

EVALUATION OF UNITED NATIONS DEVELOPMENT ASSISTANCE FRAMEWORK FOR AFGHANISTAN AND ONE UN FOR AFGHANISTAN

Evaluation Report

Prepared for

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(RCO)

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LE GROUPE CONSEIL BAASTEL

Le Groupe-conseil baastel Itée

92, rue Montcalm, Gatineau QC, Canada

Boulevard Adolphe Max 55, Brussels, Belgium

P: +1 (819) 595-1421

E: ronald.santos@baastel.com

W: www.baastel.com

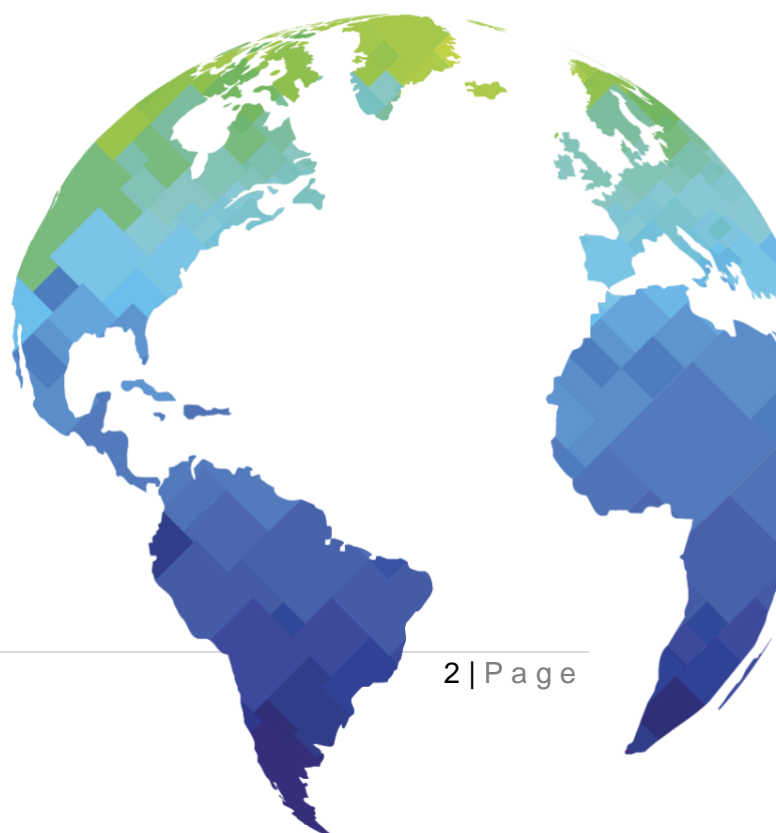


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ACRONYMS

Acronyms	Significance
ACCI	Afghanistan Chamber of Commerce and Industry
ACJC	Anti-Corruption Judicial Centre
ADB	Asian Development Bank
AEPO	Afghan Education Production Organization
AFP	Agencies, Funds and Programmes
AFSeN	Afghanistan Food Security and Nutrition Agenda
AHF	Afghanistan Humanitarian Fund
AiHRC	Afghanistan Independent Human Rights Commission
ALC	Accelerated learning centre
ALCS	Afghanistan Living Conditions Survey
ANDMA	Afghanistan National Disaster Management Authority
ANDS	Afghanistan National Development Strategy
ANPDF	Afghanistan Peace and Development Framework
ARC	Afghanistan Resilience Consortium
ARCS	Afghan Red Crescent Society
ARTF	Afghanistan Reconstruction Trust fund
ASEAN	Association of Southeast Asian Nations
BPHS	Basic Package of Health Services
CBE	Community-based education
CBF	Common Budgetary Framework
CBMSP	Community-Based Municipal Support Programme
CBS	Community-Based school
CC	Citizen's Charter
CCM	Country Coordination Mechanisms
CDC	Community Development Council
CLUIP	Community-Led Urban Infrastructure Programme
CPM	Country Programme Manager
CRC	Convention on the Rights of the Child
CRRF	Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework
CSO	Central Statistics Office
DAC	Development Assistance Committee
DIFD	Department for International Development

Acronyms	Significance
DiREC	Displacement and Return Executive Committee
DMAC	Directorate of Mine Action Coordination
DsWG	Durable Solutions Working Group
ECOSOC	United Nations Economic and Social Council
ECC	Electoral Complaints Commission
EMIS	Education Management Information System
EOC	Emergency Operations Centre
ER	Evaluation Report
EPHS	Essential Package of Hospital Services
EST	Eastern Standard Time
EU	European Union
EVAW	Elimination of Violence Against Women
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization
FGDs	Focus Group Discussions
FINCA	Foundation for International Community Assistance
FoAC	Future of Afghan Cities Report
FPMD	Facilitating Partners Management Department
FVPO	First Voice President Office
GAVI	Global Alliance for Vaccination and Immunization
GBV	Gender-based violence
GCR	Global Compact on Refugees
GDMA	General Directorate for Municipal Affairs
GE	Gender Equality
GEEW	Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women
GFATM	Global Fund to fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria
GoIRA	Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan
HCPD	Habitat Country Programme Document for Afghanistan
HLP	Housing Land and Property Task Force
HRP	Humanitarian Response Plan
IALA	Improving Adolescents' Lives in Afghanistan
IATI	International Aid Transparency Initiative
IDLG	Independent Directorate of Local Governance
IDPs	Internally Displaced Persons
IEC	Independent Election Commission
IFAD	International Fund for Agricultural Development
ILO	International Labour Organization
INGO	International Non-governmental Organisation
IOM	International Organization for Migration
IPC	Integrated Food Security Phase Classification
IR	Inception Report

Acronyms	Significance
ISAF	International Security Assistance Force
KII	Key informant interview
KM	Kabul Municipality
K-SMNP	Kabul Strengthening Municipal Nahias Programme
KSP	Kabul Solidarity Programme
LOTFA	Law and Order Trust Fund for Afghanistan
LTA	Long Term Agreements
M&E	Monitoring and evaluation
MABs	Municipal Advisory Boards
MAG	Multi-purpose adolescent group
MAIL	Ministry of Agriculture, Irrigation and Livestock
MAPA	Mine Action Programme for Afghanistan
MGSP	Municipal Governance Support Programme
MoE	Ministry of Education
MoEc	Ministry of Economy
MoF	Ministry of Finance
MoFA	Ministry of Foreign Affairs
MoHE	Ministry of Higher Education
Mol	Ministry of Interior
MoIC	Ministry of Information and Culture
MoJ	Ministry of Justice
MoLSAMD	Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs, Martyrs and Disabled
MOPAN	Multilateral Organisation Performance Assessment Network
MoPH	Ministry of Public Health
MoPW	Ministry of Public Works
MoRR	Ministry of Refugees and Repatriation
MOSS	Minimum Operating Security Standards
MoWA	Ministry of Women's Affairs
MPTF	Multi-Partner Trust Fund
MRRD	Ministry of Rehabilitation and Rural Development
MUDH	Ministry of Urban Development and Housing
NAPWA	National Action Plan for Women of Afghanistan
NEAP	National Emergency Action Plan for Polio
NESP	National Education Strategic Plan
NGO	Non-governmental organization
NPP	National Priority Plan
NSIA	National Statistics and Information Authority
NSPIII	National Solidarity Programme Phase III
NTA	National Technical Assistance
NUAWE	National Union of Afghan Workers and Employees

Acronyms	Significance
OCAI	Oversight Commission on Access to Information
OCHA	Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
OECD	Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development
OHW	Organization of Human Welfare
OOSC	Out-of-school children
PAC	Programme Advisory Committee
PACCS	Peace-Building in Afghanistan through Consolidation of Community Solidarity
PDC	listed under civil society stakeholders table
RAM	Results Assessment Module
RFP	Request for Proposals
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
SEHAT	System Enhancing for Health Actions in Transition
SME	Small and Medium Enterprises
SNGCF	Sub National Governance Coordination Forum
SP	Strategic Plan
SSAR	Regional Solutions Strategy for Afghan Refugees
SUN	Scaling Up Nutrition
ToC	Theory of Change
ToR	Terms of Reference
TVET	Technical and vocational education and training
UNAIDS	Joint United Nations Programme on UN HIV/AIDS
UNAMA	United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan
UNCAC	United Nations Convention Against Corruption
UNCT	United Nations Country Teams
UNDAF	United Nations Development Assistance Framework
UNDCO	United Nations Development Coordination Office
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
UNEG	United Nations Evaluation Group
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UNGEI	United Nations Girls' Education Initiative
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UN-Habitat	United Nations Human Settlements Programme
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNIDO	United Nations Industrial Development Organization
UNOCA	United Nations Office Complex in Afghanistan
UNODC	United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime

Acronyms	Significance
UNOPS	United Nations Office for Project Services
UNPP	Urban National Priority Plan
UNSDCF	UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
USD	US dollar
USP	Urban Solidarity Programme
WASH	Water, Sanitation and Hygiene
WASSA	Women Activities and Social Services Association
WB	The World Bank
WFP	World Food Programme
WHO	World Health Organization
WIFS	Weekly Iron and Folic acid Supplementation
WinS	WASH in Schools

Executive Summary

1. Context Overview

A Human Rights Watch 2020 report notes that Afghanistan has one of the world's largest populations per capita of people with disabilities¹. The size and circumstances of this population is unclear, and policy making is hindered by lack of data. The severe disability prevalence is 13.9 percent or 2.5 million among Afghan adults aged 18 and above.² However, people with disability impaired due to a war injury enjoy higher social status and receive social assistance in contrast to those who are born with a disability by birth. The latter are stigmatized and receive no social protection. An indicator of Social Protection spending in Afghanistan was 0.07% in 2008, declining to 0.05% in 2009 and 0.04% in 2010. This contrasts with the Asian regional average of about 3.7% of GDP per capita. Only public sector employees are covered by social insurance, leaving most people in vulnerable employment. The social protection system is currently not resilient to shocks and lacks the ability to expand vertically or horizontally.

Afghanistan is one of the poorest countries in the world. The recently published Income Expenditure and Labour Force Survey (IELFS) reports that poverty remains high at 47.1%, and reached an all time high in urban areas (45.5%) due to Covid-19 pandemic.³ Foreign aid accounts for over 40% of national income. Total international support has been around USD \$8.5 billion (\$5 billion for security forces and \$3.5 billion for civil aid) per year over recent years.

Nearly 11 million people in Afghanistan experienced high levels of acute food insecurity (IPC Phase 3 or above) due to conflict, COVID-19, high food prices and rampant unemployment, between March and May 2021. Between June and November 2021, a slight improvement in food security was expected, with the number of people in IPC Phase 3 or above decreasing to 9.5 million⁴. More than 36% of wheat required was imported in 2019. Even during years with above-average domestic production, Afghanistan still imports large quantities of wheat flour due to population growth and inadequate milling capacity. Once aid inflows begin to decline, possibly following a peace deal, the Afghan economy would not be able to meet basic needs through

¹ Unless otherwise stated, the source for statistics referenced in this Executive Summary is an unpublished strategic prioritization paper based on a retreat facilitated by the UN regional office in March 20, 2021, which resulted in a Theory of Change for the next UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (UNSDCF) 2022-2025.

² Model Disability Survey of Afghanistan 2019, The Asia Foundation, 2020.

³ Income and Expenditure & Labor Force Surveys Report 2020, NSIA 2021

⁴ IPC Acute Food Insecurity Analysis for Afghanistan: March - November 2021; Issued in April 2021

imports without finding alternative sources of foreign exchange. 80 % of employment in the country is considered vulnerable and insecure in the form of self- or own-account employment, day labour or unpaid work.⁵ The sector that accounted for over 40% of GDP in 2002 now contributes 20-25% in recent years. Four in five female rural workers are unpaid family workers, compared with only one in five male workers. Nevertheless, the sector employs 43% of Afghanistan's labour force⁶. Youth and women constitute a large proportion of this unpaid workforce. More than half of rural youth are involved in agriculture, mostly as unpaid family workers.

Afghanistan is rich in mineral deposits, including oil and gas, copper, coal, marble, iron ore, gold, lithium and other industrial minerals. The extractive industries have been identified as one of the most promising sources of revenue, as well as employment. Currently, mining and quarrying contribute just 1% to GDP. Lack of security and inadequate infrastructure have hampered the development of this industry, which employs large numbers of young people. It is therefore considered as a source for major potential peace dividends, through increased livelihoods, economic growth and taxation.

The location of Afghanistan makes it a vital crossing point for regional infrastructure projects, which will bring to the country much needed energy resources as well as revenues in the form of transmission fees. In Afghanistan more than half of the population lacks access to all-weather roads. It is estimated that USD \$25.9 billion in transport infrastructure investment is required by 2035 to support sustainable development in Afghanistan. As a landlocked least developing country (LLDC), transport infrastructure linking to regional networks is essential for competitiveness in international trade. Afghanistan's road network remains limited and an estimated 85% of roads are in poor condition. Access to electricity has expanded rapidly, but most firms continue to lack access to reliable grid electricity supply. There is less irrigated land in Afghanistan now than in 1970, due to destruction of irrigation infrastructure during decades of conflict.

Afghanistan's 'multi-dimensional risk envelope' comprises various and frequent shocks. These include conflict and forced displacement, natural hazards (floods, droughts, landslides, earthquakes, and avalanches), market/economic fluctuations, plant pests and insect infestations, animal diseases, and environmental stressors like erosion of soil and natural resources, desertification and land degradation as well as extreme weather events. It is one of the most vulnerable countries in the world to climate change and one of the least prepared against climatic shocks.

The ANPDF II streamlines the existing and proposed NPPs under three pillars of peacebuilding, state-building and market-building. The peacebuilding pillar offers important opportunities for external partner alignment with national peacebuilding efforts. The state-building pillar embodies

⁵ Country Guidance Afghanistan, European Asylum Support Office, June 2019

⁶ Fruits and nuts are among the country's most important exports. Afghanistan is highly dependent on food imports, especially cereals, importing \$2 billion worth, almost three times as much as its agricultural exports.

the Afghan president's long expressed objectives for development processes to strengthen governance by enabling government institutions to extend their reach down to the district and local levels, providing security, services and development to the population, and strengthen government's legitimacy in the eyes of the population in this period of extended conflict. Other opportunities for development alignment exist in the market development programmes.

2. Purpose

As described in the Terms of Reference (TOR), the objective of the evaluation was to ensure the accountability of the United Nations Country Team's (UNCT's) collective contribution to Afghanistan's progress towards social protection and socio-economic development as measured by the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). This evaluation assessed the extent to which the UNCT's outcomes are aligned and have contributed to the development priorities established in the Afghanistan National Peace and Development Framework (ANPDF), as well as the extent to which these outcomes have been attained. In addition, the evaluation examined the relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, sustainability, impact, UN coherence and adherence to the global UN programming principles of the UNCT's support to national development priorities. The evaluation will feed into design of the Afghanistan's forthcoming UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (UNSDCF) 2022-2025.

3. Objectives

The external evaluation of the UNDAF 2015-2020 is intended to contribute to support the UN system's Delivering as One principle to ensure the UNCT is working efficiently and effectively to implement the UNDAF 2015-2020. By objectively verifying results achieved within the framework of the UNDAF/One UN and assessing the sustainability of the strategies and interventions used, the evaluation specifically:

- Evaluated how the UNDAF/One UN's strategic intent and principles have been taken forward by UN Agencies, Funds and Programmes (AFPs) and identified factors that have affected UN AFPs working together.
- Evaluated the UNDAF/One UN's contribution to national development results through an assessment drawing on evaluation criteria grounded in evidence;
- Identified factors that may have affected the UNCT's support and contributions through the UNDAF/One UN, highlighting good practices and bottlenecks;
- Assessed the performance, progress, and gaps of the UNDAF/One UN's support to national goals and priorities; and,
- Generated a set of clear, forward-looking, and actionable recommendations logically linked to the findings and conclusions, to inform the strategies, implementation mechanism, and management of the forthcoming Afghanistan's UNSDCF 2022-2025.

4. Evaluability Assessment

The ET scanned and reviewed the documents provided by the UNCT, plus others in the public domain. The ET was also in continuous contact with the Evaluation Manager who has been providing documents and relevant data as requested. Overall, it was concluded that a sufficiently

critical mass of documents was available as well as data on results, logic models and performance measurement data although more on baselines would have helped.

5. Approach

The evaluation was guided by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development – Development Assistance Committee (OECD-DAC) Evaluation Quality Standards for Development Evaluation, the United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG) Norms and Standards for Evaluation in the UN System, and the UNEG Ethical Guidelines and Code of Conduct for Evaluation in the UN System.

In practical terms, the overall approach to the evaluation was results-based using a participatory and mixed-method approach with the goal of providing learning and recommendations to the key stakeholders that will be of value to their ongoing strategic decision-making process. More specifically, the evaluation used a systems approach. The ET also considered this evaluation to be a combination of summative and formative approaches.

6. Evaluation Methodology

The ET used a variety of methodologies, in accordance with the UN Evaluation Guidelines, to ensure quality data collection and analysis. Given that contributions to the desired outcomes come from the work of many stakeholders (not only the UN), establishing attribution of UN interventions to an observed result at the outcome level is not always possible. Therefore, the ET evaluated possible contribution of the UNCT to the achievement of the outcomes when proven attribution was not possible. Beyond the use of the ToC, which supports the contribution analysis, specific attention was given to this aspect of the evaluation approach through all lines of enquiry. The wide array of consultations with different types of stakeholders supported a strong contribution analysis process.

The data collection phase includes key informant interviews (KIIs), focus group discussions and an on-line survey. The data was gathered through 5 lines of evidence as follows:

- Line of Evidence 1 - Desk and Document Review: The full in-depth desk and document review allowed for data to be collected prior to interviews which were conducted by Skype/Zoom or phone, as well as before the launch of the online survey (OLS).
- Line of Evidence 2 – Theory of Change: The theory of change for UNDAF is reconstructed.
- Line of Evidence 3 – Key Informant Interviews: Semi-structured interviews were conducted with all available key stakeholders including key government counterparts, donor community members, representatives of key civil society organizations, UNCT members, and implementing partners (see stakeholder mapping section 4).
- Line of Evidence 4 – Focus Group Discussions: The ET conveyed a series of UN specific, and government representative, focus group meetings with agency/ministry/institution groups including those dealing with specific outcomes and M&E.

- Line of Evidence 5– Survey: Two questionnaires in English (see Annex 2) developed and composed of mainly closed questions and a few open-ended questions were sent to UN agencies representatives and external stakeholders (government counterparts, INGO and CSO representatives.) The OLS generated a large body of quantitative data that was used to triangulate qualitative information collected through other lines of evidence.

The ET also used content analysis methods to help triangulate data and standardize results across evaluators and lines of evidence and create an evidence binder that demonstrates transparently data and responses to all evaluation questions. The content analysis surfaced multiple similar responses from a variety of data sources which facilitated generating evidence-based findings, conclusions, lessons learned and recommendations.

This final phase includes the draft final evaluation report written and submitted to the UNCT and RCO.

7. Findings

7.1 Relevance

7.1.1 Findings

1. Multiple key informants from different stakeholder groups both internal and external to the UN mentioned that at the agency level, UN programming's and AFPs' are overall aligned with stakeholders' priorities and needs. These positive perceptions extend to government counterparts who are directly supported by UN agency interventions. Those who are less positive about UN agency level programming are those with responsibility for guiding national-level development policy.
2. Based on the proxy indicator of security developed from the HAG dataset, 38 districts out of 100 tracked, score at or above average for conflict. It is demonstrated below that these districts are not necessarily inaccessible to the UN for humanitarian interventions. However, the same cannot be said for long-term development interventions. Government's legitimate claim to ownership of these interventions would pose issues of access in these areas of conflict.
3. UNDAF - ONE UN, although generally seen as critical for UN planning, is not necessarily seen by all key informants as the best tool that makes the UN relevant for national stakeholders. Key informants mentioned that another option would be to fully adopt ANPDF2 framework. However, the ET finds that this might not be a viable option, without the cooperation and coordination of other stakeholders to the government, and not just the UN. This is because, the UN also acts as implementing partner to donors, who will also need to be convinced to integrate their development results into the ANPDF2 framework.
4. Outcome/ sector groups and Working groups are useful ways of keeping UN's work relevant for the national government institutions, because government-led coordination bodies are similarly structured.
5. The UN's position, credibility and reliability as a partner for the government has deteriorated over the period covered by the evaluation. Some of these perceptions have some basis in fact. For example, donor country key informants expressed a preference for engaging UN agencies as implementing partners because: of its reputation for delivering humanitarian assistance; the transparency and quality of its administrative systems; expertise on normative interventions such as human rights gender equality and Leaving No One Behind. Therefore, the potential value of non-core budget funding streams is potentially proportionately greater than for core budget for UN agencies. This then forms the foundation for perceptions of certain government counterparts (emphasis on certain) that the UN is in "competition" with the government for donor support.

