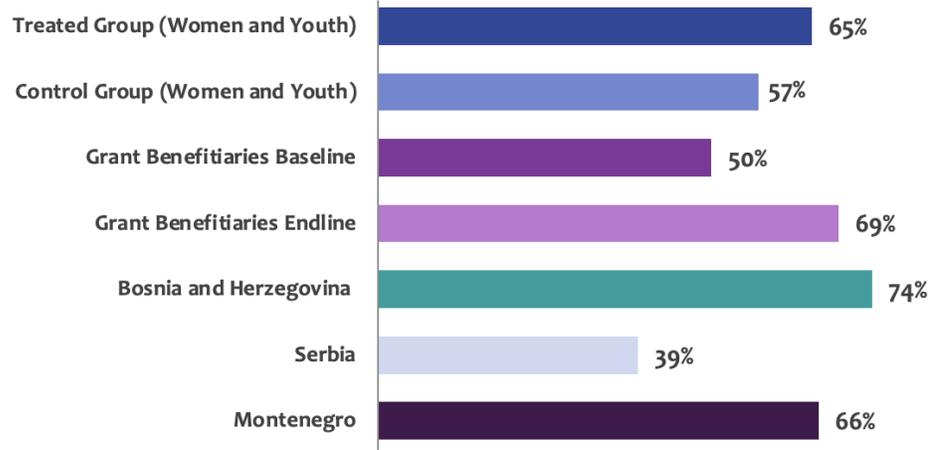
Source: DFF endline survey

Additionally, there is a broad interest in working with other ethnic and social groups to address issues pertaining to trust building. Grant beneficiaries who participated in the survey believe that regional cooperation can lead to improved interethnic relations and reduce divisions and mistrust. Already high percentage (81% out of 78 participants in the survey) recognized that cooperation could lead to improved interethnic relations; this percentage further increased in the endline survey (83% from 84 participants).

Figure 9 Interest for collaboration among the grants' beneficiaries

Grant beneficiaries- baseline   *Grant beneficiaries- endline*

Grant beneficiaries- baseline:
1% 2% 6% 15% 76%
1 - Completely disagree
2
3
4
5 - Completely agree

Grant beneficiaries- endline:
1% 2% 4% 13% 80%
1 - Completely disagree
2
3
4
5 - Completely agree
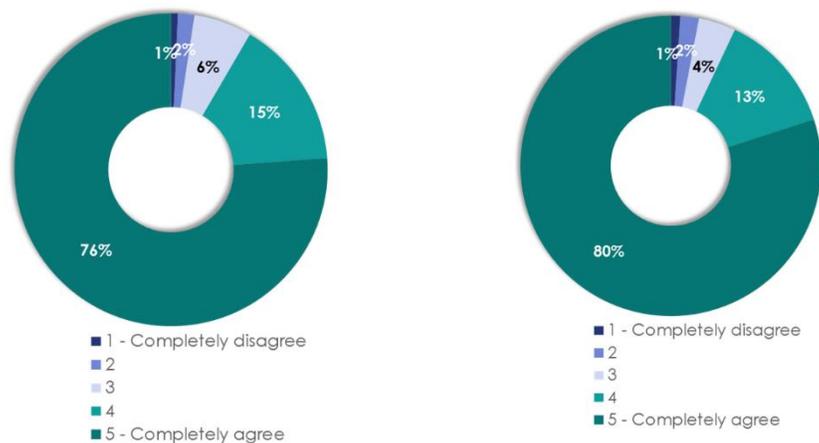
Source: DFF endline survey

The FET validated and confirmed these findings through in person interviews: the beneficiaries and Project partners recognized that "connectiveness and readiness to cooperate more closely in the future has increased, through support from the

	DFF[178]". They also recognized the DFF's impact and contribution, being aware of the scope and function of a single project.[179]
	The DFF's impact could be expected through decreased social distance (as the level of acceptance people have of others outside of their own ethnic or social group and class). The Project's assistance enabled some prejudices and stereotypes about minority or other ethnicities to be removed (among the beneficiaries)[180]. The reports from capacity development events[181] (workshops, training and mentoring) indicate that participants learned to use new tools and apply innovative techniques and methods in their work (from social media, holding dialogue to understanding policy making processes and community needs and priorities).
	There is evidence that the Project managed to activate some vulnerable groups and create multiplicative effects. For example, the workshop and progress reports indicated that "the UPSHIFT workshops included more than 25% of participants who were people with disabilities (compared to no more than 10% previously)[182]. The partners stated that, these participants, including vulnerable groups, continued engaging in other community-level initiatives[183].
	Also, impact at the individual level could be expected through the better-equipped individuals to provide services. Some examples could be that the DFF Project worked with the teachers and trainers increasing their abilities and skills for teaching media literacy, civic education and inter-cultural dialogue. The establishment of competent nodes and network of skilled individuals for teaching these topics important for social cohesion has been a critical achievement that could result in multiplication in the delivery of these educational programs.
	The FE finds that the DFF followed best-practice approach to capacity development, facilitating direct interaction among the beneficiaries and target groups. This approach ensured the more substantive impact on skills and genuinely contributes to the development of capacities among the targeted groups. Namely, learning by doing with the support of experienced and highly qualified professionals proved to be the most efficient system for transfer of knowledge and development of national capacities.
Impact- institutional level	At the institutional level, the FET analyzed if the DFF influenced the performance of the institutions in the participating countries, focusing on organizations involved in implementation or benefiting from the DFF.
	Direct institutional support or organizational development has not been the primary DFF's focus. Still, the DFF Small Grants Facility involved different institutions: CSOs, municipalities and other public institutions (including schools).

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[178] Key informants' interviews, National partners

[179] The partners stated that development assistance and implemented projects and programs could not change the region entirely, but rather test models and provide the basis for follow up actions of citizens, governments and all other stakeholders.

[180] Key informants' interviews and results of the end-line survey

[181] The end-line survey and also the DFF Progress Reports

[182] Report from the Upshift workshop, organized in Montenegro by the Innovation Lab Creactivator, in partnership with the Ministry of Education, Directorate of Youth and Sports

[183] Key informants interviews

According to the DFF's records, they have received a total of 237 applications[184] while 19 were approved for the implementation (8 in BiH, 6 in Serbia and 5 in Montenegro)

Figure 10 Overview of institutions applying for DFF's grants (by country)
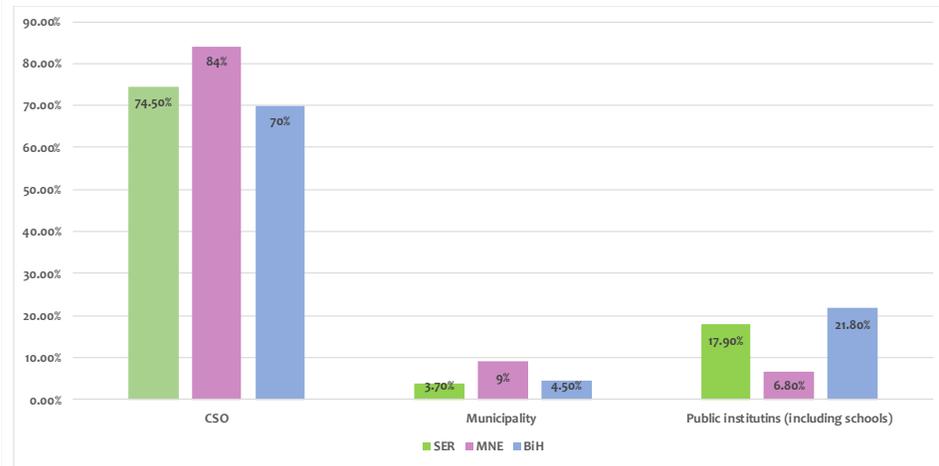
Source: Small grants facility, overview of applications

These figures indicate that the high interest among eligible stakeholders to participate in social cohesion related activities and work on regional partnerships (confirming to a large extent relevance of the topic and importance of work on level of building institutional partnerships).

The FET finds that the DFF produced (unintended) results, generating impact on improved performance and resource mobilization capacities. For example, the organizations and institutions that benefited from the DFF fund were exposed to the practical know-how and exchange of experience with the partners from other countries. They have gained experience in applying and implementing grants/ grant funded projects[185]. The grant beneficiaries reported a better understanding of the opportunities/ benefits from networking and cooperation among the countries. Based on the primary data analysis and interviews with the beneficiaries, the FE finds the DFF increased capacities of these institutions to participate and benefit from the possible other, especially EU grants.

Another aspect of possible impact at the institutional level could be expected through strengthened cooperation between organizations participating in the Project.

The DFF contributed to the increased knowledge and technical skills of the organizations that participated in conferences and seminars. They will be able to use presented and tested models for improvement of their operational practices in the different spheres of trust building, tolerance and social cohesion.

Impact- Policy level	The actual question to consider the impact at the systemic (policy) level was if the DFF influenced or provided the basis for policy development in the areas related

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[184] Small Grants Facility- Overview of Applications, March 2020

[185] KII notes, national partners

to social cohesion and peace-building. The DFF's Output 3 strived to ensure inputs and recommendations for policies and the FET applied the policy cycle model and its elements (policy decision, policy development, decision on instruments and implementation) for this analysis

The FET finds that the DFF brought to the agenda the policy cohesion as a new policy paradigm[186]. The results related to establishing and maintaining constructive dialogue between various communities and ensuring citizens participation in decision-making processes (e.g., improve communication between citizens and their highest elected leaders) have been the basis for social cohesion.

The FET finds that eleven sectoral policy documents have been targeted by the project's policy recommendations work under Output 3. For example, In BiH the DFF communicated priorities elicited in youth dialogues in the country to the Ministry of Civil Affairs and supported the development of youth programming guide (policy tool/ instrument) and assessment of the Gender Action Plan (policy decision), integrating the perspective of social cohesion. The DFF reports indicated policy inputs (46 individual dialogue recommendations) for policy decisions and policy development in five sectoral documents in Montenegro, such as those on public administration, youth, gender equality and women entrepreneurship[187]. The stakeholders confirmed these policy results.

Concerning _policy instruments_, the FET finds that DFF's inputs and recommendations related to the role of parents in skills and attitudes development will be adopted in UNICEF's new programme on parenting and in the process of design of mental health programmes for young people and teachers in Montenegro. The DFF brought to the policy agenda the need to work on _civic education reform_ in partnership with the Ministry of Education, Science, and Technological Development in Serbia. The assistance resulted in the reform of the civic education curricula (as a policy tool) tested through training for teachers and prep. The Project organized and delivered the Regional Thematic Dialogue for Teachers, presenting its efforts to integrate media and literacy in university curricula and support civic education reform. The Thematic Dialogue result has been the "Declaration on the Importance of MIL and Social Cohesion", providing the platform for the next steps in the policy reform.

The FET finds another example of policy influence, as the DFF team is bringing to the agenda the need to review Volunteering Law, reflecting the recommendations from youth dialogues. These inputs, according to the stakeholders from Serbia[188], will serve for the revision of the National Youth Strategy of the Republic of Serbia. Namely, this document has been prepared and adopted in 2015[189], covering period until 2025. Serbia's changing realities and

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[186] KII with the DFF team and national authorities

[187] DFF Progress Report, 2020 and draft Progress Report 2021; also interview with the stakeholders.

[188] KII notes, national partners, Serbia

[189] National Strategy for Youth, 2015-2025, Official Gazette of the Republic of Serbia, 22-27.02.2015, http://www.pravno-informacioni-sistem.rs/SlGlasnikPortal/eli/rep/sgrs/vlada/strategija/2015/22/1/reg

	external dynamics have enhanced the need to revise this document and the DFF inputs have been recognized as critically important[190]. Also, more than 8,000 youth in Serbia were consulted and shared their perspectives on key issues of youth concern to enhance strategic framework through U-Report. Youth perspectives were reflected in the UNCT's COVID-19 Socio-Economic Impact Assessment in Serbia, National Strategy for Digital Skills, National Strategy for Prevention of Violence Against Children and the Impact Analysis of the Law on Volunteering.

OVERALL FINDINGS

The DFF ensured impact at the individual level among the direct beneficiaries, the youth and other targeted groups showing appreciation of cultural diversity and broad interest in regional cooperation as means to trust building; the results of the independent end-line survey and interviews confirmed this. The Project also ensured impact at the systemic level, brining social cohesion to the development agenda and providing inputs to the strategic and policy documents, including UN strategic frameworks.

6.7   Sustainability

The DFF has been contributing to sector policies and enhancing capacities of partners and beneficiaries involved in the social cohesion related activities.

- **The DFF project document included sustainability plan, that helped to consider and work on sustainability of the project outputs, throughout implementation.**

The UN stakeholders recognized the demand to ensure sustainability of the DFF results, stating that plan for sustainability has been considered from the design stage"[191]. The desk materials[192] and interviews with key informants[193] showed the DFF's efforts to ensure participation and involvement of national partners and create stronger sense of national ownership. The partners from Serbia and Bosnia and Herzegovina have been generally satisfied with their involvement in conceptualization and implementation of activities[194]. However, the partners from Montenegro have expressed their concerns regarding the context analysis, and lack of adequate response to accommodate their request for changes in the intervention logic[195].

The implementation of the DFF has been characterized with effective partnerships between national stakeholders and UN Agencies and DFF teams, based on "mutual trust and respect"[196]. The involvement of national stakeholders has been in different capacities, as beneficiaries or participants in activities or partners involved at the strategic and implementation level. These working relations helped to build trust and commitment, mitigating risks and solving problems as they arose. Furthermore, the UN's substantive insight and the DFF's response to needs and challenges in peacebuilding process especially in BiH" have been highlighted[197].

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[190] KII notes, national partners, Serbia

[191] This has been a common opinion of the national partners and also the staff from UN Agencies

[192] The Project document and the materials from the DFF formulation

[193] Materials from the interviews with key informants

[194] KII notes- national partners;

[195] Kii notes, national partners – also, minutes from the N

[196] KII notes, national partners

197 KII notes- national partners

The senior decision-makers that participated in the Joint Programme Board (regional level) and National Coordination Bodies (in Montenegro and Serbia) have been well-informed and aware of activities and initiatives of UN Agencies, expressing positive opinion concerning their DFF achievements[198]. Their positive experience ensured through the involvement in setting strategic directions and decisions, created commitment at the political level[199] and sense of ownership over the achieved results. This participatory approach and sense of ownership have set the solid basis for continuation and even expansion of activities that DFF initiated[200].

The FET finds that the stakeholders involved in implementation often associate DFF with (their partner) UN Agency, with limited insight in the broader DFF-regional framework and achievements outside of their interest.[201]

- **DFF has been steadily addressing capacity needs to facilitate social cohesion, remove barriers and enable more effective communication and cooperation among beneficiaries (represented through different target groups).**

During the implementation of the DFF project, building the capacities and removing obstacles affecting stability in the region with citizens (as end-beneficiaries) being in the centre of its focus[202]. The Project introduced a "twinning-like" approach, ensuring that the competent CSOs/ organizations from one has been working with the partners from other two countries. This horizontal knowledge-sharing, according to the partners, had a notable system-building effects.[203]

The Project has been effective in designing innovative capacity development assistance, benefiting from the tested UN Agencies' platforms and learning experiences[204]. For example, through skill building programme UPSHIFT, youth were supported to lead initiatives for community development and the program was digitized to ensure continuity, while all supported projects were amplified with digital tools and formats such as video galleries, 2 podcasts and a web platform with youth media content[205]. The FET finds that training programs were comprehensive, while the DFF's capacity development approach has been balanced, focusing on strategic priorities and mandates of partners in the broad context and different aspects of social cohesion- e.g., teachers, librarians, pedagogues, adolescents and youth, for example. The partners evaluated positively trainers who designed and conducted capacity development programmes under Project outputs. They stated that "the trainings were delivered by eager, qualified and adequate experts who effectively tailored the courses according to their needs."[206] The testing of training participants was not part of the training delivery (testing was implemented only for training for women).

The FE finds positive evidence of other forms of capacity development under all outputs, involving affiliates from different partners' institutions. For example, the capacity building of teachers (675 trained out of planned 200) in all three countries involved strong cooperation with academia. The FET finds that DFF has been characterized by its high-quality experts' support: bringing competent (national) technical support additionally contributed to greater effectiveness of the assistance and progress under outputs, also advancing capacities among the target groups and beneficiaries. Some of the subjects included topics such

[198] Interviews with key informants from the participating countries. Also, meeting minutes from the Joint Programme Boards and National Coordination Bodies.

