

Draft Final Report

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Final Evaluation of the joint project “Communities Resilient to Violent Ideologies”

January 2022

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This report was written by Tommaso Balbo di Vinadio (team leader), Gulnara Asilbekova and Kanykei Latipova.

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I. Project and Evaluation Information Details

Title	Communities Resilient to Violent Ideologies
Country	Kyrgyzstan (PBF/KGZ/A-7) ¹
Recipient agencies	UNICEF, UNFPA, UN Women
Starting Date	11.01.2018
Duration	36 months with 7-month extension due to Covid-19. Total: 43 months
Implementing Partners	President's office, Prime Minister Office, Ministry of Education and Science; State Agency for Vocational Education; Kyrgyz Academy of Education; State Agency for Youth and Sports; Agency on Religious Affairs; State Agency on Local Self Governance and Interethnic Relations; Local Self-Governance (LSG) bodies in selected districts, CSOs
Target Areas	12 municipalities: 1) Bishkek city: Bakai-Ata, Ak-Ordo 2) Osh city: Sulaiman-Too, Kerme-Too, Amir-Temur Osh province: 3) Alliya Anarov municipality in Aravan district; 4) Karasuu municipality in Karasuu district; 5) Nookat city; 6) Gulistan municipality in Nookat district Jalalabad province: 7) Jalalabad city, 8) Suzak municipality in Suzak district Batken province: 9) Kyzyl-Kiya city in Kadamjai district Issyk-Kul province: 10) Sary-Bulak municipality in Tyup district Naryn province: 11) Ugut municipality in Ak-Talaa district Talas province: 12) Kara-Buura municipality in Kara-Buura district
Budget	\$ 2,601,082 distributed as follows: UNICEF – \$ 1,358,000 UNFPA – \$ 908,000 UN Women – \$ 335,082
Funding Source	UN Peacebuilding Fund (PBF)
Goal	To build community resilience to violent and manipulative ideologies, including those exploiting faith, through the means of education, empowerment, and dialogue.

¹ The project's Gateway page <http://mptf.undp.org/factsheet/project/00108337>

Evaluation information		
Evaluation type (project/ outcome/thematic/ country program, etc.)	Project Evaluation	
Final/midterm review/ other	Final Review	
Period under evaluation	Start	End
	11.01.2018 –	10.07.2021
Evaluators	Tommaso Balbo di Vinadio, Gulnara Asilbekova, Kanykei Latipova	
Evaluator email address	tommasobalbo@gmail.com	gulnara.asilbekova@yahoo.com klatipova@gmail.com
Evaluation dates	Start	Completion
	14.07.2021	28.01.2022

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III. Acronyms

CRM	Child Rights Monitoring
CSOs	Civil Society Organizations
DAC	Development Assistance Committee
EMT	Evaluation Management Team
ERG	Evaluation Reference Group
EQ	Evaluation question
EU	European Union
FEIS	Foundation for Education Initiatives Support
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
FTI	Foundation for Tolerance International
GYPI	Gender and Youth Promotion Initiative
IDEA CA	Public Fund "International Debate Education Association in Central Asia"
IP	Implementing Partner
JSC	Joint Steering Committee
LSG	Local Self-Government
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MEL	Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning
MoF	Ministry of Finance
MoJ	Ministry of Justice
MTU	Municipal Territorial Unit
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
PBF	UN Peacebuilding Fund
PPP	Peacebuilding Priority Plan
PVE	Prevention of Violent Extremism
QA	Quality Assurance
RC	Resident Coordinator
RF	Result Framework
RUNOs	Recipient UN Organizations
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
ToC	Theory of Change
ToR	Terms of Reference
TOT	Training of Trainers
VE	Violent Extremism
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Program
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UNICEF	United Nations International Children's Fund
UNODC	United National Office on Drugs and Crime
UN OHCHR	United Nations Human Rights Office of the High Commissioner
UNV	United Nations Volunteers
UN Women	United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and Empowerment of Women

IV. Executive summary

This is the final evaluation of the joint \$2.6 million project “Communities Resilient to Violent Ideologies,” PBF/KGZ-A-7², which was funded by the UN Peacebuilding Fund (PBF) and implemented by UNICEF, UNFPA, and UN Women. The project was a multi-agency effort to community resilience to violent and manipulative ideologies, including those exploiting faith, through the means of education, empowerment and dialogue in 12 target municipalities in the north and south of Kyrgyzstan. The project aimed at empowering youth to take critical stances to extreme ideas while, at the same time, support horizontal and vertical trust (with institution and with their community/family). In this sense, the project devised a strategy with three separate but interconnected outputs. **The first output** focused on youth, adolescents and women in target communities to gain civic competencies in schools, homes and the community. **The second output** focused on young people and adults in target communities to engage in collaborative measures to address local vulnerabilities leading to violent extremism. Lastly, **the third output** focused on strengthening the capacity of opinion leaders, civil society activists and religious leaders to provide alternative and positive messages and build meaningful dialogue and exchange. The project began in January 2018 and ended in July 2021 (the project was extended given the pandemic of COVID-19).

The purpose of this evaluation was to: Fulfil UNICEF, UNFPA and UN Women’s accountability towards national government and PBF and other stakeholders by providing an assessment of the results of the project; Assess the circumstances influencing the project’s achievements and the challenges that hindered it; Generate knowledge and evidence on achievements, lessons learned and recommendations to influence further strategic directions.

The intended users of the evaluation are: decision-makers from government; implementing partners and the implementing agencies (UNICEF, UNFPA, UN Women); the UN Peacebuilding Fund; local self-government staff in project communities; and the project beneficiaries in the 12 target municipalities.

The evaluation covered the entire period of the project implementation (11.01.2018 – 10.07.2021) and was conducted from June 2021 to January 2022.

The methodological approach of this evaluation was in line with evaluation criteria of the OECD DAC Criteria for Evaluating Development Assistance, namely relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability and impact and the newly agreed criteria on coherence, as well as a criterion on cross cutting themes such as gender and equity (human rights/leave-no-one-behind) as per the Terms of Reference. After having reviewed the conflict analysis and having reviewed and reconstructed the Theory of Change (TOC), the evaluation team utilized a mixed-method approach of data collection (desk review and literature review, key informant interviews, Focus Group Discussions, and online guided survey) and analysis tools (analysis of TOC and contribution analysis, content and qualitative analysis, quantitative analysis) to answer the main questions that were developed against the evaluation criteria. In addition, the evaluation built on the good practices from the literature on peacebuilding and peacebuilding evaluation.

Key Findings and Conclusions

Relevance: The evaluation found that the PBF-funded project was very relevant as the project design was anchored on a sound understanding of the context of Kyrgyzstan and some of root

² The project's Gateway page <http://mptf.undp.org/factsheet/project/00108337>

causes of violent extremism. The project's assumption that youth (and women) have a potential as peacebuilders was validated by the project. However, the lack of agreement on the clear definition on violent extremism and radicalization caused some uncertainty among project participants, especially at the beginning of the project implementation.

The approach and the strategy developed by the project was adequately devised to address the root causes of violent extremism that the project had identified. Indeed, the project developed a threefold approach through the means of education, empowerment, and dialogue to address the drivers of violent extremism and to build resilience to violent and manipulative ideologies. The project is to be considered innovative as it was the first one in the country to use such an approach to counter VE. Yet, the TOC could have been better articulated laying down all assumptions at the project development stage thus following the PBSO guidance on TOC development for peacebuilding projects.

The project was also based on a good understanding of the needs of young women (including vulnerable women) and men, in particular, vulnerable groups and was designed to engage young people who are considered to be marginalized, vulnerable, or 'hard to reach'. In addition, the project objectives were closely aligned with both national strategies and UN key strategies for Kyrgyzstan.

Coherence: The evaluation found that the project was designed and implemented building on the comparative advantage of each UN agency. The contributing factors that facilitated the cooperation between the agencies (and with the implementing partners among CSOs were, as follows: 1) the willingness of the agencies to cooperate with each other; 2) an overall clear vision for what the project intended to achieve; 3) the clarity of the comparative advantage of each agency. However, the evaluation detected a few minor obstacles to overcome for developing a more effective joint program. For instance, the project did not clearly define roles and responsibilities of each agency.. In addition, the evaluation found that the project did map complementary project at the beginning of its implementation, yet it did not clearly document how it interacted with them during implementation.

Effectiveness/Impact: The evaluation found that, within its sphere of influence, the project successfully empowered youth, women and other beneficiaries. Concerning youth, the project increased young people's confidence and self-esteem, and helped them to develop critical thinking, communication, teamwork, and leadership skills. At the same time, other beneficiaries than youth such as community leaders, local authorities and adults have been empowered by the project to engage with youth and to deliver positive messages to counter violent extremism.

The evaluation also found that there some evidence that the integrated approach of the project (targeting the individual, institutional and community/family level) has had a positive impact on youth resilience to violence – this was confirmed by the evaluation through triangulation of data and by the guided questionnaire specifically devised to measure youth's resilience to violence. The results of the survey developed by the project suggested indeed that, because of the participation in project activities, young people have fostered a *sense of belonging to community*, have higher *confidence in the state* and, finally, are more open to communication and dialogue as a way to resolve conflicts (the project activities having had an impact on their *violence related behaviors and beliefs*). What this entails is that the main underpinning assumption of the project was validated by this evaluation - empowering youth (and other main beneficiaries), strengthening their trust in government and developing a sense of belonging in the community/family can have a positive impact on their resilience to violence. It should be noted, however, that it is too early to verify all the results of the project, in particular, at the community level.

Efficiency: The overall efficiency of the project is be considered solid as project activities were implemented in a timely and resource appropriate manner. The project was efficient at adapting to the challenges posed by COVID-19 by assuring a smooth and quick response, which included adjusting some of its activities to tackle issues caused by the pandemic. The project partly used the pandemic as an opportunity to have a stronger impact – for instance, by reaching out to a wider audience. On the other hand, though there was solid willingness to properly follow the progress of the project and measure its results, the monitoring and evaluation system suffered from some weaknesses. The evaluation found some minor obstacles for the project to effectively monitor the progress of the project and learn from it due to: the complexity of the concept of VE and how to measure them; the absence of a strategic peacebuilding framework at the portfolio/country level that would facilitate the measurement higher-level results of impact; and the absence of the project baseline or an end-line data for measuring its indicators.

The focus on good reporting and knowledge management could have been improved to allow the project team to clearly document the progress of the project, its challenges, and all the solutions that were tested to address those challenges.

Sustainability: The evaluation identified some signs of sustainability for some of the project activities and results. For instance, the project supported the development of child and youth friendly plans that now ensure that the needs of the young people and women are integrated into current socio-economic development plans of the pilot communities. With the same token, other results of the project have already been institutionalized – this is the case of the gender and anti-discrimination expertise of educational materials that has already been adopted by the MoES.

The evaluation also highlighted that for community resilience to withstand violent extremist ideologies, follow-up activities will need to be developed by the government (with the support of International Organizations and CSOs).

Gender Equality: The project also showed a good understanding of the importance of gender mainstreaming throughout its activities under all three outputs. Most commitments regarding gender equality from the initial project documents were realized during the implementation of the project. Overall, the project contributed to the commitments of the Women, Peace and Security (WPS) Agenda and UNSCR 1325 by implementing various initiatives for young women in the communities, such as training and mentoring workshops and events, by promoting women’s initiatives and collaborating with local level institutions on addressing women’s rights and gender equality.

The evaluation concludes that the project under review was highly relevant both for the country and its intended beneficiaries, with an integrated approach to resilience to violence that proved to be efficient and effective even if it was implemented under challenging circumstances including COVID-19 pandemic. While some of the results of the project need follow-up to be sustained over time, there is solid evidence that the project had a positive impact on youth empowerment and on strengthening youth resilience to violence.

The evaluation offers a series of recommendations:

- The PBF should continue supporting youth empowerment projects that have proven to be effective around VE – it should also formalize the development of a longer strategic framework that can represent the foundation of the youth empowerment projects
- The PBF should build on the existing platforms it has already developed to strengthen knowledge management and facilitate exchange of information among countries that receive peacebuilding funds

- The PBF secretariat should consider helping country follow PBF guidance and possibly strengthen the capacity of country teams to develop peacebuilding projects
- The UNRC office should continue providing guidance on how to address complex concepts such as VE
- The RUNOs should continue focusing on youth empowerment and peacebuilding around VE through an integrated approach while at the same time including peacebuilding into their regular programs and investing in skill development on peacebuilding
- RUNOs should make learning one of the priorities when developing/implementing peacebuilding projects by strengthening MEL systems
- When conducting joint projects, RUNOs should clarify the level of collaboration they seek by better clarifying the roles and responsibilities
- When developing peacebuilding projects, RUNOs should develop solid partnerships with complementary projects by identifying them at conception stage building on the common synergies but also interact with them during implementation and documenting this in the progress reports
- The government should build on the results of the project to ensure sustainability.

Lessons Learned

The evaluation offers a series of lessons learned that refer to: the importance of spending enough time to develop a solid and coherent project; the importance to develop a well-articulated TOC at design stage; the necessity to learning that should be at the core of peacebuilding projects so that teams can continuously see the progress of the activities; the importance of better defining VE concepts at design stage; the interest for project implementers to either develop longer term projects or develop a strategic framework (five years) that could then fund shorter projects with realistic indicators that complement each other; and the necessity to develop a sustainability strategy from the very beginning of their design.

V. Introduction

The project “Communities Resilient to Violent Ideologies” (hereafter “the project”) was implemented as a joint initiative by the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF), United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) and United Nations Women (UN Women) between 11 January 2018 and 10 July 2021. The total budget of the project amounted to 2,601,082 USD, which was provided by the United Nations Peacebuilding Fund (PBF). The project’s geographical scope of activities focused on the 6 provinces (Batken, Jalal-Abad, Issyk-Kul, Naryn, Osh, and Talas) and 2 cities (Bishkek and Osh) covering 12 target municipalities.

The objective of this evaluation report is to share the findings, conclusions and recommendations based on the theory-of-change-based evaluation of the project. The evaluation was both summative, presenting how the theory of change operated towards results through the reference period, and formative, demonstrating what dynamics prepare the results to ultimately contribute to long term impact, and how future follow-up activities could be framed. The report aims to unpack the lessons learned and recommendations to implementing United Nations agencies, civil society implementing partners, the PBF as well as local and national duty bearers.

The evaluation was commissioned by UNICEF Kyrgyzstan, supervised by the UNICEF Kyrgyzstan Child Rights Monitoring Specialist, Tolgonai Berdikeyeva, and entrusted to the following evaluation team:

- Mr. Tommaso Balbo Di Vinadio, International Consultant, Team Leader
- Ms. Gulnara Asilbekova, National Consultant 1
- Ms. Kanykei Latipova, National Consultant 2

The evaluation process was accompanied by reviews and comments from UNICEF Child Rights Monitoring Specialist and the UNICEF Europe and Central Asia Regional Office Evaluation Specialist, colleagues from an Evaluation Reference Group (ERG), Evaluation Management team (EMT), PBF and UNICEF external quality assurance team. (Annex 5: Terms of Reference of the Evaluation Reference Group)

The evaluation process was composed of three phases:

- Phase 1.* Inception: review of documentation, elaboration of the methodology, identification of stakeholders, consultation with the Reference Group, development of the Inception Report.
- Phase 2.* Data collection and field work: conducting remote data collection (as per standard COVID-19 prevention measures. with 90 interviews, two focus groups, an additional desk-review, and the consultation with the Evaluation Reference Group regarding the preliminary findings.
- Phase 3.* Data analysis and reporting: conducting the analysis of interview and focus group notes, analysis of project documentation, report drafting, remote consultation with Reference Group and UNICEF Kyrgyzstan, and finalization of the Evaluation Report.

Context and Conflict Analysis

The Kyrgyz Republic is located in Central Asia and shares borders with Kazakhstan to the north, Uzbekistan to the west, Tajikistan to the southwest, and the People's Republic of China to the southeast. The population of the country, as of July 2021, was 6.6 million with about 34 per cent living in urban areas, and 66 percent in rural areas. Over 50 percent of the population of the country is under the age of 29, and almost a third of the population is between 20 and 39 years old. The ethnic makeup of Kyrgyzstan is diverse, including Kyrgyz (74 percent), Uzbek (15 percent), and Russian (5 percent). An estimated 3 percent of the population is made up of other minorities, including Dungan, Uighur, and Tajik, each representing one percent of the population. The rest are represented by Turks, Kazakhs, Tatars, Azerbaijanis, Koreans, Ukrainians, Germans, Turkmens, Chechens, Belarusians, and others. Women constitute 50.4 percent and men 49.6 percent. Approximately 75 percent of the population is Muslim (the majority Sunni), around 20 percent are Russian Orthodox, and the rest 5 percent constitutes minority religious groups.³ The country comprises seven provinces (oblasts) - Batken, Jalal-Abad, Issyk-Kul, Naryn, Osh, Talas, and Chui; nine administrative divisions; and two administratively independent cities - Bishkek (capital) and Osh. In 2020, 1 million 678 thousand people, in other words, every fourth resident of Kyrgyzstan, lived below the poverty line, of which 73.7 percent were residents of rural settlements.⁴



Figure 1. Map of Kyrgyzstan, showing provinces, administrative centers, and neighboring countries (Research Gate)

Poverty continues to be widespread. At the end of 2020, the poverty rate increased by 11 percent, reaching 31 percent of the population.⁵ In 2021, the poverty level in Kyrgyzstan may grow by another 4 percent and reach 35 percent of the population.⁶

Since it gained its independence in 1991 when the Soviet Union collapsed, Kyrgyzstan has been considered as one of the most democratic states in Central Asia due to commitment to democratic values, support to human rights and existence of independent media. However, over the last 25 years, the country has faced endogenous and exogenous obstacles, which were accompanied by revolutions^{7,8} internal protests and confrontation because of superficial observance of the democratic principles. Several instances of cross-border and ethnic violence have occurred over the past decades. For example, this mix of tensions contributed to a surge of violence in June 2010 in the southern cities of Osh and Jalalabad and their surrounding areas.⁹ More recently, the tension

³ Data (01.06.2021) National Statistical Committee of the Kyrgyz Republic

⁴ Data (11.06.2021) National Statistical Committee of the Kyrgyz Republic. Retrieved from <http://stat.kg/ru/news/v-2020-godu-kazhdjy-chetvertj-zhitel-kyrgyzstana-prozhival-v-usloviyah-bednosti/>

⁵ Kudryavtseva, T. (2021). www.24.kg

⁶ World Bank predicts further growth of poverty in Kyrgyzstan. (2021) <https://rus.azattyk.org/>

⁷ There have been three revolutions in the Kyrgyz Republic since independence, sparked by anger over corruption in the government—the first in 2005, the second in 2010, and the third in 2020.

⁸ Lukyanov, G. (Sept, 2017)

⁹ At least 470 people died in the clashes and 1,900 people received medical assistance at hospitals, in: Report of the Independent International Commission of Inquiry into the Events in the Southern Kyrgyzstan in June 2010, OSCE, 2020 at https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/Full_Report_490.pdf, <<https://web.archive.org/web/20131124221720/http://www.crisisgroup.org/~media/Files/asia/central-asia/kyrgyzstan/222-kyrgyzstan-widening-ethnic-divisions-in-the-south.pdf>> [20/10/2020].

escalated with the neighboring country Tajikistan (2021).¹⁰ The main reasons of disputes and multiple conflicts with the neighboring countries, such as Uzbekistan and Tajikistan, are mostly due to “border demarcation, access and use of natural resources as water for irrigation purposes and pasture grounds for grazing animals.”¹¹

The issue of radicalization and violent extremism entered the discourse in Kyrgyzstan after the 2010 violence in the south of the country coupled with the unsolved economic and social problems. Disaffected youth, women, especially among ethnic minorities, have become more prone to embracing violent and radical ideologies, because of discrimination (real or perceived) and exclusion most commonly from education and employment opportunities. In addition, formal politics limit opportunities for young people to participate in it.¹²

By 2021, more than 800 of people, including about 150 women, who travelled to Syria and Iraq to join extremist groups, were citizens of Kyrgyzstan.¹³ Young people have been active in more informal groups and movements. Due to various reasons such as lack of ability to participate in decision-making, little trust in state institutions, and struggle to find jobs (as a consequence, internal and external migration) and obtain quality education, young people show a very high degree of trust in religious organizations, higher than in the state and international organizations (see Figure 2). Additionally, since access to the Internet through mobile phones is widespread and easy, it is perceived as the main channel through which radicalization of minds is realized. In terms of geographical location, recent research¹⁴ shows that young people in the Southern provinces have higher vulnerability than their peers in the North. Batken oblast and Osh city are the most vulnerable locations due to complex interethnic relations and a history of confrontations. The study also found that young people who are involved in labor migration, and those who are affected by the absence of their parents due to labor migration, are more vulnerable to radicalization.¹⁵

Figure 2. Degree of youth’s trust in various organizations according to questionnaire results conducted by Nasritdinov, et. al. (2019)



Women, along with youth, have been undoubtedly a major target of PVE measures. According to the project document, “...women and girls who joined violent groups show that women’s specific vulnerability to joining violent groups is linked to a process of re-traditionalization where women return to traditional values, family life, religion.”¹⁶ Women and girls are pressured into early school drop-out which leads to poor literacy. They are encouraged or forced to stay at home looking after elderly family members. Having no education or gainful employment makes women financially dependent and vulnerable. Almost all women who followed their husbands to Syria were not aware of the armed conflict taking place there. They simply followed their husbands as obedient wives,

¹⁰ More information on the conflict <https://www.usip.org/publications/2021/05/border-clash-between-kyrgyzstan-and-tajikistan-risks-spinning-out-control>

¹¹ Kurmanalieva, p.5, 2019

¹² Nasritdinov, et. al. (2019)

¹³ RFE, 2021

¹⁴ Nasritdinov, et al (2019)

¹⁵ Nasritdinov, et al. (2019)

¹⁶ From Project Document

as reported by law enforcement and security officials.¹⁷ Kyrgyzstan has been investing in achieving gender equality and respect for women's rights with a strong legislative base that is aligned with international policies and standards, however, the practice of gender inequality continues to be pervasive in the country. Major concerns remain: gender-based violence, exclusion from decision-making, domestic violence, bride-kidnapping, trafficking, child marriage, and physical and psychological abuse.¹⁸ In addition, although there is a gender parity in education enrolment and literacy rates in Kyrgyzstan, women's economic involvement (48.2 percent, versus men's at 75.7 percent), and political empowerment (with only 17 percent¹⁹ of seats in the Parliament in 2020 held by women²⁰) remains low.

Violent extremism is still considered a young phenomenon in the country. Nevertheless, over 30 projects in the field of prevention of violent extremism (PVE) have been implemented in Kyrgyzstan with the support of international organizations and agencies in the last four years, totaling over 42 million USD.²¹ The International Crisis Group estimated in 2015 that around 3000 Central Asian citizens had joined radical groups fighting in Syria and Iraq. The majority of them were young men between the ages of 25 and 35, with women accounting for up to 25% of the total.²²

Legislation and National Policies on Youth and Prevention of Radicalization in Kyrgyzstan

Kyrgyzstan's strategic benchmarks for its long-term development as a politically stable, economically strong, and socially responsible state are defined in the National Development Strategy of the Kyrgyz Republic 2018-2040 (hereafter – the National Strategy) approved by the Decree of the President of the Kyrgyz Republic dated October 31, 2018 No. 221, and was endorsed in November 2018.²³ The National Strategy established that Kyrgyzstan would strive to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals adopted by Resolution 70/1 of the United Nations General Assembly Nations September 25, 2015. The National Strategy outlines the country's overall commitment to sustainable growth through development of four areas: 1) Individual – Family – Society, 2) Economic well-being, and quality of environment for development, 3) Public administration, and 4) Development management. The National Development Program 2018-2022 “Unity, Trust, Creation”²⁴ serves as a medium-term implementation plan for the National Strategy. The National Development Program aims to improve the quality of citizens' life through sustainable economic growth. Among its priorities, the program lists liberal fiscal policy, development of the regions, and investment protection mechanisms.²⁵

¹⁷ Michele E. Commercio (2015)

¹⁸ UN Women Europe and Central Asia, n.d.

¹⁹ Despite 30 percent quota

²⁰ Proportion of Seats Held by Women in National Parliaments - Kyrgyz Republic, 2020

²¹ Pierobon, 2020

²² Speckhard et al., 2017

²³ Access to English version here: < <http://donors.kg/en/strategy/5174-national-development-strategy-of-the-kyrgyz-republic-for-2018-2040> [05/11/2021]

²⁴ Access to English version here: < https://www.unpage.org/files/public/the_development_program_of_the_kyrgyz_republic_for_the_period_2018-2022.pdf>

²⁵ Development Program of the Kyrgyz Republic for the period 2018-2020 at <> https://www.unpage.org/files/public/the_development_program_of_the_kyrgyz_republic_for_the_period_2018-2022.pdf

The Government of the Kyrgyz Republic has a youth policy for 2020-2030.²⁶ The state youth policy aims, first of all, at providing youth with opportunities for the development of human potential, the formation of youth as the main resource for the development of the state and society, the encouragement of youth initiatives in the political, economic and social spheres, the formation of a responsible attitude of young citizens to their health, heritage ancestors, interaction with the outside world, their own decisions. Preventing radicalization is one of the focuses of the policy, actions of which are described in the Program of the Government of the Kyrgyz Republic "Development of youth policy for 2017-2020."²⁷ According to this program, youth development can be achieved through four priorities (see box 1).

Priority areas of youth development:

- Priority I. Creation of favorable conditions for social, economic self-realization and all-round development of new generations of young Kyrgyzstanis.
- Priority II. Ensuring equal access for youth to state and municipal services.
- Priority III. Expanding the active participation of young people in the preparation and decision-making process.
- Priority IV. Improving the efficiency of the youth management system.

Figure 3. Priority areas of youth development in Kyrgyzstan

Within the project “Communities resilient to violent ideologies,” the Decree²⁸ of the Temporary Regulation on the procedure for holding the competition "City friendly to children and youth" was approved. The Regulation is based on the Concept of regional policy of the Kyrgyz Republic for the period 2018-2022²⁹

In terms of PVE, The Kyrgyz government adopted and launched its National Program on Countering Extremism and Terrorism for 2017-2022 in 2017.³⁰ Three primary priorities are identified in the Action Plan: 1) Preventing extremism and terrorism, 2) Detecting and combatting extremism and terrorism, and 3) Improving legislative procedures and collaboration in the fight against extremism and terrorism. As a complement to that, the UN developed the 2017-2020 Peacebuilding Priority Plan (PPP) in Kyrgyzstan in collaboration with the Kyrgyz government in 2017.

To ensure the implementation of United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325, the Kyrgyz Government adopted an action plan for 2018-2020 (dated September 21, 2018, No. 334-p) with the following goals:

1. Strengthened role and participation of women in activity aimed at preserving peace and security, including at the decision making level
2. Strengthened interaction of state agencies, LSGs and the civil society for the prevention of conflicts and risks of violence towards women and girls
3. Improvement of the system of protection and meeting special needs of women and girls in emergencies

Growing inequalities, perceptions of injustice, human rights violations, socio-political exclusion, widespread corruption, marginalization, and isolation of certain populations were identified as key drivers of violent extremism in the Peacebuilding Priority Plan (PPP) 2017-2020.³¹ The revised

²⁶ Available in Russian here: <<http://cbd.minjust.gov.kg/act/view/ru-ru/157204>>

²⁷ Available in Russian here: <<http://cbd.minjust.gov.kg/act/view/ru-ru/100209>>

²⁸ of May 2, 2019 No. 206 available at: <<http://cbd.minjust.gov.kg/act/view/ru-ru/13641>>

²⁹ Decree dated March 31, 2017 No. 194. Available at: <<http://cbd.minjust.gov.kg/act/view/ru-ru/99897?cl=ru-ru>>

³⁰ Order of the Government of the Kyrgyz Republic #414, as of 20 September 2017.

³¹ United Nations Kyrgyz Republic, n.d.

PPP defined three interlinked outcomes as building blocks of interventions for preventing violent extremism in Kyrgyzstan each outcome implemented by a UN agency:

Outcome 1: Justice and security sector institutions, national and local authorities apply socially inclusive approaches, participatory decision-making and guarantee increased civic space (UNDP, UNICEF, OHCHR, UN Women).

Outcome 2. Penitentiary and probation officers, as well as the police and forensic experts, are able to prevent and address radicalization to violence by ensuring adequate safeguards respecting national and international standards (UNODC, UNDP).

Outcome 3: Women and men, boys and girls in target communities take a more critical stance on ideologies instigating violence and have a better sense of belonging to their communities and participate in local development and dialogues over PVE (UNICEF, UNFPA, UN Women).

The project “Communities resilient to violent ideologies” contributed to PPP Outcome 3 on diverting people at risk from a radicalization path by means of community dialogue, education, and development.

Brief project description

The project “Communities Resilient to Violent Ideologies,” funded by the UN Secretary-General’s Peacebuilding Fund (\$2,601,082), was approved as a joint initiative implemented by UNICEF, UNFPA, and UN Women for an initial period of 36 months³², from 11 January 2018 to 10 July 2021. The project’s geographical scope of activities focused on the 6 provinces (Batken, Jalal-Abad, Issyk-Kul, Naryn, Osh and Talas) and 2 cities (Bishkek and Osh) covering 12 target municipalities: 1) Bishkek city (Bakai-Ata, Ak-Ordo); 2) Osh city (Sulaiman-Too, Kerme-Too, Amir-Temur); 3) Alliya Anarov municipality in Aravan district; 4) Karasuu municipality in Karasuu district; 5) Nookat city; 6) Gulistan municipality in Nookat district; 7) Jalalabad city, 8) Suzak municipality in Suzak district; 9) Kyzyl-Kiya city in Kadamjai district; 10) Sary-Bulak municipality in Tyup district; 11) Ugut municipality in Ak-Talaa district; and 12) Kara-Buura municipality in Kara-Buura district.

According to the project document, the project’s main objective was “to build community resilience to violent and manipulative ideologies, including those exploiting faith, through the means of education, empowerment and dialogue.”

The project interventions were focused at providing young women and men with critical skills, engaging them in civic life, but also strengthening capacity among local self-governments and adults³³ who had a potential role in countering youth violent extremism as they engaged with them on a daily basis, and ensuring social inclusive and gender sensitive programming at local level.

Gender equality was also an important objective of the project; for example, one of the main focuses of the project activities was to design age-appropriate and gender-sensitive materials for teaching non-violent culture and civic competencies among youth, adolescents, and women. Therefore, the project aimed at mainstreaming gender in all three outputs and women were supposed to be included in the planning and/or implementation of all project activities.

³² The project’s original duration was 36 months; However, in 2020 due to delays caused by the Covid-19 pandemic, the project was extended till 10 July 2021. The project received additional 7 months. Hence, an overall of 43 months.

³³ Police, teachers, parents, government officials, community leaders and religious leaders

The project thematic scope related to SDG 4 (Education), SDG 16 (Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions), SDG 10 (Reduced Inequalities) and to SDG 5 (Gender Equality) as a cross-cutting issue.

The table below gives a brief overview of the project and its main activities

*Table 1. Brief description of the 3 outputs*³⁴

³⁴ Those are some extracts from the project document

The **outcome** of the project: Women and men, boys and girls in target communities take a more critical stance on ideologies instigating violence and have a better sense of belonging to their communities and participate in local development and dialogues over PVE.

This outcome was served by three outputs:

- Output 1 (targeting at least 2507 youth and 236 women): Youth, adolescents and women in target communities gain civic competencies in schools, homes and the community.
 - This output aimed at: a) Designing age-appropriate and gender-sensitive materials for teaching non-violent culture and civic competencies at secondary level in secular and religious settings; b) Improving the capacity of education workers to facilitate the learning of non-violent culture and civic competencies in secondary and vocational schools and in madrasahs; c) Piloting delivery of civic competencies and non-violent culture curricula to secondary schools and madrasahs; and d) Upscaling of the multilingual-education and facilitate school-led, community-based open dialogue on ethnic, cultural and language diversity building on lessons-learned from previous MLE activity
 - Activities under this output included multi-stakeholder consultations, working group meetings, workshops for teachers, TOT trainings, development and approval of educational and professional development materials, raising awareness on gender and anti-discrimination among school students and communities.
 - Implementing Agencies:
 - 1) UN Women. Implementing partner: Foundation of Educational Initiatives Support.
 - 2) UNFPA. Implementation partners: IDEA CA and PF Mutakalim.
- Output 2 (targeting 2,507 adolescents (1,169 boys and 1,338 girls); 2345 young people (with over 60% being girls); 50 teachers; 296 women and girls): Youth and adolescents and women in target communities engage in collaborative measures to address local vulnerabilities leading to violent extremism.
 - This output aimed at: a) Providing spaces and opportunities to practice civic competencies and encouraging their participation in local governance; b) Enhancing partnerships between local authorities, service providers and youth to plan and implement strategies addressing vulnerabilities to violent ideologies.
 - Activities under this output included development of a guidebook on extracurricular social activities, advocacy campaigns run by youth, workshops, trainings for local authorities, dialogues, initiatives designed and implemented by women and girls, business trainings, etc.
 - Implementing Agencies:

UNICEF. Implementing partners: Development Policy Institute, Foundation for Tolerance International, East West Management PVE Extension Project, Techaim PVE Extension Project, Youth of Osh PVE Extension Project.
- Output 3: The capacity of opinion leaders, civil society activists and religious leaders is strengthened to provide alternative and positive messages and build meaningful dialogue and exchange.
 - This output aimed at: a) Involving religious leaders and civil society activists in designing and implementing community development initiatives and dialogues on prevention of violent ideologies; b) Facilitating dialogue process with involvement of religious leaders, women's groups, civil society activists, local authorities and the policy to jointly design and implement local initiatives; c) Supporting on-line and off-line positive and responsible messaging as well as constructive debate around diverse identities by engaging civil society activists, religious community and media partners.
 - Activities under this output included training, coaching, master classes and a variety of other knowledge delivery and experience exchange processes.
 - Implementing Agencies:

UNICEF, UN Women, UNFPA. Implementing partners: Independent gender experts.

Stakeholder analysis

The project under review had 3 implementing agencies (UNICEF was also the Leading agency) that conducted the activities of the project together with some implementing partners. The main counterpart of the project were some of the ministries of the government of Kyrgyzstan (at central and local level) that were engaged in the project from the very beginning. The 3 implementing

agencies together with Government and civil society officials were part of the Joint Steering Committee, which met regularly. The project beneficiaries were young women and men together with their parents, teachers, community members in the targeted municipalities.

UN Agencies: The project was funded by the Peacebuilding Fund and implemented by three Recipient UN Organizations (RUNOs) in Kyrgyzstan: UNICEF as the leading agency, together with UN Women and UNFPA. UNICEF Kyrgyzstan was the leading agency for the coordination of the project and organization of the joint planning of the project as well as joint monitoring and reporting. The project closely coordinated with several dialogue building and peacebuilding projects funded by EU, the US Government and the UK as well as those implemented within PBF's Gender and Youth Promotion Initiative (GYPI). RUNOs took part in PPP outcome meetings organized by the PBF Secretariat to improve coordination with other PBF-funded projects and ensure information exchange.

