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**Mid Term Review
of
Integrated Climate-resilient Transboundary Flood Risk
Management in the Drin River Basin in the Western
Balkans Project**

DRAFT MID TERM REVIEW REPORT

November 2022

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International MTR Consultant**

Mid Term Review of Integrated Climate-resilient Transboundary Flood Risk Management in the Drin River Basin in the Western Balkans Project – November 2022.

Project title: Integrated climate-resilient transboundary flood risk management in the Drin River basin in the Western Balkans (Drin FRM project)		
Country: Regional	Implementing Partner: UNDP Istanbul Regional Hub for Europe and the CIS	Management Arrangements : DIM
Regional Programme Outcome 3: Building resilience to shocks and crises through enhanced prevention and risk-informed development		
UNDP Strategic Plan Outcome 3. Build resilience to shocks and crises		
UNDP Strategic Plan Outcome Indicator 3.1. Number of people per 100,000 that are covered by early warning information through local governments or through national dissemination mechanisms (disaggregated by sex)		
UNDP Social and Environmental Screening Category: Risk: moderate	UNDP Gender Marker: GEN 2	
Atlas Project ID (formerly Award ID): 00120252	Atlas Output ID (formerly Project ID): IRH: 00116503 / Albania: 00117016 Montenegro: 00117017 / North Macedonia: 00117018	
UNDP-GEF PIMS ID number: 6215	GEF ID number:	
Planned start date: September 2019	Planned end date: December 2024	
PAC meeting date: 19 July 2019		
The objective of the project is to assist the riparian countries in the implementation of an integrated climate-resilient river basin flood risk management approach in order to improve their existing capacity to manage flood risk at regional, national and local levels and to enhance resilience of vulnerable communities in the Drin River Basin (DRB) to climate-induced floods. The following results shall be achieved: (i) Improved climate and risk informed decision-making, availability and use of climate risk information;(ii) Improved institutional arrangements, legislative and policy framework for climate-resilient FRM, and development of CCA and FRM strategy and plans at the basin, sub-basin, national and sub-national levels; (iii) Strengthened community resilience through improved flood management, through implementation of structural and non-structural measures and enhanced local capacity for CCA and FRM.		
FINANCING PLAN		
Adaptation Fund (AF)	USD 9,150,000	
UNDP TRAC resources	n/a	
Cash co-financing to be administered by UNDP	n/a	
Total Budget administered by UNDP	USD 9,150,000	

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Acknowledgements

Many persons contributed to the preparation of this review report; their names are listed in Annex 4 with heartfelt thanks.

The Consultant extends his sincere thanks to Stanislav Kim, Programme Specialist and UNDP IRH Climate and Disaster Team Lead a.i. and Clotilde Goeman, Technical Advisor CCA for their valuable comments on the Draft MTR Report.

The Consultant is also indebted to Bojan Kovacevic, Regional Project Manager of Drin FRM Project and his team is greatly appreciated for their constant support and providing the needed input to the mission. Special thanks of the Consultant also go to Odeta Cato, Drin FRM National Coordinator for Albania (OC), Nikola Zdraveski, Drin FRM National Coordinator for North Macedonia (NZ), Viktor Subotic, National Project Coordinator for Montenegro for rendering their support and input in organizing meetings and for providing translation facilities during meetings and interviews with stakeholders and accompanying throughout the field site visits.

The cooperation extended by the Mayors of Lezhe and Debarca municipalities and their staff during this MTR was of great help and is gratefully acknowledged. The completion of this evaluation became possible only because of the freely given time and consideration of the stakeholders and beneficiary groups.

In accordance with normal practice, the contents of this report are the sole responsibility of the author and can in no way be taken to reflect the views of the United Nations Development Programme.

*Dr. Hamid Chaudhry
International MTR Consultant
November, 2022*

Acronyms and Abbreviations

AF	Adaptation Fund
APSFR	Area of Potentially Significant Flood Risk
CCA	Climate Change Adaptation
CPD	Country Programme Document
CPPIA	Consultative Participatory Process and Iterative Approach
CO	Country Office
CSOs	Civil Society Organizations
DCG	Drin Core Group
DRB	Drin River Basin
EIA	Environmental Impact Assessment
ESIA	Environmental and Social Impact Assessment
ESMF	Environmental and Social Management Framework
ESMP	Environmental and Social Management Plans
FFEWS	Flood Forecasting and Early Warning System
EWGF	Expert Working Group on Floods
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
FRM	Flood Risk Management
GEF	Global Environmental Facility
GIZ	Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit GmbH
GWP-Med	Global Water Partnership Organization - Mediterranean
HS	Highly Satisfactory
HU	Highly Unsatisfactory
HydroMet	Hydro-meteorological
IC	International Consultant
IR	Inception Report
IRH	Istanbul Regional Hub
M&E	Monitoring and evaluation
MTR	Mid Term review
MoAFWM	Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Water Management
MoESP	Ministry of Environment and Spatial Planning
WRMA	Water Resources Management Agency
MS	Moderately satisfactory
MU	Moderately Unsatisfactory
NCE	Nature, Climate and Energy
NRM	Natural Resource Management
O&M	Operation and Maintenance
OFP	Operational Focal Point
PMU	Project Management Unit
PPRs	Project Performance Reports
PSC	Project Steering Committee
PWDs	Persons with Disabilities
RP	Responsible Party
RPM	Regional Project Manager
S	Satisfactory
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
SESP	Social and Environmental Screening Procedure
SMART	Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Relevant, Time-bound
ToR	Terms of Reference
UNDAF	United Nations Development Assistance Framework
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNDP CO	UNDP Country Office

UNEG

United Nations Evaluation Group

ECXECUTIVE SUMMARY

A. Project Information Table

Project title: Integrated climate-resilient transboundary flood risk management in the Drin River basin in the Western Balkans (Drin FRM project)		
Country: Regional	Implementing Partner: UNDP Istanbul Regional Hub for Europe and the CIS	Management Arrangements : DIM
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UNDP TRAC resources	n/a
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Total Budget administered by UNDP	USD 9,150,000

B. Project Description

The project, executed by UNDP Istanbul Regional Hub (IRH), was designed to assist the riparian countries - Albania, Montenegro and North Macedonia in the implementation of an integrated climate-resilient river basin flood risk management (FRM) approach in order to improve their existing capacity to manage flood risk at regional, national and local levels and to enhance resilience of vulnerable communities in the Drin River Basin (DRB) to climate-induced floods. Participating countries benefit from a basin-wide transboundary FRM framework based on: Outcome 1 -*Improved climate and risk informed decision-making, availability and use of climate risk information*; Outcome 2 - *Improved institutional arrangements, legislative and policy framework for climate-resilient FRM, and development of Climate Change Adaptation (CCA) and FRM strategy and plans at the basin, sub-basin, national and sub-national levels*; and Outcome 3 - *Strengthened community resilience through improved flood management, through implementation of structural and non-structural measures and enhanced local capacity for CCA and FRM*. The envisaged transformative change is

the increased livelihoods resilience of approximately 1.6 million people living in the riparian communities in the DRB to climate-induced floods by a paradigm shift to a holistic, basin-wide, climate-responsive flood risk management and adaptation approach based on enhanced climate information, risk knowledge and community (non) structural adaptation measures.

C. Project Progress Summary

The overall progress is rated as ‘Satisfactory (S)’, as the project activities have remained on track to achieve most of its major outcomes/outputs, despite delays caused by COVID-19 pandemic. Field missions had to be put off until Q3 & Q4 2021, while relevant deliverables, such as the Assessment of the Hydrometeorological Monitoring Networks in the DRB were completed with a delay. Strong project effectiveness was evident as all the stakeholders were fully involved in the project activities and satisfied with the outcomes. Genuine interest and ownership from all stakeholders also played an important role in achieving the desired outputs under the project.

Most of the outputs of Outcome 1 have been efficiently and effectively achieved, while implementation of activities is in progress to achieve the outputs of Outcome 3. However, progress of Outcome 2 being implemented by the Global Water Partnership - Mediterranean (GWP-Med) is behind the other two Outcomes as delays have been observed in implementation of most of the planned activities. The progress needs to be reassessed and plans adjusted at least semi-annually if all outputs are to be achieved.

MTR Ratings and Achievement Summary

Measure	MTR Rating	Achievement Description
Project Strategy	N/A	In general, the design and output of the project activities were relevant. Project components and activities identified in the project document were based on the needs and priorities at the regional, national and local levels. Interventions corresponded to the output and are consistent with the riparian countries’ requirements and development priorities and UNDP/NCE and AF policies in contributing to climate change and environment protection. Gender considerations have been embedded in all project activities. The risk and assumptions and mitigation measures were identified as a part of project design and strategy. The Project Results Framework and work plans clearly spelled out the project objective, outcomes, outputs with SMART indicators and targets, activities, milestones and risks and assumptions.
Progress Towards Results	Objective Achievement Rating: S	As evidenced by minutes of the meetings of coordination mechanisms and Regional Project Board/ Drin Core Group, project reports, interviews of the key project stakeholders and national implementing partners, field visits and interviews of the local communities’ leaders, the objective is expected to achieve most of the targets.
	<i>Outcome 1: Improved climate and risk informed decision-making, availability and use of climate risk information</i> Achievement Rating: HS	MTR found that most of the targets of this outcome have achieved, as evidenced through project reports, minutes from the Regional Project Board (RPB) meetings and interviews of the National Hydromet Services officials and field visits. Target number of procured and installed stations has been achieved. Data repository established, intermittency of historical data acquired from national HydroMets addressed and overcome; database created and MoUs with National HydroMets Services signed; detailed hydrological model and hazard maps developed; numerical hi-level basin wide hydrologic model developed; numerical hi-level basin wide hydraulic model developed.

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	<p><i>Outcome 2: Improved institutional arrangements, legislative and policy framework for climate-resilient FRM, and development of CCA and FRM strategy and plans at the basin, sub-basin, national and sub-national levels</i></p> <p>Achievement Rating: MS</p>	<p>Delays have been observed in delivery of most of sub-deliverables or final deliverables by the Responsible Party - Global Water Partnership Organization (GWP-Med), such as the Review of existing FRM policies and Institutional capacity assessment and gap analysis, Basin risk financing and transfer strategy, and Revision of ToR of the Drin Expert Working Group on Floods (EWGF). Development of a five-year work program of the Drin EWG Floods.</p>
	<p><i>Outcome 3: Strengthened community resilience through improved flood management, through implementation of structural and non-structural measures and enhanced local capacity for CCA and FRM</i></p> <p>Achievement Rating: S</p>	<p>Review of project documents, interviews with the government staff, implementing partners and beneficiaries, field visits evidenced that most of the targets of this outcome have been achieved, while others that are underway expected to be completed within the stipulated project time. Particular attention has been paid by the project to the social and environmental standards (SES) while implementing the (non)structural flood protection measures, as evidenced by the SES screening reports, the Environmental and Social Impact Assessments (ESIAs), and the relevant management measures developed, such as the Environmental and Social Management Plans (ESMPs), with site-specific risk aversion and safeguards mitigation measures.</p>
Project Implementation & Adaptive Management	<p>Rating: HS</p>	<p>Implementation of all seven components – management arrangements, work planning, finance and co-finance, project-level monitoring and evaluation systems, stakeholder engagement, reporting, and communications – is leading to reasonably efficient implementation. Some shortcomings came in terms of effectiveness. Several adaptive management processes underway or already implemented. Adaptive management measures have been instituted in response to evolving circumstances in the region. The project is benefitting from a qualified and dedicated Project Management Unit (PMU), and the UNDP Istanbul Regional Hub (IRH) which have provided administrative and strategic guidance.</p> <p>All key stakeholders interviewed were very satisfied not only with the project results, but also with the way the project was managed. Project management has been successful in bringing on board and maintaining interest of key stakeholders as well as beneficiaries on all levels.</p>
Sustainability	<p>Rating: ML</p>	<p>At this point, the end beneficiaries and owners of the structural measures implemented by the project committed the budgetary funds for operations and maintenance (O&M) for the infrastructure by Letters of Commitment. However, financial capacity for O&M may be problematic in the long term. Finding ways for building up funds for O&M of the infrastructures and improvement of hydro-meteorological network, and flood forecasting and early warning system (FFEWS) and moreover, maintaining and replacing capital investments will be a challenge for the participating governments institutions to ensure long term sustainability. Socio-economic risks were determined through the SESP for each project structural intervention and addressed by the ESMP.</p> <p>All project activities are carried out in line with the existing regulatory framework. Technical knowledge transfer is constantly ongoing, during as well as after activity completion. Partnering governments' institutions suffer from chronic lack of funds. However, project addressed this by Memoranda of Understanding (MoU) with relevant institutions which foresee activities on behalf of partnering institutions on O&M of the installed hydromet monitoring stations.</p>

D. Conclusions

The project activities remained on track to achieve most of its major outcomes/outputs, despite delays caused by COVID-19 pandemic. This is a transboundary ground-breaking project for the Western Balkans (riparian countries) in a technical and institutional way. From a technical aspect the project has introduced climate change in hydrological modelling, developed basin-wide hydrological model using Hydrologic Modeling System (HEC HMS) software package, basin-wide 1D numerical hydraulic model, detailed hydrological and hydraulic 2D models for the areas of potentially significant flood risk (APSFRs)¹ in Albania and North Macedonia, as well as contributed to the hydromet monitoring networks that feed the flood forecasting and early warning system (FFEWS)². The methodologies for the flood mapping could be replicated in other countries and regions with homogeneous characteristics. Effective partnerships were established with the National Hydrometeorological Services and with all other relevant national stakeholders such as National Water Administrations and relevant ministries, as well as with the similar development initiatives run by GIZ and EU IPA.

E. Recommendations

Based on the analysis of project progress, the needs for ensuring project sustainability as well as the need to increase project benefits have become obvious. Recommendations are respectively formulated as follows:

Problem	Recommendation	Responsibility
Given that several assumptions in the Project Result Framework partially or fully did not hold true, related to the non-existence of legal regulatory reform and framework (absence of an international framework agreement on the basin management and relevant joint management entity/commission), and thus lack of DCG's legal authority to enforce and implement policies and strategies at basin and down to national levels, effective adoption implementation of strategies and policies developed under the Outcome 2 (primarily Basin-wide FRM Strategy and FRM Plan) are at risk.	UNDP together with GWP-Med as the RP, to strongly advocate with the basin-wide national stakeholders, including DCG members, the development, signing and ratification of an international agreement for the management of DRB, followed by establishment of a Joint Commission. This activity was targeted for completion by end 2022 by the Strategic Action Programme (SAP) developed under GEF "Enabling transboundary cooperation and integrated water resources management in the extended transboundary Drin River Basin" project (hereinafter referred to as GEF Drin project) and adopted by DCG in 2020. Development of a basin-level legal institutional framework is a need also recognized by the AF commissioned study on Transboundary Approaches to Climate Adaptation from 2022.	DCG, DRIN FRM Project
The assessment of the institutional capacities of the national hydrometeorological services carried out during MTR and by the project Lead Hydrometric Networks Expert showed that there was a lack of human capacities (understaffing) as well as	Assurance on these issues may be sought from the ministries/departments in order to achieve the project's desired results and for the sustainability of project initiatives.	DCG, partner institutions of riparians

¹ APSFRs in EU Floods Directive terminology or "areas of further assessment" as described in the Project Document.

² The hydraulic modelling, flood hazard and flood risk mapping in Montenegro is not done by this project as the entire territory of Montenegro was already being modelled and mapped by the "Support to Implementation and Monitoring of Water Management, Montenegro", EU IPA funded project managed by the Public Works Administration in Montenegro. Thus, this project fully synergized with EU IPA project and provided strong technical support, particularly in the hydrological assessment of certain APSFRs in Niksic and Cetinje municipalities in Montenegro.

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adequate financial resources (underbudgeting) to maintain minimum standard of services in water monitoring.		
Acquiring necessary historical hydrometeorological data series took longer than expected time due to unavailability of data in digital format, and technical issues such as chronic understaffing of national hydromet services, intermittency of data for certain time periods and inexistence of joint repository for such data. A comprehensively designed Drin Information Management System (IMS) was established during the preceding GEF Drin project, however found not to be fully functional to provide necessary (meta) data. This has been evidenced through the hydrometeorological networks and institutional assessment.	It is recommended to further build transboundary cooperation between the riparian states, beyond the MoU from 2011. For example, the mandate that the DCG derives from the MoU is insufficient to cover many needs and aspects of the transboundary cooperation, the latter in need of strong institutional and legislative framework. Example: the issue of the above-mentioned structural measure along Bojana/Buna River, firstly addressed by the project to the DCG, had to be resolved through another venue, i.e., the Bilateral Albania – Montenegro Commission on Management of the Transboundary Waters.	DCG, GWP, partner institutions of riparians
Further to the MoUs that UNDP COs signed with the National Hydro-meteorological Services of riparian countries, the Project is recommended to develop bi-lateral coordination mechanisms with the key national implementing partners to facilitate a successful transfer of the socio-economic vulnerability models and flood hazard and flood risk maps developed and/or finalized under the Outcome 1.	A tailor-made training plan addressing specific needs of individual national partners/end beneficiaries of these products needs to be developed, and trainings implemented during and after the transfer, including support for use of the advanced tools. For this, the pending institutional capacity assessment and gap analysis from the Outcome 2 would be of great benefit to the project.	Drin FRM Project
The implementation of Component 2 by GWP-Med lags behind other two Components, and particularly related to major outputs under Component 2 may affect timelines and quality of the further progress, such as the enhancing the work of the EWGF through development of comprehensive ToR and five-year Work Programme under the Output 2.2. Also operationally, the RP has utilized (including commitments) only 16.5% of the total outsourced amount of US\$ 592,810).	It is recommended that the UNDP project team, particularly its international experts, continue providing strong technical support to the GWP-Med so that the timeliness and quality of its deliverables to be developed under the Outcome 2 are fully met. Progress under Outcome 2 should be assessed by wider UNDP team at least semi-annually, detailed 2023 and 2024 Schedule of Activities and Work Plans be adjusted accordingly.	Drin FRM Project Team, GWP
Identification of some measures under Outcome 3, which had not been pre-selected during project design, depended on the development of socio-economic prioritization modelling tools and flood risk maps under Outcome 1. There is a need for continuous technical support to further transfer the knowledge and capacitate national staff of the riparian counties. Additionally, project implementation was affected due COVID-19 pandemic. Outcome 2 is also not complete.	It is recommended that the progress may be closely monitored in the next 6 months, and possibility of a no-cost extension (NCE) may be kept in mind, and do a forward planning, if deemed necessary.	UNDP IRH, GWP

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. MTR Purpose

UNDP commissioned this Mid Term Review (MTR) for the *Integrated Climate-resilient Transboundary Flood Risk Management in the Drin River Basin in the Western Balkans (Drin FRM) Project*³. The MTR assesses the progress towards the achievement of the project objectives and outcomes as specified in the Project Document and assesses early signs of project success or failure with the goal of identifying the necessary changes to be made in order to set the project on-track to achieve its intended results. The MTR also reviewed the project's strategy and its risks to sustainability.³ MTR ToR are attached as [Annex 1](#).

1.2. MTR Scope

The MTR Consultant was to assess the following four (4) categories of project progress. The team was to refer on the Guidance for Conducting Midterm Reviews of UNDP-Supported, GEF-Financed Projects for extended descriptions. The four categories of performance aspects assessed include:

- i. Project Strategy
 - Project design
 - Results Framework/Logframe
- ii. Progress Towards Results
 - Progress Towards Objectives and Outcomes Analysis
- iii. Project Implementation and Adaptive Management
 - Management Arrangements • Work Planning
 - Finance and co-finance
 - Project-level Monitoring and Evaluation Systems
 - Stakeholder Engagement
 - Reporting • Communications
- iv. Sustainability
 - Financial risks to sustainability
 - Socio-economic risks to sustainability
 - Institutional Framework and Governance risks to sustainability
 - Environmental risks to sustainability

1.3. MTR approach and methodology

The MTR is an evidence-based assessment, relying on feedback from individuals who have been involved in the design, implementation, and supervision of the project, review of available documents, and findings of online stakeholder surveys. The overall approach and methodology of the MTR followed the Adaptation Fund Evaluation Framework (rev. 2012), guidelines outlined in the *UNDP Guidance for Conducting MTR of UNDP-*

³ ToR of Mid Term Review (MTR) for the “Integrated Climate-resilient Transboundary Flood Risk Management in the Drin River Basin in the Western Balkans (Drin FRM) Project”.

supported GEF-financed Projects,⁴ United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG) Norms and Standards of Evaluation, principles and guidelines. While collecting information the Consultant ensured the respect of stakeholders' rights, dignity, security, privacy and self-worth in accordance with UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights⁵ and UNEG 'Ethical Guidelines for Evaluation'⁶ are strictly followed.

The review was carried out over the period of August-November 2022. To achieve these objectives, the review was conducted in close cooperation with the client, the project team, stakeholders and beneficiaries. Based on a thorough understanding of the project ToR and objectives and the institutional and policy framework in the Western Balkans, the project was thoroughly assessed. Main activities included desk review of documents, various interactive interviews, field visits and completion of the report.

The MTR's principal guide was the Project Document and the Results Framework. The methodological approach was synthesized into an MTR Matrix ([Annex 2](#)), which guided the Consultant and provided an analytical framework for data collection and analysis tool, and conducting the MTR. The MTR matrix was divided into each of the 4 MTR criteria – project strategy, progress towards results, project implementation and adaptive management and sustainability. This MTR adopted purposive random sampling approach to select project sites to be visited in the field and interlocutors. The purposive sampling approach considered core factors including spatial distribution of the interventions and the extent over which specific stakeholders have implemented project interventions.

Drawing inspiration from the scope and purpose in the ToR, the MTR exercise was conducted through three phases: (i) Preparatory/inception phase (inception report - desk review, finalization of methodology, work plan); (ii) Implementation phase (data collection, analysis and consolidation, mission wrap up with Project Team; and (iii) Final phase (preparation of draft report, review and incorporating stakeholders' comments and preparation of final MTR report).

The desk review was a critical part of the review as it provided the basic facts and information for developing MTR report, while the mission is required to verify the basic facts, obtain missing data and to learn opinions of respondents to help interpret the facts. The project documentation was provided by the Regional Project Manager (RPM). The list of documents reviewed is attached as [Annex 3](#).

Stakeholder interviews were held in riparian countries - Albania, Montenegro and North Macedonia. The stakeholders included the staff of participating ministries and departments, institutions of national importance (e.g. national hydrometeorological services, water management agencies, etc.), municipalities, ultimate beneficiaries, the Responsible Party (RP) and other partners. Vigorous discussions were also held with the Project Team. The list of people interviewed is presented in [Annex 4](#). Field visits were undertaken to the Areas of Potentially Significant Flood Risk (APSFRs), areas for SE data and flood mark collections with IDRA Consultancy, in the Municipalities of Lezhe and Shkodra in the lower Drin/Drim – Buna/Bojana in Albania; Niksic Municipality (Gracanica River structural measure location) in Montenegro; and Ohrid, Struga (urban part of the Crn Drim river) and Debrca (site of the ongoing structural intervention in the Sateska Riverbed) municipalities in North Macedonia. MTR mission Itinerary is attached as [Annex 5](#). The separate questionnaires were designed and used for each category of stakeholders for interviews and seek their views on the project. Questionnaires are attached as [Annex 6](#).

⁴ Guidance For Conducting Midterm Reviews of UNDP-Supported, GEF-Financed Projects, UNDP-GEF Directorate, 2014 United Nations Development Programme.

⁵ UNEG Integrating Human Rights and Gender Equality in Evaluation -Towards UNEG Guidance, UNEG/G (2011)2, March 2011.

⁶ UNEG Ethical Guidelines for Evaluation, UNEG, March 2008.

