

STRENGTHENING
INSTITUTIONAL CAPACITY IN
THE DEVELOPMENT OF A
PHASE-OUT AND PHASE
DOWN STRATEGY FOR
MERCURY ADDED PRODUCTS
IN LESOTHO

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Acronyms and Abbreviations

CHEMAC	Chemical Management Committee
COWMAN	Committee on Waste Management
GEF	Global Environment Facility
LED	Light Emitting Diodes
MAP	Mercury Added Products
MIA	Minamata Initial Assessment
MoAFS	Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Security
MTEC	Ministry of Tourism, Environment and Culture
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
PCA	Project Cooperation Agreement
PRF	Project Results Framework
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
SIP	Specific International Programme
SMART	Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic, and Time Bound
ToC	Theory of Change
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme

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1. Table 1. Project identification

Project ID:	2018/01/A/LSO
Implementing Agencies:	Department of Environment of the Ministry of Tourism, Environment and Culture of Lesotho
Project Focal Point: Functional Title, Address, Telephone, E-mail	Ms. Moleboheng Petlane, Environment Officer- Pollution Control P.O. Box 10993 Maseru 100 Lesotho +266 6343 2362 marleymjp@gmail.com
Project Title as per PCA:	Strengthening institutional capacity in the development of a phase-out and phase down strategy for mercury added products in Lesotho
Budget USD Specific Trust Fund;	USD 200,550
In-Kind Contribution	USD 49,000
Trust Fund	SSF/SIP
Expected start date:	May 10, 2019
Planned completion date:	May 09, 2022
Planned project budget at approval:	USD 249,550
Cost to the SIP:	USD 200,550
Terminal Evaluation (planned date):	December 15, 2022 – May 1, 2023

2. Summary of Key Achievements

Introduction

- i) Lesotho's instrument of ratification of the Minamata Convention on Mercury was deposited on the 12th November 2014 but came into force on 16/08/2017. By ratifying the Convention, the Kingdom of Lesotho undertook to implement obligations imposed by the Convention. In order to meet the obligations under the Convention an initial assessment of mercury in products was undertaken. The assessment found that consumer products such as thermometers, blood pressure gauges, fluorescent light bulbs, batteries, etc. account for approximately 51% of the total amount of releases of mercury into the environment. The assessment also found rampant use of mercury in religious rituals and traditional medicine.

The Project

- ii) In order to address the problem of mercury in products and the environment, a project funded by the Specific International Programme (SIP), was designed to strengthen institutional capacity in the development of a phase-out and phase down strategy for mercury added products in Lesotho. To achieve this objective, the project focused on supporting the development of technical capacity in Lesotho in undertaking mercury assessments necessary for developing the phase out and phase down strategy for mercury added products. The assessments included inventories, market research analysis on alternatives and cost benefit analysis. Capacity was also to be built through awareness raising and training for identified key stakeholders in phasing out mercury added products.

The Evaluation

- iii) This Terminal Evaluation was conducted by one evaluation consultant between December 15, 2022 and May 1, 2023. The evaluation has two purposes: (i) to provide evidence of results that meet accountability requirements, and (ii) to promote operational improvement, learning and knowledge sharing through results and lessons learned among the Convention Secretariat, UNEP, project partners and other participating agencies. Therefore, the evaluation identified lessons of operational relevance for future project formulation and implementation especially for any follow-up interventions that may be anticipated.

Evaluation Findings

Strategic Relevance/Coherence

- iv) The SIP projects explicitly address Article 4 of the Convention which states: “Each Party shall not allow, by taking appropriate measures, the manufacture, import or export of mercury-added products listed in Part I of Annex A after the phase-out date specified for those products, except where an exclusion is specified in Annex A or the Party has a registered exemption pursuant to Article 6.”¹ In line with article 19 paragraphs 1g and 1f of the Convention, the project financed activities to develop information on trade in mercury added products. In accordance with Article 18 of the Convention, awareness campaigns for local governments were developed and implemented.
- v) The project is consistent with Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 3.9 which requires a substantial reduction in deaths associated with hazardous chemicals including air, soil, and water pollution. It is also consistent with SDG 9.4 which requires an upgrade and retrofit of industries and greater adoption of clean and environmentally sound technologies and industrial processes, SDG 12 on sustainable production and consumption among other relevant SDGs.

¹ Minamata Convention on Mercury: Texts and Annexes, page 19

The project, as implemented, was also in line with the Environment Act of Lesotho (2008), the Hazardous Healthcare Waste Management Regulations (2012), the Mines and Minerals Act (2005), Public Health Order (1970), Import and Export Control Act (1984) and Import Regulations (1988 as amended 2009) among many other laws and regulations².

Effectiveness/Efficiency

- vi) At project completion, the planned project outputs were produced in spite of the disruptions caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. The evidence from the final reports and interviews conducted for this evaluation suggest that project participants have found the project outputs including information received at workshops, seminars, and through radio programs and information pamphlets useful.
- vii) A national Strategy to implement the Minamata Convention was prepared. This is significant because the national strategy represented a key output of the effort to strengthen national capacity in order to manage mercury added products in Lesotho. Government agencies, NGOs and the private sector were mobilized to support the process of developing capacity to manage the problem of mercury in products and in the environment. In addition, the project has created awareness among various institutions and the general public through seminars, workshops, radio programs and the dissemination of information material on the public health risks of mercury added products, mercury management and the Minamata Convention in general. The evidence shows that progress is being made in developing monitoring, and institutional capacity for managing mercury and mercury added products. Through institutional support and awareness raising, the project has developed the enabling environment for the effective management of mercury and mercury added products.
- viii) As evidence that progress is being made along the causal pathway towards impact, the strategy developed by the project is being finalized for presentation to Cabinet. Hospitals are now using mercury-free manometers, thermometers and LED lamps. The legislative framework proposed in the strategy is currently in final draft form. Also, through the work of the Alliance of Mercury-Free Dentistry, mercury-based dental amalgams are no longer in use.
- ix) Also, the evaluation found that relevant ministries, government departments and NGOs were closely involved in the project activities. This increased efficiency as project implementation benefited from better institutional knowledge and memory, contacts, and experience. Efficiencies were also gained from collaboration among partner agencies in organizing training activities. Besides minor administrative delays in project fund disbursements and difficulties faced in obtaining data for preparing the cost-benefit analysis which also caused delays, there were no major other negative contributions to program implementation efficiency. While workshops and

² Development of a National Strategy for the Phasing Down/Out of Mercury Added Products in Lesotho.

seminars were conducted face-to-face, the project steering committee meetings were conducted as virtual meetings.

- x) Gender considerations were built into project design. Awareness raising programmes were designed to highlight linkages between mercury exposure, the effects on human health and the environment, and gender differences in risk and impact. The project promoted the engagement of women in leadership and decision making by appointing a woman as project coordinator. The Chemicals Management Committee which served as the Project Steering Committee included eleven women and 12 men women.

Lessons

- xi) **Lesson 1:** The Cost-Benefit Analysis exercise seems to be an attempt to justify a public policy decision that had already been made through the ratification of the Minamata Convention. In an environment of data paucity, attempting a study of this nature would be an expensive undertaking within the context of a small project of this type. It would seem that the resources could have been more effectively deployed on other aspects of the capacity building effort (more awareness raising, workshops, monitoring and laboratory analytical capacity) for phase-out/phase-down of mercury in products and the environment.
- xii) **Lesson 2:** The final project reports and interviews indicate that partnership with other government agencies, NGOs, the private sector and traditional healers provided a means to effectively communicate with the different actors and stakeholders on the subject of mercury in products and was essential to project delivery. This evaluation observes that a careful and fairly detailed identification of stakeholders at the project design stage may have contributed to effective collaboration in addressing issues related to the management of the problem of mercury in products. To that effect, engagement of a wide cross-section of stakeholders at all levels is important in projects where the achievement of expected long-term impacts is highly dependent on their actions.

Recommendations

- xiii) **Recommendation 1:** This evaluation recommends that as the key outcome of the effort to strengthen national capacity to manage mercury added products in the country, the strategy developed, a key component of which is the development of the legal framework which is already in progress, should be fully implemented as laid out in the implementation plan which accompanied the strategy.
- xiv) **Recommendation 2:** The Project Results Framework seemed to be poorly understood. Some level of training in developing a Theory of Change as the basis for preparing the logical framework, matrix would be helpful in developing the project design capacity for future interventions of this nature. This will enable the project design team to provide a clearer and more coherent intervention logic that describes the causal relationships between the various results levels and a more logical presentation of the project.

- xv) **Recommendation 3:** Interviews conducted for this evaluation revealed that the awareness raising campaigns may not have been enough to create a good understanding of the problem of mercury-added products in the country. The need exists to roll out a more robust awareness raising program throughout the country to also involve an elementary school program to educate future generations about the adverse health impacts of mercury. Indeed, in general, the dissemination of information generated through the implementation of project activities should continue through the support of the Ministry of Environment. Awareness raising is one of the 4 components of the strategy and is reinforced here because it is vital for buy-in by stakeholders and the general public. Where necessary, additional information should be developed with regards to the use of mercury-added products and their relationship to the risks of exposure.

3. Introduction

1. Lesotho's instrument of ratification, accession, approval or acceptance was deposited 12 November 2014 but came into effect on 16/08/2017. By ratifying the convention, Lesotho undertook to implement obligations imposed by the Convention. In order to do so, the country has to overcome the following barriers identified through a pre-ratification, "Minamata Convention Initial Assessment (MIA) in the Kingdom of Lesotho". The Initial Assessment conducted in Lesotho on mercury in products found that consumer products such as thermometers, blood pressure gauges, fluorescent light bulbs, batteries, etc. account for approximately 51% of the total amount of releases of mercury into the environment. Mercury use in religious rituals and traditional medicine was also found to be of high priority which requires Government intervention. For this reason, a project was designed to work towards the steady and gradual reduction in the use of mercury added products, the switching to their alternatives and, eventually, phasing out mercury-added products in Lesotho, which has been identified in the country's exemption registration.
2. Funding support was provided by the Specific International Programme (SIP), to strengthen national capacity in order to overcome the barriers to the implementation of the requirements of the Convention. The specific objective of the project as stated in the cooperative agreement was "Strengthening institutional capacity in the development of a phase-out and phase down strategy for mercury added products in Lesotho". The project budget amounted to a total of USD 249,550 of which SIP funding was USD 200,550 and the remaining USD 49,000 was proposed in-kind contribution from the Government of Lesotho.