6. With respect to the relevance of UN interventions to direct beneficiaries, humanitarian assistance is generally seen as relevant, although this perception is blunted by the perception that humanitarian interventions are not always delivered in a timely manner.
7. The more local (i.e. District level) the focus on interventions, the less positive the perceptions. Specifically, more permissive districts are seen to be over-served with interventions while less secure areas are under-served or not at all served.
8. Taking a gender lens, beneficiary perceptions are that the UN could do more to develop relevant gender-based programming. A specific example was given about over-emphasizing the changing of attitudes regarding the position of women in society while not putting enough emphasis on making sure that women are able to make a living.

7.1.2 Conclusion

1. The UN is in a unique position to resolve regional issues involving the strengthening of the agriculture value chain, such as the fact that agriculture imports to Afghanistan exceeds exports by many orders of magnitude. The UN is in a unique position to resolve issues of regional cooperation because it also works in countries that border on Afghanistan.
2. Not working in a coordinated, coherent manner renders the scaling of solutions difficult. In this case, "coordinated" refers to opportunities for multi-stakeholder dialogue. As was mentioned above, HCT explicitly integrates multi-stakeholder dialogue into its platform. The development platform is not as mature with respect to this type of coordination. A lack of this type of coordination also has an effect on scaling up, in this case it means access to as many districts as possible. A lack of stakeholder engagement, especially with government counterparts, leads to their perceptions that their legitimate right to ownership of development policy is not respected. This is a disincentive for the government to facilitate access to as many communities as possible for the delivery of long-term development interventions, therefore hampering efforts to scale long-term development efforts on the part of the UN.
3. If there is a peaceful transition, the political mission might become less important and the UNCT might then become prominent. Therefore, it is even more important to strengthen the current development platform.
4. UN's approach to the nexus of humanitarian and development interventions should continue to strengthen the agriculture value chain, given its importance to Leaving No One behind, as it is a source of livelihoods for a significant proportion of the Afghan population.

7.1.3 Recommendations

1. The UN should follow up on intermediate outcomes achieved as a result of its technical support, to ensure that there are no unintended negative consequences to the intervention. This implies development of an M&E system specifically developed to monitor results achieved, over time.
2. The UN should develop a plan to eventually phase out the use of PMUs, in favour of completely utilizing the administrative systems of line ministries. In the interim, the UN should make every effort to locate its PMUs in line ministries.
3. The UNCT should, as a priority, formally integrate a multi-stakeholder consultation process into the development platform.
4. The UNCT should develop a coordinated plan to systematically engage provincial governments, with respect to information sharing, and access to local communities via introductions to DDCs, CDCs and Shuras.
5. The UN should continue to press its advantage with respect to its expertise regarding normative interventions, as well as achievement of SDGs, by facilitating multi-stakeholder dialogue between government and donors who also place a premium on normative interventions.
6. The OMT's TOR should be amended so that it can be tasked to support the technical interventions of the Thematic Working Groups related to information/knowledge management.
7. It is recommended that UNCT develop data sharing agreements with the entities which hold evidence required to monitor development performance.

7.2 Effectiveness

7.2.1 Findings

1. The HCT platform is responsive and strategic in delivering humanitarian assistance. Overall, the UN system has been effective in addressing the Covid-19 pandemic in a coordinated manner.
2. It is difficult to assess the progress towards A-SDGs with recent monitoring (the latest dates back to 2017).

3. The outcomes defined in the UN UNDAF/One UN for Afghanistan (the A-SDGs) are not all being achieved and so the UN is not fully contributing to their realization. While not part of Table 2 detailing achievement of our communicators by the UN, key informants mentioned process related indicators, which can be considered as achieved. There is evidence that capacity building at the technical level provided to government counterparts yielded results. These are a direct result of UN interventions and therefore are considered immediate outcomes achievement.

4. However, there are UN interventions which are not seen as particularly effective. One such example, is the retention of highly trained UN supported staff in the Tashkeel. As mentioned above, this specific issue requires the close cooperation of government counterparts and international donors, including the UN.

7.2.2 Conclusions

1. The HCT platform is more mature than the development platform, especially with respect to integrating fully, multi-stakeholder consultations, a structure for collecting, analysing, and visualizing data, as well as an explicit strategic focus on information/knowledge management.

2. As mentioned above, the development platform lacks a proper strategy for knowledge/information management in the collection of data to measure progress on results specifically SDGs A-SDGs

3. For those government counterparts who were directly supported by UN agency interventions within Ministry units, perceptions are uniformly positive that capacity building activities are effective. There is also factual evidence which leads to the finding that technical support, for example around legislation regulating agriculture food products is an indication that the support given by the UN is effective.

7.2.3 Recommendations

1. The UN should follow up on intermediate outcomes achieved as a result of its technical support, to ensure that there are no unintended negative consequences to the intervention. This implies development of an M&E system specifically developed to monitor results achieved, over time.

2. The UN should develop a plan to eventually phase out the use of PMUs, in favour of completely utilizing the administrative systems of line ministries. In the interim, the UN should make every effort to locate its PMUs in line ministries.

3. The UNCT should, as a priority, formally integrate a multi-stakeholder consultation process into the development platform.
4. The UNCT should develop a coordinated plan to systematically engage provincial governments, with respect to information sharing, and access to local communities via introductions to DDCs, CDCs and Shuras.
5. The UN should continue to press its advantage with respect to its expertise regarding normative interventions, as well as achievement of SDGs, by facilitating multi-stakeholder dialogue between government and donors who also place a premium on normative interventions.
6. The UNCT should establish a mechanism to support the technical interventions of the Thematic Working Groups related to information/knowledge management.
7. It is recommended that UNCT develop data sharing agreements with the entities which hold evidence required to monitor development performance.

7.3 Efficiency

7.3.1 Findings

1. External stakeholders (specifically, government counterparts) mention operational costs as too high, and business services are not coordinated, leading to inefficiencies that affect project and program activities. On the other hand, UN key informants especially those from smaller agencies say that if not for consolidation of premises for work and shelter in compounds, they would not be able to operate in-country. With respect to the COVID pandemic, and its effect on the efficiency of UN interventions, mention was made that mobility restrictions did affect delivery of interventions. However, those with direct knowledge also mentioned that re-establishing staff to the field occurred relatively early in the pandemic
2. Some government counterparts mention that the UN does not make available enough financial information to calculate its true cost of delivering long-term interventions. Specifically, government counterparts mentioned that, when UN agencies are asked for a portfolio review, there is not a sufficient mapping of overall financing flows with respect to the national government delivering the SDGs.
3. A subgroup of government counterparts mentioned that the UN is not sufficiently demonstrating effectiveness of UN interventions on a national scale.
4. The OMT is taking concrete steps to implement BOS 2.0. In addition, projected benefits of implementing BOS 2.0 range from between 50 and \$60 million. Also, much

of the decisions which would make the consolidation of business services into a single technology platform occur at the global headquarters level.

7.3.2 Conclusions

1. The ET could not make any definitive conclusions with respect to expenditures, given the information available at the time this report was written. Theoretically, the ET was promised expenditure information subnational level for specific provincial governments, which should have been provided by UN agencies. But this information was not provided by the provincial governor's office, in time for this evaluation report. The same information was hypothetically available from the Ministry of Finance; however, this too is not available at the time of this writing.
2. As per the HAG data set, cross-validating this with evidence from other secondary sources, and with key informant perceptions, there are about 100 districts that are inaccessible to long-term development interventions. This does not seem to be the case for humanitarian interventions, as described above, where evidence is that with respect to humanitarian assistance, the UN can access areas rated as high in conflict.
3. The modest financial analysis conducted for this evaluation demonstrates that the administrative fees charged by the UN broadly fall within international norms. As discussed in the sustainability section of the findings, the underlying issue is not necessarily about the efficiency of donor-administered foreign aid but fostering economic growth in the Afghan economy so that government is able to generate enough revenues to create robust international-standard systems for the administration of government services.

7.3.3 Recommendations

1. The UN should develop a plan to eventually phase out the use of PMUs, in favour of completely utilizing the administrative systems of line ministries. In the interim, the UN should make every effort to locate its PMUs in line ministries.
2. The UNCT should create a special technical working group on capacity building as a structure to address technical issues, which require multi-stakeholder dialogue.

7.4 Sustainability

7.4.1 Findings

1. For many government counterpart key informants, the issue related to UN partnership is about ownership of long-term development policy. For government counterparts from Ministries whose role is to set strategic direction or national

development policy, there is general negative perception about the sustainability of interventions and the link to national development goals.

2. Key informants and government express reservations about being able to independently manage interventions handed off to them by UN agencies. They mention that government counterparts asked to take over UN activities prematurely when they are not sufficiently capacitated to do so. A specific mention was made that the funding model for UN interventions is not something that the government can sustain.

7.4.2 Conclusions

1. The ET has collected information demonstrating that participation of the UN in several multi-stakeholder coordination bodies led by the government, both at the executive and technical levels, organized by theme. Given this level of multi-stakeholder engagement on the part of the UN, there exists a strong potential for sustainability of UN interventions.
2. The issue of the lack of access for development interventions is complicated. Limited access, therefore, reinforces the negative sentiments already existing on the part of government counterparts, resulting in a negative feedback loop.
3. Donor sector currently makes up 3.3% of the Afghan labour force. The productivity of the Afghan economy has to be increased so that it can produce domestically the revenues required to reduce dependence on foreign aid, while at the same time generating the necessary funds to sustain interventions currently delivered by UN agencies and other international donors.

7.4.3 Recommendations

1. The UN should follow up on intermediate outcomes achieved as a result of its technical support, to ensure that there are no unintended negative consequences to the intervention. This implies development of an M&E system specifically developed to monitor results achieved, over time.
2. The UNCT should, as a priority, formally integrate a multi-stakeholder consultation process into the development platform.
3. The UNCT should develop a coordinated plan to systematically engage provincial governments, with respect to information sharing, and access to local communities via introductions to DDCs, CDCs and Shuras.

4. The UN should continue to press its advantage with respect to its expertise regarding normative interventions, as well as achievement of SDGs, by facilitating multi-stakeholder dialogue between government and donors who also place a premium on normative interventions.
5. It is recommended that the envisioned technical working group on capacity building address as its initial issue the retention in the Tashkeel of trained staff. The objective is to ensure UN-trained Tashkeel staff remain staff which would have a positive aspect on the sustainability of the results achieved by the UN as the newly acquired knowledge and know-how would serve the government needs
6. The UNCT should develop a strategy for the role UNAMA can play in facilitating the relationship between the UN and government with respect to long-term development interventions.
7. The UNCT should develop a transition plan in case of a negotiated peace in the near term, where the emphasis starts to shift from the political mandate to that of technical implementation.

7.5 UN Coherence

7.5.1 Findings

1. During an external shock such as the COVID pandemic, a political response is less important than the technical one. According to key informants, this has a tendency to increase coordination between UN agencies, and its external stakeholders, including government counterparts. There is no analogous process when it comes to long-term development, that will drive UN agencies to coordinate system wide.
2. UN agency coordination, system-wide in the context of long-term development interventions, has improved in a sense that the PMT, which it is argued is the key to inter-agency coordination of long-term development activities, is as higher-functioning as ever before.
3. A common fund for inter-agency programming represents an important element of joint programming and mentioned by key informants within the UN system.

7.5.2 Conclusions

1. As discussed above, government ownership involves a political dimension. As the process becomes politicized, and in fact a UN political response may be required to drive coordination.

2. The functioning of the long-term development platform to be used as a true UN system-wide coordination mechanism, depends on the integration of elements into the platform such as multi-stakeholder participation, a process for gathering evidence of results achieved on long-term development indicators, including SDGs and A-SDGs, and a focus on the use of information and knowledge management to drive decision-making with respect to interventions in each thematic area.
3. A UN key informant with direct knowledge mentioned the fact that a Social Protection fund is being planned for the long-term development platform. This would represent another important element that would make the PMT, Thematic Working Group, OMT Groups evolve into a fully functioning long-term development platform. This is because, similar to the Humanitarian platform, the long-term development platform will have its own funding facility independent of the individual UN agencies.
4. While it would be an exaggeration to say that the UN enjoys broad-based support in government, it is also inaccurate to say that the UN does not have its supporters in the government. When asked to provide opinions in confidence subgroups of government counterparts freely admitted the positive effects of UN interventions both on the humanitarian and long-term development sides. At technical level, government counterpart relationships are good where government counterparts were directly supported by UN agency interventions in their technical units. Executive leadership (i.e. Ministers and Deputy Ministers) are more positive about counterpart relationships at the technical level versus those lower down the management hierarchy, and who are not directly supported by UN agency interventions. Those who are least satisfied with the interventions of the UN are those key informants who belong to Ministries that manage overall national development policy.
5. The need for a common fund and joint programming should be balanced against other key informant perceptions. A that individual UN agencies should continue to program independently in order to take advantage of each UN agencies' specific expertise.

7.5.3 Recommendations

1. A common fund for the development platform such as the planned Social Protection fund, should be structured in such a way as to provide incentives for inter-agency cooperation. However, it should be sufficiently flexible such that it would not preclude UN agencies to access the fund for UN agency-specific programming. The proposed fund should also be sufficiently flexible to incentivize partnerships between larger UN agencies focused on humanitarian assistance and early recovery to partner with smaller agencies, which are more geared to long-term development.

2. The UN should develop a plan for involving its country offices bordering on Afghanistan to strengthen the agriculture value chain that has to do with regional cooperation and trade of agricultural goods with a view to resolving the trade imbalances related to agricultural products between Afghanistan and neighbouring countries.
3. The OMT should create a working group whose mandate it is to develop an information/knowledge management strategy related to supporting the technical work of the development platform.
4. The UNCT should transform its main technology platform i.e. it is a website into one which supports the development platform's technical work, instead of its currently predominant function as method for strategic communications.
5. The UN should reassess its participation in the many government coordination bodies of which it is a member as presented in Table 7.
6. The UN should continue to press its advantage with respect to its expertise regarding normative interventions, as well as achievement of SDGs, by facilitating multi-stakeholder dialogue between government and donors who also place a premium on normative interventions.
7. Similar to the HAG on the humanitarian platform, the PMT,Thematic Working Group,OMT Groups, should create an entity with the mandate to develop evidence on performance of ANPDF2, SDGs, and A-SDGs.
8. It is recommended that the envisioned technical working group on capacity building address as its initial issue the retention in the Tashkeel of trained staff. The objective is to ensure UN-trained Tashkeel staff remain staff which would have a positive aspect on the sustainability of the results achieved by the UN as the newly acquired knowledge and know-how would serve the government needs
9. The UNCT should develop a strategy for the role UNAMA can play in facilitating the relationship between the UN and government with respect to long-term development interventions.
10. The UNCT should develop a transition plan in case of a negotiated peace in the near term, where the emphasis starts to shift from the political mandate to that of technical implementation.
11. The UNCT should develop within the structure of the PMT,Thematic Working Group,OMT Group development platform a working group on how to leverage the unique skills of individual UN agencies to further enhance the long-term development platform

1. INTRODUCTION

This chapter:

- outlines the context and scope of the evaluation,
- describes the evaluation approach and methods,
- presents the findings against evaluation criteria,

The evaluation was carried out by Le Groupe-conseil Baastel between January- August 2021.

1.1. Purpose, Scope and Evaluation Objectives

Purpose

As described in the Terms of Reference (TOR), the purpose⁷ of the evaluation was to ensure the accountability of the United Nations Country Team's (UNCT's) collective contribution to Afghanistan's progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). This evaluation assessed the extent to which the UNCT's outcomes are aligned and have contributed to the development priorities established in the Afghanistan National Peace and Development Framework (ANPDF), as well as the extent to which these outcomes have been attained. In addition, the evaluation examined the relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, sustainability, impact, UN coherence and adherence to the global UN programming principles of the UNCT's support to national development priorities. The evaluation will feed into design of the Afghanistan's forthcoming UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (UNSDCF) 2022-2025.

Scope & Objectives

The external evaluation of the UNDAF 2015-2020 is intended to contribute to:

Support the UN system's Delivering as One principle to **ensure** the UNCT is working efficiently and effectively to implement the UNDAF 2015-2020. By objectively verifying results achieved (**evaluating**) within the framework of the UNDAF/One UN and assessing the sustainability of the strategies and interventions used, the evaluation specifically:

- Evaluated how the UNDAF/One UN's strategic intent and principles have been taken forward by UN Agencies, Funds and Programmes (AFPs) and identified factors that have affected UN AFPs working together.

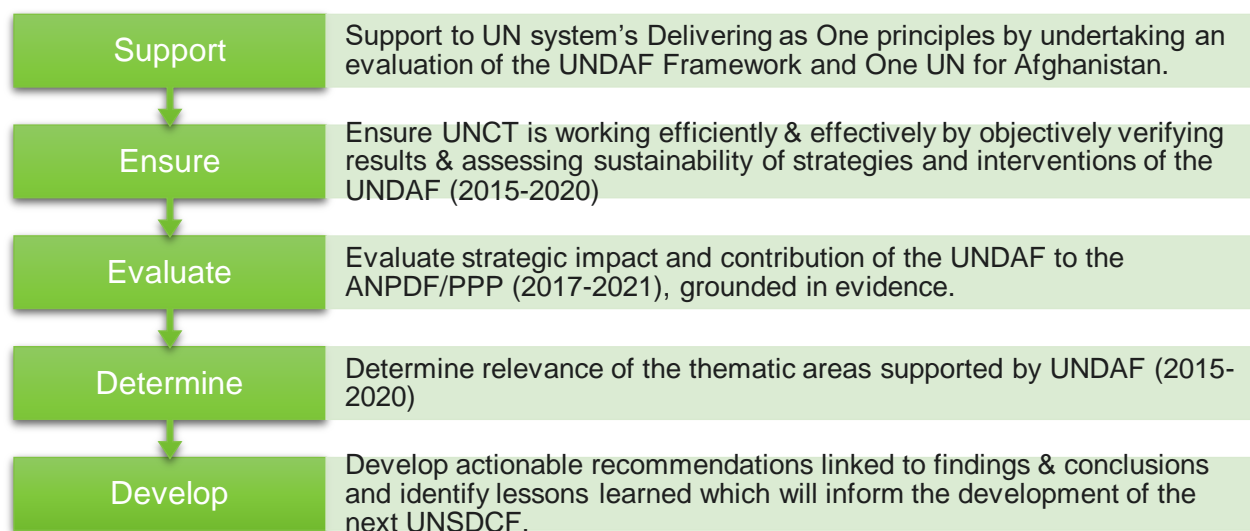
⁷ The ToR refer to the "objective" but in line with UNEG definitions, the paragraph refers to the purpose of the evaluation. 1.1.2 addresses the objectives of the evaluation.

- Evaluated the UNDAF/One UN's contribution to national development results through an assessment drawing on evaluation criteria grounded in evidence;
- **Determined** factors that may have affected the UNCT's support and contributions through the UNDAF/One UN, highlighting good practices and bottlenecks;
- Assessed the performance, progress, and gaps of the UNDAF/One UN's support to national goals and priorities; and,
- **Developed** a set of clear, forward-looking, and actionable recommendations logically linked to the findings and conclusions, to inform the strategies, implementation mechanism, and management of the forthcoming Afghanistan's UNSDCF 2022-2025.

The evaluation also assessed the progress towards implementation of the recommendations in the Mid-Term Review Report of UNDAF. The evaluation is meant to contribute to the Cooperation Framework development process. The Joint Steering Committee provided guidance on the direction of the evaluation. The ET, based on this guidance has ensured the methodology, findings, conclusion and recommendations are relevant, validated, understandable and accessible by all relevant stakeholders. The responsibility for implementation of recommendations is with the UNCT and will be part of the management response.

The evaluation's objectives are summarized in figure 1 below.

Figure 1: Evaluation's objectives



1.2. Governance and Management of the Evaluation

The Evaluation Team (ET) worked under the supervision of a dual-tiered evaluation management structure:

- The Government of Afghanistan, UN, donor and civil society Joint Steering Committee (JSC), co-chaired by a senior representative of the Government and the UN Resident Coordinator, with membership comprised of members of the UNCT and International Development Partners. It remained the decision-making organ for all decisions related to

the evaluation including, but not limited to, the review and approval of all reports and deliverables.