Evidence gathered during the MTR was cross-checked between as many sources as practicable, to validate the findings. Both qualitative and quantitative was triangulated, through cross verification from two or more sources. The use of mixed methods for the MTR enabled the MTR Consultant to obtain data and information that had the following characteristics: trustworthiness, credibility, dependability, legitimation, validity, plausibility, applicability, consistency, neutrality, reliability, objectivity, conformability, and/ or transferability. Data entry, cleaning, and analysis were a continuous process during and after data collection. Field notes and transcripts of interviews and qualitative information were analysed and validated while conducting data collection.

Following gender-responsive methodologies, the data were also collected on the UNDP cross-cutting issues of gender equality, women empowerment, Persons with Disability (PwD) and youth. All data gathered was disaggregated to the largest extent possible.

The RPM provided a self-assessment of progress towards results, using the project results framework template provided by the MTR Consultant in the MTR inception report. The project results framework was used as an evaluation tool, in assessing attainment of project objective and outcomes.

The detailed methodology is presented in the Inception Report.

1.4. Limitations

There were no significant limitations associated with language. Most of the project documentation is in English, an independent interpreter supported the stakeholder interviews, and the PMU provided English summaries of documents and information that were only available in local languages.

Overall, the MTR Consultant concludes that the information and feedback obtained sufficiently captured the progress made on the project, remaining barriers, and prospects for sustaining results after AF funding ceases.

1.5. Structure of the MTR report

Structure of the MTR report was prepared in accordance with the outline specified in the UNDP-GEF MTR guideline and nine evaluation criteria from the draft AF Evaluation. The report starts out with a description of the project, indicating the duration, main stakeholders, and the immediate and development objectives. The findings of the evaluation are broken down into the following categories:

- Project Strategy
- Progress towards results
- Project implementation and adaptive management
- Sustainability
- Conclusions and recommendations
- Annexes

The report culminates with a summary of the conclusions reached and recommendations formulated to enhance implementation during the final period of the project implementation timeframe.

2. PROJECT DESCRIPTION AND BACKGROUND CONTEXT

2.1. Development context

All the Riparian countries of the Drin/Drim basin are developing middle-income economies⁷. Since the early 1990-ties, all Riparian countries have gone through successful transition from centralized economies to market-based economies. The Human Development Indices was 0.796 for Albania (Rank 67), 0.832 (rank 49) for Montenegro and 0.770 (Rank 78) for RNM⁸. Despite this, public debt in Albania and Montenegro remains high (71 and 68% GDP respectively), while in North Macedonia it is at 38.70% of GDP, relatively low compared to its Western Balkan neighbors and the rest of Europe. Unemployment remains high (14% in Albania, 17% in Montenegro and 21.6% in RNM) as does the percentage of population living below the poverty line - 14% to 9% and 21% Albania, Montenegro and North Macedonia, respectively.⁹

2.2. Problems that the project sought to address

The Drin River Basin (DRB) is a transboundary river basin, which is home to 1.6 million people and extends across Albania (30% of basin area, 27% of total country area, 37% of basin population), Kosovo¹⁰, the Republic of North Macedonia (RNM) (17% of basin area, 13% of total country area, and 11% of basin population), Montenegro (22% of basin area, 32% of total country area, and 17% of basin population) and Greece. Climate change and climate variability have been increasing the frequency, intensity and impact of flooding in the basin.

Historical flood data from the Western Balkans DRB riparian countries in particular, suggests a more frequent occurrence of flood events, attributed to an uneven distribution of precipitation and torrential rain, particularly over the last decade (2010). More and larger areas and, therefore, a greater population numbers are being affected by flooding with a strong impact on national economies. Future climate scenarios project a further increase in the likelihood of floods as well as in their destructive nature. The socio-economic vulnerability is high due to the high (9-21%) poverty rate of the Riparian countries. Poverty and unemployment are particularly widespread in rural and mountainous areas of the basin. Vulnerability factors also include poor urban planning, unsustainable water management and agricultural practices, deforestation, industrial pollution and poor waste management in areas highly exposed to flooding.

Additionally, the impacts of climate-induced flooding are exacerbated by the anthropogenic pressures. Diverse and often conflicting uses and unsustainable management approaches applied in the DRB exert severe pressures on the Basin's ecosystems leading to their degradation, including solid waste & marine litter; wastewater; unsustainable use of water resources; hydro-morphological interventions including the construction of dams; extraction of minerals/mining; intensive agriculture and forestry; uncontrolled and often illegal fishing and hunting; erratic land use and urban development; unsustainable tourism; increasing climate variability. These pressures lead to a wide range of impacts such as: deforestation, pollution of surface and ground waters, accelerated soil erosion; salinization and salt water intrusion; loss of valuable ecosystems and biodiversity; greater exposure to floods; increasing health risks, and increased flood risk.

These non-climate factors were analyzed and addressed in the sub-region through a regional GEF supported project "Enabling Transboundary Cooperation and Integrated Water Resources Management in the Extended Drin River Basin" (GEF Drin Project), implemented by UNDP and executed by GWP, that supported the

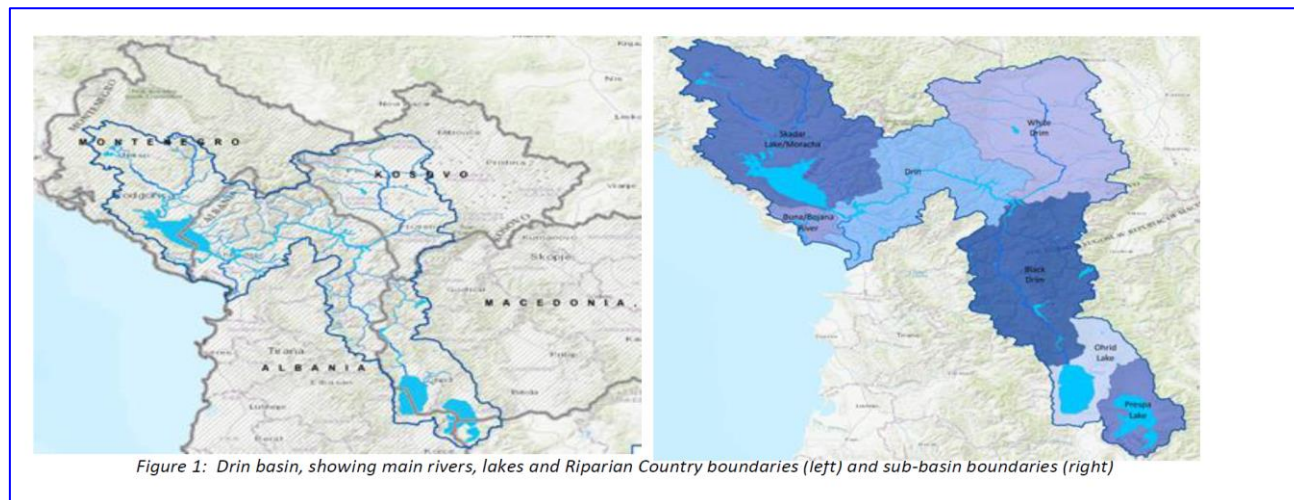
⁷ With the exception of Greece which is a developed country, but not included in this proposal.

⁸ The Human Development Report 2021/2022, UNDP.

⁹ Project Document –Integrated Climate-resilient Transboundary Flood Risk Management in the Drin River Basin in the Western Balkans (Drin FRM) Project, UNDP Albania, 2019.

¹⁰ References to Kosovo shall be understood to be in the context of Security Council Resolution 1244 (1999)

implementation of the Drin MoU for the coordinated management of the Drin Basin. However, the GEF-supported project and the on-going baseline sub-regional initiatives could not comprehensively address climate change adaptation needs of the riparian countries and establish a comprehensive basin level climate risk and flood risk management.



A review of the institutional and legal framework for water management in the DRB found that national legislation was not fully aligned with the EU Acquis. There was high fragmentation of competencies, overlapping/conflicting responsibilities of institutions; no basin management plans addressing climate risks; limited monitoring; non-reliable, non-harmonized and limited sharing of data among institutions within and between countries; no basin water cadaster; water management investment was not supported by robust analysis, no investment plans and no comprehensive financial risk transfer mechanisms. There is currently no formal basin level flood risk management in place for the Drin basin but the current practices in each Riparian country which constitute the baseline for FRM for the Drin Basin has been elaborated.¹¹

The increasing risk posed by climate change coupled with anthropogenic activities are leading to increased vulnerability of the populations of the Drin River Basin which calls for increased international collaboration in river basin flood management and sound adaptation measures as a focus area of sustainable water management. However, there is a number of barriers to effective basin-level flood risk management which need to be addressed to ensure effective integrated flood risk management for the basin:

- Lack of financial, technical and human capacities within the national Hydrometeorological Services, insufficient technologies, equipment, data and tools for flood hazard, risk and vulnerability assessments
- Limited capacities and insufficient policy framework for basin-level coordination, cooperation and joint basin-level strategic action on flood risk management
- Flood risk reduction, including flood protection measures, do not adequately integrate climate risk information, ecosystem-based and non-structural approaches to climate resilience

The proposed project will enhance resilience of the DRB countries and communities to climate-induced flood risks.

¹¹ Ibid 9.

2.3. Project Description and Strategy

The objective of the project is to assist the riparian countries (Kosovo was made exempt due to its legal status under the UN 1244 resolution) in the implementation of an integrated climate-resilient river basin flood risk management approach in order to improve their existing capacity to manage flood risk at regional, national and local levels and to enhance resilience of vulnerable communities in the DRB to climate-induced floods. Participating countries, Albania, Montenegro and North Macedonia, benefit from a basin-wide transboundary flood risk management (FRM) framework based on improved climate risk knowledge and information; improved transboundary cooperation arrangements and policy framework for FRM and; concrete FRM interventions. To realize this goal, the following results will be achieved:

- (i) Improved climate and risk informed decision-making, availability and use of climate risk information;
- (ii) Improved institutional arrangements, legislative and policy framework for climate-resilient FRM, and development of CCA and FRM strategy and plans at the basin, sub-basin, national and sub-national levels; and
- (iii) Strengthened community resilience through improved flood management, through implementation of structural and non-structural measures and enhanced local capacity for CCA and FRM.

The envisaged transformative change is the increased livelihoods resilience of approximately 1.6 million¹² people living in these riparian communities in the DRB to climate-induced floods by a paradigm shift to a holistic, basin-wide, climate-responsive flood risk management and adaptation approach based on enhanced climate information, risk knowledge and community (non)structural adaptation measures. The proposed participatory approaches enlist carefully tailored activities to help local communities raise their concerns and ensure that “no one is left behind” and that women and disadvantaged groups are actively participating in the governance of riparian areas.

The current flood forecasting and early warning system will be improved by increasing the density of the hydrometric network, and by digitizing historical data for stations not currently in the existing forecasting model. The project will develop and implement transboundary *integrated FRM strategies* providing the national authorities with robust and innovative solutions for FRM, DRR and climate adaptation, including ecosystem-based gender responsive participatory approaches. The gender responsive approach will consider the structural barriers impacting women’s, men’s and vulnerable groups’ abilities to fully benefit from climate-resilient river basin flood risk management and will integrate activities to promote gender equality and social inclusion. In addition, the project will develop the underlying *capacity of national and regional institutions* to ensure sustainability and to scale up the results. It will support stakeholders by providing guidance, sharing climate information, knowledge and best practices. The project will also invest in the *priority structural and community-based non-structural measures*. Importantly, the project is aligned with and will support the implementation of the EU Floods Directive (EUFD) in DRB countries.

The project is based on Results-based Management (RBM) principles, therefore the processes of planning, implementing, monitoring, evaluation of the work, translated in the approaches presented above, will come into effect through three clearly defined development pathways: i) unified basin-scale assessment to support riparian governments to quantify risks and assess their severity hence, clearer long-term strategic policy objectives setting and a strengthened resilience and increased investment in prevention and recovery will be the transformative outcome; ii) enhanced capacities at institutional and individual levels, clarifying mandates and institutional arrangements as well as enabling legislative and policy frameworks for climate-resilient FRM, and development of climate change adaptation (CCA) and FRM strategy and plans at the basin, sub-basin,

¹² Ibid 9

national and sub-national levels; and strengthened community resilience through improved flood management and through implementation of structural and non-structural measures and enhanced local capacity for CCA and FRM.

The most relevant regional strategy that the project will build upon and contribute to is the Drin River Basin Strategic Action Programme (SAP) that was developed in the framework of the GEF Drin project. The project will, above all, develop the Drin Integrated CCA and FRM Plan to be embedded as a sub-plan of the Drin SAP, which will link both projects institutionally. The project implementation will be informed by and facilitate the process of the legislative alignment with EU Directives in the Western Balkan countries in the framework of the EU strategy for 'A credible enlargement perspective for and enhanced EU engagement with the Western Balkans'.

2.4. Project Implementation Arrangements

The project is executed by UNDP Istanbul Regional Hub (IRH), responsible for overall management, ensuring project coherence, preparation and implementation of work plans, budgets, disbursement and administration of funds, financial and progress reporting and monitoring and evaluation. The IRH has engaged the Global Water Partnership-Mediterranean (GWP-Med)¹³ as the subsidiary to the Global Water Partnership Organization (GWPO) as the Responsible Party (RP) for the Outcome 2. As the RP, the GWP-Med implements the project's specific regional activities and provides links with the GEF Drin project, as well as the activities from the Drin Basin Strategic Action Programme (SAP) adopted therein. National, country-based activities under the Adaptation Fund (AF) Drin FRM project are delivered through the UNDP Country Offices (COs) in beneficiary countries (Albania, Montenegro and North Macedonia). The Project Management Unit (PMU) is hosted by the UNDP Albania and led by a Regional Project Manager (RPM) supported by a Project Assistant (PA). The RPM is supported by an International Chief Technical Advisor (CTA, part time) recruited by UNDP for this project. The UNDP Country Offices (COs) are responsible to implement in-country activities as per agreed workplans. IRH ensures financial allocations to Country Offices as per established workplans / activities for each of the country.

The Regional Project Board (RPB) or the Regional Steering Committee (RSC) serves as the project's coordination and decision-making body. The existing Drin Core Group (DCG) serves as the Regional Steering Committee of the Adaptation Fund project. The DCG is a body with the mandate to coordinate actions for the implementation of the Shared Vision for the sustainable management of the Drin Basin and the related Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) signed (Tirana 2011) by the ministries of the water and environment management of the Drin Riparians: Albania, North Macedonia, Greece, Kosovo and Montenegro. The following institutional set up supports the Drin Coordinated Action:

- (i) The Meeting of the Parties;
- (ii) The DCG coordinates implementation of the MoU;
- (iii) Expert Working Groups (EWGFs), an EWGF on Floods is being established; and
- (iv) DCG Secretariat hosted by the Global Water Partnership–Mediterranean (GWP-Med).

The project has built on the experience of preceding GEF Project, whose objective was to promote building consensus among countries on key transboundary concerns and drivers of change, including climate variability and change, and in reaching an agreement on priority actions. The institutional framework is given in [Figure 2](#).

¹³ GWP-Med- hired by UNDP IRH, is the Mediterranean Regional Water Partnership of the inter-governmental organization Global Water Partnership. In its capacity of the Responsible Party of the UNDP/Adaptation Fund project, the GWP-Med is implementing specific regional activities of the project and also provides links with the GEF-funded transboundary project in the Drin River basin as well as the potential SAP implementation activities in the basin.

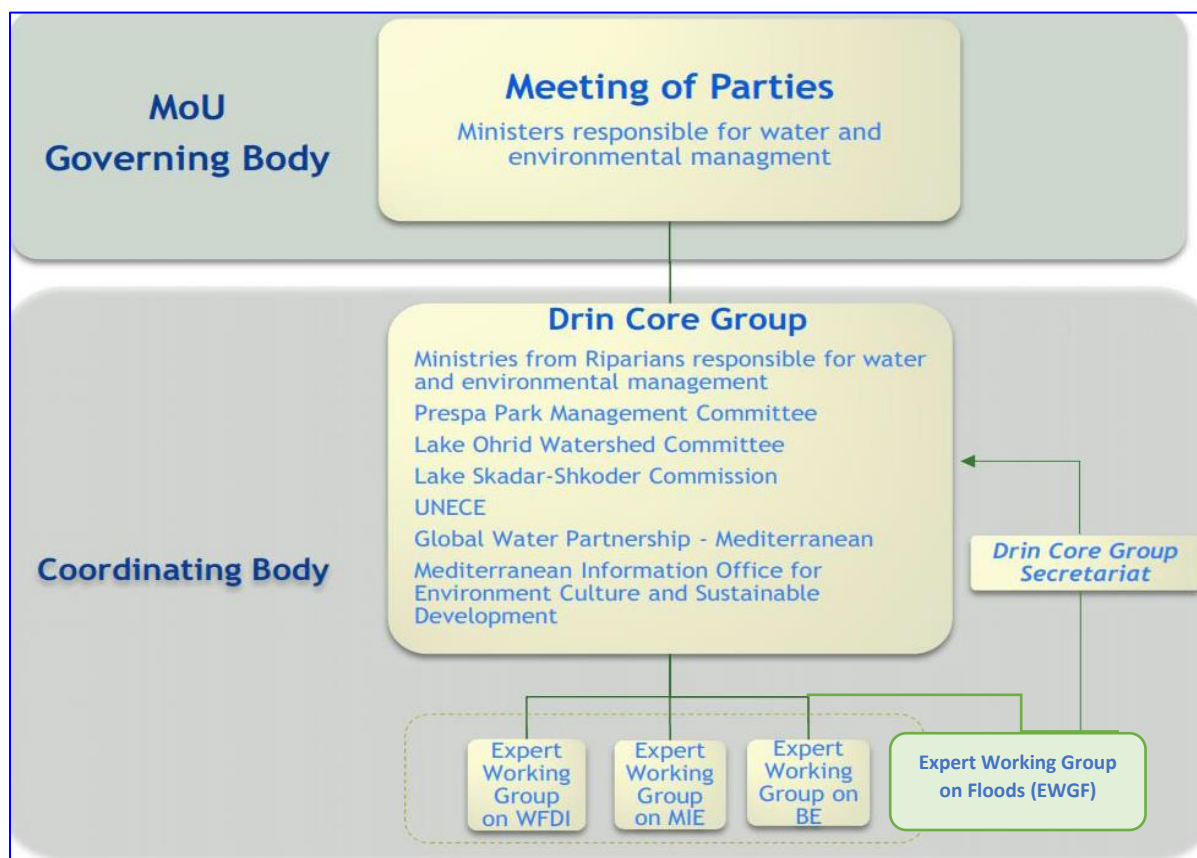


Figure 2: Existing Institutional Framework for the management of the Drin Basin established under the Drin MoU

2.5. Project timing and milestones

Milestone	Date
AFB approval date	15 March 2019
IE-AFB Agreement Signature Date	22 October 2019
Start Date	22 October 2019
Project Inception workshop report	23 November 2020
Mid-term review- (ToR development, consultant's selection)	May 2022
Closing date (planned)	December 2024

2.6. Main stakeholders

Engagement of stakeholders is vital to a successful MTR. Main project stakeholders include:

- Directorate of Waters of the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Water Management of Montenegro
- Department of Waters of the Ministry of Environment and Spatial Planning of North Macedonia
- Water Resources Management Agency of Albania
- national hydro-meteorological services in Albania, Montenegro and North Macedonia

Mid Term Review of Integrated Climate-resilient Transboundary Flood Risk Management in the Drin River Basin in the Western Balkans Project – November 2022.

- executing agencies, senior officials and task team/ component leaders, key experts and consultants in the subject area
- Regional Project Board – Drin Core Group (DCG) members
- UNDP, GEF, AF
- Local government - participating municipalities in Albania, Montenegro and North Macedonia
- Target beneficiaries
- Academia and CSOs, etc.

3. FINDINGS

3.1. Project Strategy

3.1.1 Project Design

The project emphasized a wide embracing goal relating to assist the riparian countries in the implementation of an integrated climate-resilient river basin flood risk management approach in order to improve their existing capacity to manage flood risk at regional, national and local levels and to enhance resilience of vulnerable communities in the DRB to climate-induced floods. There had been a conscious decision to link the project objective with the wider UNDP-NCE (Nature, Climate and Energy) corporate goals and the national development strategies of riparian countries. The project was well-designed, with carefully thought-out strategy to specifically address the transboundary issues. The activities were well defined covering objectives of the project. All the required elements such as project implementation and management mechanism, monitoring and evaluation mechanism, Gender Action Plan, Environmental and Social Management Framework (ESMF), stakeholder engagement plan are covered in the project document.

The scoping missions were conducted by the international expert engaged for the preparation of project document whereas comprehensive and high-inclusive participatory approach involving all identified relevant authorities and stakeholders was conducted and high priorities included.¹⁴ Project design experts conducted field visits alongside Drin/Drim River Basin, meeting with relevant national stakeholders and similar partnering projects implemented by GIZ, UNDP/GWP-Med and others. Initial Social and Environmental Screening Procedure (SESP)¹⁵ was completed to categorize the risk and develop ESMF.

In general, the design and output of the project activities were relevant. Project components and activities identified in the project document were based on the needs and priorities at the Regional, national and local levels.¹⁶ Interventions corresponded to the output and are consistent with the riparian countries' requirements and development priorities and UNDP and AF policies in contributing to climate change and environment protection.

Drin FRM project follows upon lessons learned and success of the past and ongoing interventions, existing data/information, institutional and management frameworks, capacities, and communications and coordination mechanisms built under the GEF Drin project and Drin MOU instrument. A review was undertaken of all previous and ongoing relevant national and regional studies to identify lessons learned which this project can build upon. The GIZ project in the Drin basin has provided opportunities for coordination of efforts, with further consultations taken to ascertain the scope of planned activities to identify synergies and areas for cooperation. Project participated in the GIZ facilitated technical working groups (TWGs) on hydrometry and flood policy. Drin FRM project based its flood hazard and flood risk mapping, among others, on the documents developed by GIZ, and adopted by the riparian governments, such as the Preliminary Flood Risk Assessment (PFRA) of the Drin/Drim River Basin.

¹⁴ Public hearing on Draft Environmental Impact Assessment Study (EIA).

(<https://www.dropbox.com/sh/bbonth4nu6jk5rp/AAA8zdoT4Uo01yloGzFXdPB4a?dl=0>)

¹⁵ Social and Environmental Screening Procedure and ESMF, Drin FRM Project, UNDP Albania.

¹⁶ Inception Report Integrated Climate-Resilient Transboundary Flood Risk Management in The Drin River Basin in The Western Balkans (Drin FRM project, 2020).

UNDP SESP was conducted during the design stage, and the Project ESMF was developed accordingly. Further to that, during the implementation phase, the Project has redone SESP of each pre-identified, as well unidentified subproject (USP, according to the AF identification terminology) structural flood protection measure, using UNDP SESP template, fully adjusted to adhere to the 15 Adaptation Funds Social and Environmental Principles. Further to SESP screening, Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) studies were conducted for each intervention where required by UNDP SES and/or relevant national environmental and social legislation. Full public participation was ensured, as evidenced by reports/ minutes from the public debates and review process facilitated by the respective municipalities. The identified risks were then addressed through detailed Environmental and Social Management Plans (ESMPs), tailored out by the certified professionals for each structural measure.

Gender considerations have been embedded in all project activities. Gender equality as a cross-cutting issue has been made a part of all Terms of Reference, whether concerning the recruitment of the key experts or procurement of gender-responsive design of structural flood protection measures. Thus, all project activities have been gender-sensitive, which will result in the strengthened role of women in decision-making processes concerning the climate change adaptation.

The risk and assumptions and mitigation measures were identified as a part of project design and strategy. However, following assumptions did not prove true.

Assumption: Political will to implement relevant legal-regulatory reform for effective and efficient FRM at national and transboundary level

This assumption partially held true. Declaratory political will exists, however no declared legal-regulatory reform has been initiated yet. Legal-regulatory reforms did not go beyond the MoU signed by riparian in 2011 despite 2-year target set under Sub-Objective 2.1: Strengthening regional governance and policies in the Extended Drin Basin of the Drin Basin Strategic Action Programme (SAP) adopted in 2020: “*Signing an international agreement for the management of the Drin Basin including the establishment of a Joint Commission*” (pg. 38 of the SAP).