4. The Evaluation

3. This Evaluation was conducted by one evaluation consultant between December 15, 2022 and May 1, 2023. The timeline and schedule of the evaluation are provided in Annex A of this report. The evaluation has two purposes: (i) to provide evidence of results that meet accountability requirements, and (ii) to promote operational improvement, learning and knowledge sharing through results and lessons (to be) learned among the Convention Secretariat, UNEP, project partners and other participating agencies. Therefore, the evaluation identified lessons of operational relevance for future project formulation and implementation especially for any follow-up interventions that may be anticipated.

4.1. Evaluation Methods

4. This evaluation was carried out as an in-depth desk study consistent with the specifications of the Terms of Reference. The approach involved mostly qualitative methods to determine project achievements within the context of the outputs, outcomes and impacts expected. Both primary and secondary data were collected and analysed for the preparation of this evaluation. Secondary data were obtained mainly from the Secretariat of the Minamata Convention as well as relevant partners and other organizations. Primary data was gathered through semi-structured interviews. Findings from the inception review further informed the methods used and enabled refinement of the evaluation framework by filling information gaps and helping to identify further data collection needs.
5. Discussions with the project team were informal and focused on information gaps. Subsequent interviews with project stakeholders were semi-structured based on the evaluation matrix developed during the inception phase. Discussions were held with the Convention Secretariat, project managers key persons in the project management team, and selected representatives from beneficiary groups. As noted, this evaluation has been conducted mostly as a detailed desk study and no travel was involved.
6. Since face-to-face interviews with representatives from participating governments were not possible, the evaluation conducted remote interviews using zoom calls to assess how project participants perceived the approach to project implementation and the support received from the project. The interviewees were selected with the help of the project manager from participants who attended project workshops, seminars or awareness raising events and/or had participated in project implementation.

Data collection and analysis

7. The Evaluation Matrix formed the basis for assessing the extent to which immediate and medium-term outcomes have been achieved. The evaluation has assessed the extent to which outcomes have been achieved and the key factors, both positive and negative, that affected achievement of outcomes. This includes: internal issues of intervention design, capacity or resources required to execute certain tasks, as well as factors beyond the control of the project such as extreme events or political conditions.

8. A limited number of zoom discussions were conducted with the Minamata Convention Secretariat and country project staff. Interviews conducted during the data collection phase were semi-structured, based on the evaluation matrix presented in the inception report, and were conducted with project team members and other stakeholders. Interviewees included: Convention Secretariat staff, Project focal points, Project Partners, and Minamata Convention national focal points. Table 2 presents key staff interviewed from the listed agencies.
9. Other sources of information for the evaluation were primarily interim project reports, project financial data including expenditure reports, end-of-project report, project outputs, grant application, Cooperation Agreement, and the Minamata Convention web and related portals.

Table 2. Key agencies interviewed

Institution & Staff	Location
Minamata Convention Secretariat Team	Geneva
Lesotho Project Manager	Maseru
Representatives from project participants	Maseru
Representatives from project partners	Maseru

10. The evaluator conducted an inception conference call by zoom with the Convention Secretariat on January 24, 2023. The conference call provided the opportunity for the evaluator to gain a better understanding of the project and the current status of its implementation. It also allowed the evaluator to discuss the boundaries and limitations of the evaluation and the modalities for accessing project information.
11. In soliciting the views and perspectives of project beneficiaries, the evaluator was keenly aware of the poor response rate of online surveys to governments after project completion where project participants may have moved on to other assignments. Given the duration of this evaluation, the evaluator opted for zoom interviews of project participants.

4.2 Limitations

12. This evaluation was conducted primarily as a desk study. The evaluator relied substantially on the five project interim reports prepared between December 2019 and December 2021, the final project report, project outputs and project team and stakeholder interviews conducted remotely.

4.3 Ethical considerations

13. In reporting the findings of the interviews and discussions with project participants, care was taken to not attribute comments made by individuals to them by name in the document.

5. The Project

a. Context of the Project

14. The Minamata Convention which entered into force on August 16, 2017, was established to protect human health and the environment from emissions of mercury and mercury compounds from a variety of sources. This was to be achieved by controlling the supply of and trade in mercury. Limitations were placed on specific sources of mercury including primary mining, mercury-added products, manufacturing processes and artisanal and small-scale gold mining. The Convention also addresses interim storage of mercury and its disposal once it becomes waste, sites contaminated by mercury as well as health issues.
15. As stated in Annex A of the project Cooperation Agreement between the United Nations Environment Programme and the Department of Environment of the Ministry of Tourism, Environment and Culture of Lesotho, the objective of the project was “to strengthen institutional capacity to implement Article 4 of the Minamata Convention in order to protect human health and the environment from mercury releases originating from the intentional use of mercury-added products.”
16. The envisaged outcome of the project is a steady and gradual reduction in the use of mercury-added products, the switching to their alternatives and, eventually, phasing out of mercury-added products, which have been identified in Lesotho's exemption registration. This was to be achieved through developing and reinforcing the technical capacity of Lesotho in undertaking mercury assessments necessary for developing the phase out and phase down strategy for mercury added products. The assessments will include inventories, market research analysis on alternatives and cost benefit analysis. Capacity will equally be built through awareness raising and training for identified key stakeholders in phasing out mercury added products.
17. Proposed measures undertaken include: strengthening Minamata national coordination mechanism; conducting inventories to evaluate the extent of the use of mercury added products; conducting market research on alternatives to mercury; undertaking a cost benefit analysis of switching to alternatives; developing a phase out/down strategy to switch to alternatives; conducting awareness raising activities; and undertaking monitoring, evaluation and financial audit.

b) Project Results Framework

18. The specific objective of the project was to strengthen institutional capacity to implement Article 4 of the Minamata Convention in order to protect human health and the environment from mercury releases originating from the intentional use of mercury-added products. The project supported Lesotho in strengthening institutional capacity by enhancing national coordination mechanism, training of key stakeholders, developing a national strategy for phasing down/out mercury-added products as well as creating awareness on the problem of mercury in products. The project had six key outputs (see Table 3 below) that result in a steady and gradual reduction in the use of mercury added products, in switching to their alternatives and ultimately phasing out mercury added products.

Table 3: Summary of project outcomes, outputs and activities

Project Objective: Strengthening institutional capacity in the development of a phase-out and phase down strategy for mercury added products in Lesotho		
Outcomes	Outputs	Activities
1. A steady and gradual reduction in the use of mercury added products, in switching to their alternatives and ultimately phasing out mercury added products.	National Strategy for phasing out/down mercury added products	
	1.1. Coordinating committee adopted Inception workshop held	1.1.1. Engage stakeholders
	1.2. Inventory report compiled	1.2.1. Conduct inventories on mercury added products
	1.3. Market research report compiled	1.3.1. Undertake market research on alternatives
	1.4. Cost benefit analysis report compiled	1.4.1. Conduct cost benefit analysis of switching to alternatives
	1.5 National Strategy for phasing out/down mercury added products developed	1.5.1. Develop a National Strategy for phasing out/down mercury added products
	1.6. Awareness raising activities undertaken	1.6.1. Conduct awareness raising activities
	1.7. Project evaluation and financial audit conducted	1.7.1. Undertake project evaluation and financial audit

c) Project Implementation Structure

19. The Ministry of Tourism, Environment and Culture, through its administrative hierarchy, was the overall decision-making body for the project. The day-to-day management and administration of the project was handled by the Project Coordinator and her team in the Ministry of Environment. The team provided secretariat services including: scheduling and coordinating meetings; setting the meeting agenda; producing documentation and distributing to members; recording and distributing to members meeting minutes; managing correspondence; engagement of consultants; and managing budgets.

20. The existing Chemicals Management Committee which was adopted as the Minamata National Coordination Mechanism served as the Project Coordination Committee (see Figure 1 below). The committee was responsible for monitoring progress, providing information to consultants and reviewing reports. National consultants were engaged to undertake some activities of the project. In consultation with the coordinating committee, the project coordinator sought approval from the Ministry to hire consultants for the various tasks proposed to be undertaken by consultants. This ensured accountability and coordination between stakeholders and partners.

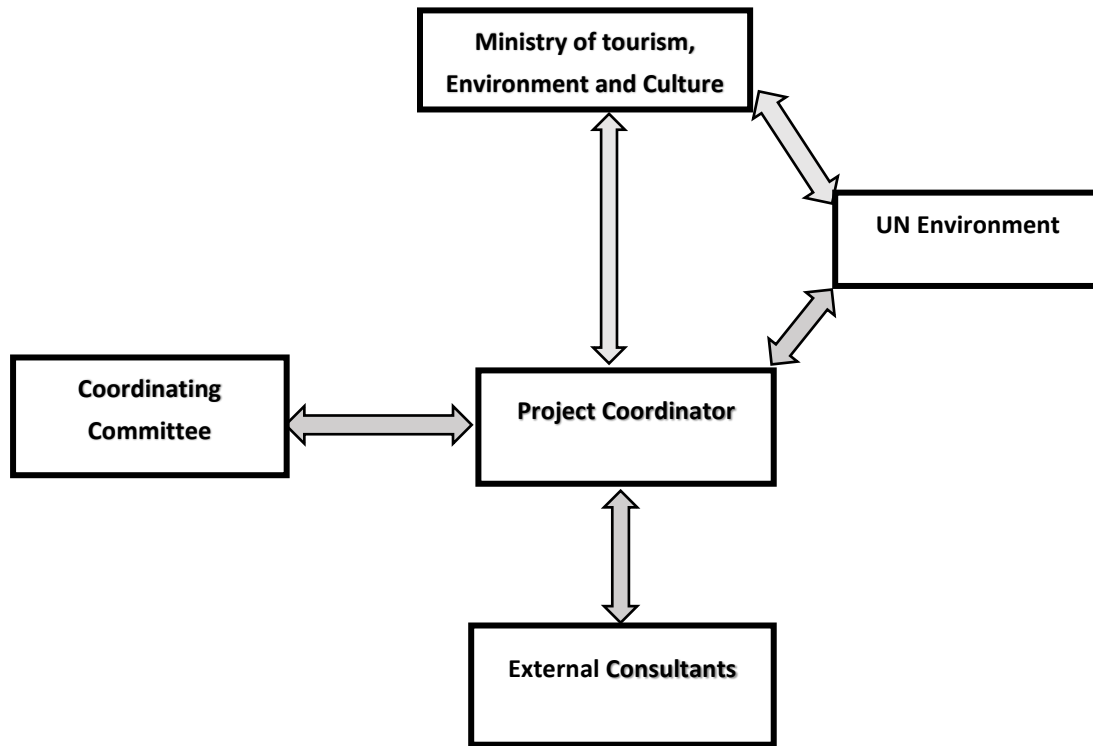


Figure 1: Project Implementation Structure (adapted from the project application)

d) Adaptive Management

21. During project implementation, a key amendment involving a no-cost extension to the Cooperation Agreement for Project ID 2018/01/A/LSO was signed on May 9, 2022 between the Secretariat of the Minamata Convention and the Ministry of Environment of Lesotho. The purpose was to extend the duration of the project for an additional period of 6 months, amend the schedule of narrative reporting, financial reporting and Annex A (log frame including the workplan) of the Cooperation Agreement. The total cost to the SIP however remained unchanged. Indeed, to extend the duration of the project, the Secretariat sought and got approval from SIP Governing Board co-chairs. because the extension took the project slightly beyond the normal SIP maximum project duration of 36 months. The disruptions caused by COVID-19 limited the number of participants that could attend each of the meetings for training and participation in the seminars.

e) Gender

22. Section 5.6 of the project application discussed gender considerations in project design. Project implementation was to adopt a multi-stakeholder approach where women and vulnerable populations are represented in the coordinating committee. Awareness raising programmes were designed to highlight linkages between mercury exposure, the effects on human health and the environment, and gender differences in risk and impact. The project proposed to promote women's engagement by encouraging women experts to apply for consultancies. The project promoted women's engagement and leadership in decision making by appointing a woman as project coordinator and the National Focal Point is a woman. The Chemicals Management Committee which served as the Project Steering Committee involved eleven (11) women and twelve (12) men.

