EVALUATION OF THE PROJECTS

funded by the Finnish Government in the area of
Transboundary Cooperation and Integrated Water Resources Management
in the Chu and Talas River Basins

REPORT

Sergey Pizikov

October 2018-February 2019

Contents

1. Executive Summary

The Kyrgyz Republic and the Republic of Kazakhstan share the waters of the transboundary Central Asian rivers Chu and Talas, which provide the necessary resources for irrigating vast agricultural land in both countries, as well as opportunities for generating hydropower. These countries created the legal and institutional framework for the joint work of the water infrastructure, which resulted in the signing of the Agreement on the Use of Water Management Facilities of Intergovernmental Status on the Rivers Chu and Talas in 2000 and establishment of the Chu-Talas Water Commission (CTWC).

A number of projects aimed at supporting these legal and institutional measures were implemented with the support of international donor organizations. Three of them were implemented by the UNECE Convention on the Protection and Use of Transboundary Watercourses and International Lakes (Water Convention) and funded by the Finnish Government to support transboundary cooperation and integrated water resources management in the Chu and Talas river basins (hereinafter "Projects"):

- "Developing cooperation on the Chu and Talas Rivers" (Chu-Talas II);
- "Promoting Cooperation to Adapt to Climate Change in the Chu and Talas Transboundary Basin";
- "Enhancing climate resilience and adaptive capacity in the transboundary Chu-Talas basin"

The purpose of the recent project was *to establish a framework for regular and strategic climate change adaptation action in the Chu-Talas River Basin and enable the Chu-Talas Commission and local authorities to facilitate climate change adaptation in the basin* and was complemented by the results of two preceding projects. The overall budget of the recent project was 333,900.00 EUR.

The purpose of the evaluation was to assess the *relevance* of the Project for the needs of the participating countries, its *effectiveness*, *efficiency*, *sustainability* and *impact* of Project results.

The evaluation was conducted in October 2018 – February 2019 by an independent consultant.

The main conclusion of the evaluation is that the ***project was fully relevant, effective, efficient and sustainable***, although CTWC still needs to be supported.

The conclusions for each evaluation criterion are as follows:

Relevance: the project is ***very relevant*** to the national needs and priorities of beneficiary countries as well as the project design and achievements are relevant to project objective. The project strategy planned actions and organizational support provided by the implementing agency fully correspond to the interests of the countries involved in the project and the region Central Asia.

Effectiveness: the ***effectiveness*** of the project can be considered to be ***high***, although some activities are still in process e.g. Strategic Action Programme (SAP) was not approved on the inter-governmental level by the end of the project. A flexible approach allowed the project team to achieve high results, despite the organizational issues that arose during the implementation of the project. The level of achievement of the planned results is quite high, and even surpasses expectations related to some indicators. Project team will continue to support the promotion and approval of SAP which, is adopted, will significantly exceed the planned results.

Efficiency: the ***efficiency*** of the project within its budget allotment is considered as ***high***. Within the allocated budget all planned activities were carried out on time within project duration except for SAP approval. In many respects, it was possible because of synergies and joint efforts with other programs/initiatives. Both financial and human (expert) resources were distributed in a way to ensure achievement of the planned results at the designated time, although there was some lack of local expertise. At the same time, more monitoring on intermediate milestones could be needed for understanding how efficient the project is and, consequently, improving its efficiency.

Sustainability: The dialogue mechanism between the countries of the Chu-talas basin supported by the project already demonstrates stability in relation to planning joint actions, maintaining cooperation in transboundary areas, and the parties' desire to increase the level of cooperation efficiency. At the same time, it is too early to rely on full ability of both countries to independently maintain the dialogue without the support of international donors. The project in this case played a decisive role not only in financing the Chu-Talas Commission, but also in ensuring and facilitating its activities. Thus, the ***stability of the results, the prerequisites of which are created by the project, would benefit from further support*** from the international community.

Recommendations for each evaluation criterion are as follows:

Relevance:

1. The UNECE should consider tocontinue to pay particular attention to the interests of both countries and to the region as a whole as well as to support transboundary cooperation in the basin. It is also necessary to promote intersectoral nature of the water issues showing that working on water-related problems countries can solve other important problems in such areas as e.g. energy, security and agriculture.

Effectiveness:

2. Currently, the UNECE should continue to promote and facilitate SAP approval by the governments of the countries (in particular, the Kyrgyz Republic).

Efficiency:

3. Expenditures for staff costs and consultancy should be better anticipated at the stage of the project proposal preparation.

Sustainability:

4. It is important for UNECE to help to develop local human potential in the Chu-Talas basin (experts, technicians, politicians) interested in the further development of transboundary cooperation between the countries.
5. It is recommended to support further activities targeted on incorporation of project results into regular government programs in both countries to ensure sustainability of the project results, for examples, by promoting SAP indicators into National Indicators System (NIS) in Kyrgyzstan.

Impact:

6. In order to increase the impact of future projects, the UNECE is recommended to continue support of CTWC in close cooperation with other donor programs. This will also improve information sharing and coordination between donors.
7. It is crucial to promote the results of the projects among senior leadership from the countries to increase project impact and visibility.

Gender:

8. For future activities, UNECE could use the gender approach used in the project as an example and basis for planning the gender aspects. The approach should include

involvement of the gender expert with further development of suggestions for the project, direct involvement of women into the project as well as through civil society organizations and listening to their expertise and needs during project implementation with further incorporation into project activities.

2. Introduction

2.1 Purpose

The independent external evaluation was performed at the request and for the benefit of the UNECE Secretariat. The purpose of this evaluation according to the Terms of Reference (TOR) (**Appendix 1**) is to review the implementation and assess the extent to which the objective of the 3 projects:

- "Developing cooperation on the Chu and Talas Rivers" (Chu-Talas II);
- "Promoting Cooperation to Adapt to Climate Change in the Chu and Talas Transboundary Basin";
- "Enhancing climate resilience and adaptive capacity in the transboundary Chu-Talas basin"

The projects were funded by the Finnish Government to support transboundary cooperation and integrated water resources management in the Chu and Talas river basins (hereinafter "Projects"). The evaluation assesses *the relevance* of the projects for the beneficiary countries and the Chu and Talas Commission, *effectiveness* in reaching relevant outcomes, *efficiency* in the use of human and staff resources in reaching project objectives, *sustainability* of projects' work, *impact* on transboundary cooperation, integrated water resources management and adaptation to climate change in transboundary basins in Central Asia, as well as coordination, synergies and complementarities with other ongoing UNECE projects funded by Finland.

The main focus of this report is on the latter listed project, since a) it was implemented by the last of these, and b) it was in some way a continuation of the previous two projects, and therefore reflects their results. The results of the evaluation will support improvement of the future technical cooperation projects and activities implemented by UNECE. The results of the evaluation will be important for the discussion with donors and partner organizations for any future work by UNECE in the area of water resources management and transboundary cooperation in the Central Asia region and beyond.

2.2 Scope

The evaluation was conducted in accordance to the objective, outcomes, activities and indicators of achievement established in the logical framework (**Appendix 2**) of the original and revised projects document. The evaluation considered to what extent the projects improved transboundary cooperation and integrated water resources management and adaptation to climate change in the Chu-Talas river basin. The evaluation covered the full period of project's implementation from September 2015 till December 2018.

The evaluation also assessed how gender considerations were included the projects' design, execution and results.

2.3 Methodology

The methodology for the evaluation included the following:

1. Desk study of all relevant projects documents, including projects descriptions, reports, publications, etc. and other information provided to the evaluator (**Appendix 3**).
2. Group discussion (which was not required by ToR) with 5 internal and external stakeholders from both countries was conducted in Bishkek at the FINWaterWEI II Regional Conference on 26-27 September 2018. This discussion organised after a short initial desk study provided the evaluator with additional information as well as guidance for further research. It also served as the basis for reviewing and clarifying some questions for the interviews.
3. 12 interviews (while 10-15 were required by ToR) with key external stakeholders, such as representatives of the Ministry of Agriculture of the Republic of Kazakhstan, RSE "Kazhydromet", Ministry of Agriculture and Melioration of Kyrgyz Republic, Hydrometeorological Service of Kyrgyzstan, Chu Talas Water Commission, NGOs, international and local experts and donors were organised in Astana, Kazakhstan and at the FINWaterWEI II Regional Conference on 26-27 September 2018, Bishkek and Issyk-Kul, Kyrgyzstan and the Chu Talas Water Commission working groups meeting on 12-13 December, Taraz, Kazakhstan.
4. Interviews with 6 internal stakeholders, including the projecs team and the Environment Division at UNECE, were performed in both English and Russian (face-to-face, via telephone and skype).
5. The aforementioned FINWaterWEI II Regional Conference on 26-27 September 2018, Bishkek and the Chu Talas Water Commission working groups meeting on 12-13 December provided an opportunity to meet and discuss the project implementation and results with donor and partner organizations dealing with water management issues in the region. Although this activity was not required by ToR, it brought very useful information to better understand stakeholder's impressions on project's role, significance and perspectives.

Some methodology deviations from ToR are described below in 2.4 Limitations section.

The evaluation questionnaire (**Appendix 4**) was based on questions listed in the TOR. For each of the basic questions, the evaluator developed additional questions which varied depending on the category of respondent, for example, representatives of the donor and representatives of NGO-grantees were asked questions in different modifications. Responses are shown in **Appendix 7**.

The evaluation questionnaire was used for both as guidance for initial interviewing and for getting additional information if something not something was omitted during the interview.

The list of respondents was provided by the UNECE Project Manager and then extended according to suggestions from stakeholders. Each stakeholder was represented by among the listy of responders including national authorities, the donors, international experts, NGOs and other parties involved into project activities. A full list of the respondents to the questionnaires and interviews is provided in **Appendix 5**.

The evaluation interviews in the field (in the countries involved) were organised between September 25 and December 14 2018. Interviews with internal stakeholders were preformed both at the aforementioned events and during the meeting in Geneva on January 24-25 when the draft of this report was discussed.

Gender aspect was also covered by the evaluation, taking into account guidance provided by the United Nations Evaluation Group on this issue. Recommendations for further development of the gender dimension are given below in the relevant section of this document.

2.4 Limitations and mitigation strategies.

The most crucial limitations to the evaluation are highlighted below:

- ***Sampling.*** The ToR directly indicates that the contacts for the interviews will be provided to the evaluator by the project team. This is reasonable for making easier the process of searching and initial contacting of the stakeholders, especially considering the cultural characteristics of the region where contacting officials without initial background may be impossible at all. However, such approach could increase the extent of subjectivity among the opinions of the responders.
- ***Qualitative Approach:*** The primary approach for this evaluation was qualitative data collection. The full picture and analysis of qualitative data are complex and the opinions of respondents are subjective by their nature. The evaluator mitigated the subjectivity of opinions by triangulating data sources (see below at the end of this section), and limited transcription errors by having the data cross-check. The initial ToR contained an electronic survey. However, the evaluator, submitting a project proposal, had a discussion with the UNECE project team, including on a combination of methods, and both parties came to the mutual conclusion that the survey is not needed due to the following reasons:
    - the sample of respondents for the interview and the sample of respondents for the survey cover the same stakeholders. Thus, the survey and interview would duplicate each other which would lead to unjustified waste of resources (e.g. time of a) the evaluator to perform and analyse the survey and interviews, and b) responders to answer both interviews and survey).
    - there was no need to expand the sample of respondents by the survey since all the major stakeholders were covered by the interviews. Inclusion of additional stakeholders who were not involved into the project could have potentially caused receiving of irrelevant information based on assumptions and lack of background data.
    - it was possible to include quantitative data as scale questions into the interviews. Thus, interview methods were used for obtaining both qualitative and quantitative information at the same time from the same respondents.
- ***Respondent bias and recalled challenges:*** Interviewees may temper their responses to questions based on their interest or expected outcomes linked to program continuation or future programming. Also, it could have been difficult for some responders to remember all the project activities due to long time between the initial project's events and the evaluation. The evaluator made a cross-checking triangulation from documents review and

various respondents to ensure the more accurate picture of projects performance.

- ***Time:*** Some deviation from the original (TOR) timeline occurred, which did not affect the quality of the assessment, and even vice versa - allowed to take into account those activities which were supported by the UNECE in the Chu-Talas basin after the project end.

All listed limitations were mitigated by triangulation of data. The desk research data were compared with the group discussion data, then with the interview data of various categories of respondents and supplemented with personal impressions of the evaluator during the project events in Bishkek and Taraz. Such cross-check allowed to eliminate subjectivity in the opinions of the respondents as much as possible and to ensure high reliability of data for the purposes of this report.

3. Findings

The main findings in this section of the report are considered a) in the context of the main questions on the evaluation criteria (relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability, impact) and c) based on the results of both desk research and interviews.

3.1 Relevance

How relevant was the project to the national needs and priorities of beneficiary countries?

On 25 September 2015, the 193 countries of the UN General Assembly adopted the 2030 Development Agenda titled "Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development". The 2030 Agenda covers 17 SDGs and 169 targets, reflecting the broad scope of sustainability issues. Water and sanitation is central to sustainable development and the 2030 Agenda with strong linkages to many other Goals. SDG 6 is the main Goal related to water and sanitation. It aims to “ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all”. SDG 6 has 8 targets and 11 corresponding global indicators, most of which overlap with Protocol targets. While the SDGs are not legally binding, governments agreed to take ownership and establish national frameworks for the achievement of the 17 Goals. The Water Convention is a powerful instrument, which can be utilized by governments in setting their own national targets on water, sanitation and health, reflecting the national circumstances.