[199] For example, in Serbia, representatives of the Office of the President as the main political figure, participated in the steering structures. Similarly, the Presidency of the BiH has been the main partner in BiH.

[200] For example, https://en.bfpe.org/in-focus/bfpe-leadership-programme-focus/dialogue-with-minister-gordana-comic/

[201] KII notes with the national partners

202 KII_015 and KII_016

203 KII notes KII_01

204 KII UN Agencies

[205] DFF materials and also interviews with the key informants

206 KII notes- national partners and DFF Project progress reports

as for example, socio-emotional skills, mobile journalism for social cohesion, voluntarism, project ideation and creation, social innovation, digital solutions and also advocacy, leadership, gender mainstreaming, political literacy and media literacy and inter-cultural communication. It is expected that these capacities will remain (among different target groups and stakeholders) and facilitate future evidence-based policies and decision making in the sectors of concern[207].Furthermore, the partners perceive that the "COVID-19 pandemic could have catalytic impact on development of capacities", as existence of on-line platforms could enable higher number of people to benefit from capacity development.

- **The DFF involved organizations in different activities (related to social cohesion) however, the partners recognized the need to continue support and ensure sustainability of these efforts.**

The FET analysed evidences of contribution of the DFF to organisational development and reinforcement of their capacities. Although development of organizational capacities has not been the principal Project's focus but rather an unintended result (as explained in the previous paragraphs of this report), the partners indicated improved performance in some areas[208]. The participants in the interviews confirmed the relevance of the DFF, prioritizing benefits from capacity development, inter-institutional cooperation/ interoperability and enhancing their abilities for strengthening social cohesion fabric, (thus, including building stability and the overall security in the region). The partners reported that all of the activities were implemented in coordination with the DFF Teams (and respective UN Agencies) and following the feedback they provided to the DFF team (stating that requests to the DFF teams for clarifications have been dealt with in the timely fashion[209]). _Still, interviewed representatives of the organizational stakeholders perceive that achieved results could gradually erode without follow-up[210]._

Mostly, the sustainability is perceived at the individual level, in form of improved skills or established connections and cooperation lines. They have highlighted produced materials as an important deliverable that would remain available and could provide benefits for the stakeholders (upon completion of initiatives). Usually, they would mention video recordings from workshops (this is one of the benefits of online activities, there is much more visibility and recordings remain as products that can have broader use[211]), different manuals, guidelines they produced (for example Faculty of Political Science), training curricula, improved curricula for teachers of civic education, web portal with materials for teachers of civic education, project brochures, etc. However, they expressed concerns about opportunities for the future delivery of same or similar activities (without future support that was available through the DFF).

Some of the partners prioritized the need to enhance capacities at the demand side: they (mainly civil society organizations) have selected proactive young people as beneficiaries, so they can use new knowledge and skills when they return to their regular activities, they are active in local communities, schools, etc.

The national partners stated that DFF provided _"valuable inputs and technical support to identify policy recommendations and bring policy decision forward thus initiate the policy improvement process"_[212]. These results and inputs are valuable, especially if considered in the context of participating countries, with limited or unfavourable experience in participative policy making processes. The previous paragraphs of this report indicated that DFF provided recommendations to sectoral policy documents that integrated perspective of social cohesion: from priorities identified during youth related dialogues in the country (communicated to the Ministry of Civil Affairs) and development of youth programming guide, assessment of the Gender Action Plan, to mainstreaming individual dialogue recommendations into public

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207 Results from tests are provided in the Annex 5 to this report.

208 More details are provided under the other EQs, whereby the results of the Project have been presented.

209 KII notes, partners

210 KII notes, national partners

211 KII notes, national partners

212 KII notes

administration, youth, gender equality and women entrepreneurship policies in Montenegro. In Serbia, the inputs have been provided for the UNCT's COVID-19 Socio-Economic Impact Assessment, National Strategy for Digital Skills, National Strategy for Prevention of Violence Against Children and the Impact Analysis of the Law on Volunteering. The participating UN agencies will continue their cooperation with various government stakeholders, following up on the recommendations made during the Project. Moreover, as "social cohesion" is part of UN sustainable development frameworks in all three countries, this will provide additional impetus to sustainability.

However, implementation of policies in the participating countries remains "work in progress", frequently on slow pace[213]. Ensuring adequate public funds could be challenging[214], coordination of policies and inter-institutional cooperation is insufficient together with limited capacities within institutions could affect implementation and achievement of social cohesion and contribute to regional stability.

OVERALL FINDINGS

The DFF has been building partnerships among the stakeholders, especially successfully among the CSOs, and academia/ faculties. The FET finds sense of ownership over the results and processes among the stakeholders that have benefited from the Project.

The Project followed well-established capacity development approach, balancing between strategic priorities and immediate needs of the partners and beneficiaries.

The COVID-19 pandemic posed significant challenges to all three participating countries, with adverse effects on stability and the overall socio-economic situation. The results could be enhanced poverty and affected functioning of the SMEs and large enterprises, while a high number of citizens could be pushed towards unemployment. These immediate socio-economic challenges could refocus priorities and public funds towards immediate post-crisis response, away from some the priorities under the social cohesion framework.

Also, political dynamics and deteriorating governance situation in all three countries (measured by different governance indicators, as presented in the background part of this report) could affect commitments to stability, peacebuilding and social cohesion in a broader sense. At the same time, the CSOs perceive that these backwards processes emphasized importance of the DFF and investments in social cohesion[215].

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[213] Reference to SIGMA reports on all three participating countries. http://www.sigmaweb.org/countries/
214 KI national partners
[215] KII national partners

7 Conclusions and lessons learned

7.1 Conclusions

The final evaluation has summarized the following overall remarks on the DFF:

- The Project is successful in delivering planned results, even overachieving the set targets in some areas of intervention[216]. This success is even more apparent when set against a complex and challenging environment and sensitive topics- peacebuilding, stability and social cohesion- that the Project was addressing[217], identifying joint social cohesion priorities and actionable solutions through 19 dialogue events, and forging new cross-border partnerships among CSOs, academic institutions and youth teams through the Small Grants Facility and UPSHIFT platform.

- The overall DFF intervention and objectives are fully in line with the regional and national development priorities and support to EU accession process for the participating countries.

- DFF has been highly effective in addressing negative effects and limitations caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, by providing substantive support to the stakeholders in defining and implementing needs-based solutions

The following paragraphs provide the conclusions for each of the evaluation questions

RELEVANCE

Conclusion 1. DFF remains relevant for BiH, Montenegro and Serbia

The regional DFF aligned its intervention with the needs of the target groups, regional and national strategic priorities to enhance social cohesion and rebuild trust and stability in the participating countries.

DFF has accurately identified components and clearly established areas of intervention and there is demand (from the institutional partners and beneficiaries) for support to continue. The FET concludes that the DFF Small Grants Facility generated high demand among the eligible stakeholders, with nearly 250 received applications and 19 awarded and implemented, despite modest budgets that were clearly impact and activities focused (and not envisaging institutional support). There is need to continue with this small-grants support, with clear links to regional perspective, SDGs, and other priorities under the social cohesion framework. Furthermore, the challenging political and social developments within the region and adverse effects of the COVID-19 pandemic are creating the need for re-adjustments of the intervention and prioritizing areas that were less evident under the DFF (e.g., addressing social cohesion through socio-economic activities, or assessing the effects of the COVID-19 on the stability within the region)

Still, the DFF needs to carry out a conflict-sensitive situation analysis (with the involvement of all stakeholders) to ensure that priority areas of intervention are well-identified and adequately addressed.

The responsiveness of the Project (and implementing UN Agencies) to the changing environment in the r egion and the needs of participating institutions have been and remained critical factors to its relevance. The timeframe for the DFF implementation may be too short to achieve measurable changes in population-level attitudes and perceptions: ensuring changes in behaviour and attitudes towards the others (from different ethnic and social groups) and removing communication barriers require time and longer-term commitment of all main stakeholders. The DFF activities and results set the ground for larger follow-up intervention.

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[216] Ref to the Table 5 Detailed analysis of the DFF's effectiveness
[217] Ref to the introduction

The indicators have been generally relevant to measure progress in the areas of intervention; however, some important aspects (e.g., progress towards the SDGs, for example) have not been reflected and measured through these indicators. Also, use of gender-sensitive indicators and reflection of gender priorities is limited.

LEAVING NO-ONE BEHIND

Conclusion 2. The "leaving no-one behind" principle has been considered and followed during the DFF's design and implementation.

The DFF considered the "no-one is left behind" principle while contributing to activate marginalized and vulnerable groups, especially accommodating the needs of people with disabilities. Still, there is a need to continue fight exclusion and marginalisation, creating a sense of belonging, promote trust, and offer marginalized groups the opportunity of upward social mobility.

GENDER MAINSTREAMING

Conclusion 3: Greater gender equality in the region is one of the main preconditions for the achievement of social cohesion

The DFF implementation included efforts to mainstream gender and ensure gender equality in its activities, supporting gender transformation[218] through practical activities and inputs for policy reforms. Also, gender equality has been defined as one of the priority thematic areas for the public call for proposals for small grants facility; implementation of these initiatives ensured results in some of the critical areas (e.g., prevention and awareness raising on gender-based violence[219]; social inclusion of women with disabilities).

Still, the region is showing significant gender differences in all spheres, and this remains an obstacle for greater social cohesion, and various areas of gender equality should be considered in the new initiative.

EFFECTIVENESS

Conclusion 4: The regional approach under the DFF added value to partner countries and organizations, following positive cooperation practices (DFF small grants facility) and creating a solid learning basis by codifying generated knowledge and facilitating exchange of experience.

Through its regional approach the Project confirmed that regional cooperation reduces social tensions and strengthens regional stability, as the crucial precondition for achieving sustainable development goals and contributing to social cohesion.

Conclusion 5: The DFF's institutional partners and beneficiaries have developed capacities in various social cohesion areas, and their capacities and commitment to further support achievement of social cohesion priorities should be considered for the future initiatives

The DFF has not been directly focusing on organizational development, but participating organizations have improved their capacities- from project management to more substantive aspects of social cohesion. In addition, communication and cooperation established among the beneficiaries of the DFF Fund resulted in follow up partnerships and possibly new development initiatives.

The DFF has ensured development of capacities of institutional partners and beneficiaries (CSOs that participated in small grans facility, and other activities or youth from the participating countries that

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[218] "Gender transformation" refers to efforts to change gender and social norms to address inequalities in power and privilege between persons of different genders, in order to free all people from harmful and destructive norms. These norms include gender roles, expectations, stereotypes, and harmful attitudes, customs, and practices, including gender-based violence (MenEngage Alliance, 2017- http://menengage.org/

[219] Prepared by the Museum of Contemporary Arts, Banja Luka

benefited from different activities). These capacities are available and should be considered for the future initiatives, peer to peer support and horizontal learning.

Conclusion 6: The Project had well-established communication platform, and the efforts should continue to use new communication platforms

Communication under the DFF has been generally effective that facilitated achievement of results and contributed to more significant effects of its results. Still, there is a need to send social cohesion messages to the broader audience- youth- using most appropriate communication tools and channels.

EFFICIENCY

Conclusion 7: The DFF has been implemented efficiently, delivering the budget and achieving results

The management practices, and well-established monitoring systems, together with competent technical inputs, have been among the main factors contributed to delivery of country-level results. At the same time, regional nature of the DFF has been affected and results at the regional level have been less apparent.

The DFF has well-established hierarchy of objectives and work-planning system that set the basis for the implementation strategy. The DFF Project Teams and UN Agencies have been flexible and reliable partners, holding themselves accountable for the achievements of results. These elements, together with the strong partnership and technical capacities, have been critical factors that contributed to its effectiveness and flexible and responsive implementation.

However, the complex steering structure created a degree of unclarity about roles, and responsibilities, - e.g., the Joint Programme Board versus National Coordination Body and the function of the Strategic Advisory Board in that context. The intention to ensure participation and ownership at the country -level (Montenegro and Serbia) could be justified (through the establishment of the National Coordination Body). Still, this has weakened regional nature of the DFF and the role of the JPB, as it remained unclear about decision making and cooperation and coordination channels between these structures.

The DFF Project Teams in different countries have been established. Their main focus has been on delivery of results; however, the focus has been primarily at the level of the participating country and particular UN Agency, while the broader (regional) picture has been less apparent. The role of the Joint (Regional) Programme Coordinator has not been and sufficiently strengthened to ensure "centralized" management of the DFF, as required in complex and multi-country programmes.

External developments such as the recent COVID-19 pandemic and its implications, and political developments within the region, together with reforms that are at chronically slow pace, have been the main challenge for the achievement and continuation of results.

IMPACT

Conclusion 8: The analysis of findings related to the impact at the individual level, together with the results of the end-line survey showed that DFF ensured impact among the individuals that participated or directly benefited from its results or activities.

At the broader level, the Project's lasting effects could be expected among indirect beneficiaries, the population at large from participating countries. Still, the achievement of larger-scale changes will depend on continuation of building enabling environment for social cohesion. Particularly important remains to ensure funding for initiatives that would involve citizens and enable their interaction across divides.

SUSTAINABILITY

Conclusion 9: DFF has been responding to capacity development needs of the partners and stakeholders, especially targeting youth from participating countries. The Project has been generally effective in

providing recommendations to improve institutional and strategic level framework, implement governance-related priorities and contribute to greater social cohesion.

The Project followed well-established capacity development approach, balancing between strategic priorities and immediate needs of the partners and beneficiaries. The importance of capacity development and transfer of knowledge have been recognized as the priority for the future, combined with inter-institutional cooperation (accountable and inclusive public institutions at all levels; institutional support for inclusive development and employment opportunities, access to justice, etc).

Conclusion 10: The DFF has been effective in strengthening regional interactions (primarily, through the activities of participating CSOs) and informal networks. These results have been ensured through ad-hoc and objective-based interactions among the beneficiaries. Still, there is a need to continue support for strengthening these informal networks, putting in place mechanisms to continue and expand initiated partnerships and interactions.

The strong sense of its relative importance and advantages of participating in regional networks has been developed among the partners and stakeholders, with the DFF role in facilitating cooperation and collaboration among them. Also, interaction across countries and among countries (formal and informal networks) has been effective for codification of knowledge and exchange of experience among the partners, creating a pool of experienced organizations and individuals in distinct areas of social cohesion (e.g., network of young defenders of human rights for education, labor and accommodation, or the network of youth with digital and media literacy capacities). These capacities could contribute powerfully to national policy and consultation processes.

7.2   Lessons learned

The FET has identified these crucial lessons that have been generated during the DFF implementation:

- DFF has effectively tested innovative approaches to delivering capacity development support (including workshops and training programs), benefiting from on-line and web-based opportunities. By combining traditional development interventions with the use of new technologies, the Project contributed to more significant learning outcomes, based on results of tests applied at the end of training programs.

- Online platforms could be highly effective in organizing meetings or learning events and workshops. However, replacing direct communication and interactions with on-line options especially among young people who expected to travel, meet with other peers in other countries could negatively affect their interest and willingness to participate in planned (on-line) activities. Therefore, to ensure lasting commitment and genuinely address stereotypes, the need remains to priorities direct interaction (especially among youth).

- The complexity of the social cohesion and peacebuilding efforts are indisputable and require mobilization of structures and institutions at different levels. To ensure country specific inputs and participation, the DFF has created complex steering and management structures (involving planned and additional coordination structures). This approach to have country-specific coordination structure has been effective in generating understanding, enhancing ownership and ensuring country-level support. However, having steering and cooperation structures at distinct-regional and national- levels increases difficulties to make decisions for the overall project and implement coordinate activities, while preserving regional focus.

- DFF successfully avoided the challenge that submitted applications are driven by opportunities to ensure additional funding. The Small Grants Facility has been well-designed and included sound eligibility criteria with requirement that submitted application is based on identified and clearly articulated needs in all three countries. It also included criteria for institutional capacities of applicants and requirement for established partnership with organizations from other two countries. This approach contributed to approved and implemented initiatives are "locally owned", embedded in the community needs.

- The flexibility and responsiveness have been underlying strengths of the DFF during the entire period of implementation, allowing to change some of the pre-established parameters (plans, activities, inputs). The Project's responsiveness enabled timely and appropriate reaction to the partners' demands, being tools for ensuring progress under all components. The Project avoided to be over-flexible/ over-responsive; this has prevented Project to slip into ad-hoc reactions to partners' requests.