6.0. Evaluation Findings

6.1. Strategic Relevance/Coherence

23. The SIP project explicitly addresses Article 4 of the Convention which states: "Each Party shall not allow, by taking appropriate measures, the manufacture, import or export of mercury-added products listed in Part I of Annex A after the phase-out date specified for those products, except where an exclusion is specified in Annex A or the Party has a registered exemption pursuant to Article 6."³ In line with article 19 paragraphs 1g and 1f of the Convention, the project financed activities to develop information on trade in mercury added products. In accordance with article 18 of the Convention, awareness campaigns for local governments were developed and implemented. The project undertook analysis of the existing institutional and regulatory framework as a part of the development of the national strategy for the phasing down/out of mercury added products in Lesotho. Project related activities also fall under Article 11 on mercury wastes.

24. The project is consistent with Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 3.9 which requires a substantial reduction in deaths associated with hazardous chemicals including air, soil, and water pollution. It is also consistent with SDG 9.4 which requires an upgrade and retrofit of industries and greater adoption of clean and environmentally sound technologies and industrial processes, SDG 12 on sustainable production and consumption among other relevant SDGs.

25. The project, as implemented, was also in line with the Environment Act of Lesotho (2008), the hazardous healthcare waste management regulations (2012), the Mines and Minerals Act (2005),

³ Minamata Convention on Mercury: Texts and Annexes, page 19

Public Health Order (1970), Import and Export Control Act (1984) and Import Regulations (1988 as amended 2009) among many other laws and regulations⁴.

6.2. Quality of Project Design

26. The primary information sources for project design quality assessment included the project application, the signed Cooperation Agreement, interim reports, and other documentation which reflected amendments to the project.
27. Both Annex A of the Cooperation Agreement and the project application presented a description of the existing situation with respect to the problem of mercury in Lesotho. This was based on an Initial Assessment conducted in Lesotho on mercury in products which found that consumer products such as thermometers, blood pressure gauges, fluorescent light bulbs, batteries, etc. account for approximately 51% of the total amount of releases of mercury into the environment. Mercury use in religious rituals and traditional medicine was also found to be of high priority which required Government intervention.
28. Stakeholders were identified and their roles in relation to the project and potential contributions to the project described [See sections 5.0 of the grant applications]. Baselines, outcomes, outputs, indicators, targets and assumptions defined in the Logical Framework Matrix provided a good means by which the monitoring of project implementation would be undertaken. In exception of the first output related to stakeholder engagement which relates to the processes of project implementation, all the outputs are properly defined and contribute to strengthening national capacity to phase down mercury added products, switching to their alternatives and ultimately phasing out these products. Indicators, targets and assumptions were defined, providing a means by which the monitoring of project implementation could be undertaken. Risks and Assumptions were defined. Assumptions were often stated as mitigation measures for the Risks.
29. The objective of the project however, it would seem, should have been set at a lower results level than the outcome as stated in the results framework, because capacity must be built before a steady and gradual reduction in the use of mercury added products, switching to their alternatives, and ultimately phasing out mercury can be achieved. In that respect, it would seem that the outcome is articulated at a lower results level than it should be. Indeed, all the outputs which should contribute to the direct outcome are all related to capacity building. No direct reduction activities were undertaken in this project.

⁴ Development of a National Strategy for the Phasing Down/Out of Mercury Added Products in Lesotho.

6.3. Efficiency

30. Efficiency is a performance measure involving the timeliness and cost-effectiveness of project implementation. These could include positive contributions to performance such as: cost and time saving measures; use of existing systems to support project design/activity; and fullest use of human and financial inputs; as well as negative contributions to performance such as administrative delays and management delays.
31. Relevant Ministries, Government Departments and NGOs were closely involved in the project activities. This increased efficiency as project implementation benefited from better institutional knowledge and memory, contacts, and experience. Efficiencies were also gained from collaboration among partner agencies in organizing training activities. For example, collaboration between agencies such as the Ministry of Tourism, Environment and Culture, the Ministry of Health, Dentists, resulted in the workshops/seminar conducted on market research analysis on the suitability and availability of alternatives to mercury added products under the Minamata Convention. During the seminars and training programs conducted, the consulting team noted that the interactions and dialogue between participants gave them the confidence that the right mix of candidates was selected to participate in the workshops. In some cases, individuals from different agencies such as the Ministry of Health and the Oral Health Community made the presentations. Besides minor administrative delays in project fund disbursements and difficulties obtaining data for preparing the cost-benefit analysis which also caused delays, there were no major negative contributions to program implementation. While workshops and seminars were conducted face-to-face, the project steering committee meetings were conducted as virtual meetings.

6.4. Effectiveness

a) Delivery of Outputs

32. Evaluation of output delivery in this report is based on section 5.4 of the Logical Framework Matrix developed for this project and the evaluation matrix. In this section, six (6) main outputs were defined: i) engagement of Stakeholders; ii) the development of an inventory of mercury added products; iii) the conduct of market research on available alternatives; iv) preparation of a cost benefit analysis for switching to alternatives; v) preparation of a National Strategy to phase out/down mercury added products; and vi) carrying out of awareness raising activities.
33. As noted in the assessment of the quality project design in Section 6.2 above, output 1 involving the engagement of stakeholders which entailed, among other things, the holding of the inception workshop, coordination meetings and the project validation workshop are activities and processes associated with project implementation and not an output of the project. For this reason, stakeholder engagement which was stated in the Results Framework as an output is not discussed here as an output.
34. Based on the interim reports and interviews conducted, this evaluation concludes that key performance targets of the project at output level as described in the results framework have been achieved. This section presents a detailed description of the outputs delivered.

Output 1 - Inventories of Mercury Added Products

35. The inventory of mercury added products was developed in 2021. Data for the year 2019-2020 was used where available to compile the inventory. The 2021 inventory is an update of an earlier inventory compiled in 2016. This inventory was compiled using "Toolkit for identification and quantification of mercury releases" provided by the Chemicals and Health Branch of United Nations Environment Programme. This application is available on the website of UNEP Chemicals and Health Branch at:

<https://www.unep.org/explore-topics/chemicals-waste/what-we-do/mercury/mercury-inventory-toolkit>

36. Mercury release sources identified in Lesotho, are categorized as follows: i) Extraction and use of fuels/energy sources; ii) Consumer products with intentional use of mercury, other intentional products/process uses; iii) Waste incineration, Waste deposition/landfilling and wastewater treatment; and iv) Potential hot spots. Only the source types positively identified as present were included in the quantitative assessment.

37. Two sources were identified under Extraction and use of Fuel/Energy Sources. They are coal combustion and Biomass fired power and heat production. Consumer products with intentional use of mercury had the most identified items. They include: batteries containing mercury; thermometers with mercury; electrical and electronic switches, contacts and relays with mercury; cosmetics and related products; polyurethane with mercury catalysts; and light sources with mercury. Intentional products/process uses, include manometers and gauges; laboratory chemicals and equipment; dental mercury-amalgam fillings; mercury metal use in religious rituals and folklore medicine.

38. With regards to disposal, informal dumping of general waste, water treatment systems, controlled landfills, informal waste burning, incineration of medical waste and cemeteries are key sources of mercury. No production phase source of mercury was identified in Lesotho.

39. In general, the inventory quantified mercury in the environment as follows: air – 8000 kg Hg/y, water – 510 kg Hg/y, land – 7790 kg Hg/y, by-products and impurities – 5.4 kg Hg/y, general waste/municipal waste – 15,496 kg Hg/y, Sector specific waste treatment /disposal – 70 kg Hg/y.

40. In preparing the inventory, hot-spots of mercury contamination were identified. These suspected contaminated sites were identified as prisons, police stations, post offices, hospitals and waste dumpsites. One such site, a facility for the production of light-bulbs, closed in 2013, was marked out as a contamination hotspot. The inventory pointed to Coal/Ash, Scrap metals, Incinerators and Medical Waste, Wastewater treatment, General Waste, Agricultural Chemicals and Brick Manufacturing as major sources of mercury contamination with coal ash being the highest contributor, followed by incinerators and medical waste, Scrap yard residues and agricultural chemicals in diminishing order.

Output 2: Market Research on Alternatives

41. This market study had seven specific research objectives in relation to Mercury Added Products and their alternatives covering: assessment of awareness, consumers need, consumer perceptions and attitudes, experience with use, provision of market information, availability and suitability of alternatives and analysis of impact of external factors on adoption of alternatives. Data collected and analyzed were both qualitative and quantitative. For quantitative data, a closed ended structured questionnaire was designed and physically administered. The findings of the market study are described below.

a) Awareness of society on the impacts of Mercury Added Products (MAPs) on human health and the environment.

42. The findings revealed that, a significant number of consumers in Lesotho are aware of the impacts of mercury on human health and the environment. The inability to differentiate between MAPs from their alternatives, was due to product factors such as labelling, packaging and market availability. In the case of dental amalgam, the lack of awareness about its dangers and alternatives was mainly due to dentists' opinion about dental amalgam being safe, durable, and inexpensive.

b) Consumer needs regarding the use of Mercury Added Products and/or their alternatives.

43. Market availability was identified as the key factor that influences consumer decision as to whether to use a Mercury Added Product or its alternative - consumers purchase what is available on the market. Consumer needs are complex to package and these needs are constantly changing, which may explain why no single factor had more than twenty percentage points.

c) Consumer perceptions and attitudes toward Mercury Added Products and their alternatives.