The Chu and the Talas Rivers are the major sources of water in agriculture and support the livelihoods of more than 3 million people in Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan.

The interests of independent countries that emerged after the collapse of the Soviet Union, in many respects contradict each other. However, Kyrgyzstan and Kazakhstan have found a mutually beneficial way to share the responsibility for maintenance and investment in the water infrastructure used by both countries. In a bilateral agreement signed in January 2000, Kazakhstan agreed to pay part of the operating and maintenance expenses for a number of Kyrgyz dams and reservoirs that supply water to both countries.

In February 2002, the Governments of Kyrgyzstan and Kazakhstan submitted a request to

the UN Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) and the UN Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UN ESCAP) for assistance in establishing an intergovernmental transboundary water commission, including the development of the Commission statute and other actions aimed at the effective implementation of the bilateral agreement addressing the Chu and Talas rivers.

Since the commission was established, a series of projects, supported by various international organizations, have been implemented, including those considered in this report. These three projects, funded by the Finnish government, were implemented one by one, and aimed at increasing the capacity of countries to find mutually acceptable solutions in water resources sharing and management.

According to forecasts, the water flow of Chu and Talas Rivers may reduce up to 25-45 % in near 25-50 years due to climate changes. Climate change and its consequences as extremely dry and shallow years may greatly harm agriculture within these basins, may lead to complication of relations between the two countries, and increase the vulnerability of the population and ecosystems. To avoid possible negative impacts, it is needed to take timely measures on water saving, improvement of effectiveness of its use.

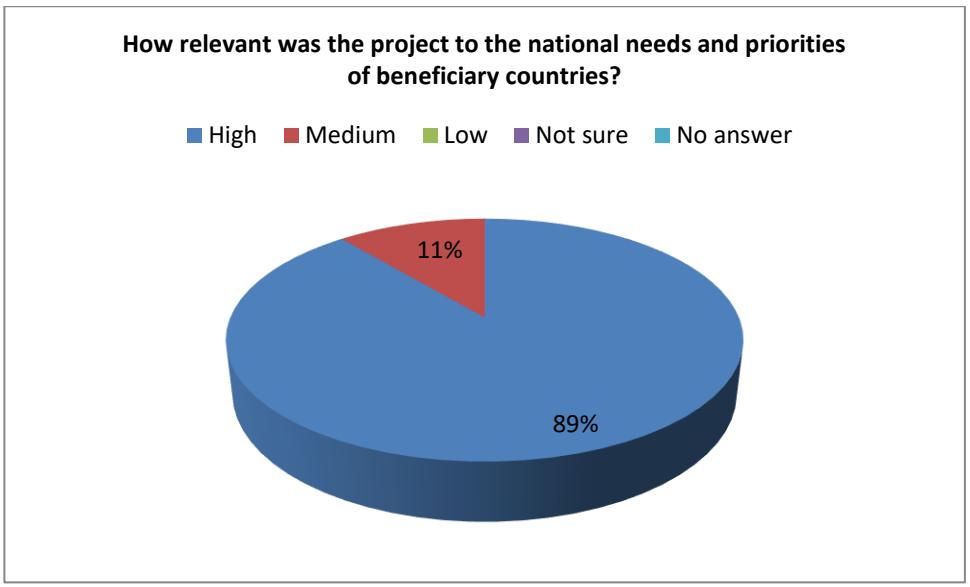
Kazakhstani Strategy 2050, issued in 2012, says: "The problem of water supply is acute in our country. We lack quality drinking water. A number of regions are in dire need of this. There is a geopolitical aspect of this problem. Already, we are faced with the serious problem of using water resources of transboundary rivers. Despite the complexity of this issue, we should not allow it to be politicized"[1].

The government of Kyrgyzstan also keeps water issues in focus. For example, for the purposes of this report, we can cite the Government Decisions "On Approving Priority Directions for Adapting to Climate Change in the Kyrgyz Republic" (October 2, 2013 No. 549)2 and Approving Priorities for the Conservation of Wetlands of the Kyrgyz Republic until 2023 and the Action Plan on the implementation of the Priorities for the Conservation of Wetlands of the Kyrgyz Republic for 2013-2017 (October 18, 2013)3 which, in particular, speaks of the need to attract international assistance to solve environmental problems.

[1] http://www.akorda.kz/ru/events/astana_kazakhstan/participation_in_events/poslanie-prezidenta-respubliki-kazahstan-lidera-nacii-nursultana-nazarbaeva-narodu-kazahstana-strategiya-kazahstan-2050-novyi-politicheskii-

[2] http://cbd.minjust.gov.kg/act/view/ru-ru/94766

[3] http://cbd.minjust.gov.kg/act/view/ru-ru/94788



All (100%) interviewed respondents note the project is relevant to the needs and interests of their countries, although 16 of 18 think the relevance is high, and 2 of 18 think the relevance is medium.

Thus, the project activities of the UNECE, aimed at reducing the potential risks associated with the use of water resources under climate change, are absolutely relevant to the interests of the countries of the region.

How relevant was the design of the project, in line with the achievements and outcomes of other initiatives?

All interviewed stakeholders note that the project team has made every effort to eliminate the possibility of duplication with other projects, and to ensure increased efficiency through cooperation and synergy. To the maximum extent, this has happened with the GEF/UNDP project on Enabling Transboundary Cooperation and Integrated Water Resources Management in the Chu and Talas River Basins. The inter-project interaction allowed pooling resources in the development of TDA and SAP and ultimately achieve even greater results than planned, which was repeatedly said by the participants from both countries at the meeting in Taraz on December 12-13, 2018.

Interviewed representatives of other initiatives (such as mentioned GEF/UNDP project, OECD, EBRD Climadapt Support) note that the project itself and project team work were designed in a way that allowed to identify and prevent duplication of the work done by different teams on the early stages. Good coordination and cooperation (in particular, with GEF project) is acknowledged in the water resource quality and quantity assessment and ecology improvement assessment, which is a part of TDA. According to both countries government officials', the quality of TDA prepared even exceed expectations and take into consideration many more aspects and questions that initially designed. Even more, 4 representatives of the Kazakhstan and 5 Kyrgyz officials said, that the most important project's outcome (which is beyond of project's LogFrame) is the development of a platform and mechanism for mutual beneficial dialogue between countries. Respondents both from Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan note, that the project plays key role to ensuring mitigation of risks associated with chances of escalation of the conflict regarding the use of the water. Generally, the overall picture of the project can be described as a well-coordinated cooperation of governments, consultants, experts and stakeholders.

To what extent was the Project design and development intervention relevant for meeting the Project's objective?

According to Project LogFrame (**Appendix 2**), the overall Development Objective is *to increase the adaptive capacity in the transboundary Chu-Talas River Basin to climate change impacts.*

Indicator O.1: Number of people who benefit from locally tailored adaptive capacity building measures

The project purpose is "to establish a framework for regular and strategic climate change adaptation action in the Chu-Talas River Basin and enable the Chu-Talas Commission and local authorities to facilitate climate change adaptation in the basin".

Indicator P.1: At least one strategic document facilitating adaptation in Chu-Talas River Basin developed

The expected results and the respective indicators are the following:

Result 1. Framework for regular and strategic climate change adaptation action in the Chu-Talas River Basin established

Indicator R.1: Strategic document facilitating adaptation in Chu-Talas River Basin developed

Result 2. Benefits of adaptation measures assessed and demonstrated on the ground

Indicator R.2: At least 3 adaptation measures implemented in the Chu-Talas basin

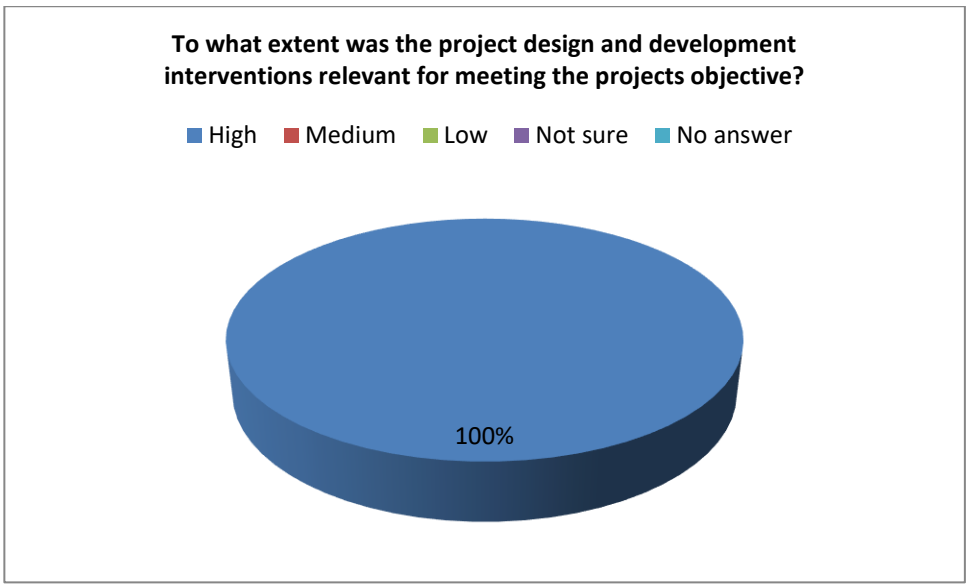
Result 3. Increased awareness and knowledge of Chu-Talas Commission and other key stakeholders of adaptation options in the river basin and the need for transboundary cooperation in adaptation

Indicator R.3.1: Number of individuals benefitting from trainings and awareness building activities

Indicator R.3.2: % of trained women

Indicator R.3.3: Training evaluation results

Project activities described at the Logical Framework, included development of strategic document, cost—benefit assessment of proposed and prioritized adaptation measures, as well as awareness raising and capacity building – so, in other words, *encompassing all the areas and actions necessary for the project's success*.



All (100%) respondents agreed that the selected design and approaches were the most relevant and efficient in terms of achieving the project objectives.

The conclusion on this point is that the design of the project (project's structure, key indicators and activities, verification criteria, and major deliverables) was developed to ensure achievement of the desired project goals.

To what extent the project was relevant to the UNECE and Water Convention's regular programme of work?

Based on the presented plans, outlines, logical framework, and achieved interim and final outcomes, it is possible and fair to claim that the Chu Talas project was fully in line with the adopted and executed Convention on the Protection and Use of Transboundary Watercourses and International Lakes as amended, along with decision VI/3 clarifying the accession procedure.

General provisions of the Convention state that "The Parties shall take all appropriate measures to prevent, control and reduce any transboundary impact". The project and its aims and objectives were fully in line and complied with the following articles and items of the Document:

Objective "Framework for regular and strategic climate change adaptation action in the Chu-Talas River Basin established" complied and falls under description of Article 3 of the Convention;

Objective "Benefits of adaptation measures assessed and demonstrated on the ground" falls under Article 5, items c), e), f), g) and h);

Objective "Increased awareness and knowledge of Chu-Talas Commission and other key stakeholders of adaptation options in the river basin and the need for transboundary cooperation in adaptation" manifests compliance with Articles 6 and 9 in the part of cooperation with the Kazakhstani side of the Commission.

Also the project corresponds to Articles 10 (cooperation with Kazakhstan in agreeing the cross-country activities and estimated their effects), 11-15 (joint monitoring and coordination of the common resource, as well as ensuring high quality exchange of information).

The Water Convention's programme of work for 2016-2018 contains Part D, Programme

area 4:Adapting to climate change in transboundary basins. There are two objectives:

(a) Increased adaptive capacity and improved cooperation on climate change mitigation and adaptation in transboundary basins worldwide;

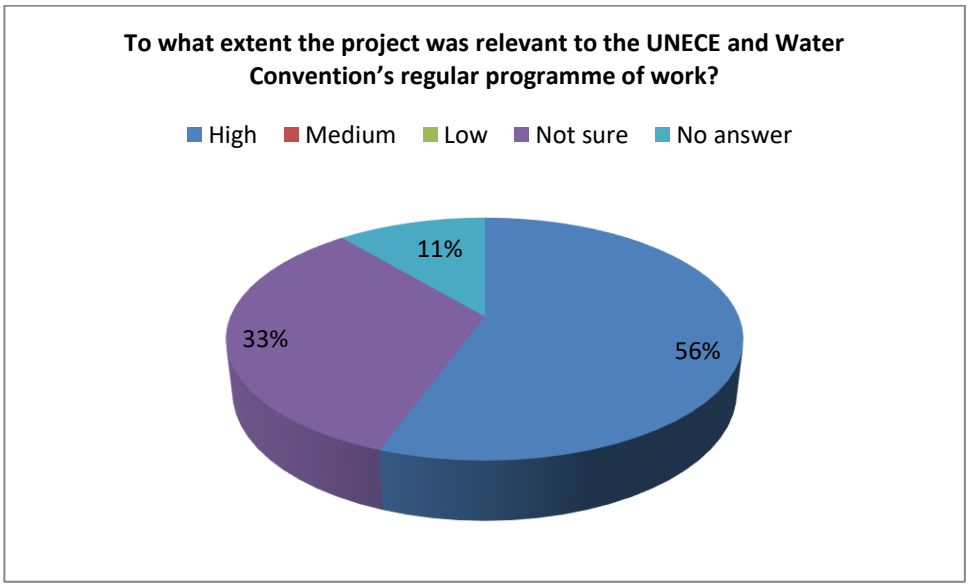
(b) Increased awareness of the importance of cooperation in climate change adaptation and disaster risk reduction at the national level and in intergovernmental processes, such as the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC).