- The Evaluation Manager, supported by a working group of UNCT representatives, was responsible for the day-to-day implementation of the evaluation and directly supervised the Evaluation Team. The Evaluation Manager closely worked with the Programme Management Team and the Monitoring and Evaluation Working Group to liaise and coordinate with UN entities. The ET consisted of highly qualified multidisciplinary team composed of a team leader with extensive evaluation expertise and at least 2 members to allow triangulation of observations and validation of findings within the team.
- The ET consisted of highly qualified multidisciplinary team composed of two international senior experts based in Canada and one Afghan experienced national expert and one intermediate evaluation expert for support, based in Canada. The ET includes Ronald Santos, who is a senior evaluation team leader with substantial evaluation leadership experience including in Afghanistan. His role is to coordinate the whole evaluative process. Alexandre Daoust, also part of the team, who is a senior evaluator with extensive UN System experience and quantitative expertise including with surveys, worked with Arnelle Blain, also based in Canada, support Mr. Santos throughout the mandate; two experienced Afghan national consultants named Wajihullah Sahibzada and Monib Noori provided country-specific context to the team and performed data collection activities. The ET worked together in a non-hierarchical manner with regular team meetings. Good communication was essential and was needed for this complex evaluation to run smoothly. The best evaluations bring together international and national external evaluators working closely with an internal team which understands the local context well.
- Each evaluator had their specific area of responsibility, but all were involved in reviewing the performance monitoring and evaluation data and in identifying which tools need to be used or created to track the available data identified in the document review. Wherever possible, two team members took part in each data gathering activity and took notes which increased the accuracy of the content analysis. Since, due to COVID 19, travel to Afghanistan was not possible for the international evaluators, interviews in English were carried out primarily by the internationals in the morning in Afghanistan and evening in Canada (EST). Interviews in Afghanistan were done completely by the local evaluators both in the morning and in the afternoon.

2. EVALUABILITY ASSESSMENT, APPROACH AND METHODOLOGY

2.1. Socio-Economic Background

In light of the launch of the ANPDF, the UN in Afghanistan undertook a comprehensive review of its work in 2017. The Mid-Term Review Report of UNDAF was produced in November 2017. This review showed that in 2016 and 2017 more than 90% of the money spent by UN agencies focused on five thematic areas: education; food security, nutrition and livelihoods; health; return and reintegration; and rule of law. An additional 1% of resources was dedicated to a sixth thematic area, namely the UN's normative work, including human rights advocacy and protection, and promoting international regulations and guidelines. Based on this review, the UN took the decision to focus on these six thematic areas, rather than trying to help address all or most of the challenges facing the country.

In the first half of 2020, the COVID-19 global pandemic affected Afghanistan as well, which in turn impacted the work of the UN in support of the Government and its people. The pandemic which started as a health crisis, has become an economic and human crisis as described by the SG Guterres. Afghanistan closed its borders and took steps to lockdown its population to contain the pandemic, economic activities were on hold, trade has been disrupted, thousands have lost their jobs, with many of them facing hunger and falling into extreme poverty⁸⁹.

Education Thematic Group

Afghanistan has witnessed major progress over the last decade and a half in socioeconomic terms. The under-25 generation represents close to 50 per cent of the population, with about 32.69 per cent of the population is aged between 15- 34¹⁰, making Afghanistan one of the youngest countries in the world¹¹. This makes quality education particularly critical for the rapidly growing numbers of school aged boys and girls. Important human development indicators including school enrollment has seen marked improvement. Net attendance rate in primary education is 44.2 per cent with girls accounting for 36.6 per cent and boys 51.1 per cent.¹²

However, the government acknowledges that the country's education system has been severely impacted by more than three decades of sustained conflict. Natural disasters such as floods, earthquakes, and landslides and insufficient disaster preparedness have only exacerbated the situation. The quality of education is also poor because only 48 per cent of their teachers have

⁸ Michael Bamberger, 2012. *Real World Evaluation. 2nd Edition*. P. 405.

⁹ One UN Afghanistan, Mid-Term Progress Report 1 January 2018-30 June 2020

¹⁰ Estimated Population of Afghanistan 2020-2021, NSIA.

¹¹ Afghanistan-Promoting Education During Times of Increased Fragility, The World Bank, 2018

¹² Income and Expenditure & Labor Force Surveys Report 2020, NSIA 2021

the minimum academic qualifications¹³. There is growing concern of declining aid in the sector due to the pandemic, leading to fears of worsening of existing vulnerabilities and inequalities.

In 2019, the UN focused in particular on supporting the Government of Afghanistan to ensure equitable access to quality education for all by supporting implementation of the NESP III 2017-2021 and review of the education sub-sector achievements through implementation of the NESP III, based on sector priorities and vision as outlined in the National Priority Programme (NPP) and Afghanistan National Peace and Development Framework (ANPDF).

Food Security Nutrition and Livelihoods Thematic Group

Afghanistan's economy grew by 3.9 per cent in 2019, driven mainly by strong agricultural growth following recovery from drought in 2018, but is estimated to have declined by 6% in 2020 due to COVID. In 2019, the inflation rate was modest at 2.3 per cent but doubled in the first six months of 2020 to 5.32%¹⁴. At 31 per cent of GDP, the trade deficit was extremely high. The structure of the domestic economy is driven by three major factors: foreign military and development aid, licit agricultural production, and illicit activities such as narcotics trafficking. At present, excluding military imports, Afghanistan imports nearly seven times more than it exports¹⁵. Fiscal performance has continued to improve with domestic revenues reaching 15.77 per cent of GDP in 2019¹⁶. UNDP Afghanistan estimates that between 80 to 90% of the economic activity in Afghanistan is derived from the informal economy although severe data limitations preclude accurate insight.

Poverty remains widespread, due to a lack of economic opportunity and disposable income as described in section 3.3 Sustainability Child poverty is particularly pernicious. Afghanistan's poverty statistics remain unacceptably high, with 47.1% of the population living below the national poverty line as reported in the Income and Expenditure and Labor Force Survey Report 2020. Multi-dimensional poverty varies by region, by gender, social class and by access to resources. Unsurprisingly, poverty is particularly severe in rural areas characterized by low productivity, poor market integration, and recurrent shocks and deep-rooted criminal economy¹⁷. Nearly four decades of armed conflict have devastated the country's traditional systems for sustainable natural resource management and contributed to deforestation, over-grazing, and food insecurity. Urban poverty is also on the rise due to growing rural-urban migration despite the absence of a developed urban economy to provide them with sustainable livelihoods, and more recently the effect of the COVID 19 lockdowns..

¹³ Education and Healthcare at Risk: Key trends and incidents affecting children's access to healthcare and education in Afghanistan, UNAMA / OHCHR / UNICEF / OCHA, 2016

¹⁴ Afghanistan National Peace and Development Framework (ANPDF) 2021-2024 (p. 45)

¹⁵ Afghanistan National Peace and Development Framework (ANPDF) 2021-2024 (p. 10)

¹⁶ Afghanistan National Peace and Development Framework (ANPDF) 2021-2024 (p. 46)46)

¹⁷ Afghanistan National Peace and Development Framework (ANPDF) 2017-2021

Health Thematic Group

Over the last 10 years the coverage of primary health care services has steadily been increasing in Afghanistan, and this has led to improvements in the delivery of services. Between 1990 and 2015, infant and maternal mortality declined by 45.5 per cent and 70.4 per cent respectively¹⁸. Under-five mortality rate stood at 46.51 per 1000 live births in 2019¹⁹. 67 per cent of the population uses at least basic drinking water services and 43 per cent of the population uses at least basic sanitation services as of 2019²⁰. Government resources for school WASH are extremely limited and the programme is mostly donor-funded. Efforts to improve WASH policies include the establishment of a sector-wide approach, drafting guidelines for rural WASH, strengthening sector coordination and the creation of a sector-wide Management Information System to harmonize data collection on WASH indicators.

Afghanistan is facing a significant population shift. The total fertility rate is 4.4747 children per woman. This demographic shift is impacting the government's ability to deliver quality health services to its population. The progress in health sector has been impeded by many challenges which include low level of investment in health (8.8 per cent of GDP), poor quality of services, institutional fragmentation, poor planning, inequity in service provision and shortage of qualified health care providers (particularly females), especially in remote areas. Women receive the least benefit from the primary healthcare system. There is high incidence of communicable diseases. In addition, there is also limited availability of family planning services, gaps in the Health Information System (HIS), pharmaceutical regulatory and quality and supply chain issues, weakness in financial management, and weaknesses in systems for accountability and risk mitigation.

The Basic Package of Health Services (BPHS) is the foundation of the Afghan public health system, established by the Ministry of Public Health (MoPH) in 2003 to deliver primary health interventions²¹. Three donors - USAID, the EU and the World Bank finance BPHS through contracted NGOs. There is concern that delivery of health services including BPHS through NGO partners may prove difficult to sustain post-2020. Development to the healthcare sector in Afghanistan is guided by the Citizens' Charter, the National Healthcare NPP (2020-2024), and the Health For All, the Human Capital Development and the National Health Policy 2015-2020 and Strategy 2016-2020.

Return and Reintegration Thematic Group

Approximately 1 in 4 Afghans have been displaced at one point in their lives and since 2002 more than 6 million Afghans have returned from neighbouring countries. Over 820,000 Afghans

¹⁸ Levels and Trends in Child Mortality, UN IGME, UNICEF (2015); Trends in maternal mortality, 1990-2015, UN WHO (2015)

¹⁹ <https://childmortality.org/data/Afghanistan>

²⁰ All data extracted from Data UNICEF, <https://data.unicef.org/country/afg/>

²¹ United Nations Development Assistance Framework for Afghanistan 2015-2019

returned from the Islamic Republic of Iran and Pakistan in 2018. This includes 13,600 refugees and 32,000 undocumented returnees from Pakistan and some 2,000 refugees and over 770,000 undocumented returnees from the Islamic Republic of Iran²². The country's capacity to absorb this new wave of returnees, in addition to the 610,000 refugees and undocumented Afghans who returned in 2017, remains under increasing strain. This is on top of the internal displacement induced by the ongoing conflict and natural disasters such as the droughts in 2018 and 2019. Civilian casualties in Afghanistan now ranks second behind Syria and ahead of Yemen for the most civilian casualties in the world.²³ The drought and the conflict forced 235,000 and 370,000 Afghans respectively, out of their homes in 2018²⁴. The top five challenges for returnees are food insecurity, shelter, land, livelihoods and access to services including civil documentation. There are over 2 million registered Afghan refugees in neighboring countries²⁵. As of 2020, the UNHCR has marked 25 priority areas for return and reintegration across the country in line with the Government of Afghanistan's priorities outlined in the Afghanistan National Peace and Development Framework (ANPDF) and the Citizens' Charter National Priority Programme and has identified over a million people of concern.

The reintegration efforts of the Government of Afghanistan are guided by the Global Compact on Refugees (GCR) and the Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework (CRRF) developed in 2018. These two frameworks together support multi-stakeholder efforts to address the root causes of displacement. The four key objectives of the GCR are: easing pressure on host countries and host communities, enhancing self-reliance, expanding access to third-country solutions for refugees, and supporting conditions in countries of origin to facilitate return in safety and dignity.

Rule of Law and Governance Thematic Group

The country has made some progress in terms of the development and consolidation of governance values, institutions, policies and laws. Four decades of conflict have confounded its efforts to build an effective state with well-functioning institutions. The country has a long history of weak justice system, law enforcement and governance, low governmental capacity, poorly functioning representative governance structures, narcotics production and inadequate public service delivery mechanisms and the protracted conflict has further compounded these weaknesses by manifold. While institutions have been created, and have expanded, the purposes for which the institutions were established have not been achieved, and they have not succeeded in the effectively delivering on their mandate of bringing inclusive and accountable governance to the people of Afghanistan²⁶. There is a general lack of public trust in government and socio-political institutions. This is mainly because for many Afghans, the formal justice and rule of law

²² Returns to Afghanistan, Joint IOM UNHCR Summary Report, 2018

²³ <https://aoav.org.uk/2019/2018-a-year-of-explosive-violence/>

²⁴ <https://www.humanitarianresponse.info/en/operations/afghanistan>.

²⁵ <https://data2.unhcr.org/en/situations/afghanistan>

²⁶ United Nations Development Assistance Framework for Afghanistan 2015-2019

institutions remain inaccessible. This has also resulted in greater reliance on traditional dispute resolution mechanisms (TDRs) compared to formal institutions, as TDRs are generally more accessible and effective, especially for the poor, even though they are widely regarded by rights bodies as being irresponsive to human rights concerns. Afghanistan which is currently ranked at 172 out of 180 countries assessed in 2019, has been consistently ranked among the ten most corrupt countries in the world by Transparency International, except for a brief moment in 2015 and 2016 when it rose into the bottom 20.²⁷ Women and representation from other minority groups are almost non-existent in rule of law institutions and civil service. The country still faces severe external threats, widespread insurgency, and terrorism which continue to shape its security policies and the rule of law sector.

In view of the challenges, the government has adopted a five-year National Campaign Plan to increase the mobility and effectiveness of the country's security forces. The Plan is designed to improve the ANSF and the police in order to secure the country against armed opposition groups and reduce criminality such as extortion, kidnapping, and illegal seizure. The Plan focuses on three areas- reconciliation, security, and stability.

2.2. Evaluability Assessment

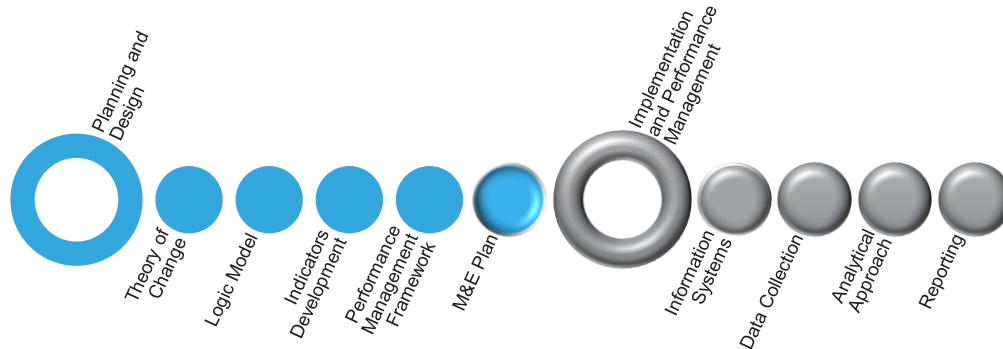
The ET scanned and reviewed the documents provided by the UNCT, plus others in the public domain. For this evaluation, lack of data did not seem to be a major issue since there is substantive data to cover all the key areas within the UN system. The ET was also in continuous contact with the Evaluation Manager who has been providing documents and relevant data as requested. Nevertheless, to cover all aspects fully, there was a need for additional government data, especially on financial issues and on allocations of resources for issues such as peace and security as well as for the SDGs in general. The Evaluability Assessment was done as part of the document review which is summarized later in this section. Overall, it was concluded that a sufficiently critical mass of documents was available as well as data on results, logic models and performance measurement data although more on baselines would have helped.

2.3. Approach

The evaluation was guided by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development – Development Assistance Committee (OECD-DAC) Evaluation Quality Standards for Development Evaluation, the United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG) Norms and Standards for Evaluation in the UN System, and the UNEG Ethical Guidelines and Code of Conduct for Evaluation in the UN System.

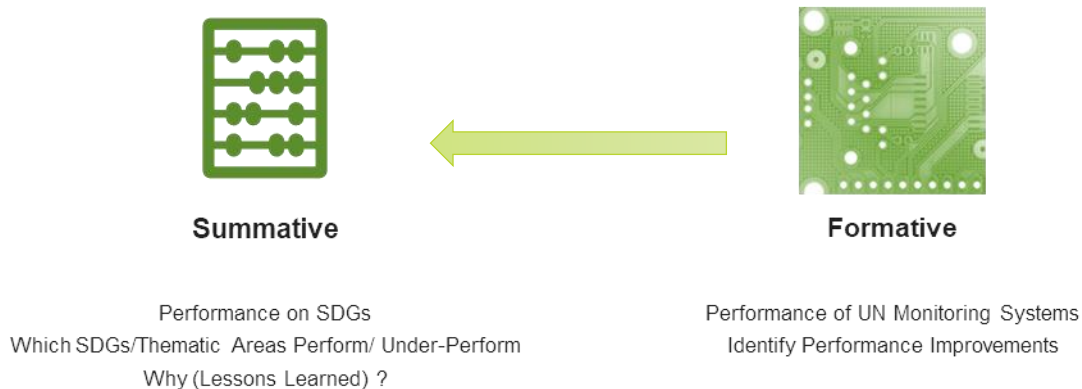
²⁷ <https://www.transparency.org/en/cpi/2019/results/afg#details>

In practical terms, the overall approach to the evaluation was results based using a participatory and mixed-method approach with the goal of providing learning and recommendations to the key stakeholders that will be of value to their ongoing strategic decision-making process. More specifically, the evaluation used a systems approach.



The above diagram represents the ET's overall approach to the evaluation. The essence of this approach contextualizes Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) as a system. The system is composed of two phases. The Planning and Design phase describes what the M&E system is supposed to measure. Evidence that the system is measuring what it is *supposed* to measure is taken from analyzing M&E work products. This includes an analysis of the: Theory of Change (ToC); Logic Model; Indicators; Performance Management Framework (PMF) and M&E Plan. In the second phase emphasis shifts from what is supposed to be measured to how to measure. This therefore involves an assessment of information systems, how data is collected, the analytical approach, and reporting of results. This approach will guide the present evaluation process.

The ET also considered this evaluation to be a combination of summative and formative approaches. The evaluation proceeded through two related phases. The summative evaluation assessed performance on SDG's. The ET identified which SDG's and/or thematic areas perform or underperform. Based on this, the team identified lessons learned and made clear, actionable



and realistic recommendations. At the same time, the formative aspect of the evaluation was implemented. The formative portion of the evaluation, based on the assessed performance of UN, looked into the strategic and forward-looking aspects of future UN system programming in a complex, insecurity affected Afghan context, using the above-described systems approach.

This means the ET assessed whether the systems measure what they are supposed to measure and secondly if they effectively and efficiently collect, analyze and report on performance data, focusing on SDG achievement. There is a dependence between the summative and formative evaluation. Being able to say something about the performance of SDG's depends on the performance of monitoring systems which are meant to measure progress on SDG's. If the monitoring systems can't validly collect, analyze and report on SDG data, then very little can be said progress on SDG's. In other words, the summative part relates to "what works, what doesn't and why?" and the formative part is as forward looking as possible to provide lessons learned that will feed into the UNSDCF for Afghanistan.

The approach is based on the following elements:

- ◆ Reconstruction of UNDAF's Theory of Change (ToC), with some input from the ET on certain aspect of the ToC, was conducted through document review as well as inputs from members of the UNCT and other key stakeholders with whom the ToC revision process was addressed during strategic data collection discussions. An assessment of the ToC was a way to inform discussions of UNDAF's thematic areas, and its effectiveness.
- ◆ A 'Conflict Sensitive' Approach to assessing Performance (ability of M&E System to measure unintended positive/negative consequences, and adjust accordingly – see sub-section 2.2.5 below)
- ◆ An Evaluation Matrix had been developed and fully discussed with the working group to ensure that the Evaluation Questions in the ToR are addressed (see sub-section 2.4.1 for more details on this subject).
- ◆ Because of time constraints, the Inception Phase of the Work Plan was compressed, and some tasks in the Data Collection Phase occurred simultaneously to those for Inception.
- ◆ Formal submission Final Drafts of both the Inception and Evaluation Reports was deferred toward the conclusion of the mandate.
- ◆ Review the UNSDCF Guidance. The data collection tools and instruments were designed to extract the strengths and challenges of the Guidance from the stakeholders to inform the entry-points for the design and implementation of the UNSDCF for Afghanistan. As an interim deliverable, a presentation of preliminary evaluation results was made to the Steering Committee, which will be used to inform development of the next UNSDCF for Afghanistan.