- As part of the EU accession process, all participating countries have identified their national strategic and reform priorities, elaborating them in different policy documents. Still, stability and peacebuilding have not been explicitly prioritized, but rather presented as already ensured preconditions. The brief analysis indicated that "peacebuilding and stability" are generally perceived narrowly, as absence of conflict or post-conflict developments. Therefore, to maximize effects and impact of the social cohesion initiatives, there is a need to adopt holistic approach that balances investments in human rights, the rule of law and accountable institutions, requiring stronger policy coordination and integrative policy making processes. At the same time, implementing initiatives that are fully aligned with the national priorities and joint regional agendas (such as EU accession and other regional processes) are likely to ensure stronger national ownership and increase sustainability prospects.

- Investing in relationships and partnerships proved to be highly valuable for effective implementation of the project. The ability to engage in policy dialogue and facilitate implementation of recommendations in distinct areas of social cohesion (and peacebuilding), together with a high level of trust and willingness of national partners to work with UN Agencies is due to the investment made in developing and maintaining relationships. In this context, relaying on personal relationships and commitments of individuals (as done during the DFF's formulation) rather than on institutional and systemic partnerships could create short-term gains, but pose the risk if changes in personnel or rotation of staff occur.

  Importance of participation and ownership could not be overstated. Working closely and collaboratively with counterparts is critical if ownership, and ultimately sustainability of change is to be achieved. A partnership approach also provides a platform on which to build a strategy to progressively devolve responsibility to counterparts for leading and managing ongoing change; thereby, progressively reducing need for external support.

8 Recommendations

The analysis of primary and secondary data served to define findings (and also concerns and challenges during DFF implementation) serving for conclusions. Considering these inputs, recommendations have been defined, as a framework for further consideration and follow up to participating UN Agencies and national stakeholders in BiH, Montenegro and Serbia.

The approach for the formulation of the recommendations that the FE followed (through the discussion with the national stakeholders and UN Agencies) has been instrumental in generating a greater sense of ownership while setting the ground for the next project.

The final evaluation team has formulated the following main recommendations:

Recommendation 1:	Recommendation 1: The FET recommends to continue with regionally-focused support to improving social cohesion, focusing on three countries (BiH, Montenegro and Serbia)
(for: • *UNDP, UNICEF and UNESCO, RCO Offices in BiH, Montenegro and Serbia;* • *National authorities (Governments- and especially respective ministries in charge of youth and education; Presidencies of BiH and Serbia and the main governance actors* • *CSOs, Academia, Media,*	The FET recommends continuing with the regional support to social cohesion that was available through the regional DFF. The initial step should be to carry out in-depth conflict sensitive situation analysis and identify core issues and challenges to social cohesion in three countries for the follow up intervention. The FET recommends to expand the DFF Small Grants Facility, supporting innovative social cohesion initiatives with a clear regional focus and impact. The DFF should consider other topics that are relevant for the region and for building social cohesion. For example, addressing the adverse effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on social cohesion, considering environment as the topic by exploring opportunities to move to a clean, circular economy or working on restoring biodiversity and considering regional priorities (with reference to social cohesion, stability and regional perspective). *(linked to Conclusions 1 and 4 and other Conclusions and lessons learned relevant)*
Recommendation 2: *(for:* • *UNDP, UNICEF and UNESCO, RCO Offices in BiH, Montenegro and Serbia;* • *National authorities* • *CSOs, Academia, Media,*	Recommendation 2: Enhance the understanding of the social cohesion in the region through involvement of authorities, CSOs, Academia and other structures The FET recommends exploring opportunities to expand activities to enhance understanding of the social cohesion among the stakeholders, partners and citizens. This could include public advocacy activities, public discussions and awareness events. Some of the areas could be enhancing capacities of government bodies , CSOs and academia to advocate for social cohesion priorities in the policy-making processes and enhancing capacities to competently engage in policy dialogue and planning in the priority areas. *(linked to Conclusions 1, 2, 3 and 4 and other Conclusions and lessons learned relevant)*

Recommendation 3 *(for:* • *UNDP, UNICEF and UNESCO, RCO Offices in BiH, Montenegro and Serbia;* • *National authorities*	**Recommendation 3: Consider longer timeframe for the new regional social cohesion initiative** Achieving measurable changes in the target groups/ population attitudes and perceptions requires time and coordinated efforts of authorities, civil society and other national and international development partners. Therefore, the FET recommends that UN Agencies plan a new initiative considering a more extended timeframe (e.g., from five to ten years). Considering complexity and sensitivity of social cohesion, the FET recommends a flexible implementation approach with organized mid-term review, and adjusting i.e. fine tuning the intervention to reflect changes in the environment. *(linked to Conclusions 1, and other Conclusions and lessons learned relevant)*
Recommendation 4: *(for:* • *UNDP, UNICEF and UNESCO, RCO Offices in BiH, Montenegro and Serbia;* • *CSOs, Media,*	**Recommendation 4: Enhance the use of social media to communicate activities and results** The FET recommends sending social cohesion messages to the broader audience -youth- using most appropriate communication tools and channels. Some of the new platforms such as Tik Tok, Instagram, twitter, twitch, etc. *(linked to Conclusions 6 and other Conclusions and lessons learned relevant)*
Recommendation 5 *(for:* • *UNDP, UNICEF and UNESCO, RCO Offices in BiH, Montenegro and Serbia;* • *CSOs, Media,*	**Recommendation 5. The FET recommends that DFF supports regional networking and horizontal exchange of know-how among the experienced CSOs with the newly participating organizations** Considering the capacities of partner institutions including CSOs in in the region, DFF should consider a long-term, needs-based capacity development approach under all its components. It is important to include knowledge tests at the end of each training program to assess immediate improvements in skills and knowledge. In addition to delivery capacity development support, the Project should consider networking and exchange of knowledge and know-how among the experienced CSOs and newly awarded/ selected organizations. *(linked to Conclusions 6 and other Conclusions and lessons learned relevant)*
Recommendation 6: *(for:* • *UNDP, UNICEF and UNESCO, RCO Offices in BiH, Montenegro and Serbia;* • *National authorities CSOs, Academia, Media,*	**Recommendation 6: The next DFF should strengthen gender mainstreaming efforts and further expand "leaving no-one behind" principle** The DFF should continue fighting exclusion and marginalisation, creating a sense of belonging, promoting trust, and offer marginalized groups the opportunity to benefit from different activities. Also, gender equality should remain one of the priority thematic areas for the DFF's support, especially that gender differences remain in all spheres, preventing achievement of greater social cohesion.

	(linked to the Conclusion 2 and 3; other conclusions could be relevant)
Recommendation 7: *For* • *UNDP, UNICEF and UNESCO, RCO Offices in BiH, Montenegro and Serbia;* • *National authorities* *Other partners (as required)*	**Recommendation 7: Participating agencies (UNDP, UNICEF and UNESCO) should work to strengthen steering and advisory structures and ensure its strategic guidance for DFF implementation, through regular meetings and involvement of senior level representatives.** It is also important to ensure that national stakeholders from non-governmental structures participate in these structures To avoid challenges with implementation of joint UN initiatives (decentralized management and UN-agency specific focus) it is recommended to strengthen the mandate of regional management team, and ensure direct management lines with the country level teams. The FET recommends to intensify joint planning through preparation of Annual/ Bi-annual Work Plans (WPs), setting the basis for holistic and integrated implementation. *(linked to the Conclusion 7; other conclusions could be relevant)*
Recommendation 8: **For:** • *UNDP, UNICEF and UNESCO, RCO Offices in BiH, Montenegro and Serbia;*	**Recommendation 8: The FET recommends that the UNDP, UNICEF and UNESCO in BiH, Montenegro and Serbia explore and work on new partnerships and diversification of funding opportunities.** The need for additional funding, especially in the post-COVID-19 recovery, will increase. The FET recommends that *UNDP, UNICEF and UNESCO* explore other funding opportunities for new social cohesion initiatives. *(linked to the Conclusion 7; other conclusions could be relevant)*
Recommendation 9: **For:** • *UNDP, UNICEF and UNESCO, RCO Offices in BiH, Montenegro and Serbia;* • *National authorities from BiH, Montenegro and Serbia* • *CSOs, Academia, Media*	**Recommendation 9: The FET recommends that participating UN Agencies, in partnership with the national stakeholders, prepare clear and practical sustainability strategy under and perform regular analysis of risks and assumptions** At the current stage of development of social cohesion related systems, structures and capacities within three countries, it is important to consider and provide a longer-term and needs-based capacity development assistance. It is especially important to continue work on the development of capacity for policy making and implementation. The role of the national stakeholders in the implementation of DFF could not be overstated- it is recommended to enhance and ensure genuine involvement of national partners in all activities, from planning to implementation of interventions within social cohesion framework. The FET recommends to UNCTs of participating countries to expand its partnership with CSOs, media and academia. *(linked to the Conclusion 9 and 10, also relevant Conclusion 1,*

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9   Annexes

Annex 1: List of interviewed people

Institution\Organization	Name
Ministry of Youth and Sports	Marija Petronijević, Adviser
Faculty of Political Sciences in Belgrade	Ana Milojević, Project Manager
MODS	Sača Stefanović, Project Manager
KOMS	Miljana Pejić, Project Manager
	Anja Jokić, Project Assistant
Grupa 484	Tamara Cvetković, Project Manager
BFPE	Svetlana Stefanović, Project Manager
Beneficiaries	Jelena Hrnjak, Participant in women's CB
	Dragica Stojanović, Teacher/ participant in the CB activities
	Dobrila Marković, Youth/ participant in discussion events

Institution\Organization	Name
Faculty of Political Sciences in Sarajevo	Emir Vajzović, Project Manager
CSO "Center for Promotion of Civil Society"	Dajana Cvjetković, Project Manager
CSO "Vive zene"	Suzdina Bijedić, Project Manager
CSO "Laboratorium"	Leila Hadžić, president
CSO "Genesis"	Dijana Pejić, director
CSO "Association of visually impaired persons" Tuzla	Tifa Tučić, Director
CSO Nevid teatar	Dejan Andrić, president
CSO „Maja" Kravica	Nada Marković, Project manager
CSO „East West Center"	Ismar Hadžiabdić, Project Manager
Museum of Modern Art of Republika Srpska	Mladen Banjac, Project Manager
Secondary School Tešanj	Albin Softić, director
Center for promotion of voluntarism – CROA	Amela Sirovina ,Project manager
Beneficiaries	Ajla Šišić, participant in youth CB
	Anastasija Ćorović, participant in youth CB
	Nasiha Džihanović, Participant in women's CB
	Ivana Savić, UPSHIFT participant
	Vesna Nezirović, teacher/librarian

	Nada Tokić Glavaš, teacher/librarian
	Mujesira Purić, Journalist
	Hana Imamović, Journalist

Institution\Organization	Name
Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Montenegro	Stanica Anđić, Director, Directorate for UN, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Montenegro, NCB member, Joint programme board member
	Srđan Orlandić, Second Secretary, Directorate for UN, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Montenegro Coordination board member, Joint programme board member
Ministry of Education, Culture, Science and Sports	Majda Mulić, education section
	Danijela Vujošević, Youth and Sports Directorate
	Tijana Vujović, culture section, NCB member
Ministry of Justice and Human rights	Biljana Pejović, NCB member
Faculty of Political Sciences in Podgorica	Nataša Ružić, Project Manager, MNE
CSO "Digitalizuj.me"	Bobana Radović, Youth Innovation Lab Coordinator
CSO "Red Cross"	Jelena Šofranac , Project manager
CSO "SOS Phone" Nikšić	Jovana Perućica Project manager
CSO "Eco Centre Delfin" Kotor	Ljilja Radunović Project Manager
CSO "Djeca Crne Gore"	Sabra Dečević Project Manager
CSO "Prazan Prostor"	Marija Backović Project Manager
Beneficiaries	Tereza Vujošević, Faculty of Political Science, Red Cross Montenegro, Women training participant
	Granica Kovačević, EU Integration Office, Young civil servants training participant
	Ljiljana Milović, teacher
	Bogdana Kostić, youth/grant
	Jelena Tadić, Regional UPSHIFT participant
	Nevena Jovanović, Regional UPSHIFT participant

Institution/Organization	Name
UNDP BiH	Alma Mirvić, Joint Regional Coordinator
	Mirza Puzić, Joint National Coordinator, a.i.
	Pavle Banjac, Communications Lead

	Amra Zorlak, M&E Lead
UNICEF BiH	Zlatan Musić, Consultant
	Nina Popović, Communications
UNESCO / all countries	Lejla Hrelja , Programme Assistant
	Amila Planinčić, Programme Assistant
UNDP MNE	Jelena Miljanić, Joint National Coordinator
	Milica Šćepović, Project Manager
UNICEF MNE	Nikola Vulić, Youth Officer
UNICEF SRB	Stanislava Vučković, Joint National Coordinator
	Aleksandra Anđelić, UNV
	Steliana Nedera, UNDP Resident Representative
	Dr Rownak Khan, UNICEF Representative
Bosnia and Herzegovina	Sinisa Sesum, UNESCO Head of Antenna Office
	Dr Ingrid Macdonald, UN Resident Coordinator
	Jago Salmon, UNRC Head of Office
Montenegro	Daniela Gasparikova, UNDP Resident Representative
	Françoise Jacob, Resident Coordinator
Serbia	Francine Pickup, UNDP Resident Representative
	Deyana Kostadinova, UNICEF Representative

Project document

Progress reports

Final Reg DFF Annual Report Nov 2020

Final Reg DFF Annual Report Nov2019

PBF project progress report- semi-annual (June 2019)

PBF project progress report- semi-annual (June 2020)

PBF project progress report -semi-annual (June 2021)

Annual Work Plans (AWP)

Joint Annual Work Plan_Reg DFF_update Jan 2021

Joint Annual Work Plan_Reg DFF_update May 2020

Joint Annual Work Plan_Reg DFF_update Jan 2019

DFF activities in BIH AWP narrative April 2019

DFF activities in BIH AWP narrative December 2019

DFF activities in BIH AWP narrative December 2020

DFF activities in Serbia AWP explanation

Dialogue for the future - UN MNE activities update January 2020

Dialogue for the future - UN MNE activities

Communication

DFF Communications Plan 2021

Visibility Annex - Serbia

Visibility Annex- Montenegro

Visibility Annex- BiH

Baseline/Endline Survey

Endline Survey – final report

Dialogue Platform Reports

Regional women dialogue report feb 2020

National Dialogue Platform BiH Report

National Dialogue Platform Montenegro Report

National Dialogue Platform Serbia Report

Regional Dialogue Platform Summary Report

Monitoring platform

Project monitoring platform Reg DFF (Detailed Table- 10 2020, consolidated)

Project monitoring platform Reg DFF Nov 2019

PBF Strategic documents

PBF Strategic plan 2017-2019 (June 2018)

PBF Strategy 2020-2024 (final)

Guidance Note on Youth and Peacebuilding (April 2021)

UN Strategic documents

UNDAF Serbia, 2016-2020

UNDAF Bosnia and Herzegovina 2015-2019

UNDAF Montenegro 2017-2021

EC Progress Reports 2018, 2019, 2020 for Serbia, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Montenegro

SEE Strategy

Annex 3 Evaluation matrix

Relevant sub-question	Judgement criteria	Indicators	Data Sources and collection tools	Data analysis
Relevant evaluation criteria: RELEVANCE				
Key Question 1: Has the DFF project aligned its intervention with the peace building strategic priorities and needs of beneficiaries in the participating countries?				
- Were the Project's peacebuilding objectives relevant to the needs of the Project beneficiaries, having in mind political, social and institutional context of the countries where the Project is implemented? - Have any changes been made to the Project design during implementation? If so, did that lead to significant design improvements? - Were coordination, management and financing arrangements clearly defined at the design stage and did these support institutional strengthening and local ownership?	▪ The extent to which the DFF peacebuilding objectives relevant to the needs of the beneficiaries and participating countries ▪ The degree of enduring relevance of the DFF (measured through the flexibility of the project and changes introduced during planning and implementation) ▪ The extent of partners involvement in the design and implementation of the DFF ▪ The extent that DFF followed PBF guidelines during the design, implementation, monitoring and reporting	Results of the analysis of the DFF Project in context of national development and peacebuilding priorities Evidence that DFF recognized and addressed the needs of beneficiaries and target groups Evidence that the DFF intervention logic remained relevant to national governance and peacebuilding priorities within the context of the region Examples of the partners involvement in the design process and their opinions about their role in the design and implementation of the DFF Evidence about the DFF compliance with the PBF framework and examples of conflict-sensitive approach during design and implementation	1. Desk/literature review of relevant documents (including problem analysis conducted by the UN Agencies) 2. Key informants' interviews (semi-structured interviews/ focus groups) 3. Focus groups	Map a theory of change to identify the logic, problem analysis and assumptions behind the DFF Problem/risk analysis of underlying development challenges including national strategic and policy documents Analysis of PB/ conflict sensitive indicators Triangulate data collected from various sources and means (e.g., cross check interview data with desk review to validate or refute TOC).
Relevant evaluation criteria: COHERENCE (AND RESPONSIVENESS)				

Key Question 2: How responsive and integrated into the peacebuilding efforts has the DFF been during its implementation (e.g., UN Agencies country programs, national interventions and activities of other development partners)?