Joint Steering Committee: Project coordination was done through the Joint Steering Committee (JSC) which was established in 2013 to oversee implementation, participate in the monitoring of the peacebuilding projects and provide recommendations to improve the project strategies; it was a multi-stakeholder body established on the order of the Kyrgyz Republic's President. The JSC was composed of 28 individuals representing Government, civil society, and development partners. It is co-chaired by the Head of the Department for Interethnic Relations and Collaboration with the Civil Society of the President of the Kyrgyz Republic and the UN Resident Coordinator. The JSC met regularly as the agencies presented and discussed the outcomes of the interventions. The JSC was also a relevant platform for development actors to coordinate their interventions. As a part of their monitoring and oversight they also undertook field trips to project sites providing feedback as well as contributing to sustainability of the results and local ownership over them³⁵. With the launch of three PVE projects in Kyrgyzstan within the framework of the Peacebuilding Priority Plan from January 2018, the composition of JSC was updated and regular meetings were organized.

National level: The main project partners were the Ministry of Education and Science and its structural subdivisions, State Commission on Religious Affairs of the Kyrgyz Republic, State Agency on Youth, Physical Culture and Sports under the Ministry of Culture, Information, Sports, and Youth Policy of the Kyrgyz Republic, which were involved in the project from the beginning and participated in working groups. Ministry of Interior Affairs (MIA), the Office for Combating Extremism and Illegal Migration, State Agency for Regional Development under the Ministry of Agriculture, Water Resources and Regional Development, State Agency for Local Self-Government and Interethnic Relations, State Agency of Local Self-Government and Interethnic Relations actively were involved in the project.

Municipal level: The project took place in six provinces of the Kyrgyz Republic across 12 locations³⁶: Issyk-Kul, Naryn, Talas, Osh, Jalal-Abad, Batken provinces; Bishkek and Osh cities. The target municipalities were selected through a separate assessment and identification of pilot communities through consultations with various stakeholders. These target municipalities were selected out of 60, which government and civil society stakeholders have detected as prone to violent extremism as well as other criteria that were identified such as geographical coverage,

³⁵ United Nations Peacebuilding Support Office (PBSO)/ Peacebuilding Fund (PBF), PBF PROJECT DOCUMENT

³⁶ Project locations: 1) Bishkek city, 2) Osh city; Osh province: 3) Alliya Anarov municipality in Aravan district; 4) Karasuu municipality in Karasuu district; 5) Nookat city; 6) Gulistan municipality in Nookat district; Jalalabad province: 7) Jalalabad city, 8) Suzak municipality in Suzak district; Batken province: 9) Kyzyl-Kiya city in Kadamjai district; Issyk-Kul province: 10) Sary-Bulak municipality in Tyup district; Naryn province: 11) Ugut municipality in Ak-Talaa district; Talas province: 12) Kara-Buura municipality in Kara-Buura district.

population size, ethnicity, avoiding overlap with other projects and willingness of communities to collaborate.

Implementing partners: The main implementing partners of the project were the State and Municipal institutions and CSOs that have the mandate and functional tasks to work with youth and community members in the target areas. See Annex 3 for further details of the stakeholders, their involvement in the project, interest in this evaluation and potential role in peacebuilding.

Final beneficiaries: The final beneficiaries included: at least 2500 young people, over 100 education workers (school and vocational education facilities, madrasah) Output 1); at least 3,545 young people demonstrate improved skills in research and analysis (Output 2); at least 2,560 young people were involved in community consultations and advocacy; 296 women and girls (in Output 3. Also, their parents, teachers, community members in the municipalities targeted by the project, and ultimately all community members of twelve municipalities. Additionally, other activities that were conducted by the final beneficiaries at local level involved many other people.

VI. Purpose, Objectives and Scope of the Evaluation

Evaluation purpose

This evaluation has produced evidence on the main evaluation questions, and it has drawn lessons learnt and recommendations. The evaluation covers the entire period of the project implementation (11.01.2018 – 10.07.2021) and was conducted from June 2021 to January 2022. The evaluation was done in accordance with the OECD DAC Criteria for Evaluating Development Assistance, including relevance, coherence, effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability, and impact.

The purpose of this evaluation was to:

- Fulfil UNICEF, UNFPA and UN Women’s accountability towards national government and PBF and other stakeholders by providing an assessment of the results of the project
- Assess the circumstances influencing the project’s achievements and the challenges that hindered it
- Generate knowledge and evidence on achievements, lessons learned and recommendations to influence further strategic directions.

The primary intended users of the evaluation are:

- decision-makers from government
- implementing partners and the implementing agencies (UNICEF, UNFPA, UN Women)
- the UN Peacebuilding Fund.

The secondary intended users are:

- local self-government staff in project communities
- project beneficiaries in the 12 target municipalities.

Annex 6 summarizes the specific possible advantages that those stakeholders will have building on the results of this evaluation.

Evaluation objectives

The objectives of the evaluation were the ones identified in the TORs, as follows:

- to validate the theory of change
- to determine the relevance of the project to the context, its effectiveness, coherence, efficiency in reaching results
- to provide evidence on the achieved results
- to assess project's potential to be sustainable and make impact
- to identify lessons learned and recommendations
- to identify the extent to which cross-cutting strategies such as human rights-based approach, results-based management and gender, equity have contributed and have been mainstreamed in the project implementation.

Scope of the evaluation

Concerning its programmatic scope, this evaluation provides an independent assessment of the project “Communities resilient to violent ideologies” by covering all project activities during the period from January 11, 2018 to July 10, 2021. It does not cover activities under PPP outcomes one and two.³⁷ The evaluation covers the full geographical reach of the project and will conduct a more in-depth evaluation in 6³⁸ out of 12 target municipalities³⁹ where the project was implemented. More information on sampling is provided in the methodology section.

Finally, the evaluation analyzed the effects of the project on the beneficiaries (youth, parents, teachers, women and girls, and community members) as well as on the duty bearers (officials from local and central government).

It should be noted that this evaluation makes a difference between:

- Stakeholders: police, parents, teachers, local authorities, religious leaders, and Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) and disadvantaged women groups, media, and academic institutions for teachers' advanced education
- Targeted beneficiaries: as the project was a youth empowerment project the final beneficiaries were meant to be youth. In this sense, when the report mentions final beneficiaries it indicates youth (young men and women).

VII. Theory of Change

This final project evaluation undertook a Theory of Change-based approach, by reviewing the existing TOC and reconstructed it to determine whether:

- the envisaged changes identified at project design stage have taken place

³⁷ The evaluations of outcome one and two will be undertaken separately.

³⁸ Chui province, Issyk-Kul, Batken, Jalal-Abad and two in Osh province

³⁹ 1) Bishkek city, 2) Osh city; Osh province: 3) Alliya Anarov municipality in Aravan district; 4) Karasuu municipality in Karasuu district; 5) Nookat city; 6) Gulistan municipality in Nookat district; Jalalabad province: 7) Jalalabad city, 8) Suzak municipality in Suzak district; Batken province: 9) Kyzyl-Kiya city in Kadamjai district; Issyk-Kul province: 10) Sary-Bulak municipality in Tyup district; Naryn province: 11) Ugut municipality in Ak-Talaa district; Talas province: 12) Kara-Buura municipality in Kara-Buura district.

- the possible contribution of the project to bring about those changes can be confirmed
- the assumptions that the project identified were realized or not.

In this sense, the evaluation included a contribution analysis that, on the basis of the TOC, analyzed the 3 elements mentioned in Box 1⁴⁰.

The TOC included in the project document is the following: *‘If women and men, boys and girls in the communities have critical thinking skills AND are able to positively claim and exercise their rights through civic engagement, THEN they will become resilient to violent and manipulative ideologies, BECAUSE they will have a sense of belonging to their communities and confidence in the State’.*

The evaluation team reconstructed the TOC to better articulate the different pathways for change as well as the assumptions underpinning those pathways. The TOC was visualized (see Figure 3 below⁴¹) and validated through two workshops with key project stakeholders⁴² (RUNO current and former staff involved in project development and implementation).

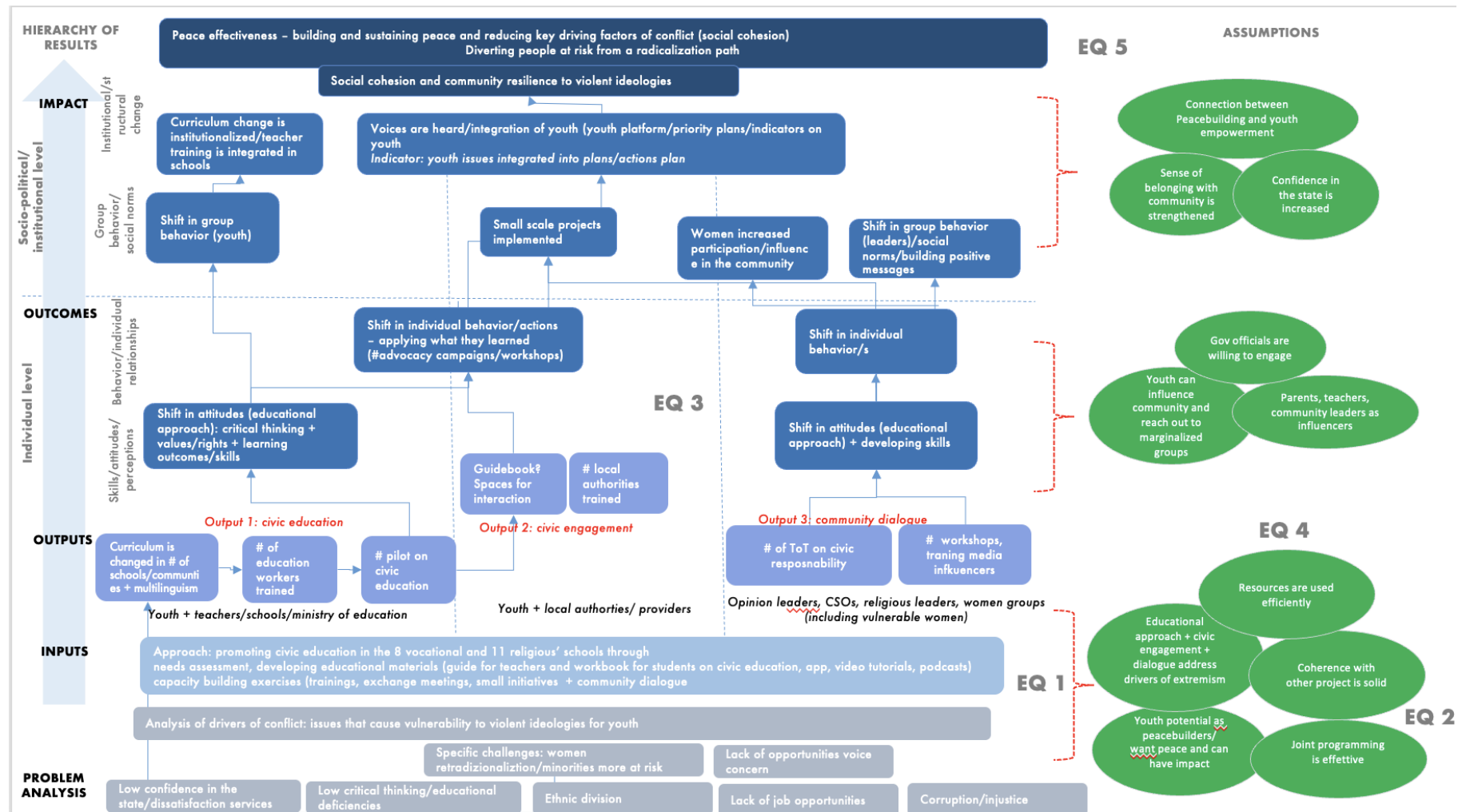
⁴⁰ The TOC also served as the basis for the evaluation team to develop the main evaluation questions that will be addressed through a series of data collection and analysis tools (further described in the inception report).

⁴¹ The TOC also shows the evaluation questions (EQ) per criteria that are later described in this document

⁴² Those stakeholders were as follows: project implementers from UN Women, UNFPA, and UNICEF, including Program Officers, M&E Specialists, Program Analyst.

It is important to note that the TOC may be slightly revised during the data collection and analysis phase. The revised version will be integrated into the final report.

Figure 4. Theory of Change⁴³



⁴³ For a higher resolution of the reconstructed TOC, please click on the following link: <https://docs.google.com/presentation/d/1hD1dUbTWnoHeuZXCzAVyV-8eml3HKLJbqFRc0gRnwFQ/edit?usp=sharing>

The TOC of the project was the following:

- *Problem analysis*: the project identified some key drivers of violent extremism that were assumed to be connected to each other, such as low confidence in the state and the dissatisfaction in state services, weak critical thinking skills and educational deficiencies, lack of opportunities for youth and vulnerable women to voice their concerns, and the lack of job opportunities. The project also identified specific categories (minorities and women from religious communities) that are at higher risk of recruitment to conflict zones (Syria) because of problems of marginalization from society.
- *Inputs*: on the basis of this analysis, the project adopted an educational approach based on civic education, civic engagement and community dialogue through needs assessment, developing educational materials, capacity building exercises, etc.

Related assumptions of the project were that:

- Youth (including women) can potentially be instrumental in peacebuilding as they want peace and can have a positive impact.
- The approach envisaged by the project (educational approach + civic engagement + community dialogue) can effectively address the drivers of extremism.
- Joint programming is an effective way to implement such a program through coordination among themselves and with other partners and through effective use of resources.
- *Short and medium results (outputs and outcomes)*: If those assumptions are met, the project expected that the activities implemented by the project would bring about changes in terms of shifting individual attitudes of beneficiaries (youth, teachers, parents, women and girls, religious leaders, community leaders, local self-government, and CSOs, etc.), strengthening specific skills such as critical thinking of youth and building their confidence (changes at the individual level). The expectation was that those results would also be at the community level as groups/communities would change their behavior and hampering social norms would be challenged.

At the same time, the expectation was that the government (both at the central and local levels) would integrate youth (including women and girls) needs⁴⁴ and concerns into their development plans and strategies (i.e. Ministry of Education and Science changing the curriculum to integrate project approach to reduce violent extremism). In this sense, the project aimed to have an impact also at the socio-political level.

Specific assumptions of the project were that:

- Police, teachers, parents, government officials, community leaders and religious leaders can have a role to play in countering violent extremism
- Youth, women and girls have the capacity to influence other youth and members of the community
- Government is willing to collaborate and engage.

⁴⁴ It should be noted that the expectation would be also that the needs of women and girls needs would be integrated so that local authorities would consider the gender-sensitive and socially inclusive aspects in local development plans (plany socialno-ekonomicheskogo razvitiya)

- *Long-term results (impact)*: the final expectation of the project was that it would strengthen young women (including vulnerable women) and men and community resilience by diverting people at risk from a radicalization path as it would reduce key driving factors of conflict. In this sense, the project would contribute to the purpose of peacebuilding in Kyrgyzstan.

The specific underpinning assumptions of the project at this stage were that:

- These results would be achieved as young women (including vulnerable women) and men and vulnerable women would increase both their sense of belonging with their community and their confidence in the state.
- On more general terms, the project assumed that there would be a strong interconnection between peacebuilding and young women (including vulnerable women) and men's empowerment.

Overall, the long-term results of the project (resilience to violence) were expected to be met by strengthening the individual (empowerment and civic education), the institutional (civic engagement) and the family/community (community dialogue). This is better articulated in the relevance and effectiveness section of this report.

VIII. Description of Methodology

This evaluation was a summative, utilisation-focused and equity-oriented evaluation using a theory-based design. Overall, this evaluation used a mixed-method approach.⁴⁵ It followed the UNEG norms and standards. This section aims to describe in depth the methodology used by the evaluation team in terms of the sampling approach and the data collection and analysis tools.

Evaluation criteria and questions

This evaluation was done in accordance with the OECD DAC Criteria for Evaluating Development Assistance, namely relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability and impact and the newly agreed criteria on coherence⁴⁶. The evaluation developed an evaluation matrix (see annex 2) that unpacks the main questions and relate them to the approaches and sources of information to be used in answering them.

Relevance: the evaluation assessed the extent to which the project objectives address the real problems (the root cause of violent extremism) and the needs of its target groups (women and men, with a particular focus also on vulnerable groups). It also researched whether this was based on good practices and the literature on peacebuilding and violent extremism. The evaluation also assessed whether the approach of the project was appropriate to address the identified problems country priorities, associated policies and donor priorities.

⁴⁵ The evaluation will use a non-experimental evaluation design and a theory-based approach. 'Today, the most commonly used method in development evaluation is a *mixed method results-based approach*, using both qualitative and quantitative information. 'OECD guidance note on evaluating peacebuilding'

⁴⁶ For a list of the OECD DAC criteria see: www.oecd.org/dac/evaluationnetwork

Evaluation question 1: How relevant was the project in addressing the main drivers of violent extremism, the real needs of its beneficiaries as well as the national and donor priorities in Kyrgyzstan

Coherence: the evaluation assessed, firstly, the internal coherence – the extent to which the UN agencies and implementing partners collaborated effectively based on their comparative advantage and clear division of tasks (assessment of the joint approach). Secondly, the evaluation assessed the external coherence – the extent to which the project was able to develop synergies and linkages with complementarity projects funded by other donors at project conception and during implementation. The evaluation wanted also to verify whether those synergies benefited the project or not.

Evaluation question 2: To what extent was the project internally coherent and to what extent was it designed and developed in synergy with other stakeholders' interventions on peacebuilding?

Effectiveness/Impact⁴⁷: the evaluation assessed the extent to which the objectives of the intervention have been achieved or are expected to be achieved and whether the intervention has contributed to addressing the drivers of violent extremism in terms of changing attitudes, behavior, social norms, as well as changes at the institutional level. This criterion is strictly linked to the one on relevance as the evaluation wanted to verify whether the approach chosen by the project was appropriate to address the root cause of the violent extremism in the country.

Finally, the evaluation wanted to verify whether there have been any unintended positive or negative results.

Evaluation question 3: To what extent did the project achieve its objectives?

Efficiency: the evaluation assessed the extent to which the project delivered results in an economic and timely way. The evaluation conducted an assessment as to whether funds and activities related to project were delivered in a timely and resource appropriate manner also in the context of COVID-19. Then, the evaluation also assessed the governance set-up of the project, in particular, the role and the guidance from the Steering Committee. Finally, the evaluation verified that the monitoring mechanisms used by the project were effective in measuring and informing management of the project performance and progress towards the targets

Evaluation question 4: How efficient was the project in using its resources to achieve its objectives?

Sustainability: the evaluation assessed the extent to which the results of the intervention continued, or were likely to continue, as well as the financial and contextual catalytic effects. In particular, the

⁴⁷ The evaluation decided to merge the criterion of effectiveness and the one on impact for the following reasons: the project terminated its activities only recently, and it is unlikely to actually have solid evidence/data for impact; building trust and resilience is a long term endeavor and it is quite difficult to appreciate the results just after the project has terminated its activities; Also, the 'likelihood of impact' in terms of willingness of the government to continue engaging with youth, the appreciation of the sense of community building and trust in the institutions will be evaluated under the criterion of sustainability

evaluation assessed whether the project generated national ownership and capacity to continue implementation of the results achieved.

Evaluation question 5: To what extent are initiatives supported by the project likely to be sustained over time so as contribute to peacebuilding?

The evaluation also looked at two cross-cutting themes⁴⁸: gender and equity/human rights/leave-no-one-behind. Concerning gender, the evaluation assessed the extent to which the project mainstreamed gender in all its activities, whether women and girls benefited equally from all 3 outputs and whether the conflict analysis was gender-sensitive and socially inclusive.

Methods for data collection, analysis, and sampling

Sampling

To be able to address the evaluation questions more in depth while maintaining representativeness of the findings, the project evaluation team sampled six out of 12 project municipalities⁴⁹, in line with what was envisaged in the TORs.

A specific set of criteria⁵⁰ was developed to sample these municipalities:

- Balancing geographical coverage of the project: based on the project documents, the target municipalities were selected using the following ratio: 60% in the southern part and 40% in the northern part of the country. The same approach was applied to the selection of the sample municipalities, i.e. thus 2 communities in the north and 4 communities in the south.
- Representativeness of the type of settlements: balancing urban, rural and mixed areas and size of population in the north and in the south. Thus, one city and one urban area in the north, and two urban (bigger city and mixed area) and two rural areas in the south were sampled.
- The level of coverage by the project services/activities, CSOs, as well as by international stakeholders.
- Balancing in the presence of ethnic minority groups: the evaluation included areas where the representation of minority groups is profound. Multi-ethnic project areas were covered by the project final evaluation as seen in Table 2 (5 out of 6 areas were multi-ethnic)

The table below shows the municipalities that were sampled by the evaluation in agreement with the ERG

Table 2. Sampling of project municipalities

Province	No	Municipalities	Sampled municipalities	Type of territory/Criteria

⁴⁸ The questions for those themes are already integrated into the evaluation matrix.

⁴⁹ The project targeted twelve municipalities covering all seven provinces of the country, which government and civil society stakeholders have detected as prone to violent extremism: four municipalities from the northern part of the country and eight municipalities from the southern part.

⁵⁰ The EMT approved the sampled municipalities through a participatory workshop held during the inception phase.

Bishkek, north	1	Bishkek city (Municipal Territorial Unit Bakai-Ata, and Ak-Ordo)	Sampled and approved, Ak-Ordo	Urban, large, population over 1 mln people, multi-ethnic, covered by other actors
Issyk-Kul, north	2	Sary-Bulak municipality in Tyup district;	Sampled and approved	Rural, mono-ethnic
Batken, south	3	Kyzyl-Kiya city in Kadamjai district;	Sampled and approved	Urban, small, multi-ethnic
Osh, south	4	Allya Anarov municipality in Aravan district	Sampled and approved	Rural, multi-ethnic, covered by other actors
	5	Nookat city	Sampled and approved	Mixed area, semi-urban, multi-ethnic
	6	Suzak municipality in Suzak district;	Sampled and approved	Rural area, multi-ethnic

Audience of final evaluation

The evaluation focused on the following audiences:

Project implementers: UNICEF, UNFPA, UN Women, RCO

National Duty Bearers: Ministry of Interior Affairs, State Agency for Regional Development under the Ministry of Agriculture, Water Resources and Regional Development of the KR, Kyrgyz Academy of Science, Spiritual Administration of Muslims of Kyrgyzstan, State Committee on Religious Affairs of the KR, State Agency on Youth, Physical Culture and Sports under the Ministry of Culture, Information, Sports and Youth Policy of the KR, Association of Primary Professional Education under the Ministry of Education, Republican Scientific Methodological Center under the Ministry of Education and Science.

Implementing CSOs: IDEA CA, Youth of Osh, Development Policy Institute, Foundation for Tolerance International, Mutakalim, FEIS, PF DIA, Crisis center “Ayalzat,” Crisis center “Ariet,” Independent Freelancers (Gender Experts).

Local Duty Bearers: Representatives of Local Governments, Youth Agency at Oblast level, Social Workers, School Principals, City Hall Leading Specialists, Teachers of Madrasah.

Community Members: Religious Leaders, Civic Activists, Village Leaders, Deputies of Local Governments.

Vocational Institutes: Vocational Instructors

Rights Holders: Parents, Young People, and Women.

Data collection and analysis

Data for this evaluation was gathered through a mix of qualitative and quantitative tools, which complement each other for the sake of triangulation in order to increase the credibility of the findings.

1. *Desk review* (EQ from 1 to 5 are covered): the team first undertook a desk review with the main purpose of providing an overview of:
 - how the project was designed and its relevance towards national plans and strategies and youth needs
 - the cooperation between UN agencies as well as with external stakeholders at design and implementation stage
 - whether results pathways of the project and its assumptions have been realized and whether there are indications for the results to be sustained over time
 - the budget and financial data of the project.

The main documents that were reviewed were as follows:

- project-related documents (i.e. project document, quarterly and annual progress reports, internal documents of UNICEF, UNFPA, UN Women)
 - general strategic documents of the Government of Kyrgyzstan (i.e. national strategies) as well as Strategic documents of the Provinces selected for the evaluation. Also, plans of sampled municipalities, municipal budgets, decisions, that can bring evidence to youth-led initiatives in the sampled case study municipalities
 - conflict-related analyses conducted for the country
 - financial and budget related documents
 - any other relevant material produced by the project (web/social media sources, video material)
 - presentations and minutes of the Steering Committee.
2. *Focus group discussions (FGDs)* (EQ 1 and 3 are covered): the team conducted 2 FGDs with the EMT and the main NGOs involved in the project. The main objective was to:
 - Better identify the main topics/elements to be better investigated with the other tools deployed (i.e. interviews, guided questionnaires)
 - Address some of the EQs, in particular, the ones related to relevance and effectiveness (EQ 1 and 3)
 - Validate final evaluation recommendations.

The team conducted two more FGDs with the EMT to discuss the main recommendations – the objective being to make the recommendations as feasible and operational as possible

FGDs were therefore used to collect information from the key project stakeholders on the main issues for the evaluation to focus on, which were then covered during in-depth interviews with a variety of stakeholders and beneficiaries.

3. *Semi-structured interviews with stakeholders and beneficiaries*⁵¹ (EQ from 1 to 5 are covered): the team then undertook of 90 interviews with selected project stakeholders (see Annex 7) to gather additional information from key people who have been involved in the design or the implementation of the project so as to start verifying the information gathered during the desk review.

⁵¹ The team will then discuss with the final project beneficiaries the project results and their perception of the possible changes they have experienced. The reason for the team to conduct those interviews after the FGDs is to be able to examine at a deeper level some of the issues that will possibly emerge from the group discussions with project stakeholders.

See Annex 7 for a complete list of the stakeholders interviewed.

The evaluation selected those stakeholders (central and government) and beneficiaries to be interviewed through ‘purposeful sampling’. The interviews were conducted in three languages depending on the beneficiary origin (Russian, Kyrgyz, and Uzbek language) and, in compliance with COVID-19 measures, used phone calls to conduct them.

The evaluation also prepared an interview guide for each group of stakeholders (see Annex 8), which served as a basis to conduct the interviews. Confidentiality was also ensured, to preserve anonymity of the interviewees that were informed and asked for consent. Some interviews were held with minors (see Ethics section of this inception report and Annex 11 for the consent form), as youth project participants were aged 13-28.

4. *Guided questionnaire* (EQ 3 is covered): the team also developed and managed a guided (phone) questionnaire targeting 43 youth⁵². The first purpose to develop a guided questionnaire was the necessity to gather additional data to overcome the challenge of the project not having developed a baseline assessment. Also, the questionnaire was important so as to allow the evaluation to measure long-term results of the project (resilience to violence). The questionnaire was also useful as the evaluation triangulated its results with data emerging from interviews, desk review and FGDs.

The guided questionnaire was built on the BRAVE-14 tool that defined some key factors (and 14 items measure) underpinning youth resilience to violent extremism, as follows: 1) cultural identity and connectedness (made up of cultural knowledge, cultural continuity, cultural security, and cultural adaptability); 2) relationships and networks (made up of bonding capital, bridging capital, linking capital); 3) community norms, behaviors, attitudes, and values (made up of coping with adversity, problem behaviors, and resources for problem solving); and 4) framing, preventing, and responding to violence (made up of beliefs, values, and resources/strategies for non-violent conflict resolution).⁵³ To make this tool more contextual and in line with the approach used by the project, the evaluation slightly revised the original BRAVE-14 tool and developed a specific questionnaire composed of 3 main elements: 1) sense of belonging to community; 2) confidence in the state and 3) violence related behavior and beliefs (see the results in Annex 12). In each area, a set of three questions were defined to measure the outcome. The respondents were asked to express their agreement or disagreement with the items using a 5-point Likert scale ranging from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (5)⁵⁴. It is important to note that the evaluators made a connection with the project activities by asking for each questions the following statement ‘as a result of the project activity you have participated in...’ For the sake of efficiency, the evaluation team reached out to those 43 young people through a phone call and then guided them through though the questionnaire (and explain the questions) and fill in the online questionnaire on their behalf.

Concerning data analysis, the evaluation used the following tools:

- **Analysis of TOC and contribution analysis:** on the basis of the reconstructed TOC, the

⁵² The evaluation team relied on UN implementing agency to facilitate the random selection of the participants. With this cohort the team conducted the questionnaire at the very beginning of the call so as to have a similar approach with the other 30 young people with whom the team were not conducting interviews.

⁵³ For more information, please refer to Michele Grossman et al. “Understanding Youth Resilience to Violent Extremism: A Standardized Research Measure Final Research Report”, 2017

⁵⁴ 43 young people from six target municipalities were reached out through the questionnaire: 30.2% male and 69.8% female; aged from 14 to 25.

evaluation used a contribution analysis to help unpack the pathways for change and the underpinning assumptions. In particular, the contribution analysis:

- identified the expected changes that the project wanted to have (TOC)
 - gathered existing evidence to test the theory of change and
 - checked whether the changes the project has brought about can be considered as a contribution from the project activities by developing a contribution narrative⁵⁵
- **Content analysis and qualitative analysis:** The evaluation team collected qualitative information from both the review of the documentation related⁵⁶ to the project and the interviews and FGDs responses and stored the data in a shared folder. Finally, it reviewed and coded information by developing categories and subcategories (the approach was to first collect enough information from interviews and FGD and then developed categories and subcategories, which were aligned with the evaluation criteria and questions).
 - **Quantitative analysis:** quantitative analysis⁵⁷ was conducted to:
 - analyze the results of the guided questionnaire to validate and triangulate findings on the level of knowledge or motivation increased because of the project activities
 - analyze the information the evaluation extracted from the documentation on the results of the project and from some of the data emerging from the interviews.
 - **Triangulation and complementarity:** Quantitative and qualitative analysis were combined to triangulate information and sources of information and to discover emerging themes and key patterns. The whole sequence of data collection methods ensured triangulation and complementarity of data:
 1. document review and focus groups identified the most important issues
 2. those issues were then investigated more in depth and the findings confirmed or not through interviews
 3. the guided questionnaire was used to further triangulate the findings and quantify qualitative results.

Ethical Issues and limitations to the evaluation

Ethical issues

The project evaluation team gave a special attention to safeguarding ethics during the process of the project evaluation. The project evaluation team ensured inclusiveness, respect for diversity, and open expression of opinions of the evaluation participants while protecting their safety and the confidentiality of their feedback.

The overall approach adhered strongly to the norms and standards for evaluation, and the ethical guidelines of the UN system and UNICEF.⁵⁸ The evaluation team observed:

⁵⁵ In case, the evaluation team brought additional evidence to then revise or strengthen the contribution narrative

⁵⁶ Excel tables were used to summarize the main notes/extracts from interviews and FGDs

⁵⁷ Given the limited amount of quantitative data, no particular method was used by the evaluation team (coding or cleaning the data).

⁵⁸ Berman, et al. (2018)

- The obligations of evaluators in the United Nations Evaluation Group Ethical Guidelines (2008)
- Ethical research involving Children, ERIC Compendium (2013)
- UNICEF Procedure for Ethical Standards in Research, Evaluation, Data Collection and Analysis (2015)
- The United Nations Evaluation Group’s Norms and Standards for Evaluation (2016)
- UNICEF Policy on Personal Data Protection (2020)
- UNICEF Ethical Considerations for Evidence Generation Involving Children on the COVID-19 Pandemic (2020)
- PBF Guidance Assessing Readiness for Remote Evaluation

The evaluation team implemented an evaluation approach that met the ethical evaluation obligations and principles, as further described.

The obligations of the evaluators to participants included:

Respect for dignity and diversity

The national evaluation team members who were locally recruited to carry out the field work were fully aware of local culture, local customs, religious practices, ethnicity, as regards the gender roles and the evolving role of the youth, and of other traits, to ensure respect during data collection. The national project evaluation team members provided notices to individuals and partner non-government/government institutions involved in data collection in advance to secure the conditions to respect people’s right to privacy and keep disruption to a minimum. This anticipation enabled the team to check the representativeness of interviewees, the inclusion of ethnic groups to the maximum extent, gender balance, as well as inclusion of more vulnerable stakeholders. The structure of the project lends itself well to an inclusive, diverse outreach to stakeholders.

Rights

- a. Right to Self-Determination: participants of the evaluation were treated as autonomous agents. They involved data collection based on their voluntary participation and will be able to opt out of the process at any time. The evaluation participants were informed fully about 1) the aims of the evaluation and the background/composition of the evaluation team, 2) why they are invited to participate in the evaluation, and 3) what the benefits of the evaluation would be.
 - b. Fair Representation: participants were selected fairly in relation to the aims of the evaluation, covering all project sites and all project stakeholder groups.
 - c. Compliance with codes for vulnerable groups: the evaluation team observed the international and national norms of governing the interviewing of children and young people. The human rights background of the Team Leader, and a human rights-based evaluation approach which envisages the various stakeholders as rights holders and/or duty bearers (as duty bearers are also citizens with their rights), and which entrenches issues related to access to rights at the very heart of the evaluation matrix, helped secure respect for the rights of the stakeholders throughout the evaluation process and the integration of human rights considerations in the data collection and analysis. Finally, the conflict analysis and peacebuilding lens, which serve as benchmarks to evaluate the relevance of the project both contain important human rights elements: this aspect added to the human rights orientation of the evaluation, both for data collection and for analysis.
-

Confidentiality

The evaluation participants were assured of confidentiality and anonymity. The evaluation team members respected people's right to confidentiality. They were clearly informed of the confidentiality measures: their contributions were aggregated and anonymized in the report, and their responses will be kept confidential. The final report does not have reference to any names. While the final evaluation report may include quotes which are representative of widespread opinions expressed by the interviewees, they were screened by the evaluation team members to check they are not attributable. Evaluation participants were informed of this process. It is a common practice that during interviews and focus groups, the evaluation participants will be asked permission to take notes from interviews and discussions. Evaluation consultants explained that detailed notes taking will assure the accuracy of the data. All interview notes will be kept within the evaluation team only (not forwarded to any other actor, even UN agencies), stored in a password-protected drive during the evaluation, and completely deleted upon completion of the evaluation. No sensitive personal information is expected from the interviews. This was stored on a device other than the team drive (USB memory stick for example) and will be deleted after the end of the evaluation.

No harm

Following the “do no harm principle”, and the principle of benevolence not malevolence, the evaluation team made sure to minimize risks to, and burdens on, people participating in the evaluation. The evaluation sought to maximize the benefits and reduce any unnecessary harms that might occur from negative or critical evaluation, without compromising the integrity of the evaluation. No harm data collection process includes clear information about the data sought to be sent in advance to the evaluation participants, online meetings and Key Informant Interview were planned according to participant availability. The duration of the meeting and interviews were kept within generally acceptable time-limits, and participants were asked how much time they would be comfortable dedicating to the interviews.

