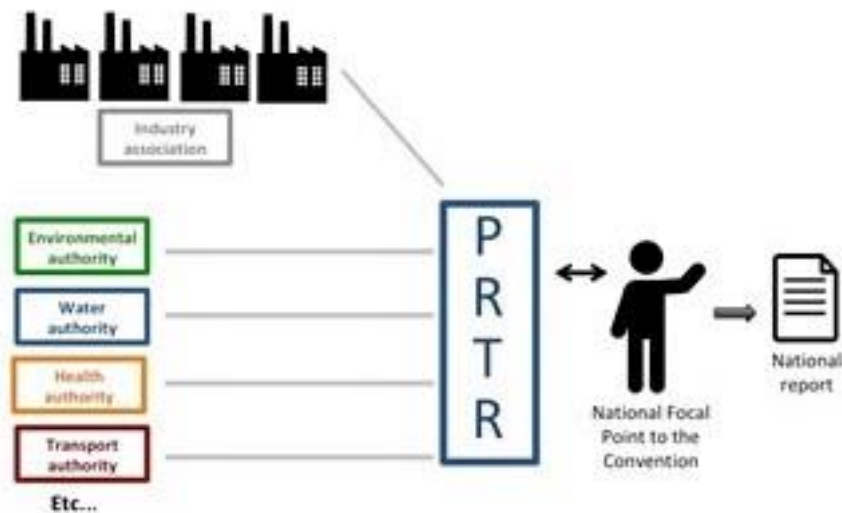

**Terminal Evaluation of the UNEP project
“Global Project on the Implementation of PRTRs as a tool for POPs
reporting, dissemination and awareness raising for Belarus,
Cambodia, Ecuador, Kazakhstan, Moldova and Peru” (PRTR II)
GEF Project number: 5648
(2014-2020)**



Evaluation Office of the United Nations Environment Programme

Distributed: August 2021



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Front cover: Illustration from Project publication: *Report on the study Pollutant Release and Transfer Registers (PRTRs) as tools to improve national reporting under Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEAs)*, UNITAR 2019

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POPs monitoring, reporting and information dissemination using Pollutant Release and Transfer Registers (PRTRs)

GEF ID: 5648

Date: 05/2021

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This Terminal Evaluation was prepared for UNEP by Wouter Pronk, as independent evaluation consultant.

The report benefits from a peer review conducted within Evaluation Office of UNEP. The evaluator would like to express his gratitude to all persons met in online meetings and who contributed to this evaluation, as listed in Annex 2.

The evaluator would like to thank the project team and in particular Andrea Cararo (UNITAR Project Coordinator) and Ludovic Bernaudat (UNEP Task Manager). During the evaluation, Ms. Pauline Marima's (Evaluation Officer) contribution and feedback has been received to improve the quality of the evaluation report. Sincere appreciation is also expressed to Mr. Uon Sokunthea and Ms. Phan Daneth from the Ministry of Environment in Cambodia, Mr. Ivan Narkevitch and Mr. Dimitry Melekh from the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environmental Protection in Belarus, Ms. Evelyn Mishel Cazorla Martinez and Ms. Berenice Alexandra Quiroz Yanez from the Ministry of Environment and Water in Ecuador, Mr. Mario Mera Minuche from the Sustainable Environmental Investment Fund in Ecuador, Mr. Nurgazy Abdulmanov from the Information-Analytical Centre of Environmental Protection in Kazakhstan, Ms Altyn Ibragimovna Balabaeva from the State Environmental Information Fund in Kazakhstan and Mr. Daniel Nuñez from the Ministry of Environment in Peru who took time for participation in the evaluation interviews.

The evaluation consultant hopes that the findings, conclusions and recommendations will contribute to the continuous improvement of similar projects in other countries and regions.

BRIEF CONSULTANT BIOGRAPHY:

Wouter Pronk has 24 years of experience in managing environmental and capacity building projects in Eastern Europe, Russia, the Caucasus, Central Asia, India, Egypt, Eritrea, Cameroon, South Africa and Vietnam for the environmental NGOs Milieukontakt International and Green Cross Switzerland. Early 2019, he started working as an independent consultant. Since 2004, Mr. Pronk has been involved in POPs and soil remediation projects financed by The Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs, FAO, UNEP, GEF, Green Cross Switzerland and the World Bank and worked in international technical assistance projects with a focus on awareness raising, environmental and social impact assessment and planning, technical capacity building, project evaluation and stakeholder involvement.

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ABOUT THE EVALUATION¹

Joint Evaluation: No

Report Language(s): English

Evaluation Type: Terminal Project Evaluation

Brief Description: This report is the terminal evaluation of a UNEP-GEF project implemented between September 2015 and December 2019. The GEF-funded project *“Global Project on the Implementation of PRTRs as a tool for POPs reporting, dissemination and awareness raising for Belarus, Cambodia, Ecuador, Kazakhstan, Moldova and Peru”* was designed to demonstrate the value of PRTRs as a tool to assist countries to comply with the Stockholm Convention and the Aarhus Convention. The general goal of the Project is to protect human health and the environment from persistent organic pollutants.

Key words: PRTRs, POPs, Chemicals Management, Stockholm Convention, Aarhus Convention

Primary data collection period: September – December 2020

Field Mission Dates: N/A

¹ This data is used to aid the internet search of this report on the Evaluation Office of UNEP website

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List of Abbreviations and Acronyms

BSR	Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm
CEC	Commission for Environmental Cooperation
DDT	Dichlorodiphenyltrichloroethane
DTIE	Division of Technology, Industry and Economics (of UNEP)
ENVSEC	Environment and Security Initiative
EA	Executing Agency
EPA	Environmental Protection Agency
EO	Evaluation Office of UNEP
FIAS	Sustainable Environmental Investment Fund Ecuador
FMO	Fund Management Officer
GC	UNEP Governing Council
GEF	Global Environment Facility
IA	Implementing Agency
IAC	Information Analytical Center, Ministry of Environment, Kazakhstan
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MEA	Multilateral Environmental Agreement
MSP	Medium Size Project
NPC	National Project Coordinator
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
NPMT	National Project Management Team
NSG	National Steering Groups
OECD	Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development
OSCE	Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe
PIR	Project Implementation Review
PM	Portfolio Manager
PMT	Project Management Team
PRTR	Pollutant Release and Transfers Registers
PSC	Project Steering Committee
PTR	Project Terminal Report
SAICM	Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management
SC	Stockholm Convention
SUIA	Unique System of Environmental Information (Ecuador)
SINIA	National System of Environmental Information (Peru)
TA	Technical Assistance
TE	Terminal Evaluation
TOC	Theory of Change
TOR	Terms of Reference
TM	Task Manager
UNCED	United Nations Conference on Environment and Development
UNDAF	United Nations Development Assistance Framework
UNECE	United Nations Economic Commission for Europe
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
UNITAR	United Nations Institute for Training and Research

Table 1. Project summary

GEF Project ID:	5648		
Implementing Agency:	UNEP	Executing Agency:	United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR)
Sub-programme:	Chemicals, Waste and Air Quality	Expected Accomplishment(s):	MTS 2014-2017
UNEP approval date:	May 2015	Programme of Work Output(s):	Consolidated advisory and support services promote the sound management of chemicals at national level.
GEF approval date:	February 2014	Project type:	Medium-size Project (MSP)
GEF Operational Programme #:	GEF 5	Focal Area(s):	Persistent Organic Pollutants (POPs)
Relevant SDG(s) and indicator(s):	Sustainable Development Goal targets 3.9, 6.3, 9.4, 12.4, 12.5, 12.8, 16.10	GEF Strategic Priority:	CHEM 1 – Phase out POPs and reduce POPs releases CHEM 3 – Pilot Sound Chemicals Management and mercury reduction
Expected start date:	13-05-2015	Actual start date:	13-05-2015
Planned completion date:	December 2018	Actual operational completion date:	18-10-2020
Planned project budget at approval:	USD 10,232,258	Actual total expenditures reported as of November 2020:	USD 10,018,010.18
GEF grant allocation:	USD 2,000,000	GEF grant expenditures reported as of August 2020:	USD 1,964,999.99
Project Preparation Grant - GEF financing:	n/a	Project Preparation Grant - co-financing:	n/a
Expected Medium-Size Project/Full-Size Project co-financing:	USD 8,232,258	Secured Medium-Size Project/Full-Size Project co-financing:	n/a
First disbursement:	07.09.2015	Planned date of financial closure:	Q2 2020
No. of formal project revisions:	2	Date of last approved project revision:	18-12-2019
No. of Steering Committee meetings:	3	Date of last/next Steering Committee meeting:	Last: 05.03.2018

Mid-term Review/ Evaluation (planned date):	n/a	Mid-term Review/ Evaluation (actual date):	n/a
Terminal Evaluation (planned date):	Q1 2020	Terminal Evaluation (actual date):	Q1 2021
Coverage - Country(ies):	Belarus, Ecuador, Cambodia, Kazakhstan, Moldova, Peru	Coverage - Region(s):	Global: Southeast Asia, Central Asia, South America, Eastern Europe,
Dates of previous project phases:	2009-2012 (POPs monitoring, reporting and information dissemination using Pollutant Release and Transfer Registers (PRTRs) GEF ID 3348)	Status of future project phases:	n/a

Executive Summary

1. Despite serious implementation delays in Ecuador, the Terminal Evaluation has found that the Global Project on the Implementation of PRTRs as a tool for POPs reporting, dissemination and awareness raising for Belarus, Cambodia, Ecuador, Kazakhstan, Moldova and Peru played a key role to support the partner countries in the development of national Pollutant Release and Transfer Registers (PRTRs). This Project is considered as PRTR Phase II. Between 2009 and 2012 a PRTR Phase I project was carried out. The two phases were evaluated simultaneously.²

2. The Project was funded through the Global Environment Facility (GEF), with a grant of USD 2,000,000, implemented by the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and executed by the United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR). Co-financing (cash and in-kind contributions) were secured to a value of USD 8,232,258). After GEF approval in February 2014, the Project began on 13 May 2015 and was completed on 18 August 2020.

2. In line with the UNEP Evaluation Policy and the UNEP Programme Manual, the Terminal Evaluation was undertaken shortly after completion of the Project (for all Project countries except Ecuador) in December 2019. The Terminal Evaluation was carried out to assess project performance (in terms of relevance, effectiveness and efficiency), and determine outcomes and impacts (actual and potential) stemming from the Project, including their sustainability.

3. The Project was designed to assist participating countries to comply with their reporting obligations under the Stockholm Convention (SC) on Persistent Organic Pollutants (POPs). The problem in many SC signatory countries is that they often do collect the required reporting data in an institutionalized way but lack a central database to collect these reporting data that is accessible to all relevant stakeholders. PRTRs act as a central database and are recognized as a robust and comprehensive data-recording system on pollutants. PRTRs provide a publicly accessible system that can assist governments to disseminate information on POPs and other chemicals in a systematic and effective manner.

4. The Project was well designed and confirmed to be of strategic relevance for all Project countries. Project activities were well-structured around the UNITAR/ IOMC Guidance Series for Implementing a National PRTR design Project, developed in 1997 and implemented in a series of other countries over the years. As part of this PRTR Phase II Project, UNITAR carried out an extensive update and restructuring of its PRTR guidance series that includes a set of 5 video trainings. The Project has successfully delivered the activities and outputs planned in the Project document.

5. Project countries have received: appropriate tools to improve access and accuracy of environmental data on POPs and other priority chemicals in the Project countries and to enhance awareness and public participation on environmental matters, through implementation of fully operational national PRTRs. All participating countries have developed detailed National PRTR Proposals following the UNITAR guidelines for PRTR

² Terminal Evaluation of the UNEP-GEF Project: POPs monitoring, reporting and information dissemination using Pollutant Release and Transfer Registers, UNEP Evaluation Office, March 2021

development. The national proposals include e.g. a recommendation for the development of the required specific PRTR legal instruments.

6. Without the initiative of the Project, the involved countries would not have been able to achieve these important results. To date, only the Moldovan PRTR, that was developed within the framework of the Project, is fully operational. Later this year, a second Project PRTR will become operational in Kazakhstan. For the other Project countries official PRTR implementation depends on national political decision making.

7. The Republic of Moldova entered the Project in 2015 with the official decision to implement a national PRTR in the country already taken. On 23 December 2013, Moldova had become the thirty-third Party to ratify the Protocol on Pollutant Release and Transfer Registers (Kyiv Protocol) of the Aarhus Convention. In the framework of the Project Moldova updated its legal framework in support of PRTR implementation. Since 2018 reporting through the national PRTR became mandatory and today in between 200 and 300 facilities are reporting emissions into the RPRT based on available estimation calculations. Starting from January 2023, reporting on around 100 chemical substances including POPs, LRTAP substances, Montreal Protocol substances, mercury and GHGs will become mandatory.

8. On 27 January 2020, Kazakhstan officially acceded to the UNECE Kyiv Protocol on PRTRs of the Aarhus Convention. With this accession Kazakhstan is the thirty-seventh Party that signed the Protocol. In addition, the drafting of a new version of the National Environmental Codex started that takes into account the basic requirements for the implementation of the country's obligations under the PRTR Protocol. The Codex was officially adopted on 2 January 2021 and will enter into force on 1 July 2021. After the Codex has taken effect, single window reporting to the national PRTR will become obligatory. It is planned that the Kazakh PRTR system then will also be used for the collection of data relevant for the reporting to Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEA's) as the Stockholm Convention, the Minamata Convention and the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change.

9. In the other Project countries, the implementation of the PRTRs is yet to be decided and sustainability of the Project initiative is dependent on political decision making. With frequent changes at ministry level the outcome of that decision making is unclear. In Ecuador and Peru, the process of decision making might be supported by national ambitions to become a member of OECD. Implementation of a national PRTR is one of the requirements of OECD membership. The evaluation considers official implementation of the PRTRs within the coming year in Belarus, Cambodia, Ecuador and Peru moderately unlikely.

10. The capacity of collecting and using accurate environmental PRTR data increased significantly in each country, resulting in increased public knowledge on environmental issues and in using PRTRs as a basis for the development of SC national reports. However, the actual use of POPs data collected through the national PRTRs in Stockholm Convention reporting is still limited and needs to be further developed.

11. All countries developed national strategies and implemented a series of activities to raise awareness about the development of the national PRTRs and educate stakeholders on how to access information from the PRTR websites. Although the work under this component was not structured in a way that would have allowed measurement of how successfully the activities were implemented, output reports and evaluation interviews confirm that valuable work was done and participation of key stakeholders was achieved.

12. On the issue of access to information via the national PRTR, frontrunner Moldova unfortunately missed an important opportunity to increase public knowledge on environmental issues. The Ministry of Environment has not yet published any consolidated summary report for 2018-2019 on the Moldovan PRTR and therefore NGOs and other relevant stakeholders cannot yet access recent pollution data.

13. Regarding the thematically cross-cutting lessons learned component of the Project the Terminal Evaluation has found country ownership and the political will to carry through the required decisions in support of PRTR implementation to be one of most important themes of the Project. National Project partners highlighted in the evaluation interviews that the absence of national decisions to adopt technical and legal documents and sign the PRTR Protocol in support of PRTR implementation in Belarus, Cambodia, Ecuador and Peru is a difficult problem to solve. Frequent changes at ministerial level do not strengthen the national decision making needed. In most of the latter partner countries that have not yet signed the PRTR Protocol, experts within the environmental ministries are ready to implement the national PRTRs and clearly see benefits for their respective countries. The national Project partners, however, cannot advance further without support from political decision makers.

14. Although one has to acknowledge that the responsibility for adoption of PRTR legislation and official PRTR implantation rests with participating governments, the problems with national commitment, project ownership and decision making in support of official PRTR implementation in 4 of the 6 Project countries, probably should have been highlighted more prominently in the monitoring mechanism of the Project to be able to react to this Project challenge when the Project was still being implemented. The delay in decision making in support of PRTR implementation was already an important issue identified in the implementation of the PRTR Phase I project.

15. For Kazakhstan and Moldova, the two countries that did sign the PRTR Protocol, the Project started at an opportune time and supported the Project partners to accomplish a lot of complicated technical, legal and awareness raising tasks, required from the countries under the agreement of PRTR Protocol.

16. The evaluation has found that the Project was very well able to support the participating countries in developing a more systematic and efficient process to collect information on pollutants, releases and transfers for national reporting and information dissemination.

17. A clear likelihood of impact from the Project is observed in Moldova and Kazakhstan. There are, however, not many signs that the intended impact will be likely on short notice in Belarus, Cambodia, Ecuador and Peru.

18. Especially the aspect of POPs reporting and reporting to other MEA's will need to be further developed. In future reporting to the Stockholm Convention, it is expected that the PRTRs will be used for collection of data. Additional data will have to be added to the SC reporting from other data collection sources.

19. The Terminal Evaluation concluded that the overall performance rating for the Project is '**Moderately Satisfactory**'.

1 Introduction

20. This is the Terminal Evaluation Report for the UNEP GEF project entitled – “*Global Project on the Implementation of PRTRs as a tool for POPs reporting, dissemination and awareness raising for Belarus, Cambodia, Ecuador, Kazakhstan, Moldova and Peru*” (hereinafter referred to as the “Project”). The GEF ID of the Project is 5648. The Project was funded through the Global Environment Facility (GEF) with a grant of USD 2,000,000 implemented by the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and executed by UNITAR. Co-financing (cash and in-kind contributions) were secured to a value of USD 8,232,258. After GEF approval in February 2014, the Project began on 13 May 2015 and was completed on 18 August 2020.

21. As a result of Project delays that occurred in Ecuador UNITAR requested for a Project extension on 25 October 2019. During implementation, the country faced social and political unrest, followed by reforms on public spending and management coming from international cooperation. Also, the frequent changes of ministers, department directors and the Project coordinator posed serious challenges for a timely Project implementation. On 18 December 2019 UNEP agreed to extend the Project until 30 June 2020.

22. In line with the UNEP Evaluation Policy and the UNEP Programme Manual, the Terminal Evaluation was undertaken shortly after completion of the Project in December 2019. The Terminal Evaluation was carried out to assess project performance (in terms of relevance, effectiveness and efficiency), and determine outcomes and impacts (actual and potential) stemming from the Project, including their sustainability. The evaluation had two primary purposes: (i) to provide evidence of results to meet accountability requirements, and (ii) to promote operational improvement, learning and knowledge sharing through results and lessons learned among UNEP and UNITAR as well as the country level partners. Therefore, the evaluation has identified lessons of operational relevance for future project formulation and implementation of new projects.

23. The Project was designed to implement a Pollutant Release and Transfers Register (PRTR) in six countries, namely Belarus, Cambodia, Ecuador, Kazakhstan, Moldova and Peru. The Project was funded through the Global Environment Facility and adheres closely to the GEF Focal Area Strategy CHEM 1: Phase out POPs and reduce POPs releases, and CHEM 3: Pilot sound chemicals management and mercury reduction.

24. The Project was approved by UNEP on 8 May 2015 and was designed to contribute to the Sustainable Development Goal targets 3.9, 6.3, 9.4, 12.4, 12.5, 12.8, 16.10. The Project is in line with UNEP’s Medium-Term Strategy for 2014–2017 in which, under the subprogramme ‘Harmful Substances and Hazardous Waste’, relevant Multilateral Environmental Agreements are highlighted, and UNEP announced that it would ‘exercise its leadership in assisting countries in developing the sound management of chemicals and waste, offering technical support that aims to catalyse the actions of its partners in minimizing the risks of chemicals and waste.’ Finally, the Project was also well aligned with UNEP’s Bali Strategic Plan and planned to implement Project activities via South-South cooperation.³

25. The Project is considered as PRTR Phase II. Earlier a PRTR Phase I project was financed by the GEF. The title of that project is *POPs monitoring, reporting and information*

³ <https://www.unep.org/zh-hans/node/16851> , <https://digitallibrary.un.org/record/541711?ln=en>

dissemination using Pollutant Release and Transfer Registers (PRTRs). PRTR Phase I started in January 2009 and was completed in September 2012. The countries Cambodia, Ecuador, Kazakhstan and Peru participated in both Phase I and II projects. The two phases were evaluated simultaneously.

26. The evaluation has two primary purposes: (i) provide evidence of results to meet accountability requirements, and (ii) promote operational improvement, learning, and knowledge sharing through results and lessons learned among UNEP, UNITAR and main national implementing partners (key intended audience). Therefore, the evaluation identifies lessons of operational relevance for future project formulation.

27. The evaluation was conducted by external evaluation consultant Wouter Pronk.

2 Evaluation methods

2.1 Overview

28. The Terminal Evaluation was carried out by an independent consultant under the responsibility of the Evaluation Office of UNEP (Nairobi) in consultation with the Task Manager and Project Coordinator (Geneva), and guided by UNEP's Evaluation Policy⁴ and the UNEP Programme Manual.⁵ In view of travel restrictions caused by the COVID-19 coronavirus outbreak, the evaluation did not include travel to participating Project countries. The evaluation approach was adjusted accordingly. At the outset of the consultancy, a Skype meeting between the Evaluation Officer, Task Manager, Project Coordinator and Evaluation Consultant was organized as an introduction of the Terminal Evaluation in May 2020. A second Skype meeting was organized in February 2021 to present and discuss the preliminary findings of the evaluation.

29. Project documents, reports and further relevant data were provided to the consultant by UNEP and UNITAR via email and through a cloud file sharing and storage service. Additional information to provide the material necessary for carrying out the TE was available from the Task Manager, Project Coordinator and Project stakeholders upon request. Through e-mail communication and conference calls the consultant reached the relevant stakeholders. An overview of the evaluation sources is presented in: *Annex 4 Stakeholders interviewed and stakeholders who responded to the evaluation review* and *Annex 5 Project documents reviewed*.

30. Semi structured interviews were held with the Task Manager, Project Coordinator and National Country Coordinators of Belarus, Cambodia, Ecuador, Kazakhstan, Moldova and Peru. A total number of 30 surveys has been sent to country stakeholders in Belarus (in English and Russian), Cambodia (in English), Ecuador (in English and Spanish), Kazakhstan (in English and Russian), Moldova (in English and Russian) and Peru (in English and Spanish).

31. Preliminary findings of the evaluation were discussed with the UNEP Task Manager, the Project Coordinator and the Evaluation Manager. As secondary data, the Evaluation Consultant reviewed the shared Project documents, publications, narrative and financial reports and PIRs. Through direct email communications the Evaluation Consultant asked the Project stakeholders to provide additional information.

2.2 Evaluation criteria and key questions

32. The overall approach to the evaluation is informed by the scope set out within the Terminal Evaluation TOR, that in turn uses established evaluation criteria grouped within eight main categories. In this report, the Evaluation Consultant provides project performance ratings against these evaluation criteria, together with a brief justification cross-referenced to the findings in the main body of the Report, following this 6-point scale: Highly Satisfactory (HS); Satisfactory (S); Moderately Satisfactory (MS); Moderately Unsatisfactory (MU);

⁴ <http://www.unep.org/eou/StandardsPolicyandPractices/UNEPEvaluationPolicy/tabid/3050/language/en-US/Default.aspx>

⁵This manual is under revision.

Unsatisfactory (U); Highly Unsatisfactory (HU). Sustainability and Likelihood of Impact are rated from Highly Likely (HL) down to Highly Unlikely (HU).

33. In addition to the evaluation criteria, the evaluation addresses the strategic questions listed below. These are questions of interest to UNEP and to which the Project is believed to be able to make a substantive contribution:

- a) To what extent, and in what ways, has the Project supported the participating countries to have a more systematic and efficient process to collect information on POPs for national reporting and information dissemination?
- b) To what extent, and in what ways, have the national PRTR systems in the six participating countries been able to demonstrate the value of PRTRs in achieving compliance with the Stockholm Convention in a manner that is replicable in other countries?
- c) Regarding the dissemination of PRTR data and best practices for national PRTR systems, what does the evaluation identify as the most effective communication strategies implemented, based on the experiences from the six participating countries?
- d) Which discernible factors have affected the successful uptake of the Project across different countries and which have led to the sustainability of Project outcomes over the Project's two phases?

34. Questions were elaborated for each evaluation criterion, together with sources of data to address the questions as well as suggested indicators/factors, which would give concrete evidence of achieved results and impacts. An evaluation framework containing detailed questions was used to structure the data gathering on the issues of:

- A) Strategic Relevance
- B) Quality of Project Design
- C) Nature of External Context
- D) Effectiveness
- E) Financial Management
- F) Efficiency
- G) Monitoring and Evaluation
- H) Sustainability
- I) Factors and Processes Affecting the Project Performance

35. The Evaluation Consultant approached the assignment with the intention to bring together the best of different stakeholders involved in the design, implementation and execution of the Project, including the stakeholders not identified at Project design. The evaluator focused on producing evidence-based conclusions as far as possible, by:

- converting the evaluation information needs into answerable questions;
- tracking down, with maximum efficiency, the best external evidence with which to answer them;
- critically appraising that evidence for its validity (closeness to truth) and usefulness (future project applicability).

36. Ownership of the evaluation results was encouraged by sharing the draft evaluation reports and discussion of its conclusions with UNEPs Task Manager and UNITARs Project Coordinator, the Evaluation Manager and other relevant stakeholders.

2.3 Data collection and analysis

32. The findings reported in the Terminal Evaluation are based on the Evaluation Matrix and related Key Questions, formulated in the Evaluation Framework at the evaluation inception phase. The Evaluation Framework, in turn, was based on the Evaluation Criteria and Scope presented in the ToR (Please see Annex 1) and the original Project intervention logic (Results framework).

33. A Reconstructed Theory of Change (TOC) for the Project was developed by the Evaluation Consultant to underpin the Terminal Evaluation. The TOC is based on the results framework, intervention logic and risk analysis in the Project document as well as on discussions with the Project Coordinator and the UNEP Evaluation Manager. The TOC was assessed for consistency and a clear conceptual understanding of the Project impact pathways to guide the Terminal Evaluation. The reconstructed TOC is presented in Figure 3

34. Project documents, reports and further relevant data were provided to the Evaluation Consultant by UNEP and UNITAR via the Evaluation Office. Additional information for collecting the necessary data for carrying out the evaluation was available from the Task Manager, Project Coordinator and Project stakeholders later during the evaluation.

35. As mentioned in *Section 2.1 Overview*, for data collection a combination of collection methods, including a desk review of an extensive collection of project related documents and reports, targeted telephone/Skype and e-mail interviews with key project stakeholders were used for validation of data. In total 16 people involved with the implementation, execution and national implementation were interviewed. As selection criterion for the interview's, direct involvement (of the persons to be interviewed) with Project implementation, execution and or national implementation was used. In addition, extra people on the national level were selected for additional interviews when specific questions required their involvement. Also, a brief, six-question survey was sent to key stakeholders in the participating countries. Altogether 30 copies of the survey were distributed among Project stakeholders. A total of (16) responses to the survey were received from Belarus (5), Cambodia (1), Ecuador (4), Kazakhstan (1), Moldova (4) and Peru (1). (Please see also *Annex 4 Stakeholders interviewed and stakeholders who responded to the evaluation survey*)

36. Although the relatively small number of respondents does not allow statistical evidence to be associated with the answers, the respondents made some valuable observations about the Project, that were helpful to understand how the Project and its outcomes were viewed by stakeholders. Finally, targeted e-mail communications were carried out by the Evaluation Consultant to clarify specific remaining questions after the main data collection phase during the writing of the report.

37. During the evaluation, the consultant tried to compare the project intervention with non-action. In other words: "What happened?" compared to "What would have happened without the project intervention?" An analysis of the baseline situation, general trends and activities implemented related to PRTR reporting was undertaken. The findings of that

analysis were compared to the intended project outcomes and impacts to attribute reported project interventions to those outcomes and impacts.

2.4 Evaluation limitations

38. There are possible limitations to the outcomes of this Terminal Evaluation. These include amongst others: potential for respondent bias, limited number of face-to-face and telephone interviews with Project stakeholders, a limited response to the evaluation survey, the possibility of incorrect attribution of the observed outcomes and impacts to the Project (positive results in PRTR development, national implementation and reporting caused by actions outside the Project).

39. Potential for respondent bias. The evaluation findings are based, in part, on the views of key informants with a responsibility for implementation and execution of Project activities that could be potentially biased in their responses regarding outcomes. Several measures were taken to reduce the effect of respondent biases and validate interview results, including the following: (i) ensuring that respondents understood the strict confidentiality of responses; (ii) including informants who do not have a responsibility for implementation and execution of Project activities; and (iii) asking respondents to provide a rationale for their judgments, including a description of specific activities which contributed to reported outcomes.

40. Limited number of face-to-face and telephone interviews with Project stakeholders and limited responses to the evaluation survey. The relatively small number of respondents has an impact on statistical confidence that can be associated with quantitative results of the interviews. With such low numbers, the evidence must be interpreted more cautiously.

41. Attribution/Contribution: as with many other international projects, factors other than the intervention itself could have contributed to the expected results. This is particularly relevant for projects aiming at strengthening government ownership of targeted problems and impacting governmental legal and institutional frameworks. Within the framework of this Project there are many external causes that have contributed or will contribute in the future to the expected results / outcomes of the Project. In order to avoid attribution to the Project intervention, where the external causes played a more important role, the consultant strived to distinguish clearly between the effects of intervention itself and those potentially resulting from external factors i.e. differentiate between correlation and causation.

2.5 Learning communication and outreach

42. To ensure promotion of learning and communication of key findings of the terminal evaluation, the evaluation adopted the following approach:

- The reconstructed TOC was discussed and validated with the Evaluation Manager, the Task Manager and the Project Coordinator;
- Assumptions and drivers were verified with the Evaluation Manager and the Project Coordinator;
- Feedback and potential recommendations were discussed with key Project partners;

- Interviews were undertaken in a semi-structured manner and (as far as possible) individually with each key stakeholder to allow space for interviewees to provide their views, priorities and potential recommendations on the implementation process;
- Preliminary findings, lessons learned and recommendations were shared with the Evaluation Manager, the Task Manager and UNITARs Manager of the CWM Programme;
- The Final Report of the Terminal Evaluation took into consideration comments / suggestions and feedback from all partners that were interviewed and or responded to the survey.

2.6 Ethics

43. This evaluation was carried out in accordance with the Ethical Code of Conduct as per the UNEP evaluation policy, which includes the following key factors: (a) all interviews and information were provided in confidence and anonymously and no information can be traced back to a direct source/individual, (b) those involved in the evaluation have had the opportunity to review the evaluation findings as well as the main evaluation report, (c) the evaluator was expected to conduct the work with empathy and sensitivity to different contexts and cultures in which stakeholders work.

44. To allow for a maximum of free and open discussion about the Project results and about how it was implemented, the opinions of the people interviewed and of the people who responded to the survey are not disclosed in direct connection with their individual views. Their responses are being treated with full confidentiality. Only an overview of people consulted for the evaluation is presented in Annex 4 of this report.

3 The Project

3.1 Context

45. The Project was designed to assist participating countries to comply with their reporting obligations under the Stockholm Convention (SC) on Persistent Organic Pollutants (POPs). Article 10 of the Convention acknowledges the value of Pollutant Release and Transfers Registers (PRTRs) for the collection and dissemination of information on estimates of annual quantities of chemicals listed in Annex A, B or C, that are released or disposed of. SC Parties are required to report on the overall management of POPs and quantities at certain intervals, and PRTRs are designed to assist Parties collect this information faster and in a more cost-effective way. PRTRs act as a central database and are recognized as a robust and comprehensive data-recording system on pollutants, which is also able to record annual information and to gather temporal data for a large number of chemicals. PRTRs provide a publicly accessible system that can assist governments to disseminate information on POPs and other chemicals in a systematic and effective manner.

46. The problem in many SC signatory countries is that they often do collect the required reporting data in an institutionalized way but lack a central database to collect these reporting data that is accessible to all relevant stakeholders. Therefore, the data tend to be stored in disaggregated way, scattered over a wide range of ministries and institutions. The lack of a centralized system does not contribute to the efficiency of the reporting and the accuracy of the reported data.

47. Technical assistance from the Project was designed to reinforce the responsibilities of national agencies; develop and adopt legislative documents; develop national guidance on the setting up of PRTRs; build capacity for the full participation of stakeholders; pilot implemented PRTRs and identify areas for improvement; and create and set up national PRTR databases, including the reporting process to the SC.

48. The Project was designed to implement a PRTR in six countries, namely Belarus, Cambodia, Ecuador, Kazakhstan, Moldova and Peru. The Project is considered as PRTR Phase II. Earlier a PRTR Phase I project was financed by the GEF. The title of that project is *POPs monitoring, reporting and information dissemination using Pollutant Release and Transfer Registers (PRTRs)*. PRTR Phase I started in January 2009 and was completed in September 2012. The countries Cambodia, Ecuador, Kazakhstan and Peru participated in both Phase I and II projects. For reasons now unidentifiable, the Terminal Evaluation of the PRTR Phase I project was not carried out directly after project completion. After completion of the PRTR Phase II project, it was decided to evaluate both phases simultaneously. The Terminal Evaluation of the first phase was concluded in March 2020.⁶

⁶ Terminal Evaluation of the UNEP-GEF Project: POPs monitoring, reporting and information dissemination using Pollutant Release and Transfer Registers, UNEP Evaluation Office, March 2020.

Figure 1 World map with Project countries highlighted in red, source mapchart.net



3.2 Results Framework

37. According to the GEF CEO Approval document (equivalent to Project Document) the Project's **overall objective** is: *to improve access and accuracy of environmental data on POPs and other priority chemicals in 6 countries, and to enhance awareness and public participation on environmental matters, through implementation of fully operational national PRTRs*. This overall Project objective was planned to be achieved through the implementation of the following five Project components:

Component 1: Project baseline strengthened and national needs identified

Component 2: Build capacity to implement PRTRs as a National POPs reporting system

Component 3: Standardization and comparison of PRTR data

Component 4: Access to PRTR data and public information

Component 5: Lessons learned and replication

(For an overview of the Project objectives / components including the subsequent activities and expected outcomes, see *Table 2. Project components, outputs and outcomes*).

38. Under each component a set of planned outputs and expected outcomes was defined. The Results framework in Annex A of the Project document lists in a detailed way the outcomes, outputs, key indicators, baseline, target at mid-term and end of Project, sources of verification, risks and assumptions for achieving the Project objective. The Project document contains the following five components, planned outputs and expected outcomes:

Table 2. Project components, outputs and outcomes⁷

Component 1: Project baseline strengthened and national needs identified	
Aim of Component 1:	To provide support and training for all participating countries to design PRTR National Executive Proposals. These proposals were intended to provide a PRTR technical design (database design and structure, stakeholder mechanisms and coordination, list of chemicals to be considered, reporting formats, etc.), taking into account an up-to-date list of chemicals to be reported upon that is based on changes in chemicals management and on developments within the Chemicals and Mercury conventions.
Planned Outputs:	Basic existing materials on PRTRs are revised and made available for national consideration National PRTR executive proposals updated guides PRTR implementation Draft PRTR regulation are developed and considered for national adoption

⁷ This summary has been developed by the consultant based upon Annex A Results Framework and the project narrative in the Project Document

Component 1: Project baseline strengthened and national needs identified	
Expected Outcomes:	National PRTR proposal guides implementation of PRTRs and guides the development of country-specific PRTR legal instruments
Component 2: Build capacity to implement PRTRs as a National POPs Reporting System	
Aim of Component 2:	To provide support and training for all participating countries to develop national PRTRs, national training was planned to be provided by sector. National capacity was planned to be completed with an international support programme, including modules on key PRTR issues and where countries have the most difficulties and where needed focusing on regional issues. Also, the component planned for national pilots on PRTRs and the development of SC national reports
Planned Outputs:	Standard training modules and materials are developed to be used by any interested country on key topics Sector specific training programmes are developed and properly documented National estimation techniques are developed and available POPs reporting documents are developed by using PRTRs through pilots
Expected Outcomes:	Capacity for collecting and using PRTR data increased significantly in each country, resulting in increased public knowledge of environmental issues and in using PRTRs as a basis for the development of SC national reports
Component 3: Standardization and comparison of PRTR data	
Aim of Component 3	To make sure that PRTRs are developed according to certain common parameters and standards and allow for comparison of data. It was planned to develop guidance for common elements in the PRTR system and in POPs reporting to be considered
Expected Outputs:	Reports and studies on standardization of PRTRs are available for countries' use Developed PRTR implementation guidance facilitates inclusion of POPs into the PRTR system Comparison of PRTR data facilitates quality data and improve PRTR reporting
Expected Outcomes:	Revised guidance on PRTRs and POPs reporting in use by each participating country ensures comparable PRTR systems
Component 4: Access to PRTR data and public information	
Aim of Component 4:	To advocate active participation of civil society during PRTR implementation. The Project included the development and implementation of strategies for public access to environmental information and PRTRs
Expected Outputs:	National strategies developed enable public access to PRTR data and a more active participation in PRTR implementation PRTR information is accessed by civil society and other sectors
Expected Outcomes:	Improved public access to PRTR data and dissemination of information allows full participation of key stakeholders
Component 5: Lessons learned and replication	

Component 1: Project baseline strengthened and national needs identified	
Aim of Component 5:	To assist other (than already involved) industrial sectors and other interested countries (e.g. SC parties) in developing their customized and specific PRTRs. An assessment of lessons learned from the previous PRTR-I project (2009-2012) was foreseen. Dissemination of the lessons learned was foreseen via the UNITAR website and communications and consultations with key partners outside the countries participating
Expected Outputs:	Final lessons learned report including regional recommendations will enable sound replication of PRTRs in countries Monitoring and evaluation plan are fully implemented
Expected Outcomes:	Key lessons learned on PRTR development, improving access to information, and using PRTRs as POPs reporting tools are disseminated among national stakeholders, and widely among SC parties

3.3 Stakeholders

39. Please note, as the Project document did not include a stakeholder analysis, the observations on expected interest and power of influence of Project stakeholders in this section are made by the Evaluation Consultant based on experience with similar international technical assistance projects. The actual reality in the different individual Project countries might have been different. The Project document provides a detailed table that describes all national and international Project stakeholders, their role in the Project and the method of their engagement with Project activities. There is, however, no stakeholder analysis describing the levels of influence and interest each stakeholder group has over the Project outcomes. In *Section 'Project justification', sub-section 2 Baseline scenario and associated baseline projects* of the Project document there is some information available on the interest of key stakeholders in the subject of PRTRs, the status of ratification of the Aarhus Convention and the Kiev Protocol on PRTRs. As stated in the Project document, at Project design none of the participating countries had ratified the Kiev Protocol and only Belarus and Kazakhstan had ratified the Aarhus Convention itself.⁸ Kazakhstan had shown, according to the Project document, a keen interest to update its legislation in accordance with the Aarhus Convention and make environmental information accessible to society. The Ministry of Environmental Protection is leading this initiative.⁹ Belarus in turn, considers the Aarhus Convention as part of the National Legislation and as a consequence its provisions are to be implemented by all legal authorities in the country. Belarus has been active, via its Aarhus Centre in Minsk, to make environmental information well accessible to society.