Chu and Talas are listed in this document among pilot projects which "continue to implement their adaptation strategies".

Since the project: a) has developed a strategic document that facilitates adaptation; b) developed and implemented 3 adaptation measures, and c) covered more than 500 people with trainings and awareness-raising activities, it can be concluded with confidence that the project fully supported the achievement of programme objectives.

The project contributed to safeguard of the environment and health, improve environmental management and further promote integration of environmental policies into sectoral policies and to improve transboundary water cooperation.

The chart illustrating results of the interviews is provided below.



Summarizing the above and taking into account that the project was developed and implemented in line with the priority key interests of both countries, as well as directly correlated with the SDGs and the UNECE regular program of work, it can be stated that the project was highly relevant.

3.2 Effectiveness

To what extent were the expected accomplishments (outcomes) of the project achieved?

The projects considered in this report, which are a logical continuation of each other and are based on previous results, are part of the program of pilot projects on climate change adaptation in transboundary basins under the UNECE Water Convention.

Thus, all of them are aimed at achieving a common goal, while each of them has its own

objectives. In the course of this evaluation, the objectives and indicators described in the Logframe were compared to the real achievements of the last project. It should be noted that both the Development objective as well as the specific project purpose have been achieved. The SAP has been developed in accordance to the Result 1, Indicator R1. Further, SAP needs to be approved by next meeting of the Intergovernmental Council as recommended at the CTWC meeting on December 12, 2018 in Taraz. Although further SAP negotiation processes are beyond the project, the project team continues to facilitate SAP approval.

Detailed information on the level of achievement of project results is provided in **Appendix 6.**

What were the challenges/obstacles to achieving the project objectives and expected accomplishments (outcomes)?

A desk study shows that from the very beginning the project had a description of risks, taking into account the particularities of the countries of the region: frequent changes of responsible officials, lack of coordination between different government agencies, lack of interest and/or willingness to solve emerging problems.

Four main risks were defined as follows:

N	Risk	Level
1	Political and institutional changes in the government, especially in the institutional framework for water management may delay the project implementation	Medium
2	Changes in the state administration may lead to loss of continuity with the project focal points and lead to decreased prioritization of the project	Low
3	Lack of coordination with other relevant initiatives may lead to duplication of efforts	Low
4	Sustainability of the project results	Medium

The political and institutional changes mentioned in this table, the lack of (or change in the vector) of political are unfortunately typical phenomena for the post-Soviet countries of Central Asia. In the case of the project, this led to the fact that one of the main documents the project provided input to, the Strategic Action Program, is still in the process of consideration by Kyrgyz side.

Even in a relatively stable environment, there are two kinds of obstacles to achieving the expected accomplishments:

- Delays caused by numerous bureaucratic approvals, a large number of involved ministries and agencies and complicated internal procedures. This constraint is marked by almost all respondents in both countries, although Kyrgyz officials say more about this, probably because they know better the specifics of the work of the government from inside.
- Lack of resources for the implementation of initiatives - and this is not only about financial resources, but also about the lack of capacity. This obstacle was noted by many

internal project stakeholders, as well as by external experts. In particular, it is called such a circumstance that Kazakhstan has its own scientific school, which is currently represented by such organizations as the joint-stock company Zhasyl Damu (formerly the Institute of Ecology and Climate), the Institute of Geography, the Climate Change Coordination Center, while such organizations are not well developed in the Kyrgyz Republic.

- Reducing of the level of political influence of people and organizations involved into water issues in the Kyrgyz Republic - according to three respondents from the Kyrgyz side, two of whom are government officials, and one is a member of the project team.

Nevertheless, the final review shows that the project has successfully applied a risk mitigation strategy, which has made it possible to achieve the planned indicators.

Has the project improved capacity of key stakeholders?

Involvement of local stakeholders on all level of discussion of adaptation measures is crucial for their successful implementation.

Project description contains a table demonstrating a level of involvement of all stakeholders based on their roles and responsibilities. Obviously, performing different roles/responsibilities implies the existence and development of different capacities. For some stakeholders (Talas Basin Water Council; Chui Basin Water Council; Shu-Talas Water Basin Council) the table explicitly provides for "receiving capacity development support" as one of the responsibilities, as well as "capacity development" for NGOs.

Thus, the project initially assumed the capacity development of potential stakeholders.

The involvement of local stakeholders was envisaged to achieve all three project results (and the corresponding five indicators).

The table below demonstrates which major stakeholder groups were involved in achieving the planned results/indicators:

Indicator	Stakeholders
R1. Strategic document facilitating adaptation in Chu-Talas River Basin development	Professional communities: Talas Basin Water Council; Chui Basin Water Council; Shu-Talas Water Basin Council; Chu-Talas Commission
R.2: At least 3 adaptation measures implemented in the Chu-Talas basin R.3.1: Number of individuals benefitting from trainings and awareness building activities R.3.2: % of trained women R.3.3: Training evaluation results	Smallholder farmers, rural population in Kyrgyzstan and Kazakhstan; Federation and Associations of water users (WUA), agricultural consumption cooperatives of water users (ACCWU) in Kyrgyzstan, Farmers alliance in Kazakhstan, Rural water users cooperatives (RWUC) in Kazakhstan; NGOs including environmentally based organizations, social inclusion and protection organizations (such as BIOM NGO Kyrgyzstan, «Aleine» environmental movement in Kyrgyzstan)

Obviously, the achievement of the R1 indicator required the involvement and at the same time a raising of the capacity of the professional community. Achieving the other three indicators would not have been possible without the active participation of communities in the water and environmental sectors — and thus contributed to raising their capacity, which in the future will be one of the conditions for sustainable development.

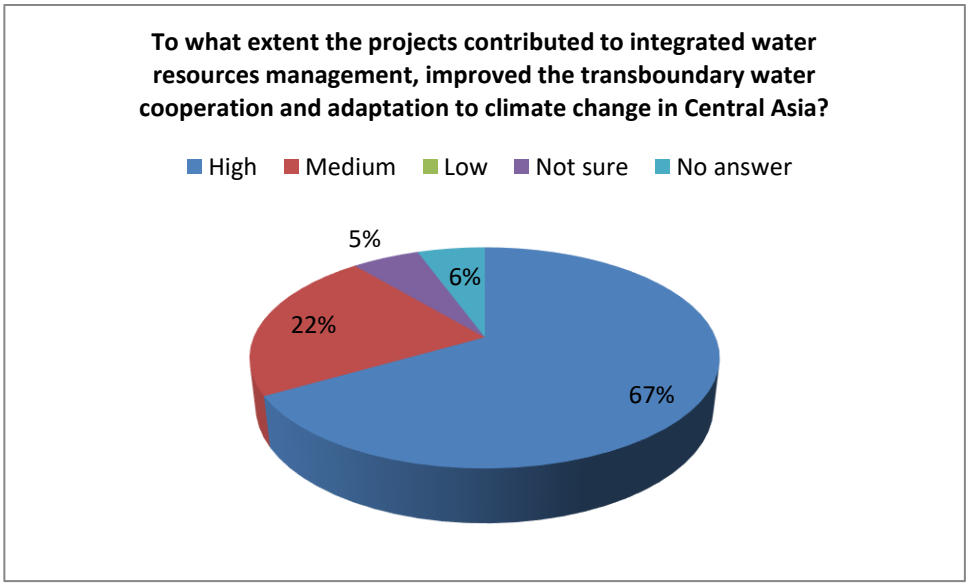
Two local NGOs were involved into project implementation. NGO Kyrgyz Association of Forest and Land users demonstrated the priority measures in re-forestation, water efficiency and technical documentation. NGO BIOM developed and conducted an "Information campaign to support climate adaptation activities in Chu-Talas basin". Representatives of both NGOs noted in their interviews that the work they carried out during the project helped to increase their professional level, and also strengthened their authority in front of local government bodies and the non-state sector. According to 2 interviewed BIOM's representatives, more than 500 people were directly or indirectly involved in project implementation while over 2 mln people indirectly benefited from the project, according to project report and opinion of CTWC co-secretaries from both countries.

So, the capacity of stakeholders was improved in at least three aspects:

- Dialogue ability
- Awareness
- Technical skills.

To what extent the projects contributed to integrated water resources management, improved the transboundary water cooperation and adaptation to climate change in Central Asia? What were the synergies that the projects brought along?

According to the common respondent's opinion, the project served as a forum and a facilitator inviting and fostering dialogue between the countries.



Its specific role was to promote healthy and holistic negotiations. The project contributed to increasing coordination of the Chu Talas basin in terms of elaborating and promoting a comprehensive strategic framework and pilot projects that could be in future maintained and implemented on a standalone basis without active involvement of foreign experts even. According to one Kazakhstani official, the project can serve as an ideal model for the joint work of various

donors and organizations on transboundary rivers.

The team, according to all interviewed respondents, facilitated and did all in its powers to promote the cooperation and climate change adaptation actions proposed by the Chu-Talas Commission.

Synergy of the project with National Policy Dialogue and GEF projects allowed to achieve even greater quality results than it was initially expected. As representative of Kazakhstan Ministry of Agriculture said in the interview: We were going to create just a brief overview of situation in basin, but managed to receive a significant analytical document finally" (this is about Transboundary Diagnostic Analysis).

At the same time, such a positive view of cooperation is not a general trend outside the project stakeholders. There is (and not so rarely) the opinion that a) intergovernmental institutions (for example, CTWC itself) and agreements are not an indicator of successful cooperation, and b) external actors (ie donors, experts) are not sufficiently involved in solving issues related with water to truly overcome political and economic differences.

Based on the above, it can be concluded that the project was effective and the planned indicators were achieved.

3.3 Efficiency

Regarding the delivery of the project outputs, it can be concluded that the Project had reached its main objectives including development of the framework for climate change adaptation, raising awareness in this area and implementing technical measures on the ground. There was a certain delay in the project implementation due to long process of review of SAP in Kyrgyzstan causing inability of SAP approval on the intergovernmental level by the end of the project.

With regard to the project duration, a no-cost project extension until 31 December 2018 was agreed by Finland and UNECE in July 2018 mainly for additional efforts made from UNECE side to facilitate SAP approval.

Were the available resources appropriate to the scale of the project and the needs identified by beneficiary countries?

The total budget of the last project was 343,900 EUR with Finland's contribution of 333,900 EUR. UNECE has provided co-funding in the form of staff time for technical inputs and project oversight estimated at EUR 10,000 (as described in the institutional arrangements section) . Co-funding was also provided for exchanging experience with the other pilot projects in the UNECE programme of pilot projects (annual global workshops and meetings of the global network of basins working on climate change adaptation) by Switzerland and the Netherlands.

The co-funding of beneficiary countries included in-kind work time of officials participating in the activities, as well data and information provided for the developing documents and implementing activities within the project.

Finnish funds were used to cover costs on the local and international experts, meetings and

travel, implementation of measures on the ground as well as for participation of experts from Kyrgyzstan in the platform for exchanging experience on water and climate under the Water Convention.

There were two main budget reallocations during project duration mainly related to much bigger efforts needed from UNECE staff due to SAP approval, complexity of the project and also underestimation of the project staff time at the stage of project proposal preparation. Thus, almost twice more than originally planned was spent on staff costs. For the same reason bigger in-kind contribution from UNECE in its staff time was provided. A recommendation for the future should be proper estimation of staff costs at the stage of the project proposal preparation. All the deviations were discussed and agreed with Finland in July 2018 and at the final stage of the project. Table 1 below presents the cost breakdown of the contribution from Finland in EUR (September 2015 – December 2018) and percentage shift between initial and modified budget.

Table 1.

Budget item	Initial budget	Modified budget
TA personnel	16,7%	32,8%
Sub-contracting (experts)	21,3%	15,7%
Investments	18%	16,4%
Travel and subsistence	8%	9,5%
Organization of missions and trainings	14,1%	8,1%
Monitoring and evaluation	9%	6%
Contingency	1,6%	0%
UN Programme and Support costs	11,5% (13% of each expenditure)	11,5% (13% of each expenditure)

Expenditures by period (Table 2 in the Appendix) were made quite evenly, which indicates good planning of project activities. Some shift in the focus of funding from subcontractors to TA personnel may indicate the desire of the project team to provide as much expertise as possible and a fairly flexible approach of the project team to changing circumstances.

According to the most of interviews (13 of 18), the resources were allocated and used in the most proper, adequate and assiduous manner. Five interviewed people (representing partners organizations and so not involved to the project activities in deep) said they do not have enough information about budget and other resources, but they were sure that the funds were sufficient for the scale and needs of the beneficiary counties.

Were the human and financial resources allocated to the project used efficiently and commensurate to the project results?

All the respondents surveyed agreed that the project's resources were used in the best possible way, the project team ensured most efficient use of the sources which resulted in some overall savings. Again, inter-project cooperation (particularly with GEF project) allowed using resources in highly effective manner but demanded more time from the UNECE staff. At the same time, 4 of 18 respondents acknowledged lack of local expertise, especially in Kyrgyz Republic.

Were the activities implemented according to the planned timeframe?