44. Consumers in Lesotho perceived both Mercury Added Products and their alternatives highly and had a positive attitude towards them. However, packaging and quality of product of Mercury Added Products improves their perception to a product compared to their alternatives. By the findings, this is quite significant when one looks at cosmetics. Packaging plays an important role in consumer's choice. Influence of others had minimal effect when it came to perception and attitude towards a product. In drawing conclusions, one should consider that the majority of respondents could not make out Mercury Added Products from their alternatives and therefore this conclusion is deduced from a narrow sample.

d) Consumer experience with Mercury Added Products and their alternatives.

45. The findings revealed that Price and market availability are the determinate factors that affect consumer experience in the Kingdom of Lesotho. The difference between the price of Mercury Added Products and their alternatives made consumers chose Mercury Added Products. This choice is made notwithstanding the fact that alternatives are widely available compared to Mercury Added Products

and holds true for the dental amalgam, lamps and cosmetics. The study concludes that technical/after sales service offered affects consumer experience.

e) Provision of market information on Mercury Added Products and their alternatives and Forecast of availability and suitability of alternatives to Mercury Added Products

46. The Lesotho Revenue Authority database revealed that there was about 50% reduction in the imports of Mercury Added measuring devices between 2012 and 2019 into the country. The study also revealed that measuring devices such as sphygmomanometers, which were electronic substitutes to Mercury Added measuring devices were not used. Some electronic thermometers also had the capability to measure parameters like pH, conductivity or relative humidity. This multi-functionality of the electronic measuring devices represents an advantage to their users.

47. The study has confirmed that mercury added products like Batteries, Lamps, Power Devices, Dental amalgam, Cosmetic products and Pesticides all had alternatives in appreciable quantities and of noticeable qualities. The findings showed that there has been shifts from the use of government policy driven fluorescent energy saving lamps to the alternative LED lamps though they are more costly.

48. The findings confirmed that the agricultural sector was ahead in phasing out mercury added pesticides and biocides. It cites the Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Security (MoAFS) as positing that alternatives to Mercury Added Pesticides were developed before the phase down/out date and their suitability has long been proven through cycles of application. The Ministry of Trade and Industry and the traders all confirm that mercury-added pesticides and biocides have been successfully phased out and there is adequate supply of suitable alternatives. The process of importing pesticides is subject to a rigorous regime of controls.

f) Impact of external factors that could influence adoption of alternatives to Mercury Added Products

49. The findings of the market study have shown that external factors of culture, social standing, economic wellbeing and reference group all have an effect on how respondents in Lesotho accept and react predictably to the offers of alternatives to Mercury Added Products.

g) Policy Implications

50. One of the key findings of this study is that market factors affect the perception, attitudes and needs of consumers in Lesotho with regard to Mercury Added Products and their alternatives. Factors like market availability, technical/after sales service and ease of use as well as packaging were found to have an effect on consumer decisions. Findings and conclusions of this study influence Lesotho's strategy development with regard to how mercury-added products are phased out and how it addresses its awareness raising campaign.

Output 3: Cost Benefit Analysis of Switching to Alternatives

51. The study was designed to collect and analyze data on mercury added products, their alternatives, costs and benefits, risks and assumptions associated with switching to alternatives. The consultant had challenges acquiring data in order to monetize environmental costs and benefits in preparing the Cost Benefit Analysis. Ratification of the Convention means that Lesotho sees more benefit to committing to the conversion than costs that could be incurred on account of ratification. This anecdotal evidence, it was argued by the report, had to be confirmed by carrying out a scientifically designed and implemented study hence the Cost Benefit Analysis. Districts visited by the consultant are the following: Lowlands: - Maseru –and Leribe Mountains: - Thaba Tseka and Qacha’s Nek.
52. Overall, the Cost-Benefit study found that there are alternatives in Lesotho for mercury added products that are listed in Annex A of the Minamata Convention. Pricing of these alternatives differ depending on the product and product quality. Some alternative products are cheaper than conventional products that contain mercury. An example being thermometers of different types. However, price does not seem to determine uptake in all cases. While digital thermometers are considerably more expensive than thermometers that contain mercury, there is a good uptake of the digital thermometers. The easiest control route for mercury containing thermometers would be to control imports.
53. As the procurement arm of the Ministry of Education, the Schools Supply Unit is the main supplier of laboratory equipment and elemental substances to secondary and high schools and has a large amount of mercury containing thermometers which it continues to sell without any restriction. The sale of elemental mercury by the Unit to schools for research and science experiments has since been stopped. No government policy has been put in place to instruct future management of the stockpile of mercury thermometers. There is ample evidence that some of the thermometers being bought by the schools get resold to traditional healers who access the mercury in them for preparing traditional medicines.

Batteries

54. The cost–benefit analysis found that battery imports are, by far, the biggest products of concern for Lesotho in terms of mercury releases into the environment. Batteries represent 15% of all mercury pollution which implies that for Lesotho, batteries constitute a greater risk in terms of the mercury added products. Importation of mercury added products average M50 million annually. The report indicates that there are many alternative battery types widely available throughout the country at comparable prices in Lesotho. It can be concluded therefore that a government policy that prohibits the importation of batteries containing mercury will not deprive consumers of access to good batteries.

Lights

55. In Lesotho, the drive towards energy savings favors mercury containing lights. While energy saving lamps are more expensive, they tend to last longer and use considerably less energy. For example, an ordinary incandescent light bulb costs approximately M6 and may last just one day up to a month. A comparable light bulb containing mercury may cost M45 but last more than 6 months and saves considerable amounts of energy⁵. The dilemma the country faces is the choice between saving on energy on the one hand by continuous use of mercury added lights, and the saving on health and environment on the other, when a rigorous collection regime is established. This challenge can be according to the Cost-Benefit study could be addressed through a collection system that is supported by an Environment Fund.

Dental amalgams

56. The study seems to indicate that the problem of dental mercury amalgam requires ministerial action to effect the required change. It is estimated that tooth filling costs between M700 – M1200 per tooth in Lesotho. There does not seem to exist a clear cost disparity between composite filling and amalgam filling. The real difference is the method of practice of the different dentists who choose a particular filling type and charge a certain level of fees accordingly. Since clients do not seem to have any predetermined choices with regard to the two filling materials, a phase-out program can be implemented successfully.

Cosmetics

57. Another product of concern is cosmetics. No clear aggregate figure could be derived for cosmetics especially cosmetics that contain mercury in the country. This is due, in part, to the fact that they are generally sold by semi-informal traders who were unable to provide any volume statistics and the types and composition of products they sell. Data from the Lesotho Revenue Authority was not useful in explaining the types and composition of cosmetics imported into the country. It is probable that they are mis-classified as they enter the borders through semi-formal traders. Basotho women in both rural and urban areas use these cosmetics and are unable to link them to mercury or to environmental pollution of any kind.

Limitations of the Study

58. The key challenge for this study relates to data, especially data that allows the study to link the use of mercury added products to human health and environmental impacts in the country. In the first place it was a big struggle to get any. Finally, when the consultant obtained some data from the Ministry of Health it was general statistics of hospital in-patient and out-patient consultations.

59. Findings of Cost Benefit Analyses are often driven by extracting monetary costs and benefits, monetization of non-monetary social and secondary benefits and latent non-monetary costs by using shadow-pricing methods, and the matching of costs against benefits, culminating in the calculation of

⁵ Costs and benefits of Transitioning from Mercury Added products to Mercury-Free Alternatives in Lesotho

a Benefit Cost Ratio (BCR). This all-important part of a Cost Benefit Analysis is missing from this assignment.

60. The principal tenet of cost – benefit analysis is that it can be used to identify costs and benefits and confidently assign them to specific causes and direct them to selected policy interests. This standard was not met in this assignment due to the difficulties of data availability and will remain unachievable if conscious efforts are not made to address limitations to data composition, collection, collation, and dissemination in Lesotho.

Output 4: National Strategy for phasing out/down mercury added products

61. The development of a National Strategy for phasing out/down Mercury Added Products was to commence with the advertisement for consultancy. This was to be completed before November 2020. The consultant was to develop his methodology for executing the assignment and finalize the inception report for presentation to stakeholders by May 2021. The consultant in developing the strategy was to undertake wide stakeholder consultations. The developed National Strategy for phasing out/down mercury added products and switching to alternatives to mercury added products, will define clearly also roles and responsibilities for stakeholders. The assignment was scheduled to be completed by January 2022.
62. Due to delays in execution, this timeline was shifted to April 2022 and then later to August 2022. The advert for the search for a consultant was still running as at 14th April 2022 and it was clear the Strategy was still not developed by June 2022. In October 2022, the National Strategy for Phasing Out/Down Mercury Added Products was finally completed.
63. The Strategy covers four frameworks: 1) Strengthened Policy, Legislative and Regulatory Framework; 2) Improved Public Awareness, Education, Research and Capacity Building; 3) Established and Improved Coordination among Stakeholders; and 4) Improved Infrastructure. The Strategy document is accompanied by an Implementation Plan - Operational Plan for the Introduction and Implementation of a National Strategy for Phasing Out/Down Mercury Added Products in Lesotho. This Plan is expected to be implemented from 2023 to 2025.
64. The strategy will be implemented under the joint supervision of the Chemical Management Committee (CHEMAC) and the Committee on Waste Management (COWMAN) under the auspices of the Ministry of Tourism, Environment and Culture (MTEC).
65. Many other government and non-governmental institutions will be involved in the implementation of the phase-out process. The MTEC is expected to provide the enabling environment, including framework agreements for effective reporting, to engage all stakeholders for a successful implementation of the Strategy. A validation workshop was held by the stakeholders to accept the Strategy and approve its publication.