The research needed for this evaluation included interviews with children /adolescents . Children involved in the evaluation were between 14-18 years old. The elements of the UNICEF Procedure for Ethical Standards in Research, Evaluation, Data Collection and Analysis (2015) were observed: Respect, Informed consent, Privacy and confidentiality, Harms and benefits, Justice, Payment and Compensation. A special procedure was applied to obtain informed consent from children and their parents. As this evaluation was conducted entirely online and the UN implementing agencies and partner CSOs support logistically the evaluation team to arrange online meetings, the project team was asked to inform the parents regarding the evaluation and sign the consent form prior to interviews. The children were informed about their right to choose the level of involvement in the process of evaluation. The evaluation ensured the data confidentiality at all levels.

The inception report, with evaluation methodology, interview templates, and consent forms were submitted to the ERB in parallel for the quality assurance procedure. Ethical approval was given, after which the data collection phase started.

Limitations

The evaluation deployed a mitigation strategy that overcame some of these challenges described below.

Limitations	Mitigation strategy
<p>Covid-19 restriction measures</p> <p>- restrictions on travel and in-person meetings</p>	<p>In compliance with COVID-19 measures, the evaluation team used video calling technology as well as more traditional tools (traditional calls) to conduct interviews and FGDs.</p> <p>The evaluation team also built on the good practices in terms of remote data collection.</p> <p>The team had several obstacles to have a complete list of the beneficiaries to interview but was able to work effectively with the UN agencies to finally get access to beneficiaries.</p>
<p>Difficulty to measure the results in the terms of effectiveness and impact as the evaluation is being conducted soon after the project's completion.</p> <p>The documentation on all the results of all the activities is not sufficient for the evaluation to show results at the outcome/impact level – also, the baseline and endline surveys were not conducted</p> <p>The measurement of resilience to violence is challenging and there is no agreement on how to measure it</p> <p>Note: The project log-frame does not include any indicator on 'impact'.</p>	<p>The evaluation team complemented the data on the results of the project (especially longer-term results as baseline and end-line were missing) by reconstructing the TOC so as to better clarify the pathways of the project towards its objectives, triangulating different and several sources of data, developing an online questionnaire in order to appreciate the impact of the project on resilience to violence.</p> <p>In this sense, the evaluation developed a methodology that gathered sufficient evidence to validate or not project assumptions and show the results according to the TOC.</p> <p>The guided questionnaire and the questions to the final beneficiaries were also tailored so as to gather the perception of youth about the long-term objectives of the project (resilience to violence). Also, the questions of the guided survey build upon a research conducted by Deakin University on how to measure resilience to violence.</p> <p>It is important to note, however, that given that long term results (such as the community and youth impact on resilience to violence) take long time and given that the project did not have neither a baseline nor an endline, this evaluation cannot appreciate all the outcomes emerging from this project as also highlighted into the effectiveness and sustainability section of this report. Also, not all data on the medium-term results of the project (for instance, the results from the pre and post questionnaires) were available for the evaluators to review</p>
<p>Since field work will take place during summer holidays, access to some key stakeholders and beneficiaries may be limited. For example, students and teachers</p>	<p>Data collection was done in September</p>

Difficulty to reach out to vulnerable groups	In the sampled municipalities, interviewed beneficiaries were sampled by referral from the implementing agencies or the beneficiaries (snowball sampling). While the collected data was considered to be reliable, the evaluation team recognized that the bias that may arise from snowball sampling and low access to internet in remote and underserved regions. The evaluation team actively attempted to hear the points of view of hard-to-reach beneficiaries and vulnerable groups, such as young women and girls (including religious people), and persons belonging to national minorities – this was highlighted to implementing agencies that were rather helpful in selecting some of those vulnerable youth to be included in the interview cohort
Frequent changes in personnel in the 3 organizations and in the JSC	This represented a small obstacle for the evaluation team, which was overcome through the support of the UNICEF office in Bishkek who helped the team reach out to staff to be interviewed who had participated in the project but who was currently working on other projects/organizations.

IX. Data Analysis - Findings

This section is organized around a chapter for each evaluation criteria: relevance, coherence, effectiveness/impact, efficiency, and sustainability.

Relevance

<p>1.Main questions: How relevant was the project in addressing the main drivers of violent extremism, the real needs of its beneficiaries as well as the national and donor priorities in Kyrgyzstan?</p> <p>Sub questions:</p> <p>1.1 To what extent was the design of the project appropriate for achieving the desired objectives?</p> <p>1.2 To what extent was the project based on a sound understanding of the different needs of young women and men?</p> <p>1.3 To what extent is the project consistent with key national development strategies, including in peace and development?</p>
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This section addresses the main question and sub-questions related to the relevance criterion. It shows: how the project was designed based on an appropriate understanding of the country and of the root causes of violent extremism (despite the initial difficulty to define this concept) around youth, namely, lack of critical thinking/educational deficiencies, distrust towards the government, and perception of ethnic divisions (finding 1); that, based on that, the project was able to develop a solid 3-fold approach around civic empowerment, civic engagement and community dialogue (finding 2); how the project develop a strong rationale for its design, however, it did not clearly articulate a TOC (finding 3); that the project was based on a good understanding of youth and engaged with them from the beginning of its conception (finding 4); and, that finally the project was also developed in line with the main UN and government strategic documents (finding 5).

Finding 1. The design of the project was anchored on a solid understanding of the context of Kyrgyzstan and (some of) the root causes of violent extremism – however, the project did not initially put forward a definition of violent extremism

Triangulation of information/sources

Desk review of project documentation (project document, United Nations Peacebuilding Priority Plans for Kyrgyzstan, research papers on violent extremism)
Interviews with UN agencies,
FGDs with UN agencies

The explanation of the logic behind the conception of the project is to be considered appropriate as it is well articulated, and it built upon the main findings of the growing literature on violent extremism, peacebuilding, young women (including vulnerable women) and men.

The main underpinning assumption that the project made, which have been highlighted and visualized in the reconstructed TOC, was that in Kyrgyzstan youth and vulnerable women are susceptible to be recruited by conflict actors⁵⁹ mainly because of their sense of exclusion from public life, dissatisfaction towards the state (also related to the lack of employment opportunities), lack of critical thinking and educational deficiencies, and their perception of ethnic divisions.

The evaluation found that the project accurately identified those problems as some of the root causes of violent extremism for youth, which constituted the ‘structural foundations’ of the reconstructed TOC⁶⁰.

The project targeted youth and vulnerable women as its main audience as it recognized that adolescents and young people can be considered as *perpetuators* of violence mobilized for violence and can often be instrumentalized by conflict actors⁶¹. This assumption was validated by the project during field consultations conducted at conception stage – for instance, statistics gathered by the Ministry of Interior Affairs showed that a high number of 20-22 year old from Kyrgyzstan reported to have travelled to combat zones in the Middle East⁶². This position was also confirmed by the evidence on the subject that highlighted how young people are particularly susceptible to recruitment⁶³.

At the same time, the project recognized (another assumption identified in the TOC of the project) that youth (including women) can also have a potential as *peacebuilders* as they can be active agents for peace. This position has been recognized in 2015 with the unanimous adoption of UN Security Council Resolution 2250 on Youth, Peace and Security (UNSCR 2250) and in other researches and reporting on the subject.⁶⁴

⁵⁹ This is confirmed from the analysis of the project documentation (i.e. UNPBF PPP 2017-2020) as well as from the interviews with the stakeholders and FGDs

⁶⁰ Structural foundations means that the whole logic of the project is based on the analysis of the causes of violent extremism – the ‘why’

⁶¹ According to the 2020 Conflict and Peace Analysis: ‘in the absence of hope for future, the youth will start to look for answers elsewhere and may find these in the more extremist religious forms of Islam’.

⁶² The project team undertook a series of consultations with government stakeholders and CSOs

⁶³ 3 International Alert, “We Don’t Trust Anyone: strengthening relationships as the key to reducing violent extremism in Kenya” (2016). http://www.international-alert.org/sites/default/files/Kenya_ViolentExtremism_EN_2016.pdf.

⁶⁴ “Youth resilience for peace”, General Assembly Security Council, 72nd session, agenda item 65, Peacebuilding and sustainable peace, 02/03/2018,

While targeting youth as main beneficiary, the project gave particular importance⁶⁵ to the educational deficiencies that ‘can render youth unable to withstand and challenge the messages of those who promote violence’.⁶⁶ The analysis conducted as part of the PPP highlighted that poor teaching standards and a lack of focus for developing functional literacy and civic competencies (such as critical thinking, self-reflection etc.) can indeed limit young people’s resilience to propaganda of violence.⁶⁷ The project assumed that those educational deficiencies coupled with the lack of social opportunities for youth to raise their voice and participate in the public life, their distrust towards the government could potentially create conditions for radicalization⁶⁸.

The evaluation found that this assumption (the interconnection between educational deficiencies, lack of trust, and lack of voice) is supported by several research conducted on the issues that cause vulnerability to violent ideologies for youth⁶⁹. The interviews conducted with the project stakeholders confirmed that most of them (95%) agreed that the interlinkage between those elements had a negative effect on youth pushing them towards a radicalization path.

As well as the Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security. The resolution 1325 (2000) addresses the impact of war on women and the importance of women’s full and equal participation in conflict resolution, peacebuilding, peacekeeping, humanitarian response and in post-conflict reconstruction. The resolution also calls for special measures to protect women and girls from conflict-related sexual violence and outlines gender-related responsibilities of the United Nations in different political and programmatic areas.

⁶⁵ The focus on ‘educational deficiencies’ is also confirmed by the project budget commitment that is indeed higher for output 1.1 (civic competencies) than for the other 2.

⁶⁶ ACTED, “Youth of the Kyrgyz Republic: values, social moods and conflict behavior”, 2014, http://pdf.usaid.gov/pdf_docs/PA00JS4T.pdf

⁶⁷ More than 80% of the country’s students displayed reading skills below a level at which they “begin to demonstrate competencies (...) that will enable them to participate effectively and productively in life”. Stated in the Youth and Public Policy in Kyrgyzstan, p 27

⁶⁸ In this sense (concerning the focus on educational deficiencies, beliefs, attitudes and not on rule of law, socio economic opportunities), one could argue that the project addressed the pull factors of VE rather than push factors. Push factors: The conditions conducive to violent extremism and the structural context from which it emerges. These include lack of socio-economic opportunities; marginalization and discrimination; poor governance, violations of human rights and the Rule of Law; prolonged and unresolved conflicts; and radicalization in prisons.

Pull factors: The individual motivations and processes, which play a key role in transforming ideas and grievances into violent extremist action. These include: individual backgrounds and motivations; collective grievances and victimization stemming from domination, oppression, subjugation or foreign intervention; distortion and misuse of beliefs, political ideologies and ethnic and cultural differences; and leadership and social networks.

In other words, push factors relate to the structural factors in the society, while pull factors refer to psychological condition of individual that can make him/her more vulnerable to undertaking violent extremist behavior. General Assembly report A/70/674, paras. 23 and 32-37; United Nations, Swiss Confederation, (2016), p. 4

⁶⁹ This is in line, for instance with UNICEF, in its 2015 Situation Analysis of the situation of children in Kyrgyzstan, highlights the following conflict dynamics and peacebuilding needs that are of particular relevance for *children and youth* in Kyrgyzstan – with over half of the population in Kyrgyzstan being under the age of 25:

- Young people and adolescents have been seen mainly as victims or perpetrators of existing conflicts. The importance of recognizing and leveraging the capacity of young people and adolescents to contribute to Kyrgyzstan’s development and stability has often been overlooked;
- Poverty and economic opportunities are limited, especially for young people. Unemployment is high. This often only leaves labor migration to either urban areas or to other countries (usually Russia or Kazakhstan) as feasible livelihood options for young people
- There are limited opportunities for young people and adolescents to make their voices heard in the public or private domains; The concept of citizenship is poorly developed among young people, and democratic values are not strongly rooted. Identity formation based on ethnicity, religion, clan, and/or regionalism are becoming more prominent especially among young people and has widened the gap between ethnicities in the country.
- Overall, the education system is deteriorating. The existing formal and informal education systems leave little room for the development of functional literacy and civic competencies such as critical thinking, self-reflection, communication and peaceful conflict prevention. School dropout rates are high, and the limited social opportunities create conditions for e.g. petty crime, fights, and alcohol consumption;
- Young people are particularly susceptible to political and religious radicalization. There is a high prevalence of violence in families and schools, particularly against children and youth. Violence is viewed as socially acceptable.
- Young people have little trust in state institutions, as those institutions tend to provide unequal access to quality public services, leaving room for discriminatory approaches and deprivation from social, economic, cultural, civil and political rights.
- Kyrgyzstan has a patriarchal and masculinity-based culture. ‘Youth issues’ are often framed from the perspective of young men, rather than both men and women. This often leads to limited participation of young women in youth initiatives, youth groups, or youth wings of political parties. There is gender-based discrimination in the labor market and in society as a whole; and gender-based violence –particularly in the context of early marriages, bride kidnapping, sexual violence, and trafficking – are not properly reflected.

Also, see the unpublished report on the study commissioned by UNCT and run by Anna Matveeva: “Religious radicalization leading to violent extremism in Kyrgyzstan” pp. 16-18 posits that younger people, especially those from ethnic minorities, are dissatisfied with what the state offers them.

It should also be noted that analyses conducted on violent extremism and on the drivers of the conflict in Kyrgyzstan that were conducted *after* the project was designed confirmed some of the main problems that the project wanted to address. For instance, the 2020 Conflict and Peace Analysis conducted by PeaceNexus⁷⁰ suggested that, among other elements, perceptions of exclusion from decision-making of women, youth, and minority ethnic groups, the inadequate quality of the education system are some of the major risk factors for the country⁷¹. With the same token, the ‘localized analysis’, which was conducted in 2020 to better understand the factors of radicalization that may inspire violent extremism, also highlighted some of the issues the project intended to address such as the lack of education, marginalization and discrimination

An area of uncertainty, however, that emerged from the interviews, FGDs and analysis of the documentation is the *lack of a clear definition and agreement on violent extremism and radicalization*⁷². The analysis of the documentation⁷³ coupled with the interviews conducted confirmed that there was an absence of shared understating of PVE issues in the country across different levels of the society and also among project stakeholders.

According to most of the stakeholders interviewed this negatively affected the design and implementation of the project, even if only slightly. The reason for that is that a lack of definition meant that stakeholders had a slightly different perspectives of what the project wanted to achieve. The interviews with some stakeholders highlighted that especially at the beginning of the project there was some slight confusion on those concepts and how the project wanted to approach that⁷⁴.

Quote:

Everyone understood radicalization and VE differently, and first meetings with UN focused on discussing different views on radicalization. We had a slightly different understanding of radicalization. Only during implementation everyone came to one understanding (Interview with NGO)

If UN staff and implementing partners managed to overcome those differences in terms of their understanding of VE during project implementation (several meetings were held between the UN agencies to unpack the definition) the same cannot be said for the beneficiaries⁷⁵. Indeed, interviews with them (youth, adults, community leaders) showed that a large majority could not really differentiate between different terms such as VE, radicalization and counterterrorism. For some (in particular youth), the relationship between PVE and the activities they participated in was not very clear. In that sense, the project could have put forward a definition of violent extremism⁷⁶ (and an explanation of

⁷⁰ Conflict and Peace Analysis Kyrgyzstan, UNCT Kyrgyzstan, April 2019

⁷¹ It is interesting to note that there is quite a substantial overlap between the identified root causes of violent extremism and the drivers of conflict in Kyrgyzstan

⁷² According to a research on VE, ‘the countering violent extremism (CVE) and PVE are relatively new fields, and their methodology is developing along the way. (Marc Sommers, “Trust-Based, Qualitative Field Methods A Manual for Researchers of Violent Extremism,” IGAD Center of Excellence for Preventing and Countering Violent Extremism (2019)

⁷³ For instance, annual progress report 2018 and the evaluation on the L&A approach

⁷⁴ Also, one could argue that, without a clear agreement or definition of what violent extremism is, it is more challenging to clearly define all the root cause of that and therefore to develop an appropriate approach to prevent it and devise indicators to measure it (see section on efficiency).

⁷⁵ For example, vulnerable women, interpreted radicalization as outbreak of violence, including the domestic violence, drop out from education system, joining prohibited groups.

⁷⁶ UN recognizes that the development of a common understanding will help in the fight against radicalization and gives the prerogative of finding own definition to each UN member country. The United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy, Plan of Action to Prevent Violent Extremism, Report of the Secretary-General (2015).

the difference between violent extremism and radicalization⁷⁷) which might have benefited the discussion at conception and during implementation⁷⁸. Based on a proposed definition, the project could have also better explained why it wanted to focus on some of the root causes (educational deficiencies) and not on others (lack of employment opportunities) and what was the overlap between the most specific drivers of PVE and the core generic drivers of conflict in the country.⁷⁹

It should be noted that to avoid confusion, this evaluation report will refer to the definition of radicalization and VE provided in the localized analysis, which states that ‘*radicalization*’ is the process by which individuals’ moderate beliefs and views move towards more extreme views, beliefs and even violent actions. The process of radicalization may therefore lead to the adoption of violent extremism, which include beliefs, feelings and behaviors that support the or use violence as a method of social change.⁸⁰

Finding 2. The approach and the strategy developed by the project was innovative and was adequately devised to address (some of) the root causes of violent extremism

Triangulation of information

- Desk review of project document (also literature on VE)
- Interviews with UN staff and implementing partners
- FGDs

The evaluation found that the project appropriately linked its intended objectives with some of the causes of violent extremism identified in the reconstructed TOC.

The project aimed at addressing some drivers of violent extremism described above and at building resilience to violent and manipulative ideologies by developing a threefold approach through the means of *education, empowerment and dialogue*. In this sense, the project was composed of 3 components/outputs, as follows:

⁷⁷ Often “violent extremism” is used interchangeable with “radicalization”. According to Striegher, they have a strong interdependence, but a certain demarcation line has to be drawn. His segregation of concepts is based on the logic that ideological goals of the person justifying violence go through “the process of radicalization that leads to the adoption of VE as an ideology, where terrorism is solely the act of violence carried out in pursuit of these goals.”¹¹ Neumann, also thinks that VE is broader and more nuanced “because it accommodates any kind of violence as long as its motivation is deemed extremist.”²¹ Jason-Leigh Striegher, “Violent-extremism: an examination of a definitional dilemma,” Australian Security and Intelligence Conference (2015), 75²¹ Peter R. Neumann, “Countering Violent Extremism and Radicalization that Lead to Terrorism: Ideas, Recommendations, and Good Practices from the OSCE Region”, International Centre for the Study of Radicalization (ICSR), King’s College London (2017), 15

⁷⁸ Indeed, the localized analysis, based on the assumption that the lack of a clarification of what VE is, proposes some definition “Therefore, to avoid confusion and to build common understanding, the definition of the term ‘radicalization’ is included in the report.”

It could be mentioned, however, that some scholars have argued that until researchers and practitioners go past the definitional debate and ‘get on with developing something useful in the field, resilience will remain nothing more than just another good concept and meaningless buzz-word’ (Longstaff et al., 2010: 17). We would add that until researchers and policy makers develop and trial approaches that are ‘useful’ (or at least usable) ‘in the field’, we will continue to lack the ability to test and refine the efficacy of such conceptual approaches based on robust empirical data.

⁷⁹ For instance, it is interesting to note that despite the fact that several analyses refer to the high levels of youth unemployment as one of the “most corrosive” conflict drivers and the next big threat to peace, the PBF (and this project) has not made this a priority issue.

⁸⁰ the localized analysis conducted in 2020

1. Output 1 that aimed at developing non-violent culture and civic competencies at secondary level in secular and religious settings for youth while at the same time improving the capacity of education workers to facilitate the learning of non-violent culture
2. Output 2 that aimed at strengthening community engagement to address local vulnerabilities leading to violent extremism so as to increase the confidence towards the state. The project envisaged measures to train local authorities to set specific youth-related indicators in their planning with the objective of addressing vulnerabilities that may lead to violent ideologies
3. Output 3 that aimed at strengthening community dialogue, the capacity of opinion leaders, civil society activists, marginalized women, and religious leaders so that they could provide alternative and positive messages within their community (targeting young women and men particular).

Concerning the educational approach, findings from the research “Journey to Extremism in Africa” show that education must provide life alternatives, and as far as possible instill critical thinking, respect for diversity and citizenship values in preventing extremism⁸¹ According to earlier research by Finkel: “civic education has meaningful and relatively long-lasting effects in terms of increasing political information, feelings of empowerment, and political engagement and participation”.⁸² This is in line with the approach the project developed.

With the same token, research have shown the importance of strengthening dialogue with local authorities to prevent violent extremism. For instance, a strategic study by Search for Common Ground (SFCG) concluded that improving state-society relations in addition to intercommunity and intergenerational ones is critical to building community resilience to violent extremism⁸³. A research conducted in Kyrgyzstani context has also noted how important local government, as well as educational institutions are in reducing vulnerability while at the same time strengthening people’s resilience to violent extremism.⁸⁴

As part of the project approach, *men and women, community and religious leaders* were also beneficiaries, along with youth – the TOC assumed that parents, teachers and community leaders (and, among them, vulnerable women) could be considered as ‘influencers’. The evaluation found that this is line with good practices concerning initiatives focusing on youth empowerment according to which the broader ecosystem (especially when it comes to the community/family) strongly influences young people⁸⁵. For instance, the 2020 Conflict and Peace Analysis Kyrgyzstan that was conducted *after* the project was designed identified parents and teachers as possible barriers to youth inclusion and participation, especially for young women, and suggested to promote dialogue with them.

It should also be noted that most interviewees (90%) reckoned that the project approach was *innovative* as the overall approach of the project no other project in the country had previously developed the 3-

⁸¹ 1 United Nations Development Program (UNDP) Regional Bureau for Africa: “Journey to Extremism in Africa: Drivers, Incentives and the Tipping Point” p. 38-40: <http://journey-to-extremism.undp.org/> last entered 20 Sept, 2017

⁸² Steven E. Finkel, “The Impact of Adult Civic Education Programs in Developing Democracies” *Public Administration and Development* 34 (2014): 177

⁸³ 2 Margaret Williams, “Working Together to Address Violent Extremism: a strategy for youth-government partnerships” Search for Common Ground (2016). https://www.sfcg.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/12/YouthGovtCVE_StrategyDocument_122116.pdf

⁸⁴ Emil Nasritdinov, Zarina Urmanbetova, Kanatbek Murzakhilov and Mamatbek Myrzabaev, “Vulnerability and Resilience of Young People in Kyrgyzstan to Radicalization, Violence and Extremism: Analysis across Five Domains”, CAP Paper no. 213, Central Asia Program, George Washington University, 2019.

⁸⁵ According to an evaluation on UNICEF, ‘while traditional norms are often cited as a barrier to young people’s participation in peacebuilding, advocacy to government officials, community leaders, parents and other adults who enforce such norms have not been regular or systematic and there are few initiatives that create spaces for young people to regularly engage with decision-makers or embed young people’s participation in systems, structures or institutions’ UNICEF Engagement With Young People In Peacebuilding

layered approach discussed above to combine civic competencies, civic engagement and community dialogue for young women (including vulnerable women) and men empowerment.⁸⁶ The project also wanted to integrate civic education and social skill training into a curriculum of vocational schools and madrasahs which was, as several stakeholders mentioned, a unique endeavor (combining the concepts of citizenship and human rights with Islamic teaching).

Finally, it should also be mentioned that the project integrated a series of specific innovations during implementation. For instance, the project used innovative approaches that had already been used in other countries (UPSHIFT to focus on design thinking). It also involved not only *imams* but also female religious leaders who are usually excluded from community dialogue.

Finding 3. The project had a strong rationale for its design – however, it did not clearly articulate its TOC

Triangulation of information
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Desk review of project document (also literature on VE)• Interviews with UN staff and implementing partners• FGDs

The literature on resilience⁸⁷ understands it increasingly as a social process supported (or inhibited) by a range of interconnected external and contextual factors at individual, family, institutional levels. This is perfectly in line with the approach of the project (see also finding 2) that incorporated activities targeting individual (activities on civic competencies), institutions (activities on civic engagement) and family/community (activities on civic engagement but also on community dialogue) that may strengthen resistance to harms or the ability to overcome adversity (resilience)⁸⁸.

The approach that the project proposed in response to some of the factors driving VE was indeed quite solid, which means that the chain of causality is rather logical and connected to the main drivers of VE. However, the evaluation found that the TOC was not clearly articulated in the project document. Indeed, there is just one paragraph explaining what the TOC is. Also, the explanation does not clearly lay down all the assumptions that the project team made while developing the project. Finally, the TOC is not visualized with a diagram, which is a good practice when developing TOCs. In this sense, the TOC in the document did not follow the PBSO guidance⁸⁹ on how to develop TOC for peacebuilding projects in which it is suggested to clearly explain the rationale behind an intervention and the specific assumptions also by clarifying what the competing assumptions behind different approaches are and why the project chooses one and not the other one. It is for this reason,

⁸⁶ In addition, UN agencies applied certain approaches to working with the beneficiaries. For example, UNWomen promoted Positive Deviance approaches to attract female champions among the vulnerable who are better informed about local context and know their needs and how to address particular challenges

⁸⁷ Ungar, M. (2008). Resilience across cultures. *British Journal of Social Work* 38, 218-35.; Masten, A. S. (2001). Ordinary magic: Resilience processes in development. *American Psychologist*, 56(3), 227-238; Southwick, S. M., Bonanno, G. A., Masten, A. S., Panter-Brick, C., Yehuda, R. (2014). Resilience definitions, theory, and challenges: Interdisciplinary perspectives. *European Journal of Psychotraumatology*, 5, DOI: 0.3402/ejpt.v5.25338

⁸⁸ Indeed, to develop this report, the evaluation also built on the research conducted as part of on the BRAVE-14 indicators that highlights how youth resilience to violence is a process that is affected by the interconnection between identity around community, family, trust in the government and violent behaviors/beliefs (see section on effectiveness).

⁸⁹ PBF Guidance Note on Theory of Change

that the evaluation team had to reconstruct the TOC and not just to validate that (see the methodology section)⁹⁰. This should have been done at project design stage.

Finding 4. Project design was based on a good understanding of the needs of youth – in particular, vulnerable groups (young women (including vulnerable women) and men)

Triangulation of information

- Desk review of project document (also literature on peacebuilding and youth empowerment)
- Interviews with UN staff and implementing partners and with beneficiaries
- Guided questionnaire
- FGDs

The evaluation found that the project appropriately addressed the needs of the main beneficiaries – young women (including vulnerable women) and men – as it was also developed (and implemented) in collaboration with them. The project did engage with beneficiaries to design part of its activities so took into account their needs.⁹¹ As an illustration of that, the civic education component started with a needs assessment in pilot vocational schools and madrasas that was conducted together with students.⁹² A participatory research was conducted among students (with active and equal participation by boys and girls) of the pilot schools to determine their needs and requirements so as to inform the new contents and materials to be produced. Also, the civic education guide and the student workbook were continuously tested and validated with students so that changes could be made. As a result of the participatory approach the project adopted, the large majority of beneficiaries (among youth) interviewed - 85% - stated that the project was relevant for them as the project was able to listen to their needs.

The project was designed to engage young people and women who are considered to be marginalized, vulnerable, or *'hard to reach'*⁹³. The project indeed assumed that this group of youth are potentially more susceptible to be recruited by violent extremist groups – this is indeed backed by research and evidence⁹⁴.

⁹⁰ It should be noted however that the evaluation team did not gather sufficient evidence about how this was used in practice though.

⁹¹ For example: UN Women conducted a field needs assessment with religious women and vulnerable women (at least 200 people) to identify areas of our work and to identify the topics of their interest, how much time they can allocate for trainings, how they are being engaged by local authorities, and etc

⁹² Needs assessment was conducted in 11 madrasahs with 400 students

⁹³ Project documents states that project is bringing PVE agenda to traditionally hard to reach groups such as those in isolated minority neighborhoods through involving diversity of male and female religious leaders as PVE communicators.

⁹⁴ Unpublished report on the study commissioned by UNCT and run by Anna Matveeva: "Religious radicalization leading to violent extremism in Kyrgyzstan". This is also. In line with UNICEF good practices 'Programs were deliberately designed to engage young people who are being directly affected by conflict and violence, typically those who are considered to be marginalized, vulnerable, or 'hard to reach'. Target beneficiaries commonly include out of school youth, often times refugees or internally displaced by conflict, and sometimes migrant young people'. UNICEF Engagement with Young People In Peacebuilding Formative Evaluation 2019

The project focused also on ethnic minorities⁹⁵ as recent research found that in most of cases those who join violent groups come from ethnic minorities⁹⁶. Likewise, this resonates with the findings from research showing that ethnic minorities can be more susceptible to violent ideologies as they feel excluded, discriminated against, and unable to fulfill themselves in Kyrgyzstan’s current social context.⁹⁷ To take this factor (ethnic differences) into account in the project, the project included several activities on multiculturalism/multilingual. The evaluation found that this is line with good practices on approaches to deal with resilience to violence and ethnic discrimination.⁹⁸

The project design was also prepared in collaboration and partnership with a series of key stakeholders. Government counterparts, particularly the representatives of the President’s Office, Ministry of Education and Science, State Youth Agency actively contributed to the project’s design⁹⁹ – for instance, government gave inputs on the selection of the pilot municipalities. With the same token, local self-governments and regional authorities helped to identify the religious leaders, civil society activists and the list of vulnerable women was provided by social workers of the municipalities.

Finding 5. Project objectives were aligned with both national strategies and UN key strategies for Kyrgyzstan

Triangulation of information

- Desk review of project document (key government and UN strategic document)
- Interviews with UN staff and implementing partners and with beneficiaries
- FGDs

The evaluation found that the project was consistent with key priorities that the government of Kyrgyzstan wanted to address. As mentioned in the background section of this report, violent extremism has been a high-level priority for the government of Kyrgyzstan in recent years because of the increasing threat. The government has indeed adopted a national program on countering religious extremism and terrorism and a national program of the Government of the Kyrgyz Republic on

⁹⁵ Those minorities include women and girls from religious backgrounds from closed settings: for instance, UN Women mobilized women and girls who attend unofficial home-based religion courses and who are easy target to be brainwashed. These women were capacitated on human rights, gender, public speaking, economic empowerment, etc.

⁹⁶ According to the 2020 CPA A common narrative among the ethnic Kyrgyz is that the Uzbeks provoked the incidents of June 2010 and that both Uzbeks and Kyrgyz were victims. Various reports have expressed that the issues of June 2010 are not properly addressed yet. This might have created a security dilemma among Uzbek community. This might be one of the reasons that among the young people who joined extremist group are found majority of Uzbek ethnic background. Minority rights and especially the “Uzbek question” continue to be an extremely sensitive issue for the country. Wilkinson (2015)

⁹⁷ Zenn, Jacob, and Kathleen Kuehnast. 2014. *Preventing Violent Extremism in Kyrgyzstan*.

https://permanent.access.gpo.gov/gpo57678/SR355_Preventing-Violent-Extremism-in-Kyrgyzstan.pdf

⁹⁸ ‘In understanding their way of ‘coping and hoping, surviving and thriving’, it is important to consider how culturally and linguistically diverse minorities navigate the cultural understandings and assumptions of both their country of origin and their country of domicile’ (Ungar, M. (2008). Resilience across cultures. *British Journal of Social Work* 38, 218-35).

⁹⁹ ‘There is evidence to suggest that people who master the rules and norms of their new culture without abandoning their own language, values and social support are more resilient than those who tenaciously maintain their own culture at the expense of adjusting to their new environment. They are also more resilient than those who forego their own culture and assimilate completely with the host society’ (Gunnestad, A. (2006) Resilience in a Cross-Cultural Perspective: How resilience is generated in different cultures. *Journal of Intercultural Communication*, 11, <http://www.immi.se/intercultural/nr11/gunnestad.htm>).

⁹⁹ The workplan of the project includes several initial activities to Workplan – efforts to engage and communicate with stakeholders (‘Local and national partners are aware of the project goals and expected outcomes and endorse them’)

countering extremism and terrorism 2017-2022, which tried to underline non-punitive approaches but rather to adopt measures.¹⁰⁰

It is interesting to mention that there is some anecdotal evidence¹⁰¹ that PBF and UN played have actually played an instrumental role in encouraging the government not only to accept the need to address extremism but above all to use a preventive approach to it – which is the approach that this project wanted to have.

The project was also fully in line with national priorities as education is enshrined as a strategy of sustaining peace and cohesion in the governmental flagship 2018-2022 program “Unity, Trust, Creativity” 2018-2022. Introduction of civic education and social skills in madrasahs provides an opportunity to make these education institutions more open, quality, and inclusive. The project was also in line with the Kyrgyz Government Action Plan for 2018-2020 to ensure the implementation of United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 (the Kyrgyz Government decree dated September 21, 2018, No. 334-p). The plan aimed at strengthening the role and participation of women in preserving peace and security, including at the decision-making level, prevention of conflicts and risks of violence towards women and girls, and improving social protection and meeting special needs of women and girls in emergencies

Finally, the project was well aligned with the UN Development Assistance Framework, the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs):

- SDG 16 (Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions) – as this SDG also relates to reduction of violence (for instance, indicator 16.1 - Significantly reduce all forms of violence) it is directly linked to the project under review
- SDG 10 (Reduced Inequalities) – as this SDG focuses also on ensuring that no one is left behind (for instance, indicator 10.2 By 2030, empower and promote the social, economic and political inclusion of all, irrespective of age, sex, disability, race, ethnicity, origin, religion or economic or other status), there is a direct connection with this project that aims at empowering vulnerable groups as well.
- SDG 5 (Gender Equality)– the connection with this SDG is rather solid as the project aims at empowering women (also vulnerable women) through UN Women support. In this sense, the project relates to several of the indicators under this SDG (for instance, indicator 5.2 Eliminate all forms of violence against all women and girls in the public and private spheres, including trafficking and sexual and other types of exploitation)
- SDG 4 (Education) – the project adopted an educational approach so that the connection with this SDG and most of its indicators is evident

¹⁰⁰ It should be noted, however, that the government of Kyrgyzstan does not use the word ‘violent extremism’ in its strategy and documents. According to the interviews conducted with officials from government, any extremism or terrorism is violent by default. One example that was given is the case of Hizb-ut-Tahrir in our country, which wants to create Halifat but by gaining minds and hearts of people, i.e. through non-violent way, but it is found as extremist organization by Kyrgyz law, because they try to overthrow the constitutional order in the country. But according to Kyrgyz legislation, and government position, it is extremist activity when they invite to change the constitutional order, and therefore it is extremist, but Kyrgyz government does not want to use the word ‘violent’

¹⁰¹ United Nations University Centre for Policy Research What Works in UN Resident Coordinator-led Conflict Prevention: Lessons from the Field June 2018. Indeed, the government did not have a sound preventive approach to violent extremism until the UN developed the PPP on violent extremism in collaboration with them

Coherence

Main question: To what extent was the project internally coherent and to what extent was it externally coherent so as to be developed and implemented in synergy with other stakeholders' interventions on peacebuilding?

Sub questions:

2.1 To what extent UNICEF, UN Women and UNFPA were able to ensure coherence, synergies and joint operation in design and implementation of the project?

2.2 To what extent this project was designed and implemented in a complimentary, harmonized, coordinated fashion with the governments' and other peacebuilding actors' interventions?