Assumption: Riparian governments have political will to implement relevant legal-regulatory reform for effective and efficient FRM framework in line with EUFD

Again, as elaborated in other comments on assumptions, this one is partially held true as the legal-regulatory reform for FRM cannot be done before and without general framework agreement and establishment of joint coordination body, i.e. river commission

Assumption: DCG maintain adequate mandate and authority to spearhead resilient FRM policies and strategies across the sub-region

This assumption did not hold true from the same reasons outlined afore “Political will to implement...”. DCG is coordination mechanism based on the MoU from 2011, however lacking legal authority enforce any policy and strategy at the basin or down at national levels. For that a framework agreement needs to be signed and ratified and a river commission established as foreseen.

Thus, this imposes risk for “endorsement” and *implementation* of policies developed under Outcome 2, specifically Integrated DRB FRM Strategy and FRM Plan under Target Indicator 2.3.

Although out of scope of this project, strong advocacy by project team and through GWP-Med, as the Responsible Party, and moreover the DCG Secretariat and executing entity of the newly designed, UNDP supported, GEF funded, “*Implementing the Strategic Action Programme of the Drin Basin to*

Strengthen Transboundary Cooperation and Enable Integrated Natural Resources Management” project, should be recommended.

Assumption: Beneficiary and partner institutions are willing to cooperate and conduct regulatory and institutional reform

Again, related to afore comments, institutional regulatory reforms cannot go before general framework agreement on Drin River Basin is adopted and ratified.

3.1.2. Project Results Framework

The Project Results Framework and work plans clearly spelled out the project objective, outcomes, outputs with indicators and targets, activities, milestones and risks and assumptions. Project objective, outcomes and outputs were realistically identified and to the large extent achievable and verifiable within the stipulated timeframe. Three components of the project are well defined covering purposes of the project. The Results Framework sets out the expected results for each of these activities. In turn, outputs are defined for which detailed activity planning sheets were prepared. The project activities were implemented through Annual Work Plans. The indicators are considered SMART (Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Relevant, Time-bound) with their baseline level clearly described. The indicators are based on the stakeholder-agreed project objectives and related to outcomes/outputs that can be considered practical and feasible based on stakeholder feedback collected during the MTR meetings. **However, quantifiable target indicators were missing for some outputs, e.g., Indicator target 1.1 b) - target number of new stations to be defined during Year 1. Also, certain baselines under the Results Framework lacked data due to their unavailability at the time of project design** (e.g., national census data). Targets set for the end of the project are achievable. Based on stakeholder discussions project implementation is reported as excellent, providing positive effects for beneficiaries as per the intended project outcomes. The project is further seen as a good practice example for upscaling efforts in other basins in the other regions and countries.

The project budget and co-financing commitments were appropriate for the level of intervention, the intended outputs were achievable for the planned five-year duration of implementation, the capacities of the executing agencies were appropriately effective for the level of project intervention.

3.2. Progress Towards Results

The review of project documents and findings of the interviews reflects that the project was at the right track in achieving majority of its milestones with few exceptions. Strong project effectiveness was evident as all the stakeholders were fully involved in the project activities and satisfied with the outcomes. Careful planning of the project activities, use of quality consulting/training resources and sound M&E plan contributed to the effectiveness of the project activities. This implies that project objectives and outputs were clearly defined, practical, and feasible to achieve under the circumstances. Genuine interest and ownership from all stakeholders also played an important role in achieving the desired outputs under the project.

3.2.1. Progress towards outcome analysis

COVID-19 pandemic outbreak that nearly coincided with the project start, lasted throughout 2021 with varying intensity. During the Inception Period and well into the third year of implementation (2021), travelling within and between the riparian states was subject to various restrictions, thus retaining most

of the communication between internal as well as external stakeholders through virtual approach.¹⁷ Project responded by changing implementation modalities and switching to telecommuting and teleworking of team members, using of e-procurement tools, etc. Effective use of IT tools has helped maintaining momentum over the most of the activities, while those that were related to physical activity in the field have, in most cases, had to be postponed for the post COVID-19 period. Proficiency in contemporary IT skills, allowed project personnel to keep fulfilling relevant tasks while working remotely. However, as the virtual communication could not fully replace physical meetings, especially field visits to conduct assessments, flood hazard and risk modelling, socio-economic mapping (ground truthing) of the communities at risk, etc., the project experienced significant delays in its inception phase and beyond, until the conditions were conducive for field deployment of project experts and personnel. At the time of MTR, all indicators, with a lesser degree those under Component/Outcome 2, were on target to be achieved or are reachable applying adaptive management with several potential issues identified for implementation of future activities. No obvious barriers exist assuming a continued excellent cooperation between project management and stakeholders as well as beneficiaries.

The progress towards outcomes and outputs is described below:

Project Objective

To assist the riparian countries in the implementation of an integrated climate-resilient river basin flood risk management approach in order to improve their existing capacity to manage flood risk at regional, national and local levels and to enhance resilience of vulnerable communities in the DRB to climate-induced floods.

As evidenced by minutes of the meetings of coordination mechanisms and Regional Project Board/ Drin Core Group, project reports, interview of the key project stakeholders and national implementing partners, field visits and interviews of the local communities' leaders, the objective is expected to achieve most of the targets.

Component 1- Hazard and risk knowledge management tools / Outcome 1: Improved climate and risk informed decision-making, availability and use of climate risk information.

Output 1.1 – Strengthened hydrometric monitoring networks in the riparian countries based on a unified optimized basin-scale assessment of monitoring needs

Project has already completed this Output, increasing density and both spatial and altitudinal coverage and efficiency of the hydromet monitoring networks in DRB, providing optimal O&M management plan and enhanced quality of data as input to Flood Forecasting and Early Warning System (FFEWS) across DRB, as evidenced through Expert's Reports, Minutes from the Regional Project Board meetings and interviews of the National Hydromet Services senior management.

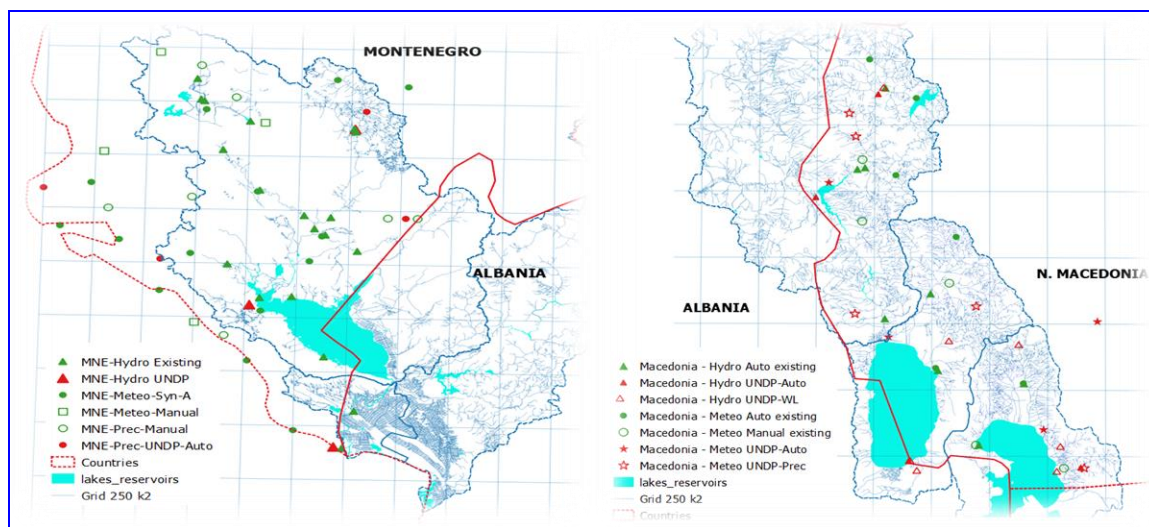
- Assessment of national hydrometeorological networks, and institutional assessment on the O&M of the hydromet networks in North Macedonia, Montenegro, Albania and Kosovo¹⁸ have been completed in full coordination with national hydromet services. Project reached out to Kosovo in these assessments at no additional costs (using the data supplied from their hydrometeorological service) as Kosovo is not part of the project but composes approximately 1/3 of the Drin River Basin. This made the assessments significantly more accurate and comprehensive.

¹⁷ Vertical Fund COVID Survey April 2020, Drin FRM Project, UNDP Albania.

¹⁸ References to Kosovo shall be understood to be in the context of Security Council Resolution 1244 (1999)

- Optimized basin hydrometric network plan, focusing on Flood forecasting and FRM has been **completed**
- Procurement and installation of 6 new hydrological and 4 meteorological monitoring stations in North Macedonia and 3 hydro and 4 meteorological stations in Montenegro was completed while 11 hydro and 5 meteorological stations in N. Macedonia were upgraded, thus improving gathering of needed hydromet data both spatially and altitudinally. Target number of 25 functional hydromet monitoring stations in N. Macedonia defined during Year 1 has been reached.¹⁹

Figure 3 – Maps of the existing and newly installed hydrological and meteorological stations



Output 1.2 - Improved knowledge of climate change induced flood risk, and risk knowledge sharing through the introduction of modelling tools and technologies for the strategic flood risk assessment based on EUFD and development of basin flood hazard maps

- Spatial Data Initiative and data management system for project has been established. Database created and MoU with Hydromet Services were signed. - **completed**
- A detailed geodetical surveillance has been completed in North Macedonia and Albania. **completed**
- High resolution topographic data (DEM) has been acquired from partnering national institutions in Albania and obtained from the aerial LiDAR surveillance of the parts of Crn Drim sub-basin in North Macedonia. - **completed**
- Basin-wide hydrological model is developed using HEC HMS software package, basin-wide 1D numerical hydraulic model developed, detailed hydrological and hydraulic 2D models developed for the APSFRs in Albania and North Macedonia – high resolution flood hazard inundation maps developed. - **completed**
- High level basin model has been developed and integrating AFAs done by other projects. **completed**
- The capacity assessment of relevant institutions for flood risk assessment and modelling and develop a long-term capacity development plan and training needs – **this activity is underway**.

¹⁹ Rating on Implementation Progress - September 2022, Drin FRM Project, UNDP.

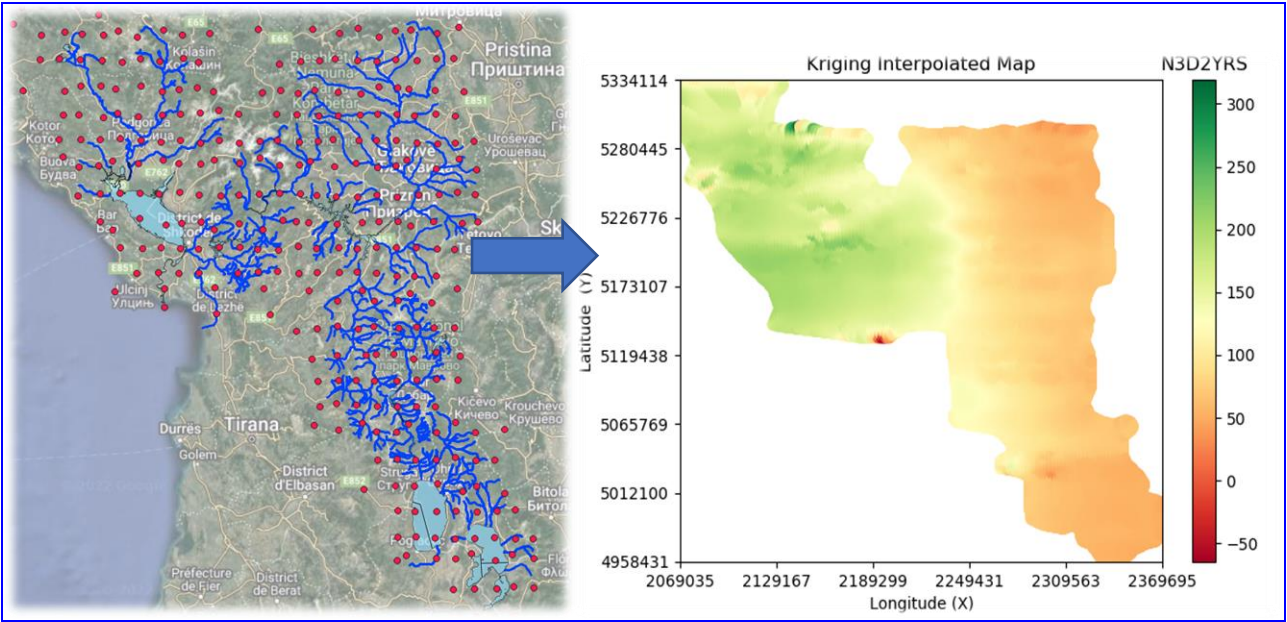


Figure 4 – Rain data statistical treatment then Kriging interpolation for development of the basin-wide hydrological model

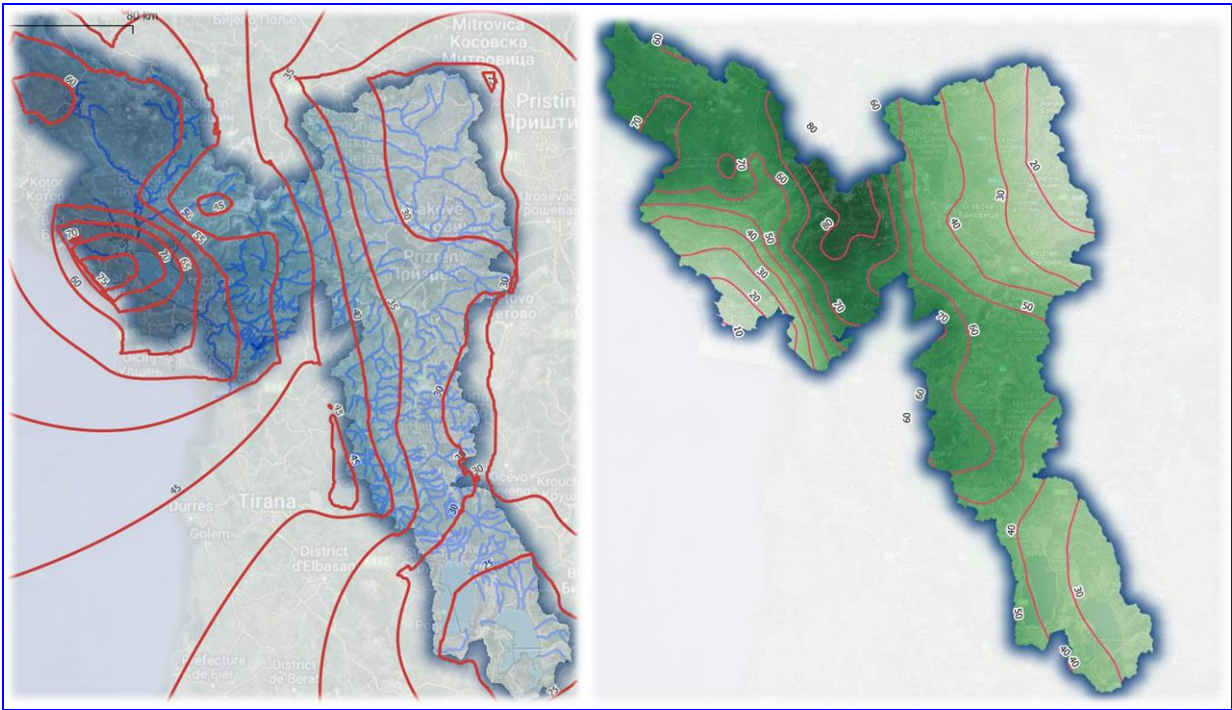


Figure 5 – prepared contours and atlas maps (for rain and snow melting)

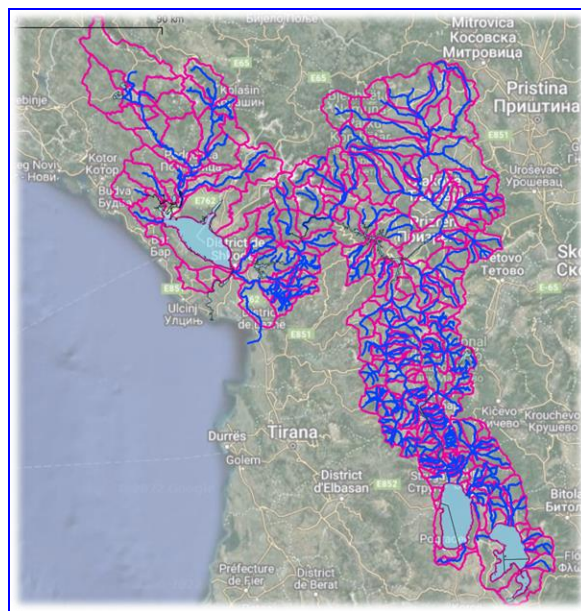


Figure 6 - Hydrological model of the whole Drin River basin: 283 modelled watersheds for Drin and Tributaries

Output 1.3 - GIS-based vulnerability, loss and damages assessment tool and database established to record, analyze, predict and assess flood events and associated losses

- a) Methodology and tools for undertaking socio-economic surveys to fully map the socio-economic conditions within the DRB was developed by the Lead Socio-Economist and approved by the national implementing partners and the DCG as the RPB. - **completed**.
- b) Socio-economic and vulnerability assessment to fully map existing vulnerability within the DRB is undertaken, in order to identify the most appropriate adaptation options to reduce vulnerability within the s basin. – **completed**.
- c) GIS-based flood risk prioritization model is **completed**.
- d) Roadmap and recommendations for systematic record of damage and loss data using Disinventar data based is developed. **completed**.
- e) Development harmonized methods, guidelines and procedures in line with Sendai Framework, for recording flood events, undertaking post-event surveys and assessing vulnerability to flooding as well as assessing the effectiveness of flood mitigation measures in reducing vulnerability and damages – activity is **underway**.
- f) Undertaking cost-benefit options analysis using the vulnerability loss and damages model is **underway**.

A SUCCESS STORY

Output 1.1 - Strengthened hydrometric monitoring networks in the riparian countries based on a unified optimized basin-scale assessment of monitoring needs has been fully completed.

- Assessment of national hydrometeorological networks, and institutional assessment on the operation and maintenance of the hydromet networks completed in North Macedonia, Montenegro, Albania and Kosovo¹ have been completed by Key International Expert in full coordination with national hydromet services. Project reached to Kosovo in these assessments at no additional costs (using the data supplied from them) as Kosovo is not part of the project but composes approx. 1/3 of the Drin River Basin. This made the assessments significantly more accurate and comprehensive
- Optimized basin hydrometric network plan, focusing on Flood forecasting and flood risk management has been completed
- Installation of 6 new hydrological and 4 meteorological monitoring stations in North Macedonia and 3 hydro and 4 meteostations in Montenegro was completed while 11 hydro and 5 meteo stations in N. Macedonia were upgraded, thus improving gathering of needed hydromet data both spatially and altitudinally.

All activities were conducted in full coordination with partnering national hydrometeorological services and assessment reports adopted by them.

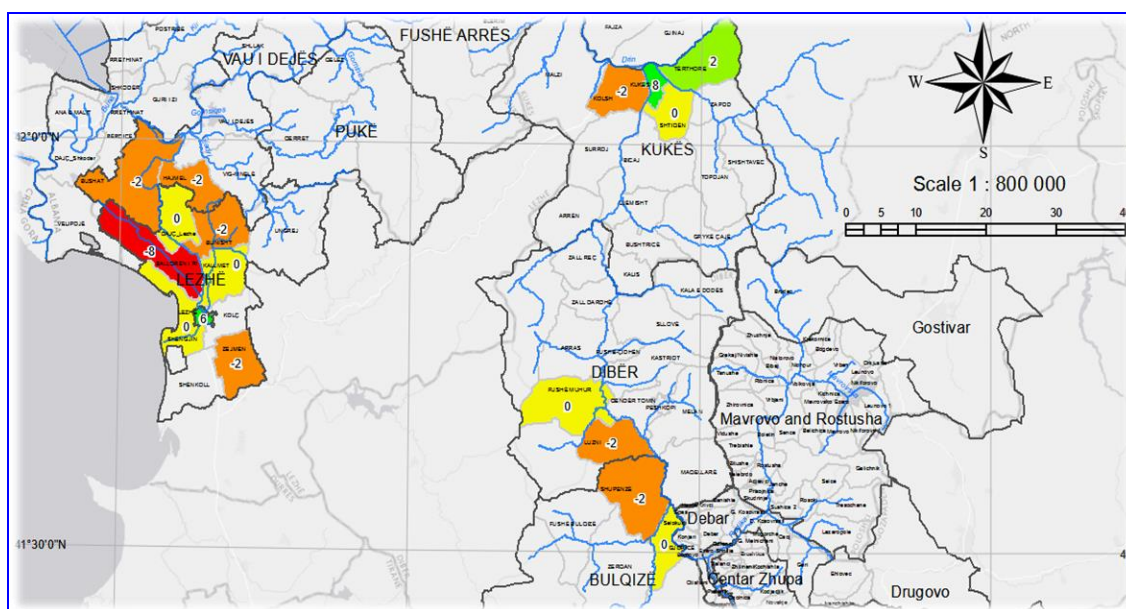


Figure 7 – An example of social vulnerability scoring in Albania

Component 2 – Transboundary FRM institutional, legislative and policy framework / Outcome 2: Improved institutional arrangements, legislative and policy framework for FRM, and development of climate change adaptation and flood risk management strategy and plans at the basin, sub-basin, national and sub-national.

The progress on Outcome 2 is slow. Implementation of activities under this outcome is awarded to the GWP-Med as the Responsible Party (RP) preselected through the Project Document. Implementation of this component has been delayed as most of the activities planned in 2022 are yet to be completed. The PMU stepped in by providing comprehensive support to GWP-Med. During MTR, the GWP representative attributed the delay to COVID-19 and unavailability of output data from Component 1, the latter however needed for parts of a couple of activities from the Component 2 that have not been initialized yet. The GWP representative nevertheless was confident that GWP will be able to achieve its pending targets.

Output 2.1 – Drin River Basin FRM Policy Framework and improved long-term cooperation on flood risk management

- a) Review of existing FM policy and enabling environments in each riparian country and development of basin FRM policies for the implementation of FRM legislative and policy framework in line with relevant EU directives **not yet completed.**
- b) Development of risk financing and risk transfer mechanisms strategy to include private sector engagement strategy for long-term implementation of risk financing and risk transfer mechanisms is **not yet completed.**
- c) The activity on Sector FRM policies (at least 2 – energy, agriculture) is **yet to be initiated.**

Output 2.2 – Regional, national and sub-national institutions (including meteorological and hydrological sectors) are trained in flood risk management, roles and responsibilities clarified and coordination mechanisms strengthened for effective climate-resilient FRM

All activities of this output are yet to be completed. Institutional capacity assessment and gap analysis have not been completed. Practically, no deliverable under Outcome 2 produced and evident by the Responsible Party

Output 2.3 – Drin River Basin Integrated CCA and FRM Strategy and Plan Developed

The activities to achieve this output is underway. Comprehensive ToR for DRB Integrated CCA and FRM Strategy and FRM Plan has been developed. Consultancy by Responsible Party (GWP-Med) has not been selected by the MTR.

Component 3 – Priority community-based climate change adaptation and FRM interventions / Outcome 3: Strengthened resilience of local communities through improved flood forecasting and early warning, implementation of structural and non-structural measures and the strengthened capacity for CCA and FRM at the local level.

Output 3.1 – Introduction of appraisal-led design for structural and non-structural measures using climate risk information and cost-benefit appraisal methods and application of methods to the detailed design of prioritized structural and non-structural measures for three riparian countries

- a) The activity to undertake optioneering for long-term FRM measures for DRB including feasibility, outline design and indicative costing is **well underway** based on the Output 1.3.