40. Based on the Project document and discussions with UNITAR, the following key stakeholders have been identified by the evaluation:

⁸ This is not entirely correct: The Republic of Moldova ratified the Convention as well (on 9 August 1999) and ratified the Kiev Protocol on 23 December 2013.

https://treaties.un.org/Pages/ViewDetails.aspx?src=IND&mtdsg_no=XXVII-13-a&chapter=27&clang=_en
Elsewhere in the Project document (page 12) it is stated that Moldova ratified the Kiev Protocol on 23 April 2013.

⁹ After restructuring the Ministry is called since August 2019: Ministry of Ecology, Geology and Natural Resources.

3.3.1 International organizations

UNEP: Implementation Agency of the Project. The Project was supervised by the UNEP Task Manager.

UNITAR: Executing Agency of the Project. The day-to-day management of the Project was carried out by the UNITAR Project Coordinator.

Global Environment Facility: Main funding agency.

41. An extensive list of **regional and global stakeholders** was supporting the Project. These stakeholders include amongst others, Stockholm Convention Secretariat and the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE), relevant departments of ministries of environment from developed countries, and other relevant global organizations and initiatives. Most of the organizations that supported the Project specify technical assistance to developing countries and countries in transition as an organizational objective. All of them demonstrated a high interest in the Project as demonstrated by their inclusion in the Project document.

42. The international stakeholders that committed their cooperation to the initiative included:

- United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE)
- Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD)
- Secretariat of the Stockholm Convention
- Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) and its Aarhus Convention Centers in participating countries
- Commission for Environmental Cooperation (CEC - North America)
- ZOI Environment Network
- Environment Canada (EC - Canada)
- Ministry of Environment Chile MoE Chile
- Ministry of Environmental Protection Israel (MoE- Israel)
- Secretariat for the Environment, Natural Resources and Fishing Mexico (SENRF Mexico)
- Norwegian Pollution Control Authority (NPCA Norway)
- Ministry of Agriculture Food and Environment Spain (MoAF&E Spain)
- Federal Office for the Environment (FOE CH)
- United States Environmental Protection Agency (US EPA)
- The Regional Environmental Center for Central and Eastern Europe (REC)
- European Environmental Bureau (EEB)
- Environment and Security Initiative (ENVSEC)

3.3.2 Country stakeholders

43. The national agencies responsible for environmental management within the participating countries were selected as main Project stakeholders. These agencies were expected to have had a strong interest to participate in the Project as the main responsible organization for the implementation of the Stockholm and Aarhus Conventions. In line with the Project objective the Ministries of Environment should have received:

- improved access and accuracy of environmental data on POPs and other priority chemicals; and
- enhanced awareness and public participation on environmental matters, through implementation of fully operational national PRTRs.

44. Both of the above points were expected to have supported the agencies to better comply with national obligations under the Stockholm and Aarhus Convention. Moreover, the easily accessible and reliable national PRTRs, should have enabled them to significantly improve the quality of their national duties and services. Within the national power balance among ministries there is a risk that the power of influence on decision making of agencies responsible for environmental management is traditionally not the strongest and most influential.

45. National partnering institutions and PRTR national coordination members included a series of relevant ministries, or more specifically selected departments at relevant ministries. During the implementation phase the following national partners were contracted:

Belarus	Ministry of Natural Resources and Environmental Protection, The Republic Scientific and Research Unitary Enterprise "Ecology"
Cambodia	Ministry of Environment
Ecuador	Ministry of Environment and Water
Kazakhstan	Ministry of Environment and Water, Center for Sustainable Consumption and Production/ created Ministry of Energy / Ministry of Ecology, Geology and Natural Resources ¹⁰
Moldova	Ministry of Environment, Inter-ministerial working group / PRTR National Coordination team
Peru	Ministry of Environment

46. Other ministries were certainly expected to have had an interest in the Project, but to a lesser degree than the Ministries of Environment, who are responsible for environmental data. The improved access and accuracy of environmental data should have been beneficial to all national partnering institutions that need to work on a daily basis with those data. The involved group of ministries and relevant departments from these 6 countries was large and diverse and a statement about their power of influence on decision making could lack the needed nuance.

Belarus:	Ministry of Industry, Ministry of Energy, Ministry of Agriculture, National Statistical Committee
Cambodia:	Ministry of Agriculture, Ministry of Industry, Mine and Energy, Ministry of Health, Ministry of Labour and Vocational Training, Ministry of Commerce, Cambodia Electricity Company

¹⁰ On 6 August 2014, in connection with restructuring state bodies of the Kazakh government, the Ministry of Environment and Water was disbanded, and its functions were transferred to the newly created Ministry of Energy and partly to the Ministry of Agriculture. In 2019, the Ministry was re-established as the Ministry of Ecology, Geology and Natural Resources

- Ecuador:** National Secretariat on Water, Ministry of Agriculture, Ministry of Health, National Secretariat on Risk Management, Ministry of Electricity and Renewable Energy, Ministry of Labour Relations, National Council on Energy, Ministry of Transport and Public Works
- Kazakhstan:** Ministry of Health, Ministry of Agriculture, Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Energy Efficiency and Cleaner Production Center
- Moldova:** State Environmental Inspectorate, Apele Moldova Agency (water Agency), Ministry of Economy, Ministry of Health, Ministry of Agriculture,
- Peru:** Ministry of Health, Ministry of Energy and Mining, Ministry of Transportation and Communication, Ministry of Production, Ministry of Agriculture, Chamber of Commerce

47. In all participating countries one or more NGOs and public interest groups were involved. It was often decided to work with Aarhus Centers in the countries that are supported by the OSCE. NGOs are expected to have had a strong interest in the Project. The Aarhus Convention provides them with an international legal licence to operate in their respective societies. The improved access and accuracy of environmental data should have been beneficial to NGOs as well as they rely on this information in their daily work. NGO power of influence on decision making is traditionally low. They can raise awareness and advocate the need to put environmental issues on the political agenda.

48. The following NGOs and public interest groups following organizations were selected for participation in the Project:

- Belarus:** Aarhus Centers in Minsk and Grodno, Green Alliance Belarus
- Cambodia:** Cambodian Agricultural Study and Development Centre (SEDAC), Cambodia Environmental Association, NGO Forum on Cambodia, Blub Baitong Organization
- Ecuador:** ECOGESTION Foundation, Fundacion NATURA,
- Kazakhstan** Aarhus Center. OSCE Center in Asntana, Ecom NGO
- Moldova:** Aarhus Center
- Peru:** Peruvian Consumers Association ASPEC, Pesticides Action Network

49. Additional important Project stakeholders included, amongst others: universities, research institutes, industrial associations, labour and occupational health organizations. These organizations were expected to have had a strong interest in the Project. All of them rely on easily accessible and accurate information for their work. In general, the power influence of this heterogenous group of organizations on decision making is not expected to have been remarkably high, although political decision makers rely on information from this group of stakeholders amongst others.

50. From academia and industry associations the following organizations were selected for participation in the Project:

- Belarus:** Republic Scientific and Research Unitary Enterprise "Écology"
- Cambodia:** Cambodia Royal Academy, Royal University of Agriculture Royal University of Phnom Penh, Labour Union Federation Association

Ecuador:	Association of Chemical Industry, Universidad Central de Ecuador, Universidad Tecnologia Equinoccial
Kazakhstan:	State Research Institute of Climate and Ecology
Moldova:	Institute of Ecology and Geography, Academia of Science of Moldova
Peru:	National Industry Association, National Mining, Oil and Energy, Universidad Católica del Perú

51. Under-represented / marginalized groups are not mentioned separately in the Project document. As PRTRs are an abstract and complicated tool that do not seem to have any direct relevance for the day-to-day life for these vulnerable groups, the vulnerable groups are expected to have had a low interest in the Project. In general, the power of influence of vulnerable groups is low.

3.3.3 Beneficiaries

52. The Project document does not identify specific beneficiaries of the Project intervention. Based on the Project narrative and logic and starting from the local level the following beneficiaries have been identified:

- A. **Vulnerable groups** living close to pollution hot spots (in practice most vulnerable are often women and children) are expected to ultimately benefit from the Project, provided that implementation of the PRTRs has a real impact. Real impact would mean that improved data and monitoring and reporting practices, result in better regulation and management of the in PRTR registered chemicals by national responsible authorities in line with international best practices. The less directly exposed **public at large in Project countries** should benefit as well from the Project if it is effective and has real impact.
- B. **NGOs in Project countries** are expected to benefit from the Project if it was successfully implemented. Provision of access to environmental information and involvement in environmental decision making is expected to enable the NGOs to perform their watch dog function in the countries, inform the population about important issues and monitor the quality of governmental policies.
- C. The same holds true for **academia and the industry sector**. Improved information is expected to enable these organizations to come up with better e.g. research, policy, reporting, guidelines on the relevant chemicals.
- D. **Key governmental Project partners such as the agencies responsible for environmental management and other relevant ministries** are expected to benefit from the Project. Access to more accurate data should enable them to improve the monitoring, reporting and regulation of chemicals.
- E. Even the relevant international treaties and organizations like e.g. **Stockholm Convention Secretariat, United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE), OECD, OSCE** are expected to benefit from the improved quality of data, monitoring and reporting and from stronger PRTR capacity in participating Project countries, if it is achieved.

53. As stakeholder participation and cooperation and Human Rights and Gender Equality are important and recurring themes throughout the evaluation, the terminal evaluation of the

Project reports on what roles the stakeholders played to bring about change and achieve impact through the Project.

3.4 Project implementation structure and partners

54. The Implementing Agency for the Project was UNEP and the Executing Agency was UNITAR. As part of its implementing role, UNEP supervised and provided administrative support to the Executing Agency. UNITAR managed the Project execution on a day-to-day basis, composed managerial and technical teams as needed and hired the required technical consultants. A Project Team within UNITAR, headed by a Project Coordinator was made responsible for the day-to-day management of the Project. This team reported directly to UNEP and the Project's Steering Committee. In line with the reporting obligations of the Project, UNITAR submitted administrative, progress and financial reports to UNEP. Financial contracting, procurement, transactions and reporting was carried out in accordance with UNEP procedures.

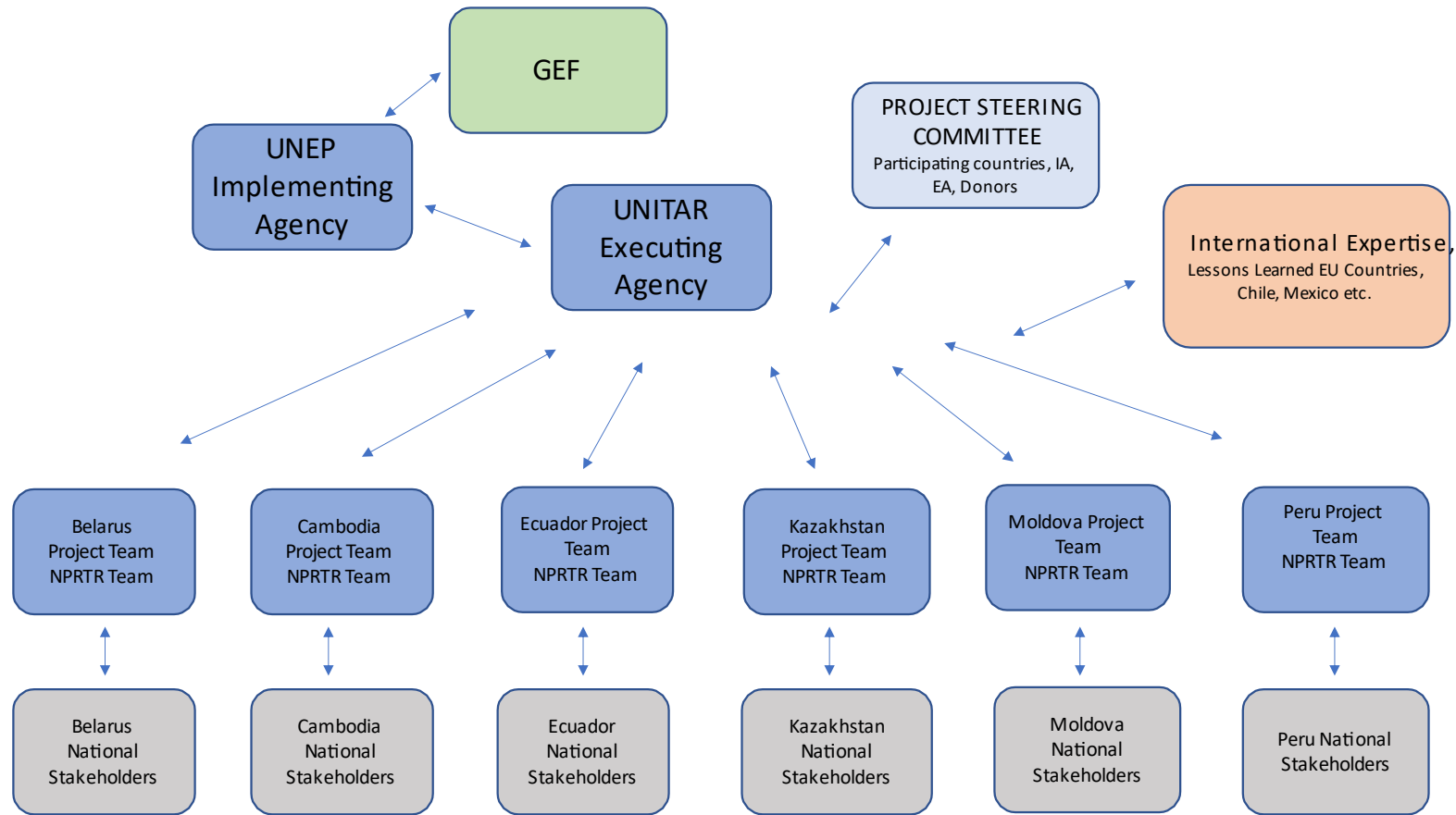
55. Under UNITAR contracting agreements National Coordinators were appointed within all of the six Project countries within the lead Ministry that took up the responsibility of national Project coordination in the implementation of the Project. Coordinating bodies within the lead Ministries had the responsibility of involving relevant representatives from government, NGOs, industry and academia. The following organizations were nominated in the different Project countries to play this role of lead Ministry for coordination of the Project:

- Belarus: Ministry of Natural Resources and Environmental Protection
- Cambodia: Ministry of Environment, Department of Environmental Pollution Control
- Ecuador: Ministry of Environment and Water
- Kazakhstan: Ministry of Environment and Water/ Ministry of Energy / Ministry of Ecology, Geology and Natural Resources¹¹
- Moldova: Ministry of Environment, Environmental Pollution Prevention Office
- Peru: Ministry of Environment, Department of Environmental Management

56. A Project Steering Committee was formed by representatives of the executing and implementing agencies, interested IGOs, donors and government representatives of the 6 participating countries. The Committee met on a regular basis to review the Project progress and results and to guarantee the fulfilment of goals and objectives.

¹¹ See note nr 10

Figure 2. Implementation structure and decision-making flow chart



3.5 Changes in design during implementation

57. After GEF approval in February 2014, the Project began operations in May 2015 and was completed in August 2020. At design, the Project was originally planned to be implemented starting from an unspecified date in the first half of 2015 to 31 December 2018. During the Project implementation, however, a revision was agreed upon to allow for the completion of activities and deliverables in Ecuador, that had fallen behind as compared to the activities from the other Project countries.

58. The other five participating countries Belarus, Cambodia, Kazakhstan, Moldova and Peru completed their work more closely to the original planned timeframe and were able to terminate their agreements with UNITAR in March 2019, after submitting their final narrative reports and grant closure forms.

59. In Ecuador, the national public institution Fondo de Inversion Ambiental Sostenible (FIAS)¹² joined under a tripartite agreement with UNITAR and the Ministry of Environment and Water to assist with the Project’s management, procurement, and reporting obligations. It was agreed that under the new agreement and rescheduled workplan, that UNITAR would provide additional assistance to the Ministry in order to guarantee completion of the Project within the extended time frame. The total budget for the execution of the Project remained the same.

3.6 Project financing

49. The Project is classified as a medium size project (MSP) in line with GEF project categories. The cost to the GEF Trust Fund was USD 2,000,000. At project design, the expected co-financing support (cash and in-kind) from various partner organizations and participating countries was USD 8,232,258. The total approved budget for the Project was USD 10,232,258 as outlined in the Tables 3. and 4. below under “Total cost of the project”. (Please see also *Section 5.5 Financial management*)

Table 3. Project budget at design by component

Project Component	Expected Outcomes	Trust Fund	Grant Amount (\$)	Co-financing (\$)
1. Strengthening baseline and identification of national needs	National PRTR proposal guides implementation of PRTRs and the development of country specific PRTR legal instruments	GEF TF	364,800	1,329,989
2. Capacity building activities towards the implementation of a PRTR for POPs reporting	Capacity for collecting and using PRTR data increased significantly in each country, resulting in increased public knowledge of environmental issues and in using PRTRs as a basis for the development	GEF TF	949,700	3,314,056

¹² Sustainable Environmental Investment Fund

Project Component	Expected Outcomes	Trust Fund	Grant Amount (\$)	Co-financing (\$)
	of Stockholm Convention national reports.			
3. Standardization and comparison of PRTR data	Revised guidance on PRTRs and POPs reporting in use by each participating country ensuring comparable PRTR systems	GEF TF	176,000	324,400
4. Access to PRTR data and public information	Improved public access to PRTR data and dissemination of information allows full participation of key stakeholders	GEF TF	152,500	2,067,213
5. Lessons learned and replication	Key lessons learned on PRTR development, improving access to information, and using PRTRs as POPs reporting tools disseminated among national stakeholders, and widely among parties to the Stockholm Convention	GEF TF	217,000	996,600
Subtotal			1,860,000	8,032,258
Project Management Cost		GEFTF	140,000	200,000
Total Project Cost			2,000,000	8,232,258

Table 4. Project budget at design by funding source

Source	Amount (US\$)
GEF Trust Fund	2,000,000
Co-financing	8,232,258
<i>UNEP</i>	<i>In-kind</i> 300,000
<i>UNITAR</i>	<i>In-kind</i> 400,000
<i>UNECE</i>	<i>In-kind</i> 2,500,000
<i>Government of Cambodia</i>	<i>cash</i> 330,400
	<i>In-kind</i> 165,800
<i>Government of Kazakhstan</i>	<i>cash</i> 1,286,909
	<i>In-kind</i> 212,000
<i>Government of Ecuador</i>	<i>cash</i> 450,000
	<i>In-kind</i> 176,353.1
<i>Government of Peru</i>	<i>In-kind</i> 362,212.5
<i>Government of Moldova</i>	<i>cash</i> 1,040,983
	<i>In-kind</i> 142,600
<i>Government of Belarus</i>	<i>cash</i> 125,000
	<i>In-kind</i> 690,000
<i>Government of Chile</i>	<i>In-kind</i> 50,000
TOTAL PROJECT COST	10,232,258

4 Theory of Change

60. At the time when the Project document was designed, the Theory of Change (TOC) was not yet a requirement for the development of project proposals. Therefore, the TOC has been reconstructed during this evaluation based on the defined outcomes, outputs and objectives as described in the original Project document.

61. In the Project document the results framework in ANNEX A lists the outcomes, outputs, key indicators, baseline, target at mid-term and end of Project, sources of verification, risks and assumptions to: *Improve access and accuracy of environmental data on POPs and other priority chemicals in 6 countries and to enhance awareness and public participation on environmental matters, through implementation of fully operational national PRTRs* as the Project's objective. Table 5. below outlines the originally proposed linkages between the Project outcomes and outputs as set out within the Project document and compares them with the Reconstructed TOC as proposed by the evaluator. The intended overall development goal in Table 5. below has been formulated based on the Project goal in the Project document, quoted above.

62. Table 5. below compares the results statements in the Project document narrative and results framework with those in the reconstructed TOC developed at evaluation.

Table 5. Comparison of results between the Project document narrative and results frame versus the reconstructed TOC:

Project Document	Reconstructed TOC	Justification for reconstruction and or comments
Impact		
	<p>Impact 1: Improved protection of human health and the environment from POPs and other hazardous chemicals through effective use of operational and publicly accessible PRTRs in 6 project countries</p> <p>Impact 2: Experience and results from the PRTR Project are replicated in other SC countries</p>	<p>Impacts are defined as long-lasting results arising, directly or indirectly from a project. Impacts are intended and positive changes and must relate to UNEP's mandate.</p> <p>The ultimate goal of working with PRTRs as a management and reporting tool is to improve the protection of human health and the environment</p> <p>Providing access to information and public participation in environmental decision making is a secondary goal of working with PRTRs that also contributes to the protection of human health and the environment</p>

Project Document	Reconstructed TOC	Justification for reconstruction and or comments
Overall Project Objective/Purpose		
To improve access and accuracy of environmental data on POPs and other priority chemicals in 6 countries and to enhance awareness and Public Participation on environmental matters, through implementation of fully operational national PRTRs		
Intermediate States (IS)		
	<p>IS1: National governments endorse and adopt PRTRs as part of National Regulatory Framework</p> <p>IS2: Countries officially implement PRTRs and start reporting to SC using PRTRs in an integrated way</p>	<p>The Intermediate States were proposed by the evaluator based on the Results Framework. Intermediate states are defined as changes beyond the Project Outcomes, that are required to contribute towards the achievement of the intended impact of a project.</p> <p>IS 1 is actually a reformulated assumption from the Project's results framework, but can be seen at the same time as an essential IS: without institutionalization the PRTRs will not be used and LTI will not be achieved</p> <p>IS 2 formulated here includes a considerable degree of institutionalization of outputs and outcomes provided by the Project, including country ownership and commitment to the Project results</p>
Outcomes		
Outcome 1. National PRTR proposal guides implementation of PRTRs and guides the development of country specific PRTR legal instruments	Project Outcome 1. National PRTR proposal guides the development of country specific PRTR legal instruments	"Implementation of PRTRs" has been taken out to better reflect the change process

Project Document	Reconstructed TOC	Justification for reconstruction and or comments
<p>Outcome 2. Capacity of collecting and using PRTR data increased significantly in each country, resulting in increased public knowledge of environmental issues and in using PRTRs as a basis for the development of SC national reports</p>	<p>Project Outcome 2. Capacity of collecting and using accurate environmental PRTR data increased significantly in each country, resulting in increased public knowledge of environmental issues and in using PRTRs as a basis for the development of SC national reports*</p>	<p>The words ‘accurate environmental’ [PRTR data] have been added to the Outcome description to better reflect the intention of the overall Project Objective as defined in the original Project document.</p> <p>* <i>“using PRTRs as a basis for the development of SC national reports”</i> - the evaluation understands this as POPs data collected through the national PRTRs used for national reporting to the Stockholm Convention.</p>
<p>Outcome 3. Revised guidance on PRTRs and POPs reporting in use by each participating country ensures comparable PRTR systems</p>	<p>Project Outcome 3. Revised guidance on PRTRs and POPs reporting in use by each participating country ensures comparable PRTR systems</p>	<p>Faithful to the descriptions in the Project Results Framework</p>
<p>Outcome 4. Improved public access to PRTR data and a more active participation in PRTR implementation</p>	<p>Project Outcome 4. Improved public access to PRTR data and a more active participation in PRTR implementation</p>	<p>Faithful to the descriptions in the Project Results Framework</p>
<p>Outcome 5. Key lessons learned on PRTR development, improving access to information, and using PRTRs as POPs reporting tools disseminated among national stakeholders and widely among SC Parties</p>	<p>Project Outcome 5 Lessons learned on PRTR development and use of PRTRs in POPs reporting are widely applied by SC parties</p>	<p>As the word ‘dissemination’ does not necessarily results in uptake/adoption/application, it has been changed for ‘applied’.</p>
	<p>Direct Outcome 1: National Executive Proposals and Draft</p>	<p>‘Direct Outcome’ has been defined as an outcome that is</p>

Project Document	Reconstructed TOC	Justification for reconstruction and or comments
	Legislation are available from national PRTR websites	intended to be achieved from the
	Direct Outcome 2: PRTR modules, trainings and guidelines on estimation techniques and SC reporting are developed and stakeholders are actively using them	uptake/adoption/application of outputs and occurring prior to the achievement of Project Outcomes. To illustrate what steps are needed in the gradual change process of the Project in support of PRTR implementation these Direct Outcomes (1 and 2) have been included in the reconstructed TOC
Outputs		
<p>Output 1.1 Basic existing materials on PRTRs revised and made available for national consideration</p> <p>Output 1.2 National PRTR executive proposals updated guides PRTR implementation</p> <p>Output 2.1 Standard training modules and materials developed to be used by any interested country on key topics</p> <p>Output 2.2 Sector specific training programme developed and properly documented</p> <p>Output 2.3 National estimation techniques developed and available</p> <p>Output 2.4 POPs reporting documents developed by using PRTRs through pilots</p> <p>Output 3.1 Reports and studies on standardization of PRTRs available for countries' use</p> <p>Output 3.2 Developed PRTR implementation guidance facilitates inclusion of POPs into the PRTR system</p>	<p>Output 1.1 Basic existing materials on PRTRs are revised and made available for national consideration</p> <p>Output 1.2 National PRTR executive proposals updated guide PRTR implementation`</p> <p>Output 1.3 Draft PRTR regulation is developed and considered for national adoption</p> <p>Output 2.1 Standard training modules and materials are developed to be used by any interested country on key topics</p> <p>Output 2.2 Sector specific training programme is developed and properly documented</p> <p>Output 2.3 National estimation techniques are developed and available</p> <p>Output 2.4 POPs reporting documents are developed by using PRTRs through pilots</p> <p>Output 3.1 Reports and studies on standardization of PRTRs are available for countries' use</p> <p>Output 3.2 Developed PRTR implementation guidance</p>	Faithful to the descriptions in the Project Results Framework

Project Document	Reconstructed TOC	Justification for reconstruction and or comments
<p>Output 4.1 National strategies developed enable public access to PRTR data and a more active participation in PRTR implementation</p> <p>Output 4.2 PRTR information accessed by civil society and other sectors</p> <p>Output 5.1 Final lessons learned report including regional recommendations enable sound replication of PRTRs in countries</p>	<p>facilitates inclusion of POPs into the PRTR system</p> <p>Output 4.1 National strategies developed enable public access to PRTR data and a more active participation in PRTR implementation</p> <p>Output 4.2 PRTR information is accessed by civil society and other sectors</p> <p>Output 5.1 Final lessons learned report including regional recommendations enable sound replication of PRTRs in countries</p>	
<p>Output 5.2 Monitoring and evaluation plan fully implemented</p>		<p>'Output 5.2 Monitoring and evaluation plan fully implemented' was originally listed in the ProDoc but is omitted as it is not necessarily part of the Project's TOC</p>

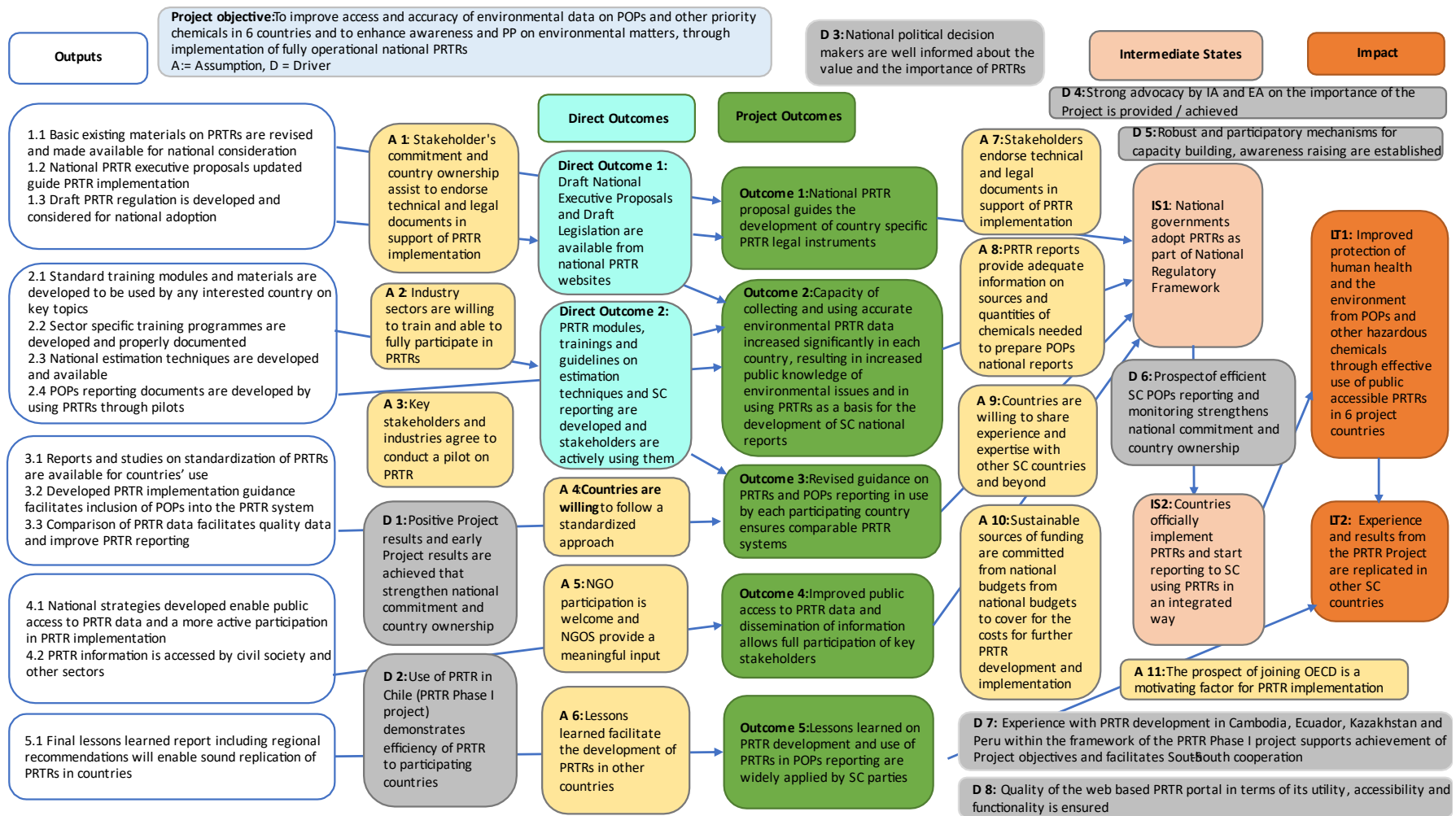


Figure 3 Reconstructed Theory of Change

Assumptions and Drivers

63. Assumptions¹³ (A) used in the Reconstructed TOC are summarized from the assumption descriptions in the Project's results framework¹⁴:

A1. Stakeholders commitment and country ownership assist to endorse technical and legal documents in support of PRTR implementation
A2. Industry sectors are willing to train and able to fully participate in PRTRs
A3. Key stakeholders and industries agree to conduct a pilot on PRTR
A4. Countries are willing to follow a standardized approach
A5. NGO participation is welcome and NGOs provide a meaningful input
A6. Lessons learned facilitate the development of PRTRs in other countries
A7. Stakeholders endorse technical and legal documents in support of PRTR implementation
A8. PRTR reports provide adequate information on sources and quantities of chemicals needed to prepare POPs national reports
A9. Countries are willing to share experience and expertise with other SC countries and beyond
A10. Sustainable sources of funding are committed from national budgets to cover for the costs of further PRTR development and implementation of the reporting and monitoring system
A11. The prospect of joining OECD is a motivating factor for PRTR implementation (Implementation of a national PRTR is one of the requirements).

64. There are no Drivers¹⁵ (D) included in the original Project document. Proposed drivers that could support change towards the intended impact, are formulated in the Reconstructed TOC as:

D1. Positive Project results and early Project results are achieved that strengthen national commitment and country ownership
D2. Use of PRTR in Chile (PRTR Phase I project) demonstrates efficiency of PRTR to participating countries
D3. National political decision makers are well informed about the value and the importance of PRTRs
D4. Strong advocacy by IA and EA on the importance of the Project is provided / achieved
D5. Robust and participatory mechanisms for capacity building, awareness raising are established
D6. Prospect of efficient SC POPs reporting and monitoring strengthens national commitment and country ownership

¹³ An assumption is a significant external factor or condition that needs to be present for the realization of the intended results but is beyond the influence of the project and its partners

¹⁴ As observed by the Evaluation Office peer reviewers, assumptions A4, A6, A7, A8 and A9 are expected to be potentially 'influencable' by the project intervention.

¹⁵ A driver is a significant external factor that, if present, is expected to contribute to the realization of the intended results of a project. Drivers can be influenced by the project and its partners.

D7. Experience with PRTR development in Cambodia, Ecuador, Kazakhstan and Peru within the framework of the PRTR Phase I project supports achievement of Project objectives and facilitates South-South cooperation

D8. Quality of the web based PRTR portal in terms of its utility, accessibility and functionality is ensured

4.1 Causal pathways from Outputs to Outcomes

65. Outputs related to **Project outcome 1** (*National PRTR proposal guides the development of country specific PRTR legal instruments*) are designed to provide necessary support and training for participating countries to develop Draft PRTR National Executive Proposals and Draft Legislation. Only when the combined planned outputs under this component are accomplished, will **Direct outcome 1** (*Draft National Executive Proposals and Draft Legislation are available from national PRTR websites*) be successfully achieved.

66. Assumptions and drivers relevant for Direct outcome 1 are equally important for Project outcome 1. Regarding the assumptions, it is important to state that without active country ownership and commitment no national proposals and legal instruments would be expected to be developed (A1) and Project outcome 1 will not be achieved. As clearly concluded by the PRTR Phase I project evaluation, an important factor to strengthen country ownership and commitment is the prospect of joining the OECD (implementation of a national PRTR is a requirement for becoming an OECD member) (A 11).¹⁶ Without the aim to join the OECD, Project countries would be expected to be less motivated to develop national PRTR proposals and country specific legal instruments. For the development of these proposals and legal instruments it is important that NGO participation was welcome, and NGOs can provide meaningful input (A5).

67. As far as the drivers are concerned, positive Project results achieved early on in the Project were expected to create enthusiasm for achieving the Project goals and were expected to strengthen country ownership (D1). The example of Chile's results with effective PRTR reporting (D2) (PRTR Phase I) and the experience of Cambodia, Ecuador, Kazakhstan and Peru with PRTR design (also PRTR Phase I) is expected to strengthen country commitment to develop the proposals and legislation (D7). Without being well informed about the value of PRTRs, national decision makers will not have the strong enough Project ownership and commitment to carry through with the development of proposals and legislation (D3). The authority of representatives of IA and EA on the subject of PRTRs could strengthen ownership and commitment (D4). Robust and participatory mechanisms for capacity building and awareness raising are expected to enhance the quality of the national proposals and legal instruments (D5). The prospect of efficient SC POPs reporting and monitoring is expected to strengthen national commitment and country ownership (D6).