This section addresses the main question and sub-questions related to the coherence criterion. It shows: how the project was designed but also implemented based on the comparative advantage of each agency and the UN collaborated rather effectively together (Finding 6); that, however, there were some obstacles in terms of clearly understanding the roles and responsibilities of each agency and other minor obstacles such as, for instance, conducting joint M&E (Finding 7); and that, the project was able to identify several projects that were complementary yet it did not manage to create solid partnerships with other donors and partners (Finding 8).

Finding 6: The project was designed and implemented building on the comparative advantage of each agency – there was strong willingness to coordinate and collaborate

Triangulation of information

- Desk review of project document (project document, annual and semi-annual report)
- Interviews with UN staff and implementing partners and with beneficiaries
- FGDs

Overall, UN Women, UNICEF and UNFPA complemented each other by using their expertise and network to carry out project activities – evidence shows how this benefited the project. As an illustration of that, UNICEF was instrumental for UN Women to get easy access to the Ministry of Education so that UN Women could work on the activities related to the textbook review.¹⁰² With the same token, UN Women was instrumental to UNFPA as they conducted a research on how religious institutions developed and integrated civic education in their programs – the results informed some activities by UNFPA.

There is also some anecdotal evidence that agencies relied on each other's experience/expertise on peacebuilding to implement their respective tasks. While this evaluation did not conduct an in-depth assessment of the project staff expertise and skills for lack of time/resources, some instances point to the direction that there was some cross-fertilization between agencies – in one case, one staff in UNICEF was supported to implement one of the project activities by another person in UNFPA that

¹⁰² The activities foreseen are the following:

- 1.1.1.b. Revision of educational standards in the field of civic education in order to enhance key competencies that better enable resistance to violent ideologies (grades 5-11)

- 1.1.1.c. Development of gender and age sensitive teaching and methodological materials fostering non-violent culture and civic competencies in students (grades 7-9)

had some solid peacebuilding expertise.¹⁰³ In this sense, when working together, agencies were able to build on each other's comparative advantage and expertise to solve project challenges¹⁰⁴.

Similarly, the interviews with CSOs and implementing partners confirmed that the large majority of them was satisfied by the cooperation with the 3 UN agencies

Quote:

*But there were no difficulties in cooperation with UN partners. We always sat and discussed arising issues.
(Interview with implementing partner)*

The evaluation found that the contributing factors that facilitated the cooperation between the agencies (and with the implementing partners) were the following:

- Willingness of the agencies to cooperate - most stakeholders interviewed from the agencies (90%) confirmed that there was solid cooperation between the agencies.
- An overall clear vision for what the project intended to achieve – the interviews and FGDs confirmed that agencies clearly understood the rationale behind the project and its objectives.¹⁰⁵
- The clarity of the comparative advantage of each agency – based on the objectives of the project dealing with civic competencies and civic engagement for youth, community dialogue and women empowerment, it was clear what the comparative advantage and the added value was for each agency (yet no specific role and tasks – see below).

Quote:

it was clear from the beginning what was the added value of each organization. For instance, we really liked about UNICEF that they brought an integrated approach to child education as well as some innovative approach (interview with UN staff)

- The leadership of the UN Resident Coordinator as well as the PBF secretariat – the evaluation found that the UN RC followed closely the progress of the project and tried to facilitate the collaboration between agencies (i.e. for instance by holding formal and informal meetings).¹⁰⁶ With the same token, the PBF secretariat also ensured that collaboration would happen within the project.¹⁰⁷

Collaboration among agencies took place mainly through regular formal meetings as part of the Joint Steering Committee, regular meetings organized by PBF Secretariat, and other ad-hoc meetings such as the ones organized as part of the Adaptation and Learning Approach.

¹⁰³ There is an ongoing discussion on this subject – the capacity of UN agencies on peacebuilding. For instance, drawing on evaluations and evaluative exercises of initiatives supported by the Fund Some UN entities have peacebuilding at the core of their mandates, such as the Department of Peace and Political Affairs (DPPA) and UNDP. Most multi-mandate UN agencies, however, do not have peacebuilding as a central concern, including FAO, UNFPA, WFP, WHO, IOM, ILO, and UNICEF, all of which are fund-recipients of PBF. Several of these agencies have taken steps towards increasing their understanding and capacities in peacebuilding in recent years and are making efforts to make sense of the Sustaining Peace and Humanitarian-Development-Peace nexus agendas in practice for their organizations.

¹⁰⁴ UN Women also cooperated with UNFPA and conducted joint activities with them to ensure the participation of women in UNFPA events

¹⁰⁵ However, as mentioned earlier, the lack of definition on violent extremism created some minor challenges especially at the beginning of the implementation of the project.

¹⁰⁶ It was also under the leadership of the new RC that the CPA and localized analyses were conducted so as to better understand the root cause of violent extremism and

¹⁰⁷ For instance, PBF Secretariat with support from PeaceNexus that initiated the ç6A approach whose objective was also to strengthen collaboration and knowledge exchange)

In this sense the expectation from the TOC at the input level that the joint programming would be effective and beneficial to the project design and implementation was validated, with some minor caveats described in the section below.

Finding 7: There are still a few minor obstacles - in terms of lack of clarification of specific roles of each agency and absence of collaboration on key activities such as monitoring - to overcome for developing a more effective joint program

Triangulation of information

- Desk review of project document (project document, annual and semi-annual report)
- Interviews with UN staff and implementing partners and with beneficiaries
- FGDs

The 2014 guidance joint programming¹⁰⁸ states that ‘a Joint Program is a set of activities contained in a *joint work plan and related common budgetary framework*, involving two or more UN organizations and (sub-) national governmental partners, intended to achieve results aligned with national priorities as reflected in UNDAF/One Program or an equivalent programming instrument or development framework. The work plan and budgetary framework form part of a *Joint Program Document, which details roles and responsibilities of partners in coordinating and managing the joint activities*.

The evaluation found that, while the cooperation was overall solid, as mentioned above, there is still some room for improvement for collaborating in a more effective way. Some minor obstacles to effective collaboration are described, as follows:

- The document included indeed a description of the comparative advantage of each agency, yet it did not clearly define the roles and responsibilities of each agency and their specific tasks. With the same token, the ‘joint workplan’ reviewed by the evaluation team set out the activities that would be carried out during each year of the Joint Program. However, there was no clarification on what the expected outputs and outcomes were for those activities nor a description of the inputs needed to carry out the activities, as well as the budget for completing those activities (this is instead what is suggested as a good practice in the 2014 guidance note on joint programs).¹⁰⁹

Quote

Without better clarifying our roles and responsibilities we can run into the risk of giving too much weight to informal elements such as the personality of the program manager or the RC that can facilitate or hamper the implementation of a project (Interview with UN staff)

- Monitoring, reporting and knowledge management were not always properly documented by the agencies in collaboration with each other. Some of the stakeholders interviewed reported

¹⁰⁸ UNDG guidance note on joint programs 2014

¹⁰⁹ According to a recent evaluation ‘Role clarity between different UN actors in complex country configurations is essential to increase coherence, as well as funding coherence, including a clearer articulation of PBF’s particular niche and role in relation to other funding sources and donors’ Synthesis review 2017-2019 PBF project and portfolio evaluations

not being always up to date with the activities and progress of the project especially regarding what the other agencies were doing.

While the evaluation did not find evidence that those obstacles led to major difficulties (with the exception of the monitoring reporting related issues, which will be discussed more in-depth in the efficiency section), some missing opportunities to more effectively collaborate can be highlighted.

Quote:

We spent quite some time at the beginning for program to understand each other and set boundaries. It was a long process but finally we were able to do so. Perhaps, some things should be more formalized before the start of a project (Interview with UN staff)

The evaluation reckoned that one of the possible root causes for those obstacles might be the legacy of agencies that have their own procedures, systems, culture etc.

Quote:

We all have different procedures, annual working plans and calendar events, it is indeed rather difficult to coordinate and synchronize. We are not used to do so and yet we are trying to do that increasingly (Interview with UN staff)

Quote:

On joint projects, there is still a long way to go as agencies are used to run their own ship and they are not horizontally accountable. When you look at the project reports sometimes you look at 3 different reports that then need to be merged together (Interview with UN staff)

Some stakeholders also reflected that the lack of a strategic framework at UNCT level might hamper the collaboration between agencies – a strategic framework could indeed better clarify the long-term objectives, specify the needed expertise to achieve those objectives and clarify the responsible agency that could help doing so¹¹⁰. This position is confirmed by recent previous evaluations that have proposed the development of such strategic framework.

Quote:

However, overall UN coherence is limited by the absence of a strategic framework at UNCT level and the fact that the PPP (Peacebuilding Priority Plan) was abolished without putting in place another strategic framework that would support UNCT strategic planning at portfolio level to work more consistently towards collective impacts at portfolio levels (Synthesis review 2017-2019 PBF project and portfolio evaluations)

Without a broader strategic framework, we feel there is a high level of unpredictability on peacebuilding funds when we work on concepts and issues that require long horizon to change (FGD with UN staff)

¹¹⁰ The current steps towards developing 5-year strategic frameworks are an important milestone for PBF to commit to longer time horizons. In 2020, PBF has started to support the development of two strategic framework processes that were both underway at the time of writing of this report: Guatemala and a regional framework for the Balkans. The overall idea behind these processes is to develop a framework at the portfolio level (with participation from RUNOs, NUNOs, government and civil society to varying degrees) to provide an overall strategic orientation for PBF portfolio in country, beyond specific projects and programs.

Finding 8. At the design stage, the project did identify several projects that were complementary yet it did not manage to create solid partnerships with external partners and donors

Triangulation of information

- Desk review of project document (project document, annual and semi-annual report)
- Interviews with UN staff and implementing partners and with beneficiaries
- FGDs

The TOC assumed (at input level) that the project would ensure solid coherence with other complementary projects – this could have benefited the project by identifying synergies and collaborating with partners on common issues. This assumption was only partly validated by this evaluation.

The project document did include a very well-articulated table with possible synergies and complementarities with existing projects.¹¹¹ The interviews conducted confirmed that the main stakeholders were aware of complementary projects in Kyrgyzstan.¹¹² This led to having the project avoid duplication with other complementary projects (for instance, the project decided not to select areas where other similar projects were being implemented). It is interesting to note that not all the stakeholders interviewed were aware of other projects funded by PBF in Kyrgyzstan¹¹³ or in other countries and did not know how to gather more information about them, such as good practices that they could get inspiration from.

The evaluation found only some evidence that the project interacted with those complementary projects and with other partners during implementation and how this interaction made the project adapt or learn from them. At the same time, there is little evidence that the project interacted with other agencies involved in the implementation of the other outcomes (1 and 2) of the PPP¹¹⁴.

¹¹¹ Project document Table 1 – Mapping of peacebuilding activities and gaps

¹¹² For instance, UN Women was aware of the *Women and Girls as Drivers for Peace and Stability by UNFPA, UNICEF, UNDP, UNODC*

¹¹³ Projects funded by PBF in Kyrgyzstan are, as follows:

- Communities resilient to violent ideologies: UNICEF, UNFPA, UN Women with budget USD 2,601,082 (11 Jan 2018 – July 2021)
- Support to the prevention of radicalization to violence in prisons and probation settings in the Kyrgyz Republic: UNODC, UNDP with budget USD 1,758,000 (11 January 2018- 10 January 2021)
- Inclusive governance and Justice system for Preventing Violent Extremism: UNDP, UNICEF, OHCHR, UN Women with budget USD 3,089,265 (12 January 2018- 11 January 2021)
- Promoting Kyrgyzstan's youth cohesion and interaction towards Uzbekistan: UNICEF, UNDP, UNFPA with budget USD 1,500,000 (14 November 2018- 13 May 2020)
- Jash araket: Strengthening capacity of young women and men in Kyrgyzstan to promote peace and security: Saferworld with budget USD 536,013 (14 December 2018- 13 June 2020)
- #JashStan: supporting the next wave of youth peace leaders in Kyrgyzstan (Phase 2): Search for Common Ground with budget USD 950,538 (21 January 2019 – 31 March 2020)
- Empowering women and girls affected by migration for inclusive and peaceful community development: IOM, UN Women, ILO with budget USD 1,450,000 (25 November 2019 - 24 May 2021)

¹¹⁴ The project did hold some meetings with the other agencies involved in the implementation of the other outcomes but only at the beginning of the project. One of the reasons this stopped is because of COVID-19. Also, it should be mentioned that the work with LSG on social inclusive and gender sensitive programming at local level was implemented by UN Women in Outcome 1 and is to be considered as a good platform for women from vulnerable groups to be a part of this local planning,

There is, however, evidence that the project developed a solid partnership with the government (see also the section on relevance, effectiveness, and sustainability). The government participated actively in the project design (in particular, the Ministry of Education and Science, state and Youth Agency, the Presidents' office and the SCVRA) and in the implementation of project activities – the confirmation of that is the fact that the MoES endorsed the non-discrimination gender-sensitive methodology, the MoU signed by the VEA to scale up the civic education in the sector.

Effectiveness/Impact

3. Main question: To what extent did the project achieve its objectives?

Sub questions:

3.1 To what extent have the project's results (outputs and outcomes) been achieved?

3.2 Have there been unintended positive or negative results?

This section addresses the main question and sub-questions related to the effectiveness criterion. The TOC of the project anticipated that if the young people in the communities have critical thinking and other life skills which enable them to positively claim and exercise their rights through civic engagement and interaction with local self-government bodies, then they will become resilient to violent and manipulative ideologies. The logic behind this and how this resonated with the existing academic literature is described in detail in the relevance section of this report.

The reconstructed TOC shows that the project expected that:

- Empowering youth (and women) and increasing their analytical skills would allow them to take a more critical stance to violence (programmatic pathway within output 1). Also, empowering youth to take part in initiatives with local authorities would reinforce their confidence;
- Empowering also other beneficiaries such as parents, community members and local authorities would allow them to better understand youth priorities, listen to their needs and send positive messages (output 2 and 3).
- Ultimately, the combination and interconnection between those outputs (young women (including vulnerable women) and men are empowered, they have a stronger trust in the state and they also feel closer to their community) would strengthen youth/women resilience to violence.

In this context, the section below shows that: there is evidence that the project contributed to youth empowerment with significant results for boys and girls in terms of strengthening their confidence, critical thinking, skills, teamwork, etc. - output 1 (Finding 9); there is also evidence of empowerment of (vulnerable) women (and girls) with transformative personal results generated by the project: building confidence, new businesses, pursuing new goals, new interactions (secular and religious women) (Finding 10); other beneficiaries than youth such as local authorities have also been empowered to engage with youth and to deliver positive messages to counter violent extremism - output 2 and 3 (Finding 11); there is some evidence that the overall approach of the project – with the interconnected outputs - has indeed had some positive impact on youth resilience to violence (Finding 12).

Finding 9. There is evidence that the project contributed to youth empowerment with significant results for boys and girls in terms of strengthening their confidence, critical thinking, skills, teamwork, etc. – this was instrumental for youth to take a critical stance to violence

Triangulation of information

- Interviews with youth participants, parents, teachers, mentors, local self-government authorities, implementing partners
- Focus group discussion with implementing partners, UN staff
- Project documents, implementing partners narrative reports

Individual level (output 1 civic education) – The logic of the first project component was to empower youth by slightly revising the curricula on civic education to make youth more critical thinkers, more open to diversity and tolerant and, at the same time, more sensitive to gender elements. This involved the development of a whole methodology and a series of training involving also teachers.

This evaluation found substantial evidence that youth got empowered by project activities and that this ‘empowerment’ was instrumental for them to be able to take a more critical stance to violence (i.e. messages promoting violence).

Indeed, the analysis of the TOC of the project showed that the project achieved its intended results under this component as the project was successful in building skills among youth and adolescents in formal (vocational and secondary schools) and informal educational settings (madrasahs)¹¹⁵. The evaluation team gathered plenty of evidence on empowerment of the young people involved in the project. Youth shared individual examples of increased confidence, critical thinking but also strengthened teamwork, increased motivation in participating in social initiatives, and increased interaction with peers from other regions.

Quote:

I like the trainer and the atmosphere they created. We made friends with other young people from Naryn (interview with young female from Issyk-Kul province).

Quote:

I really liked that there was no discrimination in the project regarding nationalities. There was a friendly spirit. I also learnt a lot of new information, for example, about leadership, team-work (interview with young female from Osh province from vulnerable groups).

Quote:

¹¹⁵ It should be noted that the project did not have any baseline values for its indicators. To overcome this problem, the current evaluation gathered qualitative and quantitative data and reconstructed the TOC to be able to validate the main assumptions and clearly show the logical chain of results

I learnt to identify problems of our community, to solve them and make presentation of our ideas (interview with young male participant from Jalalabad province, 15 years old).

“Because of my disability, the boys from my school used to humiliate me. One day I even was thrown into a trash can by my classmates, where I remained for 1.5 hours because of feeling of fear. But, I am not the same person now, I have changed a lot. Now I can openly speak up if someone is doing wrong, if I see wrong things around, and if I see any violence going on around, because I have a sense of confidence. Through trainings and initiatives, I have learnt to stand up for myself, I even became our school president. I am very grateful to FTI for such projects, thanks to them my life has significantly changed” (interview with young adult)

Project interventions under output 1 (civic education) fostered individual level changes targeting youth in three types of educational settings - mainstream school, vocational professional schools, and madrasas. The results for each setting are described, in more detail, below.

Civic education in secondary schools

Concerning formal school education, the MOES introduced into the current state’s teacher’s training program two training manuals developed within the framework of the project: (i) on non-discrimination, gender expertise and mainstreaming gender and non-discrimination in educational setting and (ii) on civic competency teaching methodology.¹¹⁶ These manuals were endorsed through training, sensitizing education sector employees and schoolteachers towards non-discrimination and gender equality principles¹¹⁷. As reported by the project, a total of 2,507 upper secondary students (grades 7-11, 1,169 boys and 1,338 girls) from 32 schools in 11 target municipalities enhanced their knowledge on civic competencies of social inclusion, diversity and gender equality by 50 teachers trained by the project.¹¹⁸ The competence level of the students was assessed by pre and post-tests, which showed about 35 percent increase of the level of sensitivity of the students at the end of the program. The final general level of knowledge of the gender and non-discrimination topic was 69 percent (girls 69% and boys 63%) at the post-test. As noted by the project partner, there was difference in perceptions of gender equality among boys and girls: *“girls did not know that their rights are equal to the boys’ rights, they thought that their destiny is different from the boys, they did not know that they can plan their own lives by themselves. Boys knew about equality among men and women, at the end they learnt that, for example, they can wash dishes like girls, and it is not a shame to do it”*.¹¹⁹

Additionally, the project conducted an expertise of 15 school textbooks¹²⁰ from gender perspective with recommendations for further use. As a result, the methodology of conducting gender and anti-discrimination expertise of educational materials was adopted by the MoES.¹²¹ In order to develop and publish high-quality textbooks of a new generation, the MoES further developed a draft Regulation "On the procedure for selecting textbooks (educational and methodological complexes)

¹¹⁶ The Ministry of Education and Science approved two educational modules: “Gender, non-discrimination in school education: for specialists in education”, “Learning living together: methodological guidance on developing basic competencies of school children in gender and non-discrimination for teacher of social sciences” in Kyrgyz, Uzbek and Russian languages. The module is accessible via <https://book.iukedu.kg/ru> and was included as 72-hour obligatory course within the professional training program for the teachers of “History” and “Human and Society” school subjects, and 8-hour course for the teachers of the other specialization areas on the basis of the Republican Institute of Teacher Training (RIIT) programs.

¹¹⁷ It should also be mentioned that Un Women TV developed some video lessons with the aim to sharpen students’ civic competencies in Kyrgyzstan

¹¹⁸ Project Annual Report 2020, FEIS final report.

¹¹⁹ From the interview with the IP, Bishkek

¹²⁰ UN Women additionally contributed to expertise of Uzbek language books(Uzbek language and Uzbek literature). See here <https://eca.unwomen.org/en/news/stories/2021/06/tv-and-video-lessons-sharpen-students-civic-competencies-in-kyrgyzstan>

¹²¹ Approved by the MoES, Order № 1096/1, dated 16.09.2019

for educational organizations of the Kyrgyz Republic”.¹²² The regulation provides four types of mandatory textbook examinations - scientific expertise, scientific and pedagogical expertise, practical and pedagogical expertise (approbation) and anti-discrimination and gender expertise.¹²³ This means that all books issued and disseminated by the MoES are now subject to mandatory gender and anti-discrimination review. As reported by the project, this methodology has already been applied on 40 textbooks and none has passed the expert review due to discriminatory and gender-blind text and images.

To increase public awareness about non-violent culture and civic competencies the project supported the development of 28 learning¹²⁴, media, and educational materials and conducted online information campaign in social media with an outreach of approximately 784,405 views.¹²⁵ However, during the project evaluation a concern was raised by education and gender professionals regarding the limited technical capacity of the Ministry of Education and Science to further lead the initiative which envisages further quality capacity building of teaching staff on gender and non-discrimination practices, implementing these practices in schools, regular updating methodological materials, guiding textbook authors, etc. It was stressed that further technical support would be needed to MoES to enroot this into practice.

Civic education in vocational schools

8 vocational schools were targeted by the project to develop and pilot new content along with methodological materials for instructors/teaching staff of the existing course "Legal Basis for Professional Activity" (referred in the project as *civic education course*). The civic education course was developed by the project working group consisting of representatives of the Agency of vocational education of the Kyrgyz Republic, the Republican Scientific and Methodological Center, directors of professional vocational schools and experts in the field of education. The content of the course was developed considering the principles, the educational standards of primary vocational education of the Kyrgyz Republic and contains 24 academic hours. It contains new for this course topics such as anti-discrimination notions and practices, tolerance, gender equality, human rights, etc. Additionally, the Teacher's Guide, Students' Workbook and Competence Assessment System were elaborated for the course. The teachers in the pilot vocational schools underwent professional training (72 academic hours) and they appreciated participating in it.

Quote:

The capacity building training was very useful for us, as our existing teaching staff exercise traditional teaching methods. New innovative, interactive methods of teaching were presented. My new teaching methods were very much appreciated by my students, they liked the course and were interested to come to class (Vocational school instructor, Bishkek).

Based on information from the Agency on vocational education under the MoES, the course was recommended further to be rolled out to all vocational schools starting from the 2020 academic year.

¹²² The Regulations has not been approved yet by the Ministry, however, it was publicly discussed.

¹²³ This could be considered an important milestone for embedding the values of human rights, equality, and diversity into the education system. <https://kutbilim.kg/ru/news/inner/mon-razrabotato-novoe-polozhenie-ob-uchebnom-knigoizdani-ru/>

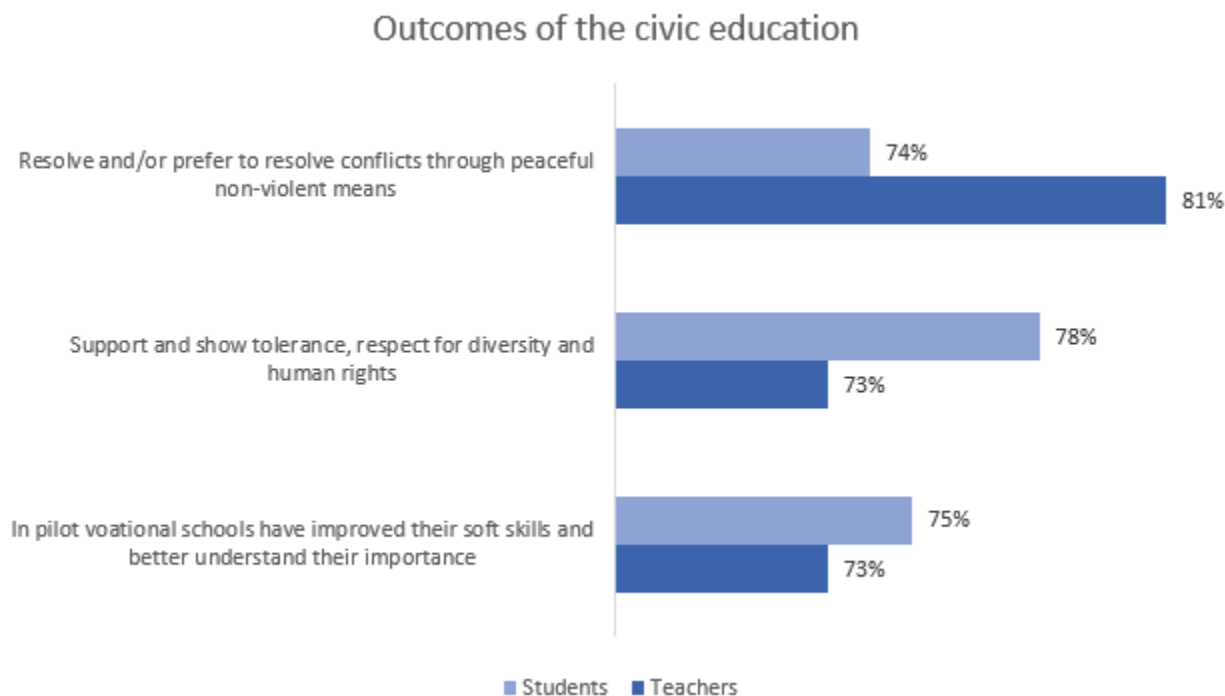
¹²⁴ 10 TV programs dedicated to five key topics on civil competencies, social inclusion, gender equality and non-discrimination. A series of five TV programs (5 in Kyrgyz and 5 in Russian) was developed on the following topics: diversity, stereotypes, contemporary inequality, inclusive society, our rights and opportunities. The YouTube channel has around 5 000 views of these programs at https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PL_iZdxTX_xllG2D-PbrqYth00ARxrKg; 10 animated videos on gender equality, non-discrimination and tolerance (5 in Kyrgyz and 5 in Russian); 8 video lessons on Human and Society subject (4 in Kyrgyz and 4 in Russian)

¹²⁵ Project Annual Report 2020

In addition, the project published the course materials (646 copies) in Russian and Kyrgyz languages and handed them over to vocational schools. However, as informed by the project participating instructor during the evaluation interview, the Agency had to presumably roll out the training for other teachers to pass on teaching methodologies and the new content of the course with support of already trained teaching staff. In total 219 vocational school students (out of this number 91 female) benefited from the new content of this course taught by 25 trained vocational school instructors. In addition, various workshops, Leadership Academy, camps were also arranged for the students to teach civic competences, other soft skills along with life skills.

Similarly, to the civic education in secondary schools, the project had a positive impact on youth. As shown in the graph below (graph 1), youth improved considerably their soft skills related to civic competencies (students) and teaching skills (teachers). As a result, 78 per cent of students and 73 per cent of teachers succeeded to show tolerance, respect for diversity and human rights because of project interventions. Most importantly, 74 per cent of students and 81 per cent of teachers show preference of resolving occurring everyday conflicts through peaceful and non-violent means. This (see also sections below) is a confirmation that the educational approach taken by the project had a positive impact on youth beliefs and behaviors related to violence.

Figure 5: Outcomes of the civic education course in vocational schools



Source: project paper - Good practices and lessons learnt in building resilient communities in Kyrgyzstan, 2021

It should be noted that during the COVID-19 pandemic the project transferred to on-line mode providing distance learning podcasts, animated videos, and video tutorials/lessons along with several online events were conducted on topics such as media literacy, tolerance, information on COVID-19 pandemic to both teachers and students.

Civic education in madrasahs

Considering the number of young people attending madrasahs, which is estimated to be at around 6000¹²⁶ students or higher, the project rightly addressed the issue of integrating secular subjects in religious education settings. A civic education course was developed and introduced into the curriculum of 11 madrasahs in the pilot locations. At least 240 young people benefited from the course. 40 madrasah teachers underwent intensive training to be able to deliver the new course. As a result, according to the project post-activity survey, conducted after the completion of the civic education course among 101 students and 79 teachers, 81 per cent of respondents demonstrated support for gender equality and women’s empowerment, while 76,6 per cent reported having higher tolerance, and respect for diversity and human rights.¹²⁷

In addition, a civic education mobile application “a journey to civil-land” was developed to support the learning, which is compatible with Android and IOS devices. The application has over 100 downloads by the period of writing this report.

Overall, the civic education course in madrasahs was a unique and timely attempt to integrate the concepts of citizenship and human rights into Islamic teaching in the Kyrgyzstan context.

Finding 10 – There is evidence of empowerment of (vulnerable) women (and girls) with transformative personal results generated by the project: building confidence, new businesses, pursuing new goals, new interactions (secular and religious women).

Triangulation of information

- Interviews with youth participants, parents, teachers, mentors, local self-government authorities, implementing partners
- Focus group discussion with implementing partners, UN staff
- Project documents, implementing partners narrative reports

This evaluation found that the project paid specific attention to women and, in particular, vulnerable women. The TOC of the project rightly included vulnerable and other women into the process of building resilience to violent and manipulative ideologies in the communities by empowering them to positively claim and exercise the rights. This was done through civic education component in the vocational schools and madrasahs, and through empowering vulnerable women in communities.

The project evaluation gathered evidence and testimonials of participating women, including the most vulnerable and disadvantaged ones, who were successful in gaining confidence and self-esteem as a result of being part of the project.

Quote:

I really liked that it is possible to provide unemployed women with jobs. That they [women] can find a way out of situations on their own, without hoping that someone else would defend their rights. Issues related to parenting, critical

¹²⁶ <https://iwpr.net/global-voices/kyrgyzstan-taste-secularism-religious-schools>

¹²⁷ Project Final Report 2021.

thinking were raised. We discussed that children can defend their rights, for example, people of Uzbek nationality, especially girls after the 9th grade, mostly get married. We covered the topics that we can make decisions on our own, and not depend on someone else's opinion. I was depressed because I could not find a job, and when I wrote my own project and got supported, my soul opened and I began to enjoy life. I felt joy when I bought sewing machines... the first thing we started to sew were face masks. I sewed and handed out the masks absolutely for free, and it brought me a great pleasure (interview with female participant from Osh province).

The project worked with the women on development and implementation of social projects for their communities as well as helping them develop new business and start-ups. At least 200 women and girls from vulnerable groups across 12 target municipalities strengthened their knowledge and skills in small scale income-generating activities and entrepreneurship, including on how to develop business ideas and start their own business¹²⁸. As a result of this, in total, 46 small scale initiatives were jointly designed by 93 women and girls from vulnerable groups in selected across 12 pilot municipalities. Through the dialogue process, selected initiatives were implemented to facilitate their active civic engagement and articulate the burdens of the vulnerable community member, and to address causes of insecurity, to prevent discriminatory practices (domestic violence, bride abduction, early marriages, etc¹²⁹). These initiatives included sewing and baking centers, greenhouses and gardening, event management services, printing/copying services, consultations center on PVE and peacebuilding, sport center for women, installation of video cameras and electricity in and around new settlements of Bishkek city, planting of flowers and trees in the communities. However, though the income generation support was very well welcomed by the women, not all of them were able to successfully develop further their start-up projects after the closure of the project. For example, fitness club for women in Allya-Anarov municipality has stopped operating (at the time of conducting this evaluation) due to lack of additional equipment/necessities for the start-up to be provided by the municipality (which was promised but never provided) and due to health issues of the start-up owner. The flower greenhouse cover in the same Allya-Anarov municipality has also worn out and the participating woman articulated the need for further support (during the evaluation phase).¹³⁰ It should be noted that UN Women reports that additional funds have also been mobilized from other organizations to ensure the sustainability of these initiatives.

Nevertheless, the project has many success stories of women empowerment results including through income generating activities (for example, flower business and sewing workshop in Bishkek). Out of all trained women and girls, 3 women became deputies of local councils¹³¹.

Women also contributed to mobilizing a solid response to COVID-2019 crisis. For example, women in Allya-Anarov municipality, who completed the sewing courses with support of the project, sewed and donated 2000 face masks to vulnerable community members. Women, also with support of project gender experts, managed to mobilize financial resources and distributed food packages to six

¹²⁸ Project Annual Report 2020.

¹²⁹ For example, the women conducted initiatives to prevent discriminatory practices such as campaign "Life without violence" as part of a 16-day campaign against gender-based violence (December 2019, 2020, Bishkek). The project participating women started actively being part of celebrations devoted to International Peace Day, global campaign "16 Days of Activism against Gender-based Violence", the International Day of the Girl Child.

¹³⁰ However, it should be noted that the project succeeded in general to boost income generating activities of the vulnerable women, especially taking into account some of the participating women have lower level of education, low self-esteem, being a victim of domestic violence and facing a intersecting forms of discrimination, also considering the COVID implications, those women managed not only enhance their skills and knowledge, contribute to family budget, but also actively promoted the alternate messages to PVE.

¹³¹ More information can be found here «Дома – келинка, на работе – руководительница, в селе – депутатка». Зачем араванские женщины идут в местные кенеш - KLOOP.KG - Новости Кыргызстана

women from Osh city, and provided other support. In addition, UN Women distributed basic hygiene kits for the most vulnerable women which contained of cleansing wipes, reusable face masks, essential hygiene items, liquid soap, sanitizers, detergent and much more. These kits were distributed by the local project gender experts who had to deliver them to women at the time of lock down and high risk on contamination of the disease with few protective means of individual protection for themselves.

It is also important to note that the project initiated an interesting interaction on the secular themes local religious leaders, women and other community members. As a result of that, religious leaders supported human rights and equality by organizing seminar on “Child and women rights” for religious people, police and other community members in Osh and talk show “Women in Islam”, “Islam the religion of peace” to promote the significance of education and other.

Thought the project worked on issues related to women empowerment, it could be noted that that these efforts would need further support and follow-up for them to be sustained over time.

Finding 11. Other beneficiaries than youth such as local authorities have also been empowered to engage with youth and to deliver positive messages to counter violent extremism

Triangulation of information

- Interviews with youth participants, parents, teachers, mentors, local self-government authorities, implementing partners
- Focus group discussion with implementing partners, UN staff
- Project documents, implementing partners narrative reports

At institutional level (Output 2, civic engagement) - The logic of the second project component was to empower local authorities and facilitate a process of engagement with youth – the expectation was that this would lead to having local authorities more open to start a dialogue with youth, listen to their needs and, ultimately, would increase youth trust towards government. This evaluation found evidence that, indeed, this happened as local authorities started take into account their priorities in their development plans and were more willing to engage with them. As a result, youth involved in this project increased their trust in the government (see also section below).

As part of the implementation of this output, the project involved the participation of 1,200 adolescents and young people in 18 cities. The government-run Youth and Child Friendly Local Governance (YCFLG) contest¹³² has prompted 18 towns to develop child and youth friendly development plans and commit funds for implementation. As part of the whole process 2,560 young people were involved in community consultations and advocacy and 1,600 adolescents attended participatory research and discussions on local priorities and solutions. 270 girls from vulnerable

¹³² The Regulations of the contest could be found here with 6 mln Kyrgyz soms as prize fund <http://cbd.minjust.gov.kg/act/view/ru-ru/13645>

communities gained IT skills and developed digital solutions addressing issues of environmental degradation, sexual and reproductive health, GBV and employability.¹³³

In addition, as part of the YCFLG initiative implemented by UNICEF since 2017¹³⁴, a methodological recommendations paper (Guide) for local governments on the implementation of youth policy was developed. The Guide contains a methodological and practical description of actions that LSG bodies can take to develop and implement youth policy in the territory of a municipality applying participatory approaches with better consideration and articulation of the needs of the beneficiaries.