- b) Detailed designs including the Environmental and Social Impact Analyses (ESIA) completed for the preselected structural measure of Sateska riverbed relocation and sludge gate installation in North Macedonia and subsequently identified design only of the structural measure of Gracanica riverbed regulation and rehabilitation of bridges in the downstream part in Montenegro. - **completed**

Detailed design of the reconstruction of embankments on the Montenegro side along Buna/Bojana in Ulcinj Municipality completed, presented to government implementing partners in both Montenegro and Albania, and endorsed by them. Preliminary design of the rehabilitation of Murtenza channel structural measure in Albania **underway**.

Output 3.2 – Construction of structural risk reduction measures in prioritized areas

One pre-selected/identified through project document structural measure successfully completed (cleanup of the Crn Drim riverbed in the urban part of the Municipality of Struga), another one under implementation (relocation of Sateska Riverbed in the Municipality of Debrca in North Macedonia), as evidenced through the field visits and interview of the municipal officials.

10,000 inhabitants in the targeted communities at flood risk of Ulcinj municipality in Montenegro directly or indirectly and approximately 3,500 ha of land (largely agricultural land) are protected by the implementation of the structural measure on Bojana/Buna Embankments Reconstruction. Cleanup of the Crn (Black) Drim Riverbed in length of approximately 765 meters in the urban part of Struga Municipality in North Macedonia was completed and more than 22.000 m³ of accumulated sediment removed.²⁰ The structural measure of cleanup of the Black Drim riverbed in the urban part of the Municipality of Struga was completed during 2020. This activity has protected 3,550 ha of agricultural land, 6,500 directly affected population and 70,000 potentially indirectly affected population, 2,500 dwellings and road network of more than 40km.

Implementation of another pre-selected structural measure of the Sateska riverbed regulation and sludge gate installation in the Municipality of Debrca is **well underway** (with estimated completion time by end of 2022). Approximately, 400 ha of agricultural land will be saved by implementation of this measure.

Output 3.3 - Strengthened local community resilience to flooding through the participatory design and implementation of non-structural community-based resilience, adaptation and awareness measures

- a) Nine (9) municipalities included in the Post Disaster Needs Assessment Training of Trainers in coordination with the Directorate for emergencies of Montenegro, well underway. Forty (40) local communities in DRB in Montenegro will benefit from the trainings on FRM and post-disaster recovery.
- b) ToRs developed for tailored trainings in implementation of hydraulic models for flood risk mapping and assessment purposes.

The communities to work with on the implementation of these non-structural measures will be selected based on the degree of their exposure and vulnerability to flood risk, determined by Risk Prioritization Model (RPM) and flood risk modelling.

Project progress as per the results framework is shown in **Table 1**.

The rating scale criteria is given as **Annex 7**.

²⁰ 1st National Project Board meeting progress Report-
https://www.dropbox.com/s/5smmvbguz8s0k1h/1st_NPBMtg_29.01.2021.pptx?dl=0

Table1: Progress Towards Results Matrix

Objective/ Outcome	Indicators	Baseline	Targets Project completion	Means of verification	Risks and assumptions	Mid-term Level & Assessment ²¹	Achievement Rating ²²	Justification for rating
Objective of the Project To assist the riparian countries in the implementation of an integrated climate-resilient river basin flood risk management approach in order to improve their existing capacity to manage flood risk at regional, national and local levels and to enhance resilience of vulnerable communities in the DRB to climate-induced floods	Total Number of direct and indirect beneficiaries (disaggregated by sex) with reduced vulnerability to flood risks; Number of beneficiaries relative to total population	0	Direct beneficiaries: 190,000 people (50.6% women) / 12% of the DRB population Indirect beneficiaries: 1.6 million people living in DRB (50.6% women)	Census data Baseline and periodic vulnerability assessments and surveys Risk and vulnerability database Project mid-term and final evaluations	Capacities created at relevant agencies through the project are maintained and periodically renewed Political will to implement relevant legal-regulatory reform for effective and efficient FRM at national and transboundary level Enhanced hydrometeorological observation network results in enhanced generation and delivery of early warnings and response actions of communities at risk Coordination mechanisms have relevant representation, participation in the coordination mechanisms are at the appropriate decision-making level, the coordination mechanism meets with sufficient periodicity and consistently, the mechanism coordinates appropriate information flows and the mechanism monitors action on items/issues raised		S	As evidenced by minutes of the meetings of coordination mechanisms and Regional Project Board/ Drin Core Group, project reports, interview of the key project stakeholders and national implementing partners, field visits and interviews of the local communities' leaders, the objective is expected to achieve most of the targets
	Availability of high-quality flood hazard and risk information generated and disseminated to stakeholders on a timely basis	Gaps in observation and flood risk information hamper effective flood forecasting and EWS, development of basin-level integrated CCA and FRM strategy and plan and climate resilient sectoral planning.	Enhanced flood hazard and risk information for DRB is available and used for: (a) enhanced FFEWS (in cooperation with GIZ) (b) Climate-informed Drin River Basin Integrated CCA and FRM Strategy and Plan and implementation	Regional and national climate change and FRM/DRR policies, plans and reporting at the national, district and community levels; Project Reports; Midterm and Final Evaluations	Effective cooperation and coordination with GIZ project on the implementation and enhancement of the FFEWS.			

²¹ Colour code this column only²² Use the 6-point Progress Towards Results Rating Scale: HS, S, MS, MU, U, HU

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			capacities are in place (c) Sectoral planning		GIZ project delivers its planned outcomes. Structural and non-structural measures met their design standards in reducing the risks to populations and reduction in agricultural land losses Target communities understand shorter-to-longer-term benefits of CRM and risk reduction interventions and engage on a voluntary basis in operations and maintenance of such systems			
	Number and level ²³ (where relevant) of effective coordination mechanisms for climate-resilient FRM in DRB	1 coordination mechanism: Drin Core Group/MOU: Level 3 The Drin Coordinated Action was established to promote joint action for the coordinated integrated management of the shared water resources in the basin. The MoU does not currently specifically address joint actions required for cooperation on flood risk management. The existing coordination and bilateral agreements are insufficient for a truly transboundary river basin approach to flood risk management.	4 coordination mechanisms: (a) DCG/MOU: Level 4 (b) Drin Floods Working Group: Level 4 (c) DRB Framework Agreement on FRM (d) DRB SAP is informed of climate-induced flood risks and integrated resilient FRM measures	Minutes of the meetings of coordination mechanisms Project annual reports; Mid-term evaluation, final report.				

²³ Level 1 = no coordination mechanism; Level 2= coordination mechanism in place; Level 3 = coordination mechanism in place, meeting regularly with appropriate representation (gender and decision-making authorities); Level 4 = coordination mechanism in place, meeting regularly, with appropriate representation, with appropriate information flows and monitoring of action items/issues raised.

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<p>Outcome 1 Improved climate and risk informed decision-making, availability and use of climate risk information</p>	<p>Indicator 1.1: a) Coverage and effectiveness of the hydrometric monitoring networks in riparian countries. b) Number of new observation stations installed</p>	<p>Significant gaps in the coverage (especially in Republic of North Macedonia and Montenegro) and inefficiencies in data management, operations and maintenances of the hydrometric monitoring network across DRB prevents adequate forecasting and early warning and efficient decision making on FRM. An integrated basin wide hydrological and hydraulic model for the DRB is absent. Under the new GIZ project detailed flood modelling and mapping is planned for the Lake Shkoder/Skadar and Bojana-Buna area. Lack of socio-economic data for risk, damages, losses, exposure and vulnerability assessments.</p>	<p>Indicator target 1.1. a) Enhanced coverage and efficiency of the hydrometric monitoring network in DRB and improved O&M provides for improved FFEWS and FRM decisions across DRB. b) Target number of new stations to be defined during Year1 of the project based on the network design.</p>	<p>Inventory of the new hydrometric monitoring equipment in riparian countries installed by the project (NHMSs) Reports on the operations of the FFEWS (GIZ project) DRB integrated hydrological and hydraulic models Project annual reports; Mid-term evaluation, final report.</p>	<p>Government commitments to secure adequate O/M of monitoring equipment, relevant software and databases are fulfilled on a continuous basis both during the project implementation and afterwards Capacities built across relevant agencies through the project are maintained and periodically updated Relevant government agencies cooperate on and allocate resources for the implementation of the data management Unified modeling methodologies, developed with the Project support and with GIZ project, are endorsed and used for mapping; Necessary data sets for developing hazard maps and risk models are available</p> <p>Effective cooperation and coordination with GIZ project on the implementation and enhancement of the FFEWS</p> <p>Governments allocate necessary human and technical resources to conduct vulnerability assessment; Decision-makers at selected state agencies use assessment data in prioritizing resilience measures in high-risk areas</p>		<p>HS</p>	<p>a) Project has already completed this Output, increasing density and both spatial and altitudinal coverage and efficiency of the hydrometric monitoring networks in DRB, providing optimal O&M management plan and enhanced quality of data as input to FFEWS across DRB, as evidenced through Expert's Reports, Minutes from the Regional Project Board meetings and interviews of the National Hydromet Services senior management b) Target number of procured and installed stations has been achieved, as evidenced by the project reports, RPB Minutes and interviews of the National Hydromets officials, and field visits, Signed MoU with N. Macedonia HydroMet on sustainability and responsibility for the operational and maintenance of the extended hydrometeorological monitoring network</p>
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								in the Macedonian Part of the Drin Basin Signed MoU with HydroMet on hydrological data series share for purpose of hydrological model and flood hazard and risk maps development MoU on sustainability and responsibility for the operational and maintenance of the extended hydrometeorological monitoring network to be signed with Institute for Hydrometeorology and Seismology of Montenegro by end-2022
	Indicator 1.2: Level of introduction of modelling tools and technologies for the strategic flood risk assessment and flood hazard mapping		Indicator target 1.2. Enhanced modelling tools and technologies for the strategic flood risk assessment in DRB based on EUFD, including: a) Spatial Data Spatial Data Initiative ²⁴ and data management system; b) Detailed				S	a) Data repository established, intermittency of historical data acquired from national hydromets addressed and overcome Database created and MoUs with National HydroMet Services signed b) detailed topographic surveys conducted, hi-resolution DEM obtained via LiDAR

²⁴ A data repository which will provide a structured environment to enforce data integrity and support data auditing, versioning and data quality. Audit trails, as well as structured and categorized schemas, will make data collation, manipulation and analysis more manageable throughout the project

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			topographic surveys and data for the Crn Drim in Macedonia. c) Detailed hydrological and hydraulic modelling for the Crn Drim in Macedonia and high-resolution flood hazard inundation maps d) Numerical high-level basin-wide hydrological and hydraulic models of the DRB integrating detailed area-based modeling developed under AF, GIZ and national projects.					surveillance in N. Macedonia and from national institutions in Albania c) by project CTA while detailed hi-res flood hazard maps were developed by international and national experts d) numerical hi-level basin wide hydraulic model developed integrating detailed area-based modeling. Project fully coordinated with GIZ, EU IPA Floods Directive implementation Project in Montenegro and other projects conducting similar modelling, as well as with national authorities in order to avoid overlapping in modeling certain areas of further assessment (AFAs) The above evidenced through the project and RPB reports and presentations, interviews of the key project and national stakeholders
	Indicator 1.3. Level of implementation of the systematic gender-responsive socio-economic vulnerability		Indicator target 1.3. (a) Socio-economic data collection tool developed and embedded at local and central	Reports of the socio-economic surveys Evaluation of the socio-economic risk model Project annual			S	a) Socio-economic data collection methodology developed. Bespoke GIS based risk prioritization model (RPM) developed, tested and applied in

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	assessment in the DRB		institutions to systematically collect damages and losses data. Bespoke GIS-based socio-economic modelling tool developed and introduced. (b) Baseline, progress and final report on social and gender vulnerability. At least 30% participants of consultations are women. (c) Systematic recording of flood damage and losses in DisInventar database	reports; Mid-term evaluation, final report.				selected areas of the potentially significant high risk (APSFRs). S/e data collection through ground truthing in the selected APSFRs well underway b) Gender mainstreamed in RPM: data disaggregated where feasible, at least 30% of ground truthing respondents were women c) roadmap to efficient use of DisInventar developed
Outcome 2 Improved institutional arrangements, legislative and policy framework for climate-resilient FRM, and development of CCA and FRM strategy and plans at the basin, sub-basin, national and sub-national levels	Indicator 2.1: State of the Drin River Basin FRM Policy Framework and cooperation on flood risk management	Limited basin-level coordination and cooperation on flood risk management. Under an MoU between the national hydromet institutions there is cooperation and data exchange for flood warning, based on regional forecasts, EFAS and SEE FFG. The Drin Coordinated Action was established to promote joint action for the coordinated integrated management of the	Indicator target 2.1. a) FRM policies designed in line with relevant EU directives. b) Basin risk transfer mechanisms designed, including risk financing and risk transfer strategy, private sector engagement strategy, feasibility studies for identified and shortlisted risk financing mechanisms.	Project annual reports; Mid-term evaluation, final report;	Riparian governments have political will to implement relevant legal-regulatory reform for effective and efficient FRM framework in line with EUFD DCG maintain adequate mandate and authority to spearhead resilient FRM policies and strategies across the sub-region Private sector is interested and is engaging in developing risk transfer and risk reduction mechanisms Beneficiary and partner institutions are willing to cooperate and conduct regulatory and institutional reform		MS	a) Review of existing FRM policies not completed yet b) Basin risk financing and transfer strategy not completed yet

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		<p>shared water resources in the basin. The MoU does not currently specifically address joint actions required for cooperation on flood risk management.</p> <p>Institutional capacities at the regional, national and sub-national level across the basin are insufficient to secure climate-resilient FRM.</p> <p>The existing coordination and bilateral agreements are insufficient for a truly transboundary river basin approach to flood risk management. What is missing is a basin-level integrated climate change adaptation and flood risk management strategy and plan and a multi-lateral Framework Agreement for the DRB in the field of flood risk management which establishes the</p>	<p>c) Sector FRM policies (at least 2 – energy, agriculture) based on modelling of climate change impacts on the identified sectors and on the detailed methodologies for incorporating climate-change responsive flood risk considerations into risk assessments, strategies, policies and plans for the energy and agriculture sectors.</p>		Capacities created at relevant agencies through the project are maintained and periodically renewed			
	<p>Indicator 2.2. a) % increase in institutional capacity to promote integrated climate resilient flood risk management b) Number of staff from targeted institutions trained to respond to impacts of climate-related events</p>		<p>Indicator target 2.2. a) 50% increase in institutional capacity (measured through an institutional capacity assessment scorecard) b) At least 50 officials and other key national/regional stakeholders trained on improving the enabling environment (minimum 30% women)</p>	<p>Institutional capacity assessment scorecard Capacity review Training test results</p> <p>Project annual reports; Mid-term evaluation, final report;</p> <p>Partner reporting and audit.</p>			MU	Institutional capacity assessment and gap analysis not completed yet; institutional mapping not started by project mid-term. Practically, no deliverable under Outcome 2 produced and evident by the Responsible Party

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	Indicator 2.3. State of Drin River Basin Integrated CCA and FRM Strategy	institutional and legal basis for cooperation.	Indicator target 2.3. Drin River Basin Integrated CCA and FRM Strategy and Plan developed and endorsed by regional and national stakeholders; Implementation started.	Review of the Drin River Basin Integrated CCA and FRM Strategy Minutes of the DCG meetings Project annual reports; Mid-term evaluation, final report			S	Comprehensive ToR for DRB Integrated CCA and FRM Strategy and FRM Plan developed. Consultancy by Responsible Party (GWP-MED-MED) has not been initiated yet
Outcome 3 Strengthened community resilience through improved flood management, through implementation of structural and non-structural measures and enhanced local capacity for CCA and FRM	Indicator 3.1: State of climate-responsive design of structural and non-structural measures for long-term FRM investment in DRB.	Communities of the DRB remain highly exposed to flooding. In the Riparian countries of the DRB, flood defense and flood risk management are done in a reactive manner and as budgets allow. Relevant institutions have limited annual budgets to address urgent issues like structural defense needs, and currently do not take a climate risk-informed strategic approach (e.g. river basin approach) to flood risk management interventions. Capacities to design climate-responsive and resilient flood protection structures are limited. Many defenses have exceeded their design life and have not been upgraded or	Indicator target 3.1. For each of 3 riparian countries a set of structural and non-structural flood protection options identified and designed using climate risk information and cost-benefit appraisal methods.	Project design documentation, CBA Mid-term evaluation, final report	Co-financiers fully meet its commitment towards implementation of structural flood protection measures Structural and non-structural measures met their design standards in reducing the risks to populations and reduction in agricultural land losses Communities actively participate in planning and implementation of risk reduction measures Effective cooperation and coordination with GIZ project on the implementation and enhancement of the FFEWS		S	Detailed design successfully completed for three (3) structural flood protection measures: Relocation of the Sateska Riverbed in the Municipality of Debrca in N. Macedonia and rehabilitation of embankments along the Montenegro bank of the Bojana/Buna River in Ulcinj Municipality (both measures preselected/identified through ProDoc), and rehabilitation of the riverbed and bridges downstream the Gracanica River in the Municipality of Niksic in Montenegro. Full SESP conducted and ESMP developed for each measure. Public participatory process followed as evidenced in ESMPs

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		maintained and are therefore now largely ineffective. There is limited use of modern eco-system-based flood risk management approaches and approaches which combine both						and interviews of municipal officials. No grievances received during the public insight and consultation process nor through the project Grievance Redress Mechanism (GRM).
	Indicator 3.2: (a) Number of people directly protected from flood risks through structural measures at 3 high risk sites in Albania, Republic of North Macedonia and Montenegro (b) Area of land protected from flood risks through structural measures at Drin FRM project 3 sites	structural and non-structural measures as part of FRM, due to a lack of knowledge and application of non-structural measures and ecosystem-based approaches (EbA) to flood risk management. There is also limited knowledge and capacities among local communities on climate resilient livelihoods for coping with climate-induced hazards.	Indicator target 3.2. (a) 10,000 people directly protected (b) 7000 ha protected, including agricultural and municipal land	Project annual reports. Mid-term evaluation, final report Field visits, pilot site reports Community surveys			S	One pre-selected/identified through ProDoc structural measure successfully completed (cleanup of the Crn Drim riverbed in the urban part of the Municipality of Struga), another one under implementation (relocation of Sateska Riverbed in the Municipality of Debrca in North Macedonia), as evidenced through the field visits and interview of the municipal officials. 10,000 inhabitants of Municipality of Ulcinj directly protected by the implementation of the structural measure on Bojana/Buna Embankments Reconstruction in Municipality of Ulcinj App. 3,500 ha of land (largely agricultural land) will be

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								protected by the implementation of the structural measure on Bojana/Buna Embankments Reconstruction in Municipality of Ulcinj Targets a) and b) already exceeded.
	Indicator 3.3: (a) number of communities across DRB supported with non-structural measures and adaptation planning (including training, participatory planning and implementation) (b) scale of agroforestry measures implemented (ha)		Indicator target 3.3. (a) At least 50 communities across DRB are supported with training, participatory CRM and FRM planning and/or implementation of non-structural measures (b) At least 150 ha	Project annual reports. Mid-term evaluation, final report Demonstration site reports Community training and awareness workshop reports Community Surveys Feasibility study on rehabilitation and diversion of Sateska Riverbed in its natural riverbed.			S	a) Nine (9) municipalities included in the Post Disaster Needs Assessment Training of Trainers in coordination with the Directorate for emergencies of Montenegro, well underway. 40 local communities in DRB in Montenegro will benefit from the trainings on FRM and post-disaster recovery ToRs developed for tailored trainings in implementation of hydraulic models for flood risk mapping and assessment purposes.

3.2.2. Remaining barriers to achieving the project objective

Observations during the MTR mission as well as based on the review of documents and feedback from stakeholders show that the technical outputs of the project are excellent and practical considering the project context as well as stakeholder and beneficiary capacity and needs. The results respectively serve the actual needs of the population affected by flooding as well as improving the capacity and the ability of the involved stakeholders to act. For the remainder of the project, it will further be necessary to focus on implementing flood risk management planning and to install the required technical, managerial and institutional prerequisites with the stakeholder institutions to sustainably carry on with flood risk management activities after project ends.

3.3. Project Implementation and Adaptive Management

3.3.1. Management arrangements

The project is executed by the UNDP Istanbul Regional Hub (IRH) under the UNDP Direct Implementation Modality (DIM) in line with UNDP's Programme and Operations Policies and Procedures and IRH Standard Operating Procedures for Regional Programme Management. The project management team has built an effective management structure both considering the Project Board/steering committees as well as through interaction with direct stakeholders and beneficiaries in the riparian countries. During discussion with stakeholders, project management was praised as excellent considering all aspects of project applicability, progress and involvement. Decision making is transparent with stakeholders feeling involved and project reporting is in place and on time. The project team itself is well coordinated and complementary in their skills and responsibilities as well as well connected with stakeholders and beneficiaries.

Regional cooperation and partnerships with ongoing projects, particularly GIZ "Climate Change Adaptation through Flood Risk Management in the Western Balkans" project and EU IPA funded "Support to Implementation and Monitoring of Water Management, Montenegro" project, have made this project quite complementary. Overlaps in flood hazard modelling and flood risk mapping of the previously identified Areas of Potentially Significant Flood Risk (APSFRs) have been avoided by close coordination with the mentioned projects and relevant national institutions, such as water management agencies in Montenegro and Albania, and the Ministry of Environment and Physical Planning of North Macedonia (there is no stand-alone water management agency in N. Macedonia). By this, the project will assist the riparian states, engaged in the EU membership negotiation process, to fulfill the requirements from the EU Directive on Floods.

The project explored potentials for both public and private sector involvement through meetings between the project team and the Albanian Hydropower Corporation (KESH) on eventual joint funding of prioritized non-structural flood protection measures. Also, analysis of the private insurance market, to be developed under the basin-wide Risk financing and risk transfer strategy under the Component 2, may identify further private sector stakeholders from the insurance market.

Project objectives are being implemented through selected implementing partners with the support of a technical assistance team. Tasks have been well tackled so far and the partly previously less experienced partner institutions have gained experience through exposure and cooperation with the technical assistance team. While their skills and capacity has been enhanced care should be taken to further involve them to assure continued exposure and, in that way, promoting sustainability of the achieved capacity improvement. All interviewed implementing partners have shown a good understanding of their tasks and confirmed good cooperation with the project team. The

implementing partners are aware of the need for further exposure and consolidating capacity. A current limiting factor may be the limited number of technical staff on the side of the national partnering/benefiting institutions so that staff fluctuation may lead to serious loss of capacity. Products developed and delivered by the implementing partners have been derived with support, and/or reviewed by the technical assistance team, ensuring the required quality.

Gender balance has been ensured through a Gender Assessment and Action Plan (GAAP), as part of the project design process and regularly updated, which gives an overview of the gender situation in the region, as well as provides a gender action plan (GAP), to mainstream gender into project activities. The project has safeguarded local communities and their assets from flood disasters with particular involvement of women as well as other vulnerable groups. Most recent version of GAP has been shared by GWP-Med. Project gender balance has been achieved (50%), as well as the gender balance within the RPB. Gender balance has also been achieved in the project activities in all the three countries. Of the 81 persons who participated in the various training programmes organized by the project, 56% (45) were women. The gender balance was 56%, 51% and 56% for Montenegro, North Macedonia and Albania, respectively, that exceeds the target of 30% determined for training in the project document.

3.3.2. Work planning

Considering project progress and stakeholder satisfaction, work planning through the project management team is excellent, especially also ensuring full transparency and using participatory and result based approaches with the beneficiaries. This approach ensures ownership which was positively highlighted in all interviews. The project activities have been carried out in line with the AWP with significant efforts made to align project activities with other flood risk management projects in the riparian countries as well as developing pilot examples for hydrological and hydraulic modelling, flood hazard and risk mapping, and flood forecasting and early warning systems.

The project is mostly on target regarding its implementation status, the results framework has been used for assessing project progress during the scheduled project implementation reviews.

3.3.3. Finance and co-finance

In financial terms, Adaptation Fund (AF) is the only donor with US\$ 9.15 million contribution to the project's total input.