¹⁶ Terminal Evaluation of the UNEP-GEF Project: POPs monitoring, reporting and information dissemination using Pollutant Release and Transfer Registers, UNEP Evaluation Office, December 2020.

68. Provided that most of the above-mentioned assumptions hold and drivers are in place, the achievement of Direct outcome 1 is followed by the achievement of the expected Project outcome 1.

69. Outputs related to Component 2 are designed to develop PRTR modules, trainings and guidance on estimation techniques and SC reporting. It is important that these capacity building tools are actively used. Accomplishment of the combined planned outputs under this component is expected to result in the achievement of **Direct outcome 2** (*PRTR modules, trainings and guidelines on estimation techniques and SC reporting are developed and stakeholders are actively using them*). Provided that most of the assumptions hold and drivers are in place, it can be expected that the achievement of Direct outcome 2 will result in the achievement of **Project outcome 2** (*Capacity of collecting and using accurate environmental PRTR data increased significantly in each country, resulting in increased public knowledge of environmental issues and in using PRTRs as a basis for the development of SC national reports*). To correctly reflect change and application at outcome level “using PRTRs as a basis for the development of SC national reports” in this outcome, should be understood as: POPs data collected through the national PRTRs is used for national reporting to the Stockholm Convention in Project countries.

70. Regarding the assumptions it is important to state that without the industry sector and other stakeholders such as NGOs and academia willing to train (A2 and A5), no standardized national and international comparable approach of PRTR implementation can be applied for use and further developed (A4). It is key that all relevant stakeholders are involved with the trainings and that sector-specific trainings are organized where a standardized approach is used. Without active involvement of stakeholders, insufficient capacity will be built. Without the agreement of the relevant stakeholders to carry out a pilot test-phase (A3 and A5), there will be a lack of experience to scale PRTRs up to the national level.

71. For the drivers, it is important to state that robust and participatory mechanisms for capacity building are key to guarantee the quality of trainings, guidelines and other capacity building activities (D5). The experience of Cambodia, Ecuador, Kazakhstan and Peru with PRTR design (in PRTR Phase I) is expected to strengthen their knowledge on the subject of PRTRs and support their ability to actively use the provided training materials and guidelines (D7).

72. Outputs related to Component 3 are designed to ensure the development of comparable PRTR systems in participating countries, based on the revised guidance for POPs reporting, are developed within the framework of the Project. Only when the combined planned outputs under this component are accomplished, will **Project outcome 3** (*Revised guidance on PRTRs and POPs reporting in use by each participating country ensures comparable PRTR systems*) be successfully achieved.

73. Regarding the assumptions it is important to highlight that without the agreement to follow a standardized approach, countries are expected not be able to use the comparable PRTR systems for effective and efficient POPs reporting (A4). A key driver for the support the achievement of Project outcome 3 is experience with the PRTR design in the Phase I project. The experience of Cambodia, Ecuador, Kazakhstan and Peru with PRTR design (in

PRTR Phase I) was expected to strengthen their knowledge on the subject of PRTRs and support their ability to use the provided revised guidance on PRTR POPs reporting and also possibly facilitating South-South cooperation (D7).

74. Outputs related to component 4 focus on access to PRTR data of stakeholders in line with the provisions of the Aarhus Convention. Delivery of the planned outputs under this component results in the achievement of **Project outcome 4** (*Improved public access to PRTR data and a more active participation in PRTR implementation*). Regarding the assumptions, it is important to mention that if NGO participation in the Project would not be forthcoming or if NGOs did not provide a meaningful input (A 5), it was expected that improved public access to PRTR data and dissemination of information through full participation of key stakeholders would not be achieved. For the drivers, again the experience with the Phase I project was important (D7). The experience of Cambodia, Ecuador, Kazakhstan and Peru with PRTR design (in PRTR Phase I) was expected to strengthen knowledge on the importance of PRTRs in the Aarhus Convention on public participation and access to information and environmental decision-making.

75. Outputs related to component 5 were thematically cross-cutting and designed to provide the key lessons learned from the whole Project and disseminate these lessons learned among national stakeholders and SC parties. Accomplishment of the component 5 output results in the achievement of **Project outcome 5** (*Lessons learned on PRTR development and use of PRTRs in POPs reporting are widely applied by SC parties*). It should be noted that dissemination of lessons learned would not directly facilitate change, uptake, or application of Project results at outcome level. The evaluation, therefore, looked for signs of such application. In line with the TOC, application of Project experience in other SC countries should be regarded as impact (See also Impact 2 below).

76. Regarding the assumptions, it is essential for the achievement of Project outcome 5 that countries were willing to share experience and expertise with other SC countries and that lessons learned from the project would be disseminated internationally (A9). The lessons learned are expected to be used to facilitate the development of PRTRs in other countries (A6). The driver to support the achievement of Project outcome 5 highlights the importance of strong project ownership achieved through positive Project results that are expected to strengthen the motivation to share experience and expertise internationally (D1).

4.2 Causal pathways form outcomes to Intermediate States

77. The achievement of the Intermediate States can be seen as a precondition that is essential to the Impact becoming realized. Here, the assumption about the endorsement of PRTR implementation is a critical component in the change process (A1). Without endorsement and adoption of Project proposals, legal documents, reports, guidelines and strategies, institutionalization and meaningful use of PRTRs such as reporting to the Stockholm Convention cannot be developed, improved access to accurate environmental data and enhanced public participation on environmental matters also cannot be achieved. As a consequence, the participating countries will not comply with their obligations under the Stockholm and Aarhus Conventions. Especially with regard to the Aarhus Convention and its principles of public participation, it is important that Project countries are open to

acknowledging the important role of NGOs in society and that decision makers commit themselves to work with NGOs in a meaningful way (A5).

78. **Intermediate State 1** (*National governments endorse and adopt PRTRs as part of National Regulatory Framework*) is actually a reformulated assumption taken from the Project's results framework but can be seen at the same time as an essential precondition: without the determination of country decision makers to institutionalize the PRTRs into the responsible ministry's management, working processes and legal frameworks, PRTRs will not be used and the desired Impact of the Project will not be achieved. As mentioned above when discussing the achievement of Component 1, the assumption of stakeholder commitment and country ownership to endorse the required technical and legal documents in support of PRTR implementation (A1, A7) are expected to be an important ingredient in the change process. The prospect of joining OECD is expected to be a motivating factor for this commitment and ownership (A11). Regarding the drivers the use of PRTR in Chile (Phase I project) was expected to demonstrate the efficiency of PRTRs in participating countries (D2, D6). It was also expected that actively informing national political decision makers about the value and the importance of PRTRs (D3) and PRTR Phase I Project experience (D7) would strengthen the national decision makers in endorsement and adoption of PRTRs. Strong advocacy by UNEP and UNITAR (D4) could support this.

79. **Intermediate States 1 and Intermediate State 2** (*Countries officially implement PRTRs and start reporting to SC using PRTRs in an integrated way*) both include a considerable degree of institutionalization of outputs and outcomes provided by the Project, including country ownership and commitment to Project results. Without active commitment, ownership of results by national Project partners would be insufficient to endorse technical and legal documents in support of PRTR implementation and without sustainable sources of government funding committed, PRTRs will not be used. At the same time, it is expected that without such commitment, countries will fail to integrate the data collection needed for reporting to the Stockholm Convention in the PRTR systems developed by the Project.

80. With regard to the achievement of Intermediate State 1 and 2, the assumed stakeholder commitment and country ownership are the central requirements for successful endorsement and adoption of PRTRs as part of the national regulatory framework (A1, A7, A10 and A11). Key drivers that are expected to support the achievement of the Intermediate states highlight the importance of positive Project results (D1), well informed decision makers (D3), strong advocacy for the importance of PRTRs (D4), the prospect of efficient SC POPs reporting (D6) and experience with Phase I PRTR development (D7). All such drivers are expected to support changes needed for the achievement of Intermediate State 1 and 2.

4.3 Causal pathways from Intermediate states to Impact

81. The ultimate goal of working with PRTRs as a management and reporting tool is to improve the protection of human health and the environment and achievement of the Project's intended **Impact I**. Both the Stockholm and the Aarhus Convention mention the development of PRTRs not as a goal in itself, but as an effective and efficient tool to be used in reporting to the SC, to present national collected environmental data easily accessible to NGOs and to enhance public participation in environmental decision making.

82. Whether decision makers in Project countries, are willing to commit themselves to the Project in connection with the above listed assumptions is beyond the direct control of key Project stakeholders. The Project document's risk identification correctly states: "the responsibility for the process of legislation rests with the participating government." However, country ownership and governmental commitment to the Project objectives is of crucial importance for the achievement of the desired impact. Without the political will to make decisions in favour of endorsement for and adoption of PRTRs as part of the national regulatory framework, PRTRs will not be implemented in Project countries, PRTRs will not be used for reporting on POPs and public participation and awareness on environmental matters will not be enhanced. Key Project stakeholders can facilitate governmental Project commitment and decision making in favour of PRTR implementation by making sure that the Project would be carried out to the highest possible standards including e.g. engagement with appropriate stakeholders, hiring of the best available experts and provision of efficient Project management. In this respect, active dissemination of information on the effectiveness and efficiency of PRTRs around the world among national decision makers was expected to be particularly important.

83. Successful implementation of PRTRs in participating Project countries was/is expected to lead to the achievement of **Impact 1**. Successful achievement of the cross-cutting Project outcome 5 is expected to function as a strong example that other SC countries would like to follow. The achievement of **Impact 2** (*Experience and results from the PRTR Project are replicated in other SC countries*) would strongly demonstrate the sustainability of the Project initiative. Figure 3 above presents the reconstructed TOC in diagrammatic form.

5 Evaluation findings

5.1 Strategic relevance

5.1.1 Alignment with MTS and POW

84. The Project proposal is well aligned with UNEP's Medium-Term Strategy (MTS) for 2014–2017 and subsequent Programme of Work (POW). UNEP's MTS sub-programme 'Harmful Substances and Hazardous Waste', highlights relevant Multilateral Environmental Agreements and announces that UNEP will 'exercise its leadership in assisting countries in developing the sound management of chemicals and waste, offering technical support that aims to catalyse the actions of its partners in minimizing the risks of chemicals and waste.' The Project's Results Framework in detail describes how the Project's objective, outcomes and outputs are relevant to UNEP's MTS and POW. The relevant MTS sections include MTS Performance Highlights 4 "A number of UNEP-developed tools have become standard approaches for preparing quantitative assessments of the scale and distribution of chemicals releases – in particular for persistent organic pollutants and mercury", Chemicals and Waste: Accomplishment 3 "Countries, including major groups and stakeholders, make increasing use of the scientific and technical knowledge and tools needed to implement sound waste management and the related multilateral environmental agreements." The relevant POW sections is UNEP PoW 5B4 "Support to implementation of the chemicals and waste MEAs."

Sub-rating for Alignment with MTS and POW – Highly Satisfactory (HS)

5.1.2 Alignment to UNEP / GEF Strategic policies

85. As UNEP is an important actor in the UN system for activities related to the sound management of chemicals, the Project is well aligned with UNEP strategy to provide technical support to the Parties of the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants via UNEP Chemicals.

86. The Project is well aligned with UNEP's Bali Strategic Plan for Technology Support and Capacity building and amongst others foresees to implement Project activities via South-South cooperation.¹⁷ The Bali Strategic Plan for Technology Support and Capacity Building is an inter-governmentally agreed framework for strengthening the capacity of governments in developing countries and countries with economies in transition to consistently address their needs, priorities and obligations in the field of the environment. The project fits well within the Bali Strategic Plan's thematic areas (vii) Chemicals, (viii) Waste management, (x) Health and environment, and cross-cutting areas (ix) Access to scientific and technological information, (x) Facilitating access to and support for environmentally sound technologies and corresponding know-how, and (xi) Education and awareness raising. The above-mentioned South-South Cooperation is a cross-cutting mechanism intended to enhance UNEP's ability to deliver environmental capacity building and technology-support activities in developing countries and regions of the South. The implementation of the South-South

¹⁷ <http://62.160.8.20/bsp/staticpages/mandate.aspx>

Cooperation initiative is carried out as part of the Bali Strategic Plan for Technology Support and Capacity Building.

87. The goal of the GEF through its chemicals program is to promote the sound management of chemicals throughout their life cycle in ways that lead to the minimization of significant adverse effects on human health and the global environment. The Project adheres closely to the GEF Focal Area Strategy of GEF 5 - CHEM 1 Phase out POPs and reduce POPs releases, CHEM 3 Pilot sound chemicals management and mercury reduction and CHEM-4: POPs enabling activities in support of the development and update of National Implementation Plans for the Stockholm Convention.

88. The GEF's POPs focal area of GEF 5 described the goal as to protect human health and the environment by assisting countries to reduce and eliminate production, use, and releases of POPs, and consequently contribute generally to capacity development for the sound management of chemicals. This goal was programmed to be met through:

- a) Phasing out of production and use of controlled POPs chemicals;
- b) Environmentally sound use of exempted POPs chemicals;
- c) Reduction of POPs releases to the environment;
- d) Prevention, management and disposal of POPs waste and environmentally sound management of POPs contaminated sites; and
- e) Country capacity building to effectively phase out and reduce releases of POPs.

Sub-rating for Alignment to UNEP / GEF Strategic policies – Highly Satisfactory (HS)

5.1.3 Relevance to regional, sub-regional and national environmental priorities

89. All countries are signatories to the Stockholm Convention and mentioned efficient ways to improve compliance with their reporting obligations to the convention in their National Implementation Plans (NIP) and other national strategic documents as a priority.

90. Each Project country has also developed a national PRTR proposal, outlining national plans and budget for PRTR development. The national proposals especially highlight the participating countries' commitment to developing and implementing national PRTRs.

91. Belarus, Kazakhstan and Moldova have ratified the UNECE Aarhus Convention on Access to Information, Public Participation in Decision-making and Access to Justice in Environmental Matters. At design all participating countries had shown efforts under own initiatives towards ratification of the UNECE PRTR Protocol.

92. Participating countries' UNDAF (The United Nations Development Assistance Framework) ¹⁸ include waste management, sustainable development, cleaner production, cooperation under MEA's.

93. Most of the respondents to the evaluation survey rated the Project initiative as highly relevant for their country and concluded that the Project was highly satisfactory in its

¹⁸ <https://unsdg.un.org/resources/united-nations-development-assistance-framework-guidance>

alignment with other national and international initiatives for sound management of POPs and other hazardous chemicals

Sub-rating Relevance to regional, sub-regional and national environmental priorities – Highly Satisfactory (HS)

5.1.4 Complementarity with existing Interventions

94. As shown by the large number of international organizations who prioritize PRTR development in the involved Project countries listed in the Project document and in reports on implementation, the Project was well designed to avoid a duplication of efforts, create synergies and be complementary with existing interventions.

Sub-rating Complementary with existing interventions – Highly Satisfactory (HS)

Rating Strategic Relevance – Highly Satisfactory (HS)

5.2 Review of project design

95. Overall, the Project is well elaborated. The Project has a comprehensive, coherent results framework that contributes towards the Project objective in both content and processes. The outputs and outcomes are clearly defined and interconnected. The 5 outcomes within the framework are supported by 14 outputs, that in turn rely on the completion of 13 activities, although one could argue that the description of the activities in the Project document is rather short.¹⁹ Component 1 is focusing on the strengthening of baseline documents and the required relevant legal national frameworks. Component 2 is focusing on the need to build capacity to implement PRTRs as a national SC reporting system and involves a series of trainings and a SC reporting pilot. Component 3 is reserved for standardization and a Project effort to develop PRTRs according to common parameters and standards that will allow for comparison. Component 4 highlights the importance of involving civil society and public access to environmental information via the development and implementation of national strategies in this field. Finally, Component 5 looks back on the lessons learned from the Project, dissemination of Project results and sharing of experience in global workshops and meetings. The Project design shows the following strengths and weaknesses:

A. Strengths

- The Project is well embedded in national and international initiatives on both the Stockholm and Aarhus Convention;
- The Project is well designed in view of sustainability and the intent to upscale and replicate Project results. The Project intervention clearly foresees ways to make the Project results available for national and global audiences via national meetings, CoPs

¹⁹ The results framework provides a separate column that makes detailed reference to the relevant UNEP MTS and POW for the Project objective, outputs and outcomes.

and meetings organized in the framework of both the Stockholm and the Aarhus Convention;

- As the SC requires from parties to report regularly on POPs management and parties have indicated that they have encountered difficulties in gathering and centralizing this information at the national level, this Project is highly relevant;
- The Project takes participating countries needs for capacity building clearly into account and aims to develop the existing capacities further via south-south cooperation and shared learning strategies;
- The Project document clearly describes the key stakeholders and their roles and responsibilities in the Project.

B. Weaknesses

- Although the component description gives an overview of what the Project plans to do, the planned activities are described rather briefly;
- A description of a stakeholder consultation during the Project design is not provided;
- Under-represented / marginalized groups and gender aspects of the Project are not mentioned in the Project document;
- The Project document gives a detailed description of the different roles that the stakeholders will play in the Project. There is, however, no stakeholder analysis that describes the interest in the Project and the power of decision making of the different stakeholders. The analysis could have enabled targeted adaptive Project management to take specific aspects of stakeholder interest and power of decision making into account;
- The Project document does not plan any activities involving national decision makers to advocate the importance for acceptance of PRTRs and required legislation at the national level (institutionalization).

96. The quality of the overall Project design is assessed following the Evaluation Office of UNEP's template 'Assessment of the project design quality' that is attached to this report as Annex 2. The quality of the Project design is rated as Highly Satisfactory.

Rating Quality of Project design – Highly Satisfactory (HS)

5.3 Nature of External Context

97. The nature of the external context is rated as favourable to the Project. During the implementation period of the Project no serious political unrest occurred in the participating Project countries. It should be noted, however, that frequent personnel changes in the Ministries of Environment of the Project countries caused delays in the negotiations about the country agreements with UNITAR and in Project implementation, especially in Ecuador. The PIR reports note that there were frequent personnel changes (including the environmental ministers) in 2016 in Moldova, Ecuador and Peru. Belarus changed the director of the national institution in charge of the project implementation The Republic Scientific and Research Unitary Enterprise "Ecology" (RSE BRC Ecology) In 2017. The external risk in the Project context for Political stability was rated as a medium risk. During Project implementation there were no severe weather events or other natural disasters in any of the Project countries.

Rating for Nature of External Context – Favourable (F)

5.4 Effectiveness

5.4.1 Delivery of outputs

98. Project activities were well-structured around the UNITAR/ IOMC Guidance Series for Implementing a National PRTR design Project, developed in 1997. The series includes a core guidance document 'Implementing a National PRTR Design Project', and four detailed supplements:

- Preparing a national PRTR infrastructure assessment;
- Designing key features of a national PRTR system;
- Implementing a PRTR reporting trial; and
- Structuring a national PRTR proposal.

In 1998 three additional supporting documents were added to the UNITAR guidance series:

- Addressing industry concerns related to PRTRs
- Guidance for facilities on PRTR data estimation and reporting and
- Guidance on estimating non-point source emissions

99. UNITAR's approach has been successfully used internationally in e.g. Cuba, Argentina, Egypt, the Czech Republic, the Slovak Republic and South Africa. The approach was also used in 2009 – 2012, during the implementation of PRTR Phase I project *POPs monitoring, reporting and information dissemination using Pollutant Release and Transfer Registers* in the partnering countries Chile, Cambodia, Ecuador, Kazakhstan, Peru and Ukraine. The core document and the 4 supplements are available in English, Spanish and Russian at <http://prtr.unitar.org/site/document/1219>

As part of this PRTR Phase II Project, UNITAR carried out an extensive update and restructuring of its PRTR guidance series that includes a set of 5 video trainings available at <https://prtr.unitar.org/site/prtr-learn> (See also *Output 2.1. Standard training modules and materials are developed to be used by any interested country on key topics*)

100. According to progress reports and information provided by the UNEP Task manager, the UNITAR Project Coordinator and the Country Coordinators interviewed, the Project has successfully delivered the activities and outputs planned in the Project document.

Component 1: Project baseline strengthened and national needs identified

101. The TOC developed at evaluation defined the following outputs for Component 1:

- **Output 1.1** Basic existing materials on PRTRs are revised and made available for national consideration
- **Output 1.2** National PRTR executive proposals updated guide PRTR implementation
- **Output 1.3** Draft PRTR regulation is developed and considered for national adoption

Output 1.1 Basic existing materials on PRTRs are revised and made available for national consideration

102. As preparation for this output and to start up the Project at the national level, National PRTR coordinators were officially nominated and Project inception workshops were organized in the different Project countries. (In Belarus on 17-08-2017, in Cambodia on 20-07-2016, in Ecuador on 08-05-2018, in Kazakhstan on 26-01-2017, in Moldova on 16-02-2016 and in Peru on 15-02-2017.) During the inception meetings the project was presented to the national stakeholders and discussions were held on the PRTR baseline situation and the materials developed up till that time, the objectives and scope of national PRTRs, and work plans. The National Coordination Team (NCT) and the National Steering Committee (NSC) were officially elected and endorsed.

Output 1.2 National PRTR executive proposals updated to guide PRTR implementation

103. In line with the documentation provided in the Project's Final Report and the evaluation interviews, all countries have developed and or updated detailed National PRTR executive proposals to guide the national PRTR implementation. In Ecuador the process of developing the national PRTR Executive Proposal was delayed and the country finalized that report based on an extension agreement in May 2020. In a standardized way the National executive proposals followed the UNITAR guidelines on how to structure such documents.

Output 1.3 Draft PRTR regulation is developed and considered for national adoption

104. In Belarus, Cambodia, Ecuador and Peru PRTRs operated through voluntary cooperative agreements among governmental institutions to share data on pollutant releases and transfers. In the framework of the Project draft PRTR regulations were developed in support of PRTR implementation in these countries awaiting official adoption and institutionalization.

105. In **Belarus** draft legislation was developed in support of national PRTR implementation including the required amendments for the current Law on Environmental Protection. Unfortunately, further work needs to be carried out with governmental decision makers in support of positive decisions on PRTR implementation.

106. Within the framework of the Project, **Cambodia** drafted the national *Sub-Decree on Management of Pollutant Release and Transfer Register System* in 2017. Currently the country is in the process of updating its national environmental codex and it was decided to include the developed PRTR legislation into the new codex. Official implementation Cambodia's PRTR can only start after the adoption of the new environmental codex, that is expected to take place towards the end of 2021.

107. In **Ecuador** in January 2020 a technical justification report was developed in support of a Ministerial Agreement for the development of a PRTR in Ecuador.

108. In **Peru** draft legislation with provisions on PRTR implementation was developed for inclusion in the draft General Law for the Management of Chemical Substances, which is (as at the beginning of 2021) in the final stage of formulation. Unfortunately, final adoption of the

developed legal instruments is still pending. Further work needs to be carried out with the frequently changing, political decision makers in support of PRTR implementation.

109. On 23 December 2013, the Republic of **Moldova** became the thirty-third Party to ratify the Protocol on Pollutant Release and Transfer Registers (Kyiv Protocol) to the Convention on Access to Information, Public Participation in Decision-making and Access to Justice in Environmental Matters (Aarhus Convention). The law adopted earlier in 2013, i.e. Law no. 99 of April 26, 2013 on the *Ratification of the Protocol on Pollutant Release and Transfer Registers to the Aarhus Convention*, ruled that The Ministry of Agriculture, Regional Development and Environment should ensure the PRTR implementation. Based on the ratification, Moldova entered the Project in 2015 with the official decision already taken to implement a national PRTR in the country. Later, by *Government Decision 373 on PRTR establishment* on April 24 it was decided that the Office of Environmental Pollution Prevention would be tasked to support the development and management of the PRTR reporting and information system from sources provided by donors. Since the adoption of the *Government Decision 373* reporting through the national PRTR became mandatory and at the time of writing between 200 and 300 facilities are reporting emissions into the PRTR based on available estimation calculations. There are no reporting thresholds and all economic operators with more than 10 employees must report through the PRTR reporting system. It is expected to take some time until full compliance with the reporting obligation of all Moldovan economic operators can be reached. Certain substances prohibited by regulations under the Montreal Convention, UNECE Convention on Long-range Transboundary Air Pollution (LRTAP), and Stockholm Convention were excluded from the mandatory reporting because of the prohibition of these substances in Moldova. Starting from January 2023 reporting on around 100 chemical substances including POPs, LRTAP substances, Montreal Protocol substances, mercury and GHGs will become mandatory.²⁰

110. The Environmental Code of **Kazakhstan** was amended in 2016 to oblige enterprises to provide information to the National PRTR (Article 160 of the Kazakh Environmental Code). In parallel, a domestic procedure for the ratification of the PRTR Protocol was conducted. The President of the Kazakhstan officially signed the Law on Ratification of the PRTR Protocol on 12 December 2019. On 27 January 2020, Kazakhstan officially acceded to the UNECE Protocol on PRTRs of the Convention on Access to Information, Public Participation in Decision-making and Access to Justice in Environmental Matters (Aarhus Convention). With this accession Kazakhstan is the thirty-seventh Party that signed the Protocol. Kazakhstan is the first country in Central Asia to accede to the PRTR Protocol. In addition, the drafting of a new version of the National Environmental Codex started that takes into account the basic requirements for the implementation of the country's obligations under the PRTR Protocol. The Codex was officially adopted on 2 January 2021 and will enter into force on 1 July 2021 after the necessary update of all bylaws and regulations. In practice this means that today Kazakh industries are reporting on paper to the 17 environmental authorities of the country at regional (oblast) level. After the new Environmental Codex will enter into force on 1 July 2021, single window reporting to the national PRTR will become obligatory. It is planned that the Kazakh PRTR system then will also be used for the collection of data relevant for the

²⁰ As confirmed in the evaluation interviews with national Project counterparts from Moldova.

reporting to MEA's as the Stockholm Convention, the Minamata Convention and the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change.²¹

Component 2: Build capacity to implement PRTRs as a National POPs reporting system

111. The TOC developed at evaluation defined the following outputs for Component 2:

Output 2.1 Standard training modules and materials are developed to be used by any interested country on key topics

Output 2.2 Sector specific training programmes are developed and properly documented

Output 2.3 National estimation techniques are developed and available

Output 2.4 POPs reporting documents are developed by using PRTRs through pilots

Output 2.1 Standard training modules and materials are developed to be used by any interested country on key topics

112. As mentioned above, Project activities were well-structured around the UNITAR/ IOMC Guidance Series for Implementing a National PRTR design project. During Project implementation UNITAR updated and restructured the guidance series. Based on priorities of participating countries 5 training videos were published on PRTR section of UNITAR's website <https://prtr.unitar.org/site/prtr-learn> between January and June 2018. The content of each video is also reflected in a separate downloadable report at the *PRTR Learn* section of the website. The videos and reports are well made, instructive and easy to understand. Subtitles are available in Spanish and Russian. The restructured guidance series include the following 5 modules including a pdf report for reference:

- Module 1 - Communication & Dissemination of Data
- Module 2 - Legal Implementation
- Module 3 - Release Estimation Techniques
- Module 4 - Data Standardisation
- Module 5 - Online Reporting Systems

113. As organizations UNECE, OECD, European Commission, European Environmental Agency and UNEP have also developed valuable guidance documents, the Project developed the report *Collection of International Guidance Materials* on PRTR in support of the PRTR development in Project countries. As a result of the Projects implementation the following more detailed reports on separate issues were published in 2020:

- Designing the Key Features of a National Pollutant Release and Transfer Register System
- Implementing a Pollutant Release a Transfer Register Pilot Reporting
- Structuring a National PRTR Proposal
- Addressing Industry Concerns Related to Pollutant Release and Transfer Registers

²¹ As confirmed in the evaluation interviews with national Project counterparts from Kazakhstan.

- Guidance on PRTR Data Estimation and Reporting
- Guidance on Estimating Non-Point Source Emissions

Output 2.2 Sector specific training programmes are developed and properly documented

114. As confirmed in the Final Report and evaluation interviews, sector-specific training programmes were prepared in all 6 project countries. Training workshops were carried out for government, industry, NGOs, civil society and the media. The training programmes and workshop reports show that the countries prepared well for the activities and implemented training workshops of good quality.

115. Unfortunately, not all workshop reports provide participants lists with statistical information disaggregated by gender and stakeholder type. There was also no standardised information on participants' evaluation and appreciation of the training provided. As a result, this evaluation cannot provide a statistical overview on the total number of people trained on the different PRTR subjects, their background in terms of stakeholder type and gender and their appreciation of the provided training. A standardized reporting template provided at the start of a project that provides all relevant aspects of project execution to report on, including the above-mentioned quantitative information would have been a good way to produce this important data and include the relevant information in the final reporting.

116. The following information on the Project's training activities was available²²:

117. **Belarus** trained a total of 120 people in 3 sessions on different aspects of PRTR reporting that included:

- National training workshop on the development of a national PRTRs for NGOs and mass media representatives (07-09-2018, 31 participants)
- National training workshop on the development of a national PRTR for representatives of the government and the business sector (23-10-2018, 53 participants)
- National training workshop on the development of a national strategy for public access to environmental information (18-12-2018, 36 participants)

(The Belarus National Coordination team reports an estimated 64% of female participants in the Project trainings, ranging in the different workshops from 48% to 77%.)

118. **Cambodia** trained a total of 92 people in 3 training sessions on different aspects of PRTR reporting that included:

- Training of trainers on Estimation techniques for industrial sector and other sectors related to release and transfer of POPs (17/19-1002017, 14 participants),

²² Please note, as the numbers are not reported on in a standardized way and it is not agreed on beforehand whom to count when you organize a Training of Trainers or how to count participants that attend several trainings, the total number of people trained mentioned cannot be fully relied on.

- Training nr 1 on PRTR reporting and estimation techniques (25-05-2018, 34 participants)
- Training nr 2 on PRTR reporting and estimation techniques (02-11-2018, 44 participants)

(The Cambodia National Coordination team reports that based on estimations more than 50% of the participants were female)

119. **Ecuador** trained a total of 485 people in 21 training sessions on different aspects of PRTR reporting, including:

- 12 internal technical training sessions on PRTR design and reporting at the Ministry of the Environment (Dates not specified)
- 9 training sessions on PRTR and estimation techniques and Public Access to PRTR Data and Participation in PRTR Implementation (Dates not specified)

120. **Kazakhstan** trained a total of 213 people in 4 training sessions on different aspects of PRTR reporting that included:

- Training session nr 1 on International PRTR Experience (26-10-2017)
- (34 Participants, 21% NGO, 23% Government, 56 % Industry sector. 26 % of the participants was female, 74 % male)
- Training session nr 2 on International PRTR Experience (30-10-2017)
- (74 Participants, 27% NGO, 27% Government, 33% Industry sector, 8% International Organizations, 5% Environmental consultants. 17 % of the participants was female, 83 % male)
- Training session nr 3 on International PRTR Experience (02-11-2017)
- (46 Participants, 20% NGO, 49% Government, 31% Industry sector. 69 % of the participants was female, 31 % male)
- Training session on Emission of Pollutants and Mercury and PRTR reporting (11-04-2018)
- (59 Participants, 20% NGO, 49% Government, 31% Industry sector. 83 % of the participants was female, 17 % male)

121. **Moldova** trained a total of 422 people in 18 training sessions on different aspects of PRTR reporting that included:

- 1 Training workshop on launching the series of training events on presentation and application of methodologies for determination of releases of pollutants to air and water for the Environmental Inspectorate at district level (01-12-2017, 41 Participants)
- 2 Training workshops on Application of calculation methodologies for the energy sector (29-11-2017 and 18-05-2018, 47 Participants in total)
- 5 Training workshops on Application of calculation methodologies for the waste and wastewater management sector (05,06,08-12-2017 and 24-05-2018, 130 Participants in total)

- 2 Training workshops on Application of calculation methodologies for the mineral and extraction sector (19-12-2017 and 22-05-2018, 48 Participants in total)
- 2 Training workshops on Application of calculation methodologies for the chemical sector and other activities sector (22-12-2017 and 23-05-2018, 23 Participants in total)
- 2 Training workshops on Application of calculation methodologies for the metallurgical sector (31-01-2018 and 18-05-2018, 31 Participants in total)
- 2 Training workshops on Application of calculation methodologies for the sector 8 – slaughterhouses / meat processing and milk processing (23-01-2017 and 07-06-2018, 42 Participants in total)
- 2 Training workshops on Application of calculation methodologies for the sector 8 – grain elevators/bakery/oil production and beverage (25-01-2017 and 07-06-2018, 60 Participants in total)

122. **Peru** trained a total of 253 people in 7 training sessions on different aspects of PRTR reporting that included:

- 3 regional training workshops on PRTR reporting for industry representatives (105 Participants, 30% of the participants was female, 70% male)
- 1 Training workshop on Emission calculation and PRTR reporting for industry occupational health and environmental specialists (44 Participants, no gender data provided)
- 3 regional training workshops on Emission calculation and PRTR reporting for representatives from chemical, food, textile and paper producing industries and for representatives from the agriculture sector. (104 Participants, 48% of the participants was female, 52% male)

Output 2.3 National estimation techniques are developed and available

123. As reported in the Final Report and confirmed in the evaluation interviews, National guidelines on estimation techniques were developed in collaboration with international experts from Japan, Chile and Mexico. Emission calculation was an important subject during the training and capacity building activities in Project countries. (*See also: Output 2.2 Sector specific training programmes are developed and properly documented*). The evaluation has not received reports that further document the development of national estimation techniques.

Output 2.4 POPs reporting documents are developed by using PRTRs through pilots

124. According to the Final Project Report, all countries conducted online PRTR reporting pilots in cooperation with a selection of national industrial companies. As described in the output reports, the pilot experience was viewed by participants as valuable experience in support of future PRTR implementation. It was noted, however, that national adoption of PRTR regulation and mandatory reporting was considered a key requirement to create a level playing field for national industries. The national reports attached to the Final Project Report describe preparation for and organization of the pilot trials, the designed PRTR web

infrastructure, selected substances and participating industries, rather than the actual experience with reporting to the Stockholm Convention. Many of the trials were carried out on a voluntary basis with a limited number of participating industrial companies and there is not much experience reported on data collection to be used for POPs reporting. In Peru for instance, no POPs were reported during the pilot trial. Also, Peruvian stakeholders stated that the pilot trial in the country needed to be scaled up to gain more practical experience. Full integration of national PRTR reporting and national reporting to the Stockholm Convention is expected to need further adaptations and Project countries are planning to use PRTR data for future POPs reporting. In this respect an important observation was made in the Belarus report which concluded that *“the Stockholm Convention has developed a strict procedure both in terms of the format of data presentation and the periodicity of reporting, but not yet spelled out mechanisms for directly using the PRTR information to generate SC reports.”* In countries with voluntary reporting agreements the POPs data collected in the PRTR will only be one of the sources for national POPs reporting. Belarus planned to use the data aggregated by the pilot trial for the Stockholm Convention fifth reporting cycle and add that to other sources of information on POPs in Belarus, not reported in the pilot trial.²³ Also, in Ecuador key actors from the industrial sector reported on POPs and the data collected during the pilot trial are planned to be used as one of the sources for the fifth reporting cycle of the Stockholm Convention.

125. As some substances were already forbidden in the country for a long time, Moldova excluded a number of Stockholm Convention substances including e.g. Aldrin, Dieldrin, DDT and PCB from mandatory reporting. Moldova’s national reporting to the Stockholm Convention has been delayed by its NIP reporting.²⁴ As a result, there is no actual experience in POPs reporting using the national PRTR. In future reporting to the Stockholm Convention, it is expected that the PRTR will be used for collection of data on the biggest point sources and diffuse sources releasing POPs. Additional possible data from e.g. existing or not yet detected stockpiles containing forbidden POPs, will have to be added to the SC reporting from other data collection sources. Full integration of the Stockholm Convention electronic reporting system with the Moldovan PRTR is also a task to be realized in the future.

126. In hindsight, it can be argued that data collection through national PRTRs in support of POPs reporting to the Stockholm Convention will be easier to realize when a national PRTR is officially implemented. However, if countries are collecting parts of the required information on POPs or other MEAs substances through national PRTRs, this should already be regarded as an important achievement. (See also *Output 1.3 Draft PRTR regulation is developed and considered for national adoption* and *Output 3.2 Developed PRTR implementation guidance facilitates inclusion of POPs into the PRTR system*)

Component 3: Standardization and comparison of PRTR data

127. The TOC developed at evaluation defined the following outputs for Component 3:

Output 3.1 Reports and studies on standardization of PRTRs are available for countries’ use

²³ <http://chm.pops.int/Countries/Reporting/NationalReports/tabid/3668/Default.aspx>

²⁴ The last NIP is from 2004 and the last national report from 2010.