As mentioned earlier, the evaluation also found evidence that the stakeholders involved in this output such as local authorities learned to better listen to the needs of youth and understood the importance to consider their perspectives.

Quote:

Through this initiative, it was important for us to engage with youth. We understand we need to consider their priorities when developing plans (interview with local authority).

At the level of community and family (Output 3, community dialogue)

The logic of the third project component was to empower community members but also adults (partly output 1 and 2) to consider more youth needs and deliver positive messages against violence that could influence them. The evaluation validated this pathway and the assumption underneath (parents, community leaders, other adults were considered are ‘influencers’).

The project indeed developed training and activities involving those community groups to participate in local development discussion and dialogues over PVE. The objective was to promote the idea of tolerance and gender equality and to involve other community members in dialogue and cooperation through local initiatives.

In particular, the project reached out to female religious leaders, who are usually excluded from community dialogue.

Quote:

I think everything in the project was meaningful because I got useful knowledge out of the project. I feel that I have been useful for women around me. Before, all our educational entities like madrasah, schools, etc. in our community worked separately. In this project we worked together: the 10th Department, educators, social pedagogues, we all worked together, we had a very good exchange of ideas, we went to schools, madrasahs to deliver training and seminars which was very useful for participants. I would recommend continuing these efforts and conduct more of such activities (female religious leader from Suzak, Jalalabad province).

The project created a platform (especially for women) to speak up on hardships they face in communities to open dialogue in the wider society. Their voices to be heard, the project trained over 100 municipality leaders in strategic planning, prioritizing issues affecting young people (including women) together with youth councils in 10 municipalities¹³⁵. The project also facilitated local dialogues

¹³³ Project Final Report, 2021

¹³⁴ <https://childfriendlycities.org/kyrgyzstan/>

¹³⁵ Project Progress Report 2020

between municipalities, police, religious leaders, and civil society over the issue of community challenges which resulted in more than 100 local PVE initiatives with around 5000 participating in it. In the communities the following issues were raised and some of the issues tackled through small scale youth initiatives such as limited education and leisure opportunities for girls, domestic violence, lack of safe spaces for young people (especially girls), environmental issues, child marriage and so on.

Finally, there is also solid evidence that parents have also been positively impacted from participating into project activities. The project indeed foresaw several activities targeting adults and making sure they would participate actively – i.e. by inviting them when their kids would present their final project (output 2).

Quote:

I now realize how important education is for my kid and want to let him pursue his dreams (interview with an adult)

Finding 12. There is some early evidence that the overall approach of the project has indeed had some positive impact on youth resilience to violence

Triangulation of information

- Desk review
- Interviews with youth participants, parents, teachers, mentors, local self-government authorities, implementing partners
- Guided questionnaire

This evaluation found that the combination and interconnection between the project outputs had a positive impact on youth empowerment, on their trust towards the state and the sense of belonging towards their community. In turn, this had a positive impact on resilience to violence.

This was confirmed by the results of the guided questionnaire this evaluation developed with a selection of young people from six sampled communities.¹³⁶ Indeed, the results of this questionnaire suggest that, because of the project, all 3 dimensions (sense of belonging, trust in government and behavior/beliefs towards violence) have been impacted positively.

Graph 2 shows that *sense of belonging to community* was fostered among the young people (n=43): 72 percent of young people feel that adults listen to their needs and concerns, 79 percent feel safe in community, 77 percent feel no concern interacting with different people from different cultures and beliefs.

As for *confidence in the state* (n=43), the Graph 3 illustrates that 63 percent of youth now trust local authorities, 79 percent of the young people feel confident when interacting with local authorities, 51% feel that their voices heard when dealing with local authorities.

Violence related behaviors and beliefs is presented in Graph 4 which shows that 95 percent of young people think that when there is a conflict situation the best way to address this is through dialogue, 93 percent

¹³⁶ Bishkek (Ak-Ordo), Suzak, Allya Anarov, Sary Bulak, Nookat and Kyzyl-Kiya municipalities

of the young people are willing to speak up when someone is violent in the community, and 74 percent of youth disagree with the statement “my community assumes that young people may use violence to solve problems”.

Figure 6. Sense of belonging of young people to community

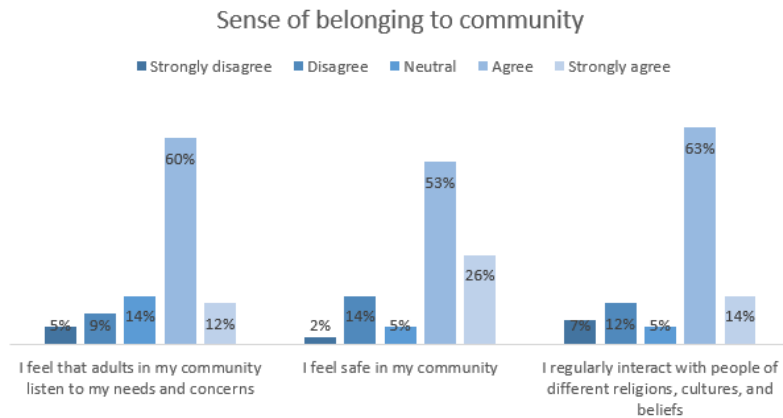


Figure 7. Confidence of young people in the state

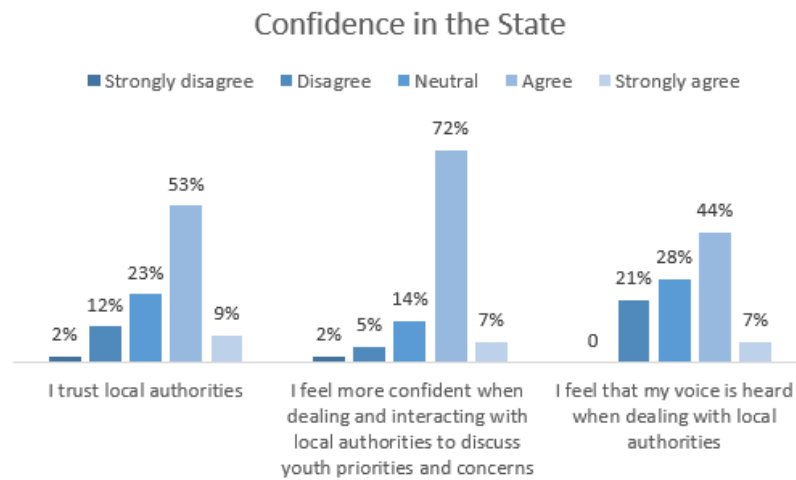
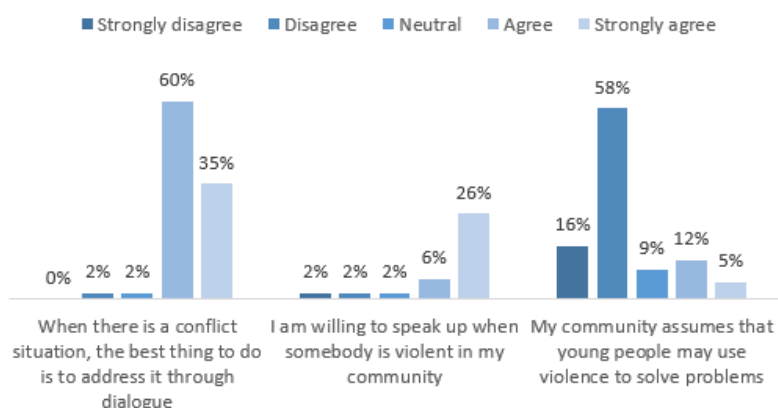


Figure 8. Violence related behaviors and beliefs among young people

Violence related behaviors and beliefs



The questionnaire results reveal that the young people built up positive relationships and networks at the level of their own communities, gained confidence in the state, cope well with diversity, and strongly disagree with violence related behaviors and beliefs. *In other words, these results suggest that the project may have, to some extent, positively affected the young people as they are less supportive of violence related behaviors and beliefs.*

The information and results emerging from the guided questionnaire were also triangulated and coupled with the analysis from the interviews that provided the evaluation team to provide with an in-depth understanding of the behavioral changes and the reasons for them.¹³⁷ In this sense, there is evidence that the approach used by the project, namely, the combination of the civic empowerment (individual level), civic engagement (institutional level) and community dialogue (family/community level) has had indeed a positive impact on resilience to violence thus validating the main assumption of the project. As an illustration for that, a young person interviewed reported to have increased his critical thinking skills and therefore he was able to better filter the messages coming from outside. At the same time, he reported that his parents were now more willing to listen to his needs as a result of project activities. As part of the guided questionnaire, he reported that he is now more comfortable to use communication and dialogue to resolve issues at home and in his community.¹³⁸

In relation to any unintended results the project could have generated during its implementation stage, the evaluation team observed no indirect or unintended impacts or results related to peacebuilding and to prevention of violent extremism. However, the project did have some results that were not foreseen at conception stage (i.e. groups of women who took the initiative, thanks to UN Women, to produce and distribute more than 2000 face masks) and that were produced as a result of the COVID pandemic (see finding 13 below).

¹³⁷ It is important to note that after the guided questionnaire those 43 youth were also interviewed to gather more in-depth information on the project and its impact on them

¹³⁸ As a word of caution, it should be noted however that it is too early to verify all the results of the project at the community level. The project has had a solid impact at the individual level also in terms of resilience to violence. However, it is not possible for this evaluation to evaluate the resilience towards violence at community level.

Efficiency

4. Main questions: How efficient was the project in using its resources to achieve its objectives?

Sub questions:

4.1 Have funds and activities related to the selected initiatives been delivered in a timely and resource appropriate manner?

4.2 To what extent was the governance set-up appropriate to achieve results in terms of:

- Guidance from the Steering Committee?
- Cooperation among supporting and implementing partners?

4.3 To what extent were the monitoring mechanisms in place effective in measuring and informing management of the project performance and progress towards the targets?

This section addresses the main question and sub-questions related to the efficiency criterion. It shows: how efficiency of the project was overall solid despite the COVID-19, which was even used as an opportunity to have a stronger impact (Finding 13); that, even if there was some overall appreciation of its role, the joint steering committee did not play a strategic role it was designed to do (Finding 14): and that there was solid willingness to properly follow the progress of the project and measure its results, yet, this did not translate into an effective monitoring, evaluation and learning system (Finding 15).

Finding 13: Overall efficiency of the project is solid as activities were implemented in a timely and resource appropriate manner despite COVID-19 – the project partly used the pandemic as an opportunity to have a stronger impact

Triangulation of information

- Desk review of project document (financial reports, annual and semiannual reports)
- Interviews with UN staff
- FGDs

100 percent implementation rate was reached by the project and most line items were close to the planned expenditure. Not surprisingly, because of COVID-19 epidemic most of the activities of the project had to be postponed leading to an extension of the whole project, which was finally implemented for 42 months. However, this evaluation found that despite the pandemic, the project managed its resources appropriately and implemented all its activities while achieving its objectives.

The project was flexible enough to adapt, though non-monetary and monetary adjustments, to COVID-19 challenges and even used the crisis as an opportunity.

Indeed, the project was able to adapt some of its activities to address new and more pressing health challenges caused by the pandemic. As an illustration of that, the project helped women to take active role in the context of the pandemic – for instance, A total of 36 women and girls sewed 2,000 face masks and gave them to their community members, especially to the most vulnerable families. One

woman, for instance, was able to use the skills she had developed through the Small-Scale Initiatives (SSI) element of the project and she actively helped to identify vulnerable women and girls for humanitarian aid support. She was also among the activists who helped UN Women distribute hygiene kits in communities.

The project also ‘used’ COVID-19 as an opportunity to strengthen its efficiency and effectiveness. Firstly, the project was able to conduct virtually several of its activities¹³⁹ (and even make some savings). Secondly, there is anecdotal evidence that the reach out of the project was amplified as more participants were able to attend project activities as the project switch to its tools. For instance, one of the interviewees stated that he was able to participate in the project activities (i.e. UPSHIFT) even if he was not part of the initial cohort that was supposed to be conducted in-person.¹⁴⁰

Table 3. Adjustments to the project made as a response to the COVID-19 pandemic

<ul style="list-style-type: none">• As an immediate response to COVID-19, more than 320 the most vulnerable women within 11 PVE target communities across the country received hygiene kits as humanitarian aid. Hygiene kits include cleansing wipes, reusable face masks, essential hygiene items, liquid soap, sanitizers and detergent. These kits gave women and girls the opportunity to use their limited funds to purchase other vital resources.• Women targeted in this project were forefront of the response to COVID-19 crisis in their communities. Thus, 36 women who implemented the initiatives in the field of sewing sewed and distributed more than 2000 face masks to their community members and healthcare workers to protect from the spread of COVID-19. Moreover, women conducted information and awareness raising campaigns against the spread of COVID in their communities, actively participated in disinfecting streets, and volunteered in day care centers. Furthermore, in 12 project localities women distributed humanitarian aid and participated in other decision-making initiatives on crisis response.• The community participatory research with youth and adolescents in May – July was moved to online mode because of the high infection rate occurring at that time. Youth bootcamp workshops for developing solutions to issues identified in previously were moved from June – July spring time to September – October;• The stakeholders’ round table on civic education was conducted as online conference together with other implementing partners, where the lessons learned from the project and the results achieved were revealed.
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It should be noted that the project also made some appropriate changes and adjustments that were not directly related to COVID-19 to strengthen its efficiency and respond to unexpected circumstances. As an illustration of that, the implementation of civic education in secondary schools was delayed due to the slow process led by the MoES on the selection of a new textbook proposal for Grade 7 on “Human and Society” and the fact that the MoES failed to announce the call for proposals by September 2019, which was the beginning of new school year. Because of this delay in this process and some uncertainty about the future implementation of this activity, the project decided to cancel the activity and reallocate the funds on the further support that the MoES needed to ensure the fully functioning of gender-sensitive and non-discrimination review of education materials and tools.¹⁴¹

¹³⁹ For example, UN Women provided courses to improve IT skills and on communication tools for the target women.

¹⁴⁰ Also, indicator 1.3.2 141 young people (77% girls), that were reached out online during COVID, were able to proposed solutions to issues of mental health, domestic violence.

¹⁴¹ Only a few stakeholders interviewed highlighted that sometimes the rigidity of the UN system makes it difficult to make changes and adjustments when needed. This is in line with a recent evaluation that states that L&A strategies only make sense when implementing partners have the possibility to make ad hoc changes during the implementation. And yet, many agencies’ internal procedures do not allow for adaptations after the projects have been logged into their internal systems. If L&A strategies are only partially applied, agencies are missing important opportunities for joint learning,

A minor note relates to reporting, this evaluation found that this could have been improved to better articulate the efficiency of the project throughout implementation. For instance, the annual and semi-annual reports only mentioned “the implementation rate as percentage of total project budget” without better articulating other interesting elements that the evaluation team found in separate documents related to the budget of the project. The project could have also better explained the implementation problems and the possible solutions to overcome them.

Finding 14: Even if there was some overall appreciation of its role, the steering committee did not play a strategic role it was designed to do

Triangulation of information

- Desk review of project document (annual and semiannual reports)
- Interviews with UN staff

This evaluation found that there was good appreciation by the project implementers on the guidance of the JSC. This is confirmed by the interviews conducted with both agencies and NGOs during the evaluation. The JSC was composed of 28 individuals representing Government, civil society and development partners and was co-chaired by the Head of the Department for Interethnic Relations and Collaboration with the Civil Society of the President and the UN Resident Coordinator.

However, this evaluation found that the JSC was used as opportunity to validate some decisions already taken by the project rather than being an opportunity to act as a platform to discuss the strategic direction of the project, its progress of the project, its challenges, and possible solutions¹⁴². This is confirmed by the initiatives taken by the UN RC and the PBF secretariat that decided to closely follow the project progress also by organizing field monitoring visits that should have been, in principle, organized by the JSC.¹⁴³ Also, the role of the JSC to coordinate project stakeholders was rather limited and, as discussed more in depth in the coherence section, it was rather the initiatives of some of the stakeholders (UNRC) that facilitated stakeholders to collaborate than the ones initiated by the JSC.

The stakeholders interviewed emphasized some of the limitations of the JSC including frequent changes in government limited capacities of members. Also, the lack of PBF strategic framework at portfolio or country level, which has already been mentioned in this report, was highlighted as a

conflict sensitive reality checks, and inter-agency cooperation. This also shows that once PBF projects have been approved and the money has been transferred to RUNOs, the PBF has limited influence on the implementation process.” (Kyrgyzstan Strategic Review 2020, p. 21)

¹⁴² As mentioned above, there is also little evidence that the project interacted with other agencies involved in the implementation of the other outcomes (1 and 2) of the PPP, which the JSC could have facilitated

¹⁴³ According to the project document “JSC is also a relevant platform for development actors to coordinate their interventions. As a part of their monitoring and oversight they also undertake field trips to project sites providing feedback as well as contributing to sustainability of the results and local ownership over them.

potential constraint – a well-articulated and clear strategic framework would facilitate in principle the work of the JSC as the guidance of the latter would also be based on a long-term vision.

Finding 15: There was solid willingness to properly follow the progress of the project and measure its results - however, there were some challenges regarding the monitoring and evaluation system

Triangulation of information

- Desk review of project document (including annual and semiannual reports, good practices on M&E)
- Interviews with UN staff
- FGDs with UN staff and implementing partners

New PBF strategy has made a clear commitment to making learning to project and a component of monitoring and evaluation.

The evaluation found that there was a strong commitment at project conception to make M&E a crucial part of the activities of the initiative. The project document mentioned that approximately 7 percent of the total budget will be allocated to M&E, which is in line with good practices on establishing M&E at project level. The project also foresaw the establishment of baseline assessment to identify baseline data for the project and to identify targets. Finally, it was envisaged that the JSC along with the agencies would carry out monitoring activities in a systematic manner.

The evidence collected by the evaluation only partially validated this. Project stakeholders indeed followed up on their initial commitment by conducting some specific monitoring activities. Desk review and interviews confirmed that the agencies deployed their own monitoring instruments (for instance pre and post-test questionnaire) to measure the results of the project. The L&A¹⁴⁴ exercise also helped the agencies to better understand the chain of results of the project and, under the guidance of UNFPA, a more articulated TOC and Result Framework was developed.¹⁴⁵

There is also evidence that the project did adapt some of its activities because of the monitoring actions it undertook. As an illustration of that, the localized analysis produced some recommendations for expanding community dialogues over PVE issues as well as a need for multi-media products to better raise public awareness that were then considered by the project.

In addition, during its monitoring visits the PBF secretariat identified some further issues and challenges that were highlighted to strengthen the project.

¹⁴⁴ The Learning and Adaptation workshops that were facilitated by the PeaceNexus Foundation helped to identify risks, to develop mitigation strategies, and to share expertise and strengthen coordination. It needs to be pointed out, though, that while the workshops were attended by most RUNOs follow-up actions were undertaken with sporadic success and consistency.

¹⁴⁵ It should be mentioned however that the evaluation team did not receive this document and thus could not review it

However, the evaluation also found the following obstacles¹⁴⁶ for the project to effectively monitor the progress of the project and learn from it:

- Complexity of the concept of VE and how to measure it¹⁴⁷: as mentioned in the relevance section, there is an ongoing discussion on the definition of VE and radicalization as this is a new field that has received increased attention on the recent years, without however having an agreed definition and framework around them.
- The difficulty of measuring such concepts was exacerbated by the absence of a strategic peacebuilding framework at the portfolio/country level that would facilitate the measurement higher-level results of impact (i.e. sense of belonging in the community) at country level beyond specific projects.¹⁴⁸ In this sense, it should be noted that the PPP logframe is just a collection of the 3 logframes rather than being an integrated logframe with higher level results
- The project did not have either a baseline, or an end-line for measuring its outcome indicators. The logframe of the project was, therefore, only partially filled in. There is also some terminology confusion between outcomes and outputs. For instance, the workplan (PVE outcome 3 workplan refers to the different components as outcome 1.1, 1.2, and 1.3 whereas the project document refers to them as output 1.1., 1.2, and 1.3
- As mentioned earlier in this report, the project did not articulate the TOC and clarify all the assumptions that should be monitored also during implementation. In this sense, it not possible to verify whether the project indicators coincide with the TOC of the project
- The focus on good reporting and knowledge management could have been improved. The evaluation found that the structure of the reporting and its contents does not really allow to clearly understand the progress of the project, its challenges, the solutions that have been tested, and the learning process that the project is making based on all that. This is confirmed by the interviews with project stakeholders that highlighted that they were not always up-to-date on the progress of the project, its main obstacles etc.

One interesting reflection was made by the evaluation on the L&A approach that states that the different culture of learning of each agency can, at times, hamper the process of measuring results and learning from it. According to this evaluation, the culture of learning is different among the agencies as some organizations are more open to new approaches than others. Indeed, UN officials across different agencies differed in their understanding of "what, why and how" of the L&A approach.¹⁴⁹

¹⁴⁶ (it should be mentioned that some of those obstacles are within the control of the project and some outside its control)

¹⁴⁷ There are significant research gaps in the development of indicators or measures of community resilience relating to violent extremism, especially those that can create understanding of why people don't turn to violent extremism, rather than on why they do. More work is needed in particular on identifying the preventive and protective factors at work in community resilience contexts, with detailed assessment of their multi-level systemic processes. The absence of a standardized measure addressing these domains currently limits the efforts of communities and agencies to develop effective and meaningful youth-focused policies and programs that can identify both what young people in communities already possess as resilience resources (but which may be unrecognized or under-utilized), and what vulnerabilities or gaps they may need to address, and how. (Grossman et al., 2016).

¹⁴⁸ See The 2017-2019 Synthesis Review.

¹⁴⁹ L&A evaluation. Evaluation of the L&A approach.

Sustainability

Main question: To what extent are initiatives supported by the project likely to be sustained over time so as contribute to peacebuilding?

Sub question:

5.1 How effectively has the project generated national ownership and capacity to continue implementation of the results achieved?

5.2 How likely is it that youth and communities will sustain the results of the project after its end?

This section addresses the main question and sub-questions related to sustainability. It shows that: there are already encouraging early signs of sustainability (Finding 16); and that, however, community resilience to withstand violent extremist ideologies needs to be further fostered requiring more efforts and time (Finding 17).

Finding 16: There are encouraging early signs of sustainability related to inclusion of young women (including vulnerable women) and men’s needs into community development, civic education and engagement

At the same time, the expectation was that the government (both at the central and local levels) would integrate youths’ (including women and girls) needs and concerns into their development plans and strategies. The project reported that the needs of the young people and women were integrated into current socio-economic development plans of the pilot communities. The project succeeded to support the development of child and youth friendly plans and commit funds within YCFLG initiative in 18 towns. However, as shared by the project implementing partner, though there is a legislation in place in terms of participatory development of socio-economic plans¹⁵⁰, in practice the local self-government bodies (municipalities, local council deputies) have limited capacity to work out quality plans due to various reasons (low capacity, staff turn-over, lack of institutional capacity). Often these plans are elaborated formally. The existing practice of development of socio-economic programs for cities and villages (aiyl aimaks) is aimed to a greater extent at solving infrastructural problems within the existing budgets. At the same time, local governments do not pay due attention to local community development, and proper identification of community needs. Existing development programs rely to a greater extent on funding from the scarce local budget, resources of potential development partners usually remain unused. Modest local budgets and general problems of economic development of the regions are long-lasting issues which require systematic solutions.

This project heavily relied on the implementing partners, their capacity and experience. With some of them, the RUNOs have cooperation on several projects¹⁵¹ with crosscutting agenda. The project implementing partners like DPI has been supporting the local governments to improve the work with population at the local level for many years with support of various development partners. Based on the experience, DPI (with UNICEF support) elaborated a guide based on the experience, including

¹⁵⁰ Based on Degree No 194 of the Government of the Kyrgyz Republic dated 31.03.2017 on the Concept of the Regional Policy 2018-2022, the Ministry of Economy (joint order with the State Agency of local self-governance) approved Methodological Recommendations for the local self-government bodies for development of socio-economic plans (Order No 63-A dated 15.05.2018).

¹⁵¹ A particular CSOs could partner with UN agencies on several projects, e.g. IDEA CA, Youth of Osh were also partners for “Promoting Kyrgyzstan’s youth cohesion and interaction towards Uzbekistan” implemented by UNICEF, UNDP, UNFPA.

the experience of the Child and Youth Friendly Municipalities Project carried out jointly with UNICEF in Kyrgyzstan since 2017. The goal of the project was to adapt and implement the Child and Youth Friendly Kyrgyzstan initiative in 32 urban and rural municipalities of Kyrgyzstan (and as part of the current project as well). LSG staff, leaders, and young members of local communities (including children and adolescents) were able to improve knowledge about the specific needs of adolescents and young people, especially in terms of access to local services. They received skills and tools for planning and implementing local development policies, considering the interests of adolescents and youth. Piloting has resulted in working development plans that meet the needs, requirements and rights of children and young people. Local authorities often welcome any support to local development, and they displayed strong commitment to continued cooperation with the projects alike. However, the scarcity of local budget could jeopardize further sustainability of youth initiatives or limit future opportunities for youth without external support.

Other obstacles that the project faced to promote quality dialogue between LSGs and youth was resilience of some of the local government to shift the way of their working, the way of their thinking to the new approach that the project was suggesting, so they have some resilience to immerse with the needs of the “awakened” youth. Interviews with evaluation participants disclosed that this happens because a) local government used to engage youth only in one-time events such as organization of sport games on an annual basis, b) limitations in resources – “government doesn’t have money to carry out activities, such as community meetings, because they require additional financial expenses,” c) lack of coordination, etc.

However, the guided questionnaire results revealed that more than 60 percent of youth trust local authorities, whereas the rest either neutral or disagree to this statement. Few interviewed young adults shared that they encountered difficulties with local government while implementing the project initiatives, because the local government did not offer proper support or showed mistrust in the young people.

Quote:

“I became a leader. I manage my team successfully. We had obstacles from the side of local government. I remember I searched 3 days for a list of children with disabilities from the local government. It referred those who did not have any disability, but the children from the list was from vulnerable families, so I had to walk door-to-door to find our target group.”

But, at the same time, local governments are willing to cooperate with future projects alike and to support youth initiatives. For example, the share of interviewed adults (parents, teachers, religious leaders) that agree on the need to continue working to counter violent extremism through civic education, engagement and dialogue was high. Around 90 percent of the people interviewed acknowledge that gained civic competencies and established dialogue between LSGs and youth and community members can challenge unsolved community issues.

The role of educational institutions in promoting civic education was more prominent. Adoption of non-discrimination and gender sensitive approaches in textbook publication, civic education curriculum, competencies development and methodological papers in support of civic competencies development for teachers have outlasting effect. However, there is a need to deliver further technical assistance to the MoES and its agencies to further introduce it into education practice.

Finding 17: Community resilience to withstand violent extremist ideologies needs to be further fostered requiring more efforts and time

As mentioned above, the project succeeded to build civic competencies of the restricted number of the young people and empowered them at individual level. The project also facilitated interaction of police, teachers, parents, government officials, community leaders and religious leaders to act jointly. The project proved that different actors could have a role to play in countering violent extremism. However, more time and systemic approach should be considered for the whole community to be resilient to violent ideologies. In a way the project tested different approaches and created positive precedents, like interaction of with religious leader, civic education in madrasahs. But there is not enough evidence for these initiatives/interactions to continue without external support and facilitation. To have a greater impact on community level, more time, resources and most importantly prioritization should be made by a successor project.

The evaluation found that there is a need for most of the stakeholders to develop a follow-up project. Most of the stakeholders interviewed highlighted how projects like this are important for their communities and Kyrgyzstan and showed their desire for follow-up project. Young people and their parents explained it as gaining enormous number of benefits for the growth of youth. One of the teachers interviewed said that school students formed a waiting list of candidates among 8th-11th grade students who want to be engaged in projects that are implemented in their school and/or community. Vulnerable women explained their willingness for follow-up projects as they feel they do not receive enough support. Those who participated in small-grant initiatives, were not able to fully realize their goals because of short-term support and lack of further skills to overcome difficulties they faced. For example, interviews with more than one vulnerable woman revealed that their small-scale intention to do e.g. sewing business had to stop because of absence of rented workshop.

Quote:

I am not able to earn as planned, because I could not find a place to rent to launch my workshop. I keep now my sewing machines at home, and receive little orders (interview with woman from vulnerable groups).

I got necessary equipment, and I am grateful. But I realized I don't have skills to sell my products. I wish I could learn about it within the project, too (interview with woman from vulnerable groups).

The project, for sure, opened doors for many participated beneficiaries, especially vulnerable women to gain self-esteem claim their rights. But the women have not yet formed confidence to enjoy fully their rights, to withstand all forms of violence and discrimination in their own communities.

X. Conclusions and Lessons Learned

Conclusions

The project “Communities Resilient to Violent Ideologies” funded by the UN PBF and implemented by UNICEF, UNFPA, and UN Women was a multi-agency effort to build community resilience to

violent and manipulative ideologies through civic education, empowerment and dialogue in the target municipalities across Kyrgyzstan. The project used an integrated approach to resilience to violence that proved to be effective even if it was implemented under challenging circumstances including COVID-19 pandemic – there is solid evidence that the project had a positive impact on youth/women empowerment and on strengthening youth resilience to violence. Some of the results of the project, however, would need follow-up to be sustained over time.

The evaluation found that the project was highly relevant as its design was embedded in a solid understanding of the context and youth empowerment (despite the difficulty, especially at the beginning of the project, to clearly conceptualize VE). The project was also developed taking into considerations the needs of the final beneficiaries of the project with a particular focus on vulnerable groups and women. Among its beneficiaries, the project targeted also adults, teachers, community members, as it correctly assumed that youth are positively and negatively influenced by them - therefore, a full-fledged youth empowerment project should consider them as well.

Based on the analysis of some of the root causes of VE, the project devised a solid integrated approach including civic education, civic empowerment and community dialogue, therefore targeting the individual, institutional and family/community that may strengthen resistance to harms or the ability of youth to overcome resilience.

The project was designed and implemented building on the comparative advantage of each UN agency, however the project could have more clearly defined the roles and responsibilities of each agency and complied more closely with the UN guidance note on joint programs. While the project was able to clearly map complementary projects at design stage, there is little evidence that the project built on those complementary projects during implementation.

Despite the difficult circumstances created in particular by the pandemic, there is solid evidence not only that the project positively empowered youth (but also other beneficiaries) but that the integrated approach proved to be effective in strengthening resilience to violence. The evaluation can validate the majority of the logical pathways and assumptions identified in the (reconstructed) TOC – empowering youth (and other main beneficiaries), strengthening their trust in government and developing a sense of belonging in the community/family can have a positive impact on their resilience to violence. The lack of a solid MEL (Monitoring, evaluation and learning) (i.e. lack of baseline, end-line, articulated TOC etc.) represented a problem as the project could have better shown the results of its activities and learned from it to have even stronger impact. The problem of a lack of such a system is exacerbated by the absence of a PBF strategic framework, which could in principle define longer-term results and how parallel peacebuilding projects could complement each other in contributing to their achievement.

The project was also able to institutionalize part of their results – namely, the integration of the gender non-discriminatory filter into the civic education component and the integration of youth priority into municipal plans. However, some of the results of the project will need more support towards sustainability. In particular, this will not happen without further support by government and CSOs which require additional resources, time and efforts.

Lessons learned

Program design: the achievement of results and the smooth implementation of projects is very reliant on the quality of the project design. Spending enough time and efforts to develop a solid and coherent project can have many spill-over effects during implementation.

TOC: complementary to the previous lesson learned, developing a more solid TOC is key to make the project more coherent and to more easily communicate with the stakeholders and the public on what the project wants to achieve. The TOC needs to be well articulated (both with logical pathways and assumptions), and a visual representation needs to be developed at the beginning of the project through a workshop with the project team.

Peacebuilding, flexibility and learning: in country such as Kyrgyzstan, it is of utmost importance to develop projects that are flexible enough and can adapt to unexpected circumstances (i.e. change of government). This is related to the MEL system that the project needs to be able to develop. Indeed, learning should be at the core of peacebuilding projects so that teams can continuously see the progress of the activities, identify, or anticipate problems and overcome them. Rather than being a separate activity, learning needs to be part of daily activities of project teams.

PBF and innovation: the project was rather innovative in its approach. Evaluations of PBF funded projects have shown that this was the case elsewhere as well - PBF has proven to be able finance projects that be considered as pilot to be scaled up by the government or other donors. However, as mentioned below, the option for the PBF is either to continue financing short term projects that need to complement each other achieving longer term projects or try to develop longer term projects.

Peacebuilding and VE: projects that are conceived to deal with VE or, more generally, to deal with peacebuilding related issues should try to better define those concepts at conception stage as this might benefit the development of the TOC and the communication on what the project is trying to achieve.

Peacebuilding and youth empowerment: there is a growing literature on the relationship between peacebuilding and youth empowerment. The project under review was able to show that a direct connection might be established, yet it is important to better explain and articulate this relationship when developing the project

Literature on peacebuilding and conflict analysis: there is a growing literature on peacebuilding and peacebuilding and evaluation that should be fully used when developing a project. For instance, this could help to develop stronger conflict analysis by using specific methodologies or what kind of indicators to use when developing the logframe.

Impact and duration: strengthening vertical or horizontal trust (as in the case of this project) takes time and it is very difficult to show concrete results in a span of two years. The option could be to either develop longer term projects or develop a strategic framework (five years) that could then fund shorter projects with realistic indicators that complement each other.

Trust building: trust building is an important element that should future peacebuilding projects should increasingly consider as an objective or cross-cutting theme. However, projects need to

consider that trust building is a long-term endeavor and that it is not possible to develop it and measure it in a short timeframe.

Also, it should be important for the project to either focus on vertical or on horizontal trust building as merging the two together in a project might make the project too complex.

Sustainability: it is of utmost importance for peacebuilding projects to develop a sustainability strategy from the very beginning of their design. Also, those strategies should focus not just on proposing a follow-up project, rather they should seek, to the extent possible, to empower local beneficiaries (including central and local institutions) to take over activities of the project when it ends.

XI. Recommendations

The recommendations below provide specific suggestions for each intended user and were discussed and validated in three steps:

- a Focus Group Discussion with UN staff 8 was held in November 2021 to better understand their feasibility;
- The Evaluation Reference Group meeting was held on the 15th of December 2021 to present the final report and discuss the recommendations
- Upon completion of the first draft of the final report, RUNO staff and the Evaluation Reference Group commented on the recommendations, both in terms of content and structure.

It also should be noted that the specific roles in developing the recommendations of the project stakeholders (duty bearers, the rights holder, project partners) included:

- Individual critical reflection: discussing possible recommendations and feedback during the interviews with duty bearers, right holders, and project partners
- Group critical reflection – discussion of the recommendations within ERG, RUNO

The recommendations are presented in order of priority for each intended user.