The project finances are managed well, and no issues were witnessed during the MTR. The funds have been received from the donor, the Adaptation Fund, through three out of five tranches received insofar, according to the agreed Payment Distribution Schedule, which has been adjusted to reflect delays in implementation during the first years, caused by COVID-19 pandemic.

As of 31st August 2022, in total, US\$ 3.57 million or about 64.87% of all AWP were spent in since Year 1- 2019. The total expenditures at the regional level were estimated at US\$ 589,354 or 43.37% and for Montenegro at US\$ 1,228,327 or 82.25%. The actual expenditures for N. Macedonia were estimated at US\$ 1,010,355 or 70.61% while for Albania lagged behind with 58.84% actual expenditures. Detail is given in [Table 2](#). As the project activities progressed the delivery rate increased from US\$ 22,714 in year 1 to US\$ 1.37 million in year 4 (31 August 2022). AWP were revised/updated on annual basis, i.e., reduced (in delivery) for 2019, 2020 and 2021, and increased for 2022 and so on, e.g. initial (from project document) AWP for 2019 was \$236.053, for 2020 was

also higher, etc. MTR noted that allocation of funds was made against specific activities that defined the target beneficiaries.

The programme itself has a strong financial system with internal controls and external audits which all showed good management of programme funds. UNDP procedures and rules have been fully adhered to in funds utilizations, allocations and procurement using UNDP Enterprise Resources Planning (ERP) ATLAS tool in parallel to the Project Implementation Management System (PIMS) for vertical funds financing. No audits were conducted during the project implementation. The recorded as well as planned spendings are within budget and plausible given the overall project budget and implementation rate. In purchasing of any goods and services the programme insisted on a Value for Money (VfM) basis and followed stipulated procurement procedures all the time. Strong control over the budget by the project management is seen in project budget balance reports i.e., planned vs. disbursed funds, and budget revisions which are made to best suit project needs, but also stay within lines of budgeting guidelines.

No financial problem was reported by the project management.

Table 2: Planned and actual expenditures on project outputs**(As of 31st August 2022, in US\$)**

Riparian Country	Year 1- 2019			Year 2-2020			Year 3- 2021			Year 4 - 2022			Total			% Expenditures
	AWP 2019	Expenditure	Disbursed by AF	AWP 2020	Expenditure	Disbursed by AF	AWP 2021	Expenditure	Disbursed by AF	AWP 2022	Expenditure + Commitments	Disbursed by AF	All AWP	Expenditure	Disbursed by AF	
Regional	63,718	3,515	2,538,686	536,198	123,317	-2,287,146	263,457	236,821	474,084	495,632	225,701	1,111,981	1,359,005	589,354	1,837,605	43.37
Albania			54,465	18,680	18,679	542,074	210,219	136,684	349,690	520,237	285,428		749,136	440,791	946,229	58.84
Montenegro	53,770	14,952	53,770	354,182	310,915	765,338	457,638	400,140	542,561	362,738	284,348		1,228,327	1,010,355	1,361,669	82.25
North Macedonia	4,247	4,247	64,102	549,832	511,844	979,734	663,157	437,280	536,577	943,847	572,553	660,000	2,161,082	1,525,924	2,240,413	70.61
Total	121,734	22,714	2,711,023	1,458,892	964,755	0	1,594,470	1,210,925	1,902,912	2,322,454	1,368,030	1,771,981	5,497,550	3,566,424	6,385,916	64.87

Source: PMU, Drin FRM Project, October 2022.

Project management did not report any major problem in the recruitment of staff. An experienced and well-motivated team was assembled for the Project, despite initial difficulties and with some delays caused by COVID-19 pandemic. The MTR found project staff to be performing their duties conscientiously and with determined interest. Project management displayed UNDP standards, procedures and transparency in the recruitment of staff, operational procedures and selection of municipalities, projects and beneficiaries.

As of 31 August 2022, total utilization of international and national experts and consultants by the project was 33 person months against 34 person months planned. In terms of financial input, expenditures on staff were estimated at US\$ 720,070 representing 20% of the total expenditures of the project. Given that the project operated under the direct implementation (DIM) modality, the use of staff resources is considered consistent with the scope of activities. The detail is reflected in [Table 3](#).

The project utilized the human resources efficiently to transfer the technical knowledge and improve technical competencies of the partner ministries and institutions in the areas of strategic planning, policy development for rural development and analysis and agriculture development. This objective was achieved through extensive formal trainings, coaching and direct application by the project partners through the implementation of specific interventions in capacity building. This combination proved to be efficient as it enabled the national, regional and local partners to go through the complete learning cycle where the learner “touches all the bases,” i.e., a cycle of experiencing, reflecting, thinking, and acting. Immediate or concrete experiences lead to observations and reflections.

From the comments offered by the persons met and interviewed the MTR has drawn the conclusion that the team established overall very good working relations with government counterparts, partners, stakeholders, beneficiaries, other projects and donors.

Table 3: Human resources management

Type of Staff	Staff Input planned (<i>Person Months</i>)	Actual recruited (person months)	Expenditures	% of total project Expenditures
International	2	2	134,028	4%
National	6	6	249,068	7%
International Consultant	9	9	188,631	5%
National Consultants	17	16	148,344	4%
Total	34	33	720,070	20%

Source: PMU, Drin FRM Project, October 2022.

The desk review of project documents, interviews and field visits evidenced that the Drin FRM project has successfully adopted a cost-effective alternative to conventional/baseline reactive approaches to risk management that builds around ad-hoc recovery investment and compensations, predominance of large-scale hard defence infrastructure and limited community engagement. The regional cooperation and coordination on flood risk management and climate risk information management is another factor of the Drin FRM project efficiency.

3.3.4. Project-level monitoring and evaluation systems

A monitoring and evaluation (M&E) plan was put in place at the time of the design of the project. Overall, M&E mechanism for the project prepared during the project design and then regularly updated during implementation, was efficient and effective.²⁵ The project adopted results-based management as a corporate management approach, so that performance at the level of development goals and outcomes is systematically measured and improved. Monitoring was carried out through the analysis of the results-based quantitative and qualitative indicators outlined in the project 's results framework and the budget allocation tables. Apart from the delays in project implementation caused by COVID-19, which affected timelines of submission of the Inception Report, no other problems were experienced in implementation of the M&E Plan, in line with which all monitoring activities were conducted. In addition to the Project Management Unit (Regional Project Manager and Chief Technical Advisor) review and acceptance of all project's technical deliverables, the Regional Technical Advisor is playing an important role in the quality assurance (QA) process and provide critical and regular input, particularly on the technical reports and papers produced.

The oversight monitoring mechanism was very effective. The RPB/DCG, a regional oversight forum, held seven (7) meetings until the time of MTR. Besides, National Steering Committee held five meetings (2 in North Macedonia and Montenegro each and one in Albania). Twenty-four (24) fortnightly (bi-weekly) meetings of the whole project team, including UNDP Country Offices' senior personnel and UNDP IRH Regional Technical Advisor and Climate and Disaster Team Leader, were held to monitor and track implementation progress.²⁶ All meetings were minuted with outcomes and disseminated to all participants. Three meetings took place of the Joint Technical

²⁵ Ibid 9.

²⁶ Minutes of the Project Board Meetings, Drin FRM Project, UNDP Albania.

Group in the framework of the agreement between the Republic of Albania and Montenegro on Water Management of Common Interest, one in Montenegro and two in Albania (Tamara and Shkodra).

Project field activities were monitored through activity work plans. Field visits by the project were conducted as required and reported about through the UNDP framework, as evidenced by one of the Back to Office reports.

As evidenced by the M&E Plan, the Project adopted the following M&E tools:

- Reporting: Inception Report, Project Progress Reports (PPRs)
- Measurement of means of verification (indicators) set by the Project Logical Framework
- Monitoring and management of risks identified through both the Project Risk Log (offline depository) and the regularly updated UNDP Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) tool – ATLAS
- Monitoring of environmental and social risk through Environmental and Social Screening Process (ESP)
- Periodic monitoring field visits and meetings with key implementing partners, such as National Focal Points, performed by the RPM (as evidenced by the Back to Office Reports)

3.3.5. Stakeholder engagement

The Stakeholder Engagement Plan is an integral part of the project design and implementation of the activities. There has been engagement from a wide spectrum of stakeholders. Stakeholders have been specifically interviewed during the MTR in order to obtain information regarding stakeholder engagement and ownership. Stakeholders confirmed that the project has an excellent track record of stakeholder engagement starting from project design through implementation with periodic steering committee meetings taking place and stakeholders and beneficiaries on all levels being involved in the definition of detailed project details and decision making, which is well appreciated and leading to an excellent ownership mentality and support of project activities from local-, entity- and national government side.

A project inception workshop was conducted and included all key stakeholders and role players. Involvement of the stakeholders continued throughout the project implementation leading to a strong sense of ownership of the project by the national partners. This is an important element contributing to the long-term sustainability of the project. The project inception report included the technical methodology, updated risk- and assumption tables, terms of reference for the main international experts and subcontractors, and also pointed out the need- and identified activities necessary for stakeholder coordination.

The steering committee (Project Board) plays an integral part in managing the project, with periodic meetings taking place annually including reporting on progress as well as on planned activities. The interviewed steering committee members confirmed good cooperation and involvement in project management aspects.

3.3.6. Social and environment standards

- UNDP SESP was conducted during the design stage, and the Project ESMF was developed accordingly.

- Further to that, during the implementation phase, the Project has redone SESP of each pre-identified, as well unidentified subproject (USP, according to the AF identification terminology) structural flood protection measure, using UNDP SESP template, fully adjusted to adhere to the Adaptation Funds Social and Environmental Principles.
- Further to SESP screening, Environmental Impact Assessment studies were conducted for each intervention where required by UNDP SES and/or relevant national environmental and social legislation
- The identified risks were then addressed through detailed Environmental and Social Management Plans (ESMPs), tailored out by the certified professionals for each structural measure
- Finally, all the deliverables were reviewed by the Project Management Unit – Chief Technical Advisor and the Regional Project Manager who is UNDP certified Social Environmental Policy specialist

3.3.7. Reporting

Project reporting has been conducted as planned, showing good quality and depth. All project reports were timely submitted and approved by relevant authorities (the Donor - Adaptation Fund, Regional Project Board/ Drin Core Group). However, there had been some delays/misunderstanding with regards to quarterly reporting from GWP using standard FACE report forms, and there was with the last one for Q3 2022 as it was past due.

The progress on activities and outputs was documented through annual project performance reports, bi-annual and annual, annual financial reports, policy briefs and other periodical updates for the donors and stakeholders. These reports were in general very informative and served as a tool for monitoring the implementation of planned activities. All reports indicated a highly satisfactory rating of implementation of project activities. Various technical reports were also produced on the planned activities. These technical reports were then used to formulate interventions with the local actors based on evidence. The project management was also reflected by the overall activity timeline and output target compliance. All the indicators showed positive compliance to the annual schedules and plans.

3.3.8. Communication and knowledge

Successful communication programmes are a product of thorough study, diligent planning, and careful implementation. The Communications and Advocacy Strategy is gender-sensitive paying special attention to the role of women in vulnerable communities. This document defines clear methods, channels, tools, and target audiences, thus making the project's communication with its partners and stakeholders more at ease.

Communication in the project has been reported as excellent by interviewed stakeholders on all levels. The steering committee is fully involved in processes and interviewed entity as well as municipal institutions expressed their full satisfaction with project communication, contributing in full ownership on beneficiary side and respective sustainability. Communication is regular and effective.²⁷

- Meeting with the beneficiaries' representatives, such as local communities/municipalities were held regularly.

²⁷ The Communication and Advocacy Strategy, Drin FRM Project, UNDP Albania.

- Concerning the project structural interventions in the field, during the appraisal led design process, regular consultations were held with the representatives of the beneficiary communities affected by floods, as evidenced by the reports from the public insight in the subproject design documentation and public consultations held afterwards.
- Media announcement for public insight into the Request for determining the need for Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) of the structural measure of Restoration of the Downstream Gracanica Riverbed and Rehabilitation of Bridges, by the beneficiary, Municipality of Niksic.

The results, good practices and lessons learnt were shared through the Adaptation Fund Study on Transboundary Approach to Climate Change Adaptation²⁸ from April 2022 and presented at the UNECE, AF and FAO hosted Global Workshop on Water, Agriculture and Climate Change in Geneva in October 2022²⁹. It is recommended that project publicize all major studies, further progress and lessons learned that could be shared and disseminated in the regional and international conferences.

3.4. Sustainability and scaling up

Sustainability measures the extent to which benefits of the project or programme continue after external (UNDP) development assistance has come to an end. The Project Team developed a Sustainability Plan that would be finalized at least 12 months prior to the project end date.³⁰ The Sustainability Plan that is regularly updated, has comprehensively encompassed exiting milestones, key questions, response and challenges. Given the good stakeholder and beneficiary involvement in the project, ownership and sustainability of project interventions during the project implementation period are rated as moderately likely. In addition to the institutional involvement and ownership, the project design regarding capital investments (i.e., the project providing the necessary capital investments) as well as the confirmed commitment of the governments and benefitting institutions allows to assume that long term sustainability of the project beyond the project end date is a strong interest of the government institutions.

- Financial risks to sustainability: The end beneficiaries and owners of the structural measures implemented by the project committed the budgetary funds for operations and maintenance (O&M) for the said infrastructure, at this point by Letters of Commitment. Financial capacity to operate and maintain the implemented improvements may anyhow be problematic in the long term. Finding ways for building up funds for O&M of the infrastructures' maintenance and improvement of hydro-meteorological network and flood forecasting and early warning system and moreover, maintaining and replacing capital investments will be a challenging requirement for the involved governments' institutions to ensure long term sustainability. Tackling long-term sustainability before project closure is therefore, a major requirement and will be a major benefit for long term financial sustainability. Given the population's memory of the last devastating flood events, this may be an opportune time to develop accepted public funding mechanisms including the necessary legal and fiduciary instruments for long term financing. Also, Drin FRM Project delivered so far and commits to continue, most of the political, organizational, financial and environmental/social risks are either mitigated or will be in execution of planned activities, especially related to implementation of on-ground activities.

²⁸ Transboundary Approaches to Climate Adaptation: Lessons Learned from the Adaptation Fund's Regional Projects and Programmes - Adaptation Fund (adaptation-fund.org), last viewed on 25 November 2022

²⁹ Global Workshop on Water, Agriculture and Climate Change | UNECE, last viewed on 25 November 2022

³⁰ Sustainability Plan, FRM Project, UNDP, Albania.

Output 2.3 – “Drin River Basin Integrated CCA and FRM Strategy and Plan Developed” will support the development of plans, but might lack an associated financing plan, and thereby put at risk the potential for sustainability and scale-up of the interventions. Even more in a context where there is no official & permanent coordination body/commission to assess and follow-up on the implementation of the plan. The FRM Strategy and Plan will, preferably, have to encompass the Drin River Basin in its entirety, including Kosovo sub-basin (at to additional cost), and need to balance with the input data of different level of details and quality as some data had already been produced by other projects and government initiatives. The most detailed socio-economic modelling of the identified flood risk areas was done by this project.

There is a general recognition among stakeholders interviewed of the importance of this project. However, in order to increase the sustainability of project outcomes, greater buy-in at the highest decision-making levels of the importance of investing in and prioritizing FRM is required. Riparian Governments’ agreements will be needed to put in place the financial resources, which means that political will is key. More specifically and in light of the transboundary cooperation, this means a basin-wide institutional legal framework on transboundary cooperation for establishment of a joint coordination body, e.g., a river basin commission for the functioning of which certain financial commitments will have to be made.

- *Socio-economic risks to sustainability:* The project is properly documenting its results and lessons learnt, all project activities are continually shared with and handed-over to authorized institutions, thus making socio-economic risk insignificant. Socio-economic risks were determined through the SESP for each project structural intervention and addressed by the Socio-economic Management Plans. The initial non-inclusion of Kosovo in the activities could have put at risk the sustainability of the interventions considering the important share of the basin that passes through Kosovo. There is a risk to poor sustainability if 30% of the basin is not considered.
- *Institutional framework and governance risks to sustainability:* All project activities are done in line with the existing regulatory framework. Activities which support legal and policy changes are done with significant involvement of relevant stakeholder, ensuring that final products are institutionally supported. Technical knowledge transfer is constantly ongoing, during as well as after activity completion, with e.g., technical staff in water agencies receiving continued training on modelling and water information system utilization. Partnering governments’ institutions suffer from chronic lack of funds. However, project addressed this by MoU with relevant institutions, such as National Hydrometeorological Services. These MoUs foresee activities on behalf of partnering institutions on O&M of the installed hydromet monitoring stations. Further to this, the national hydrometeorological networks, as well as national hydromet services were thoroughly assessed by project International Hydrometeorological Networks Expert and concrete measures were recommended to ensure future sustainability.

As a subsidiary to the DCG, the EWGF provides technical advice and inputs relating to project implementation. Technical experts may be invited in to discuss specific issues, however, necessary technical training is needed. The activity focused on revising the Terms of Reference (ToR) and development of a five-year work programme of the EWGF (Component 2) is foreseen to strengthen this entity that contributes to the governance sustainability. One of the important governance risks to sustainability is the absence of a permanent basin-wide coordination body/commission. The delays in implementing activities under Component 2 could also be a risk to sustainability as they are quite strategic and GWP-Med might not be able to ensure full ownership before the end of the project.

- Impact of COVID-19 on project's sustainability: COVID-19 pandemic impacted national economies in the riparian states severely. Project has addressed in close coordination with national governments' institutions through assessment of their resources and gaps identification, conducted under its Component 2, implemented by the GWP-Med as the Responsible Party to the Project.
- Environment risks to sustainability: There is no environmental risk to project sustainability. SESP of all structural measures' sub-projects, for both sub-projects were pre-identified through the Project Documents and unidentified sub-projects, as evidenced by the Gracanica Riverbed Restoration SESP. Environmental and Social Management Plans (ESMPs) were developed in line with relevant national legislation, UNDP Social and environment Policy and the AF Social and Environmental Principles, as evidenced by the Gracanica Riverbed Restoration ESMP.
- Availability and structure of the sustainability plan: Detailed Drin FRM Project Sustainability and Scaling Up Strategy and Sustainability Plan was developed by the Regional Project Manager.
- Action plans for enhanced Project Sustainability: Project Sustainability Plan was developed by the Regional Project Manager.

4. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

4.1. Conclusions

The overall progress is rated as "Satisfactory (S)", as many expected outputs have efficiently and effectively been produced to date while others are in a process of being achieved or planned in the remaining period of the project. Stakeholders repeatedly emphasized that the support provided to the relevant institutions was essential, and the MTR Consultant is convinced that technical capacity has been enhanced, awareness created on many issues related to FRM and ministries and institutions have been supported in a myriad of ways.

The project activities remained on track to achieve most of its major outcomes/outputs, despite delays caused by COVID-19 pandemic the outbreak of which nearly coincided with the commencement of the project implementation and lasted with varying intensity throughout the reporting period. The pandemic issue was addressed through the revised both Multi Year Work Plan (MYWP) and the Budget, by relocating the unspent funds earmarked for 2019 - 2021 along the same budget lines, mostly over to 2022 and the rest of the project implementation period (2022 - 2024). Functional partnerships have also been established with all other relevant national stakeholders such as National Water Administrations and relevant ministries, as well as with the similar development initiatives run by GIZ and the "Support to Implementation and Monitoring of Water Management, Montenegro" EU IPA funded project managed by the Public Works Administration in Montenegro.

As the latter project covered the entire territory of Montenegro and to avoid overlapping, in coordination with the national Water Management Agency of Montenegro, the Drin FRM project did not undertake hydraulic modeling and flood hazard and flood risk mapping in the Montenegro part of the Drin River Basin, but instead provided a strong technical support and expertise, particularly in the hydrological assessment of certain APSFRs in Niksic and Cetinje municipalities in Montenegro. Likewise, in coordination with the national Water Management Agency of Albania, the Drin FRM project did not model and map the APSFRs that had already been treated by the former, GIZ project but focused on the remaining ones. Project also used DCG EWGF and transboundary Technical Working Groups set up by the long-running GIZ project for initial meetings and discussions with national hydrometeorological services.³¹

The project highlighted particular progress in important activities and has established proactive supporting network with the identified stakeholders and beneficiaries in the project. The project has created a precedent in river basin management in riparian countries and has laid the foundations for a more robust, and efficient management of climate change adaption measures for flood risk management in the region.

While delay is expectable of a project which is in its relative midpoint, some standstills have been identified which should quickly be acted upon if objective, outcomes, outputs and results are to materialize thoroughly in the rest of the implementation period.

GWP-Med implemented Component 2 – ‘Transboundary FRM institutional, legislative and policy framework / Outcome 2: Improved institutional arrangements, legislative and policy framework for FRM, and development of climate change adaptation and flood risk management strategy and plans at the basin, sub-basin, national and sub-national levels’, at the time of MTR was behind in all activities, and needs attention by the decision makers. In spite of the fact that full support provided by the Project Team to GWP-Med, still the progress was very slow.

³¹ Rating on Implementation Progress – September 2022, Drina FRM Project, UNDP.

Further, during MTR and the assessment of the institutional capacities of the national hydrometeorological services, lack of primarily human capacities (understaffing) and inadequate financial resources (underbudgeting) were identified as major bottlenecks in the effective implementation of project activities.

Few challenges with availability and timeliness in acquiring necessary technical data, needed for implementation of activities under Component 1, such as the national hydro-meteorological historical data were encountered during the implementation. These issues were successfully addressed through adopting an appropriate coordination mechanism with relevant national institutions (e.g., national hydro-meteorological institutes), and by applying contemporary data gathering techniques by project technical experts (Chief Technical Advisor in the first place). For example, issue of spatial and temporal data intermittency in the historical hydromet data series were solved by using the hydromet data obtained from free sources and in coordination with foreign institutions with which UNDP has established cooperation, such as NASA meteorological depository, etc.³²

4.2. Key lessons learnt

- Providing excessive number of hydrological or meteorological stations found to be counterproductive due to the lack of technical staff, competencies and funds at the national hydromet services. Thus, there is a need for improvement with perennial financing and staffing arrangements
- Temporal and spatial intermittency in the historical data series obtained from national hydromet services, that limited data quality for assessment and modelling purposes, was addressed by the project by using satellite imagery. This approach provides for the climate parameters assessment for creating virtual rain/snow gauges over the DRB at various time steps and preparing long time series with enough data to be processed and calculate both statistical rainfall values at virtual gauges and variograms related to rain heterogeneity.³³
- Stakeholder engagement ensured effective and efficient technology transfer and implementation – not only in identifying effective technology solutions in different local contexts but also in creating awareness and fostering ownership of these solutions.
- The availability of high quality and up to date information proved to be an essential condition to effect project delivery. The project team must—early on— understand the robustness and availability of climatic, scientific and socio-economic information. A well-planned transboundary initiative will be based on up-to-date data and information usually gathered from a combination of national-level agencies, regional institutions and international organisations.
- Transboundary initiatives can offer new opportunities for learning and knowledge transfer, and to deliver adaptation action that has advantages in terms of coordination, significant cost savings, and opportunities for cross-border learning and innovation.
- Implementing entities must develop a comprehensive understanding of the regional institutional landscape, including any past experiences at transboundary cooperation in the region. This involves understanding the strengths of national-level agencies as well as their needs for capacity enhancement. It also involves understanding the mandate, experience, and competencies of any

³² Project Lessons Learned Log, DRIN FRM Project.

³³ Strengthening riparian states' hydro-meteorological monitoring systems for enhanced FFEWS, Global Workshop on Water, Agriculture and Climate Change 17-18 October 2022, Geneva and online, Climate-resilient transboundary flood risk management in the Drin/Drin River Basin, Bojan Kovacevic, Regional Project Manager Istanbul Regional Hub/UNDP.

regional or basin-level authorities, such as those charged with river-basin management or regional economic development. Crucially, implementing entities must understand the nuanced political and policy realities around past efforts at cooperation, to develop shared understandings on the adaptation issues to be confronted and to find consensus on potential solutions and approaches for implementing those solutions.