Output 3.2 Developed PRTR implementation guidance facilitates inclusion of POPs into the PRTR system

Output 3.3 Comparison of PRTR data facilitates quality data and improve PRTR reporting

Output 3.1 Reports and studies on standardization of PRTRs are available for countries' use

128. As mentioned above, the module on Data Standardization (Module 4) was prioritized as a key subject by participating countries and made available by the Project from UNITARs PRTR learn webpage as an online training and downloadable reference report at: <https://prtr.unitar.org/site/prtr-learn> (See also *Output 2.1 Standard training modules and materials are developed to be used by any interested country on key topics*)

Output 3.2 Developed PRTR implementation guidance facilitates inclusion of POPs into the PRTR system

129. To provide participating countries guidance on the use of PRTR data collection for POPs reporting to the Stockholm Convention the Project developed new guidance material. As next to POPs, GHGs and mercury are included in the list of pollutants to be reported under the PRTR Protocol, UNITAR decided to develop an extended report: *Pollutant Release and Transfer Registers (PRTRs) as tools to improve national reporting under Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEAs)*. The report provides an overview of the data requirements under the Basel, Stockholm and Minamata conventions and the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and recommendations for potential use of PRTRs in reporting to the different conventions. Regarding the requirements of the PRTR Protocol the study highlights that: The Protocol covers 86 pollutants including 14 POPs, 6 GHGs under the UNFCCC, and Mercury and Mercury compounds under the Minamata Convention. Parties are required to highlight these substances as releases to air, water and land. However, there are no requirements to report data on stockpiles, data that are of interest for reporting to the Stockholm Convention. Requirements for reporting from the EU E-PRTR, recommendations on how to design a national PRTR from OECD and international examples of existing PRTRs slightly differ from the PRTR Protocol. The study concludes that: *"The Basel, Stockholm and Minamata Conventions, as well as the UNFCCC, already provide important guidelines on release estimation techniques and inventorying methods for chemicals included in their lists [especially for unintentional releases]. These techniques can be followed when reporting to national PRTRs."* To report on amounts of chemicals used, imported and exported and the amounts of chemicals stored in stockpiles, *"reporting requirements would need to be adapted."* Unfortunately, practical instructions on the best practices for data collection in support of POPs reporting are missing. (See also *observations on PRTR SC reporting under Output 1.3 Draft PRTR regulation is developed and considered for national adoption and Output 2.4 POPs reporting documents are developed by using PRTRs through pilots.*)

Output 3.3 Comparison of PRTR data facilitates quality data and improves PRTR reporting

130. In line with the Final Report and confirmed in the evaluation interviews, the data collected through voluntary (mandatory in the case of Moldova) disclosure of industrial facilities has been reported and made available through the following public websites:

- Belarus: <http://www.prtr.ecoinfo.by>
- Peru: <https://retc.minam.gob.pe/>

- Moldova: <https://retp.gov.md>
- Kazakhstan: <https://prtr.kz>
- Cambodia: <http://www.prtrcambodiamoe.gov.kh/>
- Ecuador: <http://qa-suiaint.ambiente.gob.ec>

131. Unfortunately, the relevant PRTR websites of Belarus, Ecuador and Kazakhstan could not be reached during the evaluation. It was understood that unexpected webhosting costs in Belarus made it impossible to maintain the site after the end of the Project, Ecuador is planning to integrate their PRTR website with the official website of Ecuadorian Ministry of Environment: <http://suia.ambiente.gob.ec> and Kazakhstan is temporally not able to provide access to its PRTR website as the government did not allocate a budget for maintenance of the site in 2021. The site will, reportedly, be online again after the new Kazakh Environmental Codex is adopted.

Component 4: Access to PRTR data and public information

132. The TOC developed at evaluation defined the following outputs for Component 4:

Output 4.1 National strategies developed enable public access to PRTR data and a more active participation in PRTR implementation

Output 4.2 PRTR information is accessed by civil society and other sectors

Output 4.1 National strategies developed enable public access to PRTR data and a more active participation in PRTR implementation

133. In line with the Final Report and confirmed through the evaluation interviews, participating countries developed national strategies aimed to enable public access to PRTR data, well aligned with the principles of the Aarhus Convention and the individual countries their national development plans. Countries outlined in what way different stakeholders in their societies would benefit from increased access to information and public participation in environmental decision making. The strategies included different forms of action planning to raise awareness among the different stakeholders in society through a series of awareness raising activities including the public accessible national PRTRs, public meetings, printed publications in newspapers and specialized media, websites, radio & TV programmes and social media actions. Some of the strategies included a work plan, an available budget, and indicators of achievement for the strategy implementation. Unfortunately, not all strategies were structured in the same way and did not contain the same strategy components. Overall, the strategies gave the impression of being developed in an ad hoc manner, lacking an overarching analysis of what specific type of strategy is needed to enable public access to PRTR data and active participation in PRTR implementation.

134. In hindsight, one could argue that it would have been more efficient if all countries had developed their strategies following one standardized approach. Such an approach should be based on the analysis of international experience with public participation and awareness raising in the framework of PRTR reporting and implementation of the Aarhus Convention.

Experience with the national strategy development could then have been used for the further development of the UNITAR PRTR guidance series.

Output 4.2 PRTR information is accessed by civil society and other sectors

135. Reports on how the above-mentioned strategies were implemented describe a broad variety of implemented activities:

136. **Belarus** made the development of the National Strategy for Public Access to Environmental Information and PRTR Development the centre of the implementation of its stakeholder involvement and awareness raising activities implemented in the framework of the Project. The National Project Coordination Team invited 37 representatives of NGOs and public organizations to take part in a workshop on 28 December 2017 for the development and endorsement of that strategy. In preparation of the strategy work participants were trained in the principles of PRTR reporting and public access to environmental information disclosed via the PRTR. The developed strategy was presented to the government for inclusion in amendments of the current Law on Environmental Protection.

137. **Cambodia** promoted access to environmental information through a series of publications on relevant websites and social media. Governmental representatives from the National Project Coordination Team gave interviews in a series of TV shows and radio programmes. The National Project Coordination Team invited 376 representatives of Academia, NGOs and social organizations to take part in a workshop on 23 January 2019 to educate and instruct them on the principles of public access to environmental information through a national PRTR. In addition, a national workshop was organized on 14 December 2018 for company owners to make them aware of the expected efficiency gains in national reporting obligations after the adoption of national regulation that would make PRTR reporting mandatory.

138. **Ecuador** concentrated its activities to promote access to environmental information on a series of workshops for relevant stakeholders from industry, government and NGOs on a series of 4 public meetings throughout the country early December 2019, in which 70 people took part. In addition, public access to environmental information was promoted in cooperation with industrial companies Facebook and Twitter messages were posted about their involvement with the Project.

139. In **Kazakhstan**, the strategy was developed and implemented by the training institute Cooperation for Sustainable Development of the Republic of Kazakhstan. To highlight the activities of the project the institute prepared a series of press releases, published news articles on official governmental websites, in newspapers and social media and developed information brochures. In addition to the capacity building trainings mentioned under Output 2.2, a series of workshops were organized with representatives of NGOs and educational institutes to inform them about access to environmental information via the Kazakh PRTR in the first half year of 2018, in which 196 people participated.

140. In **Moldova**, immediately from its start, the Project was widely highlighted at the official website of the Ministry of Agriculture, Regional Development and Environment and on a series of news sites. Brochures and further educational materials were developed. In addition to the two training cycles mentioned under *Output 2.2*, a third cycle of trainings was given at

district level in the second half of 2018. The training cycle focused on methodologies for calculation of releases and on online reporting into the PRTR system and targeted a broad selection of stakeholders including NGOs.²⁵

141. On the issue of access to information via the national PRTR, frontrunner Moldova unfortunately missed an important chance to increase public knowledge on environmental issues. The Ministry of Environment has not yet published any consolidated summary report for 2018-2019 on the Moldovan PRTR and therefore NGOs and other relevant stakeholders cannot yet access recent pollution data. There is also no data available on diffuse emissions available.

142. In **Peru**, the start of the Project was actively announced with information stands and presentations at national conferences and exhibitions. At targeted workshops in October and December 2018, 62 representatives of governmental agencies and 84 representatives of other relevant stakeholders were introduced to Aarhus Convention principles of public access to environmental information through the implementation of a national PRTR.

143. In all countries important, innovative and original awareness raising activities have been implemented to educate stakeholders on how national PRTR reporting systems can provide better access to environmental information and guarantee public participation in environmental decision making. However, a more standardized approach to implement the awareness raising and public participation activities supported by a standardized Project strategy approach and clear indicators of achievement to report on, would have enabled the Project management to better monitor and assess how successfully the Project activities were implemented. With the actual variation of reporting arrangements and lack of clear indicators, it was not possible to determine how successfully PRTR information was accessed by civil society and other sectors in participating Project countries.

Component 5: Lessons learned and replication

144. The TOC developed at evaluation defined the following output for Component 5:

Output 5.1 Final lessons learned report including regional recommendations will enable sound replication of PRTRs in countries

145. Back-to-back with the third International Steering Committee Meeting a final Lessons Learned workshop was organized in on 25 – 27 March 2019, in Siem Reap, Cambodia. The lessons learned, best practices and recommendations from the Project were reported following the thematical Project topics of:

- Legal PRTR framework
- National PRTR Proposal
- National Guidelines and Trainings
- Pilot Testing
- PRTR and MEAs
- Reporting, Project Administration
- Coordinating Mechanisms
- Sustainability

²⁵ The total number of participants was not reported.

- Awareness Raising Activities

146. Important conclusions from the lessons learned workshop included amongst others the following important points:

147. **Legal PRTR Framework** - Project partners highlighted their experience that ratification of the PRTR Protocol enables a faster and easier implementation of a national law on PRTR. Political commitment in support of PRTR implementation was seen as a key requirement for success. It was recommended that the PRTR legislation clearly specifies that it should be mandatory and in line with all international requirements and that it should integrate all existing reporting into a single window reporting system, with a yearly submission deadline.

148. **National PRTR Proposal** - The systematic National proposals approach for PRTR development was regarded as a useful tool by Project partners. It was recommended an executive summary of National PRTR Proposals be used when in communication with decision makers, for whom the full proposal documents might include too many details.

149. **National Guidelines and Trainings** - Project partners reported that the prospect of PRTR becoming obligatory in the long-term considerably strengthened the interest and commitment of industry representatives to improve their experience in applying the national guidelines for reporting. Interactive training forums and the involvement of experts from e.g. the national statistical bureau and environmental inspection agency were recommended by Project partners to secure the quality of the data used in the training. Another important recommendation for the development of National Guidelines was to include requirements across international conventions, to enable efficient future reporting.

150. **Pilot Testing** - The availability of well-organized support to reporting facilities (especially for small- and medium-sized businesses) was seen by Project partners as an important requirement for the test to succeed. The provision of calculation sheets and Release Estimation Techniques in advance of the trainings for the trainees was recommended. To properly prepare themselves. To enhance regional cooperation, the use of the same emission factors as neighbouring countries was recommended, when available.

151. **Awareness Raising Activities** - Project partners reported in the lessons learned report strong public interest in the subject of PRTR during the implementation of the training programme, especially from participants from industrial areas and the most polluted districts of cities²⁶. Effective cooperation in the awareness raising activities was achieved with OSCE supported Aarhus Centres, that have an important role in the dissemination of knowledge on and experience with the Aarhus Convention. It was not an easy task to find suitable NGO-partners with knowledge on chemicals and environmental pollution in every country.

152. **PRTRs and MEAs Reporting** - As mentioned above under *Output 2.4 POPs reporting documents are developed by using PRTRs through pilots*, reporting requirements of the Stockholm Convention and other MEAs are not especially designed for inclusion in PRTRs. Project partners also highlighted this issue in the lessons learned report. The report does not

²⁶ The report did not specify which cities and polluted areas.

include clear recommendations on how to solve this issue and achieve the desired efficiency in PRTR data collection especially on POPs stockpiles.

153. Project Administration - In the experience of the Project partners the Project implementation and the institutional arrangements of the Project worked well. There was a constant communication between UNITAR, national coordinators and UNEP. Also, at the national level Project partners were satisfied with the effective functioning of the National Coordination Teams.

154. Coordination Mechanisms - Project partners recommended the official establishment of the National Steering Committees by Ministerial Decree and actively work with an Inter-ministerial Working Group on PRTR development.

155. Sustainability- Adoption of national PRTR legislation and allocation of a national budget to secure the required funds to sustain the national PRTR in the future are mentioned by Project partners as key requirements to guarantee the sustainability of national PRTR initiatives.

156. Project countries participated in a series of international meetings to share key lessons learned on PRTR development, improving access to information, and using PRTRs as POPs reporting tools. For an overview, please see Table 7. below

Table 6 Overview of international meetings in which Project partners participated

Fourth Compliance Committee under the PRTR Protocol, 27 - 29 April 2015 Geneva, Switzerland
UNECE Second sub-regional PRTR Capacity Workshop Belarus 19-21-september 2016, Minsk, Belarus
Mekong PRTR experience Cambodia, Thailand & Vietnam, 14-17 March 2017 - Phnom Penh, Cambodia
Sixth Compliance Committee under the PRTR Protocol, 14 - 15 September 2017, Budva, Montenegro
First Regional Workshop on Pollutant Release and Transfer Register - PRTR. (2-3 November 2017, Lima, Peru, in coordination with GIZ and UNITAR; Government delegations from Costa Rica, Ecuador, Peru, Argentina, Chile and Spain participated
PRTR Global Roundtable and OECD Working Group on PRTRs, 07-08 November 2018, Geneva Switzerland
Regional Workshop on Pollutant Release and Transfer Register (PRTR), (December 6, 2018, Lima) In coordination with the Government of Canada, government delegations from Canada, Brazil, Argentina, Dominican Republic, Colombia and Mexico participated
Seventh Compliance Committee under the PRTR Protocol, 01 - 02 April 2019, Geneva, Switzerland
Meeting of the Parties to the Protocol on Pollutant Release and Transfer Registers to the Convention on Access to Information, Public Participation in Decision-making and Access to Justice in Environmental Matters, 28-29 November 2019, Geneva, Switzerland. Belarus, Moldova and Kazakhstan attended and shared project experiences/updates
Eighth Compliance Committee under the PRTR Protocol, 30 - 31 March 2020, Geneva Switzerland

4th Meeting of the Working Party on Pollutant Release and Transfer Registers (PRTRs), 28-29 January 2021, virtual Zoom meeting, Peru presented experiences in PRTR development including work done under the project

Sub-rating Delivery of Outputs – Satisfactory (S)

5.4.2 Achievement of Direct outcomes and Project outcomes

157. The Project was evaluated against the Direct outcomes, Project outcomes assumptions and drivers in the reconstructed Theory of Change. The achievement of each outcome will be discussed below.

158. Project outcome 1: **National PRTR proposal guides the development of country specific PRTR legal instruments** has been fully achieved. As mentioned in *Section 6.4.1. Delivery of outputs*, all participating countries have developed detailed National PRTR Proposals following the UNITAR guidelines for PRTR development. The national proposals include e.g. a recommendation for the development of the required specific PRTR legal instruments. The necessary support from UNEP and UNITAR to develop the proposals and the national websites as a tool to share the proposals with relevant stakeholders for endorsement resulted in the achievement of Direct outcome 1: **Draft National Executive Proposals and Draft Legislation are available from national PRTR websites** followed by the achievement of Project outcome 1. Although for different reasons not all national websites were online when the evaluation was carried out, the evaluation interviews confirmed that all were accessible when the countries needed to share the national draft legislation. (See also *Section 5.4.1. Delivery of outputs, Output 3.3 Comparison of PRTR data facilitates quality data and improve PRTR reporting.*)

159. Interview respondents confirmed that indeed many of the assumptions mentioned in *Chapter 5 Theory of Change* were important for the achievement of Direct outcome 1 and Project outcome 1. Without active country ownership and commitment no national proposals and legal instruments would have been developed (A1) and the Project outcome would not have been achieved. The prospect to join the OECD was a strong motivation for the Peruvian and Ecuadorian governments to actively develop the national PRTR (implementation of a national PRTR is a requirement for becoming an OECD member) (A11).²⁷ For most of the other Project countries the ambition to join the OECD did not play a role. In the case of Moldova, however, a similar ambition to become a member of an international organization was important. Moldova signed on 27 June 2014 an Association Agreement with the EU and one of the requirements for being able to sign that agreement was the development of a PRTR or

²⁷ In the case of Peru, the seriousness of the PRTR endorsement in support of future adoption and implementation is demonstrated by a government decision of 12 October 2012 to create an official PRTR Working Group by Ministerial Resolution No. 274-2012-MINAM. Further proof of the fact that Peru is preparing for full implementation of its PRTR system can be found in the fact that today the Peruvian government is reportedly preparing for membership of the OECD. Having a fully functional PRTR is one of the requirements to become a member country of the organization. In the case of Ecuador, the ambition to become a member of OECD is a more recent development. The country has approached the OECD for the first time to express its interest in OECD membership.

E-PRTR, as the European PRTR is called.²⁸ For the development and endorsement of these National Proposals and country specific legal instruments it was important that NGOs were welcome to participate in the Project and did provide meaningful input (A5 and A7). The involvement of the industry with the development of the PRTR also reportedly proved to be important. Participating countries confirm that although not all industry sectors were equally enthusiastic about the initiative, in general they were willing to train and able to fully participate in the PRTRs (A2 and A7). All countries were willing to follow the standardized approach provided by UNITAR in the guidance documents (A4). Governmental commitment to sustain the PRTR is demonstrated by long term funding made available to the national PRTR in Kazakhstan and Moldova (A10), the two Project countries that signed the PRTR protocol. In the other Project countries, long-term funding is less certain. Especially in Peru, where it is reported that some politicians fear that official implementation of the national PRTR might hamper future economic development.

160. As far as the drivers are concerned, respondents confirmed the importance of many of the drivers mentioned in Chapter 5 above. The PRTR initiative including ratification of the PRTR Protocol was well underway in Moldova and Kazakhstan when the Project started. Early on in the Project positive project results could be shown (D1). Decision makers from the latter two countries and the decision makers from the countries that participated in the PRTR Phase I project (Cambodia, Ecuador, and Peru) were well informed about PRTRs (D3) and strong advocacy for the importance of the project by the IA and EA (D4) played a role to convince Moldovan and Kazakh decision makers of the importance to endorse PRTR technical and legal documents required for PRTR implementation. For the same PRTR Phase I countries, the positive example of Chile demonstrated the efficiency of PRTR implementation (D2). The other countries had less exchange of experiences with representatives of Chile. Robust and participatory mechanisms for capacity building and awareness raising (D7) were in place during the Project phase in which the National PRTR Proposals and Draft Legislation were developed. Unfortunately, in three of the Project countries (Belarus, Ecuador and Kazakhstan) the national PRTR portals are currently unavailable, and National PRTR proposals and country specific legislation are not publicly accessible. Although this is reported to be a temporary issue, the quality of the websites in terms of utility, accessibility and functionality was not ensured (D8).

161. To measure the achievement of Project objectives and outcomes, the Project's results framework provides indicators for the Project objective and more specifically detailed per Project outcome. The following Project outcome 1 indicator was provided in the Project's results framework:

162. *Project outcome 1 indicator: Technical proposals and legal draft legislation facilitates implementation of PRTRs.* To better reflect the phased change process from national proposals to the development of legal instruments, Project outcome 1 was changed under the TOC into: *National PRTR proposal guides the development of country specific PRTR legal instruments.* Subsequently, the Project outcome 1 indicator considered by this evaluation is: *Number of technical proposals used to facilitate the development of country specific PRTR legal instruments.* Achievement of the Project outcome 1 is confirmed by the fact that all 6

²⁸ <https://ec.europa.eu/trade/policy/countries-and-regions/countries/moldova/>

countries have developed their country specific PRTR legal instruments guided by the earlier developed National Proposals.

163. Project outcome 2: ***Capacity of collecting and using accurate environmental PRTR data increased significantly in each country, resulting in increased public knowledge of environmental issues and in using PRTRs as a basis for the development of SC national reports*** has been achieved according to the Final Project Report and the evaluation interviews with country stakeholders. The evaluation has found, however, that the achievement is incomplete for the moment. As mentioned above in *Section 5.4.1. Delivery of outputs, Output 2.4 POPs reporting documents are developed by using PRTRs through pilots*, the actual use of POPs data collected through the national PRTRs in Stockholm Convention reporting is still limited and needs to be further developed. The combined outputs related to Project outcome 2 were developed to build the national capacities for operating PRTR reporting and monitoring systems and resulted in the achievement of Direct outcome 2: ***PRTR modules, trainings and guidelines on estimation techniques and SC reporting are developed and stakeholders are actively using them.*** As mentioned in *Section 5.4.1. 'Delivery of outputs'* standard international training modules and materials were developed by UNITAR and sector specific training programmes and national estimation techniques are available in the different Project countries.

164. Looking at Kazakhstan and Moldova, the two countries that signed the PRTR Protocol, Moldova excluded several prohibited POPs substances from obligatory reporting in the national PRTR and needs to collect possible additional data on, for example, existing or not yet detected stockpiles containing forbidden POPs from other sources. Regarding national reporting and the intended increased public knowledge, it needs to be mentioned that the Ministry of Environment has not yet published any consolidated summary report for 2018-2019 on the Moldovan PRTR and therefore NGOs and other relevant stakeholders cannot yet access recent pollution data. There is also no data on diffuse emissions available.

165. The Kazakh PRTR is temporarily not accessible. Starting from 1 July 2021, single window reporting to the national PRTR will become obligatory in Kazakhstan, after the new Environmental Codex will enter into force. It is planned that the Kazakh PRTR system then will also be used for the collection of data relevant for the reporting to MEA's as the Stockholm Convention.

166. Other Project countries are also for the moment only planning data collection for POPs and other MEA reporting. Especially in the case of voluntary reporting, the PRTRs will cover only part of the sources for the national reporting.

167. In the evaluation interviews stakeholders confirmed that many of the assumptions mentioned in *Chapter 5 Theory of Change* were important for the achievement of Project outcome 2. The industry sector and other stakeholders such as NGOs and academia in partner countries were willing to train and provide meaningful input into the Project (A2 and A5). Key stakeholders and industries agreed to conduct a pilot (A3). Countries agreed to follow a standardized approach and adapt the approach if necessary, to national needs and endorsed technical and legal documents (A4 and A7). The UNITAR guidance was seen as valuable and very helpful. Since PRTR based Stockholm Convention reporting needs further development assumption (A8) did not hold completely. PRTR reports from participating

countries do not yet provide complete information on sources and quantities of chemicals needed to prepare POPs national reports.

168. Concerning the drivers, the evaluation interviews and the output materials provided with the Final Project Report confirmed that robust and participatory mechanisms for capacity building were in place to guarantee the quality of trainings, guidelines and other capacity building activities (D5). Also, the experience from Cambodia, Ecuador, Kazakhstan and Peru with PRTR design (in PRTR Phase I) strengthened the countries' knowledge on and experience with the subject of PRTRs in support of the achievement of Project objectives and facilitated South-South cooperation (D7) A good example of South-South cooperation is the support that Peru and Ecuador received from Chilean PRTR and IT experts, trained in the framework of the PRTR Phase I project. With several of the national PRTR portals inaccessible a bit more than one year after Project end, the quality of the web based PRTR portal in terms of its utility, accessibility and functionality is unfortunately not ensured (D8).

169. The following Project outcome 2 indicator was provided in the Project's results framework: *Project outcome 2 indicator: First official national PRTR report and first POPs report submitted using PRTR as the main source of information.* Achievement of the Project outcome 2 is partly confirmed by the fact that all 6 Project countries have developed Pilot testing reports. Regarding reporting to the Stockholm Convention, at the time of the evaluation none of the Project countries had reported on POPs based on data collected through their PRTRs. The two countries that have signed the PRTR Protocol are planning such reporting for the not-too-distant future and other Project countries such as Belarus and Ecuador are planning to use data collected under the Project's pilot trials as one of the sources for future POPs reporting.

Project outcome 3: ***Revised guidance on PRTRs and POPs reporting in use by each participating country ensures comparable PRTR systems*** has been achieved according to the Final Report and the evaluation interviews. The well-developed revised UNITAR guidance, mentioned above under *Section 5.4.1 Delivery of outputs, Output 3.1 Reports and studies on standardization of PRTRs are available for countries' use* was highly valued by Participating countries and in the evaluation interviews the different Project counterparts confirmed having developed comparable PRTR systems, following UNITARs guidance and standardized approach. The updated guidance on MEA reporting through PRTRs provided valuable information. At the same time the study highlighted that reporting on POPs stockpiles especially would need further adaptation for efficient inclusion in PRTR reporting systems. This finding is supported by the experience of Project partners with *Output 3.2 Developed PRTR implementation guidance facilitates inclusion of POPs into the PRTR system.* The data that resulted from voluntary reporting was reportedly made publicly available in most countries through the national PRTR websites, although as mentioned above in *Section 5.4.1 Delivery of outputs* many of the national PRTRs were temporarily not accessible during the evaluation. One assumption mentioned in *Chapter 5 Theory of Change* was especially important for the achievement of Project outcome 3. The assumption (A4) that countries were willing to follow UNITARs guidance and standardized approach. Reportedly all countries were readily willing to follow the Project's approach. The key driver to support the achievement of Project outcome 3, was the driver that highlights the experience with PRTR design in the PRTR Phase I project in support of the achievement of the Project objectives and South-South cooperation (D7).

Cambodia, Ecuador, Kazakhstan and Peru took part in the Phase I project. Experts from Chile supported colleagues/counterparts in Ecuador and Peru.

170. The following Project outcome 3 indicator was provided in the Project's results framework: *Project outcome 3 indicator: Guidance on PRTR and POPs developed and used by participating countries.* Achievement of Project outcome 3 is partly confirmed by the fact that all 6 Project countries used the guidance when conducting their PRTR pilot trials. However, as reported in the different sections above on delivery of outputs and achievement of outcomes, to date, not much experience has been gained with PRTR POPs data collection and POPs reporting.

171. Project outcome 4: ***Improved public access to PRTR data and dissemination of information allows full participation of key stakeholders.*** According to the Final Report and evaluation interviews this outcome, that is strongly in line with the objectives of the Aarhus Convention, has been achieved. As reported under *Section 6.4.1 Delivery of outputs, Output 4.1 National strategies developed enable public access to PRTR data and a more active participation in PRTR implementation*, all countries developed national strategies and implemented a series of activities to raise awareness about the development of the national PRTRs and educate stakeholders on how to access information from the PRTR websites. Although the work under this component was not structured in a way that would have allowed measurement of how successfully the activities were implemented, the output reports and evaluation interviews confirm that valuable work has been done and important participation of key stakeholders has been achieved. For reference, PRTR Consultation strategies from Canada, USA, UK, Spain and Australia were made available to countries. However, a UNITAR analysis of international best practices of PRTR strategies, and a guidance document on how to develop strategies for enhancing public access to PRTR data and strengthening the dissemination of information, would have been a valuable addition to the organization's guidance materials for PRTR development. Most of the respondents to the evaluation survey felt the Project performed 'Satisfactory' to 'Highly Satisfactory' in effective communication, raising public awareness and enhancing public participation in environmental decision making. A small number of respondents rated these activities as 'Moderately Satisfactory'. One respondent argued that there was a need to strengthen the involvement with representatives of the media and academia. As mentioned above under achievement of Project outcome 2, consolidated summary reports on pollution data in 2018/2019 are not yet accessible from the Moldovan PRTR. 14. With this, frontrunner Moldova unfortunately missed an important opportunity to increase public knowledge on environmental issues and increase the access to information via the national PRTR.

172. The key assumption important for the achievement of outcome 4 was confirmed in the evaluation interviews: NGO participation was welcome in all Project countries and NGOs provided meaningful input (A5). Reportedly, improved public access to PRTR data enabled the dissemination of information through participation of country stakeholders in the Project. All countries actively worked with NGOs and included them in the strategy development and implementation. As a key driver to support the achievement of improved access to environmental information, it is important to mention that the experience of Cambodia, Ecuador, Kazakhstan and Peru with the PRTR Phase I project has strengthened the quality of the implemented educational and awareness raising activities (D7).

173. The following Project outcome 4 indicator was provided in the Project's results framework: Project outcome 4 indicator: Number of NGOs and NGO Networks that are part of the National Coordinating Committee. The Final Project Report and evaluation interviews confirm achievement of Project outcome 4. Although no statistical data of the PRTRs in terms of site search metrics are reported, the active involvement of NGOs in the Project and specifically in the National Coordinating Committees suggest an improved public access to PRTR data and dissemination of information has been achieved. Project partners reported the involvement of altogether 18 NGOs / Non-profit organizations in the National Coordinating Committees of the Project countries. respectively 3 in Belarus, 4 in Cambodia, 5 in Ecuador 1 in Kazakhstan, 2 in Moldova and 3 in Peru.

174. Project outcome 5: **Lessons learned on PRTR development and use of PRTRs in POPs reporting are widely applied by SC parties**. In addition to the lessons learned report mentioned in *Section 6.4.1 Delivery of outputs*, the evaluation interviews provided further insight in what those lessons were. Most importantly, it needs to be mentioned that all participating countries were contented with the quality of the PRTR development guidance provided. Also, the way the Project was implemented by UNEP and executed by UNITAR was greatly appreciated.

175. It is reported by UNITAR that a strong interest exists among a group of countries to replicate this PRTR experience and get the same support with the implementation of national reporting systems. As mentioned above in *Section 6.4.1. Delivery of outputs, Output 5.1 Final lessons learned report including regional recommendations will enable sound replication of PRTRs in countries*, project counterparts travelled to international meetings to share their PRTR experience and lessons learned from the Project. As a result of these activities and as result of UNITAR's wider experience with PRTR development, the organization has received requests from Mongolia, Brazil, Argentina, Colombia and Vietnam to support these countries in developing national PRTRs. Although experience and results from the PRTR Project is not yet replicated in other SC countries, there is a strong interest in the subject. (See also *Section 5.4.3. Likelihood of impact below*)

176. With Peru and Ecuador preparing themselves to become a member of OECD and Moldova having signed the Association Agreement with the EU in 2014, the assumption that the prospect of joining OECD (or other international bodies) (A11) would be a motivating factor in support of PRTR implementation, is clearly important. Other Project countries have not reported that there are national ambitions to become a member of OECD. The assumption that countries would be willing to share experience and expertise with other participating countries (A5) clearly held during the Project implementation. In the evaluation interviews countries confirmed that the experience exchange between countries and South-South cooperation was highly appreciated and effective. The relevant driver for Project outcome 5: 'Strong project ownership based on positive Project results' (D1), was in place. All countries were clearly motivated to share their experience with PRTR development internationally.

177. The following Project outcome 5 indicator was provided in the Project's results framework: Project outcome 5 indicator: Lessons learned [are] developed and widely disseminated to, and applied by, other Parties to the POPs convention. The Final Project Report and evaluation interviews confirm achievement of Project outcome 5. The lessons learned are widely disseminated in a series of international PRTR meetings and there is a clear

interest among a group of SC countries to get support to replicate the experience and develop national PRTRs.

Sub-rating Achievement of Outcomes –Moderately Satisfactory (MS)

5.4.3 Likelihood of impact

178. As mentioned above in *Section 4.3 Causal pathways from Intermediate states to Impact*, the ultimate goal of working with PRTRs as a management and reporting tool is to improve the protection of human health and the environment and achievement of the Project's intended Impact 1 (Improved protection of human health and the environment from POPs and other hazardous chemicals through efficient use of public accessible PRTRs in 6 Project countries). The achievement of the Intermediate States can be seen as a precondition that is essential to the Impact being realized. Here, the assumption about endorsement and adoption of technical and legal documents (A1 and A7) is the central point. The assumed political will to make the required decisions for PRTR implementation is clearly demonstrated by the Moldovan and Kazakh governments, who signed the PRTR Protocol and with the adoption of the relevant legal framework, achieved early in the Project **Intermediate state 1**. (National governments adopt PRTRs as part of national regulatory framework). Moldova entered the Project in 2015 with the decision already officially taken to implement a PRTR and the PRTR protocol already ratified. During Project implementation the country fully updated its National Regulatory Framework as required under the protocol. In Kazakhstan, the PRTR will be officially implemented after the country's new Environmental Codex will enter into force on 1 July 2021.

179. Achievement of **Intermediate state 1** in Belarus, Cambodia, Ecuador and Peru is less likely in the short term. Cambodia and Peru plan to include PRTR legislation in the framework of a national reform of the environmental codex. Final implementation depends on political decision makers assumed Project ownership and commitment by endorsing the framework of the Project designed and piloted PRTRs (A7). "High level" statements issued at the last Steering Group Meeting of the PRTR Phase I project and bilateral communications between Project countries and UNEP and UNITAR, officially express these endorsements and commitment. Unfortunately, the statements have not yet led to PRTR implementation in those countries to date. This does not necessarily imply that the Project underperformed with respect to the intended Project activities. Most of the respondents to the evaluation survey felt that Project performed to highly satisfactory level in its efforts to support their countries to prepare for national governments endorsement and adoption PRTRs as part of the national regulatory framework. Moreover, regarding national commitment and Project ownership, it is also important to highlight to the completely justified observation from the Project document's risk identification sheet that "the responsibility for the adoption of national legislation in support of PRTR implementation rests with the participating governments."

180. With regard to the achievement of **Intermediate state 2** (Countries officially implement PRTRs and start reporting to SC using PRTRs in an integrated way), Moldova will start reporting to the Stockholm Convention using the officially implemented PRTR as one of the sources for data collection, in the not-too-distant future. It is planned that the Kazakh PRTR system then will also be used for the collection of data relevant to the Stockholm Convention

and other MEAs. Other Project countries like Belarus and Ecuador are planning to use data collected under the Project's pilot trials as one of the sources for future POPs reporting.

181. Improved protection of human health and the environment from POPs and other hazardous chemicals through efficient use of public accessible PRTRs in 6 project countries has been defined in the TOC as the Project's intended long-term **Impact 1**. The achievement of an efficiently working and public accessible PRTR in Moldova and planned to be implemented in Kazakhstan as a result of the PRTR Phase I and II demonstrates that in Moldova and Kazakhstan the intended long-term impact of the Project is likely. The Moldovan and Kazakh governments demonstrated the political will to make decisions in favour of endorsement for and adoption of PRTRs as part of the national regulatory framework in the country. Moldova and Kazakhstan have developed a system that enables all relevant industrial facilities to report to national monitoring authorities through the single window online system. Although the Kazakh system is temporarily not available, this is an important achievement that could not have been reached without serious governmental investments and the commitment to continue Moldova's and Kazakhstan's future environmental reporting via a PRTR reporting and monitoring system. With this achievement the important assumption (A10) holds. Not all the drivers are relevant for the transition from intermediate state to impact in Moldova and Kazakhstan. To achieve improved protection of human health (Impact 1) driver (D3) is relevant: decision makers were well informed about the value of PRTRs. Also, driver (D4) applies: reportedly, strong advocacy by UNEP and UNITAR on the importance if the Project was provided. The two countries have properly understood the potential of PRTRs to strengthen monitoring and control of the industrial sector in accordance with environmental regulations.

182. For Belarus, Cambodia, Ecuador and Peru the achievement of **Impact 1** is less likely. In the evaluation interviews some counterparts explained that in practice national political decision makers needed more information about the value and importance of PRTRs (D3) and possible also more targeted advocacy by UNEP and UNITAR on the importance of the Project (D4). Frequent personnel changes within some of the different national ministries and the reported worry among some decision makers that a PRTR could hamper the much-needed national economic growth, without doubt made it in some cases difficult to achieve the Project commitment and political will in support of PRTR implementation. At the same time, respondents to the evaluation survey concluded that the Project was satisfactory to highly satisfactory in its efforts to inform decision makers about the effectiveness and efficiency of PRTR for POPS and chemicals management and for enhancing public participation and awareness raising on environmental matters.

183. Concerning the likelihood of the achievement of **Impact 2** (*Experience and results from the PRTR Project are replicated in other SC countries*) it should be noted that actual replication of the experience and results from the Project has not been reported. Consequently, it can be concluded that to date achievement of Impact 2 is unlikely. However, based on the active involvement of Project counterparts in international PRTR meetings and UNITARs wider experience with PRTR development, the organization reportedly has received requests from Mongolia, Brazil, Argentina, Colombia and Vietnam to support these countries in developing national PRTRs. The strong interest from those countries in the subject of PRTR development

demonstrates that there is a potential for replication of the experience and results from the PRTR Project in the future.