PBSO

1. *The PBF should continue supporting youth empowerment projects that have proven to be effective around VE – it should also formalize the development of a longer strategic framework that can represent the foundation of the youth empowerment projects*

It is recommended that the PBF continues to support Kyrgyzstan in strengthening PVE mechanisms in the country with projects that focus on preventive measures against PVE. The integrated approach¹⁵² has proven to be effective as a model to produce concrete results on youth resilience to violence. The project managed to create a momentum around youth empowerment and resilience to

¹⁵² A combination between civic education, civic empowerment and community dialogue

violence that should be followed-up on (see also Recommendation 5). The expectation from the government is also that they would receive support to continue or scale up some of the results of the projects.¹⁵³ Yet it would be important to define a strategic framework at portfolio and/or country level based on the new five-year eligibility process on the basis of the examples in Guatemala and the Balkans. New peacebuilding projects funded by PBF will be then based on the new strategic framework.

Operational recommendations:

- PBF should consider the following two options as a follow-up to the project evaluated: either fund a new project developed by RUNOs or help RUNOs ensure the sustainability of specific project activities with additional funds (see Recommendation 5);
- The PBF should formalize the development of a strategic framework focusing on peacebuilding longer-term results and finance a series of projects that can even have a shorter time horizon but that can complement each other and have a direct impact on the longer-term objectives;
- The strategic framework should have a solid M&E framework for the overall period that can be unpacked to show main outcomes, the projects contributing to those objectives and the UN agency working on them.

Overarching long-term objectives	Main outcomes and outputs	Projects contributing to those objectives	UN Agency involved

- The PBF should consider the possibility to conduct impact evaluation on PBF initiatives at portfolio/country level to better appreciate the longer-term results of PBF-funded initiatives.

2. The PBF should build on the existing platforms it has already developed to strengthen knowledge management and facilitate exchange of information among countries that receive peacebuilding funds

The PBF has already a Community of Practice who are encouraged to exchange their experiences through different platforms. As a complement to that, the PBF should develop a system for country teams to exchange good practices and learning from each other. In addition to that, PBF should also help country teams to identify complementary projects in the country so that teams could build on each other’s synergies maximizing the impact.

The ultimate objective for PBF is to ensure that ‘learning’ is happening, and UN agencies can learn from the design and implementation of the projects on peacebuilding.

Operational recommendations:

- Building on its website, the PBF should develop a database of good practices and lessons learned from peacebuilding operations highlighting the contributing and hampering factors

¹⁵³ For instance, concerning civic education components there is a series of important activities that should be developed so as to follow up with project activities, among which, Integration of civic competencies in the existing discipline ‘Legal basis of professional activity’; the subject ‘Civic education’ within the ‘Legal basis of professional activity’ curriculum should be taught based on the guide produced by the project partners, as agreed with the national authorities, based on the decision of the RSMC

for achieving results. It should also consider the implementation of specific key learning events around peacebuilding – for instance on the findings from the Synthesis Reviews, the Thematic Review(s) and other relevant reviews.

One important element PBF should focus on when thinking about ‘knowledge exchange’ and learning is around the issue of joint programming - it will be important for PBF to distill lessons learned of joint projects on peacebuilding to help country teams decide ‘the nature of their collaboration’ and the extent to which they intend to collaborate (see Recommendation 7)

- The PBF should also consider helping country teams to develop partnerships by possibly mapping main peacebuilding interventions from different actors in the countries where it supports peacebuilding work
- The PBF should slightly revise the structure of the ‘semi-annual and annual reports’ to ensure proper learning. For instance, it is recommended to add a section in the report for ‘challenges and problems’ as well as ‘innovative solutions’ to some of those challenges and problems¹⁵⁴. Also, it is recommended to add a section on the ‘semi-annual and annual reports’ on the financials – for instance, showing the disbursement rate of the project as well as the budget figures (i.e. budget planned VS disbursed)

PBF secretariat

3. The PBF secretariat should consider helping country follow PBF guidance and possibly strengthen the capacity of country teams to develop peacebuilding projects

Representing ‘a bridge’ between PBF headquarter and the RUNOs, the PBF secretariat has a unique opportunity to, for instance, help country teams to apply the guidance PBF has developed. Indeed, the guidance produced by the PBF (i.e. guidance on TOC) is clear but teams need support in ensuring that this is well understood and complied with.

The PBF secretariat could also play an important role to facilitate the knowledge exchange between agencies - as in the case of the L&A for the project evaluated.

Operational recommendations:

- The PBF secretariat should motivate and mobilize UN staff to apply the guidance notes when developing the CN. This implies that there should be coherence between what the guidance note states and the CN templates. It also implies that PBF could find innovative ways to facilitate the reading of the guidance notes by, for instance, making short videos on how to develop a structured TOC
- In collaboration with the UNRC, the PBF secretariat should also help UN agencies interact and exchange knowledge when developing and implementing joint projects. The secretariat should make the L&A approach an important part of its agenda so that agencies can prioritize learning as part of their activities

¹⁵⁴ An interesting example is the ‘Learning and Adaptation Plan of Action’ that includes the following sections: a) Progress (What has been done)
b) If there is no progress, explain why.

UN Resident Coordinator Office

4. **The UNRC should continue providing guidance on how to address complex concepts such as VE**

The UNRC played a very important role for the project under review. The UNRC should help RUNOs to take the context into account when designing projects by ensuring that conflict analysis has been adequately conducted. In principle, the UNRC could help RUNOs to have a shared understanding among implementing agencies and government counterparts on the scope of project concepts like PVE, social cohesion, cross-border cooperation, women's empowerment, etc.

Operational recommendations

- The UNRC should ensure that peacebuilding programs and projects are embedded in solid conflict analysis that meet validated international criteria
- In collaboration with PBF secretariat, the UNRC should help UN agencies to exchange knowledge on what works around peacebuilding

RUNOs

5. ***The RUNOs should continue focusing on youth empowerment and peacebuilding around VE through an integrated approach while at the same time including peacebuilding into their regular programs and investing in skill development on peacebuilding***

As mentioned under the recommendation 1, the momentum around the project should be seized and RUNOs should continue focusing on issues related to youth empowerment around VE – the project has proven that its approach was effective in addressing some of the causes of VE.

Above all, RUNOs should integrate peacebuilding into their programs following the example of UNICEF.¹⁵⁵ It will also be important to consider increasing agencies' level of technical expertise in peacebuilding as it is necessary for building strong peacebuilding programs.

Operational recommendations

- RUNOs should consider developing peacebuilding projects around VE by continuing to use an integrated approach applied by the project under review
- RUNOs should anchor their peacebuilding approach in the broader strategic planning and programming architecture of country offices to the possible extent by including peacebuilding outcomes in the CPD and their strategies
- When designing new peacebuilding projects, RUNOs should define difficult concepts such as VE into the project document – in collaboration with the UNRC office - based on good practices and the growing literature on the subject RUNOs should also consider strengthening their technical expertise in peacebuilding, in collaboration with the PBF, by perhaps attending online courses or in-presence training

¹⁵⁵ New UNICEF country strategy includes peacebuilding as a cross-cutting theme

6. RUNOs should make learning one of the priorities when developing/implementing peacebuilding projects by strengthening MEL systems

It is of utmost importance that ‘learning’ becomes a central part of peacebuilding projects and the agencies incorporate that in project activities, Especially, in countries like Kyrgyzstan where there are frequent and unexpected changes in the government and when dealing with complex issues such as VE and radicalization (whose definitions is still not agreed upon), it is key to learn quickly from the project activities and adapt as a result of that.

Rather than having it as a separate activity or as an "extra" assignment, learning should be integrated into existing processes gradually, it should be part of the M&E system. However, the M&E system should be viewed more broadly than just the development of a simple logframe – it should include the development of an articulated TOC, with a solid logframe with an articulated monitoring table, the definition of responsibilities, a clarification of the information flow and an explanation of how learning would happen throughout the project and how it will inform programmatic decisions on changes.

Given that the smooth implementation of the projects is also a condition based on the quality of project design and its M&E framework, this evaluation recommends the RUNOs to spend extra resources at conception stage when developing program to ensure a high-quality design.

Operational recommendations:

- The RUNOs should better clarify the logic behind the projects they develop by clearly illustrating TOC that can illustrate the several pathways and underlying assumptions for the project to achieve those objectives. The TOC should also include a visualization of the logical connections as well as the underlying assumptions¹⁵⁶. The TOC should clearly show all the underlying assumptions that are clearly illustrated and tested (and refined, if need be) during implementation.
- Based on the TOC M&E frameworks, RUNOs should:
 - Develop SMART indicators and develop data collection tools that can actually facilitate the attribution, to the extent possible, to the activities of the project.
 - Develop specific tools or mechanisms to be able to capture the catalytic role of the project. In that sense, it is recommended to use qualitative methodologies such as the ‘outcome mapping’ approach that empowers beneficiaries to collect the data themselves also by showing the changes in the behavior they are observing
 - Develop a digital platform that could capture not only the progress against the indicators but also some major reflections and changes made during implementation
 - Develop a M&E system and workplan that allow for some flexibility on how to revise the indicators, if need be.¹⁵⁷ This implies developing a solid RF/logframe and related workplan but also giving flexibility to the project to easily revise activities, indicators or budget items during implementation.
- RUNOs should gradually integrate learning into project activities. This could be done by, for instance, adding a specific section on the reporting templates on learning (related to the problems the projects faced and the solutions devised to address those problems). This could

¹⁵⁶ Also, the TOC should be a “living product” that the project team should continuously verify to see whether the causal connections are proven and whether the assumptions hold true – this would be a way to slightly revise the approach of the project, if need be.

¹⁵⁷ For inspiration, see the “search framework” from Harvard University, the Objectives and Key Results from Google or the Rapid Results Approach

be also done, lightly, by asking a series of systematic questions during the formal meetings agencies hold such as: what did we learn about the problem we are trying to face? What are learning about the way in which we collaborate?

At the same time, it might be envisaged to hold some 'light events' specifically on learning so as to give UN agencies and the main stakeholder some space for reflection.

7. *When conducting joint projects, RUNOs should clarify the level of collaboration they seek by also better clarify the roles and responsibilities*

When developing joint programs, it is recommended to carefully consider the different options and scenarios that are possible before deciding which governance structure and collaboration activity to envisage. Indeed, the UN guidance on joint projects is rather broad and there are different options RUNOs can envisage when developing joint projects: from designing projects where agencies jointly collaborate within each project output/component (and where they have therefore many joint activities) to projects where each agency work on one output/component with only some limited collaboration and exchange of information. The evaluation showed that a better clarification of roles at the beginning would have benefited the comprehension of each other's roles.

Operational recommendations:

- RUNOs should better specify 'the nature of collaboration' they envisage within joint programs based on the project objectives, budget, country context, agencies involved and also based on the UN joint programming guidance. They should better justify the extent to which they will collaborate (i.e. ho many joint activities they intend to develop) at conception stage
- RUNOs should consider the development of a 'responsibility matrix', to be develop at proposal stage and then finalized before starting implementation, to clarify the specific tasks of each agency in the project document (not just their comparative advantage)
- RUNOS should better articulate joint workplan including description of the inputs needed to carry out the activities as well as the budget for completing those activities
- RUNOs should better learn from other joint programs about the governance structure they used, the type of activities they developed etc. (see Recommendation 1)

8. *When developing peacebuilding projects, RUNOs should develop solid partnerships with complementary projects by identifying them at conception stage building on the common synergies but also interact with them during implementation and documenting this in the progress report*

Finding synergies with complementary projects starts at conception stage and should be followed up with some knowledge exchange throughout implementation so as to avoid duplication but also to adapt the project to build on good practices and lessons learned from complementary projects. The project under review was able to identify complementary project at conception stage but did not document how it built on these synergies during implementation. This would also enable to attract additional donor support to follow-up peacebuilding work or to develop new projects.

Operational recommendations:

- RUNOs should ensure that proper synergies are sought with partners and donors that have developed complementary projects at design and implementation stage
- RUNOs should ensure that learning is happening also at this level – agencies should document how synergies or adjustments are made, because of those complementary projects, during implementation

Government

9. Government should build on the results of the project to ensure sustainability

In connection with recommendation 1 and 5, the government should take ownership of the results of the project (some of which have already been institutionalized) and ensure that a proper follow-up is considered. As mentioned above, RUNOs could support the government in implementing some of those recommendations through, for instance, UNICEF expertise on education (UNICEF could provide technical assistance and training).

Operational recommendations:

- Around civic education, the government should:
 - Consider the integration of civic competencies in the existing discipline ‘Legal basis of professional activity’ and ensure that the curriculum is taught based on the guide produced by the project partners, as agreed with the national authorities;
 - In order to maintain the quality and continuous education process in vocational schools, increase the capacity of teachers on digital skills, new technologies for distance learning, and create infrastructure conditions for distance learning. At the same time, the government should focus on how to strengthen digital skills of students so that they can also take advantage of distance learning opportunities;
 - Consider the integration of the civic education subject into the "Concept of State Policy of the Kyrgyz Republic in the Religious Sphere" for the period 2021-2026;
 - Consider the integration of the Civic education guide, workbook, video courses and mobile application into the curriculum in the remaining 96 madrasas, 10 Islamic institutes and the Islamic University.

XII. Annexes

Annex 1. References

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Annex 2. Evaluation Matrix

Evaluation Questions/ Sub-questions	Judgment criteria	Data collection methods & sources	Data analysis
Relevance			
How relevant was the project in addressing the main drivers of violent extremism, the real needs of its beneficiaries as well as the national and donor priorities in Kyrgyzstan?			
1.1 To what extent was the design of the project appropriate for achieving the desired objectives?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extent to which project design (and TOC) is based on an updated conflict analysis – it addresses clearly some of the key drivers of violent extremism • Extent to which project design reflects on the evidence on what works in peacebuilding • Extent to which project is developed on a sound TOC – the hierarchy of results are clear and the related assumptions are based on evidence • Project document builds on the literature on peacebuilding shows that youth are key actors for peacebuilding interventions • Extent to which the project design is based on an updated gender analysis • Extent to which participants perceive the project as relevant for their needs • The project team conducted participatory workshops to develop the project - Number of youth that have been consulted on or associated with the drafting and design of the project. • Extent to which the Project has made adjustments as a consequence of the COVID-19 situation so as to remain relevant to the new beneficiaries' priorities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Desk review of documents ▪ Review of Theory of change ▪ Review of peacebuilding literature ▪ Interviews ▪ FGDs ▪ Review of the project documents ▪ Local case studies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Contribution analysis - analysis of TOC: conflict analysis and analysis of the approach ▪ Qualitative and content analysis ▪ Comparison between project TOC and good practices ▪ Qualitative and content analysis
1.2 To what extent was the project based on a sound understanding of the different needs of	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project document mentions how its design is aligned with relevant institutions policy objectives • Project document mentions how its design is aligned with UN strategic document for Kyrgyzstan • The project objectives are aligned with the main mandate of the PBF and in line with its priority areas 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Review of the project documents ▪ Review of UN documents ▪ Review of PBF main strategic document 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Document qualitative analysis

young women and men?			
1.3 To what extent is the project consistent with key national development strategies, including in the area of peace and development?			
Coherence			
2. To what extent was the project internally coherent and to what extent was it designed and developed in synergy with other stakeholders' interventions on peacebuilding?			
2.1 To what extent UNICEF, UN Women and UNFPA were able to ensure coherence, synergies and joint operation in design and implementation of the project?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Degree of satisfaction of implementing agencies and cooperation partners about coordination among project implementers and partners Extent to which the distribution of outputs and activities between the UN agencies is made on the basis of specific competence and mandate 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review of the project document Review of the progress report Interviews 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contribution analysis - analysis of TOC: analysis of the synergy of UN agencies among themselves Qualitative analysis
2.2 To what extent this project was designed and implemented in a complimentary, harmonized, coordinated fashion with the governments' and other peacebuilding actors' interventions?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The design of the project was done in coordination and synergy with complementary interventions implemented by UNICEF, UNFPA and, UN Women The project document articulates the synergy with complementary projects The implementation of the project was conducted in synergy with complementary interventions implemented by UNDP-UNV, UN Women, and UNICEF Occurrences of mention that the project has made changes to project activities during implementation to be in synergy with complementary interventions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review of the project documents Review of the progress report Interviews 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contribution analysis - analysis of TOC: analysis of the synergy with other partners Qualitative analysis
Effectiveness			
3. To what extent did the project achieved the explicit and tacit objectives?			
3.1 To what extent have the project's results (outputs and	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evidence shows that targets are met at the output level Evidence shows that objectives are met at outcome level through: Share of participants who have improved their critical thinking, skills and confidence; 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review of Project document, reports, logframe 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contribution analysis - analysis of TOC: analysis of changes produced by the project and

<p>outcomes) been achieved?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▸ share of young people who confirm increased ability to claim and exercise rights ▸ number of concrete applications of skills learned through the workshops and training ▸ number of examples that prove shifts in individual attitudes ▸ number of examples of behavior changes or actions undertaken ▸ examples of empowering women in decision-making process are available ▸ number of local development plans that integrate youth needs, priority and concerns ▸ extent to which the project improved resilience as well as young people's sense of belonging to their communities and confidence in the state ▸ causal linkages in the reconstructed TOC are verified by project results 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Review of pre and post workshop questionnaire · Project monitoring data questionnaires · Guided questionnaire · Interviews 	<p>the ones attributable to the project as conditions are met</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Analysis of results data against project logframe (quantitative analysis) ▪ Contribution analysis - Verification of the validity of the TOC main linkages against project results ▪ Analysis of questionnaire against interviews and FGD (quantitative analysis) ▪ Qualitative analysis ▪ Assessment of the results through the Reflecting On Peace Practice (RPP) Matrix Plus
<p>4. Have there been unintended positive or negative results?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evidence of positive spillovers • Evidence of unintended negative results 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Interviews ▪ Review of documentation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Analysis of interviews and documentation
<p>Efficiency</p>			
<p>4. How efficient was the project in using its resources to achieve its objectives?</p>			
<p>4.1 Have funds and activities related to the selected initiatives been delivered in a timely and resource appropriate manner?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • % activities that have been planned and completed on time • occurrences and clarity of mentions for changes to the timeframe and for delays • % of budget that has been disbursed VS timeline 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Review of project workplan, reports ▪ Interviews ▪ Budget assessment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ TOC-based contribution analysis: analysis of mobilisation and optimisation of assets ▪ Quantitative analysis of the information ▪ Qualitative analysis
<p>4.2 To what extent was the governance set-up appropriate to achieve results in terms of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Guidance from the Steering Committee? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • UN agencies perceive Joint Steering Committee to have provided clear guidance; • extent to which Level of cooperation and communication among agencies is clear - project documents clearly articulate who does what; level of satisfaction from implementing partners and UN agencies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Minutes of Joint Project Committee ▪ Interviews with Agencies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Content analysis ▪ Qualitative assessment of the interviews

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Cooperation among supporting and implementing partners? 			
<p>4.3 To what extent were the monitoring mechanisms in place effective in measuring and informing management of the project performance and progress towards the targets?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extent to which project indicators coincide with the TOC of the project • Number of examples of reaction and adaptation of action according to monitoring findings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Review of project document, MEL, and progress reports ▪ Interviews 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Content analysis ▪ Qualitative assessment of the interviews
<p>Sustainability 5. To what extent are initiatives supported by the project likely to be sustained over time so as to contribute to peacebuilding?</p>			
<p>5.2 How likely is it that youth and communities will sustain the results of the project after its end?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Share of interviewed youth who display increased resilience, sense of belonging and trust in institutions • Share of interviewed adults (police, parents, teachers, religious leaders) that agree on the need to continue working to counter violent extremism through civic education, engagement and dialogue • Evidence and examples of activities that are being implemented/have been implemented without support from project 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Review of project documentation ▪ FGDs ▪ Interviews ▪ Guided questionnaire 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Content analysis ▪ Qualitative assessment of the interviews

Annex 3. Project stakeholder’s information and their roles in peacebuilding

Stakeholders	Involvement in the project	Interest in the evaluation	Potential role in peacebuilding
Implementing agencies			
UNICEF	<p>The leading implementing agency of the project and the lead agency for the coordination, organizing the process of joint planning of the project as well as joint monitoring and reporting. UNICEF organized systematic coordination meetings with participation of the Recipient UN Organizations (RUNOs).</p> <p>Gender-sensitive teaching, non-violent culture and civic competencies at secondary level in secular and religious settings, production of video lessons on non-discrimination</p>	<p>Hiring agency, evaluation management, logistical support, contact point for evaluation team, interviews of project staff, focus group discussion, participation in ERG.</p> <p>Project evaluation, organisational learning recommendations for future PVE projects</p>	<p>Implement the Peacebuilding Priority Plan for 2017-2020 (Outcome 3). The new PPP defines three interlinked outcomes, recognized as building blocks of interventions for preventing violent extremism in the Kyrgyz Republic. The three outcomes will be implemented through six UN agencies (UNDP, UNICEF, UN Women, UNODC, UNFPA and UN OHCHR). The six agencies have a comparative advantage in addressing the risks of radicalization and violent extremism.</p> <p>Outcome 1: Justice and security sector institutions, national and local authorities apply socially inclusive approaches, participatory decision-making and guarantee increased civic space (UNDP, UNICEF, OHCHR, UN Women).</p> <p>Outcome 2. Penitentiary and probation officers, as well as the police and forensic experts, are able to prevent and address radicalization to violence by ensuring adequate safeguards respecting national and international standards (UNODC, UNDP).</p> <p>Outcome 3: Women and men, boys and girls in target communities take a more critical stance on ideologies instigating violence and have a better sense of belonging to their communities and participate in local development and dialogues</p>
UNFPA	<p>The implementing agency. Strengthening institutional capacity of health and education service providers in delivery of high quality integrated gender responsive sexual and reproductive health services, gender-sensitive teaching, non-violent culture and civic competencies at secondary level in secular and religious settings</p>	<p>Project evaluation, organisational learning recommendations for future PVE projects</p>	
UN Women	<p>The implementing agency. Gender-sensitive teaching, non-discrimination and gender expertise of educational materials, civic education guide for madrasahs, local dialogues between municipalities, police, religious leaders and civil society, women’s and girls’ small-scale initiatives, facilitate dialogue/and public hearing meeting in the communities btw women/girls, religious leaders, women’s groups, civil society activists, local authorities and the police</p>	<p>Project evaluation, organisational learning recommendations for future PVE projects</p>	

			over PVE. (UNICEF, UNFPA, UN Women).
<i>Government decision-makers and duty bearers</i>			
Ministry of Education of the Kyrgyz Republic	The main project partner. Piloting civic education and youth's engagement within the framework of Youth and Child Friendly Local Governance; endorsing non-discrimination gender-sensitive expertise methodology for textbooks, introducing gender sensitive teaching methodologies	Good practices, lessons learned and recommendations for further youth and PVE activities	The Ministry of Education and Science of the Kyrgyz Republic is the central executive body that implements state policy in the field of education and science and provides access to quality education, ensuring the constitutional right of citizens of the Kyrgyz Republic to education.
Kyrgyz Academy of Education under the Ministry of Education and Science	Project partner, civic education materials	Good practices, lessons learned and recommendations for further youth and PVE activities	Scientific, methodological, innovative and technological support of preschool, school, extracurricular and vocational education
Primary Vocational Education Agency under the Ministry of Education	Project partner, civic education in 8 vocational schools introduced in the existing course "Fundamentals of legal support of professional activity", 24 modules.	Good practices, lessons learned and recommendations for further youth and PVE activities	The agency is responsible for implementation of a unified state policy in the field of vocational education to ensure the labor market by qualified personnel in accordance with the standards of primary vocational education.
Republican Institute of Teachers' Training and Qualification under the Ministry of Education and Science	Project partner, underwent ToT on gender-sensitive teaching methodologies.	Good practices, lessons learned and recommendations for further youth and PVE activities	Methodological support to teachers, training and requalification of the teaching staff in schools.
Republican Scientific Methodological Center under the Ministry of Education and Science;	Project partner, civic education materials, methodological support	Good practices, lessons learned and recommendations for further youth and PVE activities	

Kyrgyz Academy of Science	Project partner, civic education materials	Good practices, lessons learned and recommendations for further youth and PVE activities	Conducting fundamental and applied innovative scientific research in the field of natural, technical, humanitarian and social sciences in the Kyrgyz Republic; studying the actual problems of the socio-economic, political, scientific, technical, innovative and cultural development of the republic; improving the efficiency of the use of scientific developments and achievements
State Commission on Religious Affairs of the Kyrgyz Republic (SCRA)	Project partner, coordination and support working with religious organizations, civic education promotion	Good practices, lessons learned and recommendations for further youth and PVE activities	Some of the functions: development and implementation of state policy in the religious sphere; ensuring citizens' rights to freedom of religion, coordination of the relations of the state with religious organizations; further improvement of legal regulation of the relationship between the state and religious organizations
Ministry of Interior Affairs, the Office for Combating Extremism and Illegal Migration	Project partner, overall support to define project locations, information sharing and support, participation at round table meetings	Good practices, lessons learned and recommendations for further PVE activities	Some of the functions: control and combating extremism and illegal migration
Ministry of Culture Information, Sports and Youth Policy, since 12 February 2021 (former Ministry of Culture, Information, and Tourism)	Project partner, civic education promotion, youth participation and engagement	Good practices, lessons learned and recommendations for further PVE activities with youth	The aim of the Ministry is the formation and implementation of public policy in the areas of culture, information, sports, youth policy and strengthening inter-ethnic relations
State Agency on Youth, Physical Culture and Sports under the Ministry of Culture, Information, Sports and Youth Policy of the Kyrgyz Republic, since 12 February 2021	Project partner, civic education promotion, youth participation and engagement	Good practices, lessons learned and recommendations for further PVE activities with youth	The goal of the Agency is to develop and realize the potential of youth, develop physical culture and sports in the Kyrgyz Republic. The Agency develops and implements state policies in the areas of youth development, physical culture and sports

State Agency for Regional Development under the Ministry of Agriculture, Water Resources and Regional Development of the Kyrgyz Republic, since 12 February 2021 (former State Agency on Local Self Governance and Interethnic Relations)	Project partner, Youth and Child Friendly Local Governance, civic education, youth friendly programming and budgeting	Good practices, lessons learned and recommendations concerning young women (including vulnerable women) and men participation, Youth and Child Friendly Local Governance	The aims of the Agency is to create conditions for the sustainable development of a local government system to achieve economic growth and well-being of the population, and strengthening inter-ethnic consent
Department for Civic Development, Religious and Ethnic Policy at the Office of President of the Kyrgyz Republic;	The relevant office of the Presidential Administration had been regularly informed about the project development process and project implementation process	Insight in the role of political lead and impulse for sustainable youth and peace-building areas Recommendations	Some of the roles: organization of the activities of the President of the Kyrgyz Republic to consolidate and preserve the unity of the people of the Kyrgyz Republic, to develop interethnic and civil tolerance
Public Fund “Spiritual Administration of Muslims of the Kyrgyz Republic” - Muftiyat	Project partner, civic education course in madrasas, training on	Good practices, lessons learned and recommendations concerning young women (including vulnerable women) and men participation, civic education, and empowerment	Some of the roles: promoting Islam and conservation of unity and consent of Muslims, satisfying religious needs, organization of the study of the Quran, religious education, distribution of the Quran and other religious books, media publishing literature
<i>Duty bearers at the local level</i>			
Municipal and district level representatives involved with young women (including vulnerable women) and men issues.	The main partners in project implementation, recipients of the capacity building activities	Good practices, lessons learned and recommendations concerning youth participation, local gender responsive budgeting	As above
Law enforcement bodies	Capacity building, Informed about the progress of the project, were consulted throughout the project	Good practices, lessons learned and recommendations as duty bearers in communities	
Vocational education institutions, schools, madrasas	Capacity building, informed about the progress of the project, were consulted throughout the project	Good practices, lessons learned and recommendations for youth civic education and engagement	
State Agency for Youth and Sports, Provincial Departments	Recipients of the capacity building activities, Informed about the progress of the project, were consulted throughout the project	Good practices, lessons learned and recommendations for further youth and peace-building activities at local level	

CSO project partners and activists			
Public Fund "Mutakallim"	Project partner, implementing NGO, civic engagement, training women and youth		CSOs implement different initiatives to support the peacebuilding processes in the county.
Public Fund "International Debate Education Association in Central Asia" (IDEA CA)	Project partner, implementing NGO, civic education guide, established debate and media clubs in project target vocational schools to enable students to practice civic competencies.		
Public Fund "Development Policy Institute"	Project Partner, implementing NGO, Youth and Child Friendly Local Governance		
Foundation for Education Initiatives Support-FEIS	Project partner, participated in implementing civic education in vocational schools and co-financed an expert group on the development of a civic education manual, established debate and media clubs in project target vocational schools to enable students to practice civic competencies.		
Public Fund "Youth of Osh"	Project partner, implementing NGO, civic and digital skills and competencies for youth, capacity building of the governmental and local authorities, parents/ guardians to engage youth in decision-making processes and mitigate the impact of the COVID-19.		
Experts involved in the project (civic education, gender-sensitive expertise methodology for textbooks, introducing gender sensitive teaching methodologies, etc.)	Various roles – providing technical assistance within project expert groups		
Foundation for Tolerance International	Project partner, implementing NGO, promotion of participation of adolescents and youth in planning and implementation of community development through UPSHIFT methodology		
Beneficiaries			
Young women, adolescents and youth who have participated in project activities	Extensive capacity building of the young women and girls involved in the project, developed innovative projects and initiatives	Summative evaluation of the project (transparency and accountability)	Meaningful participation of young women and girls in local selfgovernment institutions and peace processes.

Parents, teachers, police, community members, community leader and religious leader in the municipalities targeted by the project	Capacity building	Consolidation of perception of milestones and benefits Awareness raising about existing participation and initiative opportunities	
Local self-governments	Participated at various project events and capacity building initiatives		

Annex 4. List of Project Documents

Document title

Project documentation

United National Kyrgyzstan Team, Project Document “Outcome 3 ProDoc_PAC comments addressed_06122017”

Final Outcome 3 Annual Narrative Report June 2019

PBF Project Progress Report: Review_BKS_Final 3 Outcome Semi-annual Narrative Report - 2020

PBF Project Progress Report: 2018 Annual Narrative Report

PBF Project Progress Report: 2018 Semi-Annual Narrative Report

PBF Project Progress Report: 2019 Annual Narrative Report

PBF Project Progress Report: 2019 Semi-Annual Narrative report

PBF Project Progress Report: 2020 Semi-Annual Narrative report

PBF Project Progress Report: 2020 Annual Narrative Report

Interface of the online learning tools Non-discrimination Gender_expertise secondary education_RUS

Post release Online conference Forming civic competencies through education

Jul162020_RUS

Press release Forming key civic competencies in non-discr GEWE secondary education

Dec25_2019_RUS

Press release Online conference Forming civic competencies through education

Jun24_2020_RUS

FEIS_Apr_Jul_2019_Narrative_Report

FEIS_Apr_Jun_2020_Narrative_Report

FEIS_Final_Narrative_Report

FEIS_Financial_Report_Inst3_Oct_7_2019

FEIS_Financial_Report_Inst4_Dec_2019

FEIS_Jan_Mar_2020_Narrative_Report

Final report on piloting TV programs and video lessons_December 2020_Ru

Table with links to TV programs and video lessons_Ru

Success_story_Teachers_form_civic_competencies_in_Non-

discr_GEWE_Jun10_2020_ENG

Success_story_Teachers_form_civic_competencies_in_Non-

discr_GEWE_Jun10_2020_RUS

6 videos

Annual Work Plan for "Communities Resilient to Violent Ideologies" (PVE 3/OUTCOME 3)_Year 2019

Annual Work Plan for "Communities Resilient to Violent Ideologies" (PVE 3/OUTCOME 3)_Year 2020

GPS workplan_KGZ04MTK_Revision 3_24.12.2019

GPS_Workplan_KGZ04IDE_Rev4_2019_17.01.2020

GPS_Workplan_KGZ04IDE_Rev V_17.11.2020

GPS_Workplan_KGZ04IDE_Rev_I_27.12.2018

GPS_Workplan_KGZ04MTK_Rev_III_27.12.2018

GPS_Workplan_KGZ04MTK_Rev1_18.06.2018

GPS_Workplan_KGZ04MTK_Rev6_23.12.2020

Monthly workplan documents for 2018-2019

Monthly workplan documents for 2020

Quarterly Workplan Progress Reports for Civic Education Output submitted by IDEA for 2019-2020

Quarterly Workplan Progress Reports for Civic Education Output submitted by Mutakalim

AWP monitoring reports for the period of 2017-2020

Field monitoring reports for the period of 2019-2020

IDEA reports for the period of 2018-2019

Mutakalim reports for the period of 2018-2019

FTI Publication_Сообщества за устойчивый мир

Good practices and lessons learnt in building resilient communities

FTI-CFC_Workplan_revised_240919

Annual Work Plan for "Communities Resilient to Violent Ideologies" (PVE 3/OUTCOME 3)_2019_Eng and RU

Annual Work Plan for "Communities Resilient to Violent Ideologies" (PVE 3/OUTCOME 3)_2020

GPS_Workplan_KGZ04FTI_RevI_21.12.2020

GPS_Workplan_KGZ04FTI_Revision 1_ 2019_signed

GPS_Workplan_KGZ04FTI_Revision4_12.10.2018

Monthly workplans for 2018-2019-2020

Amendment_3 Outcome PBF Project document_Amendment – ENGLISH
Annex 3_PRF Monitoring and Evaluation Framework_Final

Reports of training conducted in the north & south

Program_Document_Progress_Reports_DPI *from 1 tranche to 8 tranche*

RUS-Press Release-DPI Инновационная лаборатория Кара-Буура

Достижения конс.советов ГТР_13.08.2020

МОЛОДЕЖЬ_руководство_МСУ_РУС фин

FTI Progress Reports *from 4th tranche to 8th tranche*

FTI Contribution to PBF 2019 annual report

FTI contribution to PBF 2020 semi-annual report

FTI Contribution to PBF 2020 Annual report

FTI-CFC_Results-Framework_210819

Total_FTII Participants_Outreach&Upshift

Program Document AFEW final

SSFA_Techaim_Dec2020 final

Program Document Eng 2020_Youth of Osh_EngagedHeard-Christine

1. Adapted Otcn 3 semi – annual_2020_PVE_UNFPA_UNW

Final Outcome 3 Semi-annual 93arrative report June 2019

Reports for the following target municipalities: Ak-Ordo_Bakai-Ata, Alla-Anarov_Kara-

Suu; Amir-Temur_Kerme-Too_Sulaiman-Too; Kyzyl-Kiya_Nookat_Gulistan;

Sputnik_Kurmanbek-Suzak; Ugut-Sary-Bulak_Kara-Bura

Manual_Lessons learnt report on working with women and girls from vulnerable settings_PVE

Report_RT on Preventing Violent Extremism in _10.12.18

ME tool_vulnerable groups of women and girls_PVE 3

Success stories

FTI Quaterly Workplan Progress Reports for 2018 – 2019 – 2020

Donor reports for 2018-2019-2020

Final Outcome 3 Annual Narative Report_PVE_111119

Final PVE Outcome 3 2019 Annual Financial Report

Outcome 3 Annexes

Amendment_3 Outcome PBF Project document_August V - ENGLISH YO (1)

FTI reports for 2018 and 2019

Good practices and lessons learnt in building resilient communities

Documents on peacebuilding and on evaluating peacebuilding operations

UNPBF_Kyrgyzstan-Priority-Plan-2013-2016-and-PBSO-approval-letter (1)

CPA Summary Covid-19 and elections included clean 11.02.2021

Final CPA Kyrgyzstan_clean

UNPBF in Kyrgyzstan_PVE PPP_2017-2020 SIGNED

2021 Quality Assessment templates

ERB templates

Annex 5. Terms of Reference for the Evaluation Reference Group

Terms of Reference Evaluation Reference Group: “Communities resilient to violent ideologies” project

Background

The project "Communities resilient to violent ideologies" implemented by UNICEF, UNFPA, UN Women contributes to UN's Peacebuilding Priority Plan for 2017-2020 on diverting people from joining to groups propagating for violence by means of community participation, dialogue and education.

