



Terms of references

External End of Phase Evaluation: Strong and Inclusive Parliamentary Democracy (SIPD) project

SIPD Phase I (May 2017 – April 2021)

1. Background

The *Strong and Inclusive Parliamentary Democracy* (SIPD) project is a ten-year initiative with an estimated budget of CHF 10 million funded by the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) and implemented by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) to support the Parliament of the Kyrgyz Republic to improve its oversight functions, as well as to embed institutional accountability, inclusive democracy and realization of the rule of law in the country.

The project has the overall objective of ensuring that citizens benefit from responsive, inclusive and accountable institutions. The intervention is designed around the achievement of the following two outcomes:

- Outcome 1: Parliament sets national strategic priorities in accordance with citizens' needs, and oversees their implementation by the government;
- Outcome 2: Civil society actors promote active citizenship and effectively influence political processes to better serve the needs and priorities of the country's citizens.

As the establishment of multi-stakeholder partnership is a strategic *modus operandi* of the project, from the inception phase throughout the implementation of all the activities, the SIPD project works with a variety of key actors at the national level, including the parliament, three parliamentary committees and the parliament's apparatus; government offices, line ministries and agencies; Local Self-Governments; the Chamber of Accounts; civil society actors and organizations and Public Councils.

The project is designed to provide long-term presence, spanning the performance cycle of two parliamentary convocations (2015-2020 and 2020-2025), multiple coalition government terms with undefined duration and two presidential terms (2017-2023 and 2023-2029). In particular, the intervention will be implemented in line with the following phases:

- Phase I (2017- 2021), with an overall budget of USD 3,164,577;
- Phase II (2021 – 2025);
- Phase III (2025-2027) – exit phase.

Several months prior to the end of the first phase, an external evaluation of the project is planned to assess the results of the project and to provide recommendations regarding the continuation of the project and implementation of potential next phase.

2. Objective of the assignment

1. Assess the achievements of the project goals and outcomes in terms of efficiency, effectiveness, relevance, impact and sustainability;
2. Provide recommendations for the project remainder phase adjustments and on strategic areas of interventions as a basis for planning of the next project phases.

3. Process and deliverables

3.1 Working methodology

The evaluation methodology should answer the following questions, based on the five OECD/DAC evaluation criteria:

Relevance:

Are the necessary pre-conditions for the project to realistically being able to contribute to improving the public accountability of the democratic political system existing? What are these conditions? Can the selected project approaches (including the Civic Action Fund) realistically contribute to increase public accountability and strengthen dialogue between civil society and the parliament in an effective way? Are the project interventions (concentrating on the improvement of parliamentary processes and the promotion of civil society inclusion in the national parliamentary decision-making process) relevant and sufficient without supporting democratic local grassroots practices? Is the project collaborating with all relevant formal and informal partners, institutions, organizations and instruments to achieve the project goals?

Effectiveness:

Is the project approach effective and have the project activities of SIPD achieved their objectives and targets? Is the level of ambition of the set goals and targets appropriate? Were the selected approaches effective (what vs. how), especially in the area of strengthening the cooperation between the Parliament and civil society (Civic Action Fund)? Is the project cooperating in effective partner alliances to achieve results? What alliances are these or would need to be fostered? Was the level of commitment of members of parliament (MPs) and staffers to the project sufficient to achieve results? For those MPs that engaged with the project in a constructive collaboration ("champions"): who are they and what are their reasons and motivation to collaborate? Was the work with the parliamentary committees effective? How and why, or what were the key constraints? Has the project resulted in greater civic engagement with the parliament? Were risk analysis (including reputational and political risks) and mitigation measures adequate and effective?

Efficiency:

Does SIPD have the right resources, competencies and capacities to successfully implement the project and to achieve the targeted results? Were activities cost-effective (have the project resources been utilized in an appropriate and economic way to achieve the results)? Were objectives achieved on time? Was efficiency ensured within the established Civic Action Fund (CAF) grant mechanism and financial management risks adequately mitigated and managed? What realistic new delivery options shall the project consider to maximize efficiency and cost-effectiveness, in particular also with a view to the collaboration with civil society?

Impact:

Are the interventions contributing to a broader positive impact in improving the public accountability of the democratic political system, in particular in view of the political party situation and civic education in the country and in particular in the regions? Is there an expected lasting positive long-term impact of the supported interventions for citizens, civil society and the Parliament?

Sustainability:

Have the project partners and beneficiaries involved in the project implementation developed ownership of the approach and goals to be achieved? Is there a common vision and/or common agenda between members of parliament and civil society on the needs, approach and principles to work on? Did the project contribute to changing approaches, agenda and behavior of partners? How likely will the benefits of the project continue after the funding/implementation has ceased? What existing or new mechanisms shall the project consider to support and work with to ensure sustainability?