184. Using the Evaluation Office of UNEP’s standardized approach, Table 8. below summarizes the analysis of likelihood of impact.

Table 7. Analysis of Likelihood of Impact

#	Criteria	Findings
1	Drivers to support transition from outputs to outcomes are partially in place / are in place / are not in place	<p>Drivers were partly in place:</p> <p>D1) Some of the Project countries quickly achieved positive results, especially Moldova.</p> <p>D2) The example of Chile demonstrated the efficiency of PRTRs, especially for countries that participated in PRTR Phase I.</p> <p>D3) National decision makers were well informed. In some countries, more efforts to inform decision makers are expected to be needed.</p> <p>D4) UNEP and UNITAR provided strong advocacy for the importance of PRTRs. In some countries more advocacy is expected to be needed.</p> <p>D5) Robust and participatory mechanisms for capacity building, awareness raising were established.</p> <p>D6) For Moldova and Kazakhstan the prospect of efficient SC reporting strengthened national commitment. To date there is no evidence that it did strengthen national commitment in the other countries.</p> <p>D7) Experience with the PRTR Phase I Project supported achievement of Project achievements for relevant countries and facilitated South-South cooperation.</p> <p>D8) With not all national PRTRs accessible one year after Project end this driver is only partly in place.</p>
2	Assumptions for the change process from outputs to outcomes hold/ partially hold/ do not hold	<p>Most of the assumptions for the change process held in all Project countries²⁹:</p> <p>A1) Stakeholder commitment assisted to endorse technical and legal documents.</p> <p>A2) The industry sectors were willing to train and participate.</p> <p>A3) Key stakeholders and industries agreed to conduct a pilot trial.</p> <p>A4) Countries were willing to follow a standardized approach</p> <p>A5) NGO participation was welcome.</p> <p>A6) Lessons learned (potentially) facilitated the development of PRTR in other countries.</p> <p>A7) Stakeholders were actively endorsing PRTR implementation.</p> <p>A8) PRTR reports provide adequate information. Although for POPs reporting more sources of information are required.</p>

²⁹ For A8 not completely and for A10 not for all Project countries.

#	Criteria	Findings
		<p>A9) Countries were willing to share experience.</p> <p>A10) Sustainable sources of funding are committed in Moldova and Kazakhstan, in the outer countries this is less clear.</p> <p>A11) The prospect of joining OECD / sing EU Association agreement was respectively a motivating factor for Peru and Ecuador / Moldova.</p>
3	Proportion of outcomes fully achieved / partially achieved	<p>Some of the outcomes are fully achieved:</p> <p><u>Outcome 1</u> has been fully achieved. All countries have developed national proposals that guided the development of legal documents.</p> <p><u>Outcome 2</u> has been partly achieved. The capacity of collecting and using accurate PRTR data has been increased, use of POPs data collected through the national PRTRs in SC reporting is planned.</p> <p>Regarding <u>Outcome 3</u>, Revised guidance on POPs reporting is available, but needs further elaboration.</p> <p><u>Outcome 4</u> has been partly achieved. Improved access to PRTR allows participation in the countries where the PRTR is implemented and available. For various reasons, not all PRTRs are accessible to date.</p> <p><u>Outcome 5</u> has been partly achieved. Key lessons are actively shared and signs of countries willing to replicate the experience are reported.</p>
4	Outcomes to attain intermediate states / impact (the most important, others)	<p>The most important outcomes (outcome 1, 2, 3 and 4) contributed to attainment of intermediate state 1 in Moldova and Kazakhstan where PRTRs are officially implemented or being implemented on short notice (Kazakhstan) and both countries plan reporting to SC using PRTR in an integrated way. In Belarus, Cambodia, Ecuador and Peru there is a much lower sense of commitment among decision makers to enable the process to move forward to achieve the intermediate states 1 and 2.</p>
5	Level of outcome achievement	<p>As discussed in Section 6.4.2, most of the outcomes were partially achieved. As 4 of the 6 Project countries still have not officially implemented their PRTRs, the level of outcome achievement should be described as partial.</p>
6	Drivers to support transition from outcome(s) to intermediate states are In place / partly in place / not in place	<p>Drivers to support transition from outcomes to intermediate state 1 were partially in place</p> <p>It is expected that driver D2) Use of PRTR in Chile demonstrates the efficiency of PRTRs to other participating countries was in relevant for Phase I countries.</p> <p>D3) decision makers were well informed, although more information was needed in some countries.</p> <p>D4) Strong advocacy for the importance of PRTR was provide, although more was expected to be needed in some countries</p> <p>D5) Robust and participatory mechanisms for capacity building were provided.</p>

#	Criteria	Findings
		<p>D6) Prospect of efficient SC POPs reporting was relevant for Moldova and Kazakhstan</p> <p>D7) Experience with PRTR Phase I supported achievement of Project for some of the Project countries</p> <p>D8) Quality of the web based PRTR portal is ensured for some of the Project countries</p>
7	Assumptions for the change process from outcomes to intermediate states hold / partly hold / do not hold	<p>As for the change process from outcomes to intermediate state assumptions partially held. However, only for Moldova and Kazakhstan and not for the other countries.</p> <p>A1) <i>Stakeholder's commitment and country ownership assist to endorse technical and legal documents in support of PRTR implementation</i> held in Moldova, where the national PRTR is actively used, and in Kazakhstan that will start obligatory reporting via its national PRTR later in 2021. The assumption did not hold in Belarus, Cambodia, Ecuador and Peru.</p> <p>A7) <i>Stakeholders endorse technical and legal documents in support of PRTR implementation</i> held in Moldova and Kazakhstan. The assumption did not hold in Belarus, Cambodia, Ecuador and Peru.</p> <p>A10) <i>Sustainable sources of funding are committed from national budgets to cover for the costs of further PRTR development and implementation of the reporting and monitoring system</i> held in Moldova and Kazakhstan. The assumption did not hold in Belarus, Cambodia, Ecuador and Peru.</p>
8	Proportion of Intermediate states achieved all / some / none	<p>Intermediate state 1 is achieved in Moldova and Kazakhstan. The same is true for Intermediate state 2, although reporting to the SC is only planned and needs to be further developed. Intermediate state 1 and 2 are not achieved in Belarus, Cambodia, Ecuador and Peru.</p>
9	Level of Intermediate state achievement full / partial	<p>The evaluation has found full achievement of the intermediate in Moldova and Kazakhstan where PRTRs are officially implemented and parties start reporting to the SC in an integrated way using part of the reporting data collected through the national PRTRs. In Belarus, Cambodia, Ecuador and Peru the Intermediate state is not achieved.</p>
10	Drivers to support transition from intermediate states to impact are? In place / Partially in place / Not in place	<p>For Moldova and Kazakhstan drivers are partially in place.</p> <p>To achieve improved protection of human health (Impact 1) driver D3): Decision makers were well informed about the value of PRTRs. Also, driver D4) applies: Strong advocacy by UNEP and UNITAR on the importance of the Project. For Belarus, Cambodia, Ecuador and Peru, where impact is (not yet) achieved, it should be noted that Project partners see a need for more information and advocacy to convince decision makers.</p>
11	Assumptions for the change process from intermediate states to impact hold / partially hold / do not hold	<p>Assumptions partially hold for the change process from Intermediate states to impact 1 <i>Improved protection of human health and the environment from POPs and other hazardous chemicals through effective use of public accessible PRTRs in 6 project countries</i>. Impact has been achieved in Moldova and is expected to be achieved in Kazakhstan. Especially important in</p>

#	Criteria	Findings
		this respect is assumption A10) <i>Sustainable sources of funding are committed from national budgets to cover for the costs of further PRTR development and implementation of the reporting and monitoring system.</i>
	OVERALL RATING	Moderately Unlikely

Sub-rating Likelihood of Impact – Moderately Unlikely (MU)³⁰

185. **The indicator from the Project results framework for the Project objective:** *number of PRTRs operational and serving POPs reporting and access to information purposes*, confirms achievement of the Project objective (Although not for all Project countries. Strictly speaking the number, to date, is 1 country). Among Project countries, currently only the Moldovan PRTR is operational and implemented as the national mandatory way of reporting. Like Moldova, Kazakhstan has signed the PRTR Protocol and its PRTR will become operational after 1 July 2021, when the country’s new Environmental Codex will enter into force and PRTR reporting will become mandatory. Pending national decision making to officially implement the national PRTRs, other Project countries operated their PRTR on a voluntary basis.

186. It can be concluded that the Project has produced many of the programmed outputs and outcomes and impact is visible. However, the Project impact becoming realized in more Project countries really depends on political decision making.

Overall rating Effectiveness – Moderately Satisfactory (MS)

5.5 Financial management

187. The total approved budget was USD 10,232,258 (See also *Table 3. and 4. in Section 3.6 Project financing*) including USD 2,000,000 in cash from the GEF Trust Fund and USD 8,232,258 of in-kind and cash co-financing contributions from Project countries and international partners. The actual budget reported consisted of the total Project cost of USD 10,018,010.18 including USD 1,964,999.99 in cash from the GEF Trust Fund and USD 8,053,010.20 of co-financing in in-kind and cash contributions from Project countries and international partners. This is USD 179,247.80 less than anticipated.

188. Table 9. below presents an overview of total GEF project budget, actual project expenditures and expenditure ratio (actual/planned). The total GEF project budget was USD 1,965,000.00 The actual expenditure at project end was USD 1,964,999.99. With all the planned project costs realized, that results in the overall expenditure ration of 1.00.

³⁰ Although a clear likelihood of impact is observed in 2 of the 6 Project countries (Moldova and Kazakhstan), there are not many signs that impact will be likely in the 4 other Project countries (Belarus, Cambodia, Ecuador and Peru). As a result, the overall likelihood of impact should be rated as Moderately Unlikely.

Table 8. Expenditure reported by UNITAR following UNEP Budget lines

	Estimated cost at design	Actual Cost/ expenditure	Expenditure ratio (actual/planned)
Personnel component			
Project coordinator UNITAR	200,000.00	200,000.00	1.00
International pilot expert	50,000.00	50,000.00	1.00
International standardization expert	35,000.00	35,000.00	1.00
International expert to review and monitor strategies of information dissemination	15,000.00	15,000.00	1.00
Sub total	300,000.00	300,000.00	1.00
Consultants			
Development of training module on PRTR data interpretation and communication - government, civil society, journalists	55,000.00	55,000.00	1.00
Regional PRTR experts	65,000.00	65,000.00	1.00
International POPs reporting and PRTRs expert	35,000.00	35,000.00	1.00
International legal expert	40,000.00	40,000.00	1.00
Sub total	195,000.00	195,000.00	1.00
Travel on official business (above staff)			
Travel (International)	58,000.00	48,055.65	0.83
Sub-total	58,000.00	48,055.65	0.83
Component Total	553,000.00	543,055.65	0.98
SUB-CONTRACT COMPONENT			
Sub-contracts (SSFA, PCA, non-UN)			
Belarus national execution	190,000.00	190,000.00	1.00
Cambodia national execution	190,000.00	190,000.00	1.00
Ecuador national execution	190,000.00	189,968.55	1.00
Kazakhstan national execution	190,000.00	190,000.00	1.00
Moldova national execution	190,000.00	190,000.00	1.00
Peru national execution	190,000.00	190,000.00	1.00

	Estimated cost at design	Actual Cost/ expenditure	Expenditure ratio (actual/planned)
Sub-total	1,140,000.00	1,139,968.55	1.00
Component Total	1,140,000.00	1,139,968.55	1.00
Training component			
Group training			
Face-to-face training	45,000.00	54,975.83	1.22
IT development and maintenance of online training	40,000.00	40,000.00	1.00
Sub total	85,000.00	94,975.83	1.12
Meetings / Conferences			
Lessons learned meeting	35,000.00	43,931.02	1.26
Lessons learned mid-term meeting	32,000.00	25,958.50	0.81
Global forum on PRTRs and MEAs and lessons learned	35,000.00	32,110.48	0.92
Sub total	102,000.00	102,000.00	1.00
Component Total	187,000.00	196,975.83	1.05
Equipment and premises component			
Expendable equipment under USD 1.500			
Operating costs	26,000.00	29,100.00	1.12
Sub total	26,000.00	29,100.00	1.12
Component Total	26,000.00	29,100.00	1.12
Miscellaneous component			
Reporting costs (publications, maps, NL)			
Printing of guidance training material (non-online)	16,000.00	15,373.12	0.96
Translation of essential documents	14,000.00	14,000.00	1.00
Sub total	30,000.00	29,373.12	0.98
Sundry (communications, postage, etc.)			
Communication costs	29,000.00	26,526.83	0.91
Sub total	29,000.00	26,526.83	0.91
Component Total	59,000.00	55,899.95	0.95

	Estimated cost at design	Actual Cost/ expenditure	Expenditure ratio (actual/planned)
TOTAL	1,965,000.00	1,964,999.99	1.00

189. Co-finances were provided by UNEP, UNITAR, UNECE, Government of Cambodia, Government of Kazakhstan, Government of Ecuador, Government of Peru, Government of Moldova, Government of Belarus and the Government of Chile. In agreement with UNEP, UNITAR did not include in its regular reporting an overview of the actual Project co-finance expenditures per donor and objective / activity. Table 10. below presents the planned and actual Project co-finance expenditures following UNEP budget lines. The total co-finances project budget was USD 8,020,257.60. The actual expenditure of co-finances at project end was USD 8,053,010.20. With all the planned project costs realized, that results in the overall rounded expenditure ratio of 1.00 (and an actual increased amount of realized co-finances of USD 32,752.60).³¹

Table 9. Project co-finance expenditures following UNEP budget lines

	Estimated cost at design	Actual Cost/ expenditure	Expenditure ratio (actual/planned)
Project personnel	430,000.00	430,000.00	1.00
Consultants	518,400.00	518,400.00	1.00
Travel on official business	60,000.00	60,000.00	1.00
Subcontracts (supporting organizations)	5,330,257.60	5,363,010.20	1.01
Group training / workshops	490,000.00	490,000.00	1.00
Meeting / Conference	851,600.00	851,600.00	1.00
Expendable equipment	180,000.00	180,000.00	1.00
Reporting	100,000.00	100,000.00	1.00
Sundry	40,000.00	40,000.00	1.00
Evaluation	20,000.00	20,000.00	1.00
TOTAL	8,020,257.60	8,053,010.20	1.00

5.5.1 Adherence to UNEP's policies and procedures

190. In line with the UN Agency to Agency Contribution Agreement between UNEP and UNITAR, UNEP required from the latter to send financial reports within one month after the end of the reporting period. The half year financial reporting provided for the evaluation shows a thorough practice of timely reporting maintained throughout the entire lifetime of the

³¹ Partner countries confirmed in a written statement that they spent the in-kind contribution for the project in accordance with co-financing letter provided to UNITAR in advance of the project.

Project. Based on the provided documentation, the evaluation has found that the Project was implemented in line with UNEPs policies and procedures.

Sub-rating of Adherence to UNEP's policies and procedures – Highly Satisfactory (HS)

5.5.2 Completeness of Financial Information

191. The financial information presented in Table 9. Expenditure reported by UNITAR following UNEP Budget lines and Table 10. Project co-finance expenditures following UNEP budget lines, suggest that Project finances were well administered and at the end of the Project a complete overview was reported on how the available budget was spent. Confirmation of the realization of co-financing per donor at Project end was available.

Sub-rating of Completeness of Financial Information – Highly Satisfactory (HS)

5.5.3 Communication between Finance and Project Management Staff

192. Interviews with the former UNEP Task Manager, the UNITAR Project Coordinator and the UNEP Fund Management Officer revealed that there were no issues with the reporting and that the financial management has been sound throughout the lifetime of the Project. Also, it was confirmed in these interviews that appropriate communication was maintained between the Executing Agency and the Fund Management Officer.

Table 10. Completeness of Project financial information

Financial management components:		Rating	Evidence/ Comments
1. Completeness of project financial information:			
Provision of key documents to the evaluator		HS:HU	
A.	Co-financing and Project Cost's tables at design (by budget lines)	Yes	Provided Project reports
B.	Revisions to the budget	Yes	Provided
C.	All relevant project legal agreements (e.g. SSFA, PCA, ICA)	Yes	UN agency to agency contribution agreement
D.	Proof of fund transfers	No	
E.	Proof of co-financing (cash and in-kind)	Yes,	The actual co-finance expenditures following UNEP budget lines + a written statement from Project partners confirming co-finances for the project in accordance with the co-financing letter provided to UNITAR in advance of the project
F.	A summary report on the project's expenditures during the life of the project (by budget lines, project components and/or annual level)	Yes	The actual expenditure reported by UNITAR following UNEP Budget lines and annual level was provided

Financial management components:		Rating	Evidence/ Comments
G.	Copies of any completed audits and management responses (<i>where applicable</i>)	No	It was understood that no national financial audits were required
H.	Any other financial information that was required for this project (list):	Yes	Half year financial reports were provided
Any gaps in terms of financial information that could be indicative of shortcomings in the project's compliance with the UNEP or donor rules		No	
Project Coordinator, Task Manager and Fund Management Officer responsiveness to financial requests during the evaluation process		S	The provided financial documentation was initially not complete
2. Communication between finance and project management staff		HS:HU	
Project Coordinator and/or Task Manager's level of awareness of the project's financial status.		HS	Interview with FMO
Fund Management Officer's knowledge of project progress/status when disbursements are done.		HS	Interviews with TM and PM
Level of addressing and resolving financial management issues among Fund Management Officer and Project Coordinator/Task Manager.		HS	Interviews with TM, FMO and PM
Contact/communication between by Fund Management Officer, Project Coordinator/Task Manager during the preparation of financial and progress reports.		HS	Interviews with TM, FMO and PM
Overall rating		HS	

*Highly Satisfactory (HS); Satisfactory (S); Moderately Satisfactory (MS); Moderately Unsatisfactory (MU); Unsatisfactory (U); Highly Unsatisfactory (HU)

Overall Rating Financial Management – Highly Satisfactory (HS)

5.6 Efficiency

193. Cost-effectiveness and timely implementation are key for the quality of any project implementation. As mentioned above in *Table 1. Project summary*, the Project was originally planned for a 43-month implementation period and subsequently extended to 63 months. The main reason for the delays was bureaucratic hurdles in national administrative regulations especially in the case of Ecuador, that required more international assistance than originally planned.

194. Early 2019, five of the six countries had delivered most of the planned outputs, only the problems that occurred in Ecuador needed to be solved to keep the country on board and

avoid a discontinuation of the cooperation with Ecuadorian partners. The implementation and contractual problems that UNITAR faced in Ecuador were clearly highlighted from an early stage of Project implementation. The evaluation has found that UNITAR has reacted well to these delays in Project implementation, by keeping the communication lines open and finding a creative solution to the implementation agreement problems and associated delays in Ecuador. A tripartite agreement was signed early 2019 between UNITAR, the Ecuador Ministry of Environment and Water and the national public institution Fondo de Inversion Ambiental Sostenible (FIAS) that solved the contractual and procurement problems that had hampered Project implementation right from the start of the Project.³² UNITARs adaptive management assured to avoid further implementation delays amongst others through a no-cost Project extension. The efficiency of implementation in the country was negatively affected by the fact that the national Ecuadorian Project coordinator was changed four times during the Project implementation. Finally, the Covid-19 crisis negatively affected the efficiency of the Project implementation in Ecuador in the last half year of the Project. Implementation of the scheduled awareness raising campaign, development of the Pilot trial report and the organization of the final national meeting were delayed. For the other countries, the Project was efficiently implemented and in principle in line with the planned Project duration. (See also sections *1. Introduction and 5.3 Nature of External Context*)

195. The combination of countries that were experienced with the subject of PRTR development (Cambodia, Ecuador, Kazakhstan, Peru) and new countries that were expected to develop their PRTRs quite quickly (Belarus and Moldova) worked quite well. Moldova even had ratified the PRTR Protocol already in 2013, before entering the Project. The country used its participation in the Project to develop everything required from the country under the protocol and educate Moldovan experts, decision makers and the public at large about the value, efficiency and benefits of the system that was being developed and implemented. The same is true for Kazakhstan. It is expected that this positive example has strengthened the efficiency of the Project. The originally planned South-South cooperation worked efficiently well especially in South America. Well experienced experts from countries with already operating PRTRs could support colleagues overseas e.g. Experts from Chile and Mexico have provided technical support to several countries in the region for design and implementation.

196. To avoid duplication of efforts and create synergies with other international, regional and national PRTR initiatives, the Project efficiently cooperated with a group of international organizations that all in a specific way were involved in PRTR initiatives. i.e. Project representation in thematical PRTR working group meetings of UNCE; Cooperation with OSCE and its Aarhus Centers in Belarus and Moldova; cooperation with GIZ (German Society for International Cooperation) in a Latin American Regional PRTR workshop; Participation in Project meetings from PRTR experts of OECD, ZOI Environmental Network, governments of Canada, Spain and others. (See also section *3.3.1. International organizations*)

³² <http://www.basel.int/?tabid=4848>

197. As standard operating procedure for minimizing its environmental footprint, UNITAR implemented efficiency measures by combining necessary Project travel for different activities to avoid excessive travel, planning steering committee and Project meetings “back-to-back” with the same purpose to avoid extra travel. Another initiative for minimizing the Projects environmental footprint was taken by Peru. The country implemented the entire Project at the national level without making use of paper.

Rating of Efficiency – Satisfactory (S)

5.7 Monitoring and reporting

5.7.1 Monitoring design and budgeting

198. The Terminal Evaluation has assessed the monitoring tools provided by the Project document to assure the overseeing of Project implementation, including planned monitoring and evaluation activities and tools such as Financial Half Yearly Expenditure Reports, Half Yearly Progress Reports, Project Implementation Reports (PIRs), Work Plan, Co-financing Report, Final Project Report, Inception Workshop Reports and Steering Group Meetings Reports. In the Project design, adequately planned activities and resources were foreseen for a Mid-term Evaluation. A monitoring plan to track progress against SMART indicators towards achievement of the Project outputs and direct outcomes was part of the Project document. Monitoring was assumed to be carried out as part of the day-to-day Project management at country level by the national Project teams and at Project level respectively by the Executing Agency and the Implementing Agency. A monitoring and evaluation plan and separate budget for the Terminal Evaluation was foreseen in the Project document. Gender and low represented groups were mentioned in the Project document and in the evaluation interviews. These groups were, however, not included in the monitoring tools.

Sub-rating of Monitoring design and budgeting – Satisfactory (S)

5.7.2 Monitoring implementation

199. Based on the evaluation interviews and Project reporting the evaluation has found that UNEP and UNITAR applied the monitoring system that was designed in the Project document to track the results of the Project throughout the implementation period. Ongoing monitoring was reportedly carried out by open communication lines via different media in frequent contacts between the UNITAR Project Coordinator and the countries. Progress Reports clearly highlighted obstacles that occurred during the implementation period. (i.e. Delay of country contracts mentioned in first Half Yearly Progress Report because of language problems; serious contractual problems with Ecuador mentioned in second Half Yearly Report). Financial Half Yearly Expenditure Reports included expected expenditures for the next reporting period. PIRs tracked i.e. the progress towards achieving the Project’s objective, the status of implementation in percentage, implementation risks and proposed mitigation measures for these risks. Reportedly, the Steering Group Committee’s extensively discussed the Project progress and implementation difficulties. In the Steering Group Committee’s reports, the evaluator, however, has not found evidence of Steering Group Committee’s interventions that advised the Project management to adapt the Project implementation.

Notwithstanding the implementation difficulties faced in Ecuador, the Project was implemented in principle in line with its planning. In view of this, UNEP decided that a Mid-Term Review of the Project was not needed. The funds allocated for monitoring implementation in the Project document include only costs for the Mid-Term Review and the Terminal Evaluation. All the other Monitoring and Evaluation activities such as Inception Workshop, Project Review by PSC, Terminal report, are budgeted under other Project budget lines. Although a Financial Audit was included in planned Monitoring and Evaluation activities of the Project document, it was understood that no national financial audits were required for this Project, UNEP cannot request an audit from UNITAR as the executing agency because of the UN-to-UN standard agreement on audit.

200. Although one has to acknowledge that the responsibility for adoption of PRTR legislation and official PRTR implantation rests with participating governments, the problems with national commitment, project ownership and decision making in support of official PRTR implementation in 4 of the 6 Project countries, probably should have been highlighted more seriously in the monitoring mechanism of the Project to be able to react to this Project challenge when the Project was still being implemented. The delay in decision making in support of PRTR implementation had already proved to be an important issue in the implementation of the PRTR Phase I project.

Sub-rating of Monitoring implementation – Moderately Satisfactory (MS)

5.7.3 Project reporting

201. The Terminal Evaluation found that progress and financial reporting was of good quality and delivered in line with the UN Agency to Agency Contribution Agreement between UNEP and UNITAR in a timely manner. Based on the interviews with the Task Manager, Project Coordinator and national coordinators, it is understood that also reporting from the countries to UNITAR was carried out well and in a timely manner. However, the latter reports were not made available to the evaluator. Complete and high-quality documentation on progress of the Project implementation from UNEP and UNITAR was available. Though one could argue that the practical problems faced within the project implementation and execution with the application of PRTRs as a POPs reporting tool were slightly underreported. Information was available in the reporting on the number of Project participants in capacity building and their gender / stakeholder background. However, this information is not systematically collected and reported. (See also sections 5.4.1. *Delivery of outputs* and 5.5. *Financial management*)

Sub-rating of Project reporting – Moderately Satisfactory (MS)

Overall rating of Monitoring and reporting – Satisfactory (S)

5.8 Sustainability

202. In line with the ToR for this Terminal Evaluation the following aspects of Project sustainability are addressed in this section: Socio-political sustainability, Financial sustainability and Institutional sustainability.

5.8.1 Socio-political sustainability

203. The most important sustainability question regarding the Project is determined by socio-political aspects. As mentioned in different sections of this report, the question whether Project countries are willing to endorse and adopt the different technical and legal documents required for PRTR implementation can have the potential to limit the achievement of the Project outcomes and its final impact. As stated in different sub sections of *Section 6 Evaluation findings*, the Terminal Evaluation has found that Moldova and Kazakhstan have shown enough Project ownership and political will to fully implement a PRTR and Moldova has started to use the system officially from 2018. After the new Kazakh Environmental Codex will enter into force on 1 July 2021, Kazakhstan will follow that example of obligatory PRTR reporting. Such a policy decision has far reaching consequences for the two countries and will have serious budget implications for the future. It clearly demonstrates the government's commitment to continue with the PRTR reporting and monitoring system in future years and with that it demonstrates strong sustainability of the Project initiative.

204. For the four other countries, it is less clear whether decision makers will ultimately endorse and adopt the different technical and legal documents required for PRTR implementation. Under these circumstances the sustainability of the Project initiative is not assured. As reported in the evaluation interviews with country coordinators, frequent changes of ministers in the Ministries of Environment of many Project countries have not strengthened national Project commitment. New ministers have different experiences and often different priorities. Such circumstances potentially can negatively affect the sustainability of the Project initiative. The fact that having a fully functioning national PRTR system is a requirement to become an OECD member country, might strengthen the sustainability of the Project initiative in Peru and Ecuador, where OECD membership is an important national ambition. Based on the evaluation interviews with national Project partners, the evaluation has not found confirmation for national ambitions to become a member of OECD in other Project countries.

205. National decision making is beyond direct control of Project. What most stakeholders could do to influence the Project's sustainability was making sure that the Project was carried out to the highest possible standards and produced high quality outputs that were well disseminated amongst Project stakeholders; thus, enabling political decision makers to take well informed decisions to adopt policies and legislation in support of PRTR implementation. The evaluation has found that most of the Project countries Project partners have successfully tried to carry out the Project to the highest possible standards and thus contribute to the sustainability of the Project.

206. Although the reality on the ground showed PRTR implementation in only 2 of the 6 Project countries, most of the respondents to the survey considered it likely that the Project created strong governmental ownership of interest in and commitment to POPs monitoring and reporting / public participation and awareness raising issues in connection to the Stockholm and Aarhus conventions.

207. In hindsight one could argue that stronger involvement of political decision makers (at Project entry level and during implementation) would have been needed to convince them of the benefits that PRTRs could bring for their countries. There is, however, no guarantee that stronger involvement would have resulted in the desired decision making in support of official PRTR implementation. The sustainability of Project outcomes has a high degree of dependency on social/political factors in most Project countries. There is a fairly strong ownership, interest and commitment among national stakeholders. That commitment does, however, not reach the governmental levels which have the power of decision making to sustain the project outcomes. Based on the above the overall rating for socio-political sustainability should be estimated not higher than Moderately Unlikely.

Rating Socio-political sustainability – Moderately Unlikely (MU)

5.8.2 Financial sustainability

208. The financial and institutional sustainability of the Project cannot be easily separated from socio-political and institutional sustainability. The political decision whether to endorse and adopt the different technical and legal documents required for PRTR implementation, is as far as financial sustainability is concerned also the central factor. The decision to officially implement a national PRTR has serious budget implications for the future (See also *Section 6.8.1. Socio-political sustainability*). As stated in the evaluation interviews, Moldova and Kazakhstan could not have financed its PRTR reporting system only from financial support provided in the framework of international technical assistance projects and both countries have reserved a national budget to maintain the PRTR system in the future. The same is not true for the other Project countries that have thus far not taken the decisions in favour of PRTR implementation: Implementation of PRTRs is expected to increase the efficiency and effectiveness of pollutant release and transfer reporting. It will, however, at the same time require substantial investments of the Project countries.

209. In most of the Project countries there is fairly strong ownership, interest and commitment among government and among other stakeholders, but it does not reach the levels which have the power to sustain the project outcomes. Only in 2 of the 6 Project countries the necessary future funding requirements have been secured. Based on the above the overall rating for socio-political sustainability should be estimated at Unlikely.

Rating Financial sustainability – Unlikely (U)

5.8.3 Institutional sustainability

210. The institutional sustainability of the Project is directly dependent on a political decision in Project countries in support of PRTR implementation. Institutional sustainability of the PRTR initiative is currently guaranteed in Moldova and Kazakhstan. As the current policy and regulatory framework in Belarus, Cambodia, Ecuador and Peru does not enforce (single window) PRTR reporting, the active motivation is lacking in the business sector to invest in their capacity and acquire the necessary skills for reporting via PRTRs. Without official endorsement and adoption of the required technical and legal documents in support

of PRTR implementation, PRTRs will not be used for national reporting and POPs reporting and monitoring.

211. As key lesson learned from the Project, national Project partners highlighted in the evaluation interviews that the absence of national decisions to adopt technical and legal documents and sign the PRTR Protocol in support of PRTR implementation is a difficult problem to solve. Frequent changes at minister level do not strengthen the needed national decision making. In most of the partner countries that have not yet signed the PRTR Protocol, experts within the environmental ministries are ready to implement the national PRTRs and clearly see benefits for their subsequent countries. The national Project partners, however, cannot advance further without the needed support from political decision makers.

212. For Kazakhstan and Moldova, the two countries that did sign the PRTR Protocol, the Project started very timely and supported the Project partners to accomplish a lot of complicated technical, legal and awareness raising tasks, required from the countries under the agreement of PRTR Protocol. As a result, PRTR reporting is mandatory in Moldova since 2018 and it will become mandatory in Kazakhstan starting from July 2021. In line with the Kazakh and Moldovan plans the two PRTRs systems will also be used more actively for the collection of data relevant for the reporting to MEA's as the Stockholm Convention, the Minamata Convention and the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change.

213. For the other countries that did not implement their PRTRs and did not sign the PRTR protocol, there is little evidence of institutional sustainability apart from the fact that Peru's and Cambodian National Coordination Teams have an official status as National PRTR Working Group that is confirmed by governmental decision.

214. As mentioned above under socio political sustainability, one could argue that a sharper focus on stronger involvement of political decision makers (at Project entry level and during implementation) would have been needed to convince them of the benefits that PRTRs could bring for their countries, but there is no guarantee that this would have worked.

215. In most of the countries sustainability of project outcomes have a high dependency on / sensitivity to institutional support. A complete but weak mechanism is in place to sustain/support the institutionalisation of project outcomes (e.g. all planned processes to draft policies and/or laws completed but none have yet been approved). Based on the above the overall rating for socio-political sustainability should be estimated at Moderately Unlikely.

Rating of Institutional sustainability – Moderately Unlikely (MU)

Overall rating of Sustainability – Unlikely (U)³³

³³ Although a clear likelihood of sustainability is observed in 2 of the 6 Project countries (Moldova and Kazakhstan), there are not many signs that sustainability will be likely in most of the Project countries (Belarus, Cambodia, Ecuador and Peru). As a result, the overall likelihood of sustainability should be rated as Unlikely.

6 Factors Affecting Performance

6.1.1 Preparation and readiness

216. Regarding the inclusion of prior PRTR initiatives in Project countries, the Project was well prepared. The Project document carefully described the baseline situation in the countries with regard to the implementation of the Stockholm Convention National Implementation Plans and regarding a series of bilateral initiatives on the subject of PRTRs undertaken by international organizations. At the end of the PRTR Phase I Project all countries that participated as well in the Phase II Project were well prepared to further develop and implement their PRTRs. National decision makers of those countries provided to UNEP and UNITAR clear statements of their commitment to the Project and intention to implement the PRTRs. With PRTRs implemented in only 2 of the 6 Project countries after Project completion, it turns out that those countries were less well prepared for participation in the Project than they declared.

217. Concerning the Project preparation and readiness at managerial level, unfortunately things turned out to be more complicated regarding the country agreement for implementation of the Project in Ecuador. (See also *Section 5.7.2. Monitoring implementation*)

Sub-rating of Preparation and readiness – Moderately Unsatisfactory (MU)

6.1.2 Quality of Project management and supervision

218. As mentioned in the sections *1. Introduction* and *Section 5.7.2. Monitoring implementation*, the Project management performance of the Executing Agency and of the Implementing Agency was of good quality.

Sub-rating of Quality of Project management and supervision – Satisfactory (S)

6.1.3 Stakeholder participation and cooperation

219. In the evaluation interviews Project stakeholders expressed that Stakeholder involvement activities and awareness raising were well appreciated and seen as successful. Project partners reported in the lessons learned report a strong public interest in the subject of PRTR during the implementation of the training programme, especially from participants from industrial areas and the most polluted districts of cities³⁴. Effective cooperation in the awareness raising activities was achieved with OSCE supported Aarhus Centres, that have an important role in the dissemination of knowledge on and experience with the Aarhus Convention. Respondents to the evaluation survey concluded that the Project performed satisfactory to highly satisfactory in the identification and involvement of important Project stakeholders. By governmental decision (carried out during the implementation of the PRTR Phase I project), Peru's and Cambodian National Coordination Teams have an official status as National PRTR Working Group.

220. In the lessons learned report, national partners highlighted the importance of active involvement of the industry sector from an early stage of PRTR development. A step-by-step

³⁴ The report did not specify which cities and polluted areas.

approach was recommended to convince the business sector of the efficiency benefits in reporting duties a PRTR with single window reporting system can provide. Also, it was mentioned by several Project partners that the involvement of NGOs and the awareness raising activities is not complete and that more activities need to be developed to raise awareness about the existence of national PRTRs and to strengthen public access to environmental information. Countries will have to look for national or international financial sources to be able to continue the work that started in the framework of the Project.

221. The evaluation has found that globally more than 1,500 people have been trained in the different aspects of PRTR development. Although it must be stated that there is a level of uncertainty to this number. A clear instruction was not provided on how to count and report participants, including their gender and possible status as representative of vulnerable and or human rights groups. The evaluation has also concluded that a more standardized approach for the national strategies to enable public access to PRTR data and active participation in PRTR implementation, could have strengthened the focus of the strategies and their subsequent implementation. (See also different sub-sections of *Section 5.4.1. Delivery of outputs*)

Sub-rating of Stakeholder participation and cooperation – Satisfactory (S)

6.1.4 Responsiveness to human rights and gender equity

222. Gender concerns, gender policies, indigenous people and human rights are not mentioned throughout the Project document, as it was not a priority or a requirement at the time when the Project document was developed. During implementation, the Executing Agency did not develop a systematic Project policy to make sure that gender equity was guaranteed and that involvement of relevant vulnerable groups, human rights advocacy groups and indigenous people would be properly considered within the PRTR initiative. In the Project reporting and in responses to the evaluation interview questions, however, it was confirmed that in practice project partners tried to make sure that women were well represented in Project activities. Although no clear instruction was provided on how to count and report female participation in the Project meetings and trainings, some of the countries reported percentage of female participation in the Project's capacity building training programmes to demonstrate the country's approach to guarantee gender equity. The following Project countries reported an estimated percentage of women participation in national Project trainings: Belarus 64%, Cambodia over 50 %, Kazakhstan 83% and Peru 48 %. The Project's Lessons Learned report highlighted involvement of what can be considered representatives of vulnerable groups during the training programme for civil society as a success. "In particular participants from industrial areas or most polluted districts of the city"³⁵ reportedly showed such interest.