Output 5: Awareness raising activities

66. A consultant, Group II, was engaged to plan, develop and conduct training for stakeholders. The consultant was to develop awareness raising materials to be used in the training and for information dissemination to the larger public. This task was to be executed before May 2021.
67. The project successfully conducted awareness raising seminars for different stakeholders. They include: women in science, parliamentarians, traditional healers, NGOs, Port officials, Dentists, Procurement officials and Major Chain Suppliers of goods and medical equipment. Modalities for these campaigns include radio programmes on mercury, the Minamata Convention, impacts of mercury, mercury added products and their alternatives. Awareness campaigns were rolled out to all the 10 Districts of the country. The district campaigns involved workshops, roadshows and seminars for midwives and pregnant women in each district. During these events, awareness raising materials were handed out to the public.
68. Seventy-five (75) government officials participated in either the seminars or training in the use of the UN Environment Programme level 2 mercury toolkit over the more than two and half-week period. The seminars and inventory training took the form of two-day events full of presentations, group discussions and evening home work. The workshops were held in the outskirts of Maseru at Molengoane Lodge, Nazareth.
69. Participants were drawn from the 10 districts of the country and represented the key ministries that have a key role in the implementation of the Minamata Convention on Mercury. The response from the participants and the engagement in the seminars and the training showed that the right mix of candidates was selected for this task. The two seminars provided the forum for various government stakeholders to understand each other's roles, areas of cooperation in the implementation of the Minamata Convention on Mercury and, in particular, the phase out of mercury added products in Lesotho. Interviews conducted for this evaluation revealed that the workshops were well planned and executed. However, the awareness raising campaigns may not have been enough to create a good understanding of the problem of mercury-added products in the country. The need exists to roll out a more robust awareness raising program throughout the country to also involve an elementary school program to educate future generations about the adverse health impacts of mercury.
70. The consultant deployed the level of COVID-19 management protocols required during the conduct of both training and seminars, such that the pandemic did not disrupt the running of the training events or seminars, and no one was known to have been infected with COVID 19 on attendance to the events. While the seminars and workshops were conducted as face-to-face events, the Steering Committee meetings were organized virtually. Going forward, a roadmap has been developed by stakeholders and the general public were also able to make input.

b) Achievement of Direct Project Outcomes

71. The outputs produced including training and knowledge as well as market research and strategy development must combine to produce the direct outcome. However, the Project Results Framework (PRF) defines the direct project outcome as "a steady and gradual reduction in the use of mercury added products, in switching to their alternatives and ultimately phasing out mercury added products". On hindsight, the evaluation believes that the objective of the project should rather have

been a gradual reduction in the use of mercury added products and switching to their alternatives and the direct outcome of the project should be the means by which that would be achieved, which is, through strengthened institutional and individual capacity. Indeed, all the outputs which should contribute to the direct outcome are all related to capacity building. No direct reduction activities were undertaken in this project.

72. Having noted that, and as discussed in section 6.1 above, the project successfully conducted awareness raising activities for different stakeholders including women in science, parliamentarians, traditional healers, NGOs, Port officials, Dentists, procurement officials and major chain suppliers of goods and medical equipment. Modalities for these campaigns included radio programmes on mercury, the Minamata Convention, impacts of mercury and mercury added products and their alternatives. Awareness campaigns were undertaken in the 10 Districts of the country. The district campaigns involved workshops, roadshows and seminars for midwives and pregnant women in each district. A total of seventy-five (75) government officials participated in either the seminars or training programs.
73. The project further succeeded in developing a strategy for strengthening capacity for eventual phase down/out of mercury containing products in the country. As described above, the key elements of the strategy relate to developing the required capacity for reducing and eventually phasing out mercury containing products in Lesotho. The Strategy which is accompanied by an Implementation Plan is expected to be implemented between 2023 and 2025. As stated above, the framework for the strategy covers 4 key components: 1) Strengthened Policy, Legislative and Regulatory Framework; 2) Improved Public Awareness, Education, Research and Capacity Building; 3) Established and Improved Coordination among Stakeholders; and 4) Improved Infrastructure. These are all aimed at developing the capacity to phase down/out mercury added products.
74. The inventories, market research and cost-benefit studies are all aimed at gaining a better understanding of the magnitude of the problem of mercury containing products, the alternatives to these products and developing the capacity to manage them. That being said, it is not clear to this evaluation why a cost-benefit analysis was necessary for this project. First, it is a small project which did not have the capital and resources to gather data and make analysis and second, the policy decision which it might help to make had been made by ratification of the Minamata Convention.
75. In order to achieve the outcome, the implementation of the project activities must move beyond the direct support received through this project to tangible evidence of government institutions, private sector institutions and individuals using the capacities developed. That being the case, the outcome as stated in the results framework, has not been achieved because it is set at a higher results level or at a much longer causal pathway than direct outcomes.
76. It is clear that progress has been made towards the strengthening of institutional and technical capacity as a result of the delivery of the project activities. The evidence from the final project reports and interviews conducted for this evaluation suggest that project participants have found the project outputs including information received at workshops and seminars and through information pamphlets useful and, are indeed, using some of the knowledge and tools acquired. In particular, the

Strategy developed by the project is being finalized for presentation to Cabinet. Hospitals are now using mercury-free manometers, thermometers and LED lamps. The legislative framework proposed in the strategy is currently in final draft form and under review. Also, mercury-based dental amalgams are no longer in use. The amalgams are currently in storage as hazardous waste and the modality of their disposal is yet to be determined.

c) Likelihood of impact

77. This evaluation finds that, project performance indicators at the objective level have been fulfilled bearing in mind that the objective was framed at a lower results level than the outcome. While there were disruptions involving postponements of project activities caused by the COVID-19 pandemic and difficulties faced in accessing quantitative data, the project has successfully developed a national strategy for the management of mercury and mercury added products. There was effective participation in awareness raising and national training activities.
78. The evidence shows that in order to develop capacity the project was able to reach women in science, parliamentarians, traditional healers, NGOs, Port officials, Dentists, Procurement officials and Major Chain Suppliers of goods and medical equipment. Awareness campaigns were rolled out to all the 10 Districts of the country. The project has created awareness among various government institutions and the public through the dissemination of information material on public health risks of mercury added products, mercury management, and the strategy for managing mercury in products.
79. As noted in the discussion on direct project outcomes above, the outputs produced including training and knowledge as well as market research and strategy development should combine to produce the direct outcome of strengthening the capacity for phasing-out mercury-containing products and developing a strategy for environmentally sound management of mercury-containing wastes. Under the assumption that the Kingdom of Lesotho will continue to support the Minamata process through implementation of the strategy and training initiatives, as well as market research and mercury surveillance activities with internal resources and/or from external resources, this evaluation believes that progress will be made along the causal pathway toward phasing out mercury added products and reducing human exposure to mercury in products.
80. The main driver is that the Kingdom of Lesotho will commit to sustaining the technical and institutional capacity built and will implement the strategy developed to phase-out mercury-added products. The final project reports, and interviews conducted during this terminal evaluation has confirmed that the government institutions have effectively supported and facilitated access to resources from the SIP for capacity building activities. This evaluation has learned through interviews that a new government had come into power since project implementation and the direction it pursues will determine if the plan prepared for the implementation of the strategy developed under the project will be funded.
81. As evidence that progress is being made along the causal pathway towards impact, the Strategy developed by the project is being finalized for presentation to Cabinet. Hospitals are now using mercury-free manometers, thermometers and LED lamps. The legislative framework proposed in the

strategy is currently in final draft form. Also, through the work of the Alliance of mercury-free dentistry, mercury-based dental amalgams are no longer in use.

d) Sustainability of Project Outcomes

82. The extent to which outcomes and impacts derived from project implementation are likely to continue after external funding and assistance ends is a measure of sustainability. Factors and conditions that affect sustainability have been considered in three areas: (i) socio-political factors, (ii) financial conditions, and (iii) institutional conditions. The SIP project presented explicit strategies to sustain project outcomes in the project design through institutional strengthening, training, awareness raising, research, and monitoring and surveillance. Indeed, the strengthening of capacity has in-built sustainability elements.

Socio-political Factors

83. The development of a strategic framework for the management of mercury containing products, the creation of awareness, knowledge and skills as well as the market research and the determination of the costs and benefits of switching to alternatives to mercury-added products are essential for the Kingdom of Lesotho to fulfil its obligations under the Minamata Convention beyond the duration of the project. These are the principal means by which the project attempted to ensure sustainability. The evidence of government commitment is the readiness of the various government institutions and universities to participate in the various aspects of the project and shows its willingness to transition to a mercury-free economy. By creating institutional partnerships with high level support and the participation of the relevant agencies, the project has ensured that implementation and monitoring of project activities can continue into the future.

Financial sustainability

84. The final project reports did not discuss the potential for allocation of resources from the national budget for the continuation of the capacity building efforts after project completion. However, discussions with the country project team have indicated that a new government came into power soon after the end of this project and it is not clear what direction it might take. Therefore, no definitive assurances can be made regarding government commitment to support awareness raising and training activities through allocation of resources to fund the plan for the implementation of the National Strategy prepared under this project. Reporting on in-kind contributions strictly followed what was proposed. However, as discussed above, it is not clear if the pledged in-kind contribution can be a predictor of the new government's commitment to further invest internal resources into building additional capacity to manage the problem of mercury in products.

Institutional sustainability

85. Factors associated with the processes, policies, legal and regulatory frameworks and governance structures address the dimension of institutional sustainability of results. The direct outcomes of this

project discussed above in Section 6.4b of this report has a direct bearing on institutional sustainability.

86. The assessment of effectiveness revealed that the workshops, which involve the development of the strategy, a key component of which is the legislative framework, have been helpful in creating knowledge and awareness. The partnerships built and the capacity building activities undertaken especially for government institutions were influential in developing institutional capacity which would enable Kingdom of Lesotho to transition to a mercury-free economy. The evaluation recognizes that staff turnover in the various institutions at the national level represents a major risk to sustainability. However, this evaluation has not undertaken any study, this soon after project completion, to determine if the built capacity still exists. This could be a subject matter of an impact study a few years into the future.

6.5. Factors Affecting Project Performance

a) Financial Management

87. The total project budget was USD 249,550 with SIP funding amounting to USD 200,550 and in-kind contributions worth USD 49,000. As shown in Table 4 the total amount of in-kind contributions pledged, was 19.6% of the total project budget. The in-kind contributions, according to the project team, were expended as planned. The breakdown of in-kind contributions is attached as Annex D to this report.

88. Discussions with the Project Coordinator indicate that the project final audit is currently under preparation. While the audit report is not available to this evaluation at this time, the budget planning and expenditure sheets prepared as a part of the final project reporting seem adequate. Project revisions are well documented and fully transparent. Table 4 presents financial costs of the project by output. Table 5 represents costs and expenditures by project output as presented in the final report by the Project Team.