The Table below shows Indicative Work Plan for the project (September 2015 – June 2018)

Results	Activities	Sep 2015 - Aug 2016				Sep 2016 - Aug 2017				Aug 2017- June 2018			
		Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q5	Q6	Q7	Q8	Q9	Q10	Q11	Q12
Result 1. Framework for regular and strategic climate change adaptation action in the Chu - Talas River Basin established	1.1. Support development of strategic document to facilitate adaptation												
Result 2. Benefits of adaptation measures assessed and demonstrated on the ground	2.1. Conduct cost-benefit assessment of adaptation measures												
	2.2. Prioritize measures for implementation through consultative process												
	2.3. Implement selected adaptation measures												
Result 3. Increased awareness and knowledge of Chu-Talas Commission and other key stakeholders of adaptation options in the river basin	3.1. Conduct capacity needs assessment of Chu-Talas Commission and other key local stakeholders												
	3.2. Develop awareness raising and capacity building strategy												
	3.3. Implement awareness raising and capacity building strategy												
	3.4. Develop project exit strategy												
Project evaluation													

Both desk study and the evaluation survey showed some delays in the preparation process of the TDA and SAP documents led to the need to postpone some activities under the project. Nevertheless, this did not impact the efficiency of the Project in general.

The activities were implemented according to the planned timeframe.

Overall efficiency of the project could be considered as ***high*** on the condition that staff time should be assessed properly at the planning stage of the project.

3.4 Sustainability

To what extent will the results of the project continue after completion of the projects in the beneficiary countries?

The projects duration covers the ten-year period 2008-2018. Bearing in mind that a milestone in cooperation between Kazakhstan and Kyrgyz in the Chu-Talas basin was the

Agreement of 2000, the process already lasts for two decades, which in itself already indicates a certain sustainability of the activities supported by the project.

The achievements of 2018, namely, development of the SAP, its acceptation by the CTWC and further submission for approval by the governments of both countries build a prerequisite for further strengthening sustainability. Given the fact that the Water Convention team will continue supporting local partners in the region even after the project is completed (see below for more details), it can be concluded with confidence that the results achieved will form the basis for new actions.

The meeting in Taraz in December 2018 showed that the project stakeholders intend to continue their current activities.

The meeting minutes contain an appeal to all interested organizations with a proposal to consider possible forms of future cooperation beyond the project.

Thus, there is an intention of the countries to support and develop cooperation. At the meeting in Taraz, it was suggested to expand the mandate of CTWC, which means that the parties involved believe in the Commission's ability to make truly meaningful decisions.

However, almost all respondents (16 out of 18) confirmed that it is necessary to continue financial and expert support for the Commission's activities, although according to one of them (the state official from the Kazakh side) there is enough trained and qualified staff to carry on with the project initiatives. The same person acknowledged the lack of understanding of the situation in the government bodies.

The project brought some sustainable results but its success largely depends on the commitment, support and funding from local authorities, as well as on expert support and funding from the donor community.

To what degree the project influenced the policies of beneficiary countries to further pursue cooperation to improve the quality and availability of shared water resources in the face of climate change?

«People have lived for many years on the banks of these rivers and have always been able to negotiate among themselves. It means that in the future we and our neighbors will always be able to find a solution of problems appeared», told one of the officials from Kazakhstan during the interview.

However, all of the respondents, without a single exception, repeatedly emphasized that the main role of all three projects was to ensure and facilitate dialogue between countries and provide expert assistance on issues that become relevant for countries under specific conditions including climate change.

Although the evaluated projects had their specific planned results and indicators, they also positively influenced the associated activities of state bodies and organizations dealing with water issues. The examples of such associated activities, given by respondents, include Surface Water Protection Rules of Kyrgyz Republic, Rules for the Reception of Industrial Wastewater into the Sewers (adopted almost simultaneously in both Kazakhstan and Kyrgyz Republic), etc.

The meeting in Taraz on December 12-13, 2018 demonstrated that the parties would like to expand opportunities for cooperation, which are currently limited to the Commission's mandate.

The discussions during the meeting indicated a desire for cooperation and finding mutually acceptable solutions.

In Kyrgyzstan a set of indicators was developed as an adaptation tool for the Strategic Development Goals (SDG) indicators at the national level. Since the SDGs are reflected in the Sustainable Development Strategy of the Kyrgyz Republic for 2018-2040, their achievement automatically becomes mandatory for all government agencies at all levels. Therefore, it is recommended to consider the feasibility and possible ways to promote SAP indicators into National Indicators System (NIS) in Kyrgyzstan.

Where the measures to enhance sustainability of project results given sufficient attention during the preparation and implementation phases?

Project's Work plan has an Activity p. 3.4. Develop project exit strategy, targeted on accomplishment of Result 3. Increased awareness and knowledge of Chu-Talas Commission and other key stakeholders of adaptation options in the river basin.

Three other activities also should ensure achievement of this result.

Consistent and persistent work of the project team to achieve these results, as was shown in the Effectiveness section, led to the full implementation of the project according to the defined indicators, which illustrates paying sufficient attention to ensuring the sustainability of the results.

3.5 Impact

To what extent have the projects impacted the legal, institutional and technical capacity challenges at the national and basin levels to effectively address transboundary water problems?

"Transboundary Diagnostic Analysis Chu and Talas River Basins" prepared jointly by GEF Project "Enabling Transboundary Cooperation and Integrated Water Resources Management in the Chu and Talas River Basins" and UNECE project "Enhancing climate resilience and adaptive capacity in the transboundary Chu-Talas Basin" deals with wide spectrum of issues and future problems related to (lack of) transboundary cooperation. Local experts noted that previous agreements on the regulation of water resources of transboundary rivers, concluded between the countries in Central Asia, did not produce a proper result. In particular, there were inconsistencies that occurred both in terms of sectoral specifics in the Central Asian countries, and in assessing the cost of fuel and energy resources offered in exchange for regulating the water flow for irrigation purposes[4].

The evaluated projects, like a number of other projects implemented in the region with the support of the international community, played primarily the role of facilitator of dialogue between countries. All the respondents in both countries speak of this repeatedly. In other words, the project's role is first and foremost to provide dialogue on cross-border issues and facilitate decision-making, which should make the overall situation much easier. The Strategic Action

[4] http://kisi.kz/ru/categories/geopolitika-i-mezhdunarodnye-otnosheniya/posts/politika-stran-central-noy-azii-i-vodno-energeticheskie

Program, if adopted by the governments of the Kyrgyz Republic and the Republic of Kazakhstan, can become a model of the mechanism of cross-border cooperation for other countries of the region. At the same time, the project contributed to the development within the countries - according to experts, the internal institutional foundations of the Chu-Talas Commission (in particular, the Secretariat) significantly strengthened, and such important CTWC documentsas Rules on Sewer and Rules of Operation of Water Objects were developed and adopted as mentioned above and confirmed by the Secretaries of the CTWC during discussions with them. Thus, the project has had a significant impact on the strengthening of capacity in all respects, and its benefits are undeniable.

To what extent the project impacted effective decision-making and information exchange between the countries on water quantity, quality and climate change issues? Has the countries' ownership improved as a result of the projects?

Since the project initially aimed at supporting transboundary dialogue (and in fact, having regional and global significance), it contributed to the exchange of information between national governments. Project events with participation of representatives of countries and international organizations increased the level of trust between countries, improved the mechanism of joint development and decision-making and contributed to the achievement of strategic development goals. International Water Forums, conferences, seminars and workshops, International Decade for Action on Water for Sustainable Development 2018-2028 and Central Asia Water Info web-portal[5] are examples of the activities which were directly or indirectly supported by the project to improve overall information exchange mechanism among the countries.

In March 2018, the first working consultative meeting of the heads of Central Asian states was held in Astana. The presidents of Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan sat down at the negotiating table to discuss the most pressing problems of the region. Following the discussion, Nursultan Nazarbayev, who chaired the first meeting, made a statement for journalists. "Our states, 70 million people, live in the alignment of large rivers - Amudarya and Syrdarya. Here we agreed that there should be no political bargaining. We must jointly decide in the interests of all states: the hydraulic structure, the use of water, and electricity," said Mr. Nazarbayev[6].

"We meet in order to solve our problems, to create conditions for our peoples relations, and other goals," the head of the Republic of Kazakhstan emphasized. This last circumstance unequivocally testifies to the emerging ownership of water projects, although, according to some media, it may also be a signal that a new configuration of forces is taking shape in Central Asia, where the main role is played not only and not so much by the opinion of external players, but by the orientation on internal strengths and resources[7].

Since there is the importance of water resources was raised on such high level, it is necessary to promote the results of the current and future projects to the highest possible level e.g. among the governments and Prime Ministers of countries which will also help to increase impact and visibility of the project.

[5] http://www.cawater-info.net

To what extent the Commission is dependent of external support? Where support is still needed?

As all respondents acknowledged during the interviews, not only funding provided by the projects is important for both countries, but also their role as an organizer and a facilitator of the dialogue.

All respondents in both countries state that it is necessary to continue donor support. According to representatives of the Kyrgyz Republic, their country still cannot fully provide funding for the activities of the Chu-Talas Commission. In addition, funds are needed for the repair and maintenance of hydraulic objects. The members of the working groups, partners, stakeholders and other participants of the events in Taraz on December 12-13, 2018 expressed the need for continued support for the Commission and its Secretariat by the donor community. This was also acknowledged in the minutes of the meeting.

Do policy contradictions affect implementation and prevent the sustainable achievement of the developmental objectives?

The policy of the Central Asian states, in the opinion of both intra-regional[8] and external researchers[9], is often characterized by the predominance of national interests over the solution of the common problems of the region. The main barriers to the adoption of effective measures aimed at the integrated management of the water and energy complex are contradictions in approaches to solving water problems. Due to the controversial issues relating to hydropower and land reclamation, each of the countries, building their political position, is guided by purely national interests, but not by regional interests.

The meeting of presidents of Central Asian countries in March 2018 would seem to give some hope for finding a reasonable compromise and mutually beneficial solution.

"We substantively discussed a very difficult water problem for all of us. I think we have achieved a breakthrough in this matter. It is of exceptional importance for further development of the entire Central Asian region," the Head of Kazakhstan Mr Nazarbayev said[10].

However, at the summit of the International Fund for Saving the Aral Sea, held in August 2018, the President of the Kyrgyz Republic sharply criticized the Foundation's policy and resource allocation system: the Kyrgyz side is in favour of resuming cooperation in the framework of the Agreement of March 17, 1998 between the governments of Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan on the use of water-energy resources of the Naryn-Syr Darya river basin, which provides for a compensation mechanism for the use of water and energy resources."[11]

And in this process, the activities of the Chu-Talas Commission can again play the role of

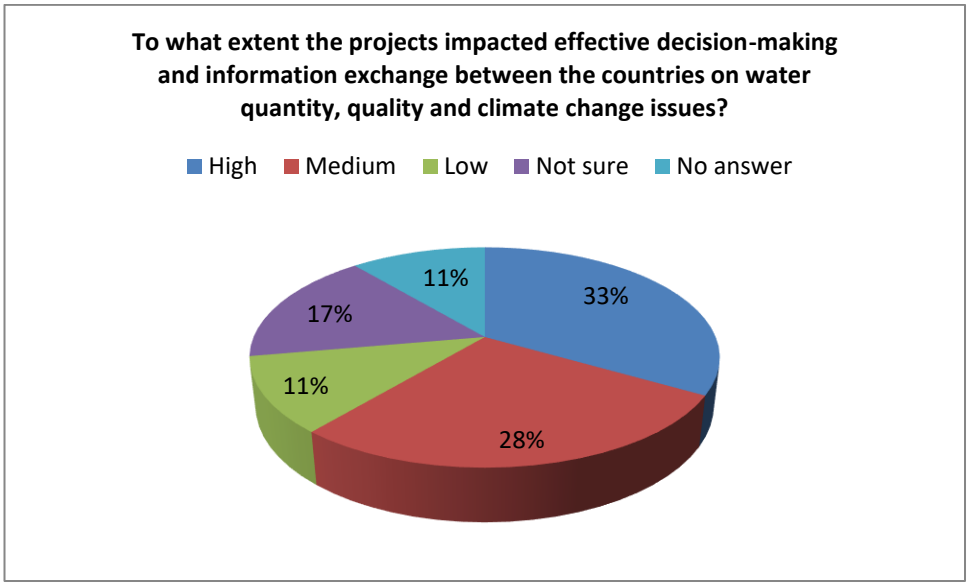
[8] http://kisi.kz/ru/categories/geopolitika-i-mezhdunarodnye-otnosheniya/posts/politika-stran-central-noy-azii-i-vodno-energeticheskie

[9] https://cyberleninka.ru/article/n/politika-stran-tsentralnoy-azii-vodno-energeticheskiy-aspekt

[10] https://tj.sputniknews.ru/asia/20170916/1023346811/Nazarbayev-kazakhstan-Uzbekistan-dostigli-proryva-vodnom-voprose.html

[11] https://m.gezitter.org/economics/72691_problema_arala_obyedinit_region/

example of real and effective dialogue - this is clearly visible both from official documents and discussions at the meetings in Taraz on December 12-13, 2018, and from the informal atmosphere of these meetings. 33% and 28% of responders told that the project impacted effective decision-making and information exchange between the countries on water quantity, quality and climate change issues in high and medium degree accordingly.



63% of respondents from both countries think that CTWC activities still should be supported by donors in future to make the work of the Commission its impact even more significant.