4.3. Recommendations

The project has encountered various problems which need to be resolved in order meet the deliverable deadlines. Key recommendations to address those issues are as under:

Table 4: Recommendations

Rec #	Recommendation	Entity Responsible
A	Outcome 1: Hazard and risk knowledge management tools / Outcome 1: Improved climate and risk informed decision-making, availability and use of climate risk information.	
A.1	Key recommendation: During the MTR assessment of the institutional capacities of the national hydrometeorological services, to maintain minimum standard of services in water monitoring, the lack of primarily human capacities (understaffing) and inadequate financial resources (underbudgeting) were identified, as well as by the project key Hydrometric Networks Expert. Assurance on these issues may be sought in order to achieve the project's desired results and for the sustainability of project initiatives.	National institutions of Riparians
A.2	Key recommendation: Further to the MoUs that UNDP Country Offices signed with the National Hydro-meteorological Services of Albania, Montenegro and North Macedonia, the Project is recommended to develop bi-lateral coordination mechanisms with the key national partners (National Hydrometeorological Services, Water Management Agencies, Ministries of Environment, Civil Protection Agencies/ Emergency Management units/Directorates) to facilitate a successful transfer of the socio-economic vulnerability models and flood hazard and flood risk maps developed and/or finalized under the Outcome 1. Thus, tailor-made training plan addressing specific needs of individual national implementing partners/end beneficiaries of the above-mentioned products needs to be developed, and trainings implemented during and after the transfer, including support for use of the advanced tools.	National institutions of Riparians, Drin FRM Project
B	Component 2 – Transboundary FRM institutional, legislative and policy framework / Outcome 2: Improved institutional arrangements, legislative and policy framework for FRM, and development of climate change adaptation and flood risk management strategy and plans at the basin, sub-basin, national and sub-national.	
B.1	Key recommendation: The progress on Component/Outcome 2 activities is rather slow despite the full technical support from the Project Team (e.g., speaking programmatically, no deliverable by any of the activities under this Outcome has been finalized yet, while speaking operationally, the RP has utilized (including commitments) around 16.5% of the total outsourced amount of USD 592,810). While half of the project period has finished, it is expected that GWP and UNDP team assess the progress and update the 2023 and 2024 Schedule of Activities and Work Plan accordingly. Progress should also be assessed by wider UNDP team at least semi-annually, focusing particularly on the key strategic deliverables, such as the revised Terms of Reference (ToR) and five-year work plan of the Expert Working Group on Floods (Output 2.2) and Drin Basin Integrated CCA and FRM Strategy and FRM	GWP-Med; Drin FRM Project

Mid Term Review of Integrated Climate-resilient Transboundary Flood Risk Management in the Drin River Basin in the Western Balkans Project – November 2022.

	Plan (Output 2.3). UNDP team of international experts, especially the experienced Chief Technical Advisor to continue support and oversight in implementation.	
B.2	<p>Key recommendation: Given that several assumptions in the Project Result Framework partially or fully did not hold true, related to the (non) existence of legal regulatory reform and framework (absence of an international framework agreement on the basin management and relevant joint management entity/commission), and thus lack of DCG's legal authority to enforce and implement policies and strategies at basin and down to national levels, effective adoption implementation of strategies and policies developed under the Outcome 2 (primarily Basin-wide FRM Strategy and FRM Plan) are at risk. It is therefore, recommended that UNDP together with GWP-Med as the RP and the DCG secretariat, strongly advocate with the basin-wide national stakeholders, the development, signing and ratification of an international agreement for the management of the Drin Basin, followed by establishment of a Joint Commission. This activity was targeted for completion in 2022 by the Strategic Action Programme (SAP) completed under GEF Drin project and adopted by the DCG in 2020. Development of a basin-level legal institutional framework is a need also recognized by the AF commissioned study on Transboundary Approaches to Climate Adaptation from 2022. The project should follow up on this with the project which is in the pipeline, UNDP supported, GEF funded, "Implementing the Strategic Action Programme of the Drin Basin to Strengthen Transboundary Cooperation and Enable Integrated Natural Resources Management.</p>	UNDP, GWP-Med, DCG
C	<i>Component 3 – Priority community-based climate change adaptation and FRM interventions / Outcome 3: Strengthened resilience of local communities through improved flood forecasting and early warning, implementation of structural and non-structural measures and the strengthened capacity for CCA and FRM at the local level.</i>	
C.1	<p>Key recommendation: It is recommended that the progress of Component 2 and Component 3 may be monitored for another 6 months and if deemed necessary a no-cost extension (NCE) may be considered primarily allowing for completion of all structural flood protection measures under Outcome 3, since identification of some measures, which had not been pre-selected during project design, depended on the development of socio-economic prioritization modelling tools and flood risk maps under Outcome 1. There is also a need for continuous technical support of the project to further transfer of knowledge and build the capacity of national staff of the riparian counties. Additionally, due to the fact that commencement of the project coincided with COVID-19 global pandemic outbreak, which affected the timeliness of the delivery of all Outcomes, the Project experienced initial one year delay in implementation, attributed to several factors related to COVID-19.</p>	UNDP, AF, GWP-Med

A N N E X E S



Annex 1: Terms of Reference

BASIC CONTRACT INFORMATION

Location: Drin/Drim River Basin in the countries of **Albania, Montenegro and North Macedonia**

Application Deadline:

Type of Contract: Individual Contract

Post Level: International Consultant

Languages Required: English

Starting Date: estimated 15 August 2022

Duration of Initial Contract:

Expected Duration of Assignment: 3 months (approx. 40 working days)

BACKGROUND

A. Integrated climate-resilient transboundary flood risk management in the Drin River basin in the Western Balkans (Drin FRM) project

B. Project Description

This is the Terms of Reference for the UNDP-AF Midterm Review (MTR) of the full-sized project titled Integrated climate-resilient transboundary flood risk management in the Drin River basin in the Western Balkans (Drin FRM) (PIMS# 6215) implemented through the UNDP/ UNDP Istanbul Regional Hub for Europe and the CIS, which is to be undertaken in 2022. The project started on the 22 October 2019 and is in its third year of implementation. This ToR sets out the expectations for this MTR. The MTR process must follow the guidance outlined in the document [*Guidance For Conducting Midterm Reviews of UNDP-Supported, GEF-Financed Projects*](#).

The project was designed to assist the riparian countries in the implementation of an integrated climate-resilient river basin flood risk management approach in order to improve their existing capacity to manage flood risk at regional, national and local levels and to enhance resilience of vulnerable communities in the Drin River Basin (DRB) to climate-induced floods. Participating countries, Albania, Montenegro and North Macedonia, benefit from a basin-wide transboundary flood risk management (FRM) framework based on the following outcomes: Outcome 1 - Improved climate and risk informed decision-making, availability and use of climate risk information, Outcome 2 - Improved institutional arrangements, legislative and policy framework for climate-resilient FRM, and development of Climate Change Adaptation (CCA) and FRM strategy and plans at the basin, sub-basin, national and sub-national levels and Outcome 3 - Strengthened community resilience through improved flood management, through implementation of structural and non-structural measures and enhanced local capacity for CCA and FRM. The envisaged transformative change is the increased livelihoods resilience of approx. 1.6 million people living in the riparian communities in the DRB to climate-induced floods by a paradigm shift to a holistic, basin-wide, climate-responsive flood risk management and adaptation approach based on enhanced climate information, risk knowledge and community (non)structural adaptation measures.

The project is executed by UNDP Istanbul Regional Hub (IRH), responsible for overall management, ensuring project coherence, preparation and implementation of work plans, budgets, disbursement and administration of funds, financial and progress reporting and monitoring and evaluation. The IRH has engaged the Global Water Partnership Organization (GWP-MED) as the Responsible Party (RP) for the Outcome 2. As the RP, the GWP-MED implements the project's specific regional activities and provides links with the UNDP-implemented, GWP-MED-executed, GEF-funded project "Enabling Transboundary Cooperation and Integrated Water Resources Management in the Extended DRB", as well as the activities from the Drin Basin Strategic Action Programme (SAP) adopted therein. National, country-based activities under the Adaptation Fund (AF) Drin FRM project are delivered through the UNDP Country Offices (COs) in beneficiary countries (Albania, Montenegro and North Macedonia). The novel coronavirus (Covid-19) pandemic outbreak coincided with the project commencement, thus impeding its implementation timeline during the first two years. The project applied several mitigation measures to adequately address this issue.

The project has been implemented from October 2019, with the planned end in December 2024, and the total budget of USD 9,150,000.

C. MTR Purpose

The MTR will assess progress towards the achievement of the project objectives and outcomes as specified in the Project Document and assess early signs of project success or failure with the goal of identifying the necessary changes to be made in order to set the project on-track to achieve its intended results. The MTR will also review the project's strategy and its risks to sustainability.

DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

D. MTR Approach & Methodology

The MTR report must provide evidence-based information that is credible, reliable and useful.

The MTR Consultant will, supported by a National Consultant selected by UNDP CO Albania, review all relevant sources of information including documents prepared during the preparation phase (i.e., project concept, UNDP Initiation Plan, UNDP Social and Environmental Screening Procedure (SESP), Environmental and Social Management Framework (ESMF)), the Project Document, project reports including Project Performance Reports/PPRs, project budget revisions, national strategic and legal documents, and any other materials that the reviewer considers useful for this evidence-based review.

The MTR is expected to follow a collaborative and participatory approach³⁴ ensuring close engagement with the Project Team, government counterparts in Albania, Montenegro and North Macedonia, the UNDP Country Offices, the UNDP IRH the Nature, Climate and Energy (NCE) Regional Technical Advisor, GWP-MED-MED, direct beneficiaries, and other key stakeholders.

Engagement of stakeholders is vital to a successful MTR.³⁵ Stakeholder involvement should include interviews with stakeholders who have project responsibilities, including but not limited to the personnel of the Directorate of Waters of the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Water Management of Montenegro, Department of Waters of the Ministry of Environment and Spatial Planning of North Macedonia, Water Resources Management Agency of Albania, national hydro-meteorological services in Albania, Montenegro and North Macedonia; executing agencies, senior officials and task team/ component leaders, key experts and consultants in the subject area, Regional Project Board – Drin Core Group (DCG) members, project stakeholders, academia, local government and CSOs, etc. Additionally, the MTR Consultant is expected to conduct field missions to Albania, Montenegro and North Macedonia, the three Drin/Drim riparian countries where the project is being implemented, including the following project sites: Sateska River area in the Crn Drim sub-basin in North Macedonia and Buna/Bojana River area in the lower Drin/Drim sub-basin.

The specific design and methodology for the MTR should emerge from consultations between the MTR Consultant and the above-mentioned parties regarding what is appropriate and feasible for meeting the MTR purpose and objectives and answering the evaluation questions, given limitations of budget, time and data. The MTR must, however, use gender-responsive methodologies and tools and ensure that gender equality and women's empowerment, as well as other cross-cutting issues and SDGs are incorporated into the MTR report.

The final methodological approach including interview schedule, field visits and data to be used in the MTR should be clearly outlined in the Inception Report and be fully discussed and agreed between UNDP, stakeholders and the MTR Consultant.

The final MTR report must describe the full MTR approach taken and the rationale for the approach making explicit the underlying assumptions, challenges, strengths and weaknesses about the methods and approach of the review.

³⁴ For ideas on innovative and participatory Monitoring and Evaluation strategies and techniques, see [UNDP Discussion Paper: Innovations in Monitoring & Evaluating Results](#), 05 Nov 2013.

³⁵ For more stakeholder engagement in the M&E process, see the [UNDP Handbook on Planning, Monitoring and Evaluating for Development Results](#), Chapter 3, pg. 93.

E. Detailed Scope of the MTR

The MTR Consultant will assess the following four categories of project progress:

1. Project Strategy

Project Design:

- Review the problem addressed by the project and the underlying assumptions. Review the effect of any incorrect assumptions or changes to the context to achieving the project results as outlined in the Project Document.
- Review the relevance of the project strategy and assess whether it provides the most effective route towards expected/intended results. Were lessons from other relevant projects properly incorporated into the project design?
- Review how the project addresses the riparian countries priorities. Review the countries ownership. Was the project concept in line with the national sector development priorities and plans of the participating countries?
- Has the project been able to effectively adapt its areas of work to the effects of the Covid-19 pandemic in projects' implementation countries?
- Review decision-making processes: were perspectives of those who would be affected by project decisions, those who could affect the outcomes, and those who could contribute information or other resources to the process, taken into account during project design processes?
- Review the extent to which relevant gender issues were raised in the project design.
 - Were relevant gender issues (e.g., the impact of the project on gender equality in the programme countries, involvement of women's groups, engaging women in project activities) raised in the Project Document?
- If there are major areas of concern, recommend areas for improvement.

Results Framework/Logframe:

- Undertake a critical analysis of the project's logframe indicators and targets, assess how "SMART" the midterm and end-of-project targets are (Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Relevant, Time-bound), and suggest specific amendments/revisions to the targets and indicators as necessary.
- Are the project's objectives and outcomes or components clear, practical, and feasible within its time frame?
- Examine if progress so far has led to or could in the future catalyse beneficial development effects (i.e., income generation, gender equality and women's empowerment, improved governance etc...) that should be included in the project results framework and monitored on an annual basis.
- Ensure broader development and gender aspects of the project are being monitored effectively.

2. Progress Towards Results

- Review the logframe indicators against progress made towards the end-of-project targets; populate the Progress Towards Results Matrix; colour code progress in a "traffic light system" based on the level of progress achieved; assign a rating on progress for the project objective and each outcome; make recommendations from the areas marked as "not on target to be achieved" (red).
- Has the project been effective in addressing the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, both in terms of effective implementation of the planned actions, and in assisting the partnering national institutions from all three riparian countries to prepare for post-COVID recovery?
- Identify remaining barriers to achieving the project objective in the remainder of the project.
- By reviewing the aspects of the project that have already been successful, identify ways in which the project can further expand these benefits.

3. Project Implementation and Adaptive Management

Management Arrangements

- Review overall effectiveness of project management as outlined in the Project Document. Have changes been made and are they effective? Are responsibilities and reporting lines clear? Is decision-making transparent and undertaken in a timely manner? Recommend areas for improvement.

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- Review the quality of execution of the Executing Agency/Implementing Partner(s) and recommend areas for improvement.
- Review the quality of support provided by the AF Partner Agency (UNDP) and recommend areas for improvement.
- Do the UNDP IRH, UNDP COs and GWP-MED-MED have the capacity to deliver benefits to or involve women? If yes, how?
- What is the gender balance of project staff? What steps have been taken to ensure gender balance in project staff?
- What is the gender balance of the Project Board? What steps have been taken to ensure gender balance in the Project Board?

Work Planning

- Review any delays in project start-up and implementation, identify the causes and examine if they have been resolved.
- Are work-planning processes results-based? If not, suggest ways to re-orientate work planning to focus on results?
- Examine the use of the project's results framework/ logframe as a management tool and review any changes made to it since project start.

Finance and co-finance

- Consider the financial management of the project, with specific reference to the cost-effectiveness of interventions.
- Review the changes to fund allocations as a result of budget revisions and assess the appropriateness and relevance of such revisions.
- Does the project have the appropriate financial controls, including reporting and planning, that allow management to make informed decisions regarding the budget and allow for timely flow of funds?
- Provide commentary on co-financing: are co-financiers (local governments and central state institutions) meeting their commitment towards covering O&M costs of the structural flood protection measures implemented by the project?

Project-level monitoring and evaluation systems

- Review the monitoring tools currently being used: Do they provide the necessary information? Do they involve key partners? Are they aligned or mainstreamed with national systems? Do they use existing information? Are they efficient? Are they cost-effective? Are additional tools required? How could they be made more participatory and inclusive?
- Examine the financial management of the project monitoring and evaluation budget. Are sufficient resources being allocated to monitoring and evaluation? Are these resources being allocated effectively?
- Review the extent to which relevant gender issues were incorporated in monitoring systems.

Stakeholder Engagement

- Project management: Has the project developed and leveraged the necessary and appropriate partnerships with direct and tangential stakeholders?
- Participation and country-driven processes: Do local and national government stakeholders support the objectives of the project? Do they continue to have an active role in project decision-making that supports efficient and effective project implementation?
- Participation and public awareness: To what extent has stakeholder involvement and public awareness contributed to the progress towards achievement of project objectives?

Social and Environmental Standards (Safeguards)

- Validate the risks identified in the project's most current SESP and ESMF, and those risks' ratings; are any revisions needed?
- Summarize and assess the revisions made since CEO Endorsement/Approval (if any) to:
 - The project's overall safeguards risk categorization.

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- The identified types of risks³⁶ (in the SESP/ESMF).
- The individual risk ratings (in the SESP/ESMF).
- Describe and assess progress made in the implementation of the project's social and environmental management measures as outlined in the SESP and ESMF submitted at CEO Endorsement/Approval (and prepared during implementation, if any), including any revisions to those measures. Such management measures might include Environmental and Social Management Plans (ESMPs) or other management plans, though can also include aspects of a project's design; refer to Question 6 in the SESP template for a summary of the identified management measures.

A given project should be assessed against the version of UNDP's safeguards policy that was in effect at the time of the project's approval.

Reporting

- Assess how adaptive management changes have been reported by the project management and shared with the Project Board.
- Assess how well the Project Team and partners undertake and fulfil AF reporting requirements (i.e., how have they addressed poorly rated PPRs, if applicable?)
- Assess how lessons derived from the adaptive management process have been documented, shared with key partners and internalized by partners.

Communications

- Review internal project communication with stakeholders: Is communication regular and effective? Are there key stakeholders left out of communication? Are there feedback mechanisms when communication is received? Does this communication with stakeholders contribute to their awareness of project outcomes and activities and investment in the sustainability of project results?
- Review external project communication: Are proper means of communication established or being established to express the project progress and intended impact to the public (is there a web presence, for example? Or did the project implement appropriate outreach and public awareness campaigns?)
- For reporting purposes, write one half-page paragraph that summarizes the project's progress towards results in terms of contribution to sustainable development benefits, as well as global environmental benefits.

4. Sustainability

- Validate whether the risks identified in the Project Document, PPRs and the ATLAS Risk Register are the most relevant and whether the risk ratings applied are appropriate and up to date. If not, explain why.
- In addition, assess the following risks to sustainability:

Financial risks to sustainability:

- What is the likelihood of financial and economic resources not being available once the AF assistance ends (consider potential resources can be from multiple sources, such as the public and private sectors, income generating activities, and other funding that will be adequate financial resources for sustaining project's outcomes)?

Socio-economic risks to sustainability:

- Are there any social or political risks that may jeopardize sustainability of project outcomes? What is the risk that the level of stakeholder ownership (including ownership by governments and other key stakeholders) will be insufficient to allow for the project outcomes/benefits to be sustained? Do the various key stakeholders see that it is in their interest that the project benefits continue to flow? Is there sufficient public / stakeholder awareness in support of the long-term objectives of the project? Are lessons learned being documented by the Project Team on a continual basis and shared/ transferred to appropriate parties who could learn from the project and potentially replicate and/or scale it in the future?

³⁶ Risks are to be labeled with both the UNDP SES Principles and Standards, and 15 AF Environmental and Social Principles (ESPs): Compliance with the Law, Access and Equity, Marginalized and Vulnerable Groups, Human Rights, Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment, Core Labor Rights, Indigenous Peoples, Involuntary Resettlement, Protection of Natural Habitats, Conservation of Biological Diversity, Climate Change, Pollution prevention and Resource Efficiency, Public Health, Physical and Cultural Heritage, Lands and Soil Conservation

- What is the possible impact of Covid-19 pandemic on project's sustainability?

Institutional Framework and Governance risks to sustainability:

- Do the legal frameworks, policies, governance structures and processes pose risks that may jeopardize sustenance of project benefits? While assessing this parameter, also consider if the required systems/mechanisms for accountability, transparency, and technical knowledge transfer are in place.

Environmental risks to sustainability:

- Are there any environmental risks that may jeopardize sustenance of project outcomes?

Conclusions & Recommendations

The consultant will include a section in the MTR report for evidence-based **conclusions**, in light of the findings.

Additionally, the consultant is expected to make **recommendations** to the Project Team. Recommendations should be succinct suggestions for critical intervention that are specific, measurable, achievable, and relevant. A recommendation table should be put in the report's executive summary. The MTR consultant should make no more than 15 recommendations total.

Ratings

The MTR Consultant will include its ratings of the project's results and brief descriptions of the associated achievements in *MTR Ratings & Achievement Summary Table* in the Executive Summary of the MTR report. See the ToR Annexes for the Rating Table and ratings scales.

F. Expected Outputs and Deliverables

The MTR consultant shall prepare and submit:

- MTR Inception Report: MTR consultant clarifies objectives and methods of the Midterm Review no later than **2 weeks** before the MTR mission. To be sent to the Commissioning Unit and project management. Completion date: (20 September 2022)
- Presentation: MTR consultant presents initial findings to project management and the Commissioning Unit at the end of the MTR mission. Completion date: (20 October 2022)
- Draft MTR Report: MTR consultant submits the draft full report with annexes **within 3 weeks** of the MTR mission. Completion date: (31 October 2022)
- Final Report*: MTR consultant submits the revised report with annexed and completed Audit Trail detailing how all received comments have (and have not) been addressed in the final MTR report. To be sent to the Commissioning Unit **within 1 week** of receiving UNDP comments on draft. Completion date: (30 November 2022)

*The final MTR report must be in English. If applicable, the Commissioning Unit may choose to arrange for a translation of the report into a language more widely shared by national stakeholders.

G. Institutional Arrangements

The principal responsibility for managing this MTR resides with the Commissioning Unit. The Commissioning Unit for this project's MTR is UNDP's Istanbul Regional Hub (IRH)

The Commissioning Unit will contract the consultants and ensure the timely provision of per diems and travel arrangements **within the** three DRB riparian countries covered by the project (Albania, Montenegro and North Macedonia) for the MTR consultant. The Project Team will be responsible for liaising with the MTR Consultant to provide all relevant documents, set up stakeholder interviews, and arrange field visits.

H. Duration of the Work

The total duration of the MTR will be approximately 40 days over a period of 12 weeks starting 1 September 2022 and shall not exceed five months from when the Consultant is hired. The tentative MTR timeframe is as follows:

- 31 July 2022: Application closes
- 10 August 2022: Selection of MTR Consultant
- 15 August 2022: Prep the MTR Consultant (handover of project documents)
- By 1 September 2022 (4 working days): Document review and preparing MTR Inception Report
- By 10 September 2022 (4 working days): Finalization and Validation of MTR Inception Report- latest start of MTR mission
- By 30 September 2022 (15 working days): MTR mission: stakeholder meetings, interviews, field visits
- By 30 September 2022: Mission wrap-up meeting & presentation of initial findings- earliest end of MTR mission
- By 20 October 2022 (15 working days): Preparing draft report
- By 10 November 2022 (2 working days): Incorporating audit trail on draft report/Finalization of MTR report/ Preparation & Issue of Management Response
- By 20 November 2022: Expected date of full MTR completion

The date start of contract is 20 August 2022.

I. Duty Station

The Consultant will be home based for the contract duration, with field works/duty travel to the three DRB countries covered by the project (Albania, Montenegro and North Macedonia).

Travel:

- International travel will be required to Albania, Montenegro and North Macedonia during the MTR mission.
- The BSAFE training course must be successfully completed prior to commencement of travel; Herewith is the link to access this training: <https://training.dss.un.org/courses/login/index.php> . These training modules at this secure internet site are accessible to Consultant, which allows for registration with private email.
- Individual Consultant are responsible for ensuring they have vaccinations/inoculations when travelling to certain countries, as designated by the UN Medical Director.
- Consultants are required to comply with the UN security directives set forth under <https://dss.un.org/dssweb/>
- All related travel expenses will be covered and will be reimbursed as per UNDP rules and regulations upon submission of an F-10 claim form and supporting documents.