Table 4: SIP Project Costs

Measures	SIP Funding (\$)	In-Kind Contribution (\$)	Total (\$)
Strengthen Minamata national coordination mechanism	11,000.00	9,000.00	20,000
Conduct inventories to evaluate mercury added products' extent of use	60,000	8,000	68,000
Conduct market research on alternatives	19,000	8,000	27,000
Conduct a cost benefit analysis for switching to alternatives.	19,000	8,000	27,000

Develop a phase out/down strategy to switch to alternatives.	19,000	8,000	27,000
Undertake awareness raising activities.	50,000	8,000	58,000
Monitoring and review/evaluation and financial audit.	13,000		13,000
Subtotal	191,000	49,000	
Administrative costs (5% of the total eligible costs below)	9,550		9,550
Total Budget	200,550	49,000	249,550

Source: Adapted from the Project Cooperation Agreement

Table 5: Final Expenditure Reports (Source: Final Project Report)

Outputs	Staff and Other Personnel Costs (FT30_010)		Contractual Services (FT30_120)		Equipment (FT30_135)		Travel (FT30_160)		Total (USD)		Comments*
	Budget	Expenditure	Budget	Expenditure	Budget	Expenditure	Budget	Expenditure	Budget	Expenditure	
1. Engage stakeholders											
M1 Hold inception workshop	250	250	2000	2000			250	250	2500	2500	
M2 Hold coordination meetings	500	500	5000	5000			500	500	6000	6000	
M3 Hold validation workshop	250	250	2000	2000			250	250	2500	2500	
2. Conduct inventories on mercury added products											
M1 Conduct inventory training for data collectors and define scope of inventory	1000	1000	8000	8000			1000	1000	10000	10000	
M2 Undertake the inventory	2500	2500	40000	40000			2500	2500	45000	45000	
M3 Analyse the data and compile report			5000	5000					5000	5000	
3. Undertake market research on alternatives											
M1 Advertise for consultancy	1000	1000							1000	1000	
M2 Develop methodology and finalise the inception report for presentation at the inception meeting			1500	1500					1500	1500	
M3 Collect and analyse data on mercury in products, mercury added products and their alternatives to formulate the respective market research analysis	500	500	7000	7000			500	500	8000	8000	
M4 Undertake stakeholder consultations to build on the draft report			7000	7000					7000	7000	
M5 Hold validation meeting for the consultancy			1500	1500					1500	1500	
4. Conduct cost benefit analysis of switching to alternatives											

Outputs	Staff and Other Personnel Costs (FT30_010)		Contractual Services (FT30_120)		Equipment (FT30_135)		Travel (FT30_160)		Total (USD)		Comments*
	Budget	Expenditure	Budget	Expenditure	Budget	Expenditure	Budget	Expenditure	Budget	Expenditure	
M1 Advertise for consultancy	1000	1000							1000	1000	
M2 Develop methodology and finalise the inception report for presentation at the inception meeting			1500	1500					1500	1500	
M3 Collect and analyse data on mercury added products, their alternatives, costs and benefits, risks and assumption associated with switching to alternatives	500	500	7000	7000			500	500	8000	8000	
M4 Undertake stakeholder consultations to build on the draft report			7000	7000					7000	7000	
M5 Hold validation meeting for the consultancy			1500	1500					1500	1500	
5.Develop a National Strategy for phasing out/down mercury added products											
M1 Advertise for consultancy	1000	1000							1000	1000	
M2 Develop methodology and finalise the inception report for presentation at the inception meeting			1500	1500					1500	1500	
M3 Undertake stakeholder consultations	500	500	7000	7000			500	500	8000	8000	
M4 Develop the National Strategy for phasing out/down mercury added products and switching to alternatives, with clearly defined roles and responsibilities for stakeholders			7000	7000					7000	7000	
M5 Hold validation meeting for the consultancy			1500	1500					1500	1500	
6.Conduct awareness raising activities											
M1 Develop awareness raising			20000	20000					20000	20000	

Outputs	Staff and Other Personnel Costs (FT30_010)		Contractual Services (FT30_120)		Equipment (FT30_135)		Travel (FT30_160)		Total (USD)		Comments*
	Budget	Expenditure	Budget	Expenditure	Budget	Expenditure	Budget	Expenditure	Budget	Expenditure	
materials to be used in the training and for dissemination											
M2 Conduct trainings to stakeholders (Customs, Other Port officials, Health sector, Major chain suppliers, Procurement officials, Major end-users)			25000	25000			5000	5000	30000	30000	
7.Undertake project evaluation and financial audit											
M1 Conduct project evaluation			8000	0					8000	0	
M2 Conduct financial audit			5000	5000					5000	5000	
Subtotal Cost	9000	9000	171000	163000	0	0	11000	11000	191000	183000	
Administrative cost (5% of total cost)	450	450	8550	8550	0	0	550	550	9550	9550	
Total cost	9450	9450	179550	171550	0	0	11550	11550	200550	192550	

a) Monitoring

89. A plan was developed at the outset for monitoring project implementation. The plan included activities/outputs, and milestones for each reporting period. The milestones appeared adequate for measuring implementation progress. Over the duration of the project, 5 interim reports (June 2020 to June 2022) were prepared reflecting changes in the status of the project over time. The project interim reports reviewed for this evaluation were found to be adequate. A final project report was also prepared. The final report lacks a narrative of what was done for the various components of the project and, therefore, this evaluation had to depend on what could be gleaned from the outputs produced. The final project reporting was of limited value in that respect.
90. As stated above in section 6.2, the project results framework presented in the Cooperation Agreement included verifiable indicators, targets and means of verification for the project objectives and outcomes. Day-to-day monitoring of implementation progress was undertaken by the Project Team based on the project's annual work plan. But as stated above, the quality of the reports on project implementation were inadequate. Besides the disruptions caused by COVID 19 there was little discussion of the problems encountered.

b) Project Reporting

91. All reporting was duly done against indicators and milestones. The interim reports failed to provide a good description of implementation progress. Financial reports were provided with progress reporting. No reports were provided for in-kind contributions. However, the project coordinator indicated that in-kind contributions were expended as planned. While that is the case, compliance with reporting requirements at the project level would be deemed to be adequate, yet, the quality of the reporting could have significantly benefited from the description of the activities undertaken.

7.0. Conclusions, Lessons and Recommendations

7.1. Conclusions

92. In spite of the disruptions caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, the planned project outputs were produced. A national strategy to implement the Minamata Convention was prepared. This is significant because it was a key outcome of the effort to strengthen national capacity to manage mercury added products in the country. The evidence from the final reports and interviews conducted for this evaluation further suggest that project participants have found the project outputs including information received at workshops, seminars, and through radio programs and information pamphlets useful.
93. Government agencies, NGOs and the private sector were mobilized to support the process of developing capacity to manage the problem of mercury in products and in the environment. In addition, the project has created awareness among various institutions and the general public through seminars, workshops, radio programs and the dissemination of information material on the public health risks of mercury added products, mercury management and the Minamata Convention in general. The evidence shows that progress is being made in developing monitoring, research, and institutional capacity for managing mercury and mercury added products. Through institutional support and awareness raising, the project has developed the enabling environment for the effective management of mercury and mercury added products in the Kingdom of Lesotho.
94. The evaluation found that relevant ministries, government departments and NGOs were closely involved in the project activities. This increased efficiency as project implementation benefited from better institutional knowledge and memory, contacts, and experience. Efficiencies were also gained from collaboration among partner agencies in organizing training activities. Besides minor administrative delays in project fund disbursements and difficulties obtaining data for preparing the cost-benefit analysis which also caused delays, there were no other major negative contributions to program implementation efficiency. While workshops and seminars were conducted face-to-face, the project steering committee meetings were conducted as virtual meetings.

95. The evaluation believes that the objective of the project should rather have been a gradual reduction in the use of mercury added products and switching to their alternatives and the direct outcome of the project should be the means by which that would be achieved; which is through strengthened institutional and individual capacity. From a project design viewpoint, the outcome was set at a higher result level than the objective of the project and that is an anomaly. Indeed, all the outputs which should contribute to the direct outcome are all related to capacity building. No direct reduction activities were undertaken in this project.
96. As evidence that progress is being made along the causal pathway towards impact, the strategy developed by the project is being finalized for presentation to Cabinet. The legislative framework proposed in the strategy is currently in final draft form. Hospitals are now using mercury-free manometers, thermometers and LED lamps. Also, through the work of the Alliance for Mercury-Free Dentistry, mercury-based dental amalgams are no longer in use.

7.2. Lessons

- a) **Lesson 1:** The Cost-Benefit Analysis exercise seems to be an attempt to justify a public policy decision that had already been made through the ratification of the Minamata Convention. In an environment of data paucity, a proper cost-benefit analysis would be an expensive undertaking within the context of a small project of this type. It would seem that the resources could have been more effectively deployed on other aspects of the capacity building effort (more awareness raising, workshops, monitoring and laboratory analytical capacity) for phase-out/phase-down of mercury in products and the environment.
- b) **Lesson 2:** The final project reports and interviews indicate that partnership with other government agencies, NGOs, the private sector and traditional healers provided a means to effectively communicate with the different actors and stakeholders on the subject of mercury in products and was essential to project delivery. This evaluation observes that a careful and fairly detailed identification of stakeholders at the project design stage may have contributed to effective collaboration in addressing issues related to the management of the problem of mercury in products. To that effect, engagement of a wide cross-section of stakeholders at all levels is important in projects where the achievement of expected long-term impacts is highly dependent on their actions.

7.3. Recommendations

- a) This evaluation recommends that as the key outcome of the effort to strengthen national capacity to manage mercury added products in the country, the strategy developed, a key component of which is the development of the legal framework already in progress, should be fully implemented as laid out in the implementation plan which accompanied the strategy.

- b) The evaluation found the need for some level of training in preparing the logical framework. The Project Results Framework seemed to be poorly understood. Some level of training in developing a Theory of Change as the basis for preparing the logical framework matrix, it would seem, would be helpful in developing the project design capacity for future interventions of this nature. This will enable the project design team to provide a clearer and more coherent intervention logic that describes the causal relationships between the various results levels and a more logical presentation of the project.

- c) Interviews conducted for this evaluation revealed that the awareness raising campaigns may not have been enough to create a good understanding of the problem of mercury-added products in the country. The need exists to roll out a more robust awareness raising program throughout the country to also involve an elementary school program to educate future generations about the adverse health impacts of mercury. Indeed, in general, the dissemination of information generated through the implementation of project activities should continue through the support of the Ministry of Tourism, Environment and Culture. Awareness raising is one of the 4 components of the strategy and is reinforced here because it is vital for buy-in by stakeholders and the general public. Where necessary, additional information should be developed with regards to the use of added mercury products and their relationship to the risks of exposure.