The evaluation should also look into the lessons learnt and specific crosscutting issues:

Lessons Learnt: what lessons have been learnt by the project and the partners? To what extent have they been already taken into account in the interventions? What lessons could be used for developing potential synergies with other SDC-funded initiatives (e.g. local governance projects)? What recommendations can be made on the future direction of the project implementation?

Transversal themes (gender, social inclusion and conflict sensitivity): to what extent were they integrated into the project and intervention logic? To what extent are the specific needs of women, ethnic minorities and disabled individuals reflected in the project design, interventions, monitoring and reporting? To what extent did women, ethnic minorities, people with special needs and other vulnerable groups participate in the processes promoted by the project, including voicing their needs and priorities? Has the project contributed to enhancing participation or inclusion of vulnerable groups and women at the national level?

3.2 Tasks

The following tasks should be performed in order to reach the objective of the evaluation:

Task 1: Develop the Evaluation Plan (including the evaluation methodology and tools, the Work Plan, and the Evaluation Mission Programme).

The Evaluation Plan should present the evaluation methodology and tools, the Work Plan and the Programme of Evaluation Mission in Kyrgyzstan. The Evaluation Plan should be approved by SDC before conducting the Evaluation Mission.

Task 2: Evaluate the overall project implementation progress and specific progress, including on transversal themes, regarding each Outcome towards the set Objectives and Targets as defined in the project Logframe. In accordance with the Evaluation Plan, the evaluation should answer the questions on relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact and sustainability of the project activities.

Task 3: Provide strategic recommendations to orient the intervention focus of the next project phase.

The report should provide specific recommendations for the remainder of the current project phase and on the strategic orientation of the next phases. It should be guided by but not limited to the specific questions on the future strategic orientation of the projects outlined in Annex 1, and inform the subsequent strategy formulation of the follow-on phases.

3.3. Consultant team and estimated level of effort

The assignment will be carried out by a team of international consultants, which may include local consultants. The estimated combined total level of effort for all consultants together is 35 person-days. The experts should be familiar with the country and its governance and parliamentary context, and challenges of the post-soviet context.

3.4 Timeframe of the assignment and mission program

Date 2020	Activity	Level of efforts (in person-days)
15 days after signing the contract	Preparation, desk review (including external relevant reports, research studies, national and international reports on the evaluated topic), development of the Evaluation Plan (including the evaluation methodology and tools, the Work Plan, and the Evaluation Mission Programme)	6
1-2 days after arrival	Briefing SDC Bishkek and implementing partner	2
Within end of April-beginning of May	Interviews (incl. by Skype/telephone if outside Bishkek), discussion as per consultants methodology/work plan (national and regional level)	13
1-2 days before departure	Debriefing/presentation of preliminary findings to SDC Bishkek and project PIU in Bishkek	2
15 days after return from the mission	Elaboration of draft final report	7
5 days after receiving feedbacks	Incorporation of feedbacks from project team and SDC into final report	2
June 15	Submission of final report to SDC	
End of April-beginning of May	Travel to/from Kyrgyzstan	3
	Total number of days	35

3.5 Logistics and Budget

The Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) in Kyrgyzstan is available to provide logistical and administrative guidance during the consultants' stay in Bishkek. Reservations and payments for flights, hotels and transport in and to the country are in the responsibility of the consultants. International travel tickets have to be booked through the Swiss Government Travel Center. As part of the contract, the consultants shall submit the assignment budget based on the agreed offer, indicating separately the consultants fees/rates and all expenses for travel, per diem, hotels, local transportation, etc.

The implementing partner, United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) in the Kyrgyz Republic, provides the evaluation team support for elaborating the mission program as well as with all necessary logistical support, including access to the parliament and arranging meetings with members of the parliament, parliament staffers,

civil society organizations and others as needed. The SIPD project team will fully support and cooperate with the mission on all logistical and thematic matters and questions. All requested project documents and data will be made available to the consultants in due time.

4. Expected Results, Deliverables and Deadlines

The expected result of the assignment is the end of phase evaluation report of the SIPD project – presenting the results of evaluation as well as the recommendations regarding relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact and sustainability of the project activities and of the strategic orientation of the next phase. An assessment grid (Annex 2) shall be filled in and attached to the report.

An Evaluation Plan should be submitted to SDC no later than 15 days after signing of the contract for review and approval.

The report shall be written in English and should not exceed 25 pages (excluding annexes). A draft Evaluation Report shall be submitted to SDC no later than 15 days after the return from mission, in electronic form. Comments from SDC and the implementing partner will be provided in order for the evaluation team to finalize the Evaluation Report. After incorporating comments and correcting factual errors, the final version shall be made available to SDC within 5 working days of receiving the comments from SDC. In case of differences on content and/or assessment conclusions, the consultants should add a section to report where they will be allowed to explain their perspective.

The deadline for the final Evaluation report is June 15, 2020.

