

Management Response and Action Plan

Name of Evaluation Report:	Final external evaluation of the project “Strengthening Participatory Democracy and Human Rights at Local Level in Georgia” - Council of Europe Project VC 2804 ADA Project 8377-00/2020		
Date of Evaluation Report:	1.12.2023	Date of Action Plan:	28.02.2024

Overall management response to the evaluation:

The project was implemented jointly by the Directorate General of Democracy and Human Dignity (DG2) and the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe. The Congress will be responsible for the follow up actions described in this Action Plan within the new project as per the Programme and Budget of the Council of Europe 2024-2027 document dated December 2023.

The Congress is an institution of the Council of Europe responsible for strengthening local and regional democracy in the 46 member states and assessing the application of the European Charter of Local Self-Government. As part of its mandate, the Congress implements co-operation activities in member states in the framework of Council of Europe action plans and in line with the Congress priorities and recommendations.

The Congress Secretariat and DG II recognise the utility of recommendations issued as a result of the present evaluation, with a view to ensuring and enhancing the relevance, effectiveness, added value, and sustainability of the project intervention. All the recommendations have been accepted by the management. The actions for their implementation are set out in the Action Plan below.

[FOR DECENTRALISED EVALUATIONS] Dissemination plan for the evaluation:

The findings of the evaluation report were presented to the main project stakeholders at a dedicated online event in October 2022. The report was also shared via email to the donor and the main partners of the project after the final Steering Committee meeting of the project in November 2024 by the Senior Project Officer. It will be uploaded into the PMM tool and to the dedicated project webpages. The team in charge of the project is responsible for the dissemination of the report.

Together with the Management Response and the Action Plan, the report will be published on the website of the Directorate for Internal Oversight.

Management Decision ¹	Entity in Charge	Planned Actions ² (determined by Entity)	Justification ³ for Non-Acceptance	Target Date for Action	Person Responsible for Action
Recommendation 1: Ensure that the ToC of a potential follow-up project 1) is reviewed with key stakeholders, including municipal stakeholders, to ensure feasibility of effect chains in a given time frame, 2) more explicitly includes national actors through a separate strand of action and 3) visualises the interplay between the two project components of civil participation and human rights.					
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Accepted <input type="checkbox"/> Partially accepted <input type="checkbox"/> Rejected	Congress of Local and Regional Authorities	A dedicated workshop will be organised to co-create and refine the Theory of Change of the new project in Georgia together with key stakeholders by April 2024. It will introduce a behavioural change perspective, ensure feasibility, and visualise the interplay between the components. Moreover, a new strand of action will be proposed in the follow-up project to work with national actors on the decentralisation strategy.	N/A	30/04/2024	Head of Centre of Expertise for Good Governance
Recommendation 2: A future project might well consider the importance of coaching/mentoring for individual municipalities. Coaching/mentoring should take all identified enablers into account, e.g. it can support municipalities in identifying resources to finance small-scale projects as visible results from participation processes. Consider locally based facilitators for this function to enhance continuity of these coaching processes.					
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Accepted <input type="checkbox"/> Partially accepted <input type="checkbox"/> Rejected	Congress of Local and Regional Authorities	The follow-up project will include a specific activity on coaching as a form of technical support for local authorities participating in the project activities, prioritising the development and use of local expertise.	N/A	31/12/2025	Head of Centre of Expertise for Good Governance
Recommendation 3: Initiate an analysis of lessons learnt from the implementation of the small-scale projects of this intervention, jointly with municipalities and national stakeholders. Assess options on how the funding of small-scale projects for municipalities to support participatory and human rights-based processes at local level can become sustainable.					

¹ The management decision is in relation to the Recommendation (Accepted, Partially accepted, Rejected).

² For implementing accepted recommendations.

³ For recommendations that are partially accepted or rejected.

Management Decision ¹	Entity in Charge	Planned Actions ² (determined by Entity)	Justification ³ for Non-Acceptance	Target Date for Action	Person Responsible for Action
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Accepted <input type="checkbox"/> Partially accepted <input type="checkbox"/> Rejected	Congress of Local and Regional Authorities	A focus group will be carried out to collect and analyse lessons learnt from the local initiatives carried out in the project. The findings will be used for assessing sustainable funding options, recommendations will be shared with national authorities, and lessons learnt will be used in the follow up project.	N/A	31/12/2025	Head of Centre of Expertise for Good Governance
Recommendation 4: Assess the possible need for adaptation to specific rural and urban contexts, in which local populations exhibit differences in composition and age structures.					
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Accepted <input type="checkbox"/> Partially accepted <input type="checkbox"/> Rejected	Congress of Local and Regional Authorities	<p>The development of the activities and the selection of target group of the new project will take into account the urban/rural divide, prioritising remote areas.</p> <p>The curriculum for human rights for local authorities will be updated to include specific tailoring mechanisms for rural or urban municipalities.</p>	N/A	30/06/2025	Head of Centre of Expertise for Good Governance
Recommendation 5: Monitor with target groups whether the presumed positive effects for gender and underrepresented groups materialise (e.g. through the initiated small-scale projects), and analyse enabling factors.					
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Accepted <input type="checkbox"/> Partially accepted <input type="checkbox"/> Rejected	Congress of Local and Regional Authorities	The new project will develop a monitoring and evaluation system to include periodic reviews of the effects of the intervention (including the first and second projects) on gender issues and underrepresented group rights as well as behavioural and social change.	N/A	30/12/2027	Head of Centre of Expertise for Good Governance

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Recommendation 6: In view of a possible follow-up project and expansion, aim for a balance between municipalities which already demonstrated commitment and interest in civil participation and human rights throughout the present project (potential for sustainability orientation) and municipalities where the awareness of human rights and civil participation needs to be raised (expansion of project scope).					
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Accepted <input type="checkbox"/> Partially accepted <input type="checkbox"/> Rejected	Congress of Local and Regional Authorities	The selection of the target group of the new project will be carried out through a call for interest during the inception phase. The team will aim to reach municipalities with low awareness on human rights and civil participation. New participants will be supported through peer exchange and mentoring from the previous project's participants.	N/A	30/12/2024	Head of Centre of Expertise for Good Governance