Annex A: Proposed schedule and deliverables

Phase	Activities & Deliverables	Proposed timeline (2023)
Inception	Start-up teleconference	January 25, 2023
	Initial documentation review	January 7-30, 2023
	Draft Inception report	February 3, 2023
	(Internally) Finalized Inception report	February 15, 2023
Data Collection and Analysis	In-depth documentation review	February 2023
	Survey Launch (if needed)	February 15
	Interviews with Project Teams	February – March 2023
	Other Telephone Interviews (where needed)	March 15 – 30, 2023
	Data analysis	February – March, 2023
	Preliminary Findings Argentina	March 3, 2023
	Draft Report for Argentina	March 15, 2023
	Preliminary Findings Armenia	March 17, 2023
	Draft Report for Armenia	March 23, 2023
	Preliminary Findings Lesotho	March 25, 2023
	Draft Report for Lesotho	March 30, 2023
	Convention Secrétariat comment due	April 15, 2023
	Final Reports	April 30, 2023

Annex B: Project results framework - Lesotho

Project objective:	Outcomes	Outputs	Indicator	Baseline	Mid-term target	End-of-project target	Source of verification	Risks/ Assumptions
Strengthening institutional capacity in the development of a phase-out and phase down strategy for mercury added products in Lesotho	The envisaged outcome of the project is a steady and gradual reduction in the use of mercury added products, in switching to their alternatives and ultimately phasing out mercury added products.		Validation of the National Strategy for phasing out/down mercury added products	0		1	Publication of the National Strategy for phasing out/down mercury added products	
		Output 1.1 Engage stakeholders	Coordinating committee adopted Inception workshop held	0		1	Minutes of the committee Inception workshop report Validation workshop report	
		Output 1.2 Conduct inventories on mercury added products	Inventory report compiled	1		1	Inventory Report	
		Output 1.3 Undertake market research on alternatives	Market research report compiled	0		1	Market research report	
		Output 1.4. Conduct cost benefit analysis of switching to alternatives	Cost benefit analysis report compiled	0		1	Cost benefit analysis report	

Project objective:	Outcomes	Outputs	Indicator	Baseline	Mid-term target	End-of-project target	Source of verification	Risks/ Assumptions
		Output 1.5 Develop a National Strategy for phasing out/down mercury added products	National Strategy for phasing out/down mercury added products developed	0		1	National Strategy for phasing out/down mercury added products report	
		Output 1.6. Conduct awareness raising activities	Awareness raising activities undertaken	3		5	Training reports IEC materials	
		Output 1.7 Undertake project evaluation and financial audit	Project evaluation and financial audit conducted	0		1	Terminal review report Financial audit report	

Annex C: List of Documents Consulted

1. Strengthening institutional capacity in the development of a phase-out and phase down strategy for mercury added products in Lesotho PROJECT COOPERATION AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE UNITED NATIONS ENVIRONMENT PROGRAMME (UNEP) AND DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENT OF THE MINISTRY OF TOURISM, ENVIRONMENT AND CULTURE, LESOTHO. May 10, 2019.
2. Strengthening institutional capacity in the development of a phase-out and phase down strategy for mercury added products in Lesotho PROJECT COOPERATION AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE UNITED NATIONS ENVIRONMENT PROGRAMME (UNEP) AND DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENT OF THE MINISTRY OF TOURISM, ENVIRONMENT AND CULTURE, LESOTHO. Amendment No. 1 (May 9, 2022)
3. Minamata Convention on Mercury, Specific International Program, Application form 1AB & II,
4. First Interim Report June 2020, Progress Report and Annexes
5. Second Interim Report, December 2020, Progress Report and Annexes
6. Third Interim Report, June 2021, Progress Report and Annexes
7. Fourth Interim Report, December 2021, Progress Report and Annexes
8. Fifth Interim Report. June 2022, Progress Report and Annexes
9. Final Project Report, December, 2022
10. Evaluation Terms of Reference
11. Expenditure reports, co-financing records, budget revisions
12. Technical reports on project Outputs, studies, publications, outreach material, etc.;
13. Terms of Reference for SIP Consultants
14. Co-Financing Letters
15. Letters from Partnering Organizations
16. Minamata Convention on Mercury: Text and Annexes, September 2019 www.mercuryconvention.org

Specific International Programme to support Capacity-Building and Technical Assistance,
<https://mercuryconvention.org/en/implementation/specific-international-programme>

Annex D: In-Kind Contribution

	Project Output / Activities		Staff and Other Costs			Operating costs (office space, transport, equipment, communications)			Grand Total
	Source of Funds		Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	
Applicant Country Contribution	Output 1: Engage stakeholders		2,000.00	2,000.00	2,000.00	1,000.00	1,000.00	1,000.00	9,000
		Office Space				400.00	400.00	400.00	
		Project Staff	2,000.00	2,000.00	2,000.00				
		Office Supplies				200.00	200.00	200.00	
		Transport				400.00	400.00	400.00	
	Output 2: Conduct inventories on mercury added products		2,000.00	2,000.00	2,000.00	1,000.00	1,000.00	0.00	8,000
		Office Space							
		Project Staff	2,000.00	2,000.00	2,000.00				
		Office Supplies							
		Transport				1,000.00	1,000.00		
	Output 3: Undertake market research on alternatives		0.00	3,000.00	3,000.00	0.00	1,000.00	1,000.00	8,000
		Office Space					400.00	400.00	
		Project Staff		3,000.00	3,000.00				
		Office Supplies					200.00	200.00	
		Transport					400.00	400.00	
	Output 4: Conduct cost benefit analysis of switching to alternatives		0.00	3,000.00	3,000.00	0.00	1,000.00	1,000.00	8,000
		Office Space					400.00	400.00	
		Project Staff		3,000.00	3,000.00				
		Office Supplies					200.00	200.00	
		Transport					400.00	400.00	
	Output 5: Develop a National Strategy for phasing out/down mercury added products		0.00	3,000.00	3,000.00	0.00	1,000.00	1,000.00	8,000
		Office Space					400.00	400.00	
		Project Staff		3,000.00	3,000.00				
		Office Supplies					200.00	200.00	
		Transport					400.00	400.00	
Output 6: Conduct awareness raising activities		0.00	3,000.00	3,000.00	0.00	1,000.00	1,000.00	8,000	
	Office Space					400.00	400.00		
	Project Staff		3,000.00	3,000.00					
	Office Supplies					200.00	200.00		
	Transport					400.00	400.00		
Output 7: Undertake project evaluation and financial audit								0	
	Office Space								
	Project Staff								
	Office Supplies								
	Transport								
								0	
	Total applicant contribution costs		4,000	16,000	16,000	2,000	6,000	5,000	49,000

Annex E: Terms of Reference (ToR)

Organizational Unit - UNEP/Secretariat of the Minamata Convention on Mercury

1. Purpose

1.1 Explain the requirement for a consultant / individual contractor including the reference to the work programme (*corresponds to box 1 of P.104/A*):

Article 13 of the Minamata Convention on Mercury defines a mechanism for the provision of adequate, predictable and timely financial resources to support developing-country parties and parties with economies in transition in implementing their obligations under the Convention. The mechanism is comprised of the Global Environment Facility (GEF) trust fund and the Specific International Programme (SIP) to support capacity-building and technical assistance. The SIP is administered by UNEP through the Secretariat of the Minamata Convention on Mercury under the oversight of the SIP Governing Board which implements its guidance, including decision-making on projects and project management.

In decision MC-1/6, the Conference of the Parties established guidance on the operations of and duration of the SIP and establishment of its Terms of Reference and Governing Board. Its Rules of Procedure were adopted by the Governing Board at its first meeting in 2018 and completed at its third meeting.

The SIP is mandated to ensure complementarity and avoid duplication with other existing arrangements to provide capacity-building and technical support, in particular GEF and the Special Programme to support institutional strengthening at the national level for implementation of the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm conventions, the Minamata Convention and the Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management, as well as other existing assistance frameworks, and be consistent with the integrated approach to financing the sound management of chemicals and waste.

The purpose of this consultancy is to undertake terminal evaluations of three SIP projects. Project logical frameworks and reporting provide key information from which to assess the effectiveness and impacts of individual projects and provide important information for reviewing the overall programme.

1.2 Ultimate result of services (*corresponds to box 1 of P.104/A*):

3 terminal evaluation reports, one for each of three completed SIP projects, namely, the projects in Argentina, Armenia, and Lesotho.

1.3 Legislative authority reference (*corresponds to box 1 of P.104/A*)

- Minamata Convention Article 13

1.4 Title and identification number of programme / project (*corresponds to box 1 of P.104/A*)

- Programme of work and budget of the Minamata Convention, 2022-2023 biennium, Activity 13

1.5 Source of Funds Regular Budget Extra-budgetary
(*corresponds to box 4 of P.104/A*)

Specific Trust Fund First Round

1.6 Allotment Account / Budget Line

Total: USD 26,000

2. Qualifications / special skills or knowledge

*(Indicate what expertise and experience, i.e. special skills or knowledge are required / essential to perform the specific tasks and responsibilities stipulated above and the level of expertise required)
Corresponds to box 1 of P.104/A*

Advanced university degree in environmental sciences, international development or other relevant political or social sciences area; a minimum of 10 years of technical / evaluation experience, including of evaluating large, regional or global programmes and using a Theory of Change approach; a broad understanding of issues relating to international chemicals management; proficiency in English, along with excellent writing skills in English. Knowledge of the UN system, specifically of the work of UN Environment Programme, is helpful.

The consultant certifies that he/she has not been associated with the design and implementation of the SIP in any way which may jeopardize their independence and impartiality towards achievements and performance. In addition, he/she will not have any future interests (within six months after completion of the contract) with the work of the SIP.

The consultant agrees not to disclose information from non-public applications and reports to third parties beyond information required for, and included in, the evaluations and review.

3. Objectives, output expectations and performance indicators

(Include the final and intermediate results and outputs of services which should be measurable; performance indicators should allow for the evaluation of the results; include details as to how the work must be delivered (e.g. electronic submission, hard copy, etc.))

In line with the UN Environment Evaluation Policy and the SIP Application Guidelines, all projects with funding from the SIP of over USD 150,000 are required to undergo a terminal evaluation. The UN has Evaluation Norms and Standards to which contracted evaluators are bound. UNEP evaluations and reviews consider nine specific evaluation criteria: relevance; quality of project design; nature of external context; effectiveness, which comprises assessments of the provision of outputs, achievement of outcomes and likelihood of impact; financial management; efficiency; monitoring and reporting; sustainability; and factors and processes affecting project performance and cross-cutting issues.

Three projects from the First Round of applications to the SIP have completed their activities and will be evaluated. They are:

- a. Argentina: Capacity Building Programme for the implementation of the Minamata Convention
Budget: USD 250,000 Duration: 31 July 2019 – 31 December 2021
- b. Armenia: Strengthening capacity to promote phasing-out of mercury-added products (lamps)
Budget: USD 162,000 Duration: 1 June 2019 – 30 November 2021
- c. Lesotho:
Budget: USD 200,550 Duration: 10 May 2019 - 09 November 2022

Terminal Evaluations Arrangements, Approach and Methods: Each of the terminal evaluations should assess the quality of the project and its implementation against the UNEP evaluation criteria and specific questions as outlined below, and provide recommendations for addressing any programming challenges, scaling up, and for ensuring sustainability of achieved results or any other recommendations within the context of the Minamata Convention’s capacity building and technical assistance support towards implementing the mandates of the Convention.