Results based and Utilization-Focused Approach

Given that there is a formative function for this evaluation, and a forward-looking and decision-making aspect to the evaluation, the team proposed adopting a Utilization-Focused Evaluation (UFE) framework, which is a widely known approach developed by Dr. Michael Quinn Patton (2008). This would also be results based to align to internal evaluation practices. The approach begins with the premise that evaluations should be judged by their utility and actual use; therefore, evaluators should facilitate the evaluation process and design any evaluation with careful consideration of how everything that is done, from beginning to end, will affect use. Use concerns how real people in the real world apply evaluation findings and experience and learn from the evaluation process. This is a well-tested and widely used evaluation approach that increases the likely uptake of recommendations by key stakeholders since it clarifies expectations and objectives in terms of the quality, content and use of the evaluation. This approach does not decrease evaluation impartiality and independence since the ET remains responsible for the content of the evaluation report. However, it is likely to be only partially effective because the UNCT and the Government often have different views of what they can utilize so the ET will not view them all as one homogeneous stakeholder group. That is why it is combined with other approaches.

Participatory and Inclusive Approach

The evaluation approach was participatory and inclusive. The ET used this approach as much as possible to ensure that, as external evaluators, it was not imposing external perspectives on stakeholders who know the challenges of their UN country programme. This approach helped to foster the buy-in of the different types of stakeholders in the UNCT and also in the government and to ensure that findings, conclusions, lessons learned and recommendations are useful not only to review what has happened to data and also to guide the future direction of the programme.

The ET, in coordination with the evaluation managers, coordinated many strategic meetings with the evaluation reference group to ensure all key stakeholders were consulted on the evaluation's approach and methodology but also on the quickly evolving context in Afghanistan. The evaluation team leader was in continuous contact with the evaluation principal manager and kept him informed of all changes and challenges faced. All deliverables were shared with stakeholders from the UNCT and among government representatives by the evaluation managers. All comments communicated to the ET were integrated and taken into consideration in the refinement of and adjustments made to these deliverables.

Mixed-Method Approach

The purpose of a mixed-methods non-experimental approach was to triangulate sources of information and perspectives drawing on quantitative and qualitative techniques (see annex 2 for the data collection tools used) to ensure a comprehensive, robust and evidence-based

understanding of the programme being evaluated. Minimally, the ET asked the same question both quantitatively and qualitatively. The quantitative data helped assess and present the trends for each question and then the qualitative information helped described, discuss and nuance the quantitative trends and main evaluation findings. This in turn allowed for the development of insightful findings, reliable conclusions, relevant lessons learned and recommendations.

To this end, the ET utilized a range of qualitative data collection tools and both qualitative and quantitative data analysis methods to assess each criterion, key question, sub-question (using probes) and each indicator. Emphasis was placed on a mixture of primary data collected in the field and a review of secondary data. Data from each line of evidence was triangulated during the triangulation analysis.

The evaluation measured the extent to which outcomes have been reached and provided value for future project design that contributes to the utility of the evaluation, e.g., utilization focused evaluation. The ET also captured change from multiple perspectives, exploring not only what change occurred, in providing context for that change, utilizing evidence from a variety of quantitative and qualitative perspectives that achieve the purpose of the evaluation, cover its scope and answer the specific evaluation questions. The Mixed-Method approach is summarized in the Figure below. Our mixed methods approach began with a document review. Sections of the document, where relevant, were associated with evaluation questions and sub-questions. If the document contained an explanation or theory related to the evaluation questions and sub-questions, any statistics or data contained in the document supporting that explanation or theory was noted for inclusion into this report. Otherwise, an effort was made to identify statistics from other sources. The Evaluation Team also identified statistics from several secondary data sources and combined them into data sets. For example, the Evaluation Team combined the location of COVID labs, with proxy indicators of security, accessed from Afghanistan's Humanitarian Access Group (HAG) to correlate location of COVID labs with indicators of conflict.

The most important source of evidence for this evaluation was the collection of qualitative information derived from Key Informant Interviews (KIIs) and Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) of key informants from the UN system or external stakeholders made up of government counterparts, donor group, as well as civil society partners, as well as beneficiary consultations conducted at the subnational level (see figure 2 and annex 4 below for more details). Standard interview/consultation schedules were developed to collect information during the consultations. Schedules were translated from English to Dari/Pashto by the evaluation team's Afghanistan consultants. Detailed notes from these schedules were transcribed into electronic documents, as well as any debriefing notes available from informal discussions with Evaluation Team members regarding the consultation.

2.4. Evaluation Methodology

The evaluation was intended to be a summative evaluation of the strategic intent and outcomes. It assessed the Afghanistan UNCT's contribution to national development outcomes as contained

in the results framework. Given that contributions to the desired outcomes come from the work of many stakeholders (not only the UN), establishing attribution of UN interventions to an observed result at the outcome level is not always possible. Therefore, the ET evaluated possible contribution of the UNCT to the achievement of the outcomes when proven attribution was not possible. Beyond the use of the ToC, which supports the contribution analysis, specific attention will be given to this aspect of the evaluation approach through all lines of enquiry. Every question is oriented towards targeting the differentiation of the UN efforts from all other initiatives in the country. The wide array of consultations with different types of stakeholders will also support a strong contribution analysis process. The evaluation was independent and adhered to and implemented UNEG Norms and Standards.

The ET used a variety of methodologies, in accordance with the UN Evaluation Guidelines, to ensure quality data collection and analysis.

Data Collection Strategy (Data Gathering Methods) and sources

Line of Evidence 1 - Desk and Document Review

Focused on UNDAF and One UN planning documents, progress reviews, annual reports and past evaluation reports (including UN country programme evaluations, those on projects and small-scale initiatives, and those issued by national counterparts), strategy papers, national plans and policies and related programme and project documents. These included reports on the progress against national and international commitments.

As the review took place, specifics on different sectors and outcomes became clearer to inform the development of the inception report. Indeed, in addition to an improved understanding of the national and sub-national context, this review helped scope the evaluation process, finalize the key evaluation questions to be answered by the team through the different lines of evidence. Data was systematically classified in a data collection matrix by relevant indicators (see evaluation matrix below in Section 5) and, as noted under the data analysis sub-section below, coded using content analysis methods to ensure that bias is avoided, and trends are clearly identified. The inclusion of a national evaluator in the ET also allowed the team to review documents in both English and Dari/Pashto.

Secondary data from a variety of sources gathered through literature searches were also used. They were sex, urban-rural, and ethnicity-disaggregated data collected from all sources whenever available. These literature searches provided background material on issues such as relevant national development contexts and key issues and challenges for each of the outcomes. The Evaluation Team also reviewed publications and internet resources.

A sample of available information on training packages was also reviewed, as well as the number of training participants by gender and other characteristics, and participant reviews of the trainings which the agencies had undertaken.

The full in-depth desk and document review allowed for data to be collected prior to interviews which were conducted by Skype/Zoom or phone, as well as before the launch of the online survey (OLS). It allowed the interviews to potentially support data collected and/or provide alternative views which then became part of the data triangulation process.

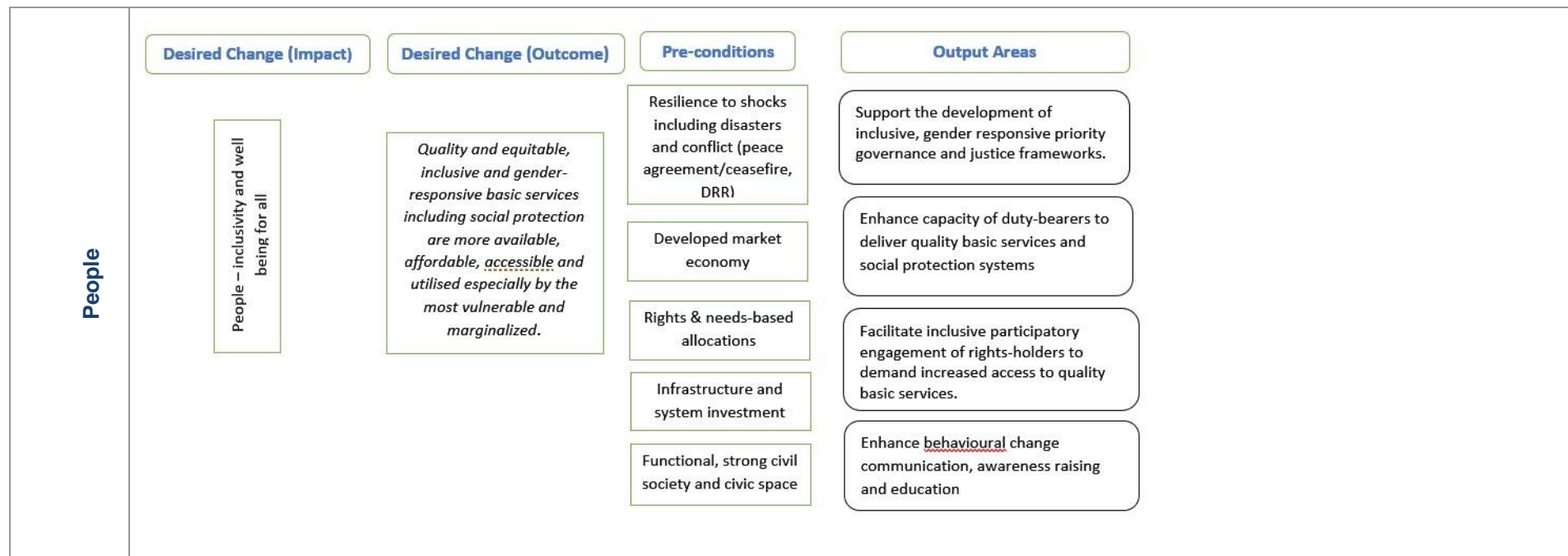
Data analysis and triangulation

Line of Evidence 2 – Theory of Change

As stated in the Interim Cooperation Framework evaluation guideline,

“the theory of change is the key reference framework for evaluators. For Cooperation Framework evaluations, the theory should cascade from the SDGs to Cooperation Framework outcomes and outputs to agency outcomes and outputs” (UNEG, July 2019). As mentioned in the Inception Report, because of time constraints, the ET could not conduct a Theory of Change validation workshop. The ET instead relied on secondary sources of information, specifically a working paper produced after a strategic planning retreat. The purpose of the retreat was to inform the development of the next UNSDCF (Cooperation Framework). Below is a reconstruction of the Cooperation Framework Theory of Change referenced in the working paper.

Table 1: Reconstructed Theory of Change



Prosperity

Desired Change (Impact)

Prosperity – inclusive and sustainable economic growth

Desired Change (Outcome)

Afghanistan is on the path of sustainable and inclusive economic growth with increased and equitable opportunities for decent employment, new markets including connectivity, and productivity including food security.

Pre-conditions

Resilience to shocks including disasters and conflict (peace agreement/ceasefire, DRR)

Developed market economy

Effective system of governance

Infrastructure and system investment

Output Areas

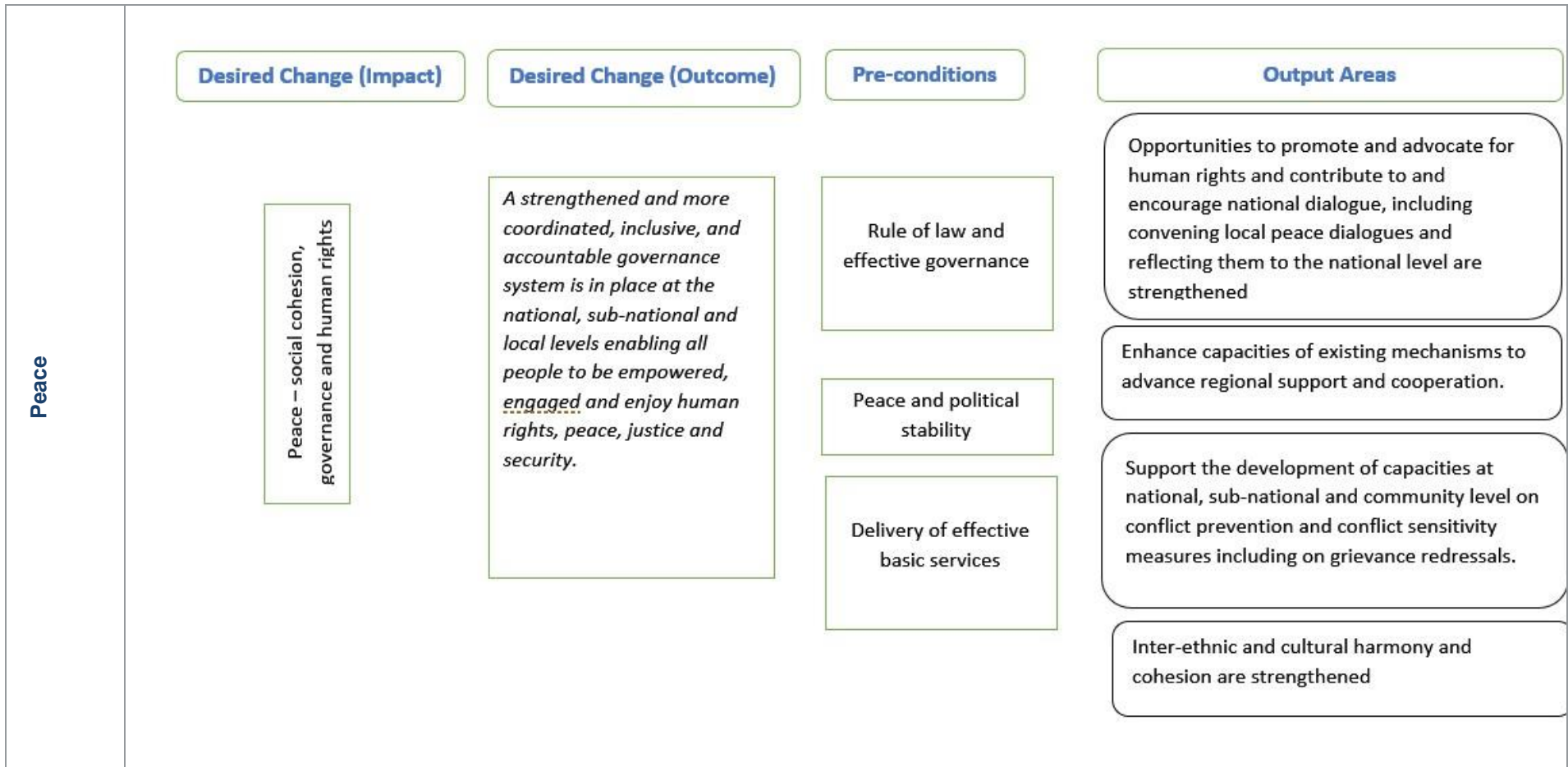
Strengthen government’s capacity to better manage and respond to disasters (access climate financing; adaptation measures; mitigation; Emergency Preparedness and Response and Disaster Risk Reduction

Enhance capacity of duty-bearers to deliver quality basic services, social protection systems and equitable land rights.

Support the development of systems and regulatory frameworks that enable access to safe and nutritious food for all focused on: locally produced food; fortified foods; sustainable food systems; and sustainable agriculture.

Enhance behavioural change communication, awareness raising and education at all levels

Strengthen the government’s capacity to provide an enabling environment for private sector development through policies and legal framework eg. anticorruption policies; inclusive employment policies and regulations; and regulatory framework for the informal economy.



Desired Change (Impact)

Planet – Environment, Climate Change, and Resilience

Desired Change (Outcome)

Afghanistan, its institutions, ecosystems and all people – especially the most vulnerable and marginalized – are more resilient to disasters, climate change and other shocks and stresses including population growth.

Pre-conditions

Adequate DRR/DRM mechanisms are in place at national and sub-national levels

Developed market economy

Effective system of governance

Infrastructure and system investment

Output Areas

Support communities to have access to timely information, resources, and climate-resilient infrastructure to allow for better planning for and managing disasters and shocks.

Facilitate knowledge building and options for communities, private sector and government to adopt more sustainable patterns of consumption and production

Strengthen government’s ability and capacity to invest through PPP, in renewable energy, improved power distribution, and better natural resource management.

Support the development of more sustainable jobs and livelihood opportunities so that communities are less dependent on deforestation, illegal mining, illicit crops, etc.,

Support the development of evidence-based policies and regulatory framework that promotes and protects natural resources and biodiversity conservation, low carbon development and efficient/sound environment management practices/systems.

Through all lines of evidence, the ET paid due attention to how gender and non-discrimination aspects have been integrated in the UNDAF and One-UN frameworks (see sub-section 2.4.2 below for more details). To do so, respondents were prompted to go beyond the integration of these concepts in the planning documentation and ask for evidence and examples as to how they were integrated in all activities and what higher level results have been reached: how have gender relations concretely changed.

Line of Evidence 2 – Key Informant Interviews

Semi-structured interviews were conducted with all available key stakeholders including key government counterparts, donor community members, representatives of key civil society organizations, UNCT members, and implementing partners. The ET did not use a specific sampling approach but rather contacted all available key stakeholders (i.e. the names of stakeholders were provided by the UNCT and during interviews, the ET asked for further names of stakeholders to ensure the list was exhaustive; see sub-section 2.6 and annex 4). The team concentrated efforts on head of agencies for the UN stakeholders but also consulted many levels of government and NGO representatives, at technical and leadership roles.

The ET conducted interviews primarily virtually and face to face when possible. Virtual interviews were conducted with key representatives of the UNCT and key agencies as well as with others outside the UN including NGOs and INGOs and government ministries and institutions (see stakeholder mapping section 4). Interviews in Afghanistan were done by the national consultant to avoid translation and interpretation challenges which otherwise would have been a limitation. The ET used Skype, Zoom and telephone or other web-teleconference software depending on the participants' preferred method. Semi-structured interviews used key evaluation questions and sub-questions (probes) based on the four identified OECD-DAC evaluation criteria (relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, and sustainability) plus the cross-cutting issues on human rights and gender equality.

The draft interview protocols were prepared (see Annex 2) and adapted and refined following feedback. Interview questions were tailored to different stakeholders, but consistent key questions were included across all interviews to provide a basis for data triangulation. To ensure data collected in all sessions is comparable, and that there is no bias, tools used were the same for each member of the ET. The list of stakeholders who were interviewed is included in the Stakeholder Analysis Section and was adjusted based on feedback from the UN to ensure stakeholders cover a sufficient variety of levels, and themes. The ET relied heavily on the support of the UNCT and ROC and the team's national consultants to reach out to all selected potential respondents.

These interviews facilitated the collection of qualitative data on a range of topics (e.g., different projects and initiatives' relevance at the national level and implementation processes, progress towards reaching SDGs, and sustainability of the results' achieved in different contexts), which

were used to answer evaluation questions and triangulate data collected using the other lines of evidence.

Line of Evidence 3 – Focus Group Discussions

We convened a series of UN specific, and government representative, focus group meetings with agency/ministry/institution groups including those dealing with specific outcomes and M&E. In this case, a focus group was a small group of (potentially three to five) people who in discussion, facilitated by an ET member, focused on specific reactions to issues under consideration. At least two team members were present in any and all focus groups to ensure that one facilitates and the other takes notes. The ET's goal was to include a cross section of people in groups. The basic questions for focus groups were similar to ensure comparability (see Annex 2) and were reviewed by the UNCT and RCO. It included focal points from agencies so information was derived from sources with first-hand knowledge.

As with many other endeavours, the ET worked with others to ensure data was gathered from sufficient remote interviews and focus groups. Whatever data was gathered through discussions with other Evaluation Teams was recorded and included in the findings. Data gathered this way reduced the rationale for field visit. This evaluation intended to assess progress at a more macro level than the agency evaluations.

Line of Evidence 4 – Survey

The idea of an Online Survey (OLS) invitation was sent to all stakeholders for which the evaluation manager has provided a name, an email address and a position. This goal was to reach as many stakeholders as possible to obtain wider stakeholders in Afghanistan beyond the UN.

The ET considered the OLS to be the most effective way to: 1) reach as many potential respondents as possible, 2) generate a large body of quantitative data that could be used to triangulate qualitative information collected through other lines of evidence (document review, interviews and group discussions), and 3) create a context in which the potential respondents are ensured confidentiality (since the raw data will not be shared with the UNCT).