Thus, the impact of the project could be described as the following:

a) ***contributed to strengthening the dialogue*** between Kazakhstan and the Kyrgyz Republic on the issues of the Chu-Talas basin, and ***this dialogue can serve as an example*** for other regions of Central Asia.

b) ***developed and submitted*** important CTWC ***documents*** (SAP) which, if approved, will improve the mechanism of joint development and decision-making and will contribute to the achievement of strategic development goals.

4. Cross Cutting Issues - Gender

In general, the gender aspects of water-related projects received due attention from project team, partners and community involved into project implementation (for example, Gender and Water Network (GWANET), UN WOMEN membership in UN Water, Women for Water Partnership). In this particular, the gender was mainstreamed according to the following:

- project's logframe contained a special gender indicator R.3.2: % of trained women;
- in total, according to project final report, approximately 52% of directly involved participants into the project were women;
- heads of country's (Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan) parts of Secretariat of Chu-Talas Commission are women;
- a special expert on gender issues was involved into the project activity, particularly - into the development of an official annex to TDA on climate change adaptation and on the prioritization of adaptation measures.

The project's national consultant prepared a report on gender issues including recommendations on better integrating gender aspects into the TDA annex and the SAP, which is included into Project Final Report as the Annex VI.

Thus, it could be concluded that the project a) ***fully achieved the planned gender indicators***, and b) in all of its activities took the gender aspects into account. It could be recommended to include more gender perspective in developing communication materials related to the project.

5. Conclusions and Recommendations

5.1 Conclusions

The main conclusion of the evaluation is that the Project was fully relevant, effective, efficient and sustainable, although CTWC still needs to be supported including in the area of climate change adaptation.

The conclusions for each evaluation criterion are as follows:

Relevance: The Project is very relevant to the national needs and priorities of beneficiary countries. The project design and achievements are relevant to project objective. The project strategy, planned actions and organizational support provided by the implementing agency fully correspond to the interests of the countries involved in the project, the region of Central Asia.

Effectiveness: The effectiveness of the Project can be considered to be high, although some activities are still in process beyond of project e.g. Strategic Action Programme (SAP) was not approved on the inter-governmental level by the end of the project. A flexible approach allowed the project team to achieve high results, despite the organizational issues that arose during the implementation of the project. The level of achievement of the planned results is quite high, and even surpasses expectations related to some indicators. Project team will continue to support the promotion and approval of SAP which, is adopted, will significantly exceed the planned results.

Efficiency: the efficiency of the project within its budget allotment is considered as high. Within the allocated budget, all planned activities were carried out on time within project duration except for SAP approval . In many respects, it was possible because of synergies and joint efforts with other programs/initiatives. Both financial and human (expert) resources were distributed by in a way to ensure achievement of the planned results at the designated time, although there was some lack of local expertise. At the same time, more monitoring on intermediate milestones could be needed for understanding how efficient the project it and, consequently, improving its efficiency.

Sustainability: The dialogue mechanism between the countries of the Chu-talas basin supported by the project already demonstrates stability in relation to planning joint actions, maintaining cooperation in transboundary areas, and the parties' desire to increase the level of cooperation efficiency. At the same time, it is too early to rely on full ability of both countries to independently maintain the dialogue without the support of international donors. The project in this case played a decisive role not only in financing the Chu-Talas Commission, but also in ensuring and facilitating its activities. Thus, the ***stability of the results, the prerequisites of which are created by the project, would benefit from further support*** from the international community.

Impact: the impact of the project is expressed in the following:

a) the project ***contributed to strengthening the dialogue*** between Kazakhstan and the Kyrgyz Republic on the issues of the Chu-Talas basin, and ***this dialogue can serve as an example*** for other regions of Central Asia.

b) the project ***developed and submitted*** important CTWC ***documents*** (SAP) which, if approved, will improve the mechanism of joint development and decision-making and will contribute to the achievement of strategic development goals.

At the same time, it is too early to hope for the full ability of both countries to independently maintain the dialogue without the support of international actors. The project in this case played a decisive role not only in financing the Chu-Talas Commission, but also in ensuring and facilitating its activities. Thus, the stability of the results, the prerequisites of which are created by the project, must be ensured by further support from the international community.

Gender: the project a) ***fully achieved the planned gender indicators***, and b) in all of its activities took into account the gender aspects. Therefore, the gender approach used in the project may in the future be used as an example and as a basis for including gender aspects in other projects.

5.2 Recommendations

Recommendations are provided for each evaluation criterion:

Relevance:

1. The UNECE should consider continuing to pay particular attention to the interests of both countries and to the region as a whole as well as to support transboundary cooperation in the basin. It is also necessary to promote intersectoral nature of the water issues showing that working on water-related problems countries can solve other important problems in such areas as e.g. energy, security and agriculture.

Effectiveness:

2. Currently, the UNECE should continue to promote and facilitate SAP approval by the governments of the countries (in particular, the Kyrgyz Republic).

Efficiency:

3. Expenditures for staff costs and consultancy should be better anticipated at the stage of the project proposal preparation.

Sustainability:

4. It is important for UNECE to help to develop local human potential in the Chu-Talas basin (experts, technicians, politicians) interested in the further development of transboundary cooperation between the countries.
5. It is recommended to support further activities targeted on incorporation of project results into regular government programs in both countries to ensure sustainability of the project results, for examples, by promoting SAP indicators into National Indicators System (NIS) in Kyrgyzstan.

Impact:

6. In order to increase the impact of future projects, the UNECE is recommended to continue support of CTWC in close cooperation with other donor programs. This will also improve information sharing and coordination between donors.
7. It is crucial to promote the results of the projects among senior leadership from the countries to increase project impact and visibility.

Gender:

8. For future activities, UNECE could use the gender approach used in the project as an example and basis for planning the gender aspects. The approach should include involvement of the gender expert with further development of suggestions for the project, direct involvement of women into the project as well as through civil society organizations and listening to their expertise and needs during project implementation with further incorporation into project activities.

6. Appendices

Appendix 1: Terms of Reference

TERMS OF REFERENCE

Evaluation of the projects
funded by the Finnish Government in the area of
Transboundary Cooperation and Integrated Water Resources Management in the Chu and Talas River Basins

I. Purpose

The purpose of the evaluation is to review the implementation and assess the extent to which the objective of the 3 projects:

- "Developing cooperation on the Chu and Talas Rivers" (Chu-Talas II);
- "Promoting Cooperation to Adapt to Climate Change in the Chu and Talas Transboundary Basin";
- "Enhancing climate resilience and adaptive capacity in the transboundary Chu-Talas basin" funded by the Finnish Government in frames of Transboundary Cooperation and Integrated Water Resources Management in the Chu and Talas River Basins (hereinafter "Projects") was achieved. The evaluation will assess the *relevance* of the projects for the beneficiary countries and the Chu and Talas Commission, *effectiveness* in reaching relevant outcomes, *efficiency* in the use of human and staff resources in reaching project objectives, *sustainability* of projects' work, *impact* on transboundary cooperation, integrated water resources management and adaptation to climate change in transboundary basins in Central Asia, as well as coordination, synergies and complementarities with other ongoing UNECE projects funded by Finland. The results of the evaluation will support improvement of the future technical cooperation projects and activities implemented by UNECE. The results of the evaluation will be important for the discussion with donors and partner organizations for any future work by UNECE in the area of water resources management and related health outcomes in the Central Asia region and beyond.

II. Scope

The evaluation will be guided by the objective, outcomes, activities and indicators of achievement established in the logical frameworks of the original and revised projects document. The evaluation will consider to what extent the projects improved transboundary cooperation and integrated water resources management and adaptation to climate change in the Chu-Talas river basin. The evaluation will cover the full period of project's implementation.

The evaluation will assess how gender considerations were included the projects' design, execution and results. It will make recommendations on how gender can be included in the design of future projects in UNECE.

The full project documentation includes project design, monitoring reports, progress reports to donors, partnership arrangements with relevant actors. All relevant information will be made available, including documentation and interviews, activities of partner organizations, any previous relevant reviews or evaluations conducted, and any other information which pertains to UNECE efforts in the successful execution of the project will be included in the evaluation.

III. Background

The Kyrgyz Republic and the Republic of Kazakhstan share the waters of transboundary Central Asian rivers Chu and Talas, which provide essential resources for irrigation of the vast agricultural lands in both countries as well as opportunities for the generation of hydropower. Whereas all facilities for rivers' regulation, such as dams, water reservoirs and canals, are located upstream in the territory of Kyrgyzstan, Kazakhstan depends on the operation and proper maintenance of these facilities. This situation prompted the two countries to establish a legal basis for the joint operation of water management infrastructure.

In January 2000 the Agreement on the Use of Water Management Facilities of Intergovernmental Status on the Rivers Chu and Talas was signed by the Government of the Republic of Kazakhstan and the Government of the Kyrgyz Republic. In 2003 OSCE, UNECE and UNESCAP initiated the project "Support for the Creation of a Transboundary Water Commission on the Chu and Talas Rivers between Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan" (Chu-Talas I) with funding from the United Kingdom, Sweden and Estonia. The project facilitated the establishment of a bilateral Commission in 2006.

The follow-up project "Developing cooperation on the Chu and Talas Rivers" (Chu-Talas II), funded by Finland, was implemented by OSCE and UNECE in 2008-2011. The project's goals were to broaden the bilateral Kazakhstan-Kyrgyzstan cooperation, enhance the understanding of the two countries on the available water resources, improve access to information, involve new stakeholders into the process of river management and promote activities for the protection of water ecosystems. The practical outcomes of the Chu-Talas II project included the development of proposals to improve the 2000 Agreement by inclusion of additional water facilities, introduction of integrated water resources management principles, and establishment of basin councils. The project raised awareness of the work of the Commission through the new official web-page and local media. In 2008-2009 the Commission carried out a joint examination of water management facilities. As a result, damage evaluation acts were prepared on the technical condition of the main waterworks along with needs assessment for repair and rehabilitation works for the following years. In addition, a joint study on the relation of groundwater and surface water resources in the Chu river basin was prepared. These results are displayed in the Project Report "Development of cooperation on the Chu and Talas Rivers (Chu – Talas II)".

The project "Promoting Cooperation to Adapt to Climate Change in the Chu and Talas Transboundary Basin" (January 2010 - December 2014) aimed to improve the adaptive capacity of Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan, to support dialogue and cooperation on the needed steps to design an adaptation strategy in the transboundary context and thereby prevent controversy on the use of water resources. Results of the project are summarized in the brochure "Strengthening cooperation in Adaptation to climate change in transboundary basins of the Chu and Talas rivers. Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan", available in English and Russian.

The purpose of the project "Enhancing climate resilience and adaptive capacity in the transboundary Chu-Talas basin" (September 2015 – December 2018), funded by the Finnish Ministry for Foreign Affairs under the FinWaterWei II Initiative, is to establish a framework for regular and strategic climate change adaptation action in the Chu-Talas River Basin and enable the Chu-Talas Commission and local authorities to facilitate climate change adaptation in the basin..

Following the adoption of the strategic decision to cooperate closely with the GEF/UNDP project "Enabling Transboundary Cooperation and Integrated Water Resources Management in the Chu and Talas River Basins" (May 2015 – September 2018) the project has provided extensive inputs to the Transboundary Diagnostic Analysis (TDA) and Strategic Action Programme (SAP) processes and developed the TDA annex on climate adaptation. Initially the project completion was planned at June 2018, but UNECE has experienced challenges in carrying out the activities, related to TDA under the GEF funded projects that required additional time to finalize its climate adaptation component. Hence, the project was extended till September 2018.

IV. Issues

The following issues/questions will provide the basis for the evaluation.

Relevance

1. How relevant were the projects to the national needs and priorities of beneficiary countries?
2. How relevant was the design of the projects, in line with the achievements and outcomes of other initiatives?
3. To what extent were the projects' design and development interventions relevant for meeting the projects objective?
4. To what extent the projects were relevant to the UNECE and Water Convention's regular programme of work?

Effectiveness

1. To what extent were the expected accomplishments (outcomes) of the projects achieved?
2. What were the challenges/obstacles to achieving the projects' objectives and expected accomplishments (outcomes)?
3. Have the projects improved capacity of key stakeholders?
4. To what extent were the planned activities sufficient to achieve the expected accomplishments (outcomes) and project objective?
5. To what extent implementation of the projects supported the expected accomplishments of the UNECE regular programme of work under the Subprogramme 1 "Environment" and of the Water Convention's programme of work for 2016-2018?
6. To what extent the projects contributed to integrated water resources management, improved the transboundary water cooperation and adaptation to climate change in Central Asia? What were the synergies that the projects brought along?
7. To what extent the implementation of the projects contributed to the overall objectives of the Water Convention?

Efficiency

1. Were the available resources appropriate to the scale of the projects and the needs identified by beneficiary countries?
2. Were the human and financial resources allocated to the projects used efficiently and commensurate to the project results?
3. Were the resources (financial and human) appropriate to the design of the project?
4. Were the activities implemented according to the planned timeframe?

Sustainability

1. To what extent will the results of the projects continue after completion of the projects in the beneficiary countries?
2. To what degree the projects influenced the policies of beneficiary countries to further pursue cooperation to improve the quality and availability of shared water resources in the face of climate change?
3. Were the measures to enhance sustainability of project results given sufficient attention during the preparation and implementation phases?