223. As mentioned in sections 5.4.1. *Delivery of outputs, Output 2.2. Sector specific training programmes are developed and properly documented* and 6.1.3. *Stakeholder participation and cooperation*, there is no properly documented statistical information available about the

³⁵ The report did not specify which cities and polluted areas.

gender balance and number of people involved representing vulnerable groups or human rights advocacy groups. A standardized reporting template provided at the start of a project that provides all relevant aspects of project execution to report on, including the above-mentioned statistical information is a good way to produce this important data and include the relevant information in the final reporting.

Sub-rating of Responsiveness to human rights and gender equity – Moderately Satisfactory (MS) (But difficult to rate as these aspects were not programming principles at the time of the project development and initiation)

6.1.5 Environmental, social and economic safeguards

224. Thematically, the aim of the Project was to equip participating governments with modern reporting tools to improve national environmental management and monitoring. Successful implementation of the PRTR systems will lead to cleaner production in the long term and improved protection of human health and the environment from POPs and other hazardous chemicals. Next to environmental benefits, cleaner production and an improved protection of human health, brings about social and economic benefits. The Aarhus Convention principles of public participation in environmental decision making also have a strong social component.

225. Regarding management monitoring and reporting on environmental, social and economic safeguards, the evaluation has no found evidence of a management plan being in place to address those safeguards. There was no reference made in the reporting to important UNEP guidance on the issue: “Safeguard Risk Identification Form (SRIF), introduced in 2019 and Environmental, Social and Economic Review note (ESRN), in place since 2016. The PIRs reported throughout the Project implementation assessments of environmental, social, cultural and economic risks. Under the latter categories the risk was only highlighted in the PIRs that PRTR data could be misunderstood by stakeholders in the different countries. Intended mitigating measure were not specified. Monitoring and reporting did not mention many issues relevant for environmental, social and economic safeguards, although the Lessons Learned report presented at the last Steering Committee Meeting highlighted a strong interest in training and capacity building activities of the Project, especially from participants from industrial areas and the most polluted districts of cities.³⁶ Reportedly efforts were made, by UNEP, UNITAR and Project partners to minimize the project’s environmental footprint by organizing Project meetings back-to-back and, with this approach, avoid unnecessary international travel.

Sub-rating of Environmental, social and economic safeguards – Moderately Unsatisfactory (MU)

6.1.6 Country ownership and driven-ness

226. The Terminal Evaluation has found that country ownership among political decision makers is a key success factor for the achievement of Project outcomes intermediate states and intended impact. Countries need to be determined to endorse and adopt all technical and legal documents in support of integrated PRTR implementation. Without this commitment,

³⁶ The report did not specify which cities and polluted areas.

PRTRs will not be implemented and used for national reporting and for POPs reporting and monitoring. As stated in different subsections of *Section 5.4 Effectiveness*, Project counterparts from the national environmental ministries are strongly motivated to work with PRTRs and clearly see the benefits the reporting systems bring. National political decision makers, however, are further away from the reporting processes in which the PRTRs would support national environmental authorities. (National reporting + Stockholm and Aarhus conventions and possibly other MEAs). Frequent changes of ministers in the Ministries of Environment of different Project countries have not strengthened the national Project commitment. In most of the countries the intention to implement the PRTRs was not strongly enough institutionalized. At the same time, the Project was well received at national level. This was officially confirmed before the Project started and in bilateral contacts with UNEP and UNITAR. As reported in the evaluation interviews and Project reports Governmental stakeholders that are essential for moving from outputs to project outcomes or from project outcomes to intermediate states in Moldova and Kazakhstan had a strong country ownership and driven-ness to achieve the Project objectives in support of their ratification of the PRTR Protocol. For the other Project countries, it is not fully clear whether they will, over time, move forward. The required country ownership and driven-ness in support of PRTR implementation is not currently evident.

Sub-rating of Country ownership and driven-ness - Moderately Unsatisfactory (MU)³⁷

6.1.7 Communication and public awareness

227. The Project included a series of activities to raise public awareness and improve communication on pollution releases and transfers. According to the Final Project report and the evaluation interviews, civil society organizations and journalists were successfully trained on the subject of PRTRs, publications on PRTRs and POPs were published and relevant stakeholders were involved with the important Project meetings and workshops. As stated earlier, the evaluation has concluded that a more standardized approach for the national strategies to enable public access to PRTR data and active participation in PRTR implementation, could have strengthened the focus of the strategies and their subsequent implementation. (See also different sub-sections of *Section 5.4.1. Delivery of outputs* and *6.1.3. Stakeholder participation and cooperation*).

Sub-rating of Communication and public awareness – Moderately Satisfactory (MS)

Overall rating of Factors affecting performance – Satisfactory (S)

³⁷ Although a clear country ownership is observed in 2 of the 6 Project countries (Moldova and Kazakhstan), there are not many signs of decisive country ownership in most of the Project countries (Belarus, Cambodia, Ecuador and Peru). As a result, the overall Country ownership and driven-ness should be rated as Moderately Unsatisfactory

7 Conclusions and Recommendations

228. The Terminal Evaluation has found that, despite serious contracting and procurement problems in Ecuador, the Project played a key role to support Belarus, Cambodia, Ecuador, Kazakhstan, Moldova and Peru in the development of national PRTRs. The aforementioned problems were solved in a creative way by UNITAR through the involvement of an external (third) partner.

229. Project countries have received: appropriate tools to improve access and accuracy of environmental data on POPs and other priority chemicals in the Project countries and to enhance awareness and public participation on environmental matters, through implementation of fully operational national PRTRs. Without the initiative of the Project the countries involved would not have been able to achieve these important results. To date, only the Moldovan PRTR that was developed within the framework of the Project is fully operational. Later this year, a second Project PRTR will become operational in Kazakhstan. For the other Project countries implementation depends on national political decision making.

230. All participating countries have developed detailed National PRTR Proposals following the UNITAR guidelines for PRTR development. The national proposals include e.g. a recommendation for the development of the required specific PRTR legal instruments.

231. The capacity for collecting and using accurate environmental PRTR data increased significantly in each country, resulting in increased public knowledge of environmental issues and in using PRTRs as a basis for the development of SC national reports. However, the actual use of POPs data collected through the national PRTRs in Stockholm Convention reporting is still limited and needs to be further developed.

232. The well-developed revised UNITAR guidance on PRTR development was appreciated and used by Project countries. The updated guidance on MEA reporting through PRTRs provided valuable information. At the same time the study highlighted that reporting on POPs stockpiles, especially, would need further adaptation for efficient inclusion in PRTR reporting systems.

233. All countries developed national strategies and implemented a series of activities to raise awareness about the development of the national PRTRs and educate stakeholders on how to access information from the PRTR websites. Although the work under this component was not structured in a way that would have allowed measurement of how successfully the activities were implemented, the output reports and evaluation interviews confirm that valuable work was done and the participation of key stakeholders was secured.

234. Regarding the thematically cross-cutting lessons learned component of the Project the Terminal Evaluation has found country ownership and the political will to carry through the required decisions in support of PRTR implementation as a critical success factor for the Project.

235. For more details about the above conclusions see also sections (5.4. Effectiveness, 5.4.1. Delivery of outputs, 5.4.2. Achievement of Direct outcomes and Project outcomes and 5.4.3 Likelihood of impact).

236. The Terminal Evaluation also posed the following set of key strategic questions:

- A. To what extent, and in what ways, has the Project supported the participating countries to have a more systematic and efficient process to collect information on POPs for national reporting and information dissemination?
- B. To what extent, and in what ways, have the national PRTR systems in the six participating countries been able to demonstrate the value of PRTRs in achieving compliance with the Stockholm Convention in a manner that is replicable in other countries?
- C. Regarding the dissemination of PRTR data and best practices for national PRTR systems, what does the evaluation identify as the most effective communication strategies implemented, based on the experiences from the six participating countries?
- D. Which discernible factors have affected the successful uptake of the Project across different countries and which have led to the sustainability of Project outcomes over the Project's two phases?'

237. As an answer to **Question A)** the Terminal Evaluation has found that the Project was very well able to support the participating countries in developing a more systematic and efficient process to collect information on pollutants, releases and transfers for national reporting and information dissemination. However, the aspect of POPs reporting and reporting to other MEA's, especially, will need to be further developed. The more systematic and efficient PRTRs that the Project counterparts have developed were a result of a combination of well-designed and well-implemented activities for capacity building and effective experience exchange that included South-South Cooperation (See also sections 5.4 Effectiveness, 5.4.1 Delivery of outputs, 5.4.2. Achievement of Direct outcomes Project outcome 1 and 2).

238. Regarding **Question B)** the evaluation has found that POPs reporting and reporting to other MEA's will need to be further developed. To date, none of the Project countries is reporting to the Stockholm Convention directly from their national PRTR, developed within the framework of the Project. Full integration of national PRTR reporting and national reporting to the Stockholm Convention is expected to need more adaptations. However, many of the Project countries are planning to use PRTRs in POPs reporting. In future reporting to the Stockholm Convention, it is expected that the PRTRs will be used for collection of data.

Additional data will have to be added to the SC reporting from other sources. This is the current practice in Chile, a country that officially implemented its PRTR in 2013 and that participated in the PRTR Phase I project. Full integration of the Stockholm Convention electronic reporting system with national PRTRs of Project countries, is a task to be realized in the future (See also sections 5.4 *Effectiveness*, 4.4.1 *Delivery of outputs*, 5.4.2. *Achievement of Direct outcomes Project outcome 3*).

239. With respect to the development of communication strategies highlighted in **Question C**), the evaluation concluded that all countries have developed effective strategies and have implemented a series of diverse communication and awareness raising activities for public dissemination of PRTR data. At the same time, the Project lacked a standardized approach that could have given this part of the Project more focus. The evaluation concluded that it would have been efficient for all countries to develop their strategies following common approach. Such an approach could have been based on the analysis of international experience with public participation and awareness raising in the framework of PRTR reporting and implementation of the Stockholm and Aarhus conventions. Experience with the national strategy development could then have been used for the further development of the UNITAR PRTR guidance series (See also sections 5.4 *Effectiveness*, 5.4.1. *Delivery of outputs*, 5.4.2. *Achievement of Direct outcomes, Project outcome 4*, 6.1.7 *Communication and public awareness*).

240. In answer to **Question D**) the key discernible factor that has affected the successful uptake of the Project across the different countries of the PRTR Phase I and PRTR Phase II projects was governmental buy-in, Project ownership and commitment to carry through political decision making in support of official implementation of national PRTRs and ratification of the PRTR Protocol of the Aarhus Convention. To achieve such ownership and commitment the evaluation has found, IA, EA and national counterparts should maximise political decision makers involvement with the Project. In support of a positive decision-making, decision makers should be well informed about the benefits in terms of data quality, efficiency, public participation and protection of human health and the environment that PRTRs bring for a country. With all the technical and public participation work of the two projects completed, many Project counterparts of countries that have not yet officially implemented their PRTRs have expressed the need to work more with national decision makers in support of the adoption of the PRTRs as part of national regulatory frameworks and official implementation of the PRTRs as the mandatory way of national reporting on pollutants, releases and transfers of chemical and waste substances.

241. The fact that more advocacy in support of PRTR implementation is still needed in a number of Project countries, however, does not necessarily imply that the merits of the Project fall short of the required quality. Responses to the evaluation survey even suggest that the Project's performance was 'Satisfactory to 'Highly Satisfactory' in its efforts to inform decision makers about the effectiveness and efficiency of PRTR for POPs and chemicals management and for enhancing public participation and awareness raising on environmental matters.

242. Implementation of both projects demonstrated that positive decision making in support of national PRTR implementation can sometimes be influenced by external factors as the national ambition to become a member of OECD (Chile, Peru and Ecuador) or the goal to sign an Association Agreement with the EU (Moldova). (See also sections 5.4 *Effectiveness*, 5.4.1 *Delivery of outputs*, 5.4.3. *Likelihood of impact*, 6.1.6 *Country ownership and driven-ness*).

243. The Terminal Evaluation concludes that the overall rating for the quality of Project implementation is **Moderately Satisfactory** (*For a summary table of the evaluation rating see Table 12. below*).

Table 11. Summary table of evaluation rating

Criterion	Summary assessment	Rating
A. Strategic relevance	The Project positioned its activities very well in line with prior and current national, regional and international PRTR initiatives and the Stockholm and Aarhus conventions (<i>Section 5. Evaluation findings, 5.1 Strategic Relevance</i>)	HS
Alignment with MTS and POW	The Project was well aligned with the draft Medium-Term Strategy for 2010–2013 (<i>Section 5. Evaluation findings, 5.1.1. Alignment with MTS and POW</i>)	HS
Alignment with UNEP/ GEF Donor Strategic priorities	The evaluation has found that the Project was well in line with UNEP / GEF Donor strategic Priorities. (<i>Section 5. Evaluation findings, 5.1.2. Alignment with UNEP/ GEF Donor Strategic priorities</i>)	HS
Relevance to regional, sub-regional and national priorities	Next to the Project countries agenda to comply with the obligations under the Stockholm and Aarhus conventions, the Project is relevant to a series of different national priorities (<i>Section 5. Evaluation findings, 5.1.3. Relevance to regional, sub-regional and national priorities</i>)	HS
Complementary with existing interventions	The evaluation has found that the Project was complementary with prior and current PRTR development support initiatives. (<i>Section 5. Evaluation findings, 5.1.4. Complementary with existing interventions</i>)	HS
B. Quality of Project design	The Project has a comprehensive, coherent logical framework that contributes towards the Project objective in both content and process. No stakeholder analysis or description of stakeholder consultation has been provided. (<i>Section 5. Evaluation findings, 5.2. Review of Project design</i>)	HS
C. Nature of the External Context	Notwithstanding frequent political changes in a number of Project countries, the nature of the external context was favourable for the external context. (<i>Section 5. Evaluation findings, 5.3. Nature of external context</i>)	F
D. Effectiveness	The evaluation has found that the Project was effective in producing programmed outputs and immediate outcomes. (<i>Section 5. Evaluation findings, 5.4. Effectiveness</i>)	MS
Delivery of outputs	The Project has successfully produced the programmed outputs. (<i>Section 5. Evaluation findings, 5.4. Effectiveness, 5.4.1. Delivery of outputs</i>)	S
Achievement of direct outcomes and Project outcomes	The Project has successfully produced most of the direct and Project outcomes faithful to the Project description, although not all outcomes important to attain intermediate states, were fully achieved. (<i>Section 5. Evaluation findings, 5.4. Effectiveness, 5.4.2. Achievement of Direct outcomes and Project outcomes</i>)	MS

Criterion	Summary assessment	Rating
Likelihood of impact	Impact in Moldova and Kazakhstan is clear, in the other Project countries impact will strongly depend on future political decision making. <i>(Section 5. Evaluation findings, 5.4. Effectiveness, 5.4.3. Likelihood of impact)</i>	MU***
E. Financial management	Project reports demonstrate and evaluation interviews confirm that Project finances were well administered. <i>(Section 5. Evaluation findings, 5.5. Financial management)</i>	HS
Adherence to UNEP's policies and procedures	Based on the provided documentation, the evaluation has found that the Project was implemented in line with UNEP's policies and procedures. <i>(Section 5. Evaluation findings, 5.5.1. Adherence to UNEP's policies and procedures)</i>	HS
Completeness of financial information	The evaluation has found that the Project complied well with UNEP financial requirements and procedures <i>(Section 5. Evaluation findings, 5.5.2. Completeness of financial information)</i>	HS
Communication between finance and project management staff	The evaluation has found that there was a well-maintained communication between finance and project management staff. <i>(Section 5. Evaluation findings, 5.5.3. Communication between finance and project management staff)</i>	HS
F. Efficiency	The Project has demonstrated Efficiency in making use of and following up on the combined existing national and international PRTR initiatives. <i>(Section 5. Evaluation findings, 5.6. Efficiency)</i>	S
G. Monitoring and reporting	On Monitoring and reporting the evaluation has found that the monitoring of the required quality and reports were delivered in a timely manner throughout the lifetime of the Project. Problems with decision making in support of official PRTR implementation probably should have been highlighted more seriously <i>(Section 5. Evaluation findings, 5.7. Monitoring and reporting)</i>	S
Monitoring design and budgeting	The evaluation has found that a well elaborated monitoring plan including the needed budget was in place, <i>(Section 5 Evaluation findings, 5.7. Monitoring and reporting, 5.7.1. Monitoring design and budgeting)</i>	S
Monitoring implementation	The evaluation has found that monitoring implementation worked well during Project implementation. However, the problems with national commitment, project ownership and decision making in support of official PRTR implementation in 4 of the 6 Project countries, probably should have been highlighted more seriously in the monitoring mechanism. <i>(Section 5. Evaluation findings, 5.7. Monitoring and reporting, 5.7.2. Monitoring implementation)</i>	MS
Project reporting	The evaluation has found that the Project reporting was of the required quality throughout the lifetime of the Project. However, problems with implementation of the PRTRs were not made noticeably clear. <i>(Section 5. Evaluation findings, 5.7. Monitoring and reporting, 5.5.3. Project reporting)</i>	MS

Criterion	Summary assessment	Rating
H. Sustainability	The efforts of Project stakeholders to secure Project sustainability are regarded by the evaluator as satisfactory. Moldova and Kazakhstan have demonstrated clear sustainability of the Project initiative through government investments in PRTR. The other countries do not demonstrate clear signs of sustainability of the PRTR initiative. <i>(Section 5. Evaluation findings, 5.8. Sustainability)</i>	U**
Socio-political sustainability	The evaluation found that the sustainability of the Project is very much dependent from socio-political circumstances. <i>(Section 5. Evaluation findings, 5.8. Sustainability, 5.8.1. Socio-political sustainability)</i>	MU
Financial sustainability	Government investments in support of PRTR implementation have been demonstrated in Moldova and Kazakhstan. In other Project countries investments are still an open question. <i>(Section 5 Evaluation findings, 5.8. Sustainability, 5.8.2. Financial sustainability)</i>	U
Institutional sustainability	Moldova and Kazakhstan have demonstrated institutional sustainability. For the other Project countries, it is important that without adoption of technical and legal documents PRTRs will not become part of the national legal framework. <i>(Section 5. Evaluation findings, 5.8. Sustainability, 5.8.3. Institutional sustainability)</i>	MU
I. Factors affecting performance	The evaluation has found that the Project dealt in a satisfactory way with factors affecting its performance <i>(Section 6. Factors affecting performance)</i>	MS
Preparation and readiness	The evaluation has found that on the subject of PRTRs the Project prepared well for implementation. Not all countries were, however, as well prepared for PRTR implementation as anticipated. <i>(Section 6. Factors affecting performance, 6.1.1 Preparation and readiness)</i>	MU
Quality of Project management and supervision	The quality of Project management and supervision was found to be good. <i>(Section 6. Factors affecting performance, Section 6.1.2. Quality of Project management and supervision)</i>	S
Stakeholder participation and cooperation	A standardized approach to stakeholder participation and cooperation could have probably improved the quality of this component. However, in general the quality of stakeholder participation was found to be good. <i>(Section 6. Factors affecting performance, 6.1.3. Quality of Stakeholder participation and cooperation)</i>	S
Responsiveness to human rights and gender equity	Human rights and gender equity were not a priority when the Project was developed. Also, during implementation, it has not been given extra attention in a coordinated way <i>(Section 6. Factors affecting performance Section, 6.1.4. Responsiveness to human rights and gender equity)</i>	MS
Environmental, social and economic safeguards	The evaluation has not found evidence of a management being in place for Environmental, social and economic safeguards. <i>(Section 6. Factors affecting performance, Section 6.1.5. Environmental, social and economic safeguards)</i>	MU

Criterion	Summary assessment	Rating
Country ownership and drivenness	Moldova and Kazakhstan have demonstrated strong country ownership and drivenness. The other Project partners to a lesser extent (<i>Section 6. Factors affecting performance, Section 6.1.6. Country ownership and drivenness</i>)	MU
Communication and public awareness	A more standardized approach in communication and awareness raising could have strengthened the focus of these activities. The evaluation has found, however, that valuable communication and public awareness activities have been carried out. (<i>Section 6. Factors affecting performance, Section 6.1.7. Communication and public awareness</i>)	MS
Overall Project rating	Moderately Satisfactory	MS

*Favourability: Highly Favourable (HF); Favourable (F); Moderately Favourable (MF); Moderately Unfavourable (MU); Unfavourable (U); Highly Unfavourable (HU). **Sustainability, ***Likelihood of impact: Highly Likely (HL); Likely (L); Moderately Likely (ML); Moderately Unlikely (MU); Unlikely (U); Highly Unlikely (HU).

7.1 Lessons learned

244. The most important lessons that are discussed throughout this Terminal Evaluation are summarized in the section below.

Lesson 1. *Project delays occur in many international projects. Especially, national regulations can make it difficult to contract the lead national ministry for the implementation of project activities and procurement, thus delaying the overall project implementation. Involvement of an external partner is a good way to solve implementation problems and avoid delays.*

Context from which lesson is derived: The PRTR Phase II project was delayed because of contracting and procurement problems in Ecuador. Only after the involvement of the third partner FIAS early 2019, the Project activities in Ecuador could really take off.

Contexts in which lesson may be useful: Implementation of UNEP and or UNITAR projects in which delays occur caused by contracting and procurement problems

Lesson 2. *The PRTR Phase II project was well implemented and executed, the successful attainment of Project results, however, finally depended strongly on national decision making. Maximizing the involvement with national decision makers in projects directly relating to national governance issues can strengthen Project ownership and commitment to the achievement of Project results.*

Context from which lesson is derived: From the 6 Project countries to date PRTRs are being implemented only in Moldova and Kazakhstan. In the other countries, implementation depends on future decision making. Although a lot has been done to involve national decision makers with the Project, many of the Project partners from the countries that did not yet decide to implement their PRTR feel the continued need to convince national decision makers of the value and efficiency that PRTR implementation would bring to their countries.

Contexts in which lesson may be useful: Development of future UNEP and or UNITAR projects, where achievement of project results depends on national decision making.

Lesson 3. *Unexpected contract details with webhosting companies and a lack of foresight in national budgeting for PRTR webhosting costs can result in national PRTRs being unavailable online one year after Project completion. Timely forward planning for adequate budgetary provision could have avoided this situation.*

Context from which lesson is derived: Due do different reasons to date the PRTRs of Belarus, Ecuador and Kazakhstan are not available on the internet.

Contexts in which lesson may be useful: Development of possible future PRTR activities and or projects.

7.2 Recommendations

245. Considering the scope of the evaluation and based on the main findings, conclusions and lessons learned, the recommendations presented here are addressed to UNEP as the Implementing Agency and UNITAR as the Executing Agency of the project *POPs monitoring, reporting and information dissemination using Pollutant Release and Transfer Registers (PRTRs)*.

Recommendation #1:	<i>Use all bilateral and international meetings (such as the 10th SC COP in 2021) with 3348 and 5648 Project countries as opportunities for ‘diplomatic advocacy’ to keep the issue of political decisions on the support of national PRTR implementation high on the national agenda of those countries, and make efforts to ensure that current and new ministers of environment are well informed about the value of PRTRs in terms of e.g. data reliability, cost-effectiveness and OECD membership.</i>
Context/comment:	The evaluation has found that many experts from the national environmental ministries in Project countries are strongly motivated to work with PRTRs and clearly see the benefits that the reporting systems bring. However, the frequent changes of ministers in the main Project countries have not strengthened national Project commitment. New ministers have different experiences and often different priorities. Such circumstances potentially can negatively affect the sustainability of the Project initiative. In turn, diplomatic advocacy initiatives from the side of UNEP and UNITAR could reinforce political decision making in support of PRTR implementation in the Project countries that have not yet taken the decision to implement the PRTRs designed within the framework of this Project.
Priority Level ³⁸:	Critical, considering the fact that Belarus, Cambodia, Ecuador and Peru are lagging behind the TOC quite considerably.
Type of Recommendation	Project
Responsibility:	Implementing Agency UNEP and executing agency UNITAR
Proposed implementation time-frame:	10th SC COP in Geneva, 19 July to 30 July 2021 and other possible occasions.

³⁸ Priority level are described as follows:

Critical recommendation: address significant and/or pervasive deficiencies in governance, risk management or internal control processes, such that reasonable assurance cannot be provided regarding the achievement of programme objectives.

Important recommendation: address reportable deficiencies or weaknesses in governance, risk management or internal control processes, such that reasonable assurance might be at risk regarding the achievement of programme objectives.

Opportunity for improvement: comprise suggestions to improve performance that do not meet the criteria of either critical or important recommendations.

Recommendation #2:	<i>In order to develop more targeted and effective strategies, special guidance materials for the design of National strategies on strengthening access to PRTR information and public participation in PRTR implementation should be developed.</i>
Context/comment:	Participating countries developed national strategies aimed to enable public access to PRTR data, well aligned with the principles of the Aarhus Convention and relevant national development plans. Unfortunately, not all strategies were structured in the same way and did not contain the same strategy components. Overall, the strategies gave the impression to be developed a bit randomly, lacking an overarching analysis of what specific type of strategy is needed to enable public access to PRTR data and active participation in PRTR implementation. In hindsight, one could argue that it would have been efficient when all countries would have developed their strategies following one standardized approach. Such an approach should be based on the analysis of international experience with public participation and awareness raising in the framework of PRTR reporting and implementation of the Aarhus and Stockholm conventions. Experience with the national strategy development could then have been used for the further development of the UNITAR PRTR guidance series.
Priority Level:	Opportunity for improvement
Type of Recommendation	Institutional
Responsibility:	Executing agency UNITAR
Proposed implementation time-frame:	Design of future PRTR implementation projects

Recommendation #3:	<p><i>To receive clear reporting information on e.g. the number of participants, gender, representation of vulnerable groups/ human rights groups from national partners, project managers should develop (or use existing) reporting guidance right from the Project start. This guidance should include information on;</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <i>1. Project strategy for ensuring gender equality, participation of vulnerable groups and responsiveness to human rights</i> <i>2. Guidelines for the implementation of participants evaluations of project trainings and workshops</i> <i>3. Guidelines for reporting statistical data on;</i> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <i>a. the number of participants participating in project activities</i> <i>b. the number of participants disaggregated by stakeholder type (government, business, academia, NGO)</i> <i>c. number of participants disaggregated by gender</i> <i>d. number of participants disaggregated by representation of vulnerable groups</i> <i>e. number of participants disaggregated by representation of human rights groups</i>
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Context/comment:	Not all workshop reports provide participants lists and statistical information disaggregated by gender, organization type and participants' evaluation input on their appreciation of the provided training. As a result, it was difficult to provide a statistical overview on the total number of people trained on the different PRTR subjects, their background in terms of stakeholder type and gender and their appreciation of the provided training. A standardized reporting template provided at the start of a project that provides all relevant aspects of project execution to report on, including the above-mentioned statistical information is a good way to produce this important data and include the relevant information in the final reporting.
Priority Level:	Opportunity for improvement
Type of Recommendation	Project
Responsibility:	Executing agency UNITAR
Proposed implementation time-frame:	Design of future PRTR implementation projects

Annex 1. Evaluation TORs (without annexes)

Section 1: PROJECT BACKGROUND AND OVERVIEW

Project General Information

Table 1. Project summary

GEF Project ID:	5648		
Implementing Agency:	UNEP	Executing Agency:	United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR)
Sub-programme:	Chemicals, Waste and Air Quality	Expected Accomplishment(s):	...
UNEP approval date:	May 2015	Programme of Work Output(s):	...
GEF approval date:	February 2014	Project type:	Medium-size Project (MSP)
GEF Operational Programme #:	GEF 5	Focal Area(s):	Persistent Organic Pollutants (POPs)
Relevant SDG(s) and indicator(s):	Sustainable Development Goal targets 3.9, 6.3, 9.4, 12.4, 12.5, 12.8, 16.10	GEF Strategic Priority:	CHEM 1 – Phase out POPs and reduce POPs releases CHEM 3 – Pilot Sound Chemicals Management and mercury reduction
Expected start date:	...	Actual start date:	November 2015
Planned completion date:	December 2018	Actual operational completion date:	December 2019
Planned project budget at approval:	USD 10,232,258	Actual total expenditures reported as of June 2019:	USD 1,837,268.75
GEF grant allocation:	USD 2,000,000	GEF grant expenditures reported as of June 2019:	USD 1,837,268.75
Project Preparation Grant - GEF financing:	n/a	Project Preparation Grant - co-financing:	n/a
Expected Medium-Size Project/Full-Size Project co-financing:	USD 8,232,258	Secured Medium-Size Project/Full-Size Project co-financing:	n/a
First disbursement:	07.09.2015	Planned date of financial closure:	Q2 2020
No. of formal project revisions:	n/a	Date of last approved project revision:	
No. of Steering Committee meetings:		Date of last/next Steering Committee meeting:	Last: 05.03.2018
Mid-term Review/Evaluation (planned date):	n/a	Mid-term Review/Evaluation (actual date):	n/a
Terminal Evaluation (planned date):	Q1 2020	Terminal Evaluation (actual date):	Q1 2020
Coverage - Country(ies):	Belarus, Ecuador, Cambodia, Kazakhstan, Moldova, Peru	Coverage - Region(s):	Global: Southeast Asia, Central Asia, South America, Eastern Europe,
Dates of previous project phases:	2009-2012 (POPs monitoring, reporting and information dissemination using Pollutant Release and Transfer Registers (PRTRs) GEF ID 3348)	Status of future project phases:	n/a

Project rationale

The Stockholm Convention (SC) on Persistent Organic Pollutants (POPs) in Article 10 acknowledges the value of Pollutant Release and Transfers Registers (PRTRs)³⁹ for the collection and dissemination of information on estimates of annual quantities of chemicals listed in Annex A, B or C, that are released or disposed of. SC Parties are required to report on the overall management of POPs and quantities at certain intervals and PRTRs are designed to assist Parties collect this information faster and in a more cost-effective way. PRTRs act as a central database and are recognized as a robust and comprehensive data-recording system on pollutants, which is also able to record annual information and to gather temporal data for a large number of chemicals. PRTRs provide a publicly accessible system that can assist governments to disseminate information on POPs and other chemicals in a systematic and effective manner.

Although some SC Parties have national reporting requirements institutionalized to collect environmental data, these are usually scattered in several ministries or institutions. The information is not always easily accessible to all stakeholders. In addition, the lack of an integrated approach to environmental data collection often leads to duplicitous reporting requirements, resulting in heavy reporting burdens and draining of national resources through the requirement to maintain various databases. Although Parties to the SC have indicated the need to have a more systematic and efficient process for reporting and information dissemination on POPs, difficulties have been encountered in gathering and centralizing this information at the national level.

To successfully use PRTRs as a tool for POPs reporting, and for meeting Stockholm Convention Article 10 requirements, Parties require technical assistance to: reinforce the responsibilities of national agencies; develop and adopt legislative documents; develop national guidance on the setting up of PRTRs; build capacity for the full participation of stakeholders; pilot implemented PRTRs and identify areas for improvement; and create and set up national PRTR databases, including the reporting process.

This project (GEF ID 5648) was designed to implement a PRTR in six countries, namely Belarus, Cambodia, Ecuador, Kazakhstan, Moldova and Peru. It was expected that the initiative would yield the following outcomes: (i) National PRTR proposals will be updated and used to guide national implementation of PRTRs; (ii) Capacity for collecting and using PRTR data will increase significantly in each country; (iii) Revised guidance on PRTRs and POPs reporting will be in use in each participating country, ensuring comparable PRTR systems; (iv) Improved public access to PRTR data and dissemination of information will allow full participation of key stakeholders; and (v) Key lessons learned on PRTR development and use of PRTRs as POPs reporting tools will be disseminated among national stakeholders, improving access to information.

The project builds upon the POPs-PRTR Phase I Project (POPs monitoring, reporting and information dissemination using Pollutant Release and Transfer Registers - PRTR I) which was funded by GEF, implemented by UNEP and executed by UNITAR from 2009 to 2012. Phase I of the project led to the successful completion of national infrastructure assessments in participating countries, detailing: chemicals used in each country; the legislative basis for PRTRs; institutional basis for PRTRs; existing environmental emissions reporting; mechanisms for public access to data; and other activities related to PRTRs.

This project facilitated participating countries to institute PRTRs that include all POPs, as well as other chemicals relevant to the countries' national contexts. A key innovation of the project was that participating countries would have instituted fully integrated PRTRs that can serve both national and international reporting needs. Use of this tool would be the basis for planning processes for the introduction of measures to reduce POPs and other chemicals of concern to the global environment, as well as tracking the success of related reduction activities. Replicable elements and products

³⁹ A PRTR is a catalogue or database of multimedia (air, water and land) releases and transfers of potentially harmful chemicals, including information on the nature and quantity of such releases and transfers.

would then be available for other SC Parties and evidence of good practice and materials would help to facilitate replication in other parts of the world. This PRTR system would also assist countries to update their National Implementation Plans (NIPs), including the updating of national POPs inventories.

Project objectives and components

According to the GEF CEO Approval document (equivalent to Project Document) the project's overall objective is: to improve access and accuracy of environmental data on POPs and other priority chemicals in 6 countries, and to enhance awareness and public participation on environmental matters, through implementation of fully operational national PRTRs.

The objectives of PRTRs are: to enhance public access to information on the environment, to facilitate public participation, and to contribute to pollution prevention and reduction. As well as facilitating Parties' ability to report under Article 15 of the SC, the institutionalization of PRTRs will also result in the public having access to important environmental data, meeting requirements under Article 13 of the Convention and supporting the national implementation of Principle 10 of the Rio Declaration of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED). In terms of potential opportunities to scale up the project outcomes, lessons learned need to be shared regionally and internationally to ensure SC parties interested in PRTRs have access to resources, guidelines and experiences produced under the project.

To achieve the objective above, the project activities were implemented under five components, each with a set of planned outputs and expected outcomes as summarised below:

Component 1: Project baseline strengthened, and national needs identified

This project component involved the provision of support to countries to develop draft regulatory frameworks for national adoption. The expected outcome under this component is that National PRTR proposals will guide implementation of PRTRs and the development of country-specific PRTR legal instruments.

Planned activities included:

- Review of existing PRTR related materials
- Updating of PRTR national executive proposals
- Drafting of national PRTR legal framework

Expected Outputs:

- Basic existing materials on PRTRs are revised and made available for national consideration
- National PRTR executive proposals updated guide PRTR implementation
- Draft PRTR regulation are developed and considered for national adoption

Component 2: Build capacity to implement PRTRs as a National POPs Reporting System

This project component provided the necessary training and technical support elements needed to develop PRTRs. National capacity was complemented with an international support programme, focusing on the development of modules on key PRTR issues and where countries have the most difficulties. The expected outcome was that the capacity for collecting and using PRTR data would increase significantly in each country, resulting in increased public knowledge of environmental issues and use of PRTRs as a basis for the development of SC national reports.

Planned activities:

- Development and implementation of training modules for global use
- Development and implementation of national training for key sectors
- Development of national guides on estimation techniques
- Conducting pilots using PRTRs to report on POPs

Expected Outputs:

- Standard training modules and materials are developed to be used by any interested country on key topics
- Sector specific training programmes are developed and properly documented

National estimation techniques are developed and available

POPs reporting documents are developed by using PRTRs through pilots

Component 3: Standardisation and comparison of PRTR data

It is important to develop PRTRs according to certain common parameters and standards so that comparison might be possible. Under this component, PRTR implementation and POPs reporting would focus on the common elements to be considered when developing a PRTR system. The expected outcome is that the revised guidance on PRTRs and POPs reporting in use by each participating country will result in comparable PRTR systems.

Planned activities:

Collection and analysis of materials on standardisation

Revision and finalisation of updated guidance on PRTR implementation and POPs reporting

Analysis and comparison of PRTR data from pilots

Expected Outputs:

Reports and studies on standardization of PRTRs are available for countries' use

Developed PRTR implementation guidance facilitates inclusion of POPs into the PRTR system

Comparison of PRTR data facilitates quality data and improve PRTR reporting

Component 4: Access to PRTR data and public information

This project component was devoted to the provision of public access to information. The project advocated for full participation of the civil society, a key aspect of which was to promote active participation during PRTR implementation through making meaningful and appropriate use of PRTR information, relevant to the national situation and needs. The expected outcome was improved public access to PRTR data and dissemination of information to promote the full participation of key stakeholders.