The project aims to provide alternative pathways away from violent and manipulative ideologies in 11 pilot municipalities across the country by taking a multidimensional approach through education, participatory community development and dialogue, as well as through the cultural domain and digital space. The Agencies provide civic competencies to young people and women within secular and religious schooling thus empowering them to participate in addressing issues that cause vulnerability to violent ideologies. People from different social backgrounds and professional affiliations are identified and supported in their actions as credible intermediaries between the vulnerable groups and the state actors. They facilitate greater communication between these groups and raise awareness about the risk of violent ideologies, thus strengthening capacities for social cohesion. The project helps strengthening platforms to promote constructive debate around diverse identities as an alternative to divisive ideologies.

The project is divided into the following three components:

Civic education for secondary and vocation schools and religious schools, also referred as madrasahs provides young people with context and critical thinking skills to examine messages brought by instigators and proponents of violence. In addition to legal and institutional foundations of the state and society, civic education is designed to promote attitudes of tolerance, inclusion, and diversity with a specific focus on gender equality.

Youth and Child-Friendly Local Governance (YCFLG) is meant to provide young people an opportunity to improve their civic competencies in real life situations. The project facilitates collaborative action of youth, local governments and community leadership in addressing issues that matter to them. YCFLG contributes to youth's participation sense of belonging to their communities, a critical component of social cohesion.

Encouraging young women and men to claim their rights, to lead and participate in community development will be the key strategy for reducing vulnerability to violent ideology. This is meant to strengthen their sense of community identity and provide a space where they can fulfil their potential and realize capacity. The main assumption behind the activities in this component is that the women (including female religious leaders) are in a better position to warn about worrying signs of radicalization amongst members of their community, and can be powerful and effective agents of support for those who are vulnerable to reach out for help.

Evaluation purpose and objectives

Conducting a summative final evaluation of the project is one of key requirements under the monitoring and evaluation provision of the project. The main objective of this summative evaluation is to generate findings, lessons learned and recommendations regarding the relevance, coherence, effectiveness, efficiency, impact and sustainability of the project results and to assess what has worked and what has not, the circumstances influencing achievement and the challenges that hindered it.

Evaluation management

The evaluation will be a consultative, inclusive and participatory process. The evaluation will be managed by the UNICEF Kyrgyzstan Country Office (CO) as a leading agency. Support will be sought from UNICEF Europe and Central Asia (ECA) Regional Evaluation Specialist. The Evaluation Reference Group (ERG) and Evaluation Management Team (EMT), a separate group consisting of technical staff, will be involved throughout the evaluation

process. Peacebuilding Support Office (PBSO) will also participate by providing comments and approval of the Inception Report and Final Report.

UNICEF Child Rights Monitoring (CRM) Specialist is the Evaluation Manager and will lead the day-to-day management of the process and will consult with and involve the Evaluation Management team regarding key issues. To avoid conflict of interest the Evaluation Manager cannot have direct involvement/responsibilities in the management of the program.

Function and composition and of the Evaluation Reference Group

An Evaluation Reference Group will be set up as a consultative body to the evaluation. The purpose of the ERG will be to facilitate the participation of relevant stakeholders in the design and scope of the evaluation, raising awareness of the different information needs, providing information quality assurance throughout the process and in supporting the dissemination of the evaluation results.

The process aims to ensure participation of stakeholders at all stages, with a particular emphasis on rights holders and their representatives. Data collection and analysis for the program includes conducting consultations and interviews with stakeholders, including with representatives of relevant national and local government institutions, CSOs, UN Agencies, beneficiaries of the program and development partners. The participation of key stakeholders to inform this evaluation is key for ensuring relevant inputs to inform the entire evaluation process.

The inputs of ERG are expected to strengthen the quality and credibility of the evaluation. The ERG members will be expected to:

- Help to identify and facilitate access to materials for desk review and key informants during the evaluation process;
- Participate in inception interviews with evaluators as relevant;
- Attend a presentation of the inception report and share comments on the inception report during the presentation (date TBC);
- Participate in follow up interviews with evaluators as relevant;
- Attend presentation of preliminary key findings from desk review and field work and provide comments during the presentation;
- Attend presentation of the final report and verify findings and recommendations during the presentation.

	Name	Title	Organization	Contact information (e-mail, phone)
1	Mr. Kurtmolla Abdulganiyev	PBF Secretariat Manager a.i., Peace and Development Advisor	PBF Secretariat	kurtmolla.abdulganiyev@un.org
2	Mr. Gulzhigit Ermatov	Peace and Development Officer	RCO	gulzhigit.ermatov@un.org
3	Ms. Christine Jaulmes	Representative	UNICEF	cjaulmes@unicef.org

4	Ms. Tolgonai Berdikeyeva	CRM Specialist	UNICEF	tberdikeyeva@unicef.org
5	Ms. Sylvi Hill	Chief Child Protection	UNICEF	shill@unicef.org
6	Ms. Gulnara Zhenishbekova	Program officer	UNICEF	gzhenishbekova@unicef.org
7	Ms. Sagipa Djusaeva	National Program Officer, Head Of Programs	UN Women	Sagipa.djusaeva@unwomen.org
8	Ms. Dildora Khamidova	Head of Osh Sub-Office	UN Women	dildora.khamidova@unwomen.org
9	Ms. Iina Pyykko	Program Analyst	UN Women	iina.pyykko@unwomen.org
10	Ms. Ainura Sulaimanova	M&E Specialist	UN Women	ainura.sulaimanova@unwomen.org
11	Ms. Rakhat Ismanbaeva	M&E Consultant	UN Women	Rakhat.ismanbaeva@unwomen.org
12	Mr. Azamat Baialinov	Head of the Office	UNFPA	baialinov@unfpa.org 0772 327 737
13	Ms. Cholpona Egeshova	HIV Program Officer	UNFPA	egeshova@unfpa.org 0772 570 488
14	Mr. Mirlan Parkhanov	Former Deputy Head	State Agency for Youth Sports and Physical Training	6@001.kg
15	Ms. Eliza Sharshenbekova	Specialist	State Agency for Youth Sports and Physical Training	sharshenbekova93@mail.ru 0709 774757
16	Ms. Ainura Djunushalieva	Program Manager	Development Policy Institute	adjunushalieva@dpi.kg 0555217075
17	Mr. Tugelbay Ormokeyev	Program Specialist	Foundation for Tolerance International	ormokeyev.fti@gmail.com 0555676653; 0770351420
18	Ms. Akmaral Satinbaeva	Executive Director	Youth of Osh	0553-455211, a.satinbaeva@youthofosh.kg
19	Mr. Murodil Tohtasinov	Leading specialist on social issues	Alli-Anarov municipality	Murodil.toktasinov@bk.ru 0779-750327 0553-220165
20	Ms. Matluba Azimova	Senior lecturer	RITT KG	azimovamatluba@mail.ru
21	Mr. Aleksandr Ivanov	Director	FEIS	ialex@edufeis.org
22	Ms. Tazhykan Shabdanova	President	FTI	shabdanova.fti@gmail.com 0554816981
23	Ms. Aizat Ruslanova	Project coordinator	IDEA CA	aruslanova@idebate.org 0703058058

24	Ms. Guldana Zhunusbaeva	Project coordinator	PAA Mutakalim	zhunusbaeva.g@gmail.com 0500903191
25	Mr. Bainazarov Iskender	Leader expert, covered Kara-Bura, Ugut and Sary Bulak		baiiskender@mail.ru 0507980254;
26	Ms. Avazkan Ormonova-	gender expert in Osh		avazkanormonova@gmail.com 0777146982;
27	Ms. Eshtaeva Nargiza-	gender expert in Nookat, Gulistan and Kyzyl-Kiya		doni.n.n@mail.ru 0557 777 405;

Annex 6. Summary of Potential Benefits for stakeholders

Users	Potential benefit from the evaluation
<i>Decision-makers from the government</i>	
Ministry of Education of the Kyrgyz Republic and its structural subdivisions: Kyrgyz Academy of Education, Primary Vocational Education Agency, Republican Institute of Teachers' Training and Qualification, Republican Scientific Methodological Center	Good practices, lessons learned and recommendations for further youth civic education/engagement, gender sensitive learning and peace-building activities
Department for Civic Development, Religious and Ethnic Policy at the Office of President of the Kyrgyz Republic	Insight in the role of political leadership for sustainable youth civic education/engagement and peace-building areas Recommendations for further civic engagement and peace-building activities
State Commission on Religious Affairs of the Kyrgyz Republic (SCRA)	Good practices, lessons learned and recommendations for civic engagement, education, and equity issues concerning youth and vulnerable groups in communities prone to VE
Ministry of Interior Affairs, the Office for Combating Extremism and Illegal Migration	Good practices, lessons learned and recommendations for civic engagement, and equity issues concerning youth and vulnerable groups in communities prone to VE within their jurisdiction
State Agency on Youth, Physical Culture and Sports under the Ministry of Culture, Information, Sports and Youth Policy of the Kyrgyz Republic, since 12 February 2021	Good practices, lessons learned and recommendations for further youth civic engagement and peace-building activities
State Agency for Regional Development under the Ministry of Agriculture, Water Resources and Regional Development of the Kyrgyz Republic, since 12 February 2021 (former State Agency on Local Self Governance and Interethnic Relations)	Good practices, lessons learned and recommendations for further youth civic engagement, access to decision making at local level and peace-building activities
<i>Implementing agencies</i>	
UNICEF	Improve accountability Organizational learning Lessons learned for developing future interventions Recommendations for future projects
UN Women	
UNFPA	
PBF	
<i>Implementing partners</i>	
Public Fund "Mutakallim"	

Public Fund "International Debate Education Association in Central Asia" (IDEA CA)	Summative evaluation of their activities within the project, consolidation of perception of milestones and benefits, awareness raising about existing participation and initiative opportunities Learning opportunity about youth civic education, gender sensitive learning and peace-building concepts Recommendations for further activities and participation
Public Fund "Development Policy Institute"	
Foundation for Education Initiatives Support-FEIS	
Public Fund "Youth of Osh"	
Foundation for Tolerance International independent gender experts and	
<i>Staff of the structural subdivisions of ministries and local self- government in project communities</i>	
Municipal and district level representatives involved with young women (including vulnerable women) and men issues.	Good practices, lessons learned and recommendations concerning youth participation, access to decision making, youth-oriented budgeting
Vocational education institutions, schools, madrasas	Good practices, lessons learned and recommendations concerning youth participation, youth engagement in decision making, civic education.
State Agency for Youth and Sports, Provincial Departments	Good practices, lessons learned and recommendations concerning youth participation, youth engagement in decision making, civic education at local level
<i>Project beneficiaries</i>	
Youth who have participated in project activities	Better understanding of the results of the project and their potential role/contribution to achieve them Increased motivation and willingness to build on the results of the project (sustainability) Transparency and accountability
Parents, teachers,	
Religious leaders, community leaders, local self-governments, vulnerable women and girls	
CSOs	

Annex 7. List of Stakeholders Interviewed

UN stakeholders	9
Young people	27
Parents	6
Local government	7
Provincial department Agency for Youth & Sports	1
School staff	4
Vocational school instructors	5
Community leaders	7
Women Religious leaders	5
Vulnerable women	9
CSOs	4
National stakeholders	6

Annex 8. Evaluation questionnaire for interviews

Introductory notes

- The following guiding questions are intended mainly to be used for semi-structured interviews with stakeholders and beneficiaries;
- The questions provided below are meant to serve as a menu. Only relevant questions will be used in each interview, depending on the experience, involvement of the interviewee in each of the initiatives selected as well as the quality of the discussion with the interviewees.

Steps

1. Introduction of evaluators and interviewee;
2. Introduction of the interview purpose by highlighting that this is not an assessment of the performance or behavior of anyone
3. Obtain the consent of the interviewee as the interview notes will not be shared and the evaluation will ensure confidentiality/anonymity
4. Question and answer - interviewer takes notes and writes down also the day of the meeting the interviewee name/s

Guiding Questions

For international organizations

- Tell me about your role and involvement in the project?
- What do you think have been some of the key successes and challenges in terms of the design, implementation and results of the program?
- What is your appraisal of the problem analysis conducted by the project (*add if needed* - What were the main drivers of violent extremism that have been integrated into the project design? To what extent were the activity in which you were involved relevant for the beneficiaries of the country?)
- To what extent were the activities you were involved in designed and implemented taking into consideration other similar initiatives in the country (*add if needed* - how did you create synergies with other initiatives during implementation)?
- (*If not answered previously*) To your appraisal, what have been the most important results of the project (the activities you were involved in and, more generically, the results of the project) for empowering youth and young women (can you give me examples of that)? Do you think youth (and surrounding communities) are more resilient to violent extremism - have they changed their attitudes and behavior? Are there any concrete results such as the integration of youth priorities into local development plans?
- What are the measures being developed to institutionalize/formalize the results of the project? Are there any examples of spill-over effects or replication of project activities in other geographical areas or sector?
- How was the cooperation with the other Agencies at project design and implementation stage? What were the challenges, if any?

- To your appraisal, how solid was the guidance from the Steering Committee, and the cooperation among supporting and implementing partners?
- Other issues?

For implementing partners/NGOs

- Tell me about your role and involvement in the project?
- What do you think have been some of the key successes and challenges in terms of the design, implementation and results of the program?
- What is your appraisal of the problem analysis conducted by the project (*add if needed* - What were the main drivers of violent extremism that have been integrated into the project design? To what extent were the activities in which you were involved relevant for the beneficiaries of the country?)
- To what extent were the activities you were involved in designed and implemented building upon successful previous projects in the country (*add if needed* - how did you create synergies with other initiatives during implementation)?
- (*If not answered previously*) To your appraisal, what have been the most important results of the project (the activities you were involved in and, more generically, the results of the project) for empowering youth (can you give me examples of that)? Do you think youth (and surrounding communities) are more resilient to violent extremism - have they changed their attitudes and behavior? Has this been different for young women and young men? Are there any concrete results such as the integration of youth priorities into local development plans?
- What are the measures being developed to institutionalize/formalize the results of the project? Are there any examples of spill-over effects or replication of project activities in other geographical areas or sector?
- How was the cooperation with the UN agency you were working with? What were the challenges, if any?
- Other issues?

For institutions (central and local)

- Tell me about your role and involvement in the project?
- (*For local government*) Have you been directly involved in engaging with youth in your municipality?
- What do you think have been some of the key successes and challenges in terms of the design, implementation and results of the program?
- To your appraisal, what are the main objectives of the initiative?
- Was the initiative relevant to your needs? Why?
- If you work in the institutions, why do you think it is important to engage more with youth?

- To your appraisal, what have been the results of the project in terms of affecting peacebuilding in the communities in the country?
- (*For local government*) what have been the main results of the project in your municipality? Have you also considered integrating the project approach (i.e. change in the curriculum, or understanding youth priorities) into your local development plans? have you received any feedback from the community?
- To your appraisal, how is this program developing a system that can be sustainable over time? Are you institutionalizing something part of the program? Why? How?
- What are the possible recommendations to enhance youth participation in institutions decision-making? And for peacebuilding?
- What are your recommendations to reduce violent extremism in the country that the project has not yet addressed? and what recommendations would you have for the UN?

For final beneficiaries (youth)

- Tell me about your role and involvement in the project? Which activity do you participate in? What do you think was the main objective of the activity you participated in?
- In what ways was this relevant to your needs? Why?
- What did you enjoy the most or did not about your participation in this activity?
- What are the things that you learned from it (*add if needed* - did you learn new skills? Do you feel more confident? have you been able to apply what you have learned? Did you have any obstacles to do that?
- Have you been able to interact more with local authorities (civic engagement)? In what ways ? Can you, please give an example?
- Do young women in your community can interact with local authorities as any other groups of the community? In what way is it different (or not different)? Can you give an example?
- Do you feel you are closer to the community or to local institutions as a result of this activity (*add if needed* - What is your perception after this activity about violent extremism)?
- What do you think constitutes peace building (conflict transformation)? Have you learnt anything on the topic from the project? Please share, give example.
- Thinking about the future, what activities do you think are needed to support your community and promote peacebuilding in general?
- Other issues?

For beneficiaries (parents, teachers, community members, women groups)

- Tell me about your role and involvement in the project? Which activity did you participate in? What do you think was the main objective of the activity you participated in?
- In what ways were these activities relevant to your needs and those of youth in your community? What difference did the project have on young men and young women?
- What did you enjoy the most or did not about your participation in this activity?
- What has changed for you (if anything) as a result of your participation, regarding your relationship with your children/the youth you teach?
- What has changed for you (if anything) as a result of your participation, regarding your perception of violent extremism?
- How the project impacted the life of young women? Does the project have the same impact on women and men? why?
- For the future, what would you like the UN to do in order to support your community and peacebuilding in general?
- Other issues?

Annex 9. Focus Group Discussions (FGDs)

Introductory notes

- The following guiding questions are intended mainly to be used for guiding the FGDs;
- The questions provided below are meant to serve *as a menu*. Only relevant questions will be used in each FGD, depending on the experience, involvement of the participants in each of the initiatives selected as well as the quality of the discussion with the participants.

Time

Around 60 minutes each

Steps

5. Introduction of evaluator/facilitator;
 6. Introduction of the FDG purpose;
 7. Obtain the consent of the participants;
 8. Question and answer
- Evaluator will ask question to each participant based on the ‘guiding questions’ below

- Each participant will answer
- Evaluator will take notes
- Evaluator will try to make participants discuss among each other

Guiding Questions for the FGD

- Can you briefly describe this project - its main objective, achievements, challenges, if any?
- *(add if needed)* Can we please discuss the main objective of the project? (if necessary probe: Was it about youth empowerment? peacebuilding? What is the relationship between the two elements to your appraisal?
- Can we now discuss the major achievements of the project in terms of empowering young men and young women? Then use the rest for probing (shifting attitudes, behavior etc.)? Do you want to highlight any particular concrete results such as integration of youth priorities into local development plans?
- How do you think this project has affected young people's resilience to] violent extremism (any concrete example)? How was this measured?
- What were the major challenges of the project in terms of the design and implementation *(give a set of examples: cooperation between agencies, working in informal settings VS formal schools)*
- What are the elements that you would like the evaluators to research more during the evaluation process?

Annex 10. Guided questionnaire

The guided questionnaire

This section will briefly illustrate some of the details of the questionnaire questionnaire. As explained in the report, the questionnaire will be developed and finalized after the FGDs and interviews as a way to put a number to the emerging issues identified through those tools. In particular, the questionnaire questionnaire will investigate the long-term objectives based on the BRAVE indicators¹⁵⁸

In this sense, it is envisaged that the questions below might be changed and revised and there may be different formats for the questionnaire depending on the specific output.

Introduction

You have been a participant to an initiative part of the project 'Communities resilient to violent ideologies' that aimed to build community resilience to violent and manipulative ideologies, including those exploiting faith, through the means of education, empowerment and dialogue.

¹⁵⁸ Understanding Youth Resilience to Violent Extremism: A Standardised Research Measure Final Research Report Michele Grossman and Michael Ungar, Principal Investigators Joshua Brisson, Vivian Gerrand, Kristin Hadfield and Philip Jefferies, Chief Investigators Understanding_Youth_Resilience_to_Violentextremism.pdf

An ongoing evaluation is being carried out so as to show the results of the project and to help future programs build on the lessons learned from this project.

In this sense, I would be very grateful if you could answer just a few questions whose answers will be crucial for UNICEF, UNFPA and UN Women to learn from you and possibly improve their activities in line with what you need. **Certainly, your answers will be kept confidential.**

I thank you very much for your time and candor – this questionnaire will only take 15 minutes to complete.

Respondent Profile

Gender: Male ----- Female ----- Age: -----

Location (municipality):-----

No	After having participated in the project activities, to what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements?	Scale
Q1.	Words and dialogue are the best way to resolve disputes.	Strongly disagree (1), Disagree (2), Neutral (3), Agree (4), Strongly agree (5)
Q2.	It is important to me to maintain cultural traditions.	Strongly disagree (1), Disagree (2), Neutral (3), Agree (4), Strongly agree (5)
Q3.	I trust authorities/law enforcement agencies	Strongly disagree (1), Disagree (2), Neutral (3), Agree (4), Strongly agree (5)
Q4.	I feel supported by people from other communities.	Strongly disagree (1), Disagree (2), Neutral (3), Agree (4), Strongly agree (5)
Q5.	My community accepts that young people may use violence to solve problems (reverse-scored)	Strongly disagree (1), Disagree (2), Neutral (3), Agree (4), Strongly agree (5)
Q6.	I know where to get help in the wider community.	Strongly disagree (1), Disagree (2), Neutral (3), Agree (4), Strongly agree (5)
Q7.	I avoid violent situations.	Strongly disagree (1), Disagree (2), Neutral (3), Agree (4), Strongly agree (5)
Q8.	I feel confident when dealing with government and authorities.	Strongly disagree (1),

		Disagree (2), Neutral (3), Agree (4), Strongly agree (5)
Q9.	I am willing to speak out publicly against violence in my community.	Strongly disagree (1), Disagree (2), Neutral (3), Agree (4), Strongly agree (5)
Q10.	I know where to find cultural instruction and access to leadership.	Strongly disagree (1), Disagree (2), Neutral (3), Agree (4), Strongly agree (5)
Q11.	Being violent helps show how strong I am. (reverse-scored)	Strongly disagree (1), Disagree (2), Neutral (3), Agree (4), Strongly agree (5)
Q12.	Even if others are violent toward me, I do not respond with violence.	Strongly disagree (1), Disagree (2), Neutral (3), Agree (4), Strongly agree (5)
Q13.	I am encouraged to communicate with government and authorities.	Strongly disagree (1), Disagree (2), Neutral (3), Agree (4), Strongly agree (5)
Q14.	Being violent helps me earn the respect of others. (reverse-scored)	Strongly disagree (1), Disagree (2), Neutral (3), Agree (4), Strongly agree (5)
Q15.	I am familiar with my cultural traditions, beliefs, practices, and values.	Strongly disagree (1), Disagree (2), Neutral (3), Agree (4), Strongly agree (5)
Q16.	I feel that my voice is heard when dealing with government and authorities.	Strongly disagree (1), Disagree (2), Neutral (3), Agree (4), Strongly agree (5)
Q17.	In general, I trust people from other communities.	Strongly disagree (1), Disagree (2), Neutral (3), Agree (4), Strongly agree (5)
Q18.	I regularly engage in conversations with people of multiple religions/cultures and beliefs.	Strongly disagree (1), Disagree (2), Neutral (3), Agree (4), Strongly agree (5)
Q19.	My cultural identity guides the way I live my life.	Strongly disagree (1), Disagree (2), Neutral (3),

		Agree (4), Strongly agree (5)
Q20.	I am willing to challenge the violent behavior of others in my community.	Strongly disagree (1), Disagree (2), Neutral (3), Agree (4), Strongly agree (5)

Annex 11. Consent Forms

Informed Consent for adult participants (interviews, focus group)

This consent form applies to (choose one): government/CSOs

The following information is provided to inform you about the evaluation on the project implemented jointly by the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF), the United Nations’ Population Fund (UNFPA) and UN Women “Communities Resilient to Violent Ideologies” project. Please feel free to ask any questions you may have about this study and the information given below. You will be given an opportunity to ask questions, and have your questions answered. In addition, you will be given a copy of this consent form.

- 1. Purpose of the study.** This study is being conducted by an evaluation team composed of three evaluators, hired by UNICEF office in Kyrgyzstan, in order to better understand how UNICEF/UNDP/UN Women has promoted Kyrgyzstan's youth civic engagement and what improvements are needed for future. In addition, we seek to understand how UNICEF/UNDP/UN Women have worked with each other and with international donors and local organizations in function of building communities resilient to violent ideologies. This research will contribute to broader knowledge about the present situation in relation to conflicts and the role of UN agencies and other stakeholders in building community resilience to violent ideologies through the means of education, empowerment and dialogue.

- 2. Description of the procedures to be followed and approximate duration of the evaluation.**
 - a) For national and provincial authorities, CSOs and municipal service providers in interviews:*

We will spend approximately 45 minutes with you, in which we will ask you a series of questions about: your organization’s work (), how it has evolved over the course of project, its relationship with other groups engaged in conflict prevention, and your own personal experience working in the context of the project. If you accept, the interview will be conducted without recording, but the interviewer will take verbatim notes on computer. These notes will only be shared within the research team, stored safely until the end of the research, and deleted at the end. You will not be quoted by name or in any identifiable fashion.
 - b) For CSOs in focus group discussions:*

We will spend approximately 1,5 hours with you, in which we will ask you a series of questions about: the project and your experiences with UN agencies involvement in this, the outcomes of the project for your institution and for your service users, as well as potential improvements which you deem necessary in the future. If you accept, the focus group discussion will be conducted without recording, but the research team will take verbatim notes on computer. These notes will only be shared within the research team, stored safely until the end of the research, and deleted at the end. You will not be quoted by name or in any identifiable fashion. The focus group discussions are subject to Chatham House Rules: by agreeing to participate, you and the other participants at the same time commit not to share the inputs of the discussion participants once exiting the room.

- 3. Description of how confidentiality will be assured and the limits to these assurances, if any.** All data collected will be stored on a password-protected secure server, to which only project team members will have access. You will not be individually identified, information you provide will be attributed to an anonymous source. Transcribed interviews do not include any traceable, sensitive information. To preserve anonymity, these documents will not contain any links to you directly.

- 4. Anticipated benefits resulting from this evaluation.**
 - A. For national and provincial duty bearers, CSOs and municipal service providers representatives in interview or focus group discussions:* The potential benefits to you from participating in the evaluation are to gain insights as to how to more effectively collaborate with other organizations as well as donor governments and other external partners to address violent extremism issues.

- B. *For young people:* The potential benefit for you, from your participation in this evaluation, is to look at your own experience as a project participant from a different, critical perspective because your thoughts will feed into design of any future projects of similar topic.
- C. *For all:* The potential benefits that may result from this study are advancing our understanding of how local institutions, civil society groups and other international actors contribute to dissolution of conflicts in communities prone for VE . This study will provide information to stakeholders engaged in the project to help them identify further strategies for empowerment of women and young people to ensure their inclusion and participation in peacebuilding and decision-making processes at all levels.
5. **Alternative procedures.** We conduct the interview by telephone, Skype, Zoom or Whatsapp, whichever you prefer. There are no other alternative procedures to participation in the interview.
6. **Contact information.** If you have any questions about this study, you can contact the person(s) below:
- Tommaso Balbo Di Vinadio, International Consultant, tommaso.balbodivinadi@sciencespo.fr
 - Gulnara Asilbekova, National Consultant, gulnara.asibekova@yahoo.com
 - Kanykei Latipova, National Consultant, klatipova@gmail.com

This study has been reviewed and approved by (UNICEF Ethics Review Board).

If you have questions or concerns regarding this study please contact the Evaluator.

8. Your rights as a volunteer. Your participation in this study is completely voluntary, and you may choose not to participate. Your responses will be confidential (See 4 above). If the results of this study were to be written for publication, no identifying information will be used. You are free to withdraw from this study at any time with no penalty to you. Should you choose to withdraw from this study data already collected from you will be destroyed, unless you provide express permission for its use.

UNICEF/UNFPA/UN WOMEN

Informed Consent/assent form for legal guardian/children between 14-18 years old

Informed Consent for the evaluation of the project “Communities Resilient to Violent Ideologies”

The United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF), the United Nations’ Population Fund (UNFPA) and the United Nation Women (UN Women) are asking for your permission to interview your child (or a child under your guardianship) for its project. Please read the following information about the evaluation. If you would like your child (or a child under your guardianship) to participate, please sign below.

Purpose of the project evaluation:

The goal of this study is to understand the logic of the project, what the project achieved and what changes brought to your community. We wish to understand what was useful, what worked well, what did not work so well, and how to improve in the future. Evaluation results will inform the Government’s, Peacebuilding Fund’s and Implementing UN Agencies’ future programs and provide evidence for further implementation or scale up of joint action plans between the bordering countries.

Participation:

If your child participates in the study, he/she will be asked to take part in an interview. He/she will be asked questions about new skills and/or opportunities your child gained from participation in these activities and what changed for him/her as a result of it. Participation in this study is voluntary. If you decide not to permit your child to participate, there will not be any negative consequences on you or your child. The interview will take place remotely (online).

Time required for participation:

Children will be in the interview for maximum two hours.

Confidentiality of information:

Information obtained in interview will be treated confidentially for the purpose of this evaluation only. Names of children as well as their parents or guardians will not be revealed in the report.

Contact information.

If you have any questions about this study, you can contact the person(s) below:

- Tommaso Balbo Di Vinadi, International Consultant, tommaso.balbodivinadi@sciencespo.fr
- Gulnara Asilbekova, National Consultant, gulnara.asibekova@yahoo.com
- Kanykei Latipova, National Consultant, klatipova@gmail.com

If you have questions or concerns regarding this study please contact the Evaluator.

Please check the box if you agree:

[] I agree that my child (a child under my guardianship) participates alone in the interview (without my presence or that of another adult).

By signing this form I am attesting that I have read and understand the information above and I freely give my permission for my child (a child under my guardianship) to participate in the final project evaluation.

Name and Signature of Parent or Guardian

Date

[FOR THOSE CHILDREN, WHOSE PARENTS HAVE GIVEN CONSENT FOR THEM TO PARTICIPATE, THE CHILD'S ASSENT MUST BE OBTAINED. FOR CHILDREN OF 14-18 YEARS OLD, USE THE TEMPLATE BELOW. EACH CHILD SHOULD HAVE THEIR OWN FORM, AND IT SHOULD BE READ ALOUD TO THEM.]

Minor Assent

My name is [insert researcher's name], and I am doing an evaluation of the results of the project "Communities Resilient to Violent Ideologies," implemented jointly by the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), the United Nations' Population Fund (UNFPA) and the United Nations Women (UN Women).

A project evaluation is an assessment of the implemented project and a way to learn more about the changes which the project made for people's lives. One of your parents (or guardians) has already given their permission for you to be part of this evaluation, and now it's your turn to decide. If you decide that you want to be part of this evaluation, you will be asked to share with us your experience in participating in this project's activities, about your new skills and/or opportunities you gained from participation in these activities and what changed for you as a result of it.

When we are finished with this evaluation, we will write a report about what was learned. This report will not include your name or that you were in the study. You do not have to be in this evaluation if you do not want to be. If you have questions or decide to stop after we begin, that's okay; just tell me. Before we begin, do you have any questions? If you want to be in this study, please write your name and sign below.

Contact information.

If you have any questions about this study, you can contact the person(s) below:

- Tommaso Balbo Di Vinadi, International Consultant, tommaso.balbodivinadi@sciencespo.fr
- Gulnara Asilbekova, National Consultant, gulnara.asibekova@yahoo.com
- Kanykei Latipova, National Consultant, klatipova@gmail.com

If you have questions or concerns regarding this study, please contact the Evaluator.

Check one:

_____ I want to be in the study.

_____ I do NOT want to be in the study.

Your name: _____

Your signature: _____

[NOTE TO RESEARCHER: DO NOT ATTACH THIS FORM TO YOUR ACTUAL QUESTIONNAIRE. IT SHOULD BE KEPT SEPARATE.]

Procedures and due diligence concerning informed consent

The team will respect the obligations of evaluators (the UNEG Ethical Guidelines, 2008): independence, impartiality, credibility, the avoidance of conflicts of interest, honesty and integrity, and accountability. The evaluators declare no conflict of interest.

Informed consent will be sought from all participants. The evaluation team will explain to the participants the purpose and use of the evaluation. The evaluation participants will be informed fully about 1) the aims of the evaluation and the background/composition of the evaluation team, 2) why they are invited to participate in the evaluation, and 3) what the benefits of the evaluation would be.

The team will make clear to participants that the participation in the process of evaluation is voluntary and should they wish to, they will be free to opt out of the discussion or interview at any point. It will be important to emphasise ethical considerations of confidentiality, power relations and informed consent. Consent should be an ongoing process, and (as far as applicable) anonymity should be adhered to. In addition, no gifts or other rewards will be presented to respondents so as not to influence consent. The statements of informed consent from those involved in the process of evaluation and providing information for the evaluator will be obtained.

Interested interviewees will be given a written Informed Consent form to read and keep, and another to sign, if agreed to. Interviewees who come to CSO or UN premises will be handed a printed copy to sign by staff or mentors, who will also explain the evaluation process and the consent form in a simple Kyrgyz/Uzbek language to the participants, and answer their questions. Mentors/staff will print the Informed Consent forms twice per interviewee: one to be signed and collected, one to be kept by the interviewees. They will also provide support in obtaining parental consent. Mentors/staff know the parents and already have experience of getting written permissions from them for project activities. As the mentors will not be present during the interviews, the risks of influence or fear of consequences via their mediation can be excluded.

Interviewees who do not need the mediation nor premises to participate will be asked to sign the consent form digitally (e.g. signing manually and sending a scan/a picture of the signed document taken from their phone, or signing with their digitalized signature in PDF – whatever they find most convenient).

Signed consent forms will be collected, either on paper by project staff or project partners, or digitally by the evaluation team, and provided to UNICEF for safekeeping. UNICEF will follow its rules for protection of data, its storage and destruction. The evaluation team will not record identifiers – the views and opinions expressed in the interviews will not be attributed to individual participants.

The interviews will involve adults and minors between 14 and 18 years old. In the case of minors, the consent of a legal guardian is obligatory, as well as the consent of the child

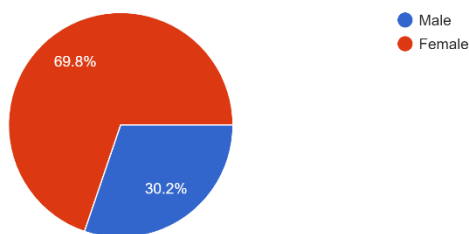
The evaluators will ensure confidentiality of information, privacy and anonymity of study participants. Confidentiality and anonymity guarantees will be made to those providing information for the evaluation. The participants of the evaluation will be clearly informed

of the confidentiality measures: their contributions will be aggregated and anonymized in the report, and their responses will be kept confidential. The final report will not have reference to any names. While the final evaluation report may include quotes which are representative of widespread opinions expressed by the interviewees, they will be screened by the evaluation team members to check they are not attributable. During interviews and focus groups, the evaluation participants will be asked permission so that the evaluators may take notes from interviews and discussions. The evaluation consultants will explain that detailed notes taking will assure the accuracy of the data. All interview notes will be kept within the evaluation team only (not forwarded to any other actor, even UN agencies), stored in a password-protected drive during the evaluation, and completely deleted upon completion of the evaluation.