Impact

1. To what extent have the projects impacted the legal, institutional and technical capacity challenges at the national and basin levels to effectively address transboundary water problems?
2. To what extent the projects impacted effective decision-making and information exchange between the countries on water quantity, quality and climate change issues? Has the countries'

ownership improved as a result of the projects?
3. To what extent the Commission is dependent of external support? Where support is still needed?
4. Do policy contradictions affect implementation and prevent the sustainable achievement of the developmental objectives?

V. Methodology

The methodology for the evaluation will include the following:

1. Desk study of project materials: all relevant projects documents, including projects descriptions, reports, publications, etc. and other information will be provided to the evaluator.
2. Interview with 10-15 key external stakeholders, such as representatives of the Ministry of Agriculture of the Republic of Kazakhstan, RSE "Kazhydromet", Ministry of Agriculture and Melioration of Kyrgyz Republic, Hydrometeorological Service of Kyrgyzstan, Chu Talas Commission, NGOs, international and local experts, donors etc. (face-to-face, via telephone and skype, list of contacts to be provided).
3. Interviews with internal stakeholders including the projects team and the Environment Division at UNECE
4. Some of the interviews, in particular with representatives of water management authorities, will be conducted by the evaluator in Astana, Kazakhstan and at the FINWaterWEI II Regional Conference planned for 26-27 September 2018, Bishkek and Issyk-Kul, Kyrgyzstan. In addition, the event will provide an opportunity to meet and discuss the project implementation and results with donor and partner organizations dealing with water management issues in the region.
5. An electronic survey of internal and external stakeholders, conducted in both English and Russian.

UNECE will provide all documentation, support and guidance to the evaluation consultant as needed throughout the timeline of the evaluation. The consultant shall be provided the UNECE Evaluation Policy, evaluation report templates and checklists as guidance for the requirements for evaluation reports in UNECE.

The evaluation will be conducted in accordance with the UNECE Evaluation Policy. The evaluation will comply with the United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG) Norms and Standards, including due consideration of the gender aspects of the project's design and implementation. UNECE will provide all documentation as needed throughout the timeline of the evaluation. UNECE will provide support and further explanation to the evaluator as needed.

The evaluation report of maximum 15-20 pages will summarize the findings, conclusions and recommendations of the evaluation (with annexes including summaries from data gathering). An executive summary (max. 2 pages) will summarize the methodology of the evaluation, key findings, conclusions and recommendations.

VI. Evaluation Schedule

The evaluation schedule follows:

1. Desk review of all documents provided by UNECE to the Consultant: 25 September - 10 October 2018
2. Developing and preparing interviews: 25-30 September 2018

3. Participation in Bishkek and Issyk-Kul Conference, interviews 26-27 September 2018
4. Follow-up interviews and studies, travel to Astana, Kazakhstan and Geneva, Switzerland as needed 1-30 October 2018
5. Delivery of Draft Report 30 October 2018
6. Comments back to the evaluator after review by project manager and selected project participants 15 November 2018
7. Delivery Final Report 30 November 2018

VII. Resources

Resources available for the evaluation of the projects funded by the Finnish Government in the area of Transboundary Cooperation and Integrated Water Resources Management in the Chu and Talas River Basins are USD 14,000, exclusive of travel costs.
The UNECE Project manager will oversee and provide guidance during the course of the evaluation. The Programme Management Unit (PMU) will provide guidance to the Project Manager and evaluator as needed on the evaluation design, methodology and quality assurance of the final draft report.

VIII. Intended Use/Next Steps

The evaluation will be consistent with the UNECE Evaluation Policy. Following the receipt of the final report, UNECE will develop a management response, and action plan for addressing recommendations made by the consultant. The results of the evaluation shall be considered, together with other project evaluations conducted during 2018, by senior management in UNECE to address systemic inefficiencies or challenges to effective project implementation in UNECE.

IX. Criteria for Evaluators

Evaluators should have:

- An advanced university degree or equivalent background in relevant to the projects disciplines;
- Minimum 10 years of relevant experience; Working experience related to projects or issues in water management in Central Asia is highly desirable;
- Specialized training in areas such as evaluation, project management, social statistics, advanced statistical research and analysis;
- Demonstrated relevant professional experience in design, management and conduct of evaluation processes with multiple stakeholders, survey design and implementation, and project planning, monitoring and management;
- Demonstrated methodological knowledge of evaluations, including quantitative and qualitative data collection and analysis for end-of-cycle project evaluations;
- Fluent in written and spoken English and Russian.
- Good computer skills (especially Microsoft office applications).

Evaluators should declare any conflict of interest to UNECE before embarking on an evaluation project, and at any point where such conflict occurs.

Appendix 2: Project Logical Framework

Overall objective	**Objectively verifiable indicators**	**Sources of verification**	
To increase the adaptive capacity in the transboundary Chu-Talas River Basin to climate change impacts	Indicator O.1: Number of people who benefit from locally tailored adaptive capacity building measures	- Internal project evaluation - Training evaluations - Questionnaires	
Project purpose	**Objectively verifiable indicators**	**Sources of verification**	**Assumptions**
To establish a framework for regular and strategic climate change adaptation action in the Chu-Talas River Basin (basin-level Adaptation Strategy and Implementation Plan) and enable the Chu-Talas Commission and local authorities to facilitate climate change adaptation in the basin	Indicator P.1: At least one strategic document facilitating adaptation in Chu-Talas River Basin developed	- Reports of the Commission meetings - Internal project evaluation	The process of development of the RBMP in the Chu basin will continue and the WB will be working on the RBMP in the Talas basin
Results	**Objectively verifiable indicators**	**Sources of verification**	**Assumptions**
1. Framework for regular and strategic climate change adaptation action in the Chu-Talas River Basin established	Indicator R.1. Strategic document facilitating adaptation in Chu-Talas River Basin developed	- Reports of the Commission meetings - Internal project evaluation - Final project report	The process of development of the RBMP in the Chu basin will continue and the WB will be working on the RBMP in the Talas basin
2. Benefits of adaptation measures assessed and demonstrated on the ground	Indicator R.2. At least 3 adaptation measures implemented in the basin	- Internal project evaluation - Final project report	The local population will be interested to participate in adaptation pilots
3. Increased awareness and knowledge of Chu-Talas Commission and other key stakeholders of adaptation options in the river basin and the need for transboundary cooperation in adaptation	Indicator R.3.1: Number of individuals benefitted from trainings and awareness building activities Indicator R.3.2: % of trained women Indicator R.3.3: Training evaluation results	- Internal project evaluation - Final project report - Training evaluations - Questionnaires	There will be no significant changes in the Commission staff and local authorities after training

Activities	Means	Assumptions	
1.1. Support development of strategic document to facilitate adaptation	Meetings, International experts, National experts	It is assumed that activities will be implemented without delays and interruptions	
2.1. Conduct cost-benefit assessment of adaptation measures	International experts, National experts	As above	
2.2. Prioritize measures for imlementation through consultative process	Meetings	As above	
2.3. Implement selected adaptation measures	Depending on the nature of prioritized measures	Stakeholders actively participate in the implementation of the measures	
3.1. Conduct capacity needs assessment of Chu-Talas Commission and other key local stakeholders	Capacity assessment scorecard and interviews, National experts	Stakeholders are willing to respond to questionnairs	
3.2. Develop awareness raising and capacity building strategy	Communication expert	Stakeholders will participate in information dissemination	
3.3. Implement awareness raising and capacity building strategy	Communication expert, adaptation expert (s), UNECE staff, meetings, outreach materials	Stakeholders will participate in information dissemination	
3.4. Develop project exit strategy	UNECE staff, meetings	The strategy will be successful after the project ends	

Appendix 3: List of Reviewed Documents

General/ UNECE and Project Based Documents:

UNECE. Support Guide for Conducting Evaluation, 2014

United Nations Evaluation Group Norms and Standards for Evaluation, 2016

Web-based Evaluation Manual, Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland, 2018

Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, UN General Assembly, 2015

Water for a Sustainable World, The UN World Water Development Report 2015

UN-Water Global Analysis and Assessment of Sanitation and Drinking-Water (GLAAS) 2017 Report

Sustainable Development Goal 6: Synthesis Report on Water and Sanitation, 2018

UN General Assembly, Proposed strategic framework for the period 2016-2017

Protocol on Water and Health and the 2030 Agenda: A Practical Guide for Joint Implementation. Geneva, 2019

World Water Development Report 2019: 'Leaving no one behind'

Water Convention's programme of work for 2012-2015.

Water Convention's programme of work for 2016-2018.

Water Convention's programme of work for 2019-2021.

Other sources and links:

Permanent Mission of the Republic of Kazakhstan to the United Nations Office and other International Organisations in Geneva. http://www.mfa.kz/en/geneva/content-view/un-economic-commission-for-europe

Green Climate Fund mandate, programming cycle, opportunities and climate rationale for water. 2018

Aid Flows to the Water Sector. Overview and Recommendations. WBG, 2016

"On water safety", Law of Kyrgyz Republic #67, 2017

National Policy Dialogs in European Union. Achievements and lessons. UNECE, 2013

Development of a System of National Indicators of Water, Food and Energy Security of the Kyrgyz Republic, 2018

NPD in Kazakhstan, 2013-2017.

Crisis in Central Asia: Key Challenges and Opportunities, New School University, 2010

Aquastat data, http://www.fao.org/nr/water/aquastat/data/query/index.html?lang=en

Water financing in Central Asia. Global Water Partnership Report, 2008

CAEWDP Report, 2015

Appendix 4: Evaluation Questionnaire (Guide for interview)

Relevance

1. How relevant was the project to the national needs and priorities of beneficiary countries?	What are specific country's goals/targets related to the project? Which problem was addressed by the Project? Do you think the project is related to strategic country's interest(s)?
2. How relevant was the design of the project, in line with the achievements and outcomes of other initiatives?	What are these related initiatives/ proejcts? Do they complement the project? Any overlapping? How could you describe the overall picture and specific project's role/outcome/impact?
3. To what extent was the project design and development interventions relevant for meeting the projects objective?	Do you think the project objectives could have been achieved in other ways?
4. To what extent the project was relevant to the UNECE and Water Convention's regular programme of work?	Did the project contribute to the Water Convention's objectives and programme of work ? if yes how?

Effectiveness

1. To what extent were the expected accomplishments (outcomes) of the project achieved?	Could the project achieve all its results according to the project document? If so, under what conditions? If accomplishments (outcomes) are less than expected, what is the reason – is there external obstacles or internal issues (political instability, time constraints, planning, etc.)?
2. What were the challenges/obstacles to achieving the project objectives and expected accomplishments (outcomes)?	What obstacles could be neutralized, and what were crucial? Were risks/mitigations developed properly at the beginning of the project? Were they modified later?
3. Have the projects improved capacity of key stakeholders?	How could you formulate stakeholders' capacity before the project? Now?
4. To what extent were the planned activities sufficient to achieve the expected accomplishments (outcomes) and project objective?	Was it possible to conduct other/additional activities to achieve the same (or even more) outcome(s)? If so, what activities would you suggest?
5. To what extent implementation of the project supported the expected accomplishments of the UNECE regular programme of work under the Subprogramme 1 "Environment" and of the Water Convention's programme of work for 2016-2018?	Did the project contribute to safeguard the environment and health, improve environmental management and further promote integration of environmental policies into sectoral policies and to improve transboundary water cooperation?

6. To what extent the projects contributed to integrated water resources management, improved the transboundary water cooperation and adaptation to climate change in Central Asia? What were the synergies that the projects brought along?	How did the projects affect the development of effective dialogue between countries? What was the specific project's role here? In how far did the project contribute to increasing adaptive capacity of the Chu Talas basin? And did it enable the Chu-Talas Commission and local authorities to facilitate climate change adaptation in the basin
7. To what extent the implementation of the projects contributed to the overall objectives of the Water Convention?	How achievement of the overall objective of the projects influenced to countries? Did the project support Kazakhstan in implementing the objectives and provisions of the Water Convention?

Efficiency

1. Were the available resources appropriate to the scale of the project and the needs identified by beneficiary countries?	Do you think resources were allocated properly?
2. Were the human and financial resources allocated to the project used efficiently and commensurate to the project results?	Was there any opportunity to organize resources better? If so, why this opportunity was not implemented?
3. Were the resources (financial and human) appropriate to the design of the project?	Do you think, some project activities suffered from a shortage of resources, while other have even extra resources?
4. Were the activities implemented according to the planned timeframe?	Were there any significant delays, re-scheduling or other time issues? Why? What is the best mitigation strategy to avoid this in future?

Sustainability

1. To what extent will the results of the project continue after completion of the projects in the beneficiary countries?	Who will fund further activities with regards to transboundary water cooperation and climate change adaptation in the Chu Talas basins? Is there any fear that governments will say "No money" or "No need"?? Were there any efforts done to mobilize resources for implementation of the SAP and climate change measures? Do countries have enough qualified staff to implement some of the proposed adaptation measures?
2. To what degree the project influenced the policies of beneficiary countries to further pursue cooperation to improve the quality and availability of shared water resources in the face of climate change?	Is there any risk of no-collaboration (lack or even refusal of cooperation) between countries?

3. Where the measures to enhance sustainability of project results given sufficient attention during the preparation and implementation phases?	Is there a plan to continue implementing the project outcomes and adaptation measures/ fort he Chu Talas commission to implement the SAP and further work on climate change adaptation?