REQUIRED SKILLS AND EXPERIENCE

J. Qualifications of the Successful Applicants

An independent consultant will conduct the MTR. The consultant cannot have participated in the project preparation, formulation, and/or implementation (including the writing of the Project Document) and should not have a conflict of interest with project's related activities.

The selection of consultants will be aimed at maximizing the overall qualities in the following areas:

Education

- A Master's degree in Energy, Environment, Business Administration, Economics, Engineering, or other closely related field (*max. 5 pts.*)

Experience

- At least 10 years of experience in conducting result-based management projects' mid-term or terminal evaluation, preferably funded by AF/GEF/GCF (*max. 30 pts.*)
- Experience applying SMART targets and reconstructing or validating baseline scenarios (*max. 5 pts.*)
- Competence in adaptive management, particularly related to climate change adaptation (*max. 5 pts.*)
- Experience of working in the Western Balkans will be considered an asset (*max. 5 pts.*)

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- Experience in relevant technical areas of the project (*max. 15 pts.*)
- Demonstrated understanding of issues related to gender and livelihoods related to climate change adaptation; experience in gender sensitive evaluation and analysis (*max. 5 pts.*)
- Excellent communication skills
- Demonstrable analytical skills
- Project evaluation/review experiences within United Nations system will be considered an asset.

Language

- Fluency in written and spoken English.
- Knowledge of any of the languages spoken in the Western Balkans (Albanian, Macedonian, Montenegrin) will be considered an asset

K. Ethics

The MTR consultant will be held to the highest ethical standards and is required to sign a code of conduct upon acceptance of the assignment. This MTR will be conducted in accordance with the principles outlined in the UNEG 'Ethical Guidelines for Evaluation'. The consultant must safeguard the rights and confidentiality of information providers, interviewees and stakeholders through measures to ensure compliance with legal and other relevant codes governing collection of data and reporting on data. The consultant must also ensure security of collected information before and after the MTR and protocols to ensure anonymity and confidentiality of sources of information where that is expected. The information, knowledge and data gathered in the MTR process must also be solely used for the MTR and not for other uses without the express authorization of UNDP and partners.

L. Schedule of Payments

- 20% payment upon satisfactory delivery of the final MTR Inception Report and approval by the Commissioning Unit
 - 40% payment upon satisfactory delivery of the draft MTR report to the Commissioning Unit
 - 40% payment upon satisfactory delivery of the final MTR report and approval by the Commissioning Unit and RTA (via signatures on the TE Report Clearance Form) and delivery of completed TE Audit Trail
- Criteria for issuing the final payment of 40%
- The final MTR report includes all requirements outlined in the MTR TOR and is in accordance with the MTR guidance.
 - The final MTR report is clearly written, logically organized, and is specific for this project (i.e. text has not been cut & pasted from other MTR reports).
 - The Audit Trail includes responses to and justification for each comment listed.

APPLICATION PROCESS

UNDP Global Policy Network (GPN)/ExpRes deployment mechanism of pre-selected and technically vetted consultants will be used for recruitment.

M. Recommended Presentation of Offer

- Letter of Confirmation of Interest and Availability** using the [template](#)³⁷ provided by UNDP;
- CV and a Personal History Form** ([P11 form](#))³⁸;
- Brief description of approach to work/technical proposal** of why the individual considers him/herself as the most suitable for the assignment, and a proposed methodology on how they will approach and complete the assignment; (max 1 page)

³⁷

<https://intranet.undp.org/unit/bom/psd/Support%20documents%20on%20IC%20Guidelines/Template%20for%20Confirmation%20of%20Interest%20and%20Submission%20of%20Financial%20Proposal.docx>

³⁸ http://www.undp.org/content/dam/undp/library/corporate/Careers/P11_Personal_history_form.doc

- d) **Financial Proposal** that indicates the all-inclusive fixed total contract price and all other travel related costs (such as flight ticket, per diem, etc), supported by a breakdown of costs, as per template attached to the [Letter of Confirmation of Interest template](#). If an applicant is employed by an organization/company/institution, and he/she expects his/her employer to charge a management fee in the process of releasing him/her to UNDP under Reimbursable Loan Agreement (RLA), the applicant must indicate at this point, and ensure that all such costs are duly incorporated in the financial proposal submitted to UNDP.

All application materials should be submitted to the address (fill address) in a sealed envelope indicating the following reference “Consultant for Integrated climate-resilient transboundary flood risk management in the Drin River basin in the Western Balkans Midterm Review” or by email at the following address ONLY: (fill email) by (time and date). Incomplete applications will be excluded from further consideration.

N. Criteria for Selection of the Best Offer

Only those applications which are responsive and compliant will be evaluated. Offers will be evaluated according to the Combined Scoring method – where the educational background and experience on similar assignments will be weighted at 70% and the price proposal will weigh as 30% of the total scoring. The applicant receiving the Highest Combined Score that has also accepted UNDP’s General Terms and Conditions will be awarded the contract.

[Annexes to Midterm Review Terms of Reference](#)

For Standard Template 2

- **ToR ANNEX A: List of Documents to be reviewed by the MTR Consultant**
- **ToR ANNEX B: Guidelines on Contents for the Midterm Review Report³⁹**
- **ToR ANNEX C: Midterm Review Evaluative Matrix Template**
- **ToR ANNEX D: UNEG Code of Conduct for Evaluators/Midterm Review Consultants⁴⁰**
- **ToR ANNEX E: MTR Ratings and Achievements Summary Table and Rating Scales**
- **ToR ANNEX F: MTR Report Clearance Form**
- **ToR ANNEX G: Audit Trail Template**
- **ToR ANNEX H: Progress Towards Results Matrix**

³⁹ The Report length should not exceed 40 pages in total (not including annexes).

⁴⁰ <http://www.unevaluation.org/document/detail/100>

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Annex 2: MTR Matrix

Evaluative Questions	Indicators	Data Sources	Methodology
Project Strategy: To what extent is the project strategy relevant to country priorities, country ownership, and the best route towards expected results?			
How does the project objective align with national strategies/programs and local communities and to what extend?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Study conducted before start of project implementation, Baseline info documented, relevant government offices and communities consulted during the project life Country ownership 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project documents and reports UNDP SESPS/UNDP ESMF AF/GEF focal area strategies Regional Project Board (RPB), Drin Core Group (DCG) UNDP Country Offices (COs) documents Government offices Project and government websites Stakeholder, communities, CSOs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In-depth desk review (IDDR) of all relevant UNDP and governments' documents, guidelines and literature Interviews and consultations Website search
Is the project aligned to policies, strategies, and priorities of the government?	Project priorities adhered to national policies and regulations, national policies and frameworks reviewed for the project design, Government officials consulted during project design	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project documents and reports UNDP SESPS/UNDP ESMF AF/GEF focal area strategies UNDP COs documents Government offices RBP, DCG Project and government websites Stakeholder, communities, CSOs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> IDDR relevant documents, guidelines and literature Interviews with key stakeholders and key informants
How do you describe the level of joint planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of project activities among government office	All relevant government offices represented and participated in the project design, all relevant offices actively engaged at all stages and decisions in the project implementation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project documents, PPRs Project team, Government offices, Community leaders, beneficiaries Reports, Minutes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> IDDR of documents and literature relevant to project Interviews and consultations Analysis
Tell us the effect of any incorrect assumptions or changes to the context to achieving the project results as outlined in the Project Document.	Assumptions and risks clearly discussed in the project design, project implementers clearly understood risks and assumptions, mitigative measures clearly discussed, and implemented in the project implementation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project documents and reports Project team Government offices, Community leaders, beneficiaries, CSOs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> IDDR, IDDR with project staff, PSC members, discussion with community groups, analysis
Were lessons from other relevant projects properly incorporated into the project design?	Relevant exemplary previous projects reviewed and lessons drawn during project design, innovations included in the project activities,	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project documents and reports Project team Government offices, Community leaders, beneficiaries, CSOs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> IDDR, IDDR with project staff, PSC members, FGDs with communities, analysis
Does the project Results Framework have meaningful targets, indicators and sources of verification for the project?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consistent set of targets, indicators and means of verification which are well-founded on the baseline analysis Use of SMART criteria for indicators 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project document and Results Framework, Work plans Project Teams and stakeholders Project, UNDP and AF websites 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> IDDR Interviews and discussions
Were gender issues raised? In what?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gender disaggregated data Women are properly represented in the project, 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project document, PPRs and other reports, Gender action plan Project team and stakeholders 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Desk review and analysis Interviews Field visits

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Key Questions	Indicators	Data Sources	Methodology
Progress Towards Results: To what extent have the expected outcomes and objectives of the project been achieved thus far?			
How much the project achieved the planned outcomes/results and its objectives so far?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Relative achievement of the project (on outcomes) compared to end of project targets and mid-term targets Relative achievement of the project (on overall goal) compared to end of project targets and mid-term targets 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project document and results framework PPRs Monitoring reports Project Inception Report Work plans, project files Project team and Stakeholder 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In-depth desk review One-on-one interviews Vigorous consultations Field visit verifications FGDs with beneficiaries Personal observations and judgment
To what extent has the project increased institutional capacity to sustainably manage flood risks?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Local development strategies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> PPRs Monitoring reports Minutes/Reports/meetings of the RPB /DCG Project Appraisal committee Local development strategies Project team and Stakeholder views Beneficiaries 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In-depth desk review One-on-one interviews Vigorous consultations Field visits Personal observations and judgment
What benefits do government institutions and community groups got from the project activities and outputs? To what extent they benefited from the project?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project implementation capacities improved New innovations adapted and implemented in other areas The efficiency and effectiveness of project implementation capacity of beneficiaries improved 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> PPRs Monitoring reports Minutes/Reports/meetings of the RPB /DCG Project Appraisal committee Local development strategies Project team and Stakeholder views Beneficiaries 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In-depth desk review One-on-one interviews Vigorous consultations Field visits Personal observations and judgment
What lessons have been learned from the project regarding achievement of outcomes?	Extent of lessons learned adoption	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> PPRs Lessons learned reports Back-to-office reports 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Desk review, interviews
How are the project outputs addressing key barriers?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reports produces Corrective actions taken 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> PPRs Minutes/Reports/meetings of the Regional Project Board /DCG Project Appraisal committee Stakeholder feedback during MTR mission 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Desk review and analysis Interviews Field visits

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Key Questions	Indicators	Sources	Methodology
Project Implementation and Adaptive Management: Has the project been implemented efficiently, cost-effectively, and been able to adapt to any changing conditions thus far? To what extent are project-level monitoring and evaluation systems, reporting, and project communications supporting the project's implementation? To what extent has progress been made in the implementation of social and environmental management measures? Have there been changes to the overall project risk rating and/or the identified types of risks as outlined at the CEO Endorsement stage?			
Is the project's strategy amended in response to implementation challenges and/or new insights?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Annual (or more frequent) review of project outcomes, impacts and strategy On-going stakeholder consultations (beyond project partners) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project Document, PPRs Minutes/of meetings of the RPB /DCG Project Appraisal committee, Project Teams and stakeholders 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Desk review One-on-one interviews and Vigorous consultations Personal observations and judgment Field visits verification
Does the project effectively monitor and track progress at outcome and goal level? Are sufficient resources being allocated and used effectively?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Existence and implementation of M&E system Level of adaptive management and Feedback from M&E activities used for adaptive management UNDP and Implementing Partner implementation / execution coordination, and operational issues 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project Document, PPRs, annual work plans Minutes/Reports/meetings of the Regional Project Board /DCG Project Appraisal committee Project Teams and stakeholder views 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In-depth desk review One-on-one interviews Vigorous consultations Personal observations and judgment Field visits verification Personal judgment
Does the project have the appropriate financial controls, including reporting and planning, that allow management to make informed decisions regarding the budget and allow for timely flow of funds?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Systems developed to control financial resources, system to allow informed decision making in place 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project documents and Reports M&E Tracking tool Government officials Target beneficiaries, CSOs, etc. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Desk review One-on-one interviews Vigorous consultations Personal observations and judgment Field visits verification
Is the project communicating effectively about its objective, activities and results to all stakeholders and society at large?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Existence of a formalized communications strategy aimed at a wide enough group of stakeholders? Existence of measurable impacts of communications activities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project documentation (communication specific) Project monitoring reports (communication specific) Stakeholder views 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Desk review One-on-one interviews with key stakeholders Interviews and questionnaires Personal observations and judgment
Has gender streaming been considered in Project staff and RPB?	%age of women in in project and RPB	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project document, PPRs, RPB meetings minutes, views of project team and stakeholders 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Preview of project documentations, discussions
Are the work planning processes results-based? Has the results framework been used as a management tool and any changes made to it?	Revised work plan and results framework	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Results framework and work plans. PPRs, RPB meetings minutes, 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Desk review Project team
Is stakeholder engagement sufficient?	Understanding and ownership of stakeholders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project documents Stakeholders Beneficiaries, CSOs, etc. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review of documents Interviews and consultations FGDs
Have the risks been identified and revised in the project's most current SESP and ESMF?	Revised risk assessment plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project risk assessment report Project team and stakeholders 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Desk review Discussions
Has the project been effective in addressing the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, both in terms of effective implementation of the planned actions, and in assisting	Extent of COVID-19 strategy implementation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> PPRs, Results Framework, Work plans, COVID-19 report RBP//DCG 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In-depth desk review and analysis One-on-one interviews and Vigorous consultations

Mid Term Review of Integrated Climate-resilient Transboundary Flood Risk Management in the Drin River Basin in the Western Balkans Project – November 2022.

the partnering national institutions from all three riparian countries to prepare for post-COVID recovery?		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project Teams and stakeholders 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Field visit verifications FGDs with beneficiaries
Key Questions	Indicators	Sources	Methodology
Sustainability: To what extent are there financial, institutional, socio-economic, and/or environmental risks to sustaining long-term project results and to what extent are the transboundary dimensions sustainable?			
Has the project effectively managed its existing risks?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Does the project actively manage its risk log? Does the project regularly discuss financial, institutional, socio-economic and environmental risks with partners and stakeholders 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project Document PPRs Views of Project Teams and stakeholders Minutes/Reports/meetings of the RPB /DCG Project Appraisal committee 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In-depth desk review One-on-one interviews Use of interview protocols and questionnaires Vigorous consultations Personal observations and judgment
What lessons can be drawn regarding sustainability of project results, and what changes could be made (if any) to the design of the project in order to improve sustainability of project results?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Changes adopted in the project strategy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project documentation Stakeholder views Current national and local development strategies and sector plans 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Desk review Interviews FGDs
How has the project addressed financial and economic sustainability? Are recurrent costs sustainable after project closure? What evidence is available that demonstrates budget allocations have been or will be made to sustain project results?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Budget revisions and budget allocations Government allocations to project initiatives 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Budget allocations PPRs Government publications 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Desk review Interviews Consultations
What evidence is available that demonstrate reduction of key threats to land and water resources? Have any new environmental threats emerged?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project outputs realised Environmental aspects covered 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tracking tool Budget allocations Training record, statistics on awareness campaigns 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review of project documentation Interviews Consultations
What incentives are in place or under development to sustain socioeconomic benefits? What evidence is available that demonstrates capacities and resilience of local communities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Socioeconomic situation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project documentation Government Stakeholders and Project team Beneficiaries 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Desk review Interviews Consultations Field visits
To what extent has the project strengthened the capacities of government institutions to take over project activities and outputs to continue in the long-run?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Government institutions, local government offices, beneficiaries are capacitated to take over project activities to ensure sustainable use of interventions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project documentation Government officials RBP/DCG Stakeholders and Project team Beneficiaries 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Report review, IDDR with PSC members, discussion with project staff, discussion with the beneficiaries, analysis

Annex 3: List of documents reviewed

- Adaptation fund board secretariat technical review, UNDP DRR West Balkans 31 Jan 2019.
- Drin FRM Project Monitoring and Evaluation Plan, Drin FRM Project, UNDP Albania.
- Environmental and Social screening report, Detailed Design for Bridges Reconstruction in Downstream Gracanica River, December 30th 2020.
- Evaluation Policy of the Adaptation Fund, AFB/EFC.29/6/Rev.1, 17 May 2022, Ethics and Finance Committee, Adaptation Fund.
- Guidance For Conducting Midterm Reviews of UNDP-Supported, GEF-Financed Projects, UNDP-GEF Directorate, 2014 United Nations Development Programme.
- Inception Report Integrated Climate-Resilient Transboundary Flood Risk Management in The Drin River Basin in The Western Balkans (Drin FRM project, 2020).
- Minutes of the First Project Board Meetings, Drin FRM Project, UNDP Albania.
- Project Document – Drin FRM Project, UNDP Albania, 2019.
- Project Performance Reports, 2019, 2020, 2021, 2022 Drin FRM Project, UNDP Albania.
- Project Lessons Learned Log, DRIN FRM Project
- Public hearing on Draft Environmental Impact Assessment Study (EIA).
(<https://www.dropbox.com/sh/bbonth4nu6jk5rp/AAA8zdoT4Uo01yloGzFXdPB4a?dl=0>)
- Rating on Implementation Progress, April 2021, Drin FRM Project, UNDP Albania.
- Regional Project Proposal, Drin FRM Project, UNDP Albania.
- References to Kosovo shall be understood to be in the context of Security Council Resolution 1244 (1999).
- Social and Environmental Screening Procedure and ESMF, Drin FRM Project, UNDP Albania.
- Strengthening riparian states' hydro-meteorological monitoring systems for enhanced FFEWS, Global Workshop on Water, Agriculture and Climate Change 17-18 October 2022, Geneva and online, Drin FRM Project, Bojan Kovacevic, Regional Project Manager Istanbul Regional Hub/UNDP
- Sustainability Plan, Drin FRM Project, UNDP, Albania.
- The Communication and Advocacy Strategy, Drin FRM Project, UNDP Albania.
- The Human Development Report 2021/2022, UNDP.
- ToR for Mid Term Review (MTR) for the Integrated Climate-resilient Transboundary Flood Risk Management in the Drin River Basin in the Western Balkans (Drin FRM) Project”.
- UNEG Integrating Human Rights and Gender Equality in Evaluation -Towards UNEG Guidance, UNEG/G (2011)2, March 2011.
- UNEG Ethical Guidelines for Evaluation, UNEG, March 2008.
- UNDP Guidance Notes on the Social and Environmental Standards (SES).
- UNDP/AF - Detailed Design for Bridges Reconstruction in Downstream Gracanica River Environmental and Social Screening Report, December 30th 2020.
- UNDP Social and Environmental Standards, POLICY UPDATE OPG approved in 2019.
- Vertical Fund COVID Survey April 2020, Drin FRM Project, UNDP Albania.

Annex 4: List of persons interviewed**Annex 4: List of persons met****UNDP Drin FRM Project and UNDP**

- Bojan Kovacevic, Regional Project Manager
- Herve Bousquet, Chief Technical Advisor
- Anita Kodzoman, Head of UNDP Environment and Disaster Reduction Unit
- Odeta Cato, Drin FRM National Coordinator for Albania
- Nikola Zdraveski, Drin FRM National Coordinator for North Macedonia
- Viktor Subotic, National Project Coordinator for Montenegro
- Ms. Elvita Kabashi- Head of Climate and Environment Cluster
- Ms. Clotilde Goeman, IRH Regional Technical Advisor and Mr Stanislav Kim, UNDP IRH Climate and Disaster Team Leader
- Dorina Canay, Admn. And Finance Assistant, Drin FRM Project

Albania

- Ms. Klodiana Marika of the Ministry of Tourism and Environment

Water Resources Management Agency

- Mr. Arduen Karagozji- Director of Strategic Management, Water Resources Management Agency
- Mr. Hermon Bonati- Director of Management and Performance
- Ms. Margarita Lutaj- Sector of Risk Management and Protection of Water Resources

Albanian National Institute of Geosciences (IGEO)

- Mr. Ylber Muceku- Director
- Mr. Edmond Dushi-Deputy Director
- Ms. Irena Ymeti- Head of Meteorology
- Ms. Liljana Lata- Researched, Hydrology

KESH- Albanian Power Corporation

- Mr. Jonid Kazani- Director, Strategic Development Department
- Mr. Loran Sevi- Director, Public Relations
- Ms. Jonida Hafizi – Chief of Department, Environment

IDRA – consultancy (tasked with collecting the flood markers and socio-economic data in APSFRs in Albania and North Macedonia, and national GIS expert for Albania)

- Mr. Auron Pasha- IDRA Director- Team Leader
- Ms. Stela Guxo- Hydrotechnical engineer
- Ms. Greisa Gurabardhi- GIS expert
- Ms. Arvena Deda- Coordinator
- Ms. Albana Zotaj- National GIS expert

GWP-Med, Albania

- Fiorela Shalsi, Gender Equality Consultant

Lezha field visit

- Ms. Arvena Deda- IDRA Project Coordinator
- Ms. Greisa Gurabardhi- IDRA GIS expert
- Mr. Gerald Rexhepi- IDRA data manager and GIS expert

Lezha municipality

- Mr. Ermal Pacaj- Deputy Mayor of Lezha Municipality
- Mr. Bardhyl Kacorri- Director, Department of Civil Emergency
- Mr. Andi Marku- Chief of Sector, Department of Civil Emergency

Shkodra- Murtemza Channel

- Sead Sadiku- Director of Shkodra Region Water Agency

Montenegro

- Viktor Subotic, National Project Coordinator for Montenegro, UNDP Drin FRM Project
- Irena Lakovic, Drin FRM Project assistant

Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Water Management

- Zeljko Furtula, General Director for Water Management
- Enis Gjokaj, Secretary of MNE-AL Bilateral Water Management Commission
- Zorica Djuranovic and Dragana Djukic, heads of departments in Directorate for Water Management of the Ministry
- Marija Stojanovic, adviser in the Ministry

Water Administration/WA (national agency for water management)

- Vesna Bajovic, Director
- Milo Radovic, senior adviser

Institute for Hydrometeorology and Seismology/IHMS

- Dusica Brnovic, Director
- Golub Culafic, head of Hydrometry division
- Biljana Kilibarda, adviser for international cooperation

IPA Floods Directive implementation Project team:

- Patrick Reynolds, Team leader
- Zdenka Ivanovic, expert for FRM planning

Global Water Partnership Mediterranean/GWP-Med (Responsible Party)

- Novak Cadjenovic, Senior Programme Officer

Niksic Municipality's team

- Vidak Krtolica, Municipal Secretary for communal affairs and transport
- Djordjije Manojlovic, Municipal Secretary for spatial planning and environmental protection
- Ana Vukotic, Director of Municipal Agency for Spatial Planning and Projects
- Slavica Zindovic, senior adviser
- Jelena Sekaric, senior adviser
- Ana Miljanic, senior adviser
- Bojan Babic, senior adviser
- Slobodan Banovic, Drin FRM Project expert

North Macedonia

- Nikola Zdravski, UNDP Drin FRM Project National Coordinator for North Macedonia

Directorate for Protection and Rescue/Ministry of Interior

- Kristina Palajsa, head of Division for Disaster Risk Reduction, Department for Civil Protection and Disaster Risk Reduction

Hydrometeorological Institute

- Mr. Ivica Todorovski, Director
- Mr. Vasko Stojov, Head of hydrology department

Ministry of Environment

- Ylber Mirta Head of the Water Department from Ministry of Environment
- Ljupka Dimovska Zajkov Deputy Head

Debarca municipality

- Zoran Nogaceski Mayor of Municipality of Debarca
- Angel Sekuloski – Head of Department for Local Economic Development and local resident of the Debarca municipality

Annex 5: MTR Mission Itinerary

Date	Activity
18 Sep. 2022	- Arrival at Tirana
Albania 19 – 23 Sep. 2022	- Briefing /Meeting with UNDP Albania
	- Meeting with Regional Manager/Project Team
	- Personnel of Water Resources Management Agency of Albania
	- National Hydro-meteorological Service Albania
	- Members Regional Project Board – Drin Core Group
	- Other stakeholders, academia, CSOs, Global Water Partnership Organisation (GWP-MED-Med – Responsible Party for Implementation of the Component 2, etc.
	- Site visits
	- FGDs with Direct beneficiaries
Montenegro 24 – 29 Sep. 2022	- Meeting with Project Team
	- Directorate of Waters of the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Water Management of Montenegro
	- Meeting with other Stakeholders, Directorate for Protection and Rescue of the Ministry of Interior of Montenegro
	- National Hydro-meteorological Service Montenegro
	- Other stakeholders, academia, CSOs, etc.
	- Site visits – Municipality of Niksic, Municipality of Ulcinj
	- FGDs with direct beneficiaries
30 Sep. 2022	- Report writing
North Macedonia 1 – 4 Oct. 2022	- Meeting with Project Team
	- Department of Waters of the Ministry of Environment and Spatial Planning of North Macedonia
	- National Hydro-meteorological Service
	- Other stakeholders, academia, CSOs, etc.
	- Site visits, Sateska River area in the Crn Drim sub-basin in North Macedonia, Municipality of Debrca and Municipality of Struga
	- FGDs with direct beneficiaries
5 Oct. 2022	- Report writing
6 Oct. 2022 or later	- Wrap up with Project Team
7 October 2022	- Departure from Tirana to Edmonton

Annex 6: Interview guide general (for all)

1. What is / was your role in the project?
2. Overall impression of the project?
3. Were the government, stakeholders and communities involved at the planning stage of the project?
4. Did you participate in the planning stage of the project, situation analysis, brain storming sessions, etc.?
5. Were the priorities of the host government and needs of the communities considered in the project?
6. Can you give an overview and timeline of the project?
7. What results have been achieved so far?
8. What were key issues / difficulties / milestones during project implementation, e.g. COVID-19?
9. Did the project encounter any new challenges (not foreseen in the project strategy)?
10. Suggestions for activities to be strengthened, and those that could be scaled back Project management questions (Chief Technical Advisor, Regional Manager, Project Team, National Coordinators, UNDP)
11. How is the interaction with the government institutions and Regional Project Board – Drin Core Group/Project Steering Committees?
12. How is the interaction with key non-governmental stakeholders, CSOs and the general public?
13. Is there any collaboration with other UN projects? Other non-UN projects addressing similar issues?
14. How is project progress monitored, any M&E System?
15. Has co-financing / spending by project partners been tracked? Where is this reported? Stakeholder questions (All other parties)
16. How does the project benefit your organisation? How does it benefit the country?
17. How does the project benefit your community?
18. What were key issues / difficulties / milestones during project implementation so far?
19. What are, in your view, the most valuable results so far of the project?
20. Would you recommend any additional activities or changes in approach, by UNDP, by the Government or by another party?