Planned activities:

Development of national strategies for public access to environmental information and PRTRs

Implementation of national strategies for public access to environmental information and PRTRs

Expected Outputs:

National strategies developed enable public access to PRTR data and a more active participation in PRTR implementation

PRTR information is accessed by civil society and other sectors

Component 5: Lessons learned and replication

An assessment of lessons learned from the previous PRTR-I project (2009-2012) and of this PRTR project was to be undertaken under this component, and practical conclusion drawn. The results of the project, including the lessons learned report, was to be disseminated through regional and global workshops. The expected outcome of this component is that the key lessons learned on PRTR development and the use of PRTRs as POPs reporting tools will be disseminated among national stakeholders, and widely among parties to the Stockholm Convention, improving access to information.

Planned activities

Organisation of a global workshop to analyse lessons learned

Organisation of a mid-term global meeting on lessons learned

Organisation of a final 'lessons learned' workshop

Project monitoring and evaluation

Expected Outputs

Final lessons learned report including regional recommendations will enable sound replication of PRTRs in countries

Monitoring and evaluation plan are fully implemented

Executing Arrangements

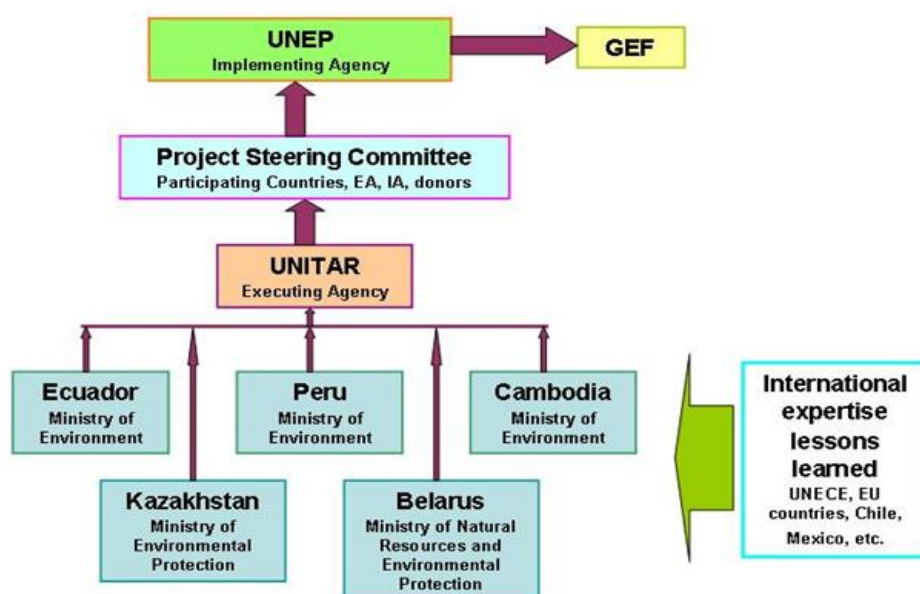
UNEP was the GEF Implementing Agency and UNITAR was the Executing Agency for the project. As part of its implementing role, UNEP supervised and provided administrative support to the Executing Agency. UNITAR was responsible for the project execution and its activities on a day-to-day basis. UNITAR established the necessary managerial and technical teams to execute the project and hired regional consultants necessary for technical activities. UNITAR was also responsible for organizing independent audits to guarantee the proper use of GEF funds. Financial transactions, audits and reports were carried out in accordance with UNEP procedures, and UNITAR submitted administrative, progress and financial reports to UNEP.

A Project Team was established within UNITAR, headed by a Project Coordinator. The Project Team was in charge of the day-to-day management of the project and reported to both UNEP and the Project Steering Committee. A National Focal Point, responsible for coordination of national level activities, was nominated by each participating country and was required to report regularly to the Project Coordinator.

The Project Steering Committee was formed by representatives of the executing and implementing agencies, interested IGOs, donors and government representatives of participating countries. This committee evaluated the progress of the project, taking the necessary measures to guarantee the fulfilment of planned goals and objectives.

Each participating country formed a National Coordinating Body that was to comprise of representatives from government, NGOs, Industry and Academia. This Coordinating body was charged with overseeing project progress and taking corrective actions at the national level, as necessary. Diagram 1 below illustrates the institutional arrangements for project implementation.

Diagram 1: Decision making flowchart and Organigram



Project Cost and Financing

The project falls under the medium-size project (MSP) category, with a GEF allocation of US\$ 2,000,000. At project design, the expected co-financing support from the participating countries, both in cash and in-kind, was US\$ 8,232,258. This brings the total estimated cost of the project to the amount of US\$ 10,232,258. The project budget by source and by component is presented in Tables 2 and 3 below respectively.

Table 2: Estimated project budget by funding source

Source		Amount (US\$)
GEF Trust Fund		2,000,000
Co-financing		8,232,258
UNEP	In-kind	300,000
UNITAR	In-kind	400,000
UNECE	In-kind	2,500,000
Government of Cambodia	cash	330,400
	In-kind	165,800
Government of Kazakhstan	cash	1,286,909
	In-kind	212,000
Government of Ecuador	cash	450,000
	In-kind	176,353.1
Government of Peru	In-kind	362,212.5
Government of Moldova	cash	1,040,983
	In-kind	142,600
Government of Belarus	cash	125,000
	In-kind	690,000
	(select)	
	(select)	
Government of Chile	In-kind	50,000
TOTAL PROJECT COST		10,232,258

Table 3: Estimated project budget by component (USD)

Project Component	Expected Outcomes	Trust Fund	Grant Amount (\$)	Co-financing (\$)
1. Strengthening baseline and identification of national needs	National PRTR proposal guides implementation of PRTRs and the development of country-specific PRTR legal instruments	GEF TF	364,800	1,329,989
2. Capacity building activities towards the implementation of a PRTR for POPs reporting	Capacity for collecting and using PRTR data increased significantly in each country, resulting in increased public knowledge of environmental issues and in using PRTRs as a basis for the development of Stockholm Convention national reports.	GEF TF	949,700	3,314,056
3. Standardization and comparison of PRTR data	Revised guidance on PRTRs and POPs reporting in use by each participating country ensuring comparable PRTR systems	GEF TF	176,000	324,400
4. Access to PRTR data and public information	Improved public access to PRTR data and dissemination of information allows full participation of key stakeholders	GEF TF	152,500	2,067,213
5. Lessons learned and replication	Key lessons learned on PRTR development, improving access to information, and using PRTRs as POPs reporting tools disseminated among national stakeholders, and widely among parties to the Stockholm Convention	GEF TF	217,000	996,600
Subtotal			1,860,000	8,032,258
Project Management Cost		GEFTF	140,000	200,000
Total Project Cost			2,000,000	8,232,258

Implementation Issues

The project was previously scheduled to complete by 2018 but was extended to complete in December 2019 in order to achieve the completion of activities and deliverables in Ecuador. The national implementation of the project in Ecuador had fallen behind the agreed work plan and planned timeframe of activities. The agreements between UNITAR and the other five participating countries (i.e. Moldova, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Peru, Cambodia) terminated in March 2019; regarding these five countries, it was considered that the PRTR objectives were successfully achieved. Final narrative reports and financial reports for these five participating countries were submitted to UNITAR together with grant-out closure forms. Regarding Ecuador however, UNITAR as the implementing agency revised and amended the terms of reference under the agreement with the Ministry of Environment of Ecuador (MOEE). A new tripartite agreement was signed in May 2019 (valid until December 2019) with the scope to include a third national public institution - Fondo de Inversion Ambiental Sostenible (FIAS) which was required to manage and report on the expenditures and use of the funding made available through the project. It was recommended (UNEP GEF PIR Fiscal Year19) that due to the limited timeframe to implement the remaining project activities and deliver the outputs in the terms of reference of the new agreement, UNITAR would provide additional support and assistance to MOEE in order to guarantee the completion of the project according to the new workplan.

Section 2. OBJECTIVE AND SCOPE OF THE EVALUATION

Objective of the Evaluation

In line with the UNEP Evaluation Policy⁴⁰ and the UNEP Programme Manual⁴¹, the Terminal Evaluation is undertaken at completion of the project to assess project performance (in terms of relevance, effectiveness and efficiency), and determine outcomes and impacts (actual and potential) stemming from the project, including their sustainability. The evaluation has two primary purposes: (i) to provide evidence of results to meet accountability requirements, and (ii) to promote operational improvement, learning and knowledge sharing through results and lessons learned among UNEP, UNITAR, and relevant national government ministries and focal points in the participating countries. Therefore, the evaluation will identify lessons of operational relevance for future project formulation and implementation, especially if a third phase of the project is anticipated/planned.

Key Evaluation Principles

Evaluation findings and judgements will be based on sound evidence and analysis, clearly documented in the evaluation report. Information will be triangulated (i.e. verified from different sources) as far as possible, and when verification is not possible, the single source will be mentioned (whilst anonymity is still protected). Analysis leading to evaluative judgements should always be clearly spelled out.

The “Why?” Question. As this is a terminal evaluation and a follow-up project is likely [or similar interventions are envisaged for the future], particular attention will be given to learning from the experience. Therefore, the “Why?” question should be at the front of the consultants’ minds all through the evaluation exercise and is supported by the use of a theory of change approach. This means that the consultant(s) needs to go beyond the assessment of “what” the project performance was and make a serious effort to provide a deeper understanding of “why” the performance was as it was. This should provide the basis for the lessons that can be drawn from the project.

Attribution, Contribution and Credible Association: In order to attribute any outcomes and impacts to a project intervention, one needs to consider the difference between what has happened with, and what would have happened without, the project (i.e. take account of changes over time and between contexts in order to isolate the effects of an intervention). This requires appropriate baseline data and the identification of a relevant counterfactual, both of which are frequently not available for evaluations. Establishing the contribution made by a project in a complex change process relies

⁴⁰ <https://www.unenvironment.org/about-un-environment/evaluation-office/policies-and-strategies>

⁴¹ <https://wecollaborate.unep.org>

heavily on prior intentionality (e.g. approved project design documentation, logical framework) and the articulation of causality (e.g. narrative and/or illustration of the Theory of Change). Robust evidence that a project was delivered as designed and that the expected causal pathways developed supports claims of contribution and this is strengthened where an alternative theory of change can be excluded. A credible association between the implementation of a project and observed positive effects can be made where a strong causal narrative, although not explicitly articulated, can be inferred by the chronological sequence of events, active involvement of key actors and engagement in critical processes.

Communicating evaluation results. A key aim of the evaluation is to encourage reflection and learning by UNEP staff and key project stakeholders. The consultant(s) should consider how reflection and learning can be promoted, both through the evaluation process and in the communication of evaluation findings and key lessons. Clear and concise writing is required on all evaluation deliverables. Draft and final versions of the main evaluation report will be shared with key stakeholders by the Evaluation Manager. There may, however, be several intended audiences, each with different interests and needs regarding the report. The consultant(s) will plan with the Evaluation Manager which audiences to target and the easiest and clearest way to communicate the key evaluation findings and lessons to them. This may include some, or all, of the following; a webinar, conference calls with relevant stakeholders, the preparation of an evaluation brief or interactive presentation.

Key Strategic Questions

1. In addition to the evaluation criteria outlined in Section 10 below, the evaluation will address the strategic questions listed below. These are questions of interest to UNEP and to which the project is believed to be able to make a substantive contribution:
2. To what degree of success has the project supported the participating countries to have a more systematic and efficient process to collect information on POPs for national reporting and information dissemination?
3. Have the national PRTR systems in the six participating countries been able to demonstrate the value of PRTRs in achieving compliance with the Stockholm Convention in a manner that is replicable in other countries?
4. Regarding the dissemination of PRTR data and best practices for national PRTR systems, what does the evaluation identify as the most effective communication strategies implemented, based on the experiences from the six participating countries?

Evaluation Criteria

All evaluation criteria will be rated on a six-point scale. Sections A-I below, outline the scope of the criteria and a link to a table for recording the ratings is provided in Annex 1). A weightings table will be provided in excel format (link provided in Annex 1) to support the determination of an overall project rating. The set of evaluation criteria are grouped in nine categories: (A) Strategic Relevance; (B) Quality of Project Design; (C) Nature of External Context; (D) Effectiveness, which comprises assessments of the availability of outputs, achievement of outcomes and likelihood of impact; (E) Financial Management; (F) Efficiency; (G) Monitoring and Reporting; (H) Sustainability; and (I) Factors Affecting Project Performance. The evaluation consultant(s) can propose other evaluation criteria as deemed appropriate.

Strategic Relevance

The evaluation will assess 'the extent to which the activity is suited to the priorities and policies of the target group, recipient and donor'. The evaluation will include an assessment of the project's relevance in relation to UNEP's mandate and its alignment with UNEP's policies and strategies at the time of project approval. Under strategic relevance an assessment of the complementarity of the project with other interventions addressing the needs of the same target groups will be made. This criterion comprises four elements:

Alignment to the UNEP Medium Term Strategy⁴² (MTS) and Programme of Work (POW)

The evaluation should assess the project's alignment with the MTS and POW under which the project was approved and include, in its narrative, reflections on the scale and scope of any contributions made to the planned results reflected in the relevant MTS and POW.

Alignment to UNEP / Donor/GEF Strategic Priorities

Donor, including GEF, strategic priorities will vary across interventions. UNEP strategic priorities include the Bali Strategic Plan for Technology Support and Capacity Building⁴³ (BSP) and South-South Cooperation (S-SC). The BSP relates to the capacity of governments to: comply with international agreements and obligations at the national level; promote, facilitate and finance environmentally sound technologies and to strengthen frameworks for developing coherent international environmental policies. S-SC is regarded as the exchange of resources, technology and knowledge between developing countries. GEF priorities are specified in published programming priorities and focal area strategies.

Relevance to Regional, Sub-regional and National Environmental Priorities

The evaluation will assess the extent to which the intervention is suited, or responding to, the stated environmental concerns and needs of the countries, sub-regions or regions where it is being implemented. Examples may include: national or sub-national development plans, poverty reduction strategies or Nationally Appropriate Mitigation Action (NAMA) plans or regional agreements etc.

Complementarity with Existing Interventions

An assessment will be made of how well the project, either at design stage or during the project inception or mobilization⁴⁴, took account of ongoing and planned initiatives (under the same sub-programme, other UNEP sub-programmes, or being implemented by other agencies) that address similar needs of the same target groups. The evaluation will consider if the project team, in collaboration with Regional Offices and Sub-Programme Coordinators, made efforts to ensure their own intervention was complementary to other interventions, optimized any synergies and avoided duplication of effort. Examples may include UN Development Assistance Frameworks or One UN programming. Linkages with other interventions should be described and instances where UNEP's comparative advantage has been particularly well applied should be highlighted.

Factors affecting this criterion may include:

Stakeholders' participation and cooperation

Responsiveness to human rights and gender equity

Country ownership and driven-ness

Quality of Project Design

The quality of project design is assessed using an agreed template during the evaluation inception phase, ratings are attributed to identified criteria and an overall Project Design Quality rating is established (www.unenvironment.org/about-un-environment/our-evaluation-approach/templates-and-tools). This overall Project Design Quality rating is entered in the final evaluation ratings table as item B. In the Main Evaluation Report a summary of the project's strengths and weaknesses at design

⁴² UNEP's Medium Term Strategy (MTS) is a document that guides UNEP's programme planning over a four-year period. It identifies UNEP's thematic priorities, known as Sub-programmes (SP), and sets out the desired outcomes, known as Expected Accomplishments (EAs), of the Sub-programmes. <https://www.unenvironment.org/about-un-environment/evaluation-office/our-evaluation-approach/un-environment-documents>

⁴³ <http://www.unep.fr/ozonaction/about/bsp.htm>

⁴⁴ A project's inception or mobilization period is understood as the time between project approval and first disbursement. Complementarity during project implementation is considered under Efficiency, see below.

stage is included, while the complete Project Design Quality template is annexed in the Inception Report.

Factors affecting this criterion may include (at the design stage):

Stakeholders participation and cooperation

Responsiveness to human rights and gender equity

C. Nature of External Context

At evaluation inception stage a rating is established for the project's external operating context (considering the prevalence of conflict, natural disasters and political upheaval⁴⁵). This rating is entered in the final evaluation ratings table as item C. Where a project has been rated as facing either an Unfavourable or Highly Unfavourable external operating context, and/or a negative external event has occurred during project implementation, the ratings for Effectiveness, Efficiency and/or Sustainability may be increased at the discretion of the evaluation consultant and Evaluation Manager together. A justification for such an increase must be given.

D. Effectiveness

Availability of Outputs⁴⁶

The evaluation will assess the project's success in producing the programmed outputs and achieving milestones as per the project design document (ProDoc). Any formal modifications/revisions made during project implementation will be considered part of the project design. Where the project outputs are inappropriately or inaccurately stated in the ProDoc, reformulations may be necessary in the reconstruction of the TOC. In such cases a table should be provided showing the original and the reformulation of the outputs for transparency. The availability of outputs will be assessed in terms of both quantity and quality, and the assessment will consider their ownership by, and usefulness to, intended beneficiaries and the timeliness of their provision. The evaluation will briefly explain the reasons behind the success or shortcomings of the project in delivering its programmed outputs and meeting expected quality standards.

Factors affecting this criterion may include:

Preparation and readiness

Quality of project management and supervision⁴⁷

Achievement of Project Outcomes⁴⁸

The achievement of project outcomes is assessed as performance against the project outcomes as defined in the reconstructed⁴⁹ Theory of Change. These are outcomes that are intended to be

⁴⁵ Note that 'political upheaval' does not include regular national election cycles, but unanticipated unrest or prolonged disruption. The potential delays or changes in political support that are often associated with the regular national election cycle should be part of the project's design and addressed through adaptive management by the project team.

⁴⁶ Outputs are the availability (for intended beneficiaries/users) of new products and services and/or gains in knowledge, abilities and awareness of individuals or within institutions (UNEP, 2019)

⁴⁷ In some cases 'project management and supervision' will refer to the supervision and guidance provided by UNEP to implementing partners and national governments while in others, specifically for GEF funded projects, it will refer to the project management performance of the executing agency and the technical backstopping provided by UNEP.

⁴⁸ Outcomes are the use (i.e. uptake, adoption, application) of an output by intended beneficiaries, observed as changes in institutions or behavior, attitude or condition (UNEP, 2019)

⁴⁹ All submitted UNEP project documents are required to present a Theory of Change with all submitted project designs. The level of 'reconstruction' needed during an evaluation will depend on

achieved by the end of the project timeframe and within the project's resource envelope. As with outputs, a table can be used where substantive amendments to the formulation of project outcomes is necessary. The evaluation should report evidence of attribution between UNEP's intervention and the project outcomes. In cases of normative work or where several actors are collaborating to achieve common outcomes, evidence of the nature and magnitude of UNEP's 'substantive contribution' should be included and/or 'credible association' established between project efforts and the project outcomes realised.

Factors affecting this criterion may include:

Quality of project management and supervision

Stakeholders' participation and cooperation

Responsiveness to human rights and gender equity

Communication and public awareness

Likelihood of Impact

Based on the articulation of long-lasting effects in the reconstructed TOC (i.e. from project outcomes, via intermediate states, to impact), the evaluation will assess the likelihood of the intended, positive impacts becoming a reality. Project objectives or goals should be incorporated in the TOC, possibly as intermediate states or long-lasting impacts. The Evaluation Office's approach to the use of TOC in project evaluations is outlined in a guidance note available on the Evaluation Office website, <https://www.unenvironment.org/about-un-environment/evaluation> and is supported by an excel-based flow chart, 'Likelihood of Impact Assessment Decision Tree'. Essentially the approach follows a 'likelihood tree' from project outcomes to impacts, taking account of whether the assumptions and drivers identified in the reconstructed TOC held. Any unintended positive effects should also be identified and their causal linkages to the intended impact described.

The evaluation will also consider the likelihood that the intervention may lead, or contribute to, unintended negative effects. Some of these potential negative effects may have been identified in the project design as risks or as part of the analysis of Environmental, Social and Economic Safeguards.⁵⁰

The evaluation will consider the extent to which the project has played a catalytic role or has promoted scaling up and/or replication⁵¹ as part of its Theory of Change and as factors that are likely to contribute to longer term impact.

Ultimately UNEP and all its partners aim to bring about benefits to the environment and human well-being. Few projects are likely to have impact statements that reflect such long-term or broad-based changes. However, the evaluation will assess the likelihood of the project to make a substantive contribution to the long-lasting changes represented by the Sustainable Development Goals and/or the intermediate-level results reflected in UNEP's Expected Accomplishments and the strategic priorities of funding partners.

Factors affecting this criterion may include:

Quality of Project Management and Supervision (including adaptive management)

the quality of this initial TOC, the time that has lapsed between project design and implementation (which may be related to securing and disbursing funds) and the level of any formal changes made to the project design.

⁵⁰ Further information on Environmental, Social and Economic Safeguards (ESES) can be found at <http://wedocs.unep.org/handle/20.500.11822/8718>

⁵¹ *Scaling up* refers to approaches being adopted on a much larger scale, but in a very similar context. Scaling up is often the longer-term objective of pilot initiatives. *Replication* refers to approaches being repeated or lessons being explicitly applied in new/different contexts e.g. other geographic areas, different target group etc. Effective replication typically requires some form of revision or adaptation to the new context. It is possible to replicate at either the same or a different scale.

Stakeholders participation and cooperation
Responsiveness to human rights and gender equity
Country ownership and driven-ness
Communication and public awareness

E. Financial Management

Financial management will be assessed under three themes: adherence to UNEP's financial policies and procedures, completeness of financial information and communication between financial and project management staff. The evaluation will establish the actual spend across the life of the project of funds secured from all donors. This expenditure will be reported, where possible, at output level and will be compared with the approved budget. The evaluation will verify the application of proper financial management standards and adherence to UNEP's financial management policies. Any financial management issues that have affected the timely delivery of the project or the quality of its performance will be highlighted. The evaluation will record where standard financial documentation is missing, inaccurate, incomplete or unavailable in a timely manner. The evaluation will assess the level of communication between the Project/Task Manager and the Fund Management Officer as it relates to the effective delivery of the planned project and the needs of a responsive, adaptive management approach.

Factors affecting this criterion may include:

Preparation and readiness
Quality of project management and supervision

F. Efficiency

The evaluation will assess the extent to which the project delivered maximum results from the given resources. This will include an assessment of the cost-effectiveness and timeliness of project execution. Focussing on the translation of inputs into outputs, cost-effectiveness is the extent to which an intervention has achieved, or is expected to achieve, its results at the lowest possible cost. Timeliness refers to whether planned activities were delivered according to expected timeframes as well as whether events were sequenced efficiently. The evaluation will also assess to what extent any project extension could have been avoided through stronger project management and identify any negative impacts caused by project delays or extensions. The evaluation will describe any cost or time-saving measures put in place to maximise results within the secured budget and agreed project timeframe and consider whether the project was implemented in the most efficient way compared to alternative interventions or approaches.

The evaluation will give special attention to efforts made by the project teams during project implementation to make use of/build upon pre-existing institutions, agreements and partnerships, data sources, synergies and complementarities⁵² with other initiatives, programmes and projects etc. to increase project efficiency. The evaluation will also consider the extent to which the management of the project minimised UNEP's environmental footprint.

The factors underpinning the need for any project extensions will also be explored and discussed. As management or project support costs cannot be increased in cases of 'no cost extensions', such extensions represent an increase in unstated costs to implementing parties.

Factors affecting this criterion may include:

Preparation and readiness (e.g. timeliness)
Quality of project management and supervision
Stakeholders participation and cooperation

⁵² Complementarity with other interventions during project design, inception or mobilization is considered under Strategic Relevance above.

G. Monitoring and Reporting

The evaluation will assess monitoring and reporting across three sub-categories: monitoring design and budgeting, monitoring implementation and project reporting.

Monitoring Design and Budgeting

Each project should be supported by a sound monitoring plan that is designed to track progress against SMART53 results towards the provision of the project's outputs and achievement of project outcomes, including at a level disaggregated by gender, vulnerability or marginalisation. The evaluation will assess the quality of the design of the monitoring plan as well as the funds allocated for its implementation. The adequacy of resources for mid-term and terminal evaluation/review should be discussed if applicable.

Monitoring of Project Implementation

The evaluation will assess whether the monitoring system was operational and facilitated the timely tracking of results and progress towards projects objectives throughout the project implementation period. This should include monitoring the representation and participation of disaggregated groups (including gendered, vulnerable and marginalised groups) in project activities. It will also consider how information generated by the monitoring system during project implementation was used to adapt and improve project execution, achievement of outcomes and ensure sustainability. The evaluation should confirm that funds allocated for monitoring were used to support this activity.

Project Reporting

UNEP has a centralised project information management system (Anubis) in which project managers upload six-monthly progress reports against agreed project milestones. This information will be provided to the Evaluation Consultant(s) by the Evaluation Manager. Some projects have additional requirements to report regularly to funding partners, which will be supplied by the project team (e.g. the Project Implementation Reviews and Tracking Tool for GEF-funded projects). The evaluation will assess the extent to which both UNEP and donor reporting commitments have been fulfilled. Consideration will be given as to whether reporting has been carried out with respect to the effects of the initiative on disaggregated groups.

Factors affecting this criterion may include:

Quality of project management and supervision

Responsiveness to human rights and gender equity (e.g disaggregated indicators and data)

H. Sustainability

Sustainability is understood as the probability of project outcomes being maintained and developed after the close of the intervention. The evaluation will identify and assess the key conditions or factors that are likely to undermine or contribute to the persistence of achieved project outcomes (ie. 'assumptions' and 'drivers'). Some factors of sustainability may be embedded in the project design and implementation approaches while others may be contextual circumstances or conditions that evolve over the life of the intervention. Where applicable an assessment of bio-physical factors that may affect the sustainability of project outcomes may also be included.

Socio-political Sustainability

The evaluation will assess the extent to which social or political factors support the continuation and further development of project outcomes. It will consider the level of ownership, interest and commitment among government and other stakeholders to take the project achievements forwards. In particular the evaluation will consider whether individual capacity development efforts are likely to be sustained.

⁵³ SMART refers to results that are specific, measurable, achievable, relevant and time-oriented. Indicators help to make results measurable.

Financial Sustainability

Some project outcomes, once achieved, do not require further financial inputs, e.g. the adoption of a revised policy. However, in order to derive a benefit from this outcome further management action may still be needed e.g. to undertake actions to enforce the policy. Other project outcomes may be dependent on a continuous flow of action that needs to be resourced for them to be maintained, e.g. continuation of a new resource management approach. The evaluation will assess the extent to which project outcomes are dependent on future funding for the benefits they bring to be sustained. Secured future funding is only relevant to financial sustainability where the project's outcomes have been extended into a future project phase. Even where future funding has been secured, the question still remains as to whether the project outcomes are financially sustainable.

Institutional Sustainability

The evaluation will assess the extent to which the sustainability of project outcomes (especially those relating to policies and laws) is dependent on issues relating to institutional frameworks and governance. It will consider whether institutional achievements such as governance structures and processes, policies, sub-regional agreements, legal and accountability frameworks etc. are robust enough to continue delivering the benefits associated with the project outcomes after project closure. In particular, the evaluation will consider whether institutional capacity development efforts are likely to be sustained.

Factors affecting this criterion may include:

Stakeholders participation and cooperation

Responsiveness to human rights and gender equity (e.g. where interventions are not inclusive, their sustainability may be undermined)

Communication and public awareness

Country ownership and driven-ness

Factors Affecting Project Performance and Cross-Cutting Issues

(These factors are rated in the ratings table but are discussed within the Main Evaluation Report as cross-cutting themes as appropriate under the other evaluation criteria, above. Where the issues have not been addressed under other evaluation criteria, the consultant(s) will provide summary sections under the following headings.)

Preparation and Readiness

This criterion focuses on the inception or mobilisation stage of the project (ie. the time between project approval and first disbursement). The evaluation will assess whether appropriate measures were taken to either address weaknesses in the project design or respond to changes that took place between project approval, the securing of funds and project mobilisation. In particular the evaluation will consider the nature and quality of engagement with stakeholder groups by the project team, the confirmation of partner capacity and development of partnership agreements as well as initial staffing and financing arrangements. (Project preparation is included in the template for the assessment of Project Design Quality).

Quality of Project Management and Supervision

In some cases 'project management and supervision' will refer to the supervision and guidance provided by UNEP to implementing partners and national governments while in others, specifically for GEF funded projects, it will refer to the project management performance of the executing agency and the technical backstopping and supervision provided by UNEP.

The evaluation will assess the effectiveness of project management with regard to: providing leadership towards achieving the planned outcomes; managing team structures; maintaining productive partner relationships (including Steering Groups etc.); communication and collaboration with UNEP colleagues; risk management; use of problem-solving; project adaptation and overall project execution. Evidence of adaptive management should be highlighted.

Stakeholder Participation and Cooperation

Here the term 'stakeholder' should be considered in a broad sense, encompassing all project partners, duty bearers with a role in delivering project outputs and target users of project outputs and any other collaborating agents external to UNEP and the Executing Agency. The assessment will consider the quality and effectiveness of all forms of communication and consultation with stakeholders throughout the project life and the support given to maximise collaboration and coherence between various stakeholders, including sharing plans, pooling resources and exchanging learning and expertise. The inclusion and participation of all differentiated groups, including gender groups should be considered.

Responsiveness to Human Rights and Gender Equity

The evaluation will ascertain to what extent the project has applied the UN Common Understanding on the human rights-based approach (HRBA) and the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous People. Within this human rights context the evaluation will assess to what extent the intervention adheres to UNEP's Policy and Strategy for Gender Equality and the Environment⁵⁴.

In particular the evaluation will consider to what extent project design, implementation and monitoring have taken into consideration: (i) possible gender inequalities in access to, and the control over, natural resources; (ii) specific vulnerabilities of women, youth and children to environmental degradation or disasters; and (iii) the role of women in mitigating or adapting to environmental changes and engaging in environmental protection and rehabilitation.

Environmental and Social Safeguards

UNEP projects address environmental and social safeguards primarily through the process of environmental and social screening, risk assessment and management (avoidance or mitigation) of potential environmental and social risks and impacts associated with project and programme activities. The evaluation will confirm whether UNEP requirements⁵⁵ were met to: screen proposed projects for any safeguarding issues; conduct sound environmental and social risk assessments; identify and avoid, or where avoidance is not possible, mitigate, environmental, social and economic risks; apply appropriate environmental and social measures to minimize any potential risks and harm to intended beneficiaries and report on the implementation of safeguard management measures taken.

Country Ownership and Driven-ness

The evaluation will assess the quality and degree of engagement of government / public sector agencies in the project. While there is some overlap between Country Ownership and Institutional Sustainability, this criterion focuses primarily on the forward momentum of the intended projects results, ie. either a) moving forwards from outputs to project outcomes or b) moving forward from project outcomes towards intermediate states. The evaluation will consider the involvement not only of those directly involved in project execution and those participating in technical or leadership groups, but also those official representatives whose cooperation is needed for change to be embedded in their respective institutions and offices. This factor is concerned with the level of

⁵⁴The Evaluation Office notes that Gender Equality was first introduced in the UNEP Project Review Committee Checklist in 2010 and, therefore, provides a criterion rating on gender for projects approved from 2010 onwards. Equally, it is noted that policy documents, operational guidelines and other capacity building efforts have only been developed since then and have evolved over time. https://wedocs.unep.org/bitstream/handle/20.500.11822/7655/-Gender_equality_and_the_environment_Policy_and_strategy-2015Gender_equality_and_the_environment_policy_and_strategy.pdf.pdf?sequence=3&isAllowed=y

⁵⁵For the review of project concepts and proposals, the Safeguard Risk Identification Form (SRIF) was introduced in 2019 and replaced the Environmental, Social and Economic Review note (ESERN), which had been in place since 2016. In GEF projects safeguards have been considered in project designs since 2011.

ownership generated by the project over outputs and outcomes and that is necessary for long term impact to be realised. Ownership should extend to all gendered and marginalised groups.

Communication and Public Awareness

The evaluation will assess the effectiveness of: a) communication of learning and experience sharing between project partners and interested groups arising from the project during its life and b) public awareness activities that were undertaken during the implementation of the project to influence attitudes or shape behaviour among wider communities and civil society at large. The evaluation should consider whether existing communication channels and networks were used effectively, including meeting the differentiated needs of gendered or marginalised groups, and whether any feedback channels were established. Where knowledge sharing platforms have been established under a project the evaluation will comment on the sustainability of the communication channel under either socio-political, institutional or financial sustainability, as appropriate.

Section 3. EVALUATION APPROACH, METHODS AND DELIVERABLES

The Terminal Evaluation will be an in-depth evaluation using a participatory approach whereby key stakeholders are kept informed and consulted throughout the evaluation process. Both quantitative and qualitative evaluation methods will be used as appropriate to determine project achievements against the expected outputs, outcomes and impacts. It is highly recommended that the consultant(s) maintains close communication with the project team and promotes information exchange throughout the evaluation implementation phase in order to increase their (and other stakeholder) ownership of the evaluation findings. Where applicable, the consultant(s) will provide a geo-referenced map that demarcates the area covered by the project and, where possible, provide geo-reference photographs of key intervention sites (e.g. sites of habitat rehabilitation and protection, pollution treatment infrastructure, etc.)

The findings of the evaluation will be based on the following:

A desk review of:

Project design documents (including GEF CEO Approval document, GEF Secretariat Review Document, Agreements, the logical framework and its budget);

Project reports such as six-monthly progress and financial reports, progress reports, relevant correspondence and including the Project Implementation Review (PIR) reports and Half-Yearly Progress reports;

Project outputs (e.g. National PRTR Proposals, National Infrastructure Assessment, PRTR Legal Framework, factsheets, national strategies for communication and dissemination of PRTR data, PRTR guidelines, interactive maps, workshop reports, etc.);

Other relevant background documentation.

Interviews (individual or in group) with:

UNEP Task Manager (TM);

Project management team, including the Project Manager within the Executing Agency;

UNEP Fund Management Officer (FMO);

Portfolio Manager and Sub-Programme Coordinator, where appropriate;

Project partners, representatives from relevant government ministries and the National Focal Points in the participating countries;

Other relevant resource persons.

Surveys as deemed appropriate.

Other data collection tools (to be determined during the evaluation inception phase).

Evaluation Deliverables and Review Procedures

The evaluation team will prepare:

Inception Report: (see Annex 1 for links to all templates, tables and guidance notes) containing an assessment of project design quality, a draft reconstructed Theory of Change of the project, project stakeholder analysis, evaluation framework and a tentative evaluation schedule.

Preliminary Findings Note: typically in the form of a PowerPoint presentation, the sharing of preliminary findings is intended to support the participation of the project team, act as a means to ensure all information sources have been accessed and provide an opportunity to verify emerging findings.

Draft and Final Evaluation Report: (see links in Annex 1) containing an executive summary that can act as a stand-alone document; detailed analysis of the evaluation findings organised by evaluation criteria and supported with evidence; lessons learned and recommendations and an annotated ratings table.

An Evaluation Brief, (a 2-page overview of the evaluand and key evaluation findings) for wider dissemination through the UNEP website may be required. This will be discussed with the Evaluation Manager no later than during the finalization of the Inception Report.

Review of the draft evaluation report. The evaluation team will submit a draft report to the Evaluation Manager and revise the draft in response to their comments and suggestions. Once a draft of adequate quality has been peer-reviewed and accepted, the Evaluation Manager will share the cleared draft report with the Task Manager and Project Manager, who will alert the Evaluation Manager in case the report contains any blatant factual errors. The Evaluation Manager will then forward revised draft report (corrected by the evaluation consultant(s) where necessary) to other project stakeholders, for their review and comments. Stakeholders may provide feedback on any errors of fact and may highlight the significance of such errors in any conclusions as well as providing feedback on the proposed recommendations and lessons. Any comments or responses to draft reports will be sent to the Evaluation Manager for consolidation. The Evaluation Manager will provide all comments to the evaluation consultant(s) for consideration in preparing the final report, along with guidance on areas of contradiction or issues requiring an institutional response.

Based on a careful review of the evidence collated by the evaluation consultants and the internal consistency of the report, the Evaluation Manager will provide an assessment of the ratings in the final evaluation report. Where there are differences of opinion between the evaluator and the Evaluation Manager on project ratings, both viewpoints will be clearly presented in the final report. The Evaluation Office ratings will be considered the final ratings for the project.

The Evaluation Manager will prepare a quality assessment of the first draft of the main evaluation report, which acts as a tool for providing structured feedback to the evaluation consultants. The quality of the final report will be assessed and rated against the criteria specified in template listed in Annex 1 and this assessment will be appended to the Final Evaluation Report.

At the end of the evaluation process, the Evaluation Office will prepare a Recommendations Implementation Plan in the format of a table, to be completed and updated at regular intervals by the Task Manager. The Evaluation Office will track compliance against this plan on a six-monthly basis for a maximum of 18 months.