- To what extent did the PBF Project complement the interventions conducted under two BiH-focused PBF projects, as well as work among different entities, especially with other UN actors? - To what degree were the design, implementation, monitoring and reporting aligned with PBF other Projects? - Was the Project flexible to the new circumstances imposed by the COVID-19 pandemic?	• The extent to which DFF complemented other UN PBF-interventions and initiatives of different development partners (especially UN actors) • Evidence of synergies that the DFF established with other interventions related to peacebuilding in the participating countries • The degree to which the DFF aligned its design, implementation, monitoring and reporting with other Projects in this sector • The extent to flexibility of the DFF especially during the COVID-19 pandemic	Examples of synergies between the DFF and other development initiatives and examples of complementarity Opinions of the development partners, UN/ UN Agencies about synergies and cooperation options with DFF Examples of DFF activities to adjust its intervention during the COVID-19 pandemic Opinions of stakeholders and examples of responsiveness and flexibility of the DFF Project during implementation	1. Desk/literature review of relevant documents (including third-party reports and national documents) 2. Key informants' interviews (semi-structured interviews/ focus groups) 3. On-line survey(s) to cover gaps and/ or validate preliminary findings	Analyse peace building interventions of Un Agencies and other development partners and DFF reports and deliverables. Interviews with the key informants and results of on-line survey Triangulate data collected from various sources and means (e.g., primary and secondary data sources).

Relevant evaluation criteria: **CONFLICT SENSITIVITY**

Key Question 3: Has the DFF project considered conflict-sensitivity and followed gender mainstreaming and the "no-one is left behind" principle?

- Did the Project have an explicit approach to conflict-sensitivity? Was the Project relevant to the UN's peacebuilding mandate - How was the 'do no harm' principle applied in the Project's work with beneficiaries? - To what extent has the DFF Project been SDG-driven during formulation and implementation? - To what extent has the DFF Project mainstreamed gender in its activities?	• The extent to which the DFF applied conflict sensitivity and "do no harm principle" • Evidence that the Project has been relevant to peacebuilding mandate • The extent to which the DFF Project support has been relevant to the achievement of the SDGs, in particular SDG16 • The extent to which gender mainstreaming (and human rights-based approach) was considered and implemented within the DFF project	Evidences that the Program followed conflict sensitive approach and applied do-no harm principles Examples of practices in promotion and mainstreaming of gender during formulation and implementation of the DFF project Opinions of the DFF project team and stakeholders about the degree of mainstreaming gender equality and conflict sensitivity during the project preparation and implementation	1. Desk/literature review of relevant documents (including third-party reports and national documents) 2. Key informants' interviews (semi-structured interviews/ focus groups) 3. On-line survey(s) to cover gaps and/ or validate preliminary findings 4. Other as appropriate	Conflict sensitive analysis of the DFF project and other collected information Analyse of the SDG frameworks and progress reports for participating countries National SDG progress reports and other analytical documents Interviews with the key stakeholders (including UN, development organizations, etc) Analysis of on-line data survey Triangulation of the collected primary and secondary data

	▪ The degree of the UN Agencies capacities to implement conflict sensitive approach	Evidence that DFF has been relevant and effective for the achievement of planned targets under the SDG framework Examples of tools for conflict-sensitive Project management and delivery		

Relevant evaluation criteria: EFFICIENCY – RISK TOLERANCE

Key question 4: Has the implementation of the DFF been efficient concerning adherence to the work plans (timely implementation), flexibility and responsiveness?

- Has the DFF been implemented in line with work plans, using available resources (financial, human, technical)? - Has the DFF established sound management practices? *(How well did the Project collect and use data to monitor results? How effectively was updated data used to manage the Project? How well did the Project team communicate with implementing partners, stakeholders and Project beneficiaries on its progress?)* - Were recipient UN agencies' internal capacities adequate for ensuring an ongoing conflict-sensitive approach? - Are there any weaknesses in Project design, coordination, management, human resource skills, and resources? - To what degree did the political developments in each participant country influence the Project's efficiency? - Has the Project been characterized as a "high risk", were risks adequately monitored and mitigated?	▪ The degree of timely implementation of the DFF, in a logical sequence, and availability of inputs in a timely fashion ▪ The extent of existence and utilization of management systems that facilitated efficient implementation of the DFF ▪ The extent to which UN Agencies practices, policies, processes and decision-making capabilities contributed to the efficiency of the DFF Program ▪ The extent to which the DFF team communicated achievements and other priorities (with implementing partners, stakeholders and Project beneficiaries) ▪ The extent to which the political developments in each participant country influence the Project's efficiency ▪ The extent to which risks were adequately monitored and mitigated	Evidence of timely implementation of activities (without delays)- analysis of planned vs implemented activities including utilization of inputs Evidence and records on timely implementation or delays and changes in implementation of plans Evidence that sound management system was in place and facilitated efficient implementation of the DFF Existence of results-oriented and quality monitoring system and reporting systems and examples of monitoring and results reports Evidence and opinions that UN Agencies practices, policies, processes and decision-making capabilities contributed to the efficiency and delivery of outputs Examples of political developments and flexibility of the DFF program during the implementation	1. Desk review of the DFF documents and project management practices 2. Interviews with DFF Project Team 3. Interviews with international development partners 4. Analysis of the UN management practices	Analysis of the DFF management practices Meeting minutes with DFF Team and other stakeholders Socio-economic analysis and conflict sensitive analysis of the participating countries Desk review of the critical indicators Triangulation of the collected primary and secondary data

		Existence of a sound risk management practice and evidence that risks were adequately monitored and mitigated		
-				

Relevant evaluation criteria: **EFFECTIVENESS- COHERENCE-**				

Key question 5: Has the DFF contributed to partnerships and skills-development of the targeted groups to interact across divides and break stereotypes and delivered joint actions and advocating for policies to improve social cohesion in the region?

- To what extent were the Project activities implemented and intended results achieved in this area? What are the main Project accomplishments? - To what extent has the Project contributed to strengthening partnership between youth, civil society organizations, academia, media professionals, teachers? - To what extent has the Project effectively outreached and engaged marginalized groups (i.e., youth, persons with disabilities, returnees, internally displaced, minorities…) in addressing stereotypes and divides? - What are the positive or negative, intended or unintended, peacebuilding changes brought about by the Project? - Has the DFF been effective in supporting joint actions to improve social cohesion in the region? - Has the DFF been effective in advocating and supporting adoption of policies to improve social cohesion in the region?	▪ The extent to which the youth and other target groups enhanced capacities and skills to interact across divides and break stereotypes ▪ The extent to which stakeholders apply the acquired skills and knowledge in their follow-up work as a result of the Project support ▪ Evidence that DFF created peacebuilding changes to the beneficiaries and youth ▪ The extent to which the DFF has been effective in supporting citizens from different groups jointly identify and implement actions that promote social cohesion in the region ▪ The extent that the DFF contributed to strengthening partnership between youth, civil society organizations, academia, media professionals, teachers ▪ The extent to which DFF contributed to political opportunities and commitment to the peace-building and social inclusion recommendations ▪ The extent to which social cohesion policy recommendations have been articulated and implemented	Evidence that youth and other groups enhanced capacities and skills to interact and break stereotypes Evidence about established (new) interactions across divides Opinions of stakeholders (beneficiaries and youth) regarding their application of acquired peacebuilding-related skills and knowledge Perception of improved capacities and practices regarding peacebuilding activities and removal of stereotypes Evidence and examples of joint actions implemented to promote social cohesion in the region Opinions of the citizens, youth, civil society organizations, academia, media professionals, teachers about DFF's support related to joint efforts to identify and implement actions that promote social cohesion in the region Examples of partnerships between youth, civil society	1. DFF Project relevant data extraction 2. Interviews with key informants - focus on validating or refuting lines of inquiry - collecting perceptions about partnerships established and skills developed and actions implemented to interact across borders of break stereotypes. Observations on the "why" and factors that influence or impede effectiveness; 3. On-line survey to cover gaps or validate preliminary findings 4. Other as appropriate	Contribution analysis against the outcomes and outcome indicators Analysis of the DFF achievements versus established targets Counterfactual analysis to check whether results could have been delivered without UN Agencies support Completion of a template of 'factors' with analysis of 'strength of influence (the factors affect DFF's ability to achieve its objectives)'

- What are the positive or negative, intended or unintended, peacebuilding changes and social cohesion brought about by the Project?	▪ The extent to which political and public support in participating countries for endorsement of social cohesion policy recommendations has been ensured.	organizations, academia, media professionals, teachers that have been created with DGG's support Examples of advocacy by stakeholders for policies to improve social cohesion in the region. Opinions of the stakeholders about DFF's contribution to inputs to the peace-building and social inclusion recommendations and policies Evidence of political and public support in participating countries for endorsement of social cohesion policy recommendations.		

Relevant evaluation criteria: **IMPACT- CATALYTIC**

KQ6 Has the DFF contributed to an enabling environment for peacebuilding including mechanisms for continues improvement of the situation in the region?

- Has the Project contributed or is likely to contribute to medium or long-term peacebuilding, social, economic, or other results? - What are the main benefits (qualitative and quantitative) for the target groups, including for vulnerable groups? - To what extent are key stakeholders/final beneficiaries satisfied with the Project implementation, specifically in terms of the partnership support and what are specific expectations for the potential follow-up assistance? - Has the Project helped to create broader platforms for	▪ The extent to which the DFF contributed to an enabling environment for peacebuilding and social economic improvements in the region ▪ The extent to which DFF ensured (qualitative and quantitative) benefits to people in the participating countries ▪ Evidence that changes occurred in lives of women and men in the targeted countries ▪ The extent to which DFF contributed to established partnerships (at levels) to support peacebuilding efforts and contribute to European Integration processes	Evidence on improvement of the peacebuilding and socio-economic situation (measured by qualitative and quantitative indicators and third-party reports, such as EU Progress reports, also opinions on benefits for the target groups) Evidence (including opinions of stakeholders) that people benefited from the DFF Opinions of the stakeholders about the DFF implementation, specifically in terms of the partnership support	1. Desk review of the DFF documents and project deliverables 2. Interviews with stakeholders and partners 3. Analysis of the partners (UNICEF, UNDP, UNESCO) corporate management practices	Analysis of peacebuilding and socio-economic indicators Analysis of the DFF reports and deliverables and also other reports of development partners Analysis of meeting minutes and results of the online survey Triangulation of primary and secondary data

peacebuilding in the target countries? Was PBF funding used to leverage political windows of opportunity for engagement?	- Evidence that the Project helped to create broader platforms for peacebuilding in the target countries - The extent to which PBF leveraged political windows of opportunity for engagement?	Examples of broader platforms for peacebuilding in the region Opinions of the stakeholders about the PBF actions to leverage political windows of opportunities		

Relevant evaluation criteria: **SUSTAINABILITY- CATALYTIC -INNOVATION**

KQ7: Has the DFF contributed to sustainable partnerships, polices and capacities of stakeholders to continue confidence strengthening and peace building processes in the region?

- To what extent are the Project outputs sustainable? How could the Project results be further sustainably projected and expanded? - To what extent has the Project approach (intervention strategy) managed to create ownership of the key national stakeholders? - How novel or innovative was the Project approach? What are innovative practices and approaches captured in the implementation process? - Has the RPP been financially and/or programmatically catalytic, enabling scaling-up / match other peacebuilding work?	▪ The extent to which (financial) sustainability of the achieved results and made changes has been ensured- financial resources ▪ Evidence about the opportunities for continuation and expansion of the results and activities in the area of DFF intervention ▪ The extent to which the DFF responded to skills and capacity development needs for policy planning and implementation in areas of intervention ▪ The extent to which stakeholders identified areas for future considerations and follow-up actions ▪ The extent to which DFF has been financially and programmatically catalytic ▪ The level of DFF's interaction and cooperation with other development initiatives ▪ Evidence that the DFF's tested and followed novel or innovative approaches ▪ To what extent has the Project contributed to strengthening partnership between youth, civil	Opinions of the stakeholders regarding sustainability of the achieved results and progress in the areas of the DFF's intervention Evidence that the DFF and partners have ensured financial and operational sustainability of the achieved results Opinion about appropriateness and responsiveness of capacity development programs to stakeholders' needs Stakeholders' opinions about partnership, actual involvement and ownership of results achieved during implementation of the DFF Opinions of the stakeholders about areas for future considerations and follow-up actions Examples of strengthened partnerships between youth, civil society organizations, academia, media professionals, teachers (with DFF support)	1. Desk review of the DFF documents and project deliverables 2. Interviews with stakeholders and partners 3. On-line survey with the stakeholders 4. Analysis of the partners (UNICEF, UNDP, UNESCO) corporate management practices 5. Third-party analysis and analytical documents	Analysis of peacebuilding and socio-economic indicators Analysis of the DFF reports and deliverables and also other reports of development partners Analysis of meeting minutes and results of the online survey Triangulation of primary and secondary data

	society organizations, academia, media professionals, teachers?	Evidence of the DFF interaction with other complementary projects (including implemented by the UN) and examples of synergies with other interventions		
		Examples of innovative practices and novel approaches tested and followed during the Project's implementation		

Annex 4: Interview Guides

During the primary data collection phase, the Final Evaluation will use semi-structured interviews with the main questions provided in this interview guide; this will enable us to ask additional, more specific questions, in line with the Evaluation Matrix and the Terms of References.

The priority is given on-line interviews and the intention is to ensure a representative sample during the primary data collection phase. Also, other means such as on-line interviewing will also be considered.

Key informants interview guide: UNDP/ UNICEF/ UNESCO/ DFF Project Team

Please describe the circumstances under which you have engaged in the project design and/or implementation.

Please describe the process of project design. What do you find very successful, and where were the challenging issues? How did the designing project team address these issues?

What was the role of national and main project teams during project design?

Relevance

- In your opinion, how this project design was well suited to the context and objectives in terms of the promotion of regional cooperation, peacebuilding, and conflict prevention? Were there some aspects of the project that should be set differently and why?

- Do you think that project objectives are properly aligned with current national policies related to the regional cooperation, building more regional cohesion?

- Do you think that project interventions are designed adequately to the needs and potentials of beneficiaries to actively contribute to the increased cooperation and cohesion in the region?

- Have the external developments affected implementation of the DFF: how flexible and responsive was the Project Team in addressing the COVID19 pandemic and its implications? Are there other examples of flexibility?

- Do you think that some important areas or forms of interventions that can contribute to the regional cooperation and cohesion were left out of the project scope? If YES, what were those, and why?

- To what extent has the DFF Project incorporated principles of gender equality and human rights during its design and implementation? Please provide your opinion and some examples.

- How much Agenda for Sustainable Development until 2030 was taken into account during project design? If you can indicate to which specific SDGs and targets this project was meant to contribute? How was that discussed in the designing team?

Coherence:

- When designing the regional project did you have in mind the need to achieve synergy with other similar initiatives? If YES, which ones? If NOT, why not?

- During project design did you plan to enhance or establish certain partnerships? If YES, which ones? Why?

- (BiH specific) To what extent did the PBF Project complement the interventions conducted under two BiH-focused PBF projects, as well as work among different entities, especially with other UN actors?

- To what degree were the design, implementation, monitoring and reporting aligned with other PBF Projects? How this was planned during the design phase?

Effectiveness

- In your opinion, how effective was the implementation of the project? What were the main achieved results? Are there any shortcomings? Are there any unforeseen positive or negative outcomes?