The ET developed survey questionnaires in English and submitted them for approval during the Inception Phase along with other instruments (the Dari/Pasto versions of these questionnaires was developed once the English version was agreed with the UNCT and RCO). A draft questionnaire in English was developed (see Annex 2) composed of mainly closed questions and a few open-ended questions that were included to allow respondents to provide explanatory details. Two questionnaires in English were sent to 43 UN agencies representatives and 71 external stakeholders (government counterparts, INGO and CSO representatives.). the response rate for External stakeholders UN agencies representatives were respectively 18% and 28%. Data was collected through survey as follows:

Table 2: Data Collection – Survey

	External stakeholder survey	UN Agencies Survey
Population	71	43
Emails sent	71	43
Questionnaire filled through email	13	11
Anonymous questionnaires completed	0	1
Total of responses	13	12
Response rate	18%	28%

The survey(s) was undertaken in phases:

1. The target respondents for the survey were initially those recruited to be key informants for the evaluation. However, additional respondents were also added. In methodological terms, the sampling method was a purposive sample of key informants.
2. The survey instrument and materials (questions, covering letter, etc.) and contact lists were developed in consultation with the UNCT and then translated into local language.
3. Pre-test: Initial contact with potential survey participants involved sending the survey questions to a small sample of people from across targeted categories of stakeholders. In addition, tests were conducted with ET colleagues to ensure content is clear and simple and that the functionalities of the survey process are effective. Thereafter, both the survey instrument and survey procedures were revised.
4. Introduction: An introductory email was sent to the contact list to announce the upcoming survey, and to identify contact details. The ET found that a letter/email from the client (UNCT) is very important to ensure a high representative response rate. Hence, the UNCT was asked to send official emails of invitation, written in partnership with the ET, to all potential respondents. These emails explained the evaluation process and the e-survey context, present the ET, mention how long it takes to fill out the e-survey and mentioned that the latter will be sending an invitation containing the OLS link.
5. Distribution: Once the pre-test phase was completed, and the UNCT had sent the introductory letters, emails were sent to the contact list, with a link to the questionnaire (on-line platform.)
6. Follow-up: After a reasonable period of time, the ET (and potentially the Afghan team members) followed up by email, text or phone. A UNCT follow-up was requested when the initial response rate was not sufficiently high. Considering that the potential

respondents was quite busy during the end of the year phase of government management reporting cycles, as well as with other ongoing evaluative processes, the ET envisaged that some hands-on follow-up might potentially be needed. At two thirds of the survey's online timeline, the Afghan national team members were asked to coordinate group meetings with the potential respondents to support them in filling in the surveys in real time. In addition, from the very start, during all ET contacts with the potential respondents for any other purposes, it reminded the stakeholders of the importance of filling the survey. In this context, the ET ensured a minimal response rate allowing for the survey data to be used for triangulation and analysis.

Data Analysis

To assist with the lines of evidence, the ET drafted and utilized several tools including those which give overview of both the outcome and output-level results in the reports and identify the challenges faced. The ET also reviewed the indicators that are being tracked and summarized them. Once all necessary data was collected through document review, key informant interviews, focus group discussions, and e-surveys, content analysis of data reviewed responses from multiple sources to the same evaluation questions, permitting triangulation and informing the drafting of evidence-based findings, conclusions, lessons learned, and recommendations. Triangulation was used to validate and enrich findings with details or additional perspectives from other sources, countering potential bias, and gaining greater understanding of identified facts.

The ET also used content analysis methods to help triangulate data and standardize results across evaluators and lines of evidence and create an evidence binder that demonstrates transparently data and responses to all evaluation questions. The content analysis surfaced multiple similar responses from a variety of data sources which facilitated generating evidence-based findings, conclusions, lessons learned and recommendations.

The following discussion describes the analytical techniques used to implement the content analysis specifically and the mixed method approach described in broad strokes in section 2.2.3. As described above, transcriptions of key informant interviews were digitized in electronic documents. These documents along with "Meta-information" i.e., the position and title as well as the organizational affiliation of the key informant, was uploaded into a content analysis platform called Dedoose. This was done in order to conduct the cross-validation analysis mentioned above. Using Dedoose, specific excerpts of transcripts were marked, and associated with evaluation questions and sub-questions. Dedoose has the functionality to search for all excerpts related to an evaluation question or sub-questions. In this way, excerpts of an evaluation question can be linked to information about the key informant, specifically stakeholder type, in order to cross-validate perceptions. Further cross-validation analysis was conducted using another content analysis software called Infranodus. Infranodus uses a network of nodes, representing words to identify groups of words that "signify" a concept. For example, this software can be used to identify which groups of words occur when discussing the issue of UN Coherence. In addition, as with Dedoose, Infranodus can display on its interface the source document, therefore the context within which the issue of UN Coherence is discussed. Below is a side-by-side depiction

of how Dedoose (Bottom of graphic) and Infranodus (Top of graphic), were used to analyse the qualitative data.

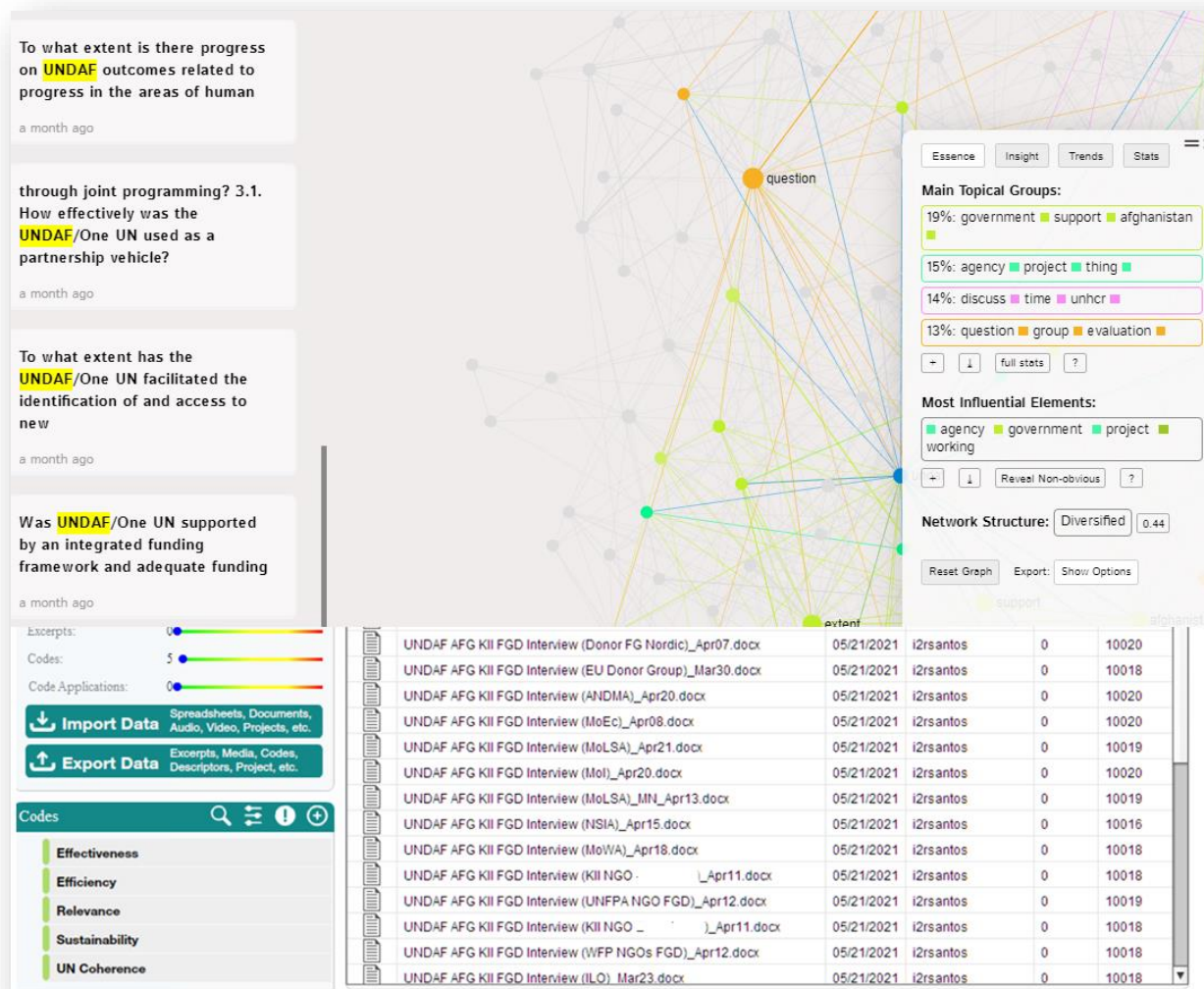


Figure 1: Content analysis software, Dedoose and Infranodus used to conduct content analysis

Reporting Phase: UNDAF/One UN Evaluation Report

This final phase includes the draft final evaluation report written and submitted to the UNCT and RCO. On the basis of the data analysis described above, a draft evaluation report has been developed through which the ET will share the initial findings — backed by evidence — conclusions, recommendations, and lessons learned with UNCT for feedback. After their

feedback to the first draft and a revised draft, the penultimate draft evaluation report was submitted and presented (via Zoom) to the JSC for review and feedback.

This draft report conforms to OECD-DAC Evaluation Quality Standards. As the assessment questions and matrix are structured around the evaluation criteria, i.e., relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability, these have formed the basic structure of the report itself. It is presented under each main section and aligned with the evaluation criteria. Findings are clearly stated, followed by the evidence and explanations leading to those findings and conclusions and finally to recommendations and lessons learned. The ET made every effort to ensure that the recommendations are relevant, valid and grounded in the current situation analysis by testing them with the Joint Steering Committee. However, it should be noted here that situation changes rapidly in the development context, especially in a country like Afghanistan. The ET acknowledged at the outset that it will not be possible for it to offer recommendations that are adaptable to all kinds of changing contexts, nor does it believe it is how it should be. The ET assumes that the RBM system of One UN in Afghanistan will have provisions to assess the efficacy and relevancy of these recommendations periodically as part of its management response plan to the evaluation

The quantitative data was used to demonstrate trends. The qualitative information supports, nuances and explains trends. The qualitative information collected as supporting evidence to the findings is presented using a simple, straightforward and efficient benchmark:

No individual respondents in this report are named to protect anonymity. The format is: All respondents said...; (100%) The majority of respondents said... (~ more than 75%); Many respondents said... (~ more than 50%), Some respondents said... (~between 25 and 50%), A few said... (~ less than 25%); and One respondent said... (This will probably not be used because if only one person mentioned the information, it cannot be considered as evidence, unless it is fully triangulated with other sources of data.)

Data protection protocol and evaluation ethics

The evaluation approach that was used conforms to the ethical principles described in the UNEG Ethical Guidelines for Evaluation (2008). The inception report and its data collection tools were reviewed and approved by the dual tiered evaluation management structure who verified the use of the Ethical Protocol and Informed Consent Forms.

The evaluation approach was grounded in ethical principles defined in the UNEG Guidelines that fall under three broad categories: obligations of evaluators, safeguards for participants, and the evaluation process and product. The ET complied with all the obligations.

First, the obligations of the ET included independence, impartiality, credibility, honesty and integrity, conflicts of interest and accountability. These were met by the team throughout the evaluation without bias or conflict of interest.

Secondly, the principles of safeguards for participants of confidentiality, do no harm, respect for dignity and diversity and rights, were met through using the approved instruments, ethics protocols and consent forms as required. Participants were informed that the final report would

be a public document to which they will have access. At the beginning of each consultations, the respondents provided an oral consent that they agreed to participate, in a confidential way, in the data collection process.

Finally, the ET also complied with the third area of Evaluation Process and Products, which covers transparency, accuracy, reporting, omissions and wrongdoing.

In terms of data security, the team is security cleared for multiple clients and sought to meet all methods requested and complied with all ethical standards in terms of questions and anonymity of respondents.

Quality assurance

Baastel's Quality Assurance (QA) system ensured that the requisite internal controls were in place to guarantee the provision of services and deliverables of the highest quality to our clients. This QA system has been developed and honed through hundreds of successful mandates with a wide range of clients. Baastel's QA system is based on four main elements:

- a) Compliance with industry norms and standards in evaluation,
- b) Excellence and efficiency in our expert teams,
- c) Baastel QA for written documents (i.e. all deliverables are proofread), and
- d) Baastel QA in contract management and backstopping services (when issues and challenges arose, the Baastel firm, with its institutional memory, was consulted for decision making).
- e) The overall evaluation and the methodologies used complied with the OECD DAC Quality Standards, used the OECD DAC criteria and with United Nations Evaluation Group standards and details as presented in the UNEG Handbook. In addition, the products of the evaluation were reviewed by the Evaluation Team Leader using evaluation grids which he has used as a reviewer for UN agencies including UNICEF for which he evaluates research and evaluation reports in Asia.
- f) Baastel teams share a commitment to high-quality work and the pursuit of excellence. Baastel used only team leaders with whom we have a strong history of collaboration, giving us complete confidence in each selected expert's reliability and skills. In addition to the Evaluation Team Leader, a carefully selected team of evaluation consultants are assigned to every evaluation. To the extent possible, Baastel relies on internal staff and past associates to staff its mandates. Whenever possible, team members who have worked together previously, are brought into Evaluation Teams as was the case for this evaluation. When a mandate also calls for a specialized expert and for national consultants, Baastel draws on its wide network of contacts to find the right consultant as we have in Afghanistan.
- g) Quality control began with the Evaluation Team Leader, who was responsible for overseeing the team's work and deliverables. The ETL ensured that all work adhered to planned approaches and methodologies, that all deliverables responded to agreed

parameters, and that written materials are of the highest quality. The ETL worked in coordination with the QA Advisor, who was active at key mandate stages to ensure that deliverables met the agreed objectives. The QA Advisor also discussed methodological or other QA issues with the team as they arose, guaranteeing high standards throughout the life of the mandate.

- h) Sound project management principles ensured effective and efficient consultancy process. Baastel's focus is on quality, timeliness, and ongoing attention to client needs. To this end, all assignments are executed and monitored by a project manager based in a Baastel office. The ETL, who has technical and operational responsibility for managing the assignment, maintained regular contact both with the project manager and the client.

Limitations and Risk mitigation

The general applicability of findings contained in this evaluation report has to do with the changing context at the time this final report was submitted (August 2021). By definition the Cooperation Framework between the UN and a host country sets out an agreement regarding achievement of long-term development goals. The assumption is that there is a level of peace, security, and stability as well as an absence of a critical humanitarian emergency which allows for conditions amenable to early recovery and long-term development. At the time of this writing, these conditions are not present. In addition, there is no legitimately recognized government with which the UN can currently negotiate a Cooperation Framework. Specific limitations are described within the context of a Risk/Mitigation analysis, described below. Therefore, the relevance of this evaluation depends on a context in Afghanistan where the conditions for long-term development exist.

Risk/Limitations Definition	Mitigation Measures
<p>Lack of timely access to official UN documents containing statistics on intervention expenditures or security assessments at the local level, to provide context for perceptions related to scale of UN interventions.</p>	<p>According to information communicated to the Evaluation Team, the UN provides local level expenditure information to the Provincial Governor's office. The ET requested these from the Provincial Governor's office where the beneficiary consultations were to take place. These were not forthcoming.</p> <p>Through the VP's office, the ET requested from the Ministry of Finance the same type of information. It was communicated to the team that the Portfolio Reviews conducted by the Ministry of Finance, provided the same expenditure information required. These were similarly not forthcoming in time to inform the writing of this draft report.</p> <p>An expenditure analysis comparing core versus non— core expenditures was also an analysis that the team wanted to conduct, in order to provide context for perceptions that the UN was "in competition" with the government for donor funding. But the official expenditure data submitted to the team was not amenable to this analysis.</p> <p>The team also requested security ratings at the district level from DSS, but was told that the information is confidential, and so this information is also not forthcoming to inform this draft report. The team was able to identify proxy indicators for security (level of conflict intensity and spread) from a public source; the Afghanistan Humanitarian</p>

Risk/Limitations Definition	Mitigation Measures
	<p>Access Group (HAG). Given the time afforded to write this draft report, the ET could not assess the validity of using these HAG indicators as proxies for those security assessments conducted by DSS.</p>
<p>Response rates to the stakeholder survey is low.</p>	<p>A follow-up request to fill in the survey was sent via email by the Evaluation Team. The Evaluation Team is aware of a civil society survey conducted as part of the latest, common country assessment. However, the scope is not same as that of the original survey.</p>
<p>Completion of the subnational beneficiary survey is delayed. Because of the restrictions on movement and schedule, it was decided to delay the Focus Group Discussions until after Ramadan.</p>	<p>No risk mitigation efforts could be implemented by the Evaluation Team, because the logistics are completely outside control of the team. The beneficiary analysis is included in this version of the Evaluation Report.</p>
<p>The Evaluation Team intended to conduct a counterfactual analysis comparing overhead expenditures by the UN to a similar institution such as ARTF. Given the compressed schedule, to produce this draft report the team is not able to conduct such a counterfactual.</p>	<p>The Evaluation Team conducted a modest financial analysis focussing on administration fees charged by an international facility Afghanistan Reconstruction Trust Fund (ARTF). This facility is comparable to those administered by the UN.</p>

2.5. Analytical Approach

Qualitative responses were analysed for patterns in responses correlated with who said it i.e., the type of stakeholder. Perceptions were compared between stakeholder types for cross-validation purposes to measure internal consistency of perceptions or to check facts expressed by key informants. Where only a few key informants mentioned a fact, it was considered valid if the key informant(s) had direct knowledge of the fact. In addition to cross-validation of key informant perceptions, these were triangulated with other sources of evidence. These were mentioned above and include triangulation with documentary and statistical secondary sources of evidence, as well as analysis of statistics from data sets developed by the team from secondary sources. Primary data collection for this evaluation took the form of an online survey which attempted to cross-validate perceptions by collecting perceptions of stakeholders consulted, using Likert scale questionnaire items.

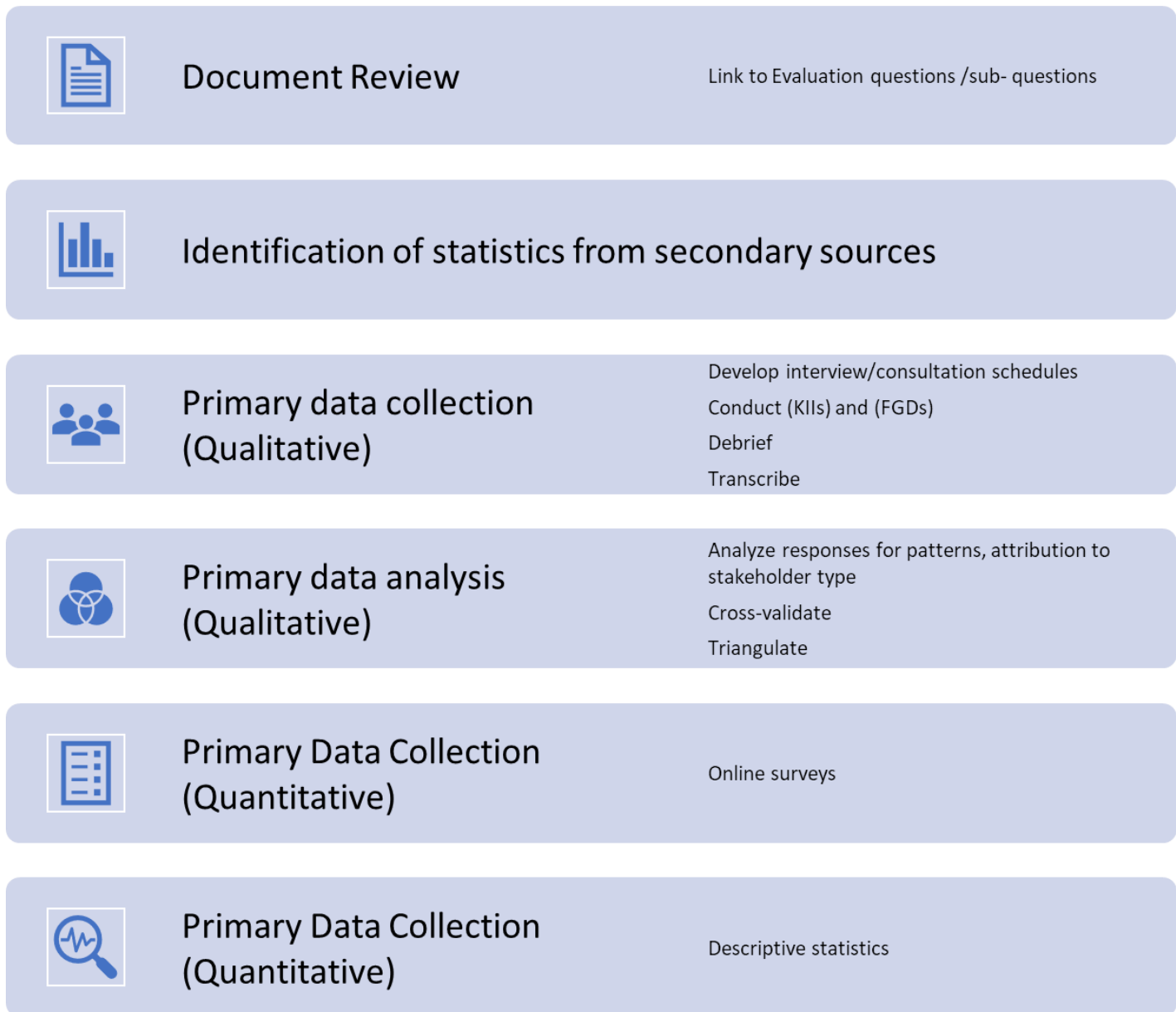


Figure 2: The Evaluation Team’s Mixed-Method approach

The figure below depicts a summary of key information related to the collection and analysis of stakeholder qualitative information evidence. The government counterpart stakeholder consultations were greatly facilitated by the first VP’s office. Executive government counterparts were consulted using the Key Informant Interview method. Government counterparts consulted by this method include Ministers, Deputy Ministers, or senior managers. These executive or senior-level key informants were from line ministries or from central ministries such as the Ministry of Finance and Ministry of Economy. These key informants were also given the choice to have the interview conducted in either English or Dari/Pasto. These interviews were conducted individually, or in small groups as well as being conducted remotely. The VP’s office also

facilitated the organization of focus group discussions targeted at participants who were not at the executive or senior levels. As with the Key Informant Interviews, focus group participants were given the option to participate in an English-language Focus Group or one conducted in Dari/Pasto. Similar questions were used for focus group discussions and KIIs although with some variations (please see annex 3 for details on questions asked in both circumstances). Civil society, i.e., NGOs consultations were facilitated by ACBAR and by individual UN agencies who engaged NGOs as implementing partners, by either organizing the group discussions or recommending key informants to interview. All of the above civil society consultations were conducted remotely. Donor groups were contacted individually, and some elected to be interviewed in groups, facilitating the process by organizing groups for the ET.