Interview closing (All)

21. Do you have further recommendations for the project, the Ministries involved and/or UNDP regarding the use of energy-efficient building materials?
22. Is there something else you would like to discuss?

Annex 6A: Questionnaire for meeting with Regional Project Manager/team**(September 2022)****A. PROJECT STRATEGY****1. Programme Status:**

Originally planned start date	Actual start date	Originally planned completion date	Revised completion date

2. Did project design take into account the national, regional and local priorities and how?
3. Were lessons from other relevant projects properly incorporated into the project design?
4. Has the project been able to effectively adapt its areas of work to the effects of the Covid-19 pandemic in projects' implementation countries?
5. Was perspective of all stakeholders taken into account during project design processes?
6. Was SMART criteria taken into account in developing indicators and targets for Results Framework?
7. Give your opinion about the practicality and feasibility of the project's objectives and outcomes or clarity of components within its time frame?
8. Has gender mainstreaming been considered in the project design? Please provide data.

B. PROGRESS TOWARDS RESULTS

9. Please provide aggregate update data **(as of 31st August 2022)** on the project's ach output/activity? Achievement/results against targets???

Progress Towards Results Matrix

.....

10. How did you deal with COVID-19? The strategy and its implementation, problems success?
11. What type of barriers/problems encountered during implementation and how those were overcome? (e.g. Political, economic, financial, human resources, etc.)
12. Since its inception in April 2019, overall, what **qualitative changes have been brought about** by the project interventions at national and local levels?
 - Capacity of stakeholders
 - Climate change and environment
 - Awareness about flood risk management among government personnel
 - Household economic development
 - Business development and trade
 - Gender mainstreaming
 - Vulnerable/persons with disability
 - Ethnic stability
 - Youth
 - Synergy and partnerships with other projects, donors, etc.
 - Awareness on project comments and benefits among target communities, CSOs/NGOs
13. What is the current situation and what impact the project has made? How was the capacity of partners before the start of project and what change it has brought?
14. Have any changes been monitored to local conditions? If yes, please provide information?

15. Pl. provide updated figures (as of July 31st August 2022) on training/capacity building (# of trainings, # of participants, distribution on gender basis, and ethnic basis)

B1. Synergies/cooperation/partnership with other projects and donors

16. What was the role of project in promoting cooperation and partnership and what are the results?
- Among ministries
 - Among departments
 - Partnership and cooperation of government institutions???
 - Cooperation among participating communities
 - Cooperation among participating communities/CSOs
17. What strategy was developed and implemented to build cooperation among partners?
18. Any success stories???
19. Any difficulties encountered in working with partners? Any suggestions

B2. Cross-cutting issues

20. How did project ensure the UN rights-based principals in project activities? Did **rights-based approach** work well in the project area and how?
21. How did project ensure **gender streaming**? Any evidence/figures? Pl. provide segregated data on this aspect, eg, gender balance of staff, gender balance of P4roject Board, participants who benefitted from project interventions (e.g. training or other benefits)
22. **PwD/venerable**? Data please
23. **Youth? Segregate male and female** Data please
24. **Ethnic consideration**? Any data or evidence that should reflect that all the **ethnic groups** participated or were facilitated equally by the project?

C. PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION AND ADAPTATION

25. What is project implementation modality. Did that modality work well? Pros and cons
26. Are the roles and responsibilities clear and being adopted? Any problems and how those were resolved?
27. Is the project's strategy amended in response to implementation challenges and/or new insights?
28. Has gender streaming been considered in Project staff and RPB?
29. Are the work planning processes results-based? Has the results framework been used as a management tool and any changes made to it?
30. Have the risks been identified and revised in the project's most current SESP and ESMF?
31. Is stakeholder engagement sufficient?

Finance and co-finance

32. What are the funding sources and expenditures? (in US\$)

Table: Finance and co-finance

Source of cofinancing	Name of financier	Type of cofinancing	Amount of co-financing	Invested during the period 2019-2022
National governments				
Albania				
North Macedonia				
Montenegro				
Multilateral agency				
Multilateral agency				
Total co-financing				

Table: Funding Sources (as of August 2022)

Sources	Year 1- 2019		Year 2 - 2020		Year 3 - 2021		Year 4 2022		Total	
	AWP 2019	Disbursed	AWP 2020	Disbursed	AWP 2021	Disbursed	AWP	Disbursed	All AWP	Disbursed
Total										

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Table: Planned and actual expenditures (as of 31st August (2022))

Activity	Year1- 2019			Year 2-2020			Year 3- 2021			Year 4 - 2022			Total		
	AWP 2019	disbursed	Actual	AWP 2020	Disbursed	Actual	AWP 2021	disbursed	Actual	AWP 2022	Disabused	Actual	All AWP	disbursed	Actual
Outcome 1															
Outcome 2															
Outcome 3															
Total															

33. Does the project have the appropriate financial controls, including reporting and planning, that allow management to make informed decisions regarding the budget and allow for timely flow of funds?
34. Fund release problems, if any and how those were resolved?
35. Were UNDP audit procedures and rules were adhered to in fund utilization, allocations and procurement (ATLAS, etc.)? Pl. provide comments by Auditors?

Monitoring and evaluation mechanism

36. Was an M&E plan prepared, if so, how did it work? Did you face any problem in implementing M&E plan?
37. What the mechanism/tools were applied for M&E of project activities?
38. Were the targets and deadlines determined for monitoring of project activities?
39. Frequency of field visits
 - Frequency of meetings held with various partners
 - Any review meetings held with beneficiaries' groups fora, CSOs, beneficiaries and what was the frequency?
 - Have you adopted participatory monitoring i.e., with beneficiaries/partners?
40. Frequency of Meetings
 - Regional Project Board meetings, total # of meetings held and impact on decision making process.
 - Drina Core Group meetings
 - National Steering Committee meetings
 - Any other project monitoring forum?
41. Were any criteria developed and applied for the selection of beneficiaries, communities and CSOs, to ensure impartiality and coverage of, women, youth, all ethnic groups and PwD?
42. Any **implementation, management and administration problems** encountered during implementation of the Programme and lessons learned?
 - Approval, recruitment, staff turnover
 - Procurement of equipment.
 - Recruitment of consultants.
 - Security.
 - Any staffing issues.
 - Any administration issues.
 - UNDP rules and regulation
 - Any other issues

D. SUSTAINABILITY

43. Has any **sustainability plan** for the project interventions been developed? What are the **risks that might influence the sustainability** of the results?
 - Financial risks to sustainability
 - Socio-economic risks to sustainability
 - Institutional framework and governance risks to sustainability
 - Impact of COVID-19 on project's sustainability
 - Environment risks to sustainability
 - Availability and structure of the sustainability plan

- Action plans for enhanced project sustainability

44. Has any plan been developed for project **exit strategy**??? If **yes**, pl provide, if **no**, what is your opinion?

45. Has any **opinion poll survey/client satisfaction** survey been conducted on project and results, if yes Pl. provide results/report....?

H. MAIN LESSONS LEARNED:

I. ANY SUGGESTIONS:

Annex 6b: Focus Group Discussion Guide for Project beneficiaries

Background information about the group

District.....

Village

Group name

FGD type (participants).....

FGD No.....

Date

- How were you selected to participate in this project?
- What preparatory activities for this project did you participate in?
- Are you aware of the objectives of this project?
- Do you believe that the selection criteria used ensured the selection of the most appropriate beneficiaries? Give reasons.
- Are the project activities and outputs in line with your key needs and priorities? Give reasons for your answer.
- What key changes would you recommend in the way the project was designed and is being implemented?
- What type of assistance did you receive from the project?
 - Support in kind/material (equipment, etc.)
 - Cash
 - Training
 - Study tour
 -
- What have you liked the most or not liked in the way this project is being implemented?
- Are and how the women do participate the project activities?
- In your opinion, are the project resources being used efficiently? Give reasons.
- How well can the project resources be put to proper use?

12. How did you benefit from the project?
 - Training
 - Protected from flood
 - Agriculture land protected
 - Awareness about flood risks and flood risk management
 - Any other benefit?
13. What do you consider to be key project achievements at output levels?
14. Have there been any significant changes in the way your group or community functions now as a result of the project training?
15. In your observation, is the project on course in achieving its set results?
16. What are the facilitating or inhibiting factors?
17. How best can the project be positioned to achieve its set targets?
18. Are the benefits you have received from the project likely to continue beyond the project period?
19. How will you manage your activities once the project assistance is withdrawn?
20. What challenges do you foresee in future in running your activities in your community?
21. What are your suggestions for the project to become more effective and helpful?

Annex 7: MTR Ratings & Achievement Summary Table + Rating Scales

Measure	MTR Rating	Achievement Description
Project Strategy	N/A	
Progress Towards Results	Objective Achievement Rating: (rate 6 pt. scale)	
	Outcome 1 Achievement Rating: (rate 6 pt. scale)	
	Outcome 2 Achievement Rating: (rate 6 pt. scale)	
	Outcome 3 Achievement Rating: (rate 6 pt. scale)	
	Etc.	
Project Implementation & Adaptive Management	(rate 6 pt. scale)	
Sustainability	(rate 4 pt. scale)	

Ratings for Progress Towards Results: (one rating for each outcome and for the objective)		
6	Highly Satisfactory (HS)	The objective/outcome is expected to achieve or exceed all its end-of-project targets, without major shortcomings. The progress towards the objective/outcome can be presented as “good practice”.
5	Satisfactory (S)	The objective/outcome is expected to achieve most of its end-of-project targets, with only minor shortcomings.
4	Moderately Satisfactory (MS)	The objective/outcome is expected to achieve most of its end-of-project targets but with significant shortcomings.
3	Moderately Unsatisfactory (HU)	The objective/outcome is expected to achieve its end-of-project targets with major shortcomings.
2	Unsatisfactory (U)	The objective/outcome is expected not to achieve most of its end-of-project targets.
1	Highly Unsatisfactory (HU)	The objective/outcome has failed to achieve its midterm targets, and is not expected to achieve any of its end-of-project targets.

Ratings for Project Implementation & Adaptive Management: (one overall rating)		
6	Highly Satisfactory (HS)	Implementation of all seven components – management arrangements, work planning, finance and co-finance, project-level monitoring and evaluation systems, stakeholder engagement, reporting, and communications – is leading to efficient and effective project implementation and adaptive management. The project can be presented as “good practice”.
5	Satisfactory (S)	Implementation of most of the seven components is leading to efficient and effective project implementation and adaptive management except for only few that are subject to remedial action.
4	Moderately Satisfactory (MS)	Implementation of some of the seven components is leading to efficient and effective project implementation and adaptive management, with some components requiring remedial action.
3	Moderately Unsatisfactory (MU)	Implementation of some of the seven components is not leading to efficient and effective project implementation and adaptive, with most components requiring remedial action.
2	Unsatisfactory (U)	Implementation of most of the seven components is not leading to efficient and effective project implementation and adaptive management.

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1	Highly Unsatisfactory (HU)	Implementation of none of the seven components is leading to efficient and effective project implementation and adaptive management.
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Ratings for Sustainability: (one overall rating)		
4	Likely (L)	Negligible risks to sustainability, with key outcomes on track to be achieved by the project's closure and expected to continue into the foreseeable future
3	Moderately Likely (ML)	Moderate risks, but expectations that at least some outcomes will be sustained due to the progress towards results on outcomes at the Midterm Review
2	Moderately Unlikely (MU)	Significant risk that key outcomes will not carry on after project closure, although some outputs and activities should carry on
1	Unlikely (U)	Severe risks that project outcomes as well as key outputs will not be sustained

Annex 8: Code of Conduct for Evaluators/Midterm Review Consultants**Evaluators/Consultants:**

1. Must present information that is complete and fair in its assessment of strengths and weaknesses so that decisions or actions taken are well founded.
2. Must disclose the full set of evaluation findings along with information on their limitations and have this accessible to all affected by the evaluation with expressed legal rights to receive results.
3. Should protect the anonymity and confidentiality of individual informants. They should provide maximum notice, minimize demands on time, and respect people's right not to engage. Evaluators must respect people's right to provide information in confidence and must ensure that sensitive information cannot be traced to its source. Evaluators are not expected to evaluate individuals and must balance an evaluation of management functions with this general principle.
4. Sometimes uncover evidence of wrongdoing while conducting evaluations. Such cases must be reported discreetly to the appropriate investigative body. Evaluators should consult with other relevant oversight entities when there is any doubt about if and how issues should be reported.
5. Should be sensitive to beliefs, manners and customs and act with integrity and honesty in their relations with all stakeholders. In line with the UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights, evaluators must be sensitive to and address issues of discrimination and gender equality. They should avoid offending the dignity and self-respect of those persons with whom they come in contact in the course of the evaluation. Knowing that evaluation might negatively affect the interests of some stakeholders, evaluators should conduct the evaluation and communicate its purpose and results in a way that clearly respects the stakeholders' dignity and self-worth.
6. Are responsible for their performance and their product(s). They are responsible for the clear, accurate and fair written and/or oral presentation of study limitations, findings and recommendations.
7. Should reflect sound accounting procedures and be prudent in using the resources of the evaluation.
8. Must ensure that independence of judgement is maintained, and that evaluation findings and recommendations are independently presented.
9. Must confirm that they have not been involved in designing, executing or advising on the project being evaluated.

MTR Consultant Agreement Form

Agreement to abide by the Code of Conduct for Evaluation in the UN System:

Name of Consultant: **Hamid Rehman Chaudhry**

Name of Consultancy Organization (where relevant): _NA_

I confirm that I have received and understood and will abide by the United Nations Code of Conduct for Evaluation.

Signed at **Edmonton, Canada** on **17th November 2022**



Signature: _____

Annex 9: MTR Report Clearance Form

(to be completed and signed by the Commissioning Unit and RTA and included in the final document)

Midterm Review Report Reviewed and Cleared By:	
Commissioning Unit (M&E Focal Point)	
Name: _____	Stanislav Kim
Signature: _____	DocuSigned by: _____ Stanislav Kim
Date: _____	01-Feb-2023
Regional Technical Advisor (Nature, Climate and Energy)	
Name: _____	Clotilde Goeman
Signature: _____	DocuSigned by: _____ Clotilde Goeman
Date: _____	01-fev-2023

Annex 10: Audit Trail Template

Note: The following is a template for the MTR Consultant to show how the received comments on the draft MTR report have (or have not) been incorporated into the final MTR report. This audit trail should be included as an annex in the final MTR report.

To the comments received on 18 November 2022 from the Midterm Review of Integrated climate-resilient transboundary flood risk management in the Drin River basin in the Western Balkans (Drin FRM) project (UNDP Project ID-*PIMS # 6215*)

The following comments were provided in track changes to the draft Midterm Review report; they are referenced by institution ("Author" column) and not by the person's name, and track change comment number ("#" column):

Author	#	Para No./ comment location	Comment/Feedback on the draft MTR report	MTR Consultant response and actions taken
Regional Project Manager (RPM)	1	Exec Summary, section E. Recommendations table, on progress in Component 2, recommendation no. 1 re. project assumptions	Suggested to make reference to full title of the preceding GEF funded Drin project, to distinguish it from the new one in the pipeline, referred to further in the document.	MTR consultant adopted the recommendation.
RPM	2	Section 2 – Project Description and Background Context, 2.4 Project Implementation Arrangements	Suggested to add the Expert Working Group on Floods (EWGF) to other EWGs in the Figure 2 depicting the existing institutional framework for the management of the Drin Basin established under the Drin MoU	Suggestion accepted, EWGF added to the Figure 2
RPM	3	Section 3 Findings, 3 rd last paragraph starting with: "Although out of	Suggested that full title of the newly designed, UNDP supported GEF project is added to distinguish it from the preceding GEF project.	Suggestion accepted, full title of newly developed GEF project added.

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		<i>scope of this project... ”</i>		
NCE Technical Advisor (TA)	4	Exec Summary, section E. Recommendations table, on progress in Component 2, recommendation no. 5	Suggestion, that following last meeting with GWP and renewed engagement to support the progress, 6-month time is allowed and in case of delay in the expected progress, issue is escalated.	MTR Consultant agreed and recommendation changed accordingly
NCE TA	5	Exec Summary, section E. Recommendations, Problem 6, with progress affected by Covid-19, implementation of pre-selected measures under Outcome 3 and implementation of progress re. Outcome 2, re. no-cost extension	Suggestion to wait another 6 months to assess on the need for eventual no-cost extension, particularly considering the level of progress by GWP.	MTR Consultant agreed and recommendation changed allowing 6-month time for progress assessment
NCE TA & RPM	6	Section 2. Project Description and Background Context, 2.3 Project Description and Strategy, last paragraph	Suggested to mention the GWP role as the secretariat to the DCG	Consultant agreed and GWP role of the secretariat to DCG and facilitator of DCG meetings added
NCE TA	7	Section 3. Findings, 3.1 Project Strategy, 3.1.1. Project Design, paragraph one	Suggested to make reference to the UNDP corporate oversight made to the UNDP-NCE team, as particularly relevant to non-GEF project	Consultant agreed and the reference changed accordingly.
NCE TA & RPM	8	Section 3, Findings, 3.1 Project Strategy, 3.1.1. Project Design, paragraph 2	Rewriting of the first sentence suggested	Consultant agreed, sentence rewritten.
NCE TA	9	Section 3, Findings, 3.1 Project Strategy, 3.1.1. Project Design, fourth last para starting with “Although out of scope of	Suggested to make reference to the role of newly designed GEF project supported by UNDP in continuing the advocacy.	Consultant agreed, reference to the new GEF project in the pipeline added.
NCE TA & RPM	10	Section 3, Findings, 3.2 Progress Towards Results, 3.2.1 Progress towards outcome analysis, Output 3.3 – Strengthened local community resilience..., Para 3, starting with “Activities under this output.... ”	Suggested to clarify on selection of the affected communities in which these activities will be implemented, based on their exposure to the flood risk and thus their vulnerability determined by the Risk Prioritization Model and flood risk modelling.	Consultant agreed, clarification on selection of affected communities added.

NCE TA	11	Section 3, Findings, 3.3 Project Implementation and Adaptive Management, 3.3.1 Management Arrangements, Paragraph 1	Suggested to further develop this para with adding the partnerships that are key to the success and projects role as the best practice in their engagements	Paragraphs 2 and 3 added further outlining key partnerships and best practices.
NCE TA	12	Section 3, Findings, 3.3 Project Implementation and Adaptive Management, 3.3.1 Management Arrangements, Paragraph 4, starting with “ <i>Project objectives...</i> ”	Suggested rephrasing national partnering institutions and beneficiaries to distinguish them from the Implementing Parties (IPs)	National institutions referred to as partnering institutions and beneficiaries.
NCE TA	13	Section 3, Findings, 3.3 Project Implementation and Adaptive Management, 3.3.3 Finance and Co-finance, Table 2: Planned and actual expenditures on project outputs	Suggested to add clarification under the Table Headings titled “Disbursed” with “Disbursed by AF” to avoid confusion with disbursement by project.	Table Heading renamed to “Disbursed by AF”
NCE TA	14	Section 3, Findings, 3.3 Project Implementation and Adaptive Management, 3.3.8 Communication and knowledge	Suggestion to recommend on how to communicate externally about the results of the project and lessons learned and assess if the collected knowledge was well shared for learning and replication.	Section 3.3.8 expanded accordingly, to include communication ratings, examples of communication successes, and recommendations
RPM	15	Section 3, Findings, 3.3 Project Implementation and Adaptive Management, 3.3.8 Communication and knowledge	Suggested to list and provide the links to the events and occasions at which the project’s lessons learned were presented and disseminated	Recommendation accepted, events and publications listed with reference hyperlinks, under which project’s lessons learned were presented
NCE TA	16	Section 3, Findings, 3.4 Sustainability and scaling up, bullet point 1 – “ <i>Financial risks to sustainability:</i> ”	Suggestion to elaborate on the financial sustainability of Output 2.3 – Drin River Basin Integrated CA and FRM Strategy and Plan Developed as this Output will support development of further plans	Additional para (2) added, assessing the financial sustainability of the Output 2.3 absence of an official permanent coordination body/commission to assess and follow up on the implementation of the plan
RPM	17	Section 3, Findings, 3.4 Sustainability and scaling up, bullet point	Suggested to elaborate on the proposed contents of the deliverable under the Output 2.3. DRB Integrated CA and FRM Strategy and Plan vis-à-	Suggestion accepted and reference to data quality and availability made in para 2.

		1 – <i>“Financial risks to sustainability, para 2</i>	vis quality of data inputs depending on the sub-basin and different projects that developed the data	
NCE TA	18	Section 3, Findings, 3.4 Sustainability and scaling up, bullet point 2 – <i>“Socio-economic risks to sustainability:”</i>	Suggestion to assess the risk to sustainability related to potential non-integration of Kosovo part of the Drin Basin as Kosovo was not include in the project due to its UN status	Paragraph expanded and risk re. Kosovo exclusion from the project assessed
NCE TA	19	Section 3, Findings, 3.4 Sustainability and scaling up, bullet point 3 – <i>“Institutional framework and governance risks to sustainability:”</i>	Suggested to make references to the EWG on Floods and their role on the sustainability, re. EWG capacities, adding absence to permanent basin coordinating body/commission as governance risk to sustainability	Paragraph rewritten to assess the impact of non-existence of permanent basin wide coordination body/commission and additional para added assessing EWG on Floods impact on sustainability
NCE TA	20	Section 4 Conclusions and Recommendations, 4.3 Recommendations	Suggested that recommendations be presented in a table format given in the MTR ToR	Consultant provided recommendations in a table format