- More specifically,

  o Has the DFF contributed to skills-development of the targeted groups, especially to interact across divides and break stereotypes?

  o Do you think that the DFF was effective in strengthening partnerships between youth, civil society organizations, academia, media professionals, teachers?

     o   Do you think that the DFF effectively reached and engaged marginalized groups (i.e., youth, persons with disabilities, returnees, internally displaced, minorities…) in addressing stereotypes and divides?

     o   Has the DFF been effective in supporting joint actions to improve social cohesion in the region? Please provide some examples

     o   Has the DFF been effective in advocating and supporting adoption of policies to improve social cohesion in the region? Please provide examples, if you know

     o   What are the positive or negative, intended or unintended, social cohesion or peacebuilding changes brought about by the Project?

Conflict sensitivity

- Did the Project have an explicit approach to conflict-sensitivity? Were recipient UN agencies' internal capacities adequate for ensuring an ongoing conflict-sensitive approach? What tools have been used?

- How was the 'do no harm' principle applied in the Project's work with beneficiaries?

Efficiency

- Has the Project Team used management systems that facilitated efficient implementation of the Project? Have the management practices, policies, processes and decision-making capabilities contributed to the efficiency of the DFF Project?

- Has the DFF Team reported deviations or delays from the approved work plans? What was the response from the Project (and has this response been appropriate?)?

Risk tolerance and innovation

- Has the Project been characterized as a "high risk"? Were risks adequately monitored and mitigated?

- How novel or innovative was the Project approach? What are innovative practices and approaches captured in the implementation process?

Impact

- Has the DFF contributed to an enabling environment for peacebuilding including mechanisms for continued improvement of the situation in the region? Please provide examples, of medium or long-term social cohesion, social, economic, or other results in the region? On what evidence you base this opinion?

- What are the main benefits (qualitative and quantitative) for the target groups, including for vulnerable groups? On what evidence you base this opinion?

- To what extent are key stakeholders/final beneficiaries satisfied with the Project implementation, specifically in terms of the partnership support and what are specific expectations for the potential follow-up assistance? On what evidence you base this opinion?

Sustainability

- Has the DFF contributed to sustainable partnerships, polices and capacities of stakeholders to continue confidence strengthening and peace building processes in the region

- To what extent are the Project outputs sustainable? How could the Project results be further sustainably projected and expanded?

- What would be future priority interventions to ensure long-term sustainability of the Project achievements, having in mind the current COVID- 19 related context?

Key informants interview guide: Other stakeholders (representatives of ministries and faculties)

Please, describe what was your role during the design and implementation of the DFF project?

How well you were informed about the project implementation and results? (based on the answer, questions will be selected among following)

Relevance

- In your opinion, was DFF designed to address key issues of regional cooperation, peacebuilding and social cohesion of the region in the way that is in line with needs and potentials of beneficiary groups?

- Are there some areas important for promotion of regional cooperation, peacebuilding and social cohesion in the region that remained outside of the scope of the project?

- Have the external developments affected implementation of the DFF: how flexible and responsive was the Project Team in addressing the COVID19 pandemic and its implications?

- To what extent has the DFF Project incorporated in its design and implementation the key principles of gender equality and human rights? Please, provide your opinion and some examples.

- How DFF Project contributed to the achievement of the SDGs in the countries? Please provide examples and targets (if available).

Complementarity and coherence:

- How effective has the DFF Project been in building partnerships (national and international development partners and other stakeholders)? Please provide examples - who are other partners in the area of promotion of regional cooperation, social cohesion and peace building in the region? How has the Project ensured complementarity of their actions?

- *(BiH specific) To what extent did the PBF Project complement the interventions conducted under two BiH-focused PBF projects, as well as work among different entities, especially with other UN actors?*

Effectiveness

- Do you think that DFF contributed to skills-development of the targeted groups, especially to interact across divides and break stereotypes?

- Do you think that the DFF was effective in strengthening partnerships between youth, civil society organizations, academia, media professionals, teachers?

- Do you think that the DFF effectively reached and engaged marginalized groups (i.e., youth, persons with disabilities, returnees, internally displaced, minorities…) in addressing stereotypes and divides?

- To your knowledge, has the DFF been effective in supporting joint actions to improve social cohesion in the region? Please provide some examples if possible.

- Has the DFF been effective in advocating and supporting adoption of policies to improve social cohesion in the region? Please provide examples, if you know.

- What are the positive or negative, intended or unintended, changes brought about by the Project from the perspective of regional cooperation, conflict prevention and peacebuilding?

Conflict sensitivity

- Did the Project have an explicit approach to conflict-sensitivity? Were recipient UN agencies' internal capacities adequate for ensuring an ongoing conflict-sensitive approach? What tools have been used?

- How was the 'do no harm' principle applied in the Project's work with beneficiaries?

Risk tolerance and innovation

Has the Project been characterized as a "high risk"? Were risks adequately monitored and mitigated? How novel or innovative was the Project approach? What are innovative practices and approaches captured in the implementation process?

Impact

- In your opinion, has the DFF contributed to an enabling environment for improvement of regional cooperation and cohesion, peacebuilding and conflict prevention? If YES, what are the most prominent achievements? If YES, how the project managed to contribute to that? Please provide examples, of medium or long-term social cohesion, social, economic, or other results in the region?

- In your opinion, what are the main benefits (qualitative and quantitative) of the project for the target groups, including for vulnerable groups? Could you provide concrete examples?

- To your knowledge, to what extent are key stakeholders/final beneficiaries satisfied with the Project implementation, specifically in terms of the partnership support and what are specific expectations for the potential follow-up assistance?

Sustainability and catalytic

- Has the DFF contributed to sustainable partnerships, polices and capacities of stakeholders to continue confidence strengthening and building trust and cooperation in the specific country (Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, Serbia)?

- Could you estimate to what extent are the Project outputs sustainable? How could the Project results be further sustainably projected and replicated or upscaled?

- What would be future priority interventions to ensure long-term sustainability of the Project achievements, having in mind the current COVID- 19 related context?

DFF Monitoring Team

- How appropriate and realistic have been the DFF's outputs, outcomes, and established targets? How adequate have been the indicators to capture work of the DFF?

- Have you been using the existing indicators to monitor and measure progress under outcomes and outputs?

- Was there a need to revise and update the indicators (including their benchmarks- targets and baselines) to better reflect external developments and progress achieved?

- Do you think that the indicators and targets have been gender-sensitive sufficiently?

- Has the DFF been effective in strengthening the capacities for data collection and analysis to ensure disaggregated data and data related to social divides, ethnic stereotypes, peace building?

International development partners/ donors

- Could you please introduce yourself, your organization and your role in this organization?

- Are you familiar with the DFF Project? If yes, how is your work related to the areas of intervention of this Project?

- Which specific conflict prevention/ peace building priorities of the country and needs of people (especially vulnerable) your organization is addressing?

- Do you think that UN Agencies and the DFF Project have been appropriately focused on the peace building areas? How would you assess your cooperation?

- Have there been any external factors that affected or affecting peace building process, or contributing to greater social divides and stronger ethnic stereotypes?

- From your perspective, what areas should be prioritized in the future in the area of peace building, removing social divides and addressing ethnic stereotypes?

- Was there an effective nation-driven mechanism for donor coordination in place? If not, what other mechanisms for donor coordination were in place?

Guide for group interviews: national coordination teams

Please describe the circumstances under which you have engaged in the project design and/or implementation.

Please describe the process of project design. What do you find very successful, and where were the challenging issues? How did the designing project team address these issues?

What was the role of national and main project teams during project design?

Relevance

- In your opinion, how this project design was well suited to the context and objectives in terms of the promotion of regional cooperation, peacebuilding, and conflict prevention? Were there some aspects of the project that should be set differently and why?

- Do you think that project objectives are properly aligned with current national policies related to the regional cooperation, building more regional cohesion?

- Do you think that project interventions are designed adequately to the needs and potentials of beneficiaries to actively contribute to the increased cooperation and cohesion in the region?

- Have the external developments affected implementation of the DFF: how flexible and responsive was the Project Team in addressing the COVID19 pandemic and its implications? Are there other examples of flexibility?

- Do you think that some important areas or forms of interventions that can contribute to the regional cooperation and cohesion were left out of the project scope? If YES, what were those, and why?

- To what extent has the DFF Project incorporated principles of gender equality and human rights during its design and implementation? Please provide your opinion and some examples.

- How much Agenda for Sustainable Development until 2030 was taken into account during project design? If you can indicate to which specific SDGs and targets this project was meant to contribute? How was that discussed in the designing team?

Coherence:

- When designing the regional project did you have in mind the need to achieve synergy with other similar initiatives? If YES, which ones? If NOT, why not?

- During project design did you plan to enhance or establish certain particular partnerships? If YES, which ones? Why?

- (BiH specific) To what extent did the PBF Project complement the interventions conducted under two BiH-focused PBF projects, as well as work among different entities, especially with other UN actors?

- To what degree were the design, implementation, monitoring and reporting aligned with other PBF Projects? How this was planned during the design phase?

Effectiveness

- In your opinion, how effective was the implementation of the project? What were the main achieved results? Are there any shortcomings? Are there any unforeseen positive or negative outcomes?

- More specifically,

    o Has the DFF contributed to skills-development of the targeted groups, especially to interact across divides and break stereotypes?

    o Do you think that the DFF was effective in strengthening partnerships between youth, civil society organizations, academia, media professionals, teachers?

o   Do you think that the DFF effectively reached and engaged marginalized groups (i.e., youth, persons with disabilities, returnees, internally displaced, minorities…) in addressing stereotypes and divides?

o   Has the DFF been effective in supporting joint actions to improve social cohesion in the region? Please provide some examples

o   Has the DFF been effective in advocating and supporting adoption of policies to improve social cohesion in the region? Please provide examples, if you know

o   What are the positive or negative, intended or unintended, social cohesion or peacebuilding changes brought about by the Project?

Conflict sensitivity

▪   Did the Project have an explicit approach to conflict-sensitivity? Were recipient UN agencies' internal capacities adequate for ensuring an ongoing conflict-sensitive approach? What tools have been used?

▪   How was the 'do no harm' principle applied in the Project's work with beneficiaries?

Efficiency

▪   Has the Project Team used management systems that facilitated efficient implementation of the Project? Have the management practices, policies, processes and decision-making capabilities contributed to the efficiency of the DFF Project?

▪   Has the DFF Team reported deviations or delays from the approved work plans? What was the response from the Project (and has this response been appropriate?)?

Risk tolerance and innovation

▪   Has the Project been characterized as a "high risk"? Were risks adequately monitored and mitigated?

▪   How novel or innovative was the Project approach? What are innovative practices and approaches captured in the implementation process?

I**mpact**

▪   Has the DFF contributed to an enabling environment for peacebuilding including mechanisms for continued improvement of the situation in the region? Please provide examples, of medium or long-term social cohesion, social, economic, or other results in the region? On what evidence you base this opinion?

▪   What are the main benefits (qualitative and quantitative) for the target groups, including for vulnerable groups? On what evidence you base this opinion?

▪   To what extent are key stakeholders/final beneficiaries satisfied with the Project implementation, specifically in terms of the partnership support and what are specific expectations for the potential follow-up assistance? On what evidence you base this opinion?

Sustainability

▪   Has the DFF contributed to sustainable partnerships, polices and capacities of stakeholders to continue confidence strengthening and peace building processes in the region

▪   To what extent are the Project outputs sustainable? How could the Project results be further sustainably projected and expanded?

▪   What would be future priority interventions to ensure long-term sustainability of the Project achievements, having in mind the current COVID- 19 related context?

Guide for group interviews: partner CSOs

Could you please introduce yourself, your institution and your respective function?

Please, describe what was your role during the design and implementation of the DFF project?

Relevance

- In your opinion how is DFF Project aligned with peacebuilding and social cohesion objectives in your country? Is it relevant to strategic priorities and challenges during the entire period of implementation? If not, what has changed in the Project environment?

- Has the DFF responded to the mission and needs of your organization and groups that you are representing?

- Has the DFF been flexible and responsive to your needs? Are there other examples of flexibility? Could you provide some examples?

- From your perspective, is there a need to expand the areas of intervention of the DFF? If yes, what could be other priorities and issues related to peacebuilding and social cohesion, social divides and other issues that the Project could address (complementing on-going activities)?

- Are there other initiatives supporting peace building and social cohesion in your country? Has DFF Project team coordinated activities with these partners, from your perspective? Please provide examples- who are other partners and how has the Project ensured complementarity?

- Did the DFF affect gender equality under its outcomes and within the areas of focus?

- Was the DFF aligned with gender equality policies and obligations country has through participation in key international conventions (CEDAW, Istanbul Convention, Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action)?

Effectiveness (depending on outputs and area of cooperation)

- How would you assess your partnership with the DFF Project? Did it contribute to more effective delivery of results?

- Have you partnered with the DFF to address skills of the targeted groups? Do you have some examples of interaction across divides and break of stereotypes?

- Do you think that you together with DFF effectively reached and engaged marginalized groups (i.e., youth, persons with disabilities, returnees, internally displaced, minorities…) in addressing stereotypes and divides?

- Have you been involved with DFF in supporting joint actions to improve social cohesion in the region? Please provide some examples

- Have you been working together with DFF in advocating and supporting adoption of policies to improve social cohesion in the region? Please provide examples, if you know

- Have you achieved any positive or negative, intended or unintended, peacebuilding changes in partnership with DFF?

- What would you identify as key positive factors that contributed to the achievement of results in the project components in which you participated? And what would you identify as negative, inhibiting factors? How did you address these negative factors if they were under your area of responsibility?

- Did you get any support from the project team to adjust your project activities to online format or other forms that were introduced as adjustments to the COVID pandemic? Please describe. Was that support sufficient for you to implement your activities in accordance with your obligations? If not, what were shortcomings?

Efficiency

- From your perspective, has the Project been timely implemented? Were there deviations or delays that you are aware off? What were the reasons for these deviations or delays?

- How was your communication and cooperation with the DFF Project?
- How would you describe your reporting obligations, were procedures very demanding?

Conflict sensitivity

- Did the Project have an explicit approach to conflict-sensitivity? Were recipient UN agencies' internal capacities adequate for ensuring an ongoing conflict-sensitive approach? What tools have been used?
- How was the 'do no harm' principle applied in the Project's work with beneficiaries?

Risk tolerance and innovation

- Has the Project been characterized as a "high risk"? Were risks adequately monitored and mitigated?

- How novel or innovative was the Project approach? What are innovative practices and approaches captured in the implementation process?

Sustainability

- Do you think that the established results will last after the end of the assistance through the DFF?

- How effective was the DFF team in coordinating activities with your organization?

- Have you participated in planning and implementation of Project activities? Do you think that involvement of your organization was sufficient and adequate?

- Has the Project responded to the capacity development needs of your organization in the areas of intervention?

- What would be future priority interventions to ensure long-term sustainability of the Project achievements, having in mind the current COVID- 19 related context?

Impact

- Has the DFF contributed to an enabling environment for peacebuilding and social cohesion, including mechanisms for continues improvement of the situation in the region? Please provide examples of medium or long-term peacebuilding, social, economic, or other results in the region?

- Are you and the final beneficiaries satisfied with the support you have received from the Project?

FGD guide for final beneficiaries

Thank you for taking participation in this FGD organized for the purpose of final evaluation of DFF project. You were selected as a beneficiary of the project and we would like to discuss with you several issues which will help us to understand the effects of the project and to recommend possible improvements for future similar actions. Your participation is voluntary and confidential and nothing you say will be linked to your identity. Information will be used only for the purpose of the evaluation.

Please, could you briefly present yourself and indicate in which project activities you have participated.

- How much you are familiar with overall project?

- In your opinion, do you think this kind of projects/activities in which you participated are needed in your country? Why? What are the main problems that are addressed by this project?

- And for you personally, how much this project/activity was useful? What have you achieved through participation in this project?

- How you can use the new knowledge/skills achieved through this project in your everyday life? Are there any obstacles to implement newly acquired knowledge or to apply norms and values you developed due to the participation in the project? What are these obstacles? If not, how this changed your life, practices, social relations?

- Would you like to participate in the future in similar projects/activities? Why?

- What would you recommend in regard to building trust and strengthening peace and social cohesion in the region, what needs to be done and what can be done through similar projects?

Individual interview consent form template - minors

Dear (XY),

To assess the achievements of the joint UN project "Fostering Dialogue and Social Cohesion in and Between Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro and Serbia (Dialogue for the Future)" a team of researchers is conducting number of interviews with relevant stakeholders. You are contacted because we believe that you possess a valuable knowledge and experience that will enable us to determine an overall added value of the project to social cohesion and peacebuilding in the three project countries.