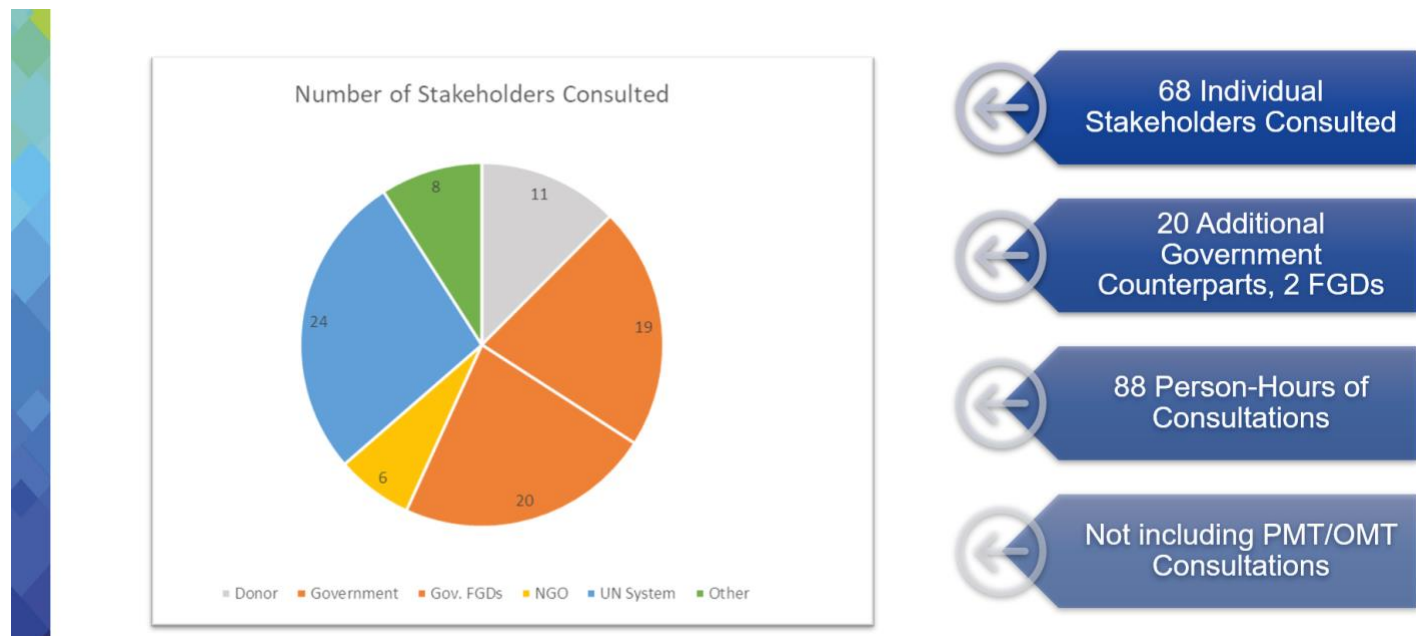


Figure 3: Breakdown of key informant stakeholder consultations conducted by the Evaluation Team

Method for conducting subnational beneficiary consultations

The figure below represents an overview of the method applied by the Evaluation Team to conduct consultations with beneficiaries of UN interventions at the subnational level. Beneficiary consultations were conducted in every region of Afghanistan- three Focus Groups per province, six per region. Beneficiaries were selected purposively and were based on nominations by provincial ministries and the provincial governor's office. A Focus Group was conducted specifically for women, and another focus group was made up of community leaders who were from subnational government structures such as the DDC/CDC or Shuras. Organization of the Focus Groups was facilitated by the first VP's office, who acted as the liaison between the Evaluation Team and the Provincial Governor's Office.

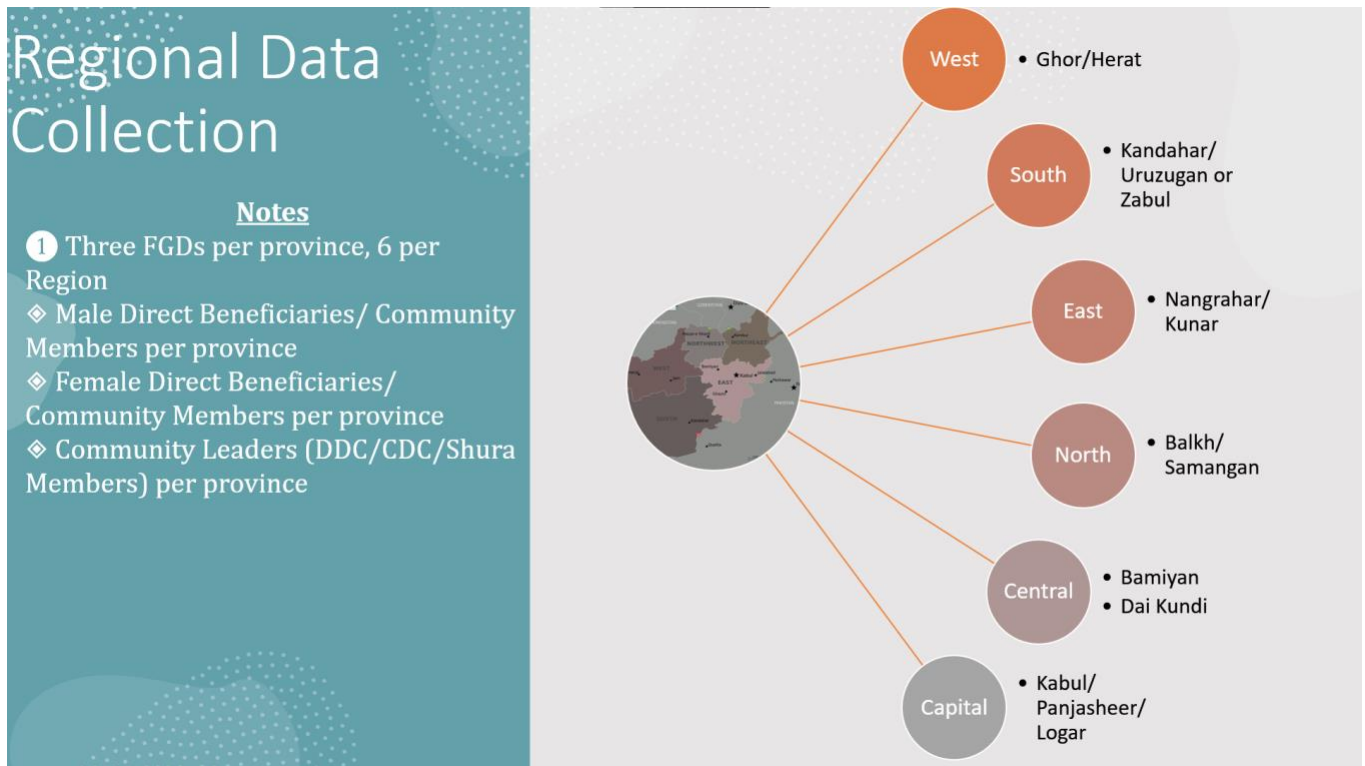


Figure 4: Geographic distribution of subnational beneficiary consultations

Environment, Gender and Human Rights Based Lens

As requested by the TOR, this evaluation also used a human rights-based lens in conjunction with the above-mentioned participatory approach. Although, no UNEG system-wide guidance on incorporating environmental and social considerations into evaluations exists at the moment, the evaluation looked into the extent to which UN agencies reflect environmental and social considerations in their policies and programmes. More specifically, it ensured that key environment, gender equality (GE) and human rights (HR) (principles identified by UNEG) have been taken into account throughout the evaluation process:

- **Non-discrimination and equality:** All individuals are equal as human beings by virtue of the inherent dignity of each person. As such, all participants in the evaluation were treated without discrimination as outlined in multiple human rights treaties;
- **Participation and inclusion:** Every person and all peoples are entitled to active, free and meaningful participation in, contribution to, and enjoyment of, civil, economic, social, cultural and political development in which human rights and fundamental freedoms can be realized;

- Accountability and the rule of law: Duty bearers (primary and secondary) are answerable for the observance of human rights while rights holders (including children supported by advocates) are entitled to claim and/or institute proceedings for appropriate redress before a competent court;
- Gender mainstreaming: Used more specifically, as “a ‘twin track strategy’, which involves: 1) Integrating women and men’s needs and interests into all development policies and programmes, and 2) Developing interventions oriented at empowering women.”

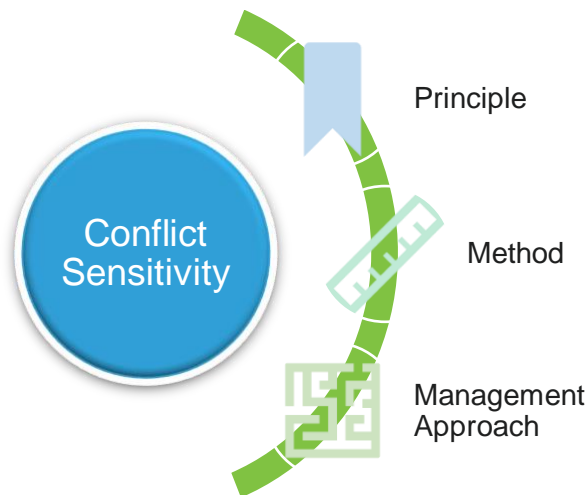
The ET has a strong track record implementing evaluations using GE and HR based lens. For this evaluation, these principles were operationalized by:

- a) Ensuring there are opportunities for interested stakeholders to participate in the evaluation process while ensuring both duty bearers and rights holders are consulted;
- b) Recognizing and mitigating power dynamics by ensuring men and women and some beneficiaries of UN programming can participate. To the extent possible, gender dynamics were analysed in a complex situation in which gender issues are not easy to deal with; and,
- c) Proposing a gender-balanced and culturally sensitive team of evaluators who all have experience working with international UN culture and most also with the local culture in Afghanistan and the SAARC region.

Gender Equality and Human Rights questions and, where appropriate, probes to other questions, were included in the Evaluation Matrix. This allowed both the lens of the rights-based framework and the GE perspectives to be taken into account.

Conflict-Sensitive Approach

Aside from the above approach elements, the ET finally applied a conflict sensitive perspective to the evaluation. A conflict sensitive approach to evaluation involves a principal, "Do No Harm". It involves a method which is technically called Outcome Harvesting (OH). OH shifts the focus from assessing the UNDAF’s intended results and considers the conflict affected behaviours, relationships, actions, and/or activities of those whom the UNDAF works with (e.g. involved national ministries’ staff). It takes the perspective of those stakeholders living in the reality of war and violence that are integrated in the intervention, or not, to see what they consider to be the real results, if any, considering the context. Essentially this means that M&E System is able to identify and measure both intended and unintended effects. It also represents a management approach that acknowledges context in conflict- affected areas changes rapidly and development interventions need to be adjusted accordingly, in order to meet intended outcomes.



2.6. Key Evaluation Questions

The following are the specific evaluation questions that were addressed through the lens of evaluation criteria and cross-cutting issues:

(1) Relevance

- To what extent has UNCT programming produced the expected results as described in the UNDAF/One UN for Afghanistan?
- To what extent were the UN AFPs comparative advantages and unique mandates relevant to government strategic areas related to international standards on gender equality, human rights, and citizen centred reforms?
- To what extent did the UNCT help strengthen the UN position, credibility and reliability of the UN as a partner for the government and other actors in the efforts to achieve both SDGs and A-SDGs?

(2) Effectiveness

- To what extent has the UNCT contributed to, or is likely to contribute to, the outcomes defined in the UNDAF/One UN for Afghanistan?
- How responsive and strategic was the UNCT in addressing emerging and emergency needs?

(3) Efficiency

To what extent have outcomes been achieved with the appropriate amount of resources within the planned time-framed?

(4) Sustainability

To what extent did the UN system support building national and local capacities to ensure long-term gains?

To what extent did the UN system promote and support inclusive and sustainable socio-economic changes and growth?

(5) UN Coherence

How has the UNDS reform been implemented in Afghanistan?

To what degree has it strengthened the coherence of the UN system support in Afghanistan?

To what extent did the UNDAF/One UN strengthen the position, credibility and reliability of the UN system as a partner for the Government of Afghanistan and other actors?

To what extent did the UNDAF/One UN reduce transaction costs for partners through greater UN coherence and discipline?

2.7. Stakeholders mapping and analysis

Coordination Structure of One UN in Afghanistan

Within the six thematic areas, a number of intergovernmental and UN entities engage through various fora. The UN recognises there are scopes for improvement in coordination and management of the structure. Moving forward, One Programme will be conducted under the guidance and in close coordination with the Development Councils.

Table 7- Existing United Nations and Government Coordination Mechanisms

Thematic Area	Development Council	Existing mechanisms
Education	High Council on Poverty Reduction, Service Delivery and Citizen Engagement Human Development Council	Education: In August 2017, within the international community the UN took on the role of coordinator for the education sector from USAID. Agencies participate in MoE coordination bodies.
Food Security, Nutrition and Livelihoods	High Council on Poverty Reduction, Service Delivery and Citizen Engagement High Economic Council	High-Level Food Security and Nutrition Steering Committee Durable Solutions Working Group
Health	High Council on Poverty Reduction, Service Delivery and Citizen Engagement	High Level Health Sector Oversight Committee (MoPH, Canada, USAID, EU, WB, WHO, UNICEF, UNFPA). GFATM supported programs will be taken through a multi-sectoral committee of CCM (Country Coordination Mechanism). National and Regional Emergency Operations Centres (EOCs) for Polio Health Cluster
Normative	High Economic Council High Council on Reforms	N/A

Return and Reintegration	High Council for Infrastructure Development Human Development Council High Council on Land and Water High Council on Urban Development	DiREC Durable Solutions Working Group Regional framework
Rule of Law	High Council for Rule of Law and Anti-Corruption High Council on Reforms	A wider group of stakeholders: specific thematic working groups and task forces, such as on Anti-Corruption, Gender Based Violence, Ending Early and Child Marriage, Sub National Governance Coordination Forum (SNGCF). A Steering Committee including government, the electoral management bodies, UNAMA and UN agencies oversees support to the elections.

3. FINDINGS OF THE EVALUATION

3.1. Relevance

Evaluation questions

- To what extent has UNCT programming produced the expected results as described in the UNDAF/One UN for Afghanistan?
- To what extent were the UN AFPs comparative advantages and unique mandates relevant to government strategic areas related to international standards on gender equality, human rights, and citizen centred reforms?
- To what extent did the UNCT help strengthen the UN position, credibility and reliability of the UN as a partner for the government and other actors in the efforts to achieve both SDGs and A-SDGs?

Evaluation sub questions

1.1. *Did the UNDAF support government efforts at implementing international standards related to leaving no one behind, gender equality and human rights standards and principles?*

Generally speaking, from all data collected and triangulated, UN programming and AFP are aligned with national stakeholders' needs and priorities²⁸. Considering the fact that Afghanistan is in a context of insecurity and emergency, the UN humanitarian response is relevant and adapted to this context. In certain areas where UN has more reach, development programming is also partially relevant going further than humanitarian interventions.

UN key informants believed that the UNDAF did support government efforts at implementing international standards specifically, they reported support for government efforts related to normative standards with respect to human rights, such as equal access to basic health and education. With respect to women's empowerment and protection of their human rights, Heads of UN agencies affirmed the contribution of the UNDAF to this international normative standard. The perceptions of UN key informants are validated by consultations with UN implementing partners. These implementing partners reported specific UN supported interventions related to the protection of women's human rights having to do with gender-based violence (GBV). Government counterparts who are specifically given the mandate for gender equality and human rights standards, also affirm the contribution of the UNDAF support government efforts in this respect. Donor stakeholder key informants also were of the opinion that the UN did contribute to efforts at supporting international normative standards. These mentions were in the context of UN supporting donors as implementing partners.

On the longer-term development side, the outcome/ sector, thematic groups and Working groups are useful ways of keeping UN's work relevant for the national government institutions²⁹. Most evaluations available point to relevant UN *agency specific* programing (e.g., UN-Habitat *National Solidarity Program* [NSP] or Community-Based Municipal Support Programme [CBMSP]³⁰) and qualify it as aligned with relevant strategic planning documents (e.g., national development agenda of Afghanistan at different gov levels.)

Many respondents do think however that some normative and hence groups are not well aligned with cultural elements within the country. For example, the gender issues are not necessarily in the main priorities of the government at the moment.

1.2. Has the UN system supported achievement of national development goals and targets, by leveraging its: reputation for impartiality; global links with partner institutes and governments; objectively tested policy options; global experience with realization of SDG's, and its robust, and tested normative voice on human rights, equity and citizen centred reforms?

²⁸ UN. United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) p. 24

²⁹ In 2019, the UN focused in particular on supporting the Government of Afghanistan to ensure equitable access to quality education for all by supporting implementation of the NESP III 2017-2021 and review of the education sub-sector achievements through implementation of the NESP III, based on sector priorities and vision as outlined in the National Priority Programme (NPP) and Afghanistan National Peace and Development Framework (ANPDF).

³⁰ Evaluation Of UN-HABITAT. Country Programme In Afghanistan 2012 – 2016; pg 14.

Stakeholders within the UN believed that the UN system did leverage its reputation for impartiality with respect to achievement of national development goals. This opinion was strong with respect to the delivery of humanitarian assistance and was a sentiment shared by external stakeholders as well, specifically donor group key informants. Government counterpart key informants also expressed this opinion. Within this context, external stakeholders did believe that the UN system's links with partner institutes and governments uniquely advantaged the UN system in Afghanistan with respect to national development goals. As the international institution leading achievement of SDG's, there was general consensus among external stakeholders that the UN system was uniquely placed to provide, practical, tested expertise with respect to aligning national development goals with SDG's.

Notwithstanding these findings, many respondents considered that although much of the work conducted by the UN system is coordinated in consultations with the government, the UNDAF – ONE UN “tools” are not actually the most useful to align UN approaches with needs and priorities. During the actual development of the tools, the process is considered important but as the national and regional contexts change quickly, they are seen by many respondents as becoming obsolete overtime. As programmes and projects are implemented, the relevance of the work conducted is attributed by the majority of respondents to the individual agencies rather than at the UNCT level. In other words, the relevance of UN's support lies in the each of the individual unique characteristics of the agencies.

Yet many respondents analyze the relevance of the UNDAF/ One UN documents as being a useful communication tool, mainly with the government. It is often used to show the government representatives, at the beginning of cycles, what the UNCT intends to do in the country in the upcoming years. The UNDAF/ One UN makes the UN, as a system, accountable to the government. It is to be noted that with some of the staff turnover involved in the ministries, their representatives are not always necessarily aware of the contents of the UNDAF/ One UN.