Deliverables	Deadline
Evaluation Plan	15 calendar days after signing of the contract
Draft final Report	15 calendar days after the return from mission
Final Report	5 working days after receiving comments from SDC but no later than June 15, 2020

5. Qualification and Experience

The team of consultants will have at least one international expert and one (or more) local expert. If the international expert is not fluent in Russian, the consultant team is responsible to arrange and to cover cost for translation of all meetings. The team of consultants will have a team leader who will be the point of contact for SDC. An international expert will have the following minimum qualifications and experience:

- Master’s degree in political science, development studies, law or a bachelor’s degree with additional 8 years’ experience in development studies, political science or related field;
- At least 5 years of experience in evaluating large and complex national and international development and grant programs and projects in the field of parliamentary democracy, good governance, rule of law and accountability;
- Proven technical knowledge and expertise in strengthening parliamentary democracy, rule of law, and cross cutting issues such as gender and conflict sensitivity;

- Knowledge of the political and national governance contexts of Central Asian region in particular Kyrgyzstan is an asset;
- Prior experience in conducting political economy analysis is an asset;
- Excellent analytical and report writing skills;
- Fluency in English, knowledge of Russian is an asset;
- Knowledge of SDC and previous experience of working for SDC is an asset.

The expertise of the local consultant should be complementary to the one of the international consultant(s), Excellent knowledge of English, Kyrgyz and Russian are required.

6. Documents

List of available documents:

1. SIPD Project Document for Phase I
2. Yearly Plans of Operation for Phase I
3. Half-yearly and annual reports for Phase I
4. Report on the targeted review of the SIPD project
5. Omnibus surveys produced to measure the achievement of project indicators (in Russian)
6. OGP National Action Plan 2018-2020
7. Concept note & Recommendations from the International Seminar on Strengthening Parliamentary Oversight in KR
8. Gender Sensitivity Roadmap
9. Strategy of Press Service
10. CAF, Implementing Partners and Lead consultants final reports
11. Jogorku Kenesh annual reports 2016-2018, 2019
12. Functional analysis and assessment reports produced by SIPD
13. Parliament Development Strategy 2021

7. Stakeholders

List of stakeholders to be interviewed for evaluation of SIPD:

- UNDP Management and project team (current and former)
- SDC
- Parliament: MPs, staffers of the committees, heads of section in Parliament Apparatus (Press Service, Science and Research Center);
- Civic Action Fund grant recipients
- Civil society representatives, including from the OGP National Forum
- Public Councils' representatives
- Implementing partners such as OSCE, NDI, WFD, Palladium
- Short-term and long-term individual experts and group of experts (consulting organizations) of the project

Annex 1. Specific questions

The report should provide **recommendations to orient the intervention focus of the next project phase (Task 3)** in particular with a view to the following specific guiding questions:

- **Work with MPs:** How can MPs and civil society build a broader common agenda for change beyond the interest of individual/targeted objectives? Are there ways and/or mechanisms that may allow to increase the commitment of more MPs into project activities? Is the reliance on “champion” members of parliament enough to achieve the project’s goals? Are there effective alternatives/complementing options to working with MPs to achieve the project goals? What other approaches should be considered, in particular in view of the upcoming parliamentary elections?
- **Focus on work with parliamentary apparatus:** Could an increased support to the institutionalization of parliamentary processes and capacity building for the parliamentary apparatus be an effective and sustainable option for promoting changes at systemic level and making a significant difference in terms of outcome and impact, even if there were limited levels of ownership and commitment to the project goals by MPs and of civic education throughout the country? If yes, how?
- **Work with civil society:** Is the role and inclusion of civil society to achieve the project goals sufficiently well defined and effective or should the project consider to increase or decrease the focus of its work with civil society? If it was recommended to increase, what kind of approach to support and collaborate with civil society would be recommended in terms of instruments (grants, technical assistance, institutional support, partner dialogue, etc.) and focus (limited to work with parliament or more broadly supporting issue-based civil society organisations across Kyrgyzstan, etc.)?
- **Attention to civic education:** Would a stronger focus on civic education be required to achieve the goals of the project? If yes, what kind of approach and partners should be considered?
- **Potential expansion of intervention focus areas:** Are there any other focus areas that the project should consider expanding in or enhancing its efforts to increase its effectiveness? If yes, which ones and why?
- **Role of policy dialogue:** Is there an enhanced role that SDC and UNDP should play in the policy dialogue to promote democratic governance and accountability of the parliament?
- **Managing impact of upcoming elections:** How should the project best prepare and adapt its operational model to remain effective and efficient during and after the period of parliamentary elections with potentially limited attention to project interventions and with expectedly many MPs changing and new and inexperienced ones with limited knowledge about the project joining the parliament?
- **Project implementation team:** Is there a need to review the current project set-up and team composition to deliver results in line with the feedback to be provided on the above listed questions regarding a potential reorientation?