We would like to ask you several questions about your opinion and experience. The interview will be conducted in a group of young people of the similar background as yours by a trained interviewed with experience. If you consent, the group interview will be recorded by the interviewer for the purposes of transcribing accurate notes of your answers. After transcription, the interviewer will permanently delete the recording and anonymize the text so that your statements and opinion can never be traced back to you. In the report you will be referred as a "young person".

You are free to withdraw any statement given during the interview or ask for your words to be except from the report without stating your reasons. Also, you are free not to answer any question that you do not feel comfortable answering or leave the discussion at any time.

You can contact the primary researcher (name of the lead researcher in the respective country and its contact e mail) in order to inquire about the evaluation report and how your statement is used in the report.

Also, we will contact your parents/caretakers for their consent.

If you agree to these terms, please sign the form.

Name in capital letters:

Signature:

Date:

Group interview consent form template - minors

Dear (XY),

In order to assess the achievements of the joint UN project "Fostering Dialogue and Social Cohesion in and Between Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro and Serbia (Dialogue for the Future)" a team of researchers is conducting number of interviews with relevant stakeholders, You are contacted because we believe that your son/daughter possess a valuable knowledge and experience that will enable us to determine an overall added value of the project to social cohesion and peacebuilding in the three project countries.

In order to do so, we would like to ask him/her several questions about his/her opinion and experience. The interview will be conducted in a group of young people of the similar background as his/hers by a trained interviewed with experience. If you consent, the group interview will be recorded by the interviewer for the purposes of transcribing accurate notes of your answers. After transcription, the interviewer will permanently delete the recording and anonymize the text so that his/her statements and opinion can never be traced back to you. In the report he/she will only be referred to as a "young person".

He/she is free to withdraw any statement given during the interview or ask for her/his words to be except from the report without stating your reasons. Also, he/she are free not to answer any question that she/he does not feel comfortable answering or leave the discussion at any time.

You can contact the primary researcher (name of the lead researcher in the respective country and its contact e mail) in order to inquire about the evaluation report and how your statement is used in the report.

Also, we will ask her or him for the assent to take part.

If you agree to these terms, please sign the form.

Name in capital letters:

Relation to the respondent:

Signature:

Date:

Individual interview consent form template - adults

Dear (XY),

In order to assess the achievements of the joint UN project "Fostering Dialogue and Social Cohesion in and Between Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro and Serbia (Dialogue for the Future)" a team of researchers is conducting number of interviews with relevant stakeholders, You are contacted because we believe that you possess a valuable knowledge and experience that will enable us to determine an overall added value of the project to social cohesion and peacebuilding in the three project countries.

In order to do so, we would like to ask you several questions about your opinion and experience. The interview will be conducted by a trained interviewed with experience. If you consent, the interview will be recorded by the interviewer for the purposes of transcribing accurate notes of your answers. After transcription, the interviewer will permanently delete the recording and anonymize the text so that your statements and opinion can never be traced back to you. In the report you will be referred as a "representative of type of organization" that you work for.

You are free to withdraw any statement given during the interview or ask for this interview to be except from the report without stating your reasons. Also, you are free not to answer any question that you do not feel comfortable answering.

You can contact the primary researcher (name of the lead researcher in the respective country and its contact e mail) in order to inquire about the evaluation report and how your statement is used in the report.

If you agree to these terms, please sign the form.

Name in capital letters:

Signature:

Date:

Group interview consent form template - adults

Dear (XY),

In order to assess the achievements of the joint UN project "Fostering Dialogue and Social Cohesion in and Between Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro and Serbia (Dialogue for the Future)" a team of researchers is conducting number of interviews with relevant stakeholders, You are contacted because we believe that you possess a valuable knowledge and experience that will enable us to determine an overall added value of the project to social cohesion and peacebuilding in the three project countries.

In order to do so, we would like to ask you several questions about your opinion and experience. The interview will be conducted in a group of people of the similar background as yours by a trained interviewed with experience. If you consent, the group interview will be recorded by the interviewer for the purposes of transcribing accurate notes of your answers. After transcription, the interviewer will permanently delete the recording and anonymize the text so that your statements and opinion can never be traced back to you. In the report you will be referred as a "young person", "female or male teacher", "a person working for media", etc.

You are free to withdraw any statement given during the interview or ask for your words to be except from the report without stating your reasons. Also, you are free not to answer any question that you do not feel comfortable answering or leave the discussion at any time.

You can contact the primary researcher (name of the lead researcher in the respective country and its contact e mail) in order to inquire about the evaluation report and how your statement is used in the report.

If you agree to these terms, please sign the form.

Name in capital letters:

Signature:

Date:

Annex 5: DFF Results Framework

Outcomes	Outputs	Indicators	Means of Verification/ frequency of collection	Indicator milestones
Outcome 1: Stability and trust in the region, and especially in BiH, are enhanced.		*Outcome indicator 1 a:* Rank of Bosnia and Herzegovina in the 2018 Global Peace Index. *Baseline (2018):* 89 out of 163 countries. *Target (2020):* Improved ranking.	Global Peace Index of the Institute for Economics and Peace.	The rankings are published annually.
		Outcome Indicator 1 b: Percentage of youth indicating higher levels of trust towards other ethnic groups in the region. *Baseline (2017):* low overall level of trust between youth of different ethnicities[48]. *Target (2020):* 50% of surveyed youth, particularly in BIH (including youth who are direct project beneficiaries) report increased trust toward members of other ethnicities.	Findings of the perception survey commissioned by the programme. uReport data (UNICEF-led). Entry- and exit surveys for youth grantees and dialogue platform participants. Final Programme Evaluation Report.	Baseline perception survey with representative sample from all participating countries conducted by the 5th month of the programme implementation. Entry- and exit surveys conducted with grant beneficiaries (upon signing and closing of grant contracts, 9th and 16th months of the programme implementation respectively). Entry- and exit surveys conducted with all dialogue platform participants (political leaders and stakeholder groups) at the first and last gatherings
		Outcome Indicator 1 c: Level of collaboration to address mistrust and social divides between citizens from different groups in the participating countries, with their peers in Bosnia and Herzegovina.	Perception study commissioned by the programme. Entry- and exit surveys for grantees and dialogue platform participants.	

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		Baseline (2017): low overall levels of cross-country collaboration addressing mistrust and social divides (BiH vis-a-vis neighboring countries). *Target (2020):* Increased level of cross-country collaboration to address mistrust and social divides between citizens, manifested through at least 20 sustainable social cohesion partnerships generated as a result of the programme.	Final Programme Evaluation Report.	respectively. End-line perception survey conducted in the last 2 months of the programme implementation. Final Evaluation of the programme will be conducted in the last 2 months of the programme implementation.
		Outcome Indicator 1 d: Level of media literacy of participating countries in the Media Literacy Index. *Baseline (2018):* Bosnia and Herzegovina ranking 25th; Croatia ranking 44th place, Montenegro ranking 28th place and Serbia ranking 31st place[49]. *Target (2020):* Increased ranking of participating countries.	Media Literacy Index, Open Society Institute – Sofia.	The Media Literacy Index is conducted annually.
		Outcome Indicator 1 e: % of young people who believe that reconciliation in the region is enhanced and the region is a safe and peaceful place. *Baseline (2018):* to be defined upon project commencement *Target (2020):* 10 % increase by the end of project	Perception Study commission by the programme. RYCO Monitoring and Evaluation Tool. Entry and exit surveys for grantees and dialogue	

				platform participants.	

	Output 1.1: **Different groups in the countries of the region, and youth in particular, acquire and practice skills to help break stereotypes and constructively interact across divides.** List of activities under this Output: 1.1.1 Establish methodological framework to enhance capacity of each stakeholder group (adolescents, youth, women, teachers, media). 1.1.2 Enhance peacebuilding capacities of youth and adolescents. 1.1.3 Enhance peacebuilding capacities for women's groups. 1.1.4 Enhance capacities of teachers/trainers for promotion of cultural diversity, inter-cultural dialogue and tolerance. 1.1.5. Enhance capacities of media to promote media literacy and amplify positive story-telling.	*Output indicator 1.1 a:* Number of people (teachers, youth, women, journalists and editors, sex- and gender-disaggregated) from participating 4 countries with increased knowledge and skills to bridge social divides. *Baseline (2018):* Insufficient number of people (particularly teachers, youth and women) capacitated to support social cohesion in the region. *Target (2020):* At least 1900, as follows: (i) 800 adolescents (10 – 18 years old); (ii) 800 young people (18 – 30 years old) among whom 50% women; (iii) 200 teachers, among whom 50% women and (iv) 120 journalists and editors. *Output indicator 1.1 b:* Number of stakeholders who apply the acquired skills and knowledge in their follow-up work as a result of the programme support. *Baseline (2018):* n/a. *Target (2020):* At least 50% of all stakeholders (in various target groups) apply the skills and knowledge acquired through the programme in their follow-up work.	Entry- and exit capacity development surveys filled in by trainees. Lists of participants in training activities. Programme progress/final report.	Capacity development support for all programme target groups is completed by the 7th month of the programme implementation.
	Output 1.2: **Citizens from different groups**	*Output Indicator 2.1 a:* Total number of people (particularly youth) from participating countries who	Lists of participants from the dialogue events.	In terms of dialogue platform sequencing, the approach is as follows: in-

		platforms and implemented with the programme support. *Baseline (2017):* n/a. *Target: (2020):* At least 10,000 people (whereby 50% are female, and among whom at least 5,000 adolescents and youth) from participating countries directly benefit from social cohesion actions. *Output Indicator 2.1 d:* % of the dialogue platforms' recommendations for social cohesion in the region implemented with the joint programme's support. *Baseline (2017):* n/a. *Target: (2020):* At least 20% of the dialogue platforms recommendations for social cohesion in the region implemented with the programme support.		
	Output 1.3: **Policy recommendations to improve social cohesion in the region are effectively advocated for, and endorsed by, authorities and relevant stakeholders.** List of activities under this Output: 1.3.1. Meetings with decision-makers on policy recommendations.	*Output indicator 1.3 a:* Number of effective advocacy channels (engaging equal numbers of both sexes) leveraging political and public support within participating countries for endorsement of social cohesion policy recommendations. *Baseline (2018):* UN agencies in the participating countries have deployed successful advocacy efforts to promote social cohesion.	Media coverage, photos, videos capturing advocacy and formal endorsement of social cohesion recommendations. Programme reports. Materials from advocacy events.	Emerging social cohesion recommendations from the dialogue platforms are in place by the 12th month of the programme implementation, so there is sufficient time for advocacy efforts. Social cohesion recommendations are formally endorsed by

	1.3.2. Support to policy advocacy campaigns. 1.3.3. Organize final regional dialogue platform.	*Target (2020):* At least 4 inter-connected and mutually-reinforcing advocacy channels help leverage political and public support for endorsement of social cohesion policy recommendations, including: (i) UN-led discussions with political leaders and policy-makers; (ii) regional dialogue platform; (iii) civil society/youth networks campaigns inspired through the programme; (iv) media. *Output indicator 1.3 b:* Number of social cohesion policy recommendations voiced through the regional dialogue platform that are endorsed by authorities and international community and contribute to their effective follow-up implementation. *Baseline (2018): n/a*. *Target (2020):* At least 5 policy recommendations formally endorsed by authorities and the international community.	Formal decisions and documents of authorities or the international community evidencing endorsement of the social cohesion recommendations.	relevant authorities / international community by the last month of the programme implementation, with strong indications for these during the second regional dialogue platform.

Annex 6: Terms of reference

Annex II - Terms of Reference

Provision of Services: Final Evaluation of a United Nations (UN) Joint Programme

BACKGROUND

"Fostering dialogue and social cohesion in and between Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro and Serbia (Dialogue for the Future)" joint regional programme contributes to trust building and stability by providing structured opportunities for dialogue, action and policy recommendations on common social cohesion priorities in and among Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro and Republic of Serbia. The joint programme is implemented by UNDP, UNICEF and UNESCO in these three countries, and funded by the UN Peacebuilding Fund (PBF) in the overall amount of $4,183,992.51 . UNDP Bosnia and Herzegovina has the lead (convening) role. It has been informed by two phases of the Dialogue for the Future in Bosnia and Herzegovina and developed at the initiative of the Presidency of Bosnia and Herzegovina. The expansion into the region was recommended during the 2015 Budva Summit of the Brdo-Brijuni process, with participation of the highest elected leaders of the participating countries.

PROGRAMME DESCRIPTION

The Dialogue for the Future joint programme posits the hypothesis that if members from different groups in the region, and especially youth, are sufficiently capacitated to engage in constructive dialogue and provided structured opportunities to identify social cohesion priorities and communicate them to their elected leaders and relevant institutions through dialogue platforms, and address them through joint programmes and activities, then this will ensure broad-based participation and create partnerships across the three countries in pursuit of commonly identified priorities because skill-building for constructive dialogue, identification of common social cohesion priorities and joint action to address them will help break down barriers among various groups and help build a sense of connectedness and understanding, which are requisite in resilience to conflict.

The Joint UN Programme seeks to contribute to the following outcome and outputs:

Outcome: Stability and trust in the region, and especially in Bosnia and Herzegovina, are enhanced.

Output 1.1. Different groups acquire and practice skills to break stereotypes, promote diversity and tolerance and advocate for peace.

Output 1.2.   Citizens from different groups jointly identify and implement actions that promote social cohesion in the region.

Output 1.3.   Relevant stakeholders effectively advocate for policies to improve social cohesion in the region.

In brief, the joint UN programme activities include:

• support dialogue and collaborative action around jointly identified priorities;

• empower adolescents and youth for constructive engagement and leadership;

• nurture inter-cultural dialogue;

• strengthen objective media reporting and positive storytelling, and

• empower young girls and women for greater social activism.

Detailed Results Framework of the joint UN programme is available Annex I.

Across the three participating countries, the joint programme works directly with the following target groups:

Adolescents and youth: Adolescents (10-18) and youth (18-30) receive targeted skill building to partake constructively in dialogue and decision-making processes, be active contributors to positive transformation in their communities, fight stereotypes and nourish acceptance of diversity. Skills-based training facilitates gender responsiveness and contributes to gender equality and fighting gender stereotyping in both teaching and learning.

Women: Young women, who are targeted with leadership and advocacy skills training will be empowered to become the leaders of change in their communities.

Teachers: Primary and secondary school teachers participate in learning seminars to enhance their skills in teaching media literacy, inter-modular civic education and Learning to Live Together concept. Additionally, primary and secondary schools will be provided with World Heritage in Young Hands kit, a teaching guide to sensitize young people to the importance of preserving their local, national and world heritage.

Media: Participating UN agencies will work with journalists and editors in various media outlets in the region to promote media literacy and amplify positive storytelling, fighting biased and prejudicial reporting.

Through the Small Grants Facility, 19 cross-border projects were awarded to further: build capacity of youth in media and information literacy; enable more space for volunteerism in communities; empower youth to lead and engage on issues that matter to them; recognize the role and contribution of female artists; support the empowerment of visually impaired women; ensure better care of the environment as a common good; promote inter-cultural understanding and dialogue through theatre; support acceptance of diversity in communities and advocate for human rights of marginalized groups.

Steering structure: The Joint Programme Board, comprising UN Resident Coordinators and Heads of UN Agencies, as well as representatives of the Presidency and Ministries of foreign affairs in all three programme countries, is responsible for providing strategic guidance and overseeing implementation. Additionally, country coordination mechanisms, composed of relevant line ministries, provide additional country-level guidance in the joint programme. Overview of key stakeholders and partners and their roles in evaluation is provided in Annex 2.

Programme relevance and alignment: The joint UN regional program is aligned with the United Nations Development Assistance/Sustainable Development Cooperation Frameworks in all three programme countries. Additionally, it is aligned with the European Union's Strategy for the Western Balkans, as well as the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, specifically goals 4, 5, 11 and 16.

Covid-19 related context: The joint UN regional programme has adapted to COVID-19 circumstances, moving activities to online format and supporting grantee and partner organizations with dedicated learning seminars on various digital platforms. This also includes organization of online grant mentoring visits.

Therefore, the joint UN regional programme is looking for a company, research institute, university or consortium of such (Service Provider), with strong presence in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro and Republic of Serbia, which can provide high quality and reliable evaluation in the three participating countries.