2.1. To what extent are UN Agencies invited by government to participate in strategic discussions around the ANPDF-1?

Government counterparts reported a high degree of participation with respect to UN system stakeholders participating in strategic discussions around national development goals in general, including ANPDF-1. UN system stakeholders were reported being part of strategic discussion groups at both the political and technical levels. Government counterparts mentioned representation of UN agencies in High Councils. At the technical level, government key informants in Line Ministries mentioned that UN agencies operating in their ministries actively participated in donor coordination and technical committees.

Relevance to Beneficiaries

As per DAC/OECD guidelines, from a monitoring and evaluation perspective, relevance is related to whether an interventions' objectives and design responds to beneficiaries' needs. Therefore, the results of the beneficiary analysis are presented as part of the evaluation questions related to relevance.

RELEVANCE

“The extent to which the intervention’s objectives and design respond to beneficiaries’ global, country and partner/institution needs, policies and priorities, and continue to do so if circumstances change.”³⁸

Opinions on the relevance of UN interventions varied by location and type of assistance. At the provincial level, the humanitarian assistance provided by the UN was uniformly appreciated in all provinces. However, there is evidence that more can be done to make UN interventions more relevant with respect to Water Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH). In all beneficiary sessions where WASH was on offer, beneficiaries reported an emphasis placed on hygiene awareness (i.e., handwashing), when in fact what was more relevant was the provision of a water source.

In addition, one key challenge mentioned in almost all provinces was the UN’s lengthy administrative and procurement policies and procedures against the effectiveness of their work, especially in emergencies. This applies to other assistance as well. For example, the UN provides modified cultivation seeds to the farmers, but they supply them at a time when the period for the cultivation of that seed is over.

Perceptions are less positive related to interventions that were longer-term. The beneficiaries consulted from Nangarhar and Bamyān were the most satisfied with respect to longer-term interventions. Beneficiaries from other provinces were less satisfied. From the other provinces beneficiaries reported that the UN designs projects and programs without any consultations with the community. The result is that some projects are perceived as not relevant or a priority need. Beneficiaries also mentioned that government interventions to MRRD were more relevant, effective and sustainable. It must be noted however, that UN provides direct technical support to many MRRD technical units, a fact which beneficiaries might not be aware.

There is wide variation in perceptions on the relevance of UN interventions at the district level. All forms of UN interventions are seen by beneficiaries as highly imbalanced at the district level. See figure 5 below which shows a specific UN project and District of implementation correlated with its rating of access as per the HAG rating. As can be seen, only one district is being tracked by the HAG for access issues. By implication, all other districts where interventions are taking place are relatively permissive with respect to security. Beneficiaries mention this imbalance of aid increases conflicts among residents of these districts and the provincial level. For example, mention was made of Jawand district in Badghis province where beneficiaries report no interventions from the UN, resulting in high food insecurity. It is worth mentioning that Jawand is a district which scores among the highest with respect to the HAG index on conflict security and conflict spread. Another district mentioned where beneficiaries say the UN does not operate is

Shah Wali Kot district in Kandahar. Shah Wali Kot district ranks among the highest with respect to conflict intensity according to the HAG Index. Beneficiaries also reported tendency to focus interventions on more permissive districts. Mention was made of the distribution of schools per district where beneficiaries from Herat say 42 schools were established in one district, while only one school was established in Shindand district. Shindand district in Herat is assessed as having a very high level of conflict and scores an 8 on the HAG Index with respect to conflict, when the average is score is 2.3.

Number	Project	Duration	Province	District	Is the district among 100 hard to reach?
1	Child-Centred Disaster Risk Reduction (CCDRR) Project	Phase I: (Nov 2012-Dec 2013) Phase II: (Jan 2014 - Mar 2015)	Balkh	Dehdadi	No
				Marmal	No
				Sholgara	Yes
				Charkent	No
			Jawzjan	Aqcha	No
				Sheberghan	No
				Khowajadoku	No
				Khanaqa	No
			Sar-e-pul	Sanchrak	No
				Gosfandi	No
				Saripul Centre	No
				Sayad	No

Figure 5: Access status of UN Intervention

Overall, in most provinces, there were different views between provincial government key informants and beneficiaries with respect to relevance of UN interventions. Provincial government key informants were more likely to be positive with respect to UN interventions, while beneficiaries were less likely to express positive opinions regarding the relevance of UN interventions.

In most of the provinces, the provincial government key informants stated that the coordination with them, at least at implementation stage, is adequate. But beneficiaries and CDCs mention a lack of coordination between them and the UN at implementation. They specifically mention a lack of guidance regarding community-level government involvement to, for example, perform their monitoring role in order to ensure the highest possible effectiveness.

The relevance of gender-related interventions in UN projects varies from one province to another. For example, beneficiaries in the central region are more likely to say the UN’s support covers both males and females equally. However, in some provinces such as in the East and Southeast beneficiaries say women have received very limited assistance compared to men. Beneficiaries say that UN interventions around making women independent economically are not having

desired effect. Beneficiaries stated that the UN trained women on various occupational skills, but these trainings were not effective because they could not find a market for these occupations³¹. Beneficiaries also say that attempts at changing norms around equality as well as women, the form of public awareness campaigns, is sometimes not suitable for Afghanistan.

An example raised regarding the gender disparity with respect to UN interventions mentioned by beneficiaries is the issue of compensation for households where there was a loss of life due to conflict. Beneficiaries mentioned that the UN does not consider women as martyred even if they have lost their lives in war. Beneficiaries say that when the UN assists the families of the martyred, they only consider men as martyred. In addition, women beneficiaries stated that access to healthcare services for women is not efficient, and the mother and child mortality rate remained one of the key challenges in most provinces despite perceived high levels of expenditures to lower the mortality rate. In most of the provinces, women also raised the issue of their empowerment in decision-making processes. They stated that women are still not involved in most of the key decisions and processes, despite consistent and long-standing efforts on the part of the UN to remediate this.

3.2. Effectiveness

³¹ The evaluation team did not have access to the original transcripts of beneficiary consultations. The majority of evidence was derived from facilitator debriefings conducted post consultations. Analysis of the debriefing materials indicated that responses regarding the marketability of occupational skills were expressed by women entrepreneurs.

³² OECD (2021), *Applying Evaluation Criteria Thoughtfully*, OECD Publishing, Paris, <https://doi.org/10.1787/543e84ed-en>.

Table 2: Achievement of Outcome Indicators by the UN³³

Outcome Indicators	Baseline (2017)	Target (2020)	Results (mid-year 2020)
Education 1 green and 3 yellow Overall, the education sector is progressing well. However, the disaggregated data shows that overall, girls benefit less than boys of this progress. It is also important to note that the Covid-19 pandemic is also affecting the progress made recently ³⁴ .			Cell colour code: Green: progress and target reached; Yellow: some progress but not all targets reached. Red: No progress or regressing. Blank: N/A or no data.
Survival/retention rate in primary education	84.2% (G: 83.9% & B: 84.4%)	85.75% (G:85.8% & G:85.7%)	85.1% (G: 82.6% & B: 86.5%)
Primary education (1-6 grades) net attendance rate	57% (G: 48% & B: 65%)	61%	61% (G: 45.5% & B: 65.5%)
Gender parity index in net primary attendance rate	0.74	0.75	0.79
Share of Development Partners in Education which align their support with NESP III and Annual Operational Plan	<60%	>90%	>70%
Food Security, Nutrition and Livelihoods 3 greens, 1 yellow, 5 N/A and 4 reds From the data presented below, the situation in this thematic group is difficult. While land irrigation indicators below are on the positive side, others linked to economic and agricultural well-being are regressing, and some extensively (e.g., yearly income of vulnerable families ³⁵ including women from the selling of livestock and agriculture products). Agriculture value chain is a big part of the Nexus between humanitarian and long-term development, so the related issues need to be addressed).			
% of food insecure population based on food security indicators	29%	26%	34%
Prevalence of stunting in children 0-59 months	41%	35%	37%
Prevalence of global acute malnutrition in children 6-59 months	9.5%	< 10%	N/A*
Prevalence anaemia in adolescent girls (10-19 years) and women of reproductive age (15-49 years)	girls = 31%; women =40%	girls = 26% women = 32%	N/A*

Percentage of breastfed children 6-23 months of age with minimum acceptable diet	15%	21%	N/A*
Average yearly income of vulnerable families including women from the selling of livestock and agriculture products	USD 800	USD 960	USD 642
Average irrigated/rainfed wheat production (MT/ha)	2.45/1.03	2.95/1.74	2.95 MT/Ha irrigated and 1.74 MT/Ha in rainfed
Rehabilitation of areas that come under the irrigation system (ha)	800,000	5,000 ha	4,050
# of national/provincial development and key sectoral plans in which climate change and disaster risk reduction are explicitly addressed (national/provincial/sectoral)	100	5	N/A
# of national/provincial operational early warning systems (national/provincial)	0	0	1
Unemployment rate, by sex (1), age and persons with disabilities (2)	17% (1); 35% (2)	15% (1) 28% (2)	18.3% male; 41% female (No information available for persons with disabilities)
% of subsidy for producer of agriculture products	75%	57%	N/A
% of provinces benefiting from strengthened agriculture value chains	35%	53%	26% = wheat 25% = soya
Heath 4 greens, 4 yellows and 4 reds Overall, the heath sector is progressing well. The indicators on polio show a bit of a deteriorating situation. Still, Over the last 10 years the coverage of primary health care services has steadily been increasing			

³³ Annex 6 contains detailed analysis of the thematic groups, informed by document review.

³⁴ As of October 2020, more than 9.5 million children in public schools and 500,000 children enrolled in community-based education classes, in addition to the 3.7 million out-of-school children in Afghanistan, have been out of school for nearly seven months starting from 14 March 2020, due to lockdowns imposed to control the spread of COVID-19. UN Women Covid 19 Gender Alert for Afghanistan, Issue#15. See annex 6 for more details.

³⁵ Income and expenditure poverty remain widespread. Child poverty is particularly pernicious. Afghanistan's poverty statistics remain unacceptably high, with 55%³⁵ of the population falling below the USD1.25/day global poverty threshold in 2017. Multi-dimensional poverty varies by region, by gender, social class and by access to resources. Unsurprisingly, poverty is particularly severe in rural areas characterized by low productivity, poor market integration, and recurrent shocks and deep-rooted criminal economy. Afghanistan National Peace and Development Framework (ANPDF) 2017-2021. https://cso-of-afghanistan.shinyapps.io/ALCS_Dashboard/ (site last visited on June 21st) See annex 6 for additional data and analysis.

in Afghanistan, and this has led to improvements in the delivery of services ³⁶ .			
% of children fully immunized	47%	60%	51.4%
% of out-of-pocket expenditure by household	73%	60%	75%
% of population in rural areas using improved sanitation facilities	33% (2015)		53%
Under Five Mortality Rate (Per 1,000 LBs)	70	55	62
Maternal Mortality Ratio (Per 100,000 LBs)	est 629	638	638
% skilled birth attendance	58%	59%	59%
% Contraceptive Prevalence Rate	20%	20%	18.9%
Number of polio cases (Interruption of wild polio virus circulation and maintain polio free status)	14	0	37
% of polio vaccine requirement that has been (i) procured; (ii) delivered on time to provinces	100% (108 million doses)	104 million doses	33,396,000 doses; 76% delivered to the region and 24,283,00 bOPV doses in the pipeline.
% of Timely (24 - 48h) identification and response to the impact of emergencies on population health	54% (750,000)	60%	92%
Case detection rate for all forms of tuberculosis	69%	85%	73%
Mortality between ages 30 and 70 years from cardiovascular diseases, cancer, diabetes or chronic respiratory diseases	31% (2014)	0	32% (2018) Cardiovascular disease (21%), Cancer (8%), Chronic Respiratory Disease (3%),
Return and Reintegration³⁷ 3 greens, 2 yellows, 5 reds and 3 N/A Concerning the return and reintegration thematic sector, results are quite nuanced and although there is some progress around getting			

³⁶ Levels and Trends in Child Mortality, UN IGME, UNICEF (2015); Trends in maternal mortality, 1990-2015, UN WHO (2015) <https://childmortality.org/data/Afghanistan> All data extracted from Data UNICEF, <https://data.unicef.org/country/afg/>; United Nations Development Assistance Framework for Afghanistan 2015-2019. (Sites last visited on June 21 2021). More details can be accessed in Annex 6.

³⁷ Approximately 1 in 4 Afghans have been displaced at one point in their lives and since 2002 more than 6 million Afghans have returned from neighbouring countries. Over 820,000 Afghans returned from the Islamic Republic of Iran and Pakistan in 2018. This includes 13,600 refugees and 32,000 undocumented returnees from the Islamic Republic of Pakistan and some 2,000 refugees and over 770,000 undocumented returnees from the Islamic Republic of Iran. Returns to Afghanistan, Joint IOM UNHCR Summary Report, 2018. More details can be found in annex 6 below.

counterparts more involved, the actual results linked to improvements for the targeted population are somewhat scarce.			
Number of persons of concern with access to basic services (by type and gender disaggregated).	95,500	135,200	110,966
Number of communities with improved access to infrastructure (productive and economic) facilities.	23	123	20
% returnee and IDP communities (from Pakistan & Islamic Republic of Iran) represented in local CDCs and Shuras	25%	70% UNHCR 5% Habitat	45%
% of target population with improved access to land and security of tenure	0	5	
# of target population with improved housing	0	5	
# of businesses established through business support for returnees, IDPs and host communities including seed capital grant, production/tool kits, entrepreneurship /business guidance and training	401	16,670	3
# of returnees, IDPs and host communities receiving job placement (men & women)	366	230	300 returnees started jobs or were self-employed in their own micro-businesses
# of returnees, IDPs and host communities receiving TVET trainings (men & women)	18,036	720	225
# of Persons of Concern with specific needs (PSN) receiving livelihoods support through cash, vouchers, seed capital grant etc.	7,401	13,600	2,073
# of Afghans who have returned voluntarily in safety and dignity through UNHCR's Voluntary Repatriation and IOM's Cross Border / Assisted Voluntary	166,937	317,000	377
Counterparts (development agencies including UN agencies, WB, Chamber of Commerce) are engaged in strategic planning and implementation	Yes/No	Yes	Yes
Counterparts (private sector) are engaged in strategic planning and implementation	Yes/No	Yes	Yes
% people (returnees, IDPs, host communities) benefitting from inter-agency response initiatives	5%	3%	
Rule of Law and Governance 1 green, 2 yellows and 9 N/A What categorizes this thematic sector is mainly the lack of data to inform the indicators. Still, three of them do show some progress on			

certain elements ³⁸			
% of population perceiving the dispute resolution institutions as fair and trusted: a) Huquq department; b) state court; c) local shuras/jirgas	a) 74 b) 63 c) 82	a) 79 b) 69 c) 88	a) 73 b) 66 c) 81
Perceptions about the number of authorities involved in corrupt practices (i) judge & magistrates; (ii) Natl Govt Officers; and (iii) Police	(i) 62%; (ii) 49%; 40%	(i) 53%; (ii) 40%; 31%	N/A as Perception survey is delayed due to COVID-19
Availability of revised and approved regulations, procedures and plans for (1) voter registration, (2) candidate nominations, (3) polling procedures and (4) results management are adopted and implemented by the IEC. (Score: 1-4)	0	4	4
Percentage of electoral complaints, which are timely adjudicated by the ECC as per the national electoral legal framework (applicable only during electoral years)	2014 Baseline: 8,994 complaints adjudicated, 100%	TBD (Not sure of what is the next elections process)	N/A (Not sure of what is the next elections process)
Number of decentralization policies developed that are referenced in the Sub- National Governance Policy and Governance National Priority Plan. (subject to the number of decentralization policies referenced in the SNGP)	0 (SNGP and Governance NPP are not yet developed)	1 Local Administrative Law to be developed; 2 SNGP new phase to be developed; 3 Strengthening the Civil Society Working Group.	Result as of 30 June 2020 Initial draft of the Local Administration Law has been completed, Mapping of conflict and dispute resolution mechanisms in the district level planned.
% of females in the civil service	22.48% (2016 survey)	25%	N/A (Survey not yet conducted).

³⁸ The Afghan government's efforts to improve governance and state effectiveness, and social capital and nation building are guided the High Council on Reforms, the High Council on Service Delivery, and the High Council on Rule of Law and Anti-Corruption, and the High Council on Poverty Reduction, Service Delivery and Citizen's Engagement. The adoption and coming into force of the Anti-Corruption Law and the Whistle Blower Protection Law was of significant achievement for the implementation of the Anti-Corruption strategy (2017) for the country. The Anti-Corruption Law was submitted in October 2018, but it is still pending approval by the parliament despite calls from donors to expedite the process at the 2020 Afghanistan Conference in Geneva. The strategy expired in 2019 and development of a successive strategy is delayed by Covid-19. See annex 6 for additional data on this subject.

% of females who are decision-makers in government positions: a) parliamentary staff; b) provincial council; c) out of rank; d) over rank; e) Grade I; f) Grade II; g) Grade III; h) Above over rank	a) 31.3; b) 21.7; c) 20.3; d) 14; e) 4; f) 6.7; g) 11.3; h) 6	a) 31.3; b) 21.7; c) 20.3; d) 14; e) 6; f) 8; g) 12; h) 7	N/A (Survey not yet conducted).
a% of recommendations referred to in the final report on progress against NAPWA 2007- 2017 implemented	0	0	0
Level of safety and security at district level: % who believe (A) security improved; (B) security situation has no positive or negative change; (C) security has deteriorated in the past 12 months.	a) 16% b) 24 c) [COMPLETE]	a) 16 b) 24 c) [COMPLETE]	N/A perception survey is delay due to COVID-19
% of the population confident in reconciliation efforts between the Government and Taliban.	52.3%	52.3	N/A perception survey is delay due to COVID-19
% of population perceiving that the Afghan National Police helps improve security	83%	83%	N/A perception survey is delayed due to Covid 19
Number of narcotics traffickers prosecuted at the Counter Narcotics Justice Center	660	TBD 800	

Evaluation questions

- To what extent has the UNCT contributed to, or is likely to contribute to, the outcomes defined in the UNDAF/One UN for Afghanistan?
- How responsive and strategic was the UNCT in addressing emerging and emergency needs?

Evaluation sub questions

As demonstrated in the table above, out of 54 indicators from the various thematic covered, 11 (or 20.4%) show some progress but are not reaching the set targets, 17 (or 31.5%) are N/A or do not have data, 13 (or 24.1%) have progressed and reached the set targets and 14 (or 25.9%) have regressed.

1.1. *Has the UNCT been effective in coordinating and mobilizing resources of the various UN agencies, government, and donors to achieve government outcomes?*

Based on a document review combined with perceptions articulated by many key informants both internal and external to the UN, the UNCT has been effective in coordinating and mobilizing the programme-level resources of individual UN agencies. Based on a review of UNCT and One UN documents, the UNCT through its coordination platform, is able to associate programme resources of individual UN agencies to national development priorities (NPPs). The UNCT is also able to mobilize resources as an implementing partner to donor governments.

Some donor group key informants did mention a specific lack of progress on results related to polio intervention outcomes. This fact is also mentioned in the formative component of this evaluation, specifically in Table 2. UN agency key informants highlighted the coordination between agencies related to health with respect polio interventions. However, the context is that polio interventions are hampered by a complex environment where Anti-Government Elements (AGE) actively discourage communities under their influence to receive vaccinations against polio. In April 2019 for a period of five months AGEs imposed a nationwide ban on all vaccinations, exposing nearly 10 million children to the poliovirus. Similarly, the emergence of Covid 19 pandemic disrupted polio campaigns and other essential health services for a period of four months creating immunity gaps which has resulted in an increase in polio cases in the country³⁹.

There are some good examples of UN interagency effective coordination such as work conducted by UN Women on eliminating gender-based violence. There was indeed a good “one voice” approach on that front, through strong advocacy work.

³⁹ *Polio eradication: reaching every child in Afghanistan with polio vaccine* downloaded at: <https://www.unicef.org/afghanistan/polio-eradication>

1.2. Are the institutional capacity building components of the Cooperation Framework likely to contribute to the outcomes defined in the UNDAF/One UN for Afghanistan?

Government counterpart key informants expressed mixed views with respect to the capacity building components of the cooperation framework. For government key informants of line ministries where interventions were directly supported by UN agencies, perception of capacity building was uniformly positive. They believed that UN system support at the agency level contributed to a more effective delivery of services. On the other hand, those government counterparts who were responsible for the overall strategic planning of national development objectives, perceptions are less positive. These government key informants believed that the level of capacity development government-wide could be more effective. First, these government key informants mentioned that there exists a cadre of qualified local nationals who could fill senior positions in government, which are now filled by foreign nationals, supported by UN agency program resources. Second, it is clear that although there is capacity building done by the UN, the results of this support do not lead to results because the trained qualified local nationals tend to leave government after a period of time.