The terminal evaluations will use a participatory evaluation approach to consult key stakeholders and keep them informed throughout the evaluation process. Both quantitative and qualitative evaluation methods will be used, as appropriate, to determine achievements against the expected outputs, outcomes and impacts.

The consultant will maintain close communication with the Minamata Convention Secretariat and promote information exchange with key stakeholders throughout the evaluations to increase their (and other stakeholder) ownership of the findings.

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

A desk review of:

- Relevant background documentation, including legal agreements, amendments or changes thereto, and application guidelines and forms, amongst others;
- Appraisal documentation and Governing Board comments on applications, if any;
- Project interim progress and financial reports;
- Project final reports;
- Supplemental materials provided by project partner to the Secretariat and/or the consultant.

Interviews (individual or in groups, undertaken virtually) with:

- Project focal points and Minamata Convention national focal points of each country;
- Secretariat staff;
- Relevant resource persons.

If the consultant considers **surveys** of relevant partners and/or stakeholders of each country to be useful and within the resources available for the evaluations, the consultant will submit draft survey instruments to the Secretariat for review, comment, and, if needed, revision.

4. Specific tasks and responsibilities

(Cover all aspects of the work to be carried out)

The consultant will prepare:

- **Inception Reports:** for each of the three terminal evaluations, these may be in the form of a PowerPoint presentation and supporting documentation, to be presented to the Secretariat. They will contain the review framework, procedures, and tentative review schedule for the evaluation.
- **Preliminary Findings Notes:** these will be in the form of either a PowerPoint presentation or a one-to two-page memo, for each of the three terminal evaluations, presented to the Secretariat, in draft form. It provides an opportunity for early comments and feedback with respect to preliminary findings before preparation of a formal draft report.

- **Draft and Final Evaluation Reports:** one report for each of the three terminal evaluations, containing executive summaries that can act as stand-alone documents; synthesized analyses of the review findings organized by evaluation criteria and supported with evidence; lessons learned and recommendations. The reports will each be no longer than 15 pages, excluding the executive summaries and annexes, and will be to the point and written in plain English. They will explain the purpose of the evaluations, the methodology used, and evidence-based and balanced findings covering the evaluation criteria set forth in “Objectives and Scope” above and the additional review questions set forth in the outline below, conclusions, lessons learned and recommendations.
 - The consultant will submit initial draft reports to the Secretariat and revise the drafts in response to Secretariat comments with respect to factual errors and other suggestions, as appropriate. The consultant will then provide revised drafts on which the Secretariat will provide substantive comments. The Secretariat may also, at its discretion, provide the drafts to additional stakeholders, such as specific project partners, for comment. The consultant will provide the final report. The consultant will be available for brief interaction with the Secretariat as the latter develops relevant documentation for the SIP Governing Board and the Conference of the Parties for a period of four weeks following submission of the final report.
 - The consultant will ensure that the evaluation reports are complete, coherent and presented in a way that makes the information accessible and comprehensible.
 - The consultant will liaise with the Programme Management Officer on comments received, will finalize the evaluation reports, ensuring that comments are taken into account, and will prepare Response to Comments documents for the Secretariat, listing those comments not accepted by the consultant and indicating the reason for the rejection.
 - The consultant will maintain a positive relationship with evaluation stakeholders, ensuring that the evaluation process is as participatory as possible but at the same time maintains its independence.
 - **The proposed structure of the terminal evaluation reports is as follows:**

1. PROJECT KEY INFORMATION

1.1. Implementing Government and Implementing Government Institution

Project Focal Point: Functional Title, Address, Telephone, E-mail

1.2. Project Title as per PCA

1.3. Budget USD Specific Trust Fund; Applicant Government Contribution [if any]

1.4. Start Date

1.5. End Date

1.6. Evaluation Date

2. SUMMARY OF ACHIEVEMENTS AND OVERVIEW OF REPORT

2.1. Project summary

2.2. About this Evaluation [objectives, duration]

3. INTRODUCTION

3.1. Institutional context of the project [Division/Branch/Unit, regions/countries]

3.2. Minamata Convention Articles to which the project contributed

3.3. Overall project outcome

3.4. Summary of Project Outputs [planned and achieved]

4. REVIEW METHODOLOGY

4.1. Data collection: Describe the evaluation methods and information sources used. These will include indicators and means of verification from the log frame, periodic progress and expenditure reports of the project, interviews including the number and type of respondents, and observations. It will be useful to include justification for methods used (e.g. qualitative/quantitative/mixed methods; electronic/face-to-face); any selection criteria used to identify respondents, sites visited; strategies used to increase stakeholder consultation; details of how the data was verified (e.g. triangulation, review by stakeholders, etc.) and data analysis method(s) used.

4.2. Addressing Limitations: Describe the strategies employed to address any potential or actual limitations in the evaluation process, such as strategies used to include the feedback of potentially marginalized groups (e.g. women, indigenous peoples, people with disabilities and youths). Describe strategies used to include divergent views while taking care not to violate human rights and ethical considerations during the review process.

5. THE PROJECT CONTEXT AND RESULTS MONITORING FRAMEWORK

5.1. Project Context: Describe the rationale of the project intervention clearly stating the problem(s) the project intended to address.

5.2. Geographic coverage [country or countries in the case of a regional project]

5.3. Results monitoring framework: Present the project results monitoring framework (i.e. the results hierarchy as presented in the logical framework including the corresponding data sources/verification methods). It may be useful to attach the full project logframe including its indicators and means of verification as an annex.

5.4. Project implementation structure and stakeholder engagement: Present the implementing institutions and supporting implementing partners and their respective roles in ensuring successful project delivery. Define how different stakeholder groups were involved in the project and the roles they played and the resultant benefits to the project in achieving desired results. Comment on the value of collaborations if any.

5.5. Project change management: Describe any changes made to project plans to adapt to evolving needs, including approved budget revisions, if any.

5.6. Gender Strategies: Describe how the project implemented its gender strategies.

6. REVIEW FINDINGS

6.1. Project design quality: Discuss the strength and weakness of the project design in relation to the project context (i.e. both a project specific situational analysis and in relation to the broader mandates of the Minamata Convention).

6.2. Relevance: How aligned is the project with the broader environmental/chemical mandates within the region/country/sector? How is the intervention aligned with the mandates of the Minamata Convention and other global environmental and sustainable development blueprints such as the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals?

6.3. Coherence: How well does the intervention fit in the country, sector etc? How does the project complement other ongoing or completed efforts within the country/sector? How did the project optimize through synergizing and avoiding duplication of effort with such efforts?

6.4. Efficiency: How well did the project deliver in relation to the available resources? Comment on timeliness and cost effectiveness, the delivery process, and the quality of results. How well did the project conduct timely tracking of results and progress towards project objectives and how well was the quality of data and information presented?

6.5. Effectiveness: Did the intervention achieve its objectives? How well did the project achieve its desired outcomes (Assess both the quality and quantity of achievements as they apply)? Comment on any project revisions and their effect on achieving results.

6.6. Impact: What difference does the intervention make? Discuss the potential and achieved long lasting positive benefits of the project. If not already attained, assess the likelihood of the intended, positive impacts becoming a reality. Assess the likelihood that the intervention may lead, or contribute to, unintended negative effects (e.g. effect on livelihood of vulnerable groups).

6.7. Sustainability of outcomes: To what extent will the net benefits of the intervention continue? Describe the socio-political, financial and institutional sustainability achievements. Assess the plans for project continuity following project closure through any commitments made including legal and policy enforcement. Comment on the nature of any relationships and collaborative partnerships that were developed through SIP support and how their continuity will be sustained.

6.8. Factors and processes affecting project performance and cross-cutting issues: including nature of external context; financial management; monitoring and reporting.

7. CONCLUSIONS, LESSONS LEARNED AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Tentative schedules for consultant deliverables for the evaluations and reviews

Terminal Evaluation of SIP Armenia Project

Inception meeting with Secretariat and project partner: October 2022

Inception report to the Secretariat: October 2022

Preliminary Findings Note: November 2022

Draft evaluation report: November 2022

Final report: December 2022

Terminal Evaluation of SIP Argentina Project

Inception meeting with Secretariat and project partner: November 2022

Inception report to the Secretariat: December 2022

Preliminary Findings Note: January 2023
Draft evaluation report: January 2023
Final report: February 2023

Terminal Evaluation of SIP Lesotho Project

Inception meeting with Secretariat and project partner: December 2022
Inception report to the Secretariat: January 2023
Preliminary Findings Note: January 2023
Draft evaluation report: February 2023
Final report: March 2023

5. Reporting lines

(Indicate whom the consultant / individual contractor is reporting to and who will evaluate the outputs of the consultant / individual contractor)

The consultant will work under the overall responsibility of the Programme Management Officer for Capacity Building and Technical Assistance of the Minamata Convention Secretariat, Ms. Marianne Bailey.

6. Duration

(The timeframe, including the delivery dates, should be clear and realistic; the planned starting date is considered realistic if the ToR are finalized at least four weeks before the intended starting date) Corresponds to box 1 of P.104/A

1 October 2022 to 14 April 2023

7. Travel involved

(Indicate the required travel itinerary, if applicable – please tick box 7 of P.104/A)

Travel will be organized by Substantive Office Selected candidate

8. Indicative level of remuneration

(Include the terms of payment (lump-sum, instalments) – corresponds to box 1 of P.104/A - as well as any cost of travel and any DSA payable – corresponds to box 5 of P.104/A and the indicative level of remuneration. Please note that the total remuneration budgeted for this purpose which is indicated in box 1 of P.104/A may be different)

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

Deliverable	Percentage Payment
Approved Inception Reports for Armenia and Argentina	30%
Approved Final Terminal Evaluations for Armenia and Argentina	40%
Approved Final Terminal Evaluation for Lesotho	30%

In case the consultant is not able to provide the deliverables in accordance with these guidelines, and in line with the expected UNEP quality standards, payment may be withheld until the consultant has improved the deliverables to meet UNEP quality standards.

If the consultant fails to submit satisfactory final products to the Secretariat in a timely manner, i.e. before the end date of his/her contract, the Secretariat reserves the right to employ additional human resources to finalize the reports, and to reduce the consultants' fees by an amount equal to the additional costs borne by the Secretariat to bring the reports up to standard.