PURPOSE AND OBJECTIVES

a) Purpose

The purpose of this Final Evaluation is (i) to assess the achievements of the joint UN programme "Fostering Dialogue and Social Cohesion in and Between Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro and Serbia (Dialogue for the Future)" in an inclusive way and (ii) to determine its overall added value to social cohesion and peacebuilding in the three programme countries. Specifically, it will assess benefits for youth supported to acquire and practice skills to help break stereotypes and constructively interact across divides; for citizens from different groups supported to jointly identify and implement actions that can promote social cohesion in and between Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro and Republic of Serbia, as well as the effects of policy recommendations advocated and adopted by authorities and relevant stakeholders to improve social cohesion in the region.

In assessing the degree to which the joint programme met its intended social cohesion and peacebuilding objectives and results, the Final Evaluation will provide key lessons about successful approaches and operational practices, as well as highlight areas where the programme performed less effectively than anticipated. In that sense, this Final Evaluation is equally about impact and accountability as well as about learning.

The information, findings, lessons learned and recommendations generated by the programme evaluation will be used by the Joint Programme Board, Peacebuilding Fund, UNDP, UNICEF, UNESCO and other relevant stakeholders to inform future programming.

b) Objective

Objectives of the Final Evaluation are to:

Assess the relevance and appropriateness of the joint UN programme in terms of: 1) addressing peacebuilding issues; 2) whether the programme capitalized on the UN's added value in the region, having in mind two previous iterations of the BiH-focused project; 3) extent to which programme approaches were adequate and provided for maximum impact; and 4) the degree to which the programme addressed cross-cutting issues, such as social cohesion and gender-sensitivity;

Assess to what extent the joint programme has made a concrete contribution to reducing a conflict factor in the region. With respect to PBF's contribution, the evaluation will also evaluate whether the programme helped advance achievement of the SDGs, and in particular - SDG 16.

Evaluate the programme's efficiency, including its implementation strategy, institutional arrangements in the specific regional context as well as its management and operational systems and value for money;

Assess whether the programme has been implemented through a conflict-sensitive approach.

Document good practices, innovations and lessons emerging from the programme implementation;

Provide strategic and actionable recommendations for future programming, especially from viewpoint of sustainability and programme substantive scope, approaches, target groups and partnerships for expanded impact.

SCOPE OF WORK

This Final Evaluation will examine the joint UN regional programme's contribution to social cohesion and peacebuilding results, based on the programme results framework, as well as other monitoring data collected during the evaluation. The evaluators should also assess and capture intended or unintended impacts and developments.

Additionally, the Final Evaluation will assess the extent to which the planned programme specific outcomes and outputs have been achieved and the likelihood for their full achievement by the end of April 2021. The Final Evaluation will look into the overall programme performance and results, covering three countries where the programme is implemented (Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro and Republic of Serbia).

Specifically, the Final Evaluation will review, evaluate and make recommendations regarding the implementation of the programme components related to support to dialogue and collaborative actions around jointly identified priorities; empowerment of adolescents and youth for constructive engagement and leadership; inter-cultural dialogue; objective media reporting and positive storytelling, and promotion of the social and political empowerment of young girls and women.

The Final Evaluation will look into the programme's processes, innovations, strategic partnerships and linkages in the specific regional context, that proved critical in producing the intended outputs and the factors that facilitated and/or hindered the progress in achieving the outputs, both in terms of the external environment and risks, as well as internal, including: weaknesses in programme design, coordination, management, human resource skills, and resources. As an integral part of the Final Evaluation report and specifically under the impact criteria, the Evaluation Team will review the programme effects and impact on its target groups, including those benefiting from 19 implemented grants.

Finally, the evaluation will assess how has the programme adjusted its implementation strategy and approach to respond to new circumstances imposed by the COVID-19 pandemic.

METHODOLOGY

Based on the UNDP Evaluation Guidelines, UNEG Norms and Stand for Evaluations (2016) and in consultations with the implementing UN Agencies (UNDP, UNICEF, UNESCO), the Final Evaluation will be participatory, involving relevant stakeholders. Also, the evaluation will be conducted in line with UNDP Independent Evaluation Office's Decentralized evaluation guidance for implementing evaluations remotely/virtually.

The Final Evaluation will be conducted by the Evaluation Team composed of an International Evaluation Consultant/Team Leader and National Evaluation Consultants (3 positions, one per participating country respectively). The International Evaluation Consultant will lead the evaluation process and decide on planning and distribution of the evaluation workload and tasks among the evaluation team. She/he will closely collaborate with the National Evaluation Consultants who will provide support throughout the evaluation process.

The Evaluation Team will propose an adjusted evaluative approach/ methodology that will be used to conduct the evaluation effectively in the COVID – 19 pandemics circumstances, including application of safety guidance, extended desk reviews and virtual stakeholder meetings and interviews by evaluators and agree on a detailed plan for the assignment as part of the evaluation Inception Report . The proposed methodology may employ any relevant and appropriate quantitative, qualitative or combined methods to conduct the programme evaluation, exploring specific, gender sensitive data collecting and analytical methods and tools applicable in the concrete case. The Evaluation Team is expected to creatively combine the standard and other evaluation tools and technics to ensure proper triangulation, maximum reliability of data and validity of the evaluation findings.

Standard UNDP evaluation methodology would suggest the following data collecting methods:

Desk review: The Evaluation Team will conduct a detailed review of the programme materials and deliverables including but not limited to the Project Document, theory of change and results framework, monitoring reports, annual workplans, consolidated progress reports, etc. An extensive list of documents for desk review is provided in Annex 3.

Key informant interviews: Using virtual technological solutions, the Evaluation Team will remotely interview representatives of main institutional partners and implementing partners. For the interviews, the Evaluation Team is expected to design evaluation questions around relevance, effectiveness, efficiency and sustainability criteria, according to different stakeholders to be interviewed. A detailed list of main stakeholders that may be considered for meetings is provided in Annex 2.

Meetings / focus group discussions with relevant stakeholders will be conducted remotely.

Other methodologies, as appropriate, such as case studies, statistical analysis, social network analysis, etc. Skype interviews, mobile questionnaires, online surveys, collaboration platforms (slack or yammer) and satellite imagery are recommended to be used to gather data. Stakeholders that are dealing with existing emergencies should be given advance notice.

Field visits will take place only if the epidemiological circumstances permit.

Stakeholders' involvement: During the evaluation process, the Evaluation Team is expected to meet senior representatives of all involved UN Agencies, as well as the programme team, key stakeholders and beneficiaries in each participating country. Initial briefing and evaluation debriefing to obtain the critical feedback on the Final Evaluation report are envisaged. To assess programme performance, approach and modalities, the Evaluation Team will seek to meet key programme partners and stakeholders, including members of the Joint Programme Board and country coordination bodies. In addition, the views of representatives of faculties of political sciences in Sarajevo, Belgrade and Podgorica, as well as civil society organisations should be considered to obtain critical insight and information on the programme activities and results. During these meetings, it would be important to record and accumulate inputs necessary not only for the programme evaluation, but also to highlight recommendations and advise on potential project future work programme.

The expected duration of the assignment is up to 52 expert days, in the period February – end April 2021.

EVALUATION CRITERIA AND KEY QUESTIONS

The Final Evaluation is to answer the following questions, based on the identified main objectives, so as to determine the programme's relevance, performance, results, effectiveness, efficiency, impact and sustainability, including lessons learned and forward-looking recommendations. The Final Evaluation questions summarized below are based on the OECD DAC evaluation criteria, as well as PBF specific evaluation criteria, which have been adapted to the context.

Relevance

1. Were the programme's peacebuilding objectives relevant to the needs of the programme beneficiaries, having in mind political, social and institutional context of the countries where the programme is implemented?

2. Was the programme relevant to the UN's peacebuilding mandate and the SDGs, in particular SDG 16, as well as UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Frameworks?

3. Have any changes been made to the programme design during implementation? If so, did that lead to significant design improvements?

4. Were coordination, management and financing arrangements clearly defined at the design stage and did these support institutional strengthening and local ownership?

5. Was the programme successful in adjusting its implementation strategy and approach to the new circumstances imposed by the COVID-19 pandemic?

Effectiveness

6. To what extent were the programme activities implemented and intended results achieved? What are the main programme accomplishments?

7. What are the positive or negative, intended or unintended, peacebuilding changes brought about by the programme?

8. To what extent has the programme contributed to strengthening partnership between youth, civil society organizations, academia, media professionals, teachers?

9. To what extent has the programme effectively outreached and engaged marginalized groups (i.e., youth, persons with disabilities, returnees, internally displaced, minorities…) and supported gender mainstreaming and women's empowerment?

10. How effective was the programme's interaction with other complementary projects (including implemented by the UN) in order to trigger synergies maximizing development results?

11. Was the programme well-timed to address a conflict factor or capitalize on a specific window of opportunity?

Efficiency

12. Have resources (financial, human, technical) been allocated strategically to achieve the programme results?

13. Are there any weaknesses in programme design, coordination, management, human resource skills, and resources?

14. How well did the programme collect and use data to monitor results? How effectively was updated data used to manage the programme?

15. How well did the programme team communicate with implementing partners, stakeholders and programme beneficiaries on its progress?

16. To what degree did the political developments in each participant country influence the programme's efficiency?

Impact

17. Has the programme contributed or is likely to contribute to medium or long-term peacebuilding, social, economic, or other results?

18. What are the main benefits (qualitative and quantitative) for the target groups, including for vulnerable groups? How have cross-cutting issues, such as gender equality, disability, and reaching the most vulnerable, been effectively taken up?

19. To what extent are key stakeholders/final beneficiaries satisfied with the programme implementation, specifically in terms of the partnership support and what are specific expectations for the potential follow-up assistance?

20. What are the key lessons to be drawn at this point of the joint programme implementation? What are the main recommendations for the remainder, as well as for future programming?

21. What is the impact of COVID-19 on the programme implementation and how the limitations imposed by the pandemic were lifted?

Sustainability

22. To what extent are the programme outputs sustainable? How could the programme results be further sustainably projected and expanded?

23. To what extent has the programme approach (intervention strategy) managed to create ownership of the key national stakeholders?

24. At this stage of programme implementation, what could be possible after-programme priority interventions and general recommendations, which could further ensure sustainability and scaling up of programme achievements?

25. What would be future priority interventions to ensure long-term sustainability of the programme achievements, having in mind the current COVID-19 related context?

Coherence

26. To what extent did the PBF programme complement the interventions conducted under two BiH-focused PBF projects, as well as work among different entities, especially with other UN actors?

27. If the programme was part of a broader package of PBF, to what degree were the design, implementation, monitoring and reporting aligned with that of other programmes?

28. How were stakeholders involved in programme design and implementation?

Conflict sensitivity

29. Did the programme have an explicit approach to conflict-sensitivity?

30. How was the 'do no harm' principle applied in the programme's work with beneficiaries?

31. Were recipient UN agencies' internal capacities adequate for ensuring an ongoing conflict-sensitive approach?

32. Were there tools to ensure conflict-sensitive programme management and delivery?

Catalytic

33. Was the programme financially and/or programmatically catalytic?

34. Has PBF funding been used to scale-up / match other peacebuilding work and/or has it helped to create broader platforms for peacebuilding in the target countries?

35. Was PBF funding used to leverage political windows of opportunity for engagement?

Risk tolerance and innovation

36. If the programme was characterized as a "high risk", were risks adequately monitored and mitigated?

37. How novel or innovative was the programme approach? What are innovative practices and approaches captured in the implementation process?

EVALUATION TASKS AND DELIVERABLES

Following the initial briefing and a detailed desk review, the Evaluation Team will be responsible for delivering the following products and tasks:

Inception Report (10-15 pages) will be presented before the Final Evaluation starts, showing how each evaluation question will be answered by proposing methods, sources of data and data collection procedures. The Inception Report should elaborate an evaluation matrix (provided in Annex 4) for the programme and propose a schedule of tasks, activities and evaluation deliverables. The Evaluation Inception Report should follow the structure proposed in the UNDP Evaluation Guidelines, p. 22-23.

Evaluation and data collection: Upon the approval of the Inception Report and the evaluation work plan by the UNDP, the Evaluation Team is expected to carry out the programme evaluation, including review of effects of field programme in target localities. The proposed data collecting methodologies presented in the Evaluation Inception Report should limit the exposure of any consultant, team member, beneficiary or stakeholder to the pandemic, therefore, strongly recommended is use of remote and virtual methodologies.

Draft Final Evaluation Report: Based on the findings generated through desk review and data collection process, the evaluation team leader will prepare and submit the Draft Evaluation Report to the UNDP team and key stakeholders for review. Structure of the Report is outlined in Annex 5.

Final Evaluation review process (and eventual dispute settlement): Comments, questions, suggestions and requests for clarification on the evaluation draft will be submitted to the evaluation team leader and addressed in the agreed timeframe. The evaluation Team Leader should reply to the comments through the evaluation audit trail document. If there is disagreement in findings, these should be documented through the evaluation audit trail, while effort should be made to come to an agreement.

Final Evaluation debriefings: will be held with implementing UN Agencies and other key stakeholders to present main findings and recommendations either face-to-face or in a form of a Skype briefing. In addition, short briefings on immediate findings with UNDP senior management will be considered after completion of the initial assessment.

Final Evaluation Report (maximum 50 pages of the main body) should be logically structured, contain data and evidence-based findings, conclusions, lessons and recommendations, and be presented in a way that makes the information accessible and comprehensible. Finally, based on the evaluation findings and in a distinct report section, the Evaluation Team will provide forward-looking actionable recommendations, outlining key strategic priorities to be addressed in the potential next phase of the programme.

Note: as previously indicated, all reports will be shared with Peacebuilding Fund for their approval.

EVALUATION ETHICS

This Final Evaluation will be conducted in accordance with the principles outlined in the UNEG 'Ethical Guidelines for Evaluation'. The Evaluation Team must safeguard the rights and confidentiality of information providers, interviewees and stakeholders through measures to ensure compliance with legal and other relevant codes governing collection of data and reporting on data. The Evaluation Team must also ensure security of collected information before and after the evaluation and protocols to ensure anonymity and confidentiality of sources of information where that is expected. The information knowledge and data

gathered in the evaluation process must also be solely used for the evaluation and not for other uses, with the express authorization of UNDP and partners. Members of the Evaluation Team should be free from any conflict of interest related to this evaluation.

Specific ethical considerations:

The UN/UNICEF's ethical guidelines will be followed in all phases of the Final Evaluation. The evaluation consultants applying (evaluators) for this assignment should indicate as part of their technical proposal how they intend to incorporate ethical standards, considering the following aspects:

Informed consent must be requested in writing from all participants in the evaluation. Participants must be informed before giving consent that in case a specific breach of a human right is raised during the interviews (for example: violence against children or adults), that this will need to be shared with relevant authorities, in accordance with UN/UNICEF's standards and existing legislation in Bosnia and Herzegovina. After this notification, participants can decide if they will further participate in the evaluation. All other information given during focus group discussions and interviews will be kept confidential.

The Final Evaluation will apply the principle of the 'best interests of the child', in which the welfare and best interests of the participants will be the primary consideration in methodology design and data collection. The evaluation will be guided by the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, in particular Article 3.1 which states that: "In all actions concerning children, whether undertaken by public or private social welfare institutions, courts or legislative bodies, the best interests of the child shall be a primary consideration."

The evaluators must have proof that they have undertaken a course in ethics in research with children and adults from a recognised institution, either during their study or work. In case they do not have this, they must undertake UNICEF's course in ethics in research with children and adults on AGORA.

If relevant given the COVID-19 circumstances, the evaluators need to indicate that they can secure venues for FGDs and interviews, which are in line with the rules of privacy protection and respectful, a comfortable setting where participants cannot be overheard.

Particular care will be taken to ensure that questions are asked sensitively, appropriate to the age, gender, ethnicity and social background of the participants. Evaluators will speak with participants in their local language. Clear language will be used which avoids victimisation, blame and judgement. Where it is clear that the interview is having a negative effect on a participant, the interview will be stopped. Evaluators need to indicate how they will ensure adequate cultural understanding of the context and how they will ensure to respect this during the evaluation process.

Physical safety and well-being of researchers and participants must be ensured at all times. Evaluators need to indicate how this will be ensured.

All data will be securely stored during the evaluation process. Three months after the end of the evaluation all data will be erased from computers/laptops and hard copies destroyed. Proof of having IT skills to do this needs to be indicated by the applicants when submitting the proposal.

EVALUATION TEAM COMPOSITION AND REQUIRED COMPETENCES

The Final Evaluation will be conducted by the Evaluation Team composed of an International Evaluation Consultant (Team Leader) and National Evaluation Consultants. The Team Leader will lead the evaluation process and decide on planning and distribution of the evaluation workload and tasks. She/he will closely collaborate with the National Consultants who will provide support throughout the evaluation process.