The Evaluation Consultant

For this evaluation, the evaluation team will consist of one Specialist who will work under the overall responsibility of the Evaluation Office represented by an Evaluation Manager (Pauline Marima), in consultation with the UNEP Task Manager (Ludovic Bernaudat), Fund Management Officer (Anu Shenoy) and the Coordinator of the UNEP Sub-programme on Chemicals, Waste and Air Quality, (T. Goverse). The consultant will liaise with the Evaluation Manager on any procedural and methodological matters related to the evaluation. It is, however, each consultant's individual responsibility to arrange for their visas and immunizations as well as to plan meetings with stakeholders, organize online surveys, obtain documentary evidence and any other logistical matters related to the assignment. The UNEP Task Manager and project team will, where possible, provide

logistical support (introductions, meetings etc.) allowing the consultants to conduct the evaluation as efficiently and independently as possible.

The Evaluation Consultant will be hired over a period of 8 months (March - October 2020) and should have: an advanced university degree in environmental sciences or other relevant sciences area; a minimum of 3 years of technical / evaluation experience, including of evaluating large, regional or global programmes and using a Theory of Change approach; a good understanding of Chemicals, Persistent Organic Pollutants (POPs) and the Stockholm Convention. English and French are the working languages of the United Nations Secretariat. For this consultancy, fluency in oral and written English is a requirement and knowledge in of Russian language desirable, along with excellent writing skills in English. Working knowledge of the UN system and specifically the work of UNEP is an added advantage. The work will be home-based with possible field visits.

The Evaluation Consultant will be responsible, in close consultation with the Evaluation Office of UNEP for overall management of the evaluation and timely provision of its outputs, data collection and analysis and report-writing, described above in Section 11 above. The Evaluation Consultant will ensure that all evaluation criteria and questions are adequately covered. More specifically:

Inception phase of the evaluation, including:

- preliminary desk review and introductory interviews with project staff;
- draft the reconstructed Theory of Change of the project;
- prepare the evaluation framework;
- develop the desk review and interview protocols;
- draft the survey protocols (if relevant);
- develop and present criteria for country and/or site selection for the evaluation mission;
- plan the evaluation schedule;
- prepare the Inception Report, incorporating comments until approved by the Evaluation Manager

Data collection and analysis phase of the evaluation, including:

- conduct further desk review and in-depth interviews with project implementing and executing agencies, project partners and project stakeholders;
- interview project partners and stakeholders, including a good representation of local communities. Ensure independence of the evaluation and confidentiality of evaluation interviews.
- regularly report back to the Evaluation Manager on progress and inform of any possible problems or issues encountered and;
- keep the Project/Task Manager informed of the evaluation progress.

Reporting phase, including:

- draft the Main Evaluation Report, ensuring that the evaluation report is complete, coherent and consistent with the Evaluation Manager guidelines both in substance and style;
- liaise with the Evaluation Manager on comments received and finalize the Main Evaluation Report, ensuring that comments are taken into account until approved by the Evaluation Manager
- prepare a Response to Comments annex for the main report, listing those comments not accepted by the evaluation consultant and indicating the reason for the rejection; and
- (where agreed with the Evaluation Manager) prepare an Evaluation Brief (2-page summary of the evaluation and the key evaluation findings and lessons)

Managing relations, including:

- maintain a positive relationship with evaluation stakeholders, ensuring that the evaluation process is as participatory as possible but at the same time maintains its independence;
- communicate in a timely manner with the Evaluation Manager on any issues requiring its attention and intervention.

Schedule of the evaluation

The table below presents the tentative schedule for the evaluation.

Table 3. Tentative schedule for the evaluation

Milestone	Tentative Dates
Evaluation Initiation Meeting	May 2020
Inception Report	May 2020
Data collection (telephone/online interviews, surveys etc.	June-July 2020
Draft report to Evaluation Manager (and Peer Reviewer)	July 2020
Draft Report shared with UNEP Project Manager and team	July-August 2020
Draft Report shared with wider group of stakeholders	August – September 2020
Final Report prepared based on comments received	September – October 2020
Final Report shared with all respondents	November 2020

Contractual Arrangements

Evaluation consultants will be selected and recruited by the Evaluation Office of UNEP under an individual Special Service Agreement (SSA) on a “fees only” basis (see below). By signing the service contract with UNEP /UNON, the consultant(s) certify that they have not been associated with the design and implementation of the project in any way which may jeopardize their independence and impartiality towards project achievements and project partner performance. In addition, they will not have any future interests (within six months after completion of the contract) with the project’s executing or implementing units. All consultants are required to sign the Code of Conduct Agreement Form.

Fees will be paid on an instalment basis, paid on acceptance by the Evaluation Manager of expected key deliverables. The schedule of payment is as follows:

Table 4: Schedule of Payment for the Evaluation Consultant:

Deliverable	Percentage Payment
Approved Inception Report (as per annex document 8)	30%
Approved Draft Main Evaluation Report (as per annex document 15)	30%
Approved Final Main Evaluation Report	40%

Fees only contracts:

The consultants may be provided with access to UNEP’s document folders and if such access is granted, the consultants agree not to disclose information from that system to third parties beyond information required for, and included in, the evaluation report.

In case the consultants are not able to provide the deliverables in accordance with these guidelines, and in line with the expected quality standards by the UNEP Evaluation Office, payment may be withheld at the discretion of the Director of the Evaluation Office until the consultants have improved the deliverables to meet UNEP’s quality standards.

If the consultant(s) fail to submit a satisfactory final product to UNEP in a timely manner, i.e. before the end date of their contract, the Evaluation Office reserves the right to employ additional human resources to finalize the report, and to reduce the consultants' fees by an amount equal to the additional costs borne by the Evaluation Office to bring the report up to standard.

Annex 2. Assessment of the project design quality

Table 12. Calculating the overall Project design quality score

	SECTION	RATING (1-6)	WEIGHTING	TOTAL (Rating x Weighting/100)
A	Nature of External Context	6	4	0.24
B	Project Preparation	5	12	0.6
C	Strategic Relevance	6	8	0.48
D	Intended Results and Causality	5	16	0.8
E	Logical Framework and Monitoring	5	8	0.4
F	Governance and Supervision Arrangements	6	4	0.24
G	Partnerships	5	8	0.4
H	Learning, Communication and Outreach	5	4	0.2
I	Financial Planning / Budgeting	5	4	0.2
J	Efficiency	6	8	0.48
K	Risk identification and Social Safeguards	5	8	0.4
L	Sustainability / Replication and Catalytic Effects	5	12	0.6
M	Identified Project Design Weaknesses/Gaps	5	4	0.2
			TOTAL SCORE (Sum Totals)	5.24
				Highly Satisfactory

1 (Highly Unsatisfactory)	< 1.83
2 (Unsatisfactory)	>= 1.83 < 2.66
3 (Moderately Unsatisfactory)	>=2.66 <3.5
4 (Moderately Satisfactory)	>=3.5 <=4.33
5 (Satisfactory)	>4.33 <= 5.16
6 (Highly Satisfactory)	> 5.16

246. Below a textual summary of the quality of the project design per section is provided:

247. **Nature of the external context:** Highly Favourable. The Project document does not identify any unusually challenging operational factors that are likely to negatively affect Project performance. There is no likelihood of conflict, natural disaster or turbulent change of the national government in Project countries.

248. **Project Preparation:** Satisfactory. The Project document includes a problem analysis in the Project rationale for the GEF intervention. The Project document provides a detailed situation analysis for all participating countries. A real stakeholder analysis, however, is

missing. Sustainable development is mentioned in different sections throughout the Project document, but not identified and dealt with systematically. Gender concerns and gender policies are not mentioned throughout the Project document, as it was no priority at the time when the Project document was developed. Indigenous people are not mentioned throughout the Project document, as it was no priority at the time.

249. **Strategic relevance:** Highly Satisfactory. The Project document clearly aligned with UNEP's MSP and POW and GEF strategic priorities. The Project document is clearly aligned with the Stockholm Convention and the Aarhus Convention is mentioned at different places throughout the Project document. In the section Linkages to related activities and country situation regional, sub-regional and national environmental priorities the Project alignment to these priorities is described. The same holds true for complementarity with other interventions.

250. **Intended Results and Causality:** Satisfactory. The Project document does not provide a Theory of Change as this was not the praxis at the time when the Project document was developed. The causal logic is described in the log frame of the Project. Assumptions are clearly described, drivers have not been identified. The roles of the different stakeholders of participation countries are clearly defined in *Section A 7 Institutional arrangement for project implementation*. The outcomes seem realistic.

251. **Logical Framework and Monitoring:** Satisfactory. In ANNEX A Results Framework a detailed component overview with smart indicators of achievement is provided, including objective level indicators, a baseline description, targets and monitoring milestones, detailed means of verification, assumptions & risks and UNEP MTS and POW references. In *Section C Budgeted M&E Plan* the planned monitoring and evaluation is described. The section contains a table with M&E activities, their purpose, the responsible party, the needed budget and a timeframe.

252. **Governance and Supervision Arrangements:** Highly Satisfactory. Governance, roles and responsibilities are clearly and in detail described. The national partners of the Executing Agency were selected at design.

253. **Partnerships:** Satisfactory. Capacities of partner countries have been in detail. The role of e.g. UNCE and OSCE, SC Secretariat, OECD, Environment Canada, Ministry of Environment Chile as external partners is clearly described. National and international external consultants are mentioned throughout the Project, but not clearly defined separately.

254. **Learning, Communication and Outreach:** Satisfactory. The Project includes a separate component on knowledge management, lessons learned and global exchange of information.

255. **Financial Planning / Budgeting:** Satisfactory. A detailed budget has been provided including international and national co-financing commitments.

256. **Efficiency:** Highly Satisfactory. The Project has been appropriately designed in relation to the duration and/or levels of secured funding. Linkages to related initiatives, projects and Multilateral Environmental Agreements are taken into account.

257. Risk identification and Social Safeguards: Satisfactory. Possible risks and proposed mitigation measures are properly identified. The risks have been also included in the Results framework. As the Project aims to improve environmental and social safeguards, potentially negative environmental, economic and social impacts of the project have been identified.

258. Sustainability / Replication and Catalytic Effects: Satisfactory. Sustainability aspects of the Project initiative are mentioned throughout the Project document, although the issue is not dealt with in an integrated way in the design of the Project. Replication and Catalytic Effects of the Project are dealt with in a more systematic way in the separate *Component 5 Lessons learned and replication*.

Identified Project Design Weaknesses/Gaps: No specific Project Designs Weaknesses/Gaps were identified.

Annex 3. Response to stakeholder comments

Annex 4. Stakeholders interviewed and stakeholders who responded to the evaluation review

Interviews

	Name	Function / Role in the project	Means of communication
1	Ludovic Bernaudat	UNEP Task Manager	Several conference calls for: -Introduction of the Project during the evaluation Inception Phase -Presentation the Preliminary findings of the evaluation -Email correspondence -Bilateral conference calls
2	Andrea Cararo	UNITAR Project Coordinator, Chemicals and Waste Management Programme (former UNEP Task Manager)	-Evaluation interview -Email correspondence -Bilateral conference calls
3	Anuradha Shenoy	UNEP Fund Management Officer	-Evaluation interview -Email correspondence
Belarus			
4	Ivan Narkevitch	Chief Researcher of the International Projects Department of the Belarusian Research Center Ecology Republic under the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environmental Protection Belarus	-Evaluation interview -Email correspondence
5	Dzmitry Melekh	Deputy head of the International Projects Department of the Belarusian Research Center Ecology Republic under the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environmental Protection Belarus	-Evaluation interview -Email correspondence
Cambodia			
6	Uon Sokunthea	National Project Coordinator Cambodia, Ministry of Environment of Cambodia, Department of Hazardous Substance Management	-Evaluation interview -Email correspondence
7	Phan Daneth	Technical Officer, Ministry of Environment of Cambodia, Department of	-Evaluation interview -Email correspondence

	Name	Function / Role in the project	Means of communication
		Hazardous Substance Management	
	Ecuador		
8	Evelyn Mishel Cazorla Martinez	National Coordinator, Ministry of the Environment and Water of Ecuador, Department of Environmental Control	-Evaluation interview (conducting in written form) -Email correspondence
9	Berenice Alexandra Quiroz Yanez	Specialist in Chemical Substances, Sub secretariat of Environmental Quality, Ministry of the Environment Ecuador	-Evaluation interview
10	Mario R. Mera Minuche	Administrative Director, FIAS (Fondo de Inversion Ambiental Sostenible)	-Evaluation interview
	Kazakhstan		
11	Nurgazy Abdulmanov	Assistant to the Director, "Information-Analytical Center of Environmental Protection" (RSE IAC), Ministry of Ecology, Geology and Natural Resources of the Republic of Kazakhstan	-Evaluation interview -Email correspondence
12	Altyn Ibragimovna Balabaeva	Director of the Department of the State Environmental Information Fund, Ministry of Ecology, Geology and Natural Resources of the Republic of Kazakhstan	-Evaluation interview -Email correspondence
	Moldova		
13	Tatiana Tugui	National Coordinator, Ministry of Environment of Moldova, Environmental Pollution Prevention Office	-Evaluation interview -Email correspondence
14	Tatiana Echim	SAICM Consultant, Ministry of Environment Moldova, Environmental Pollution Prevention Office	-Evaluation interview -Email correspondence
15	Natalia Efros	Expert Identification of Methodologies for Emission Calculation, Ministry of Environment of Moldova, Environmental Pollution Prevention Office	-Evaluation interview -Email correspondence
	Peru		
16	Daniel Nuñez	National Project Coordinator Peru,	-Evaluation interview (conducting in written form) -Email correspondence

	Name	Function / Role in the project	Means of communication
		until the end of the Project, Ministry of Environment, Directorate for Environmental Information and Research	

Survey

	Name	Function / Role in the project	Means of communication
	Belarus		
1	Ekaterina Poleshchuk	National Statistical Committee of the Republic of Belarus	-Responded to survey
2	Anton Kuralenia	IT sector	-Responded to survey
3	Tamara Kukharchyk	National Academy of Sciences of Belarus	-Responded to survey
4	Natallia Malceva	Ministry of Energy Republic of Belarus	-Responded to survey
5	Volha Zakharava	Aarhus Center Minsk, Belarus	-Responded to survey
	Cambodia		
6	Sok Chea	Deputy Director Department of Techniques & Industrial Safety General Department of Industry, Ministry of Industry, Science, Technology & Innovation of Cambodia	-Responded to survey
	Ecuador		
7	Diego Moreno	Director of Environmental Regulation and Control, Ministry of Environment and Water of Ecuador	-Responded to survey
8	Luis Pazmiño Figueroa	Manager of the Unified Environmental Information System, Ministry of Environment and Water Ecuador	-Responded to survey
9	Mirian Arias	Operational environmental coordinator, Grupo UNACEM cement company, Ecuador	-Responded to survey
10	Silvia Baez	Operational environmental coordinator, Grupo UNACEM cement company, Ecuador	-Responded to survey
	Kazakhstan		
11	Mikhail G. Kondratenko	Director of the IT Department (for the period of the project), Ministry of Ecology, Geology and Natural Resources of the Republic of Kazakhstan	-Responded to survey
	Moldova		
12	Adrian Gheorghita	American Chamber of Commerce in Moldova	-Responded to survey
13	Elena Bicova	Institute of Energetics, Academy of Science of Moldova, Expert on elaboration of the methodologies and calculation tools for energetics sector	-Responded to survey

14	Oxana Cantidailova	Termoelectrica (Moldovan Power generating company)	-Responded to survey
15	Rodica Iordanov	Director of the NGO EcoContact (Aarhus Centre Chisinau) Moldova	-Responded to survey
	Peru		
16	Xavier Gordillo	Former Director General Ministry of Environment of Peru	-Responded to survey

Annex 5. Project documents reviewed

Project documents reviewed

- ToR Terminal Evaluation of the UNEP/GEF project “*Global Project on the Implementation of PRTRs as a tool for POPs reporting, dissemination and awareness raising for Belarus, Cambodia, Ecuador, Kazakhstan, Moldova and Peru*” (PRTR II), (GEF ID 5648);
- GEF approval letter, signed on 06-02-2014
- Approved Project document *Global Project on the Implementation of PRTRs as a tool for POPs reporting, dissemination and awareness raising for Belarus, Cambodia, Ecuador, Kazakhstan, Moldova and Peru*
- UN Agency to Agency Contribution Agreement between UNEP and UNITAR, signed 13-05-2015;
- Project amendment I, signed on 27-06-2018;
- No cost extension request, signed on 25-11-2018;
- Project amendment II, signed on 18-12-2019;
- Final Project report;
- All 81 output reports annexed to the Final Project report;
- Financial reports;
- Co-finance confirmation reports;
- PIR reports of the Project;
- All UNEP Evaluation Office documents and templates guiding the Terminal Evaluation
- Strategic and policy documents:
 - UNEP PoW, MTS
 - UN Common Understanding on the Human Rights Based Approach (HRBA)
 - UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous People
 - UNEP’s Policy and Strategy for Gender Equality and the Environment.

Annex 6. Evaluation Brief:

Please see the next page

Terminal Evaluation: “Global Project on the Implementation of PRTRs as a tool for POPs reporting, dissemination and awareness raising for Belarus, Cambodia, Ecuador, Kazakhstan, Moldova and Peru” (PRTR II), GEF Project number: 5648, (2014-2019)

Evaluation Results

The Project was designed to implement a Pollutant Release and Transfers Register (PRTR) in Belarus, Cambodia, Ecuador, Kazakhstan, Moldova and Peru and assist these countries to comply with their reporting obligations under the Stockholm Convention. The problem in many signatory countries is that they often do collect the required reporting data but lack a central database to collect these data. The lack of a centralized system does not contribute to the accuracy of the reported data. To support the countries, the project provided:

- Support to develop PRTRs and involve all relevant national stakeholders in the process,
- Capacity building and technical training in collecting and using accurate environmental PRTR data, e.g. for POPs reporting,
- Public awareness stakeholder involvement and access to information programmes,
- Dissemination of lessons learned on PRTR development.

The project duration was 63 months. The budget was \$10,018,010 of which GEF provided \$1,964,999. The project was implemented by UNEP and executed by UNITAR. Because of contracting problems in Ecuador, an extension of the planned 43 months project duration was granted.

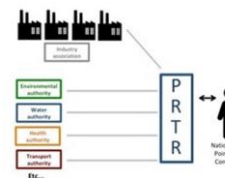
The detailed findings of the evaluation can be found here:

www.1234567/abcdefg .

The evaluation found that project countries have received: appropriate tools to improve access and accuracy of environmental data on POPs and other priority chemicals in the Project countries and to enhance awareness and public participation on environmental matters, through implementation of fully operational national PRTRs. Project activities resulted in:

- Development of 6 national PRTRs, of which 2 are officially implemented in Kazakhstan and Moldova,
- Increased capacity in collecting and using accurate environmental PRTR data in each country,
- Development of national strategies and implementation of activities to raise awareness about PRTRs and information on how to access information from the PRTR websites,
- Dissemination of lessons learned from PRTR development and a high interest of new countries to also develop their national PRTR.

¹Terminal Evaluation of the UNEP-GEF Project: POPs monitoring, reporting and information dissemination using Pollutant Release and Transfer Registers, UNEP Evaluation Office, March 2021



This Project is considered as PRTR Phase II. Between 2009 and 2012 a PRTR Phase I project was carried out. The title of that project is “POP_s monitoring, reporting and information dissemination using Pollutant Release and Transfer Registers” (GEF ID 3348) The two Projects were evaluated simultaneously¹

Background

Evaluation findings

Lessons learned

The evaluation notes that although one must acknowledge that the responsibility for adoption of PRTR legislation and official PRTR implantation rests with participating governments, the problems with national commitment, project ownership and decision making in support of official PRTR implementation that occurred in 4 of the 6 Project countries prevented the full achievement of the intended impact

Especially the aspect of POPs reporting to the Stockholm Convention turned out to be more complicated than anticipated and will need to be further developed. In future reporting, it is expected that the PRTRs will be used for collection of data. Additional data will have to be added to this reporting from other data collection sources.

The Terminal Evaluation concluded that the overall rating for the quality of Project implementation was Moderately Satisfactory.

Important Lessons from this Evaluation include:

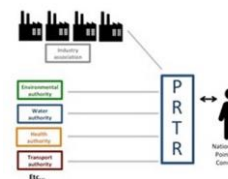
- The involvement of an external partner in Ecuador was a good way to solve implementation problems and avoid further project delays,
- Country ownership and the political will to carry through the required decisions in support of PRTR implementation was identifies as one of most important themes of the Project,
- The project was well implemented and executed, the successful attainment of project results, however, finally depended strongly on national decision making. Maximizing the involvement with national decision makers in projects directly relating to national governance issues can strengthen Project ownership and commitment to the achievement of project results,
- Unexpected contract details with webhosting companies and a lack of foresight in national budgeting for PRTR webhosting costs resulted in national PRTRs being unavailable online one year after Project completion. Timely forward planning for adequate budgetary provision could have avoided this situation.

The evaluation was carried out between April 2020 and May 2021 in by an independent consultant Wouter Pronk.

The Evaluation

In view of travel restrictions caused by the COVID-19 coronavirus outbreak, the evaluation did not include travel to participating Project countries and the evaluation needed to base its findings on document research and online interviews and electronic communication with UNEP, UNITAR and stakeholders from the six participating countries involved with the Project.

A participatory approach was used whereby key stakeholders were kept informed and consulted throughout the evaluation process.



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Annex 7. Brief resume of the consultant

Wouter Pronk has 24 years of experience in managing environmental and capacity building projects in Eastern Europe, Russia, the Caucasus, Central Asia, India, Egypt, Eritrea, Cameroon, South Africa and Vietnam for the environmental NGOs Milieukontakt International and Green Cross Switzerland. Early 2019, he started working as an independent consultant. Since 2004, Mr. Pronk has been involved in POPs and soil remediation projects financed by The Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs, FAO, UNEP, GEF, Green Cross Switzerland and the World Bank and worked in international technical assistance projects with a focus on awareness raising, environmental and social impact assessment and planning, technical capacity building, project evaluation and stakeholder involvement.

Annex 8. Quality Assessment of the Evaluation Report

Quality Assessment of the Evaluation Report

Title of the Evaluand (i.e. project, programme etc):

Terminal Evaluation of the UNEP project “Global Project on the Implementation of PRTRs as a tool for POPs reporting, dissemination and awareness raising for Belarus, Cambodia, Ecuador, Kazakhstan, Moldova and Peru” (PRTR II). GEF Project number: 5648

All UNEP evaluations are subject to a quality assessment by the Evaluation Office. This is an assessment of the quality of the evaluation product (i.e. evaluation report) and is dependent on more than just the consultant's efforts and skills. Nevertheless, the quality assessment is used as a tool for providing structured feedback to evaluation consultants, especially at draft report stage. This guidance is provided to support consistency in assessment across different Evaluation Managers and to make the assessment process as transparent as possible.

	UNEP Evaluation Office Comments	Final report: Rating
Substantive Report Quality Criteria		
<p>Quality of the Executive Summary:</p> <p>The Summary should be able to stand alone as an accurate summary of the main evaluation product. It should include a concise overview of the evaluation object; clear summary of the evaluation objectives and scope; overall evaluation rating of the project and key features of performance (strengths and weaknesses) against exceptional criteria (plus reference to where the evaluation ratings table can be found within the report); summary of the main findings of the exercise, including a synthesis of main conclusions (which include a summary response to key strategic evaluation questions), lessons learned and recommendations.</p>	<p>Final report:</p> <p>The Executive Summary is brief but informative with good coverage of the content of the report.</p>	6
<p>I. Introduction</p> <p>A brief introduction should be given identifying, where possible and relevant, the following: institutional context of the project (sub-programme, Division, regions/countries where implemented) and coverage of the evaluation; date of PRC approval and project document signature); results frameworks to which it contributes (e.g. Expected Accomplishment in POW); project duration and start/end dates; number of project phases (where appropriate); implementing partners; total secured budget and whether the project has been evaluated in the past (e.g. mid-term, part of a synthesis evaluation, evaluated by another agency etc.)</p> <p>Consider the extent to which the introduction includes a concise statement of the purpose of the evaluation and the key intended audience for the findings?</p>	<p>Final report:</p> <p>Section covers all of the main topics well, language is clear.</p>	6

	UNEP Evaluation Office Comments	Final report: Rating
<p>II. Evaluation Methods</p> <p>A data collection section should include: a description of evaluation methods and information sources used, including the number and type of respondents; justification for methods used (e.g. qualitative/quantitative; electronic/face-to-face); any selection criteria used to identify respondents, case studies or sites/countries visited; strategies used to increase stakeholder engagement and consultation; details of how data were verified (e.g. triangulation, review by stakeholders etc.).</p> <p>Methods to ensure that potentially excluded groups (excluded by gender, vulnerability or marginalisation) are reached and their experiences captured effectively, should be made explicit in this section.</p> <p>The methods used to analyse data (e.g. scoring; coding; thematic analysis etc.) should be described.</p> <p>It should also address evaluation limitations such as: low or imbalanced response rates across different groups; gaps in documentation; extent to which findings can be either generalised to wider evaluation questions or constraints on aggregation/disaggregation; any potential or apparent biases; language barriers and ways they were overcome.</p> <p>Ethics and human rights issues should be highlighted including: how anonymity and confidentiality were protected and strategies used to include the views of marginalised or potentially disadvantaged groups and/or divergent views. Is there an ethics statement?</p>	<p>Final report:</p> <p>This section covers the requirements and provides a thoughtful discussion.</p>	6
<p>III. The Project</p> <p>This section should include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Context:</i> Overview of the main issue that the project is trying to address, its root causes and consequences on the environment and human well-being (i.e. synopsis of the problem and situational analyses). • <i>Results framework:</i> Summary of the project's results hierarchy as stated in the ProDoc (or as officially revised) • <i>Stakeholders:</i> Description of groups of targeted stakeholders organised according to relevant common characteristics • <i>Project implementation structure and partners:</i> A description of the implementation structure with diagram and a list of key project partners • <i>Changes in design during implementation:</i> Any key events that affected the project's scope or parameters should be described in brief in chronological order • <i>Project financing:</i> Completed tables of: (a) budget at design and expenditure by 	<p>Final report:</p> <p>All the required elements for describing the project have been discussed and in adequate detail.</p>	6

	UNEP Evaluation Office Comments	Final report: Rating
components (b) planned and actual sources of funding/co-financing		
<p>IV. Theory of Change</p> <p>The <i>TOC at Evaluation</i> should be presented clearly in both diagrammatic and narrative forms. Clear articulation of each major causal pathway is expected, (starting from outputs to long term impact), including explanations of all drivers and assumptions as well as the expected roles of key actors.</p> <p>This section should include a description of how the <i>TOC at Evaluation</i>⁵⁶ was designed (who was involved etc.) and applied to the context of the project? Where the project results as stated in the project design documents (or formal revisions of the project design) are not an accurate reflection of the project's intentions or do not follow UNEP's definitions of different results levels, project results may need to be re-phrased or reformulated. In such cases, a summary of the project's results hierarchy should be presented for: a) the results as stated in the approved/revised Prodoc logframe/TOC and b) as formulated in the <i>TOC at Evaluation</i>. <i>The two results hierarchies should be presented as a two-column table to show clearly that, although wording and placement may have changed, the results 'goal posts' have not been 'moved'.</i></p>	<p>Final report:</p> <p>The TOC is well described, both in narrative and diagrammatic formats. The causal pathways have been discussed systematically. Drivers and Assumptions affecting causality are also sufficiently described. Comparison between the original logical framework and the reconstruction of the TOC at evaluation is clear.</p>	5.5
<p>V. Key Findings</p> <p>A. Strategic relevance:</p> <p>This section should include an assessment of the project's relevance in relation to UNEP's mandate and its alignment with UNEP's policies and strategies at the time of project approval. An assessment of the complementarity of the project at design (or during inception/mobilisation⁵⁷), with other interventions addressing the needs of the same target groups should be included. Consider the extent to which all four elements have been addressed:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Alignment to the UNEP Medium Term Strategy (MTS) and Programme of Work (POW) 2. Alignment to Donor/GEF Strategic Priorities 3. Relevance to Regional, Sub-regional and National Environmental Priorities 4. Complementarity with Existing Interventions 	<p>Final report:</p> <p>Section is covered well, and all aspects of relevance are discussed satisfactorily.</p>	6

⁵⁶ During the Inception Phase of the evaluation process a *TOC at Evaluation Inception* is created based on the information contained in the approved project documents (these may include either logical framework or a TOC or narrative descriptions), formal revisions and annual reports etc. During the evaluation process this TOC is revised based on changes made during project intervention and becomes the *TOC at Evaluation*.

⁵⁷ A project's inception or mobilization period is understood as the time between project approval and first disbursement. Complementarity during project implementation is considered under Efficiency, see below.

	UNEP Evaluation Office Comments	Final report: Rating
<p>B. Quality of Project Design To what extent are the strength and weaknesses of the project design effectively <u>summarized</u>?</p>	<p>Final report: Strengths, weaknesses of the project design per section are discussed in sufficient detail</p>	6
<p>C. Nature of the External Context For projects where this is appropriate, key <u>external</u> features of the project's implementing context that limited the project's performance (e.g. conflict, natural disaster, political upheaval⁵⁸), and how they affected performance, should be described.</p>	<p>Final report: Section is covered sufficiently</p>	6
<p>D. Effectiveness (i) Outputs and Project Outcomes: How well does the report present a well-reasoned, complete and evidence-based assessment of the a) availability of outputs, and b) achievement of project outcomes? How convincing is the discussion of attribution and contribution, as well as the constraints to attributing effects to the intervention. The effects of the intervention on differentiated groups, including those with specific needs due to gender, vulnerability or marginalisation, should be discussed explicitly.</p>	<p>Final report: Reporting on outputs is quite detailed, organized by component and addressing each output separately. There is effort made to describe the qualitative aspects of outputs as well. The assessment of outcomes is evidence-based, with several references made to the TOC including assessments on the extent to which drivers are valid and/or assumptions hold. The arguments are logical and well presented.</p>	5.5
<p>(ii) Likelihood of Impact: How well does the report present an integrated analysis, guided by the causal pathways represented by the TOC, of all evidence relating to likelihood of impact? How well are change processes explained and the roles of key actors, as well as drivers and assumptions, explicitly discussed? Any unintended negative effects of the project should be discussed under Effectiveness, especially negative effects on disadvantaged groups.</p>	<p>Final report: The findings presented in other sections of the report are brought together and are consistent with the performance rating awarded.</p>	5.5
<p>E. Financial Management This section should contain an integrated analysis of all dimensions evaluated under financial management and include a completed 'financial management' table. Consider how well the report addresses the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Adherence</i> to UNEP's financial policies and procedures 	<p>Final report: This section is well covered, and includes a sufficient explanation of the three aspects of financial management prescribed by the TOR</p>	5

⁵⁸ Note that 'political upheaval' does not include regular national election cycles, but unanticipated unrest or prolonged disruption. The potential delays or changes in political support that are often associated with the regular national election cycle should be part of the project's design and addressed through adaptive management of the project team.

	UNEP Evaluation Office Comments	Final report: Rating
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>completeness</i> of financial information, including the actual project costs (total and per activity) and actual co-financing used • <i>communication</i> between financial and project management staff 		
<p>F. Efficiency To what extent, and how well, does the report present a well-reasoned, complete and evidence-based assessment of efficiency under the primary categories of cost-effectiveness and timeliness including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implications of delays and no cost extensions • Time-saving measures put in place to maximise results within the secured budget and agreed project timeframe • Discussion of making use during project implementation of/building on pre-existing institutions, agreements and partnerships, data sources, synergies and complementarities with other initiatives, programmes and projects etc. • The extent to which the management of the project minimised UNEP's environmental footprint. 	<p>Final report: The assessment of efficiency considers the categories of timeliness and efforts to achieve cost efficiency. Examples are provided.</p>	5
<p>G. Monitoring and Reporting How well does the report assess:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitoring design and budgeting (<i>including SMART results with measurable indicators, resources for MTE/R etc.</i>) • Monitoring of project implementation (<i>including use of monitoring data for adaptive management</i>) • Project reporting (<i>e.g. PIMS and donor reports</i>) 	<p>Final report: This section presents a well-reasoned assessment under two sub-criteria 'Monitoring of project implementation' and 'project reporting'.</p>	5
<p>H. Sustainability How well does the evaluation identify and assess the key conditions or factors that are likely to undermine or contribute to the persistence of achieved project outcomes including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Socio-political Sustainability • Financial Sustainability • Institutional Sustainability 	<p>Final report: The discussion of sustainability is sufficiently comprehensive.</p>	5
<p>I. Factors Affecting Performance These factors are <u>not</u> discussed in stand-alone sections but are integrated in criteria A-H as appropriate. Note that these are described in the Evaluation Criteria Ratings Matrix. To what extent, and how well, does the evaluation report cover the following cross-cutting themes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Preparation and readiness 	<p>All the factors are discussed in stand-alone sections, but they are consistent with what is reported in the rest of the report. The assessment of these factors varies in depth, but for the most part the consultant has sufficiently covers these cross cutting themes.</p>	5

	UNEP Evaluation Office Comments	Final report: Rating
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Quality of project management and supervision⁵⁹ Stakeholder participation and co-operation Responsiveness to human rights and gender equity Environmental and social safeguards Country ownership and driven-ness Communication and public awareness 		
<p>VI. Conclusions and Recommendations</p> <p>i. Quality of the conclusions: The key strategic questions should be clearly and succinctly addressed within the conclusions section. It is expected that the conclusions will highlight the main strengths and weaknesses of the project and connect them in a compelling story line. Human rights and gender dimensions of the intervention (e.g. how these dimensions were considered, addressed or impacted on) should be discussed explicitly. Conclusions, as well as lessons and recommendations, should be consistent with the evidence presented in the main body of the report.</p>	<p>Final report: The conclusions provide a decent overview of the key findings of the evaluation. The responses to key strategic questions are included. The summary of ratings table is also presented.</p>	5
<p>ii) Quality and utility of the lessons: Both positive and negative lessons are expected and duplication with recommendations should be avoided. Based on explicit evaluation findings, lessons should be rooted in real project experiences or derived from problems encountered and mistakes made that should be avoided in the future. Lessons are intended to be adopted any time they are deemed to be relevant in the future and must have the potential for wider application (replication and generalization) and use and should briefly describe the context from which they are derived and those contexts in which they may be useful.</p>	<p>Final report: The lessons are well-presented</p>	5
<p>iii) Quality and utility of the recommendations: To what extent are the recommendations proposals for specific action to be taken by identified people/position-holders to resolve concrete problems affecting the project or the sustainability of its results? (i.e. points of corrective action). They should be feasible to implement within the timeframe and resources available (including local capacities) and specific in terms of who would do what and when. At least one recommendation relating to strengthening the human rights and gender dimensions of UNEP interventions, should be given. Recommendations should represent a measurable performance target in order that the Evaluation Office</p>	<p>Final report: Recommendations have clarity and utility.</p>	5

⁵⁹ In some cases 'project management and supervision' will refer to the supervision and guidance provided by UNEP to implementing partners and national governments while in others, specifically for GEF funded projects, it will refer to the project management performance of the executing agency and the technical backstopping provided by UNEP.

	UNEP Evaluation Office Comments	Final report: Rating
<p>can monitor and assess compliance with the recommendations.</p> <p>In cases where the recommendation is addressed to a third party, compliance can only be monitored and assessed where a contractual/legal agreement remains in place. Without such an agreement, the recommendation should be formulated to say that UNEP project staff should pass on the recommendation to the relevant third party in an effective or substantive manner. The effective transmission by UNEP of the recommendation will then be monitored for compliance.</p> <p>Where a new project phase is already under discussion or in preparation with the same third party, a recommendation can be made to address the issue in the next phase.</p>		
VII. Report Structure and Presentation Quality		
<p>i) Structure and completeness of the report: To what extent does the report follow the Evaluation Office guidelines? Are all requested Annexes included and complete?</p>	<p>Final report: The report is complete but some annexes were not included in the draft. This will be remedied.</p>	6
<p>ii) Quality of writing and formatting: Consider whether the report is well written (clear English language and grammar) with language that is adequate in quality and tone for an official document? Do visual aids, such as maps and graphs convey key information? Does the report follow Evaluation Office formatting guidelines?</p>	<p>Final report: The report is well written, language and grammar is satisfactory, and the tone is professional</p>	5
OVERALL REPORT QUALITY RATING		5.5 (Highly Satisfactory)

A number rating 1-6 is used for each criterion: Highly Satisfactory = 6, Satisfactory = 5, Moderately Satisfactory = 4, Moderately Unsatisfactory = 3, Unsatisfactory = 2, Highly Unsatisfactory = 1. The overall quality of the evaluation report is calculated by taking the mean score of all rated quality criteria.