Impact

1. To what extent the projects impacted effective decision-making and information exchange between the countries on water quantity, quality and climate change issues? Has the countries' ownership improved as a result of the projects?	Give any examples, please. Are there any qualitative and quantitatively measured results (impact)? Give any examples (decisions, documents etc) of stakeholders' ownership.
2. To what extent the Commission is dependent of external support? Where support is still needed?	Did the project contribute to the financial sustainability of the Chu Talas Commission?
3. Do policy contradictions affect implementation and prevent the sustainable achievement of the developmental objectives?	

Gender-specific questions:

- To what extent was gender quality and women's empowerment advance as a result of these projects?

Do you generally think this project was successful?
Do you think, project should be continued?
What are your recommendations to UNECE?
What are your recommendations to national governments?
Any additional details/thoughts which are important in your point of view?

Appendix 5: List of interviews

Name	Position	Date
UNECE + International organizations		
Erkin Orolbayev	UNECE Consultant, Bishkek	25.09.2018
Harsha Ratnaweera	Project Expert, UNECE	25.09.2018
Bo Libert	Expert	01.11.2018
Talaibek Makeev	Economic Affairs Officer SPECA Joint ESCAP-UNECE Office in Almaty, UNECE	12.11.2018
Taisia Neronova,	OECD Project Expert	28.09.2018
Firuz Ibrochimov	UNDP Kazakhstan	13.12.2018
Sonja Koeppel	UNECE	25.01.2019
Hanna Plotnikova	UNECE	25.01.2019
FinWaterWEI II		
Tea Törnroos,	Head of International Affairs Unit, Finnish Environment Institute (SYKE), FinWaterWEI II	28.09.2018
Kati Pritsi	International affairs unit SYKE, FinWaterWEI II	28.09.2018
Group discussion: Talaibek Makeev, Gulmira Satymkulova, Indira Akbozova, Erkin Orolbayev, Kumar Kylychev		26.09.2018
Local representatives		
Mr Igor Koval	Head of Department of Transboundary Rivers, Ministry of Agriculture of Kazakhstan	25.10.2018
Ms. Gulmira Imasheva	Head of Department Committee of water Resources, Ministry of Agriculture of Kazakhstan	29.09.2018
Indira Akbozova	Head of Kazakhstan Part of Secretariat, Chu-Talas Commission	27.09.2018
Yelena Yefimova	Media Agency	12.12.2018
Gulmira Satymkulova	Head of Kyrgyz Part of Secretariat, Chu-Talas Commission	26.09.2018
Assel Raimkulova	CC member, Agency of Environment Protection and Forestry, Kyrgyz Republic	26.09.2018
Ilia Domashov	NGO BIOM, Kyrgyz Republic	27.09.2018
Nina Valiyeva	Team Leader, Working group on environmental indicators development for National monitoring system and management of environmental information Kerege, Kyrgyz Republic	28.09.2018

18 interviews + group discussion with 5 participants

Appendix 6.

The table below provides detailed information on the level of achievement of the planned project results/indicators.

Level		Conclusion	Comment
Overall goal	**To increase the adaptive capacity in the transboundary Chu-Talas River Basin to climate change impacts**		
Project objective	To establish a framework for regular and strategic climate change adaptation action in the Chu-Talas River Basin and enable the Chu-Talas Commission and local authorities to facilitate climate change adaptation in the basin		
Indicator P1	At least one strategic document facilitating adaptation in Chu-Talas River Basin developed	Completed, 100%	The project indicator was split into three main objectives (results) and 5 indicators that facilitated the work and made it possible to assess it in regards with its quality and quantity.
Result 1	Framework for regular and strategic climate change adaptation action in the Chu-Talas River Basin established		

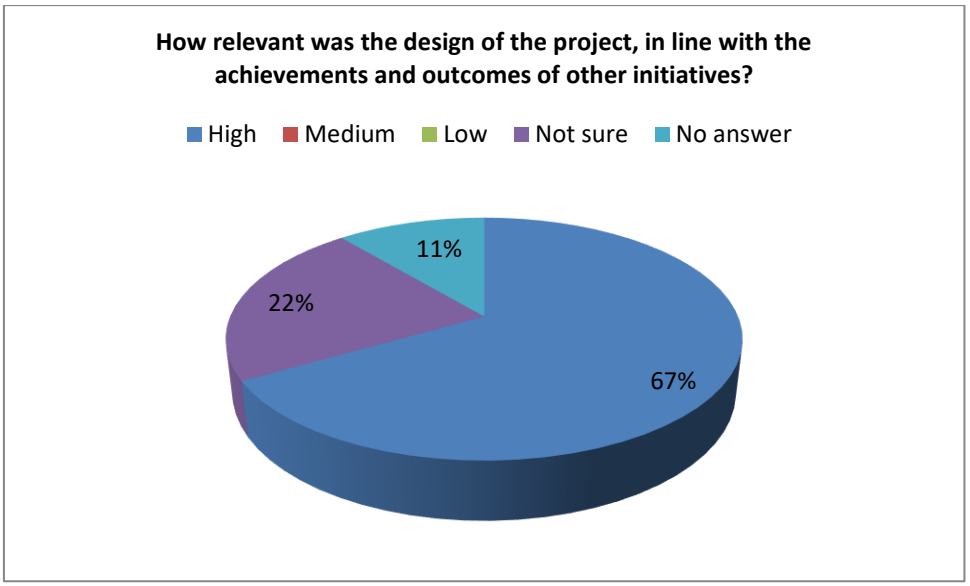
Indicator P1		The completion is 100%. The Strategic Action Program (SAP) was developed (The further approval and implementation of the SAP would considerably strengthen the Chu Talas Commission and highlight the cooperation as best practice to be disseminated in other transboundary river basins within the Central Asia region and beyond.)	The Result Card developed in Nov 2018 assumed 80% completion of the result, the assumption based on the following data: Rather intensive meeting schedule: · Kick-off meeting took place in Dec 2015; followed by more set-up meetings in late 2015 and early 2016; · Nov 2016 – a meeting resulted in a review of the Transboundary Diagnostics Analysis and a decision to incorporate the envisaged under this item document into TDA and make it an annex to the Strategic Action Plan (SAP); · Fall 2017 – a year later, a high-level meeting involving nation-level authorities, reviewed the SAP draft, however failing to agree upon it and retreating to a session of discussion and review of certain proposed amendments; · Jan 2018 – further discussions and reviews, no final agreed draft of SAP, an instruction to the co-Chairs to launch internal convening of the SAP draft for further adoption and to initiate review, consideration and endorsement of the SAP draft by the Kazakh-Kyrgyz Intergovernmental Council; · Feb 2018 – SAP draft as worded accepted and agreed by the parties; · June 2018 – start of the SAP integration procedure; In addition, the SAP document was approved by both parties of CTWC at the meeting in Taraz on 12-13 Dec 2018. CTWC has recommended the SAP to be submitted to the next meeting of the Intergovernmental Council. However, further SAP negotiation processes are beyond the project. Presidents of both countries have declared that water issues are in the focus of government policy. Therefore, given this circumstance and the lessons of this project, it seems appropriate to promote future projects to the highest possible level (probably governments and Prime Ministers of countries).
Result 2	Benefits of adaptation measures <u>assessed</u> and demonstrated on the ground		
Indicators	At least 3 adaptation measures implemented in the Chu-Talas basin	The completion is 100%. 3 adaptation measures implement	Result Card (Nov 2018) set up 90% of completion based on the following information: The part started in Nov 2015 with a joint GEF-UNDP training session, which resulted in selection of three demo projects. Following discussions during the Working Group on adaptation to climate change and long-term development programmes under the Secretariat of

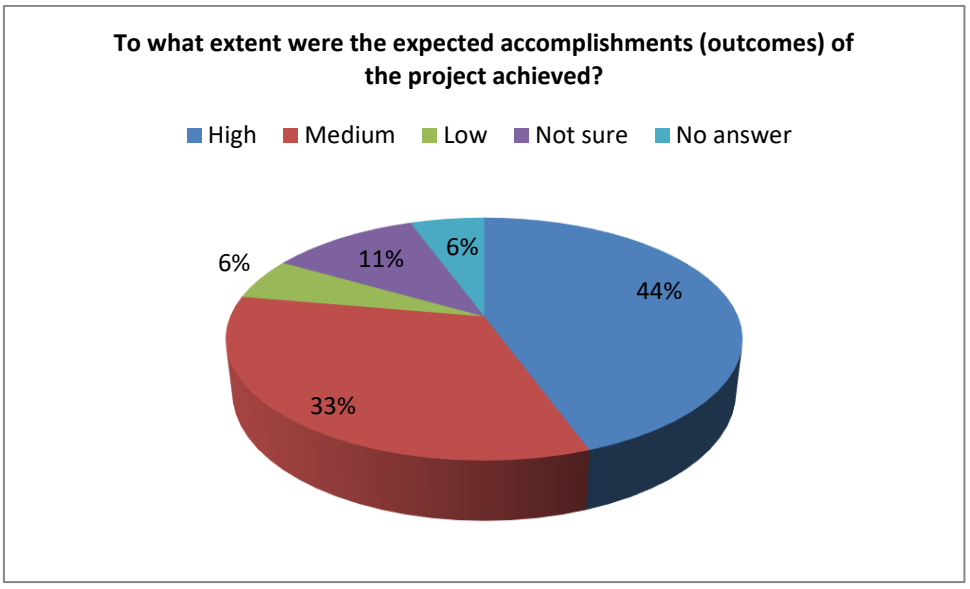
		ed in the Chu-Talas basin, demonstration of benefits is continuing beyond the project.	CTWC meetings and contacts with other relevant experts and projects, the following measures were selected as pilot ones: • Floodplain reforestation. • Water efficiency measures for irrigation. • Kirov dam safety monitoring system support. Local NGOs - Kyrgyz Association of Forest and Land users and BIOM - contributed to implementation of the prioritized projects aimed at reducing vulnerability and increasing adaptive capacities to climate changes in the Chu-Talas basin. The projects served double purposes: insuring awareness of the target audience of the existing problems and possible solutions and ensuring media coverage of the project. The first project on floodplain reforestation assumed planting saplings and post-planting care for the tree-farm, including regular check-ups, irrigation and fertilizing. Total of 54 people took part in the project (including 17 women among them and 6 local experts) in Apr 2018. The second project on introducing water-efficient irrigation systems, which took place in Mar 2018, involved 91 people (with 30% being women). Participants enjoyed 2-day's training sessions presenting modern water-efficient irrigation technologies. All trainers were national experts. Alike with the first project, 6 local media provided press coverage. The third project assumed providing of paperwork support aimed at renovation and upgrade of the Kirov dam by recruiting one local and one international expert on the matter. As was presented at the meeting in Taraz in Dec 2018, the project organized a press-tour, and after it eight local media provided over 20 publications, 4 TV stories, 3 photo stories. The main achievement of this part is that the demonstration of the benefits of adaptation measures continues after the completion of the project by local stakeholders and the media. As was told and demonstrated by the representatives of both countries at the event in Taraz on December 12, 2018, the initiative of the project was further developed and is being supported by local communities. Media representatives (2 people from Kazakhstan), who attended the event in Taraz, noted that, in their opinion, the strategic document developed by the project (SAP) is more likely to be approved by the governments sooner if the information campaign continues. (But for the future projects, noted the same respondents, it is necessary to provide special training for journalists dealing with environmental issues.
Result 3			

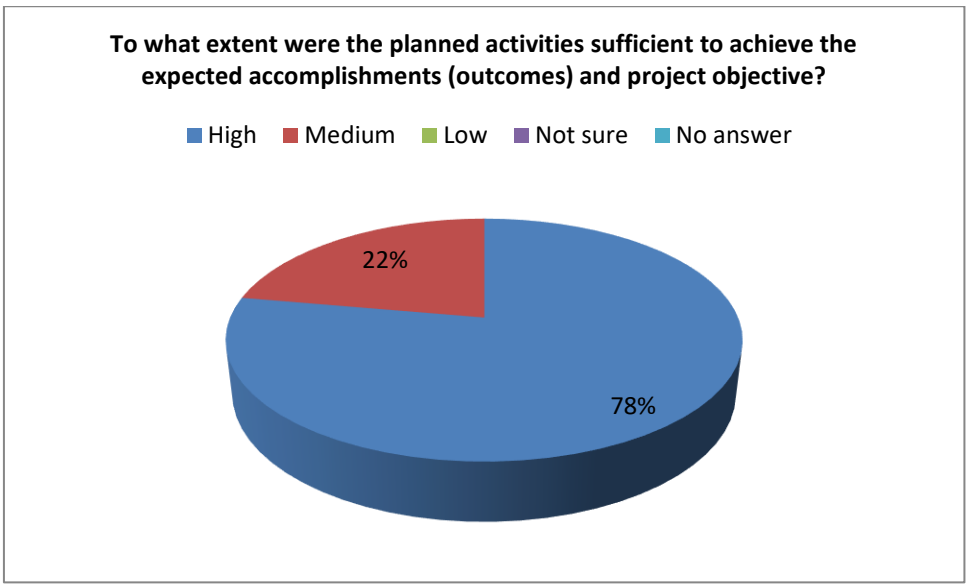
Indicators	Number of individuals benefitting from trainings and awareness building activities Percentage of trained women Training evaluation results	Completed, 100%.	The project organized a number of trips to international events and venues to ensure participation of local experts at some international relative forums, as well as some training sessions for benefitting stakeholders in the Chu-Talas basin, namely (per the report): 1. Climate change adaptation scenarios (29 November 2016, back to back with the CTWC meeting) trained 29 national experts from Kyrgyzstan and Kazakhstan (14 of them - women); 2. The training on water and health in the context of climate change (8 December 2016) trained 24 national experts from Kyrgyzstan and Kazakhstan (15 of them women); 3. A dedicated session on climate change adaptation was organized within the 1st joint meeting of the Working Group on Adaptation to Climate Change and Long-term Development Programs of Action (Bishkek, 25-26 May 2017) to increase the knowledge of the Working Group members on climate finance architecture, including through practical examples of larger scale projects that received funding from the Green Climate Fund; 4. On the occasion of the 10th anniversary of the Chu-Talas Commission a special River Day event was organised by the Commission and the GEF/UNDP Chu-Talas project on September 19, 2017, including a special session on climate change adaptation. It can be seen that the total amount of directly involved people is 53 (with 29 being women), indirectly (who were informed by media, demonstration actions, ets) is over 500, which is sufficient for ensuring further dissemination of information.