More specifically, the key tasks of the International Evaluation Consultant (Team Leader) will be to:

- Act as the main focal point for communication with the DFF joint programme;

- Be responsible for the overall quality of all deliverables to be produced in a timely manner: Inception Report, Draft Report, Final Report;

- Supervise the National Evaluation Consultants;

- Agree on the plan for all aspects of the evaluation with the Evaluation Manager, in collaboration with UNDP, UNICEF and UNESCO;

- Take into consideration UNICEF, UNDP and UNESCO recommendations at all stages of the evaluation;

- Be responsible for ensuring adherence to UNICEF Ethical Research Guidelines involving children;

- Prepare all the deliverables in English;

- Ensure that the Final Evaluation Report includes evidence and analysis to the highest possible standards and based on the proposed Report structure in the relevant Annex;

- Raise any limitations/constraints regarding the evaluation at the earliest opportunity, so that, as far as possible, these can be addressed, with any outstanding limitations to be noted in the Final Evaluation Report;

- Plan and conduct the evaluation, including participating in field work, according to the methodology agreed upon in the inception report;

- Ensure that confidentiality is maintained and that the evaluation does not include any risk, including reputational risk, for any of the stakeholders;

- Take overall responsibility for delivering the Final Evaluation in accordance with the Terms of Reference, ensuring the quality of all products.

The National Evaluation Consultants will:

Assist the Evaluation Team Leader with drafting the deliverables: Inception report, Draft report, Final report; participate in the field work; provide field work reports for the Evaluation Team Leader/ International Consultant.

The Evaluation Team will work in close cooperation with the joint UN programme team consisting of three UN agencies (UNDP, UNICEF and UNESCO in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro and Republic of Serbia) and will report to the Evaluation Manager, who will oversee and support the overall evaluation process. In addition, an evaluation reference group will be formed to provide critical and objective inputs throughout the evaluation process to strengthen the quality of the evaluation. The UN Senior Management will take responsibility for the approval of the evaluation report. Implementing UN Agencies will support the implementation of remote/ virtual meetings and provide an updated stakeholder list with contact details (phone and email) to the Evaluation Team. The Evaluation Team will be responsible for all components of the evaluation and responsible for provision of deliverables listed previously on time and of acceptable quality.

The Evaluation Team should act with integrity and respect for all stakeholders according to the UNEG Ethical Guidelines for Evaluation. Evaluation Team members shall not have any relevance with DFF design and implementation processes.

Required qualifications for the International Evaluation Consultant

- Advanced university degree in social science, human rights or related peacebuilding fields (certificates in evaluation studies is an asset);

- Expertise in the field of peacebuilding;

- Extensive experience in designing and conducting evaluations and surveys, quantitative and qualitative analysis and data analysis (minimum of 7 years);

- Excellent knowledge of monitoring and evaluation methodologies; sound judgment and ability to objectively evaluate programmes in terms of processes, as well as results achieved (evidenced through previously conducted evaluations and references);

- Experience in conducting evaluations related to peacebuilding;

- Knowledge of political situation in South-eastern Europe region.

- Knowledge of youth, human rights, gender equality, social cohesion;

- Familiarity with the UN system is a strong asset;

- Languages Requirements: fluency in English language;

- Excellent computer skills (MS Office applications) and ability to use information technologies as a tool and resource.

Required qualifications for the National Evaluation Consultant:

The National Evaluation Consultant is required to possess the following competencies:

- Advanced university degree in social science, human rights or related peacebuilding fields;

- Expertise in work on peace building/social cohesion/intercultural understanding and related fields;

- Minimum 3 years of expertise in the area of evaluation and M&E;

- Knowledge on child rights, human rights, gender equality and social inclusion;

- Demonstrated ability to prepare interview/focus groups protocols and other evaluation instruments;

- Excellent communication and presentation skills in English and languages of participating countries;

- Excellent analytical and report writing skills;

- Familiarity with the UN system is a strong asset.

- Note: National Evaluation Consultant(s) should be based in and responsible for each of the programme countries, i.e., Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro and the Republic of Serbia.

- The consultants must not have any relation to the programme, or be currently employed by UNICEF, UNDP or UNESCO or have any personal benefits from the result of the evaluation.

EVALUATION TIMEFRAME AND DELIVERABLES

The following outputs and deliverables are expected to be produced by the Service Provider, per request and needs of the DFF regional programme and prior approval of the designate DFF regional programme representative(s) and Peacebuilding Support Office (PBSO):

DELIVERABLES   ANTICIPATED DUE DATE

The following outputs and deliverables are expected to be produced by the Service Provider, per request and needs of the DFF regional programme and prior approval of the designate DFF regional programme representative(s) and Peacebuilding Support Office (PBSO):

	DELIVERABLES	ANTICIPATED DUE DATE
1	**Task 1: Inception Report (10-15 pages)** will be presented before the evaluation starts, showing how each evaluation question will be answered by proposing methods, sources of data and data collection procedures. The Inception Report should elaborate an evaluation matrix (provided in Annex 4) for the programme and propose a schedule of tasks, activities and evaluation deliverables. The Evaluation Inception Report should follow the structure proposed in the UNDP Evaluation Guidelines, p. 22-23.	19 March 2021
2	**Task 2: Evaluation and data collection**: Upon the approval of the Inception Report and the evaluation work plan by the designated representatives of the Joint Programme and PBSO), the evaluation team is expected to carry out the programme evaluation, including review of effects of infrastructure in target localities. The proposed data collecting methodologies presented in the Evaluation Inception Report should limit the exposure of any consultant, programme team member, beneficiary or stakeholder to the pandemic, therefore, strongly recommended is use of remote and virtual methodologies.	7 May 2021
3	**Task 3: Draft Evaluation Report**: Based on the findings generated through desk review and data collection process, the evaluation team leader will prepare and submit the Draft Evaluation Report to the Joint Programme for review. Structure of the Report is outlined in Annex 5.	21 May 2021
4	**Task 4: Evaluation review process** (and eventual dispute settlement): Comments, questions, suggestions and requests for clarification on the evaluation draft will be submitted to the evaluation team leader and addressed in the agreed timeframe. The evaluation team leader should reply to the comments through the evaluation audit trail document. If there is disagreement in findings, these should be documented through the evaluation audit trail, while effort should be made to come to an agreement.	31 May 2021
5	**Task 5: Evaluation debriefings:** will be held with UN agencies and other key stakeholders to present main findings and recommendations either face-to-face or in a form of a Skype briefing.	7 June 2021
6	**Tasks 6: Evaluation Report** (maximum 50 pages of the main body) should be logically structured, contain data and	15 June 2021

	evidence-based findings, conclusions, lessons and recommendations, and be presented in a way that makes the information accessible and comprehensible. Finally, based on the evaluation findings and in a distinct report section, the evaluation team leader will provide **forward-looking actionable recommendations,** outlining key strategic priorities to be addressed in the potential next phase of the programme.[220]	

Note: All deliverables need to be submitted in the English and languages of participating countries.

UNDP Evaluation Guidelines Note: UNDP Evaluation Guidelines Note: As of 11 March 2020, the World Health Organization (WHO) declared COVID-19 a global pandemic as the new coronavirus rapidly spread to all regions of the world. If it is not possible to travel to or within the country for the evaluation then the evaluation team should develop a methodology that takes this into account the conduct of the evaluation virtually and remotely, including the use of remote interview methods and extended desk reviews, data analysis, surveys and evaluation questionnaires. This should be detailed in the Inception report and agreed with the Evaluation Manager.

If a data collection/field mission is not possible then remote interviews may be undertaken through telephone or online (skype, zoom etc.). International consultants can work remotely with national evaluator support in the field if it is safe for them to operate and travel.

A short validation mission may be considered if it is confirmed to be safe for staff. International consultants can work remotely with national evaluator support in the field if it is safe for them to operate and travel. No stakeholders, consultants or UNDP staff should be put in harm's way and safety is the key priority.

8. KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS (KPI) AND SERVICE LEVEL

Activity/Month in which activities are implemented	2021			
	March	April	May	June
Deliverable 1: Inception Report methods, sources of data, data collection, evaluation matrix, schedule, activities included; clear and logical; concise; structure compliant; maximum 20 pages.				
Deliverable 2: Data collection Correspondence; number of meetings/interviews held in all participating countries; minutes.				

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[220] Evaluation Report Template available at
http://web.undp.org/evaluation/guideline/documents/PDF/UNDP_Evaluation_Guidelines.pdf, p.49

Deliverable 3: Draft Evaluation Report clear presentation of findings, conclusions and recommendations; maximum 50 pages.			▯	
Deliverable 4: Evaluation review Review within the Joint Programme			▯	
Deliverable 5: Evaluation debriefings Meetings and consultations with UN staff in the Joint Programme				▯
Deliverable 6: Evaluation report clear presentation of final version of the findings, conclusions and recommendations; maximum 50 pages; succinct PPT presentation of up to 20 slides;				▯

Should the Service Provider fail to deliver services as per defined minimum standards (KPI) or following steps described in the Scope of Work or according to agreed monthly activity plans, DFF regional programme may withhold the payment or cancel the contract.

GOVERNANCE AND ACCOUNTABILITY

The Service Provider will act under direct supervision of the UNDP Evaluation Manager and will submit reports and seek approval for any and all actions from them.

The Service Provider will maintain direct communication with representatives of implementing UN agencies within three countries, in order to ensure delivery of high-quality services tailored for specific audiences and/or a country.

Final approval on undertaking of specific activities remains with UNDP Evaluation Manager as mentioned above, while clearance of all noted deliverables will also include the Peacebuilding Support Office (donor).

In line with the UNDP's financial regulations, when determined by the Country Office and/or the consultant that a deliverable or service cannot be satisfactorily completed due to the impact of COVID-19 and limitations to the evaluation, that deliverable or service will not be paid. Due to the current COVID-19 situation and its implications, a partial payment may be considered if the consultant invested time towards the deliverable but was unable to complete to circumstances beyond his/her control.

FACILITIES TO BE PROVIDED BY THE UN JOINT PROGRAMME

To achieve the objectives, the Joint Programme will share available documentation, reports, available analytical documents and other available data it may have, contact lists of implementing partners, Joint Programme Board and Country Coordination body members. UNDP, as Convening Agency in the Joint Programme, will prepare an introductory letter to introduce evaluation and evaluation team to partner institutions.

The implementation of this activity does not foresee support personnel or logistic support to be provided by UNDP at any stage of implementation.

EXPECTED DURATION OF THE CONTRACT

The timeframe for delivering services under this ToR begins with the date of the signature and ends on 15 June 2021.

DUTY STATION

The Service Provider is expected to deliver services in three countries: Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro and the Republic of Serbia.

REPORTING

Reporting is considered as the formal presentation of relevant indicators / information and is related to service delivery under these Terms of Reference. The Service Provider is expected to provide monthly updates on performance of the above tasks to the designated UNDP Evaluation Manager.

Annex 7: Final Evaluation Team Profile

Mr Tomislav Novovic, Team Leader, is one of the leading evaluation experts, with more than 20 years of professional experience in the management of international development assistance, including evaluation of large-scale projects and programmes. Tomislav has carried out eight UNDAF evaluations in different countries, including UNDAF 2015-2019 final evaluation in Bosnia and Herzegovina and UNDAF 2016-2020 final evaluation in Montenegro.

Mr. NOVOVIC is highly skilled and competent in the area of good governance, local governance, justice sector reform and public administration and civil service. During long carrier he gained substantive experience in public policy planning, including designing monitoring systems and evaluating progress and achievements in the areas of regional development and public management system reform. He is highly competent in providing high-level advisory support to the national authorities. Particularly successful were his assignments on institutional capacity building the Ministry of Economy of the Government of Montenegro and local authorities to prepare and implement regional development strategy (2011-2014). He was also working on the institutional capacity development of the regional development agencies in Serbia (2011-2015) through the Regional Socio-Economic Development project (RSEDP-II) etc

Throughout his career, Tomislav has gained valuable experience in leading teams for complex evaluations. This experience included mid-term, ex-ante, ex-posts, and impact evaluations of more than forty projects, programs, and country programs. His experience included the implementation of a robust gender-sensitive approach. Tomislav is PhD student at the Metropolitan University and holds Masters Degrees in management and development economy.

Ms. Dženita Hrelja Hasečić is a gender policy specialist with over 15 years of experience in gender responsive monitoring and evaluation. She has progressive experience working for international donor-financed projects strongly based on Result Based Management and Project Cycle Management approach (USAID, DFID, SDC, UN, WB) as a gender expert and project manager. Over the years she has had a number of engagements as a trainer to deliver tailor-made gender mainstreaming and gender responsive budgeting training and capacity development to national and local level governments, members of parliaments, civil society and academia. Her interests include yoga, hiking and gardening.

Ms. Olivera Komar is an associate professor at Faculty of Political Science, University of Montenegro where she teaches political behaviour and methods in political science. She specializes in quantitative and qualitative research, so she acts as the national coordinator or principal investigator of several international scientific projects for Montenegro: European Social Survey ESS, European Value Survey EVS and Comparative Study of Electoral Systems CSES. She is also one of the founders and the principal investigator of Montenegrin National Election Study MNES.

She is co-owner of the largest Montenegrin polling agency – De Facto Consultancy and works well in programs for statistical or qualitative analysis – SPSS and MAXQDA.

Often, she applies her knowledge for designing and implementing studies that seek to analyse and understand the contemporary problems in Montenegrin society. She is author or co-author of the number of evidence-based studies and strategic documents, including most recently proposal of Strategy for achieving gender equality in Montenegro, Strategy for communicating European integration and National Strategy for Sustainable Development.

She collaborates often with international organisations in projects that result with evidence-based studies on contemporary Montenegrin issues – political situation, gender equality, poverty and inequality and most recently public health crises and its consequences.

Ms. Marija Babovic is full professor at the Department for Sociology of the Faculty of Philosophy – University of Belgrade. Her main area of research is socio-economic development with particular focus on social inclusion, mobility, inequality, including gender inequalities. She has over 20 years of experience in research on social changes, gender equality and social inclusion of diverse vulnerable groups, such as Roma, forced migrants, unemployed, people under risk of poverty, population living in rural areas. She has conducted evaluations of various policies, programmes and projects, with high proficiency for gender responsive evaluation. She was also engaged as leading expert or member of experts' team in drafting various national strategies and action plans, including Strategy for Sustainable Development, Strategy for Poverty Reduction, Action Plan for the implementation of Strategy on economic migration. She has experience with international organizations, such as European Commission, UN Women, UNICEF, UNDP, UNFPA, in Serbia and in wider region of South-East Europe. She is representative of European Anti-Poverty Network – Serbia in the European Anti-Poverty Network – Europe, one of the largest European civil society networks composed of over 30 national networks and 15 European organizations. She has published large number of monographs, articles in monographs, and journal papers, and has participated in numerous national and international scientific and civil society conferences.

Mr. Stevan Kandic is the CEO of Montenegrin research agency De Facto Consultancy, working in the company for more than 5 years. Currently, he is a MA candidate on Faculty of Political Sciences, University of Montenegro. He specialises in quantitative research, data processing and reporting. Mr Kandić has worked on all main projects conducted by De Facto in the last couple of years. As a researcher he is highly experienced in organizing and conducting qualitative and quantitative researchers on different topics.

Ms. Tanja Danilovic has degree is in education with postgraduate studies on local self-governance and management in education. She has twenty years of experience working with international organization (OSCE Mission to BiH) as an expert for democratization processes and development of self-governance. Her core area of expertise is related to development of local self-governance with focus on civil society engagement and social cohesion and inclusiveness. She has been engaged as part of the bigger teams in evaluation of projects implemented in the region of Western Balkans in recent years.

Ms. Tijana Veljkovic is sociologist from Belgrade Serbia working as researcher at SeConS. As a researcher she has organized numerous researches in area socio-economic development with particular focus on social inclusion, mobility, inequality, including gender inequalities. She has extensive experience in organizing and conducting quantitative as well as qualitative researches within different projects for UN Agencies.

Ms. Olivera Vukovic is an executive director at SeConS. She is sociologist from Belgrade with an academic background and extensive experience in policy-oriented research. She has regional experience since she has lived and worked in Bosnia and Herzegovina for three years, as well as in Montenegro where she worked for different clients. She has significant experience in cooperation with international institutions (such as, DFID, UNDP, IOM, UNFPA, UNW, SDC, etc.), national and local governments, institutions and civil society organizations.