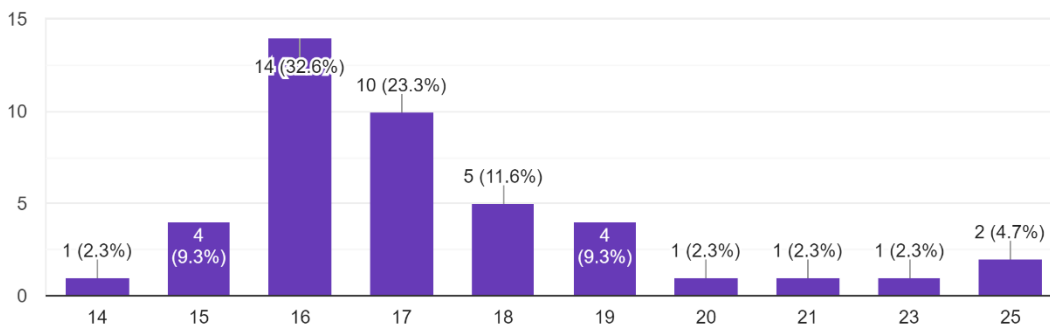
Since the evaluation will explore people’s attitudes towards ethnic diversity, particular attention will be paid to allowing stakeholders to express both positive and negative feedback, while averting the (re)ignition of possible frustrations or painful memories. The team members have extensive experience in empathic interviewing, and are also keenly aware of the inter-ethnic situation locally, which will enable them to minimize this risk.

Annex 12. Results of the Questionnaire in Charts and Diagrams

1.1 Gender
43 responses

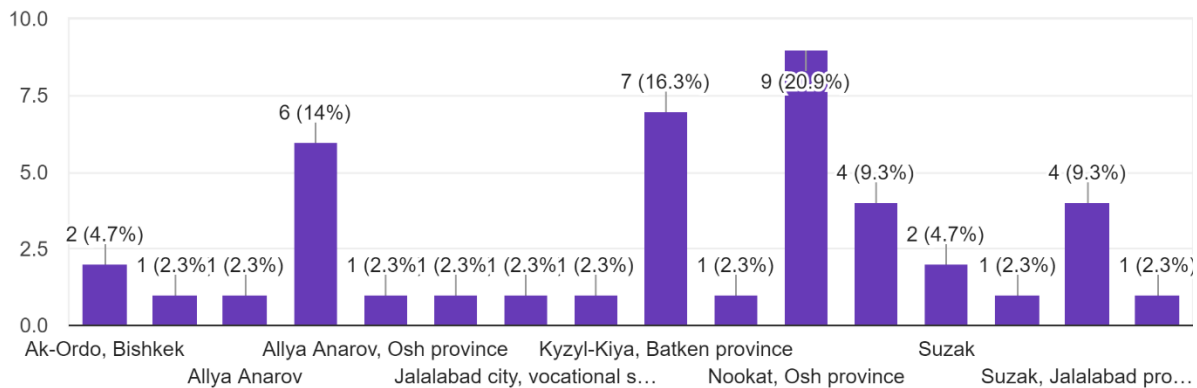


1.2 Age
43 responses



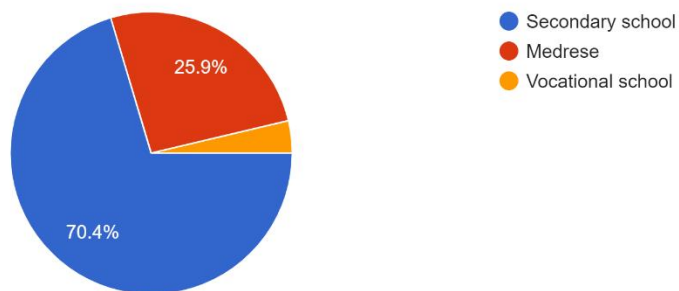
1.3 Location (municipality)

43 responses

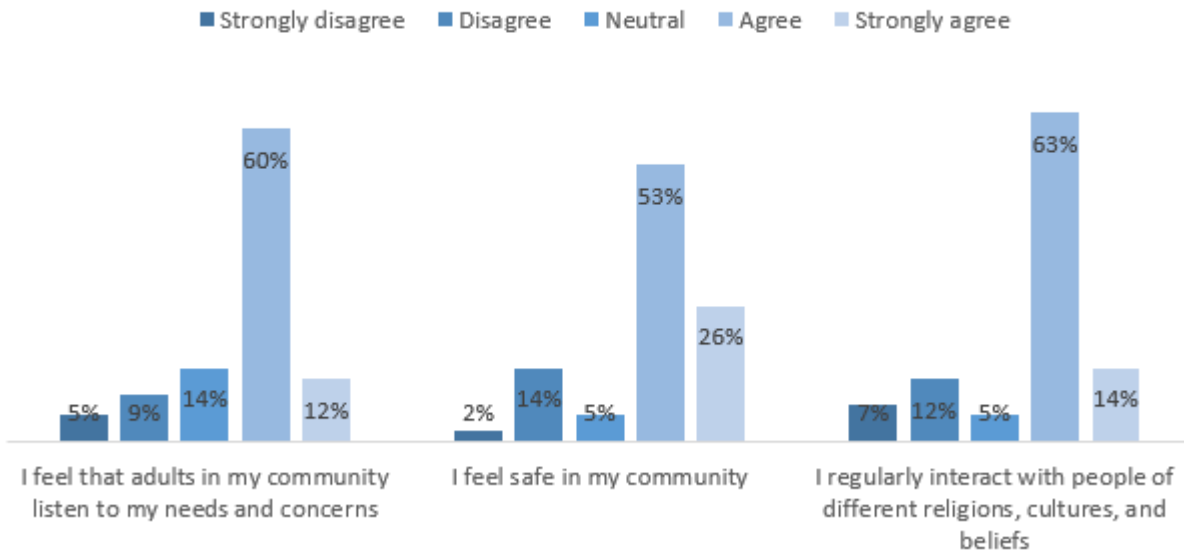


Type of institution

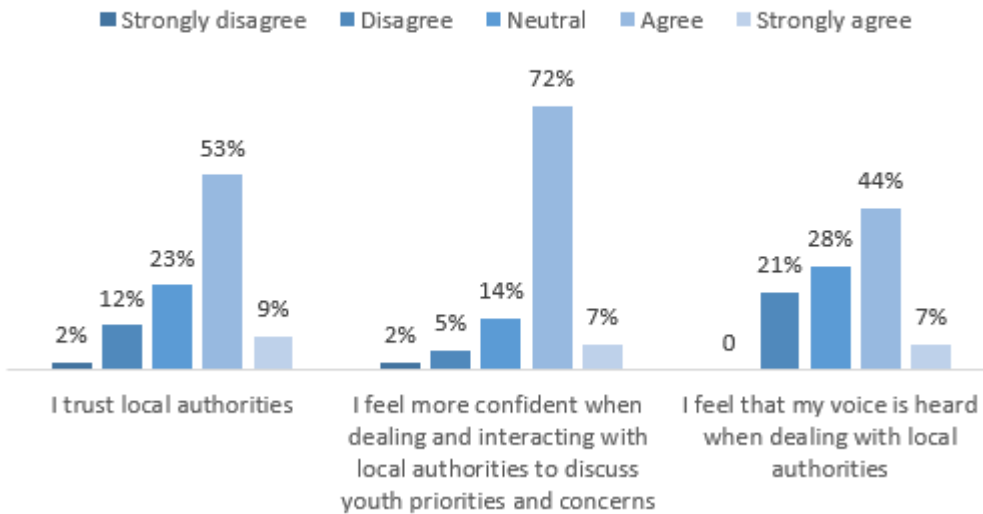
27 responses



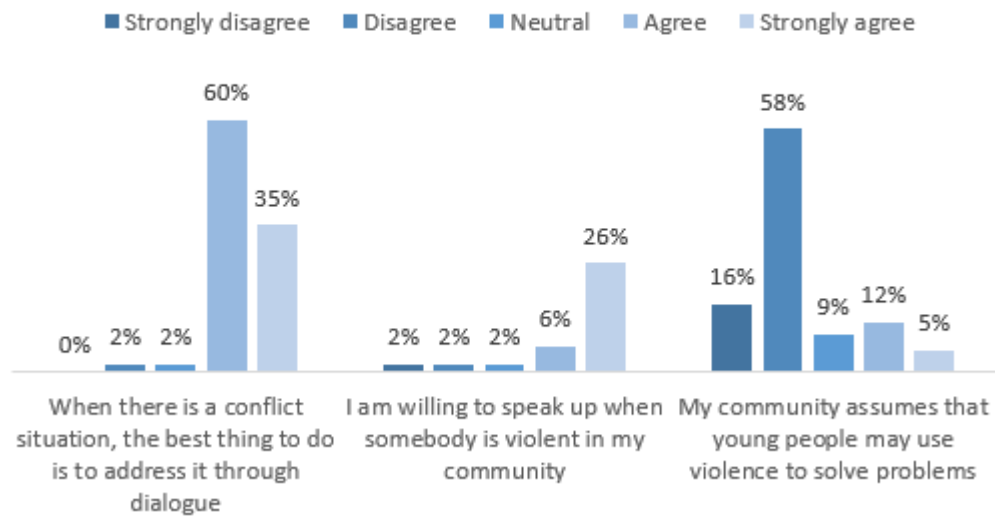
Sense of belonging to community



Confidence in the State



Violence related behaviors and beliefs





Research Ethics Approval

2 September 2021

Tommaso Balbo Di Vinadio International Consultant, Team leader UNICEF Kyrgyzstan
160 Chui avenue, Bishkek city, Kyrgyzstan

RE: Ethics Review Board findings for: *Final Evaluation of the joint project "Communities Resilient to Violent Ideologies"*
(HML IRB Review #427KYRG21)

Dear Tommaso Balbo Di Vinadio,

Protocols for the protection of human subjects in the above study were assessed through a research ethics review by HML Institutional Review Board (IRB) on 16 August – 02 September 2021. This study's human subjects' protection protocols, as stated in the materials submitted, received **ethics review approval**.

You and your project staff remain responsible for ensuring compliance with HML IRB's determinations. Those responsibilities include, but are not limited to:

- ensuring prompt reporting to HML IRB of proposed changes in this study's design, risks, consent, or other human protection protocols and providing copies of any revised materials;
- conducting the research activity in accordance with the terms of the IRB approval until any proposed changes have been reviewed and approved by the IRB, except when necessary to mitigate hazards to subjects;
- promptly reporting any unanticipated problems involving risks to subjects or others in the course of this study;
- notifying HML IRB when your study is completed.

HML IRB is authorized by the United States Department of Health and Human Services, Office of Human Research Protections (IRB #1211, IORG #850, FWA #1102).

Sincerely,

D. Michael Anderson, Ph.D., MPH
Chair & Human Subjects Protections Director, HML IRB

cc: Tolgonai Berdikeyeva, Saltanat Rasulova, Penelope Lantz, JD

HML IRB
1101 Connecticut Avenue, NW Suite 450 Washington, DC 20036 USA
+1.202.246.8504
unicef@hmlirb.com www.hmlirb.com



HML Ethics Review Board

Research Ethics Review Document

Review of UNICEF Research Project Materials for the Protection of Human Subjects

This document serves to meet UNICEF ethical standards for research, evaluation, data collection and analysis, and is the official record of an ethics review. It is designed to ensure effective processes and accountability for ethical oversight and to ensure the protection of, and respect for, child and adult rights within all research, evaluation, and data collection processes undertaken or commissioned by UNICEF. It conforms with the [UNICEF Procedure for Ethical Standards in Research, Evaluation, Data Collection and Analysis](#); Document Number: CF/PD/DRP/2015-001;

Effective Date: 01 April 2015, Issued by Director, Division of Data, Research and Policy.

The Purpose of Research Ethics Review

The purpose of an Ethics Review Board (ERB) or Institutional Review Board (IRB) is the protection of human research subjects' rights. These rights include **Respect** for individuals to make free decisions, **Justice or equity** regarding distribution of the burdens and benefits of research, and **Beneficence** or the obligation to do good and avoid harm.

ERBs review research protocols that involve the collection and analysis of data from human subjects to ensure that ethical standards are upheld. This is to protect the rights and welfare of subjects and to ensure that:

- subjects know the purpose of the study and are not placed at undue risk;
- participation is voluntary and confidential;
- subjects are provided and agree to informed consent prior to their participation;
- relevant protocols are in place to assure subjects' protection and safety, and;
- data collection and analysis does not result in the violation of privacy or discrimination.

Before issuing approval, the ERB must determine that the following requirements are satisfied:

- informed consent is sought from each subject or the subject’s legally authorized representative;
- the proposed research design is scientifically sound and that risks to subjects are minimized;
- any risks to subjects are reasonable in relation to anticipated benefits;
- subject selection is equitable;
- safeguards are included for subjects likely to be vulnerable to undue influence or coercion;
- subjects’ safety, privacy, and confidentiality are maximized.

Materials Requested for Review:	Also, please include:
Inception Report / Research Protocol, containing, e.g.,: specific aims or objectives, research questions, study design, subject recruitment, subject protection and data protection plans. Copies of all Informed Consent documents. Copies of all data collection instruments.	Written protocols to ensure subjects’ safety.* Written protocols for the protection of human subjects’ identities.* Written protocols for the protection of data.* Other relevant documents. *These may be statements incorporated into research plans and/or embedded in a single protection protocol.

HML IRB is an autonomous committee authorized by the United States Department of Health and Human Services, Office for Human Research Protections (IRB #1211, FWA #1102, IORG #850), to review and approve research involving human subjects before the start of research, and to conduct annual reviews of that research independent of affiliation with the research organization submitting materials for review.

Please submit your materials for review to:

D. Michael Anderson, PhD, MPH, HML IRB Chair & Human Subjects Protections Director and Penelope A. Lantz, JD, HML IRB General Counsel
unicef@hmlirb.com

HML IRB

Washington, DC 20036 USA

1101 Connecticut Avenue, NW Suite 450

+1.202.246.8504 www.hmlirb.com

UNICEF Research Ethics Review for Human Subjects' Protections

→ INVESTIGATORS: Please confirm your project information and any additional information requested below.

Project Title:	<i>Final Evaluation of the joint project "Communities Resilient to Violent Ideologies"</i>
HML IRB Research Ethics Review ID#:	427KYRG21
Initiating UNICEF Official: Name, CO, & RO	Tolgonai Berdikeyeva, Kyrgyzstan CO, ECARO tberdikeyeva@unicef.org
Principal Investigator/Project Manager: Name, degree(s), organization, & address	Tommaso Balbo Di Vinadio, International Consultant, Team leader Please provide address UNICEF Kyrgyzstan 160 Chui avenue, Bishkek city, Kyrgyzstan e-mail: tommaballo@gmail.com
Other Key Personnel: Names & titles	Gulnara Asilbekova, National Consultant Kanykei Latipova, National Consultant
Contracting Firm: Name & address	Please provide UNICEF Kyrgyzstan 160 Chui avenue, Bishkek city, Kyrgyzstan
Primary study site(s): (e.g., country, province, region)	Kyrgyzstan, 12 municipalities: 1) Bishkek city, 2) Osh city; Osh province: 3) Allya Anarov municipality in Aravan district; 4) Karasuu municipality in Karasuu district; 5) Nookat city; 6) Gulistan municipality in Nookat district; Jalalabad province: 7) Jalalabad city, 8) Suzak municipality in Suzak district; Batken province: 9) Kyzyl-Kiya city in Kadamjai district; Issyk-Kul province: 10) Sary-Bulak municipality in Tyup district; Naryn province: 11) Ugut municipality in Ak-Talaa district; Talas province: 12) Kara-Buura municipality in Kara-Buura district.
Project duration: (Dates from -- to)	July 2021 to January 2022, correct? Yes, the duration of the project evaluation
Duration of Subjects' Participation: (Dates from -- to)	September 2021
Thematic Area/Areas:	Human Rights VAC Social Policy

Target population:	Community resilience to violent and manipulative ideologies, including those exploiting faith, through education, empowerment and dialogue.in Kyrgyzstan

Date of ERB Request	16 August 2021
Date(s) ERB Comments Returned	23 August 2021
Date Final Documents Received	31 August 2021
DATE OF ERB APPROVAL	02 September 2021

UNICEF Ethics Review Process

HML Ethics Review Board (UNICEF LTAS 42107154) will conduct a research ethics review of submitted materials and make comments below under **Additional Information Needed**. We will then return this template for responses from investigators.

Please respond to **our comments** in **another colour**, directly under each comment.

Please provide any requested or revised materials, and please note where revisions to your materials may be found by page or paragraph number.

Please do not alter ERB comments or the format of this document.

This HML ERB review document serves as the official record of the ethics review for the project named below. This document, including all comments and responses, will be retained by UNICEF and HML ERB as a record of this review. Once you and we have agreed on the ethical rights of your research subjects, we will issue a letter of approval.

	Ethics Review Board Criteria of Interest	Additional Information Needed → Investigators: Please respond to ERB info requests in another color directly below the request	X or NA equal PASS (for ERB use)
Section 1	ERB Submission: Are all requested project information, materials, and final documents provided separately or incorporated in text? This includes:		
1.1	Inception Report or Research Protocol, containing, e.g., specific aims or objectives, research questions, study design, analysis & dissemination plans	Please keep us informed of any subject protection protocol or research design changes that need to occur in adaptation to the coronavirus pandemic in the sites of your study. We will keep you informed, however, we don't foresee any changes, as the data collection protocol was designed with full awareness of the coronavirus pandemic constraints	X
1.2	Informed Consent documents		X
1.3	Surveys and data collection instruments		X
1.4	Written protocols to ensure subjects' safety		X
1.5	Written protocols for protection of subjects' identities		X
1.6	Written protocols for protection of data		X
1.7	Other relevant documents		X
1.8	Do protocols include a section identifying ethical issues and measures to mitigate ethical problems as required by UNICEF Procedure? Included		X
1.9	Have informed consent and data collection instruments been pre-tested?	Please respond. The interview templates have been pre-tested in interviews with UN staff and Evaluation Reference Group Members (in particular those who are the same time youth CSO representatives and UN implementing partners for this project). The informed consent forms were not pre-tested for this evaluation, however they correspond to former	X

		studies/evaluations which were ethically approved, also conducted by one member of the evaluation team. The informed consent forms were counter-checked by the UNICEF Child Rights Monitoring, Evaluation Reference Group members, and all evaluation team members.	
1.10	Are all submitted documents final versions?	Please respond. All submitted documents including the interview templates are final versions, which will be used as the basis for the semi-structured interviews in these versions. The consent forms will be translated into Kyrgyz/Uzbek languages.	X
1.11	May the final protocol and instruments be included in an internal UNICEF searchable database for colleagues to learn from your work?	Please respond: INCLUDE or OMIT. INCLUDE	X
1.12	Additional comments or suggestions		X
Section 2	Research Design: Do submitted materials describe the proposed research? This includes:		
2.1	Is the study's background, rationale, and study design scientifically sound?		X
2.2	Does study involve intervention, treatment, comparison, or control groups?		X
2.3	Type of data collection: survey questionnaire... X subject interview X key informant interview (KII) X "stakeholders" focus group discussion (FGD) X document (desk) review X on-site observation..... g. case study..... analysis of secondary data..... physical measurements biological specimen	Correct	X

	k. other.....		
2.4	Number of Data Collections: one-time (no follow-up) X two or more (follow-up)	Correct	X
2.5	Sample size: Approximate total $n = 142 - 174$	Correct	X
2.6	Are any subjects children (<18 years old)? 14 -- 17	Correct	X
2.7	Additional comments or suggestions		X
Section 3	Subject Risks: Are risks reasonable in relation to any benefits to subjects and to the importance of knowledge that may be expected to result from the research?		
3.1	Is the research <i>Minimal Risk</i> Only?: This means the probability and magnitude of anticipated harm or discomfort is no greater than ordinarily encountered in daily life or during performance of routine physical or psychological exams or tests.		X
3.2	Does the research involve <i>greater than minimal risk</i> , but where risks are justified by anticipated benefits; where the relation of the anticipated benefits to risks is at least as favorable as available alternative approaches; and where the intervention or procedure is likely to yield generalizable knowledge? If so, are mitigating procedures described?		X
3.3	Do study objectives show that risks are reasonable in relationship to expected gains and benefits are clearly articulated?		X
3.4	By their participation, are subjects vulnerable to any of the following?: a. physical risk b. psychological risk X c. social risk d. economic risk e. legal risk f. political risk	The study seeks to address questions related to violence that can impact youth. While care is being taken by the researchers to not elicit personal information, the underlying issues that the study addresses are sensitive ones and psychological impact of asking questions of subjects should be considered. Thank you for the comment. While no question in the interview guides inquire about abuse or neglect, the	X

	<p>g. employment risk.....</p> <p>h. academic risk.....</p> <p>i. religious risk.....</p> <p>j. other.....</p>	<p>possibility exists that it will be disclosed in the course of a long interaction, the participants may be vulnerable to psychological risk do to previous traumatic or aversive events. To mitigate it, the following strategies are employed: (a) both national consultants have substitutional experience conducting interviews with vulnerable groups, including youth and are trained to handle psychological distress, (b) during the interview consistent monitoring of participants' emotional reactions will be done and if needed breaks will be provided breaks (or appoint different time for interview). The evaluation team members will also stress that participation is voluntary and the subject can refuse to participate at any time of the process (p 69)</p>	
3.5	<p>In event of any of the above risks, do protocols describe clear strategies to mitigate risks?</p>	<p>Please discuss potential psychological risk and its mitigation.</p> <p>Examples of triggers could be: recent memories related to gender-based violence such as early marriage may emerge in discussion about empowerment, perception of inequity in access to services and resources when describing relation to duty bearers, parent and child relations (especially girls) related to decisions of the future of the child, e.g about early marriages (for girls), education, participating at extracurricular activities.</p> <p>Strategies to address triggers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -when making contact with a participant before the interview and at the beginning of the interview, restate that the participant is free to stop at any time of the interview without any personal disadvantage. -anticipate possible experience of any tensions according to several factors (age, community characteristics) and be on the alert for early signs of discomfort or distress. 	X

		- If triggers arise: practice non-judgmental active listening. Communicate that feelings and emotions are legitimate. Ask what such projects can do to help defusetensions in the future, or alleviate the consequences of past tensions (forward-looking attitude) -indicate to the participant where s/he can discuss these experiences and get support (phone number/ association, provided by UNICEF or other actors)	
3.6	Does the study request information or opinions wherepublic disclosure may result in danger, limitations to future freedoms, or access to services?		X
3.7	Do gender, ethnicity, or other demographic characteristics -- or grouping of subjects by any of thesecharacteristics, especially in FGDs -- increase subject risk?		X
3.8	If a subject discloses or is suspected to be at risk outsidethe study, are procedures in place to address or report risk and refer subject for relevant support?	Please describe. Report amended on p. 69: “If an evaluation participant discloses or is suspected to be at risk outside of the study, the interviewer will acknowledge the risk, and address this by reporting the risk to the project team, and appropriately referring the subject for relevant support, specific to the situation at hand (e.g. providingthe phone number of a specialized association, police,local service provider).”	X
3.9	Is reporting abuse of minors mandatory? If yes, hasconsideration been given to the impacts and consequences of mandatory reporting?	Please describe. Reporting abuse of minors falls under the previous commitment to report risk and refer to adequate support.UNICEF online trainings were undertaken by the evaluation team regarding “Harassment and Abuse of Authority”, “Ethics and Integrity”, and “Prevention of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse”.	X
3.10	Additional comments or suggestions		X

Section 4	High Risk: When subjects are vulnerable to heightened risk have additional safeguards been included to protect their rights and welfare?		
4.1	Can subjects be perceived as vulnerable, including: children, especially unaccompanied or separated (UASC); lacking WASH, food, shelter, or medical care; refugees in conflict or post conflict; those in natural, ecological, or disaster settings; mothers & pregnant women; forced migrants and illegal or undocumented immigrants; prisoners or persons in institutions including orphanages or juvenile justice systems; gang members; those with mental or physical illness or disability; those with HIV/AIDS; those at economic or educational disadvantage; persecuted minority groups, or under high familial, peer, or social pressure? If yes, are study-specific protection protocols provided?		X
4.2	Does the sampling strategy target people at risk for issues such as: violence, torture, abuse, kidnapping; sexual exploitation, harassment, violence or abuse; prostitution or pornography, female genital mutilation, reproductive or sexual issues; sexual orientation; child, early or forced marriage; suicide? If yes, are study-specific protection protocols provided?		X
4.3	Are subjects involved in any of the following: slavery, including the sale and trafficking of children; forced labour, servitude, forced recruitment to armed groups; war or armed conflict; illegal activities, production or trafficking of drugs; economic exploitation; work that could damage health or safety; removal of organs for exploitation? If yes, are study-specific protection protocols provided?		X
4.4	Does the study request information relating to illegal activities? If yes, is an MOU in place with government to ensure that no participant is prosecuted? Have participants been notified of this agreement?		X
4.5	Additional comments or suggestions		X

Section 5	Recruitment: Do submitted materials describesubjects and the recruitment process?		
5.1	To what extent are subjects identified: names are recorded with responses..... names recorded separate from responses... X no names are recorded other personally identifiable information (PII) is recorded..... no PII is recorded subjects are given a unique identifier..... g. other.....	Any PII collected other than on IC?No other PII is collected.	X
5.2	If subject name or any other PII is recorded, are procedures included for how this info will be kept separate from responses?		X
5.3	Are subject recruitment procedures & sampling strategyadequately described?		X
5.4	Do recruitment procedures clearly describe ways and means to ensure privacy of subjects throughout therecruitment process?		X
5.5	If subjects are children or other vulnerable groups, arematerials (e.g.: survey instruments, focus group topics, etc.) age appropriate?		X
5.6	If subjects are children or other vulnerable groups, or if subject matter is sensitive, is recruitment sensitive to subjects' potential vulnerabilities (real or perceived) anddoes it ensure privacy throughout recruitment?		X
5.7	Do recruitment procedures show indication of bribery, coercion, intimidation, compulsion, pressure, or force?		X
5.8	Is recruitment of some members of the population and not others likely to result in resentment for either inclusion or exclusion? Have strategies to address this been adequately described?		X
5.9	Are potential subjects likely to conflate participation withpotential or actual goods or service provision? Have strategies to address this been adequately described?	Please describe for program beneficiaries. There is no such risk identified, the project services have ended in July 2021, besides, the participation at this evaluation is voluntary, the participants will be explained	X

		the potential benefits of being part of this evaluation for all stakeholders.	
5.10	If subjects are paid, compensated, provided a gift, or provided other benefits or services for participation, is the incentive described and justified as non-coercive?	Any compensation planned? If so, what and how much? No compensation is paid to the evaluation participants.	X
5.11	Additional comments or suggestions		X
Section 6	Informed Consent: IC is a negotiation whereby subjects are informed about the study and their rights, and they agree to participate voluntarily. IC must be sought from each subject or the subject's authorized representative confirming this process.		
6.1	Type of Informed Consent: written & signed X written not signed written & signed by authorized representative.. verbal & signed or recorded..... verbal & signed by authorized representative.... verbal not signed or recorded X g. active..... h. passive..... i. other	Correct	X
6.2	Are the processes for obtaining each IC adequately described?	Please describe when and how the consent form will be provided for subjects. The process is already discussed on p. 69. Informed consent will be sought from all participants. Interviewees will be asked to sign the consent form digitally (e.g. signing manually and sending a scan/a picture of the signed document taken from their phone, or signing with their digitalized signature in PDF – whatever they find most convenient). Signed consent forms will be collected, either on paper by project staff or project partners, or digitally by the evaluation team, and provided to UNICEF for safekeeping.	X

		<p>You have some consent text at the start of the survey questionnaire. Please confirm you will also have survey subjects receive and complete the full consent form.</p> <p>Yes, the survey participants will receive the full consent form as well.</p>	
6.3	Does the IC include a clear and simple invitation to participate, an explanation of what the subject will be expected to do, and why they are being recruited?		X
6.4	Does IC include the purpose of the research presented in simple, age, education, and culturally appropriate local language?		X
6.5	Does IC state that participation is voluntary, and subject may choose to not respond to any or all questions, or may withdraw anytime without consequences?		X
6.6	Does IC include the expected duration of the subject's participation (hours/minutes)?		X
6.7	Are subjects given a clear indication of who will have access to their responses and in what form?		X
6.8	Are subjects given a clear description of potential re-use or sharing of data, with whom, and in what form?		X
6.9	Does IC include a description of any risks or benefits to subjects?	<p>Please include in IC for parents and in children's assent. Thank you, well noted. IC for parents on page 67 have been edited: "The potential benefit for your child's (or the child under your guardianship) participation at this evaluation is to look at his/her experience as a project participant from a different, critical perspective because his/her thoughts will feed into design of any future projects of similar topic. We do not foresee or anticipate any significant risk to your child (child under your guardianship) in taking part in this study. Your child's involvement in the study is voluntary and he/she may withdraw from participation at any time. The research team members are experienced in conducting interviews/surveys and are sensitive to the subject area."</p>	X

		Page 68 the following text was inserted: “The potential benefit for your child’s (or the child under your guardianship) participation at this evaluation is to look at his/her experience as a project participant from a different, critical perspective because his/her thoughts will feed into design of any future projects of similar topic. We do not foresee or anticipate any significant risk to you in taking part in this study. If, however, you feel uncomfortable at any time you can ask for the interview/survey to stop. If you need any support during or after interview/survey, then the researchers will be able to put you in touch with suitable support agencies. The research team are experienced in conducting interviews/surveys and are sensitive to the subject area. The interview/survey questions have been designed with these considerations in mind. ”	
6.10	Does IC include a statement describing how confidentiality (or anonymity) will be maintained, and if there are any limitations to confidentiality?	If applicable, please include a duty to report suspected abuse as a limit to confidentiality. Thank you, the following text was inserted on page 69: “Limitations to confidentiality: if an evaluation participant discloses or is suspected to be at risk outside of the study, the interviewer will acknowledge the risk, and address this by reporting the risk to the project team, and appropriately referring the participant for relevant support, specific to the situation (e.g. providing the phone number of a specialized association, police, local service provider).”	X
6.11	Does IC provide identity and contact info of investigators? Is the form of contact useful and appropriate given power dynamics and access to resources like phones and/ or transport?		X
6.12	For child subjects, is IC being obtained from parent, guardian, caregiver, or authorized representative? If not, is a justification provided for why this is unnecessary?	How and when will you obtain parental consent for children to participate in the interview or survey questionnaire?	X

		Please refer to p. 69 which have been slightly amended: “In the case of minors, the consent of a legal guardian is obligatory, as well as the assent of the child. The project staff will provide support in obtaining signed parental consent prior to interviews or survey. The staff (implementing partners) know the parents and already have experience of getting written permissions from them for project activities.”	
6.13	For child subjects, is their role in the study described adequately and in an age and culturally appropriate manner for them to provide written or verbal <i>assent</i> ?		X
6.14	Do IC materials advise subjects to keep focus group discussions (FGD) confidential from anyone outside the group?		X
6.15	Where subjects differ by type (e.g.: age, sex, risk, status, etc.), are IC documents specific for each type?		X
6.16	Where data collection differs by method (e.g.: survey, FGD, interview, audio recording), do ICs cover each method?		X
6.17	If IC is written, is a copy left with subjects or there is explanation for not doing so?		X
6.18	Additional comments or suggestions		X
Section 7	Subject Protections: Do submitted materials clearly identify protection against risk?		
7.1	Do materials describe protocols for subjects’ safety throughout data collection, analysis, storage, and dissemination?		X
7.2	Are all data collected necessary for the purposes of evidence generation?		X
7.3	Do data analysis and reporting procedures ensure subject confidentiality (or anonymity) and security?		X
7.4	If future contact with subjects is planned, does it provide for confidentiality and data security through the research period and beyond?	Please address—is there any follow up planned with the subjects in this study? No follow up planned with the subjects of the study.	X

7.5	If children or other vulnerable groups are subjects, have personnel had experience working with these groups? If not, what specialized instruction will they receive?	<p>Please describe.</p> <p>Both national consultants are experienced to conduct research among these groups (young people, parents, national and local level stakeholders, etc) . They have necessary qualifications (one team member obtains psychological training and she is a professional social worker, other team member undergone extensive social work training which includes ethics topics) and training to interact with vulnerable groups including children.</p>	X
7.6	Have personnel collecting data from subjects had ethical training specific to the target group?		X
7.7	Are personnel collecting data aware of ethical issues that may arise and provided mitigation strategies?	<p>Please discuss.</p> <p>Two national consultants will be collecting data remotely with support of UN implementing agencies and their partners for logistical support such as informing participants about the study, obtaining consent/assent forms, ensuring the participants have access to internet connection and mobile means of communication, etc.</p> <p>Both consultants have a profession background of working with vulnerable groups (especially children and their parents, both worked for SOS Children Villages at some point of their careers) and aware of ethical issues that may arise during the evaluation process. Their background include social work with children and parents, research and evaluation in a range of topics including social protection, migration, counter-violent extremism, economic empowerment of women, etc.</p> <p>All consultants involved in the evaluation undergone the following obligatory trainings on ethics: Ethics and Integrity at UNICEF, Introduction to Ethics in Evidence Generation (UNICEF)</p>	X
7.8	Additional comments or suggestions		X

Section 8	Data Protections: Do data collection and storage protocols adequately ensure subject & data safety?	
8.1	Are data collection tools appropriate and constructed to assure subject confidentiality or anonymity?	
8.2	Do data collection procedures and environment ensure data security?	
8.3	Do procedures cover all data types (e.g., written, audio, video, observation), and are protections described for each type?	
8.4	If data will be shared with partners, is there a clear agreement or NDA?	
8.5	Do protocols describe chain of custody of data and protections for data transfer or transmission, storage, de-identification, and destruction?	
8.6	Additional comments or suggestions	

Annex 15. Information about the Evaluators

Tommaso Balbo Di Vinadio, International Consultant, Team leader (Paris)
<tommasobalbo@gmail.com>

- Evaluation team management
- Methodology development
- Data collection: UN interviews on par with National Consultants, focus groups
- Data analysis
- Responsible for drafting and quality assurance of all deliverables

Gulnara Asilbekova, National Consultant 1 (Bishkek)
<gulnara.asilbekova@yahoo.com>

- Contribution to methodology
- Data collection: documents, interviews, questionnaire (national duty bearers, UN jointly with International Consultant, duty bearers and right holders at local level (3 municipalities))
- Review, analysis, support and advice

- Input for reports, review of Russian translation

Kanykei Latipova, National Consultant 2 (Bishkek) <klatipova@gmail.com>

- Contribution to methodology
- Data collection: documents, interviews, questionnaire (national duty bearers, duty bearers and right holders, 3 municipalities)
- Review, analysis, support and advice
- Input for reports, Russian translation