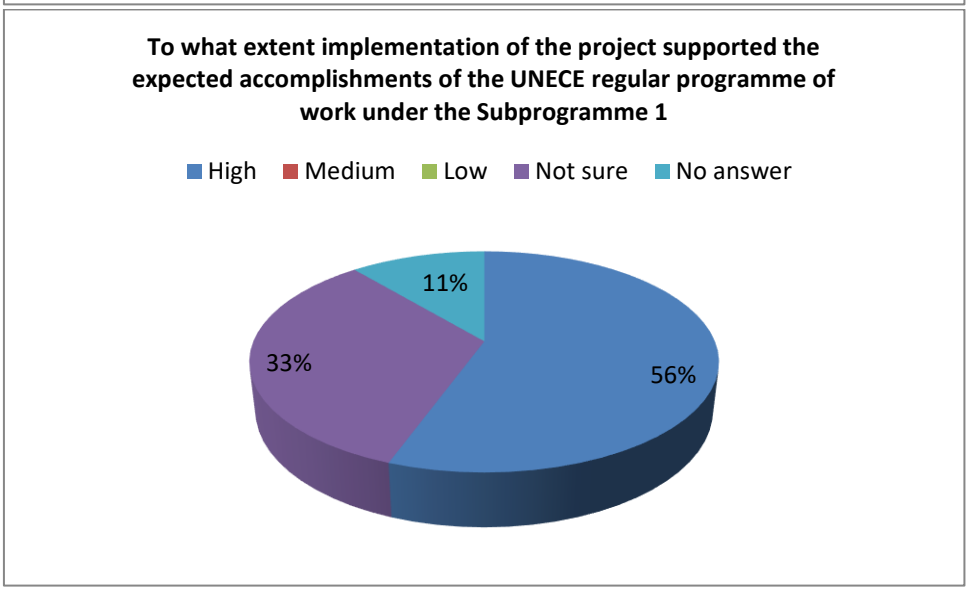
Appendix 7 – Responses to the questionnaire

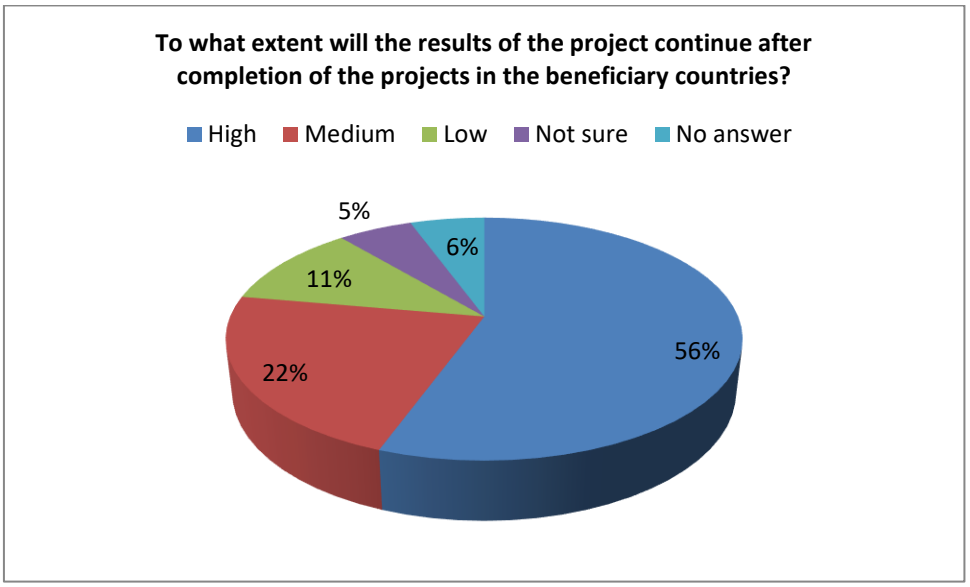
Based on 18 interviews + group discussion with 5 participants

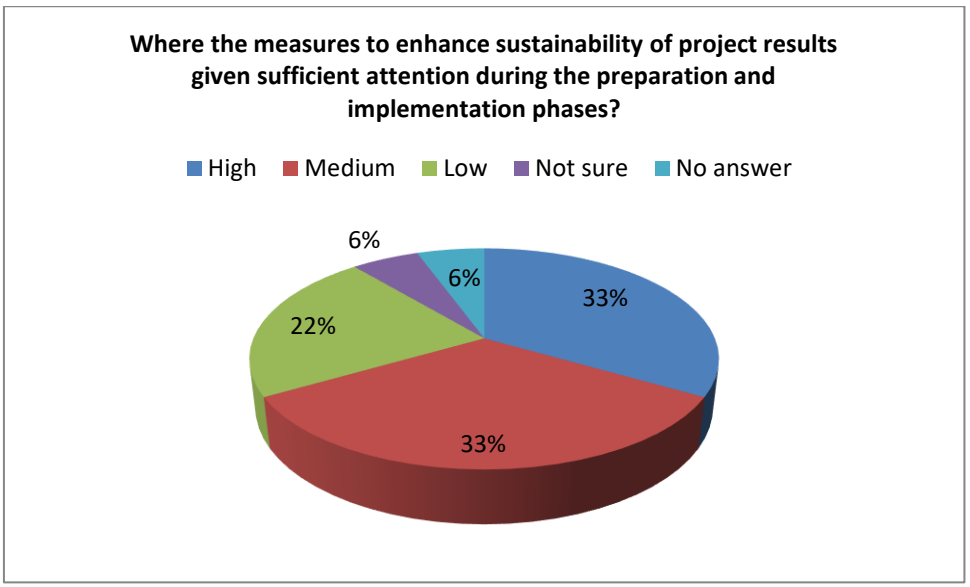


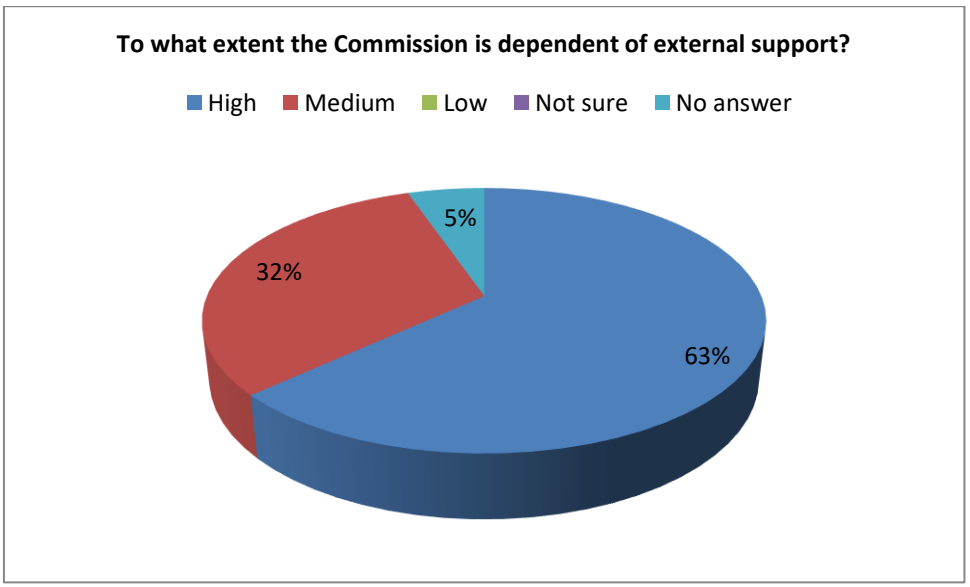


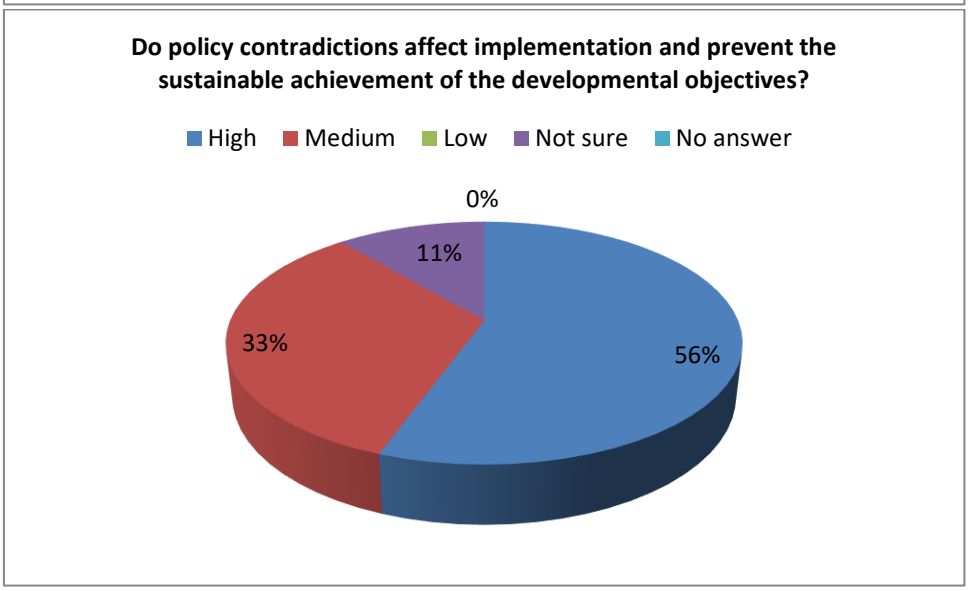

To what extent were the planned activities sufficient to achieve the expected accomplishments (outcomes) and project objective?
High
Medium
Low
Not sure
No answer
22%
78%


To what extent implementation of the project supported the expected accomplishments of the UNECE regular programme of work under the Subprogramme 1
High
Medium
Low
Not sure
No answer
11%
33%
56%


To what extent will the results of the project continue after completion of the projects in the beneficiary countries?
High
Medium
Low
Not sure
No answer
5%
6%
11%
56%
22%


Where the measures to enhance sustainability of project results given sufficient attention during the preparation and implementation phases?
High
Medium
Low
Not sure
No answer
6%
6%
33%
22%
33%


To what extent the Commission is dependent of external support?
High
Medium
Low
Not sure
No answer
5%
32%
63%


Do policy contradictions affect implementation and prevent the sustainable achievement of the developmental objectives?
High
Medium
Low
Not sure
No answer
0%
11%
33%
56%

Appendix 8

Table 2

Spending according to Indicative Work Plan for the project (September 2015 – Dec 2018)

Results	Activities	Sep 2015 - Aug 2016				Sep 2016 - Aug 2017				Aug 2017- June 2018				Jul 2018-Dec 2018	
		Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q5	Q6	Q7	Q8	Q9	Q10	Q11	Q12	Q13	Q14
Result 1. Framework for regular and strategic climate change adaptation action in the Chu -Talas River Basin established	1.1. Support development of strategic document to facilitate adaptation														
Result 2. Benefits of adaptation measures assessed and demonstrated on the ground	2.1. Conduct cost-benefit assessment of adaptation measures														
	2.2. Prioritize measures for implementation through consultative process														
	2.3. Implement selected adaptation measures														
Result 3. Increased awareness and knowledge of Chu-Talas Commission and other key stakeholders of adaptation options in the river basin	3.1. Conduct capacity needs assessment of Chu-Talas Commission and other key local stakeholders														
	3.2. Develop awareness raising and capacity building strategy														
	3.3. Implement awareness raising and capacity building strategy														
	3.4. Develop project exit strategy														
<u>Result 1:</u> Framework for regular and strategic climate change adaptation action in the Chu-Talas River Basin established	1.1. Discussions with the two governments on procedure for approval of the SAP														
	1.2 Singing of the SAP at the 8th session of the MOP to be held in Astana and presentation of project results (tbc)														

	1.3. Support of 2 working group meetings on Environment under the CTWC														
<u>Result 2:</u> Benefits of adaptation measures assessed and demonstrated on the ground	2.1 Submission of the Grants final report														
	2.2 Presentation of the project result at the FinProject session to be held at the NDP national policy workshop on 24-25 September 2018														
<u>Result 3:</u> Increased awareness and knowledge of Chu-Talas Commission and other key stakeholders of adaptation options in the river basin and the need for transboundary cooperation in adaptation	3.1 Development and printing of visual awareness documents, such as project-specific brochures and posters, visual explainer of SAP etc.														
	Project evaluation														
Spending for period		**91 515**													
						104 600									
										109 900					
														75 356	