Key informants across all stakeholder categories mentioned the issue of retaining donor-trained members of the professional civil service (Tashkeel), who leave the civil service workforce for higher wages in the private sector or for international donor organizations. It is the finding of this evaluation that this does not mean the issue of retention of trained members of the Tashkeel is something that is not in the control of the international donor community. Potential solutions such as standardization of pay scales across the government, private sector, and international donor community, will need tight coordination between these stakeholders.

Key informants from both central ministries and line ministries mentioned that the UN should concentrate on strengthening Ministry systems to the point where transitional solutions such as PMUs are no longer needed. Given the discussion above, using M&E terminology, the UN system is perceived to be effective in delivering immediate (i.e., programme level) outcomes, however perceptions of government counterpart key informants are that the UN is less effective in delivering Government-wide capacity building results (i.e., intermediate outcomes).

2.1. How effective was UNCT in mobilizing UN Agencies, counterparts, and donors in support of government response plans for COVID-19?

UNCT worked in a well coordinated manner during the Covid-19 situation. An important element of what made the country team effective was the common messaging approach. A lot of the UN work on this issue was about raising public awareness. The prevention campaign, “Salamn for Safety”, involved WHO, UNDP, UNICEF, OCHA, WFP just to name a few. The UNCT also provided support linked to strengthening the reporting process on the pandemic. Good progress has been made on that front although the government is still struggling to collect exhaustive data on the country’s situation.

From the latest data available from the WHO, here are a few indicators informed:

- a. 28 laboratories in 21 provinces (Five in Kabul, two in Faryab and two in Hirat and one for the 12 others, on per province) with capacities to do 8,200 tests per day. In addition, 289 laboratory staff trained in PCR testing;
- b. 38 ventilator machines, more than 1,064 oxygen concentrators, close to eight million masks supplies to government (overall 13.2 million⁴⁰);
- c. 11.8 million screened at Points of Entry (PoE) with 474 Rapid Response Team trained and deployed.
- d. 1,800 TV spots, over 160,000 radio spots and more than 70,000 community awareness session conducted.
- e. Vaccination: 500,000 civilians plus military and law enforcement have been vaccinated at least once and 2,000 vaccinators trained⁴¹.

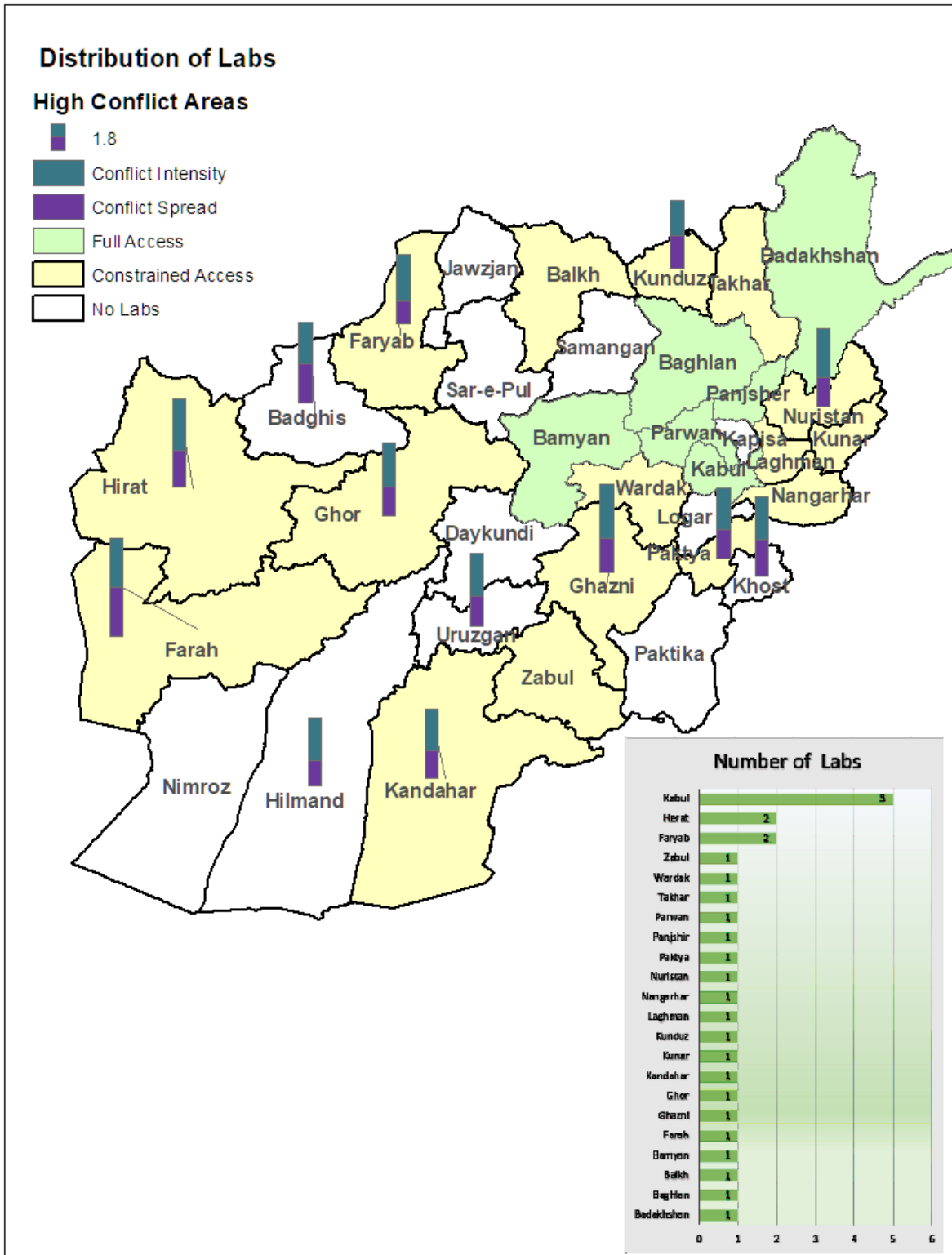
As of 25 August 2021, there have been 152,722 infections and 7,090 coronavirus-related deaths reported in the country since the pandemic began. Infections are decreasing with 65 new infections reported on average each day, which is 3% of the peak recorded in May/June this year.⁴² The country has administered 1,201,286 doses of vaccination. In March 2020, the MoPH developed the National Emergency Response Plan for COVID-19, in collaboration with the World Health Organization (WHO). WHO's support has been focused on nine pillars, guided by the COVID-19 ONE UN Health Response Plan. A multidisciplinary team from WHO's Regional Office for the Eastern Mediterranean reviewed the ongoing response to COVID-19 in October last year and identified gaps and potential risks and provided recommendations for strengthening response and control measures. The mission noted that despite having limited capacity to confirm and diagnose the virus, Afghanistan stepped up its capacity for identification and contact tracing through utilizing existing surveillance infrastructure. The mission also called for a "more institutionalized approach to protecting health care workers through improved infection prevention and control measures, especially in light of the infections occurring in health care settings."⁴³

⁴⁰ The numbers differ between WHO documentation and ONE UN documentation(One UN Covid Response Update, Infographic, May 2021).

⁴¹ WHO Weekly Covid-19 Response update, June 10th 2021.

⁴² WHO Covid-19 Dashboard- Afghanistan

⁴³ <http://www.emro.who.int/afg/afghanistan-news/regional-covid-19-mission-to-afghanistan-concludes.html>



Map 1: Distribution of COVID labs by district and HAG conflict rating

Map 1 above depicts the location of COVID labs by district, as well as districts where there are no labs. It also, uses the HAG access rating index to score districts with labs on access. The ET also created a proxy indicator of security by combining district-level scores of provinces on conflict intensity and conflict spread. Scores for districts with the highest levels of conflict are also depicted on the map. The map shows that in addition to labs being located in areas scored as having no access issues, such as Kabul, labs are also located in provinces where conflict intensity is rated as high by the HAG index.

3.3. Efficiency

Evaluation Questions

- To what extent have outcomes been achieved with the appropriate amount of resources within the planned time-framed?

At the time this report was written, the Evaluation Team did not have available to them the necessary evidence to directly answer this evaluation question regarding efficiency. However, based on consultations with members of the OMT, one can make logical conclusions on the potential for individual UN agencies and the UN system as a whole to measure whether the appropriate amount of resources was expended for outcomes within a planned timeframe. Based on consultations with the OMT, the Evaluation Team is aware that groupings of UN agencies use either of two high-quality Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) systems. Therefore, it is highly likely that UN agencies using one of these two ERP's are able to effectively monitor outcomes achieved within the appropriate amount of resources, and within the planned timeframe, i.e., Results-based Budgeting. However, without a technology platform, such as a data warehouse (which is currently not implemented), that integrates the information from these two systems, it is difficult to imagine how Results-based Budgeting can take place at country level, or the process would be less efficient in the absence of a data warehouse. Additional information about the consolidation of business services within the UN system appears below.

As mentioned in the Limitations section of this report, the Evaluation Team (ET) was only able to conduct an exploratory financial analysis comparing cost of intervention with a comparable international donor. The exploratory financial analysis concentrated on one indicator of efficiency: administrative costs charged as a percentage of total budget. This analysis was conducted for two types of financial interventions. The ET compare the fees charged by UN-administered trust funds, Law and Order Trust Fund for Afghanistan (LOTFA) and the Humanitarian Access Fund (HAF), and one administered by the World Bank, Afghanistan Reconstruction Trust Fund (ARTF). All of these are multi-donor trust funds. The graph below presents the administrative fees reported for each of these trust funds in their annual reports over several years. As can be seen fees vary over a tight range.

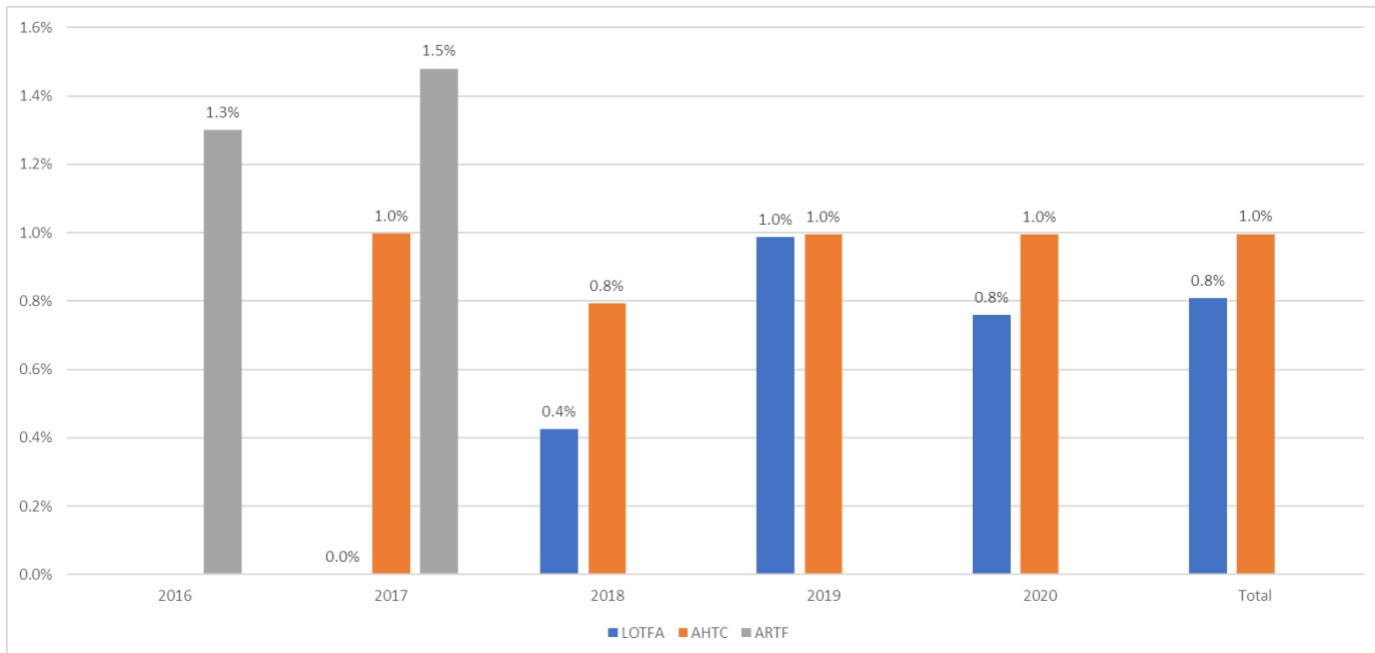


Figure 6: Administrative Fees of Multi-Donor Trust Funds in Afghanistan

A project level analysis of administrative costs was also conducted, but unlike for Multi-Donor Trust Funds budget information can only be gathered for UN projects only. Below are administrative costs for proposed projects submitted to MRRD by UN agencies. The ET makes no claim as to the representativeness of this data and is presented for illustrative purposes only. In order to place some perspective regarding the estimates of overhead presented in the table below, it is worth mentioning that Global Affairs Canada policy on fixed overhead rates for contribution agreements is 12%⁴⁴.

Table 3 Estimate of UN Project Overhead.

Name of the Project	Implementing Agency	Donor	Total Budget	Agency Fees	Project Execution Cost as % of Total budget
Adapting Afghan communities to climate-induced disaster risks	UNDP	GEF	\$ 5,600,000.00	\$ 532,000.00	9.50%

⁴⁴ Downloaded at

https://www.international.gc.ca/development-developpement/partners-partenaires/bt-oa/overhead-compensation_amendment.aspx?lang=eng

Name of the Project	Implementing Agency	Donor	Total Budget	Agency Fees	Project Execution Cost as % of Total budget
Building resilience of communities living around the Northern Pistachio Belt (NPB) and Eastern Forest Complex (EFC) of Afghanistan through an EbA approach.	UNEP	GEF	\$ 6,900,000.00	\$ 655,500.00	9.50%
Combating land degradation and biodiversity loss by promoting sustainable rangeland management and biodiversity conservation in Afghanistan.	FAO	GEF	\$ 5,906,850.00	\$ 561,150.00	9.50%
Afghanistan Rural Energy Market Transformation Initiative Strengthening Resilience of Livelihoods Through Sustainable Energy Access	UNDP	GCF	\$ 17,198,843.00		0
Climate change resilient livelihoods advanced in rural Afghanistan	UNDP	AF	\$ 9,432,556.00		0.00%
Afghanistan Anti-Corruption, Transparency, Integrity and Openness (ACTION)	UNDP	Denmark Embassy	\$ 4,264,392.00	\$ 315,881.00	7.41%

There is some anecdotal evidence which points to the fact that the overhead estimates depicted in the table are an underestimate. One factor mentioned by key informants which affected calculation of administrative fees is the use of vendors with Long-Term Agreements (LTAs) a key informant with direct knowledge of procurement in a UN agency mentioned that a procurement under an LTA would cost twice as much compared to a supplier that was not on an LTA. Mention was also made that working in a complex environment especially related to security adds to administrative costs as well. Other key informants mentioned the fact that international donors require robust auditing systems which also will add to costs.

Evaluation sub questions

1.1. To what extent are the UN systems able to accurately record performance on outcomes achieved, including SDGs?

The Humanitarian Country Team (HCT) platform and the UNCT development platform, composed of the PMT, Thematic Working Groups, OMT differ with respect to the extent to which these platforms accurately record performance on outcomes achieved, including SDG's.

On the HCT platform, for example, there exists a well-organized website, which describes the activities of the HCT, as well as information important to stakeholders of the platform including the work of the clusters in the sector/working groups. More importantly, there exists a specific sector/working group related to information management. Also, there exists directly on the site interactive dashboards by special topics, including the work of specific sector/working groups. Given the highly structured nature of the HCT's technology platform and strategic focus on information/knowledge management, the HCT's information/knowledge management systems are more likely to collect, analyse and present data and therefore is more likely to accurately record performance on outcomes achieved.

In addition, a valuable asset to the ability of the HCT to accurately record performance is the work of the Humanitarian Access Group (HAG), which regularly collects data on access to hard-to-reach areas at the district level, including proxy indicators for security (level of conflict intensity and conflict spread). The utility of the data captured by HAG is indicated by the fact that the ET used these proxy indicators of security and related it to the distribution of COVID testing labs.

On the development platform side, there does not exist analogous technology platforms, nor is there an explicit working group solely focused on information/knowledge management, related to capturing data on SDG measurement or other development-related indicators. A review of the UNCT website by the ET finds that the Home Page is mostly composed of links to individual UN agency websites. The development platform (i.e., the PMT, Thematic Working Groups, OMT) given the level of sophistication of its technology platform, as well as level of strategic focus on information/knowledge management, is less likely, compared to the HCT, to accurately record performance on outcomes achieved, including SDGs. In addition, there is no analogous data collection structure similar to the HAG on the humanitarian side, collecting systematically, performance on SDGs or other development-related indicators.

1.1 Has the Cooperation Framework reduced transaction costs for UN Agencies, in their interactions with external stakeholders?

OMT has developed a comprehensive strategy for implementing Business Operations Strategy 2 (BOS 2.0), in order to reduce transaction costs within the UN system as well as with external stakeholders. The OMT has organized technical working groups to implement specific aspects of BOS 2.0. It is also important to note that the consolidation of administrative services across all UN agencies in Afghanistan depends largely on agreements reached at the global headquarters

level. Specifically, agreements to use Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) systems are made at global headquarters. Therefore, it is not easy to consolidate business services on one technology platform at the country level. UN agency key informants mentioned that the consolidation of business services such as locating housing and work premises in compounds does reduce transaction costs. This is especially true for smaller UN agencies. More than one key informant from smaller UN agencies mentioned the fact that their organization could not maintain a physical presence in-country, if not for the existence of these compounds.

However, more work is needed by the UN system to reduce the costs to it for supporting a given Line Ministry. Key informants in the UN system mention that multiple agencies will fund several positions for the same specialist technical function in a Line Ministry. International NGO UN implementing partners also mentioned the need for the UN system to further consolidate business services, in order to reduce their transactions costs and by extension that of the UN system. A key informant of an INGO which worked with more than one UN agency mentioned the fact that not all UN agencies have the same budgeting, procurement, or HR processes. This imposes a burden, so much so that a single person has to perform several roles even if this is inefficient.

Key informants from the Donor Group of external stakeholders also mentioned actions that the UN system could take to reduce transaction costs, from their perspective (e.g. allow for sharing of individual agency resources with other agencies; increase use of local resources, ensure goods and services are procured for the system as a whole instead of for individual agencies). A specific mention was made about the need to consolidate budgeting and financial processes of UN agencies, specifically the management of the treasury function. A donor group key informant, working with multiple UN agencies as implementing partners, mentioned that it was inefficient for donors to deposit funds for implementation into separate UN agency bank accounts.

1.3. Has the Cooperation Framework increased the level of joint cooperation between UN agencies?

Based on key informant consultations both internal and external to the UN, the status quo with respect to joint cooperation between UN agencies is joint reporting. The hypothetical next level for joint cooperation would be joint programming. However, from the perspective of some key informants, joint programming to the exclusion agency-specific programming is not ideal. Greater detail on this issue is presented in other sections.

1.4. To what extent does One UN contribute to UN Agencies' capacity to efficiently collect evidence of SDG and A-SDG results achieved?

A review of evaluation documents from different UN agencies confirms that individual UN agencies can report against SDG results achieved with respect to their programmes. Many respondents mentioned the fact that there is a lack of quality and reliable data to measure the progress the UN, as a system, is accomplishing, specifically at the outcome level. This, despite evaluations from the different UN agencies which address agency effectiveness, not the UN as a whole.

To ensure that the UN system is able to accurately report on its overall progress, it would have been necessary to map overall financing flows as part of the support to the national government in delivering the SDGs. This was not fully the case. Generally speaking, the UN has not costed and resourced its activities as per UNDAF guidance⁴⁵.

3.3 Sustainability

As was mentioned above, individual UN programmes do contribute to sustainable capacity building in the context of achieving immediate outcomes, such as when a UN agency directly supports the capacity of a technical unit of a Line Ministry. This extends not only to developing the skills of staff, but also with respect to developing sustainable systems and procedures. There is also evidence that the direct technical support provided by UN agencies will lead to long-term gains with respect to the capacity of government. An example is the development of legislation regulating the content of micronutrients in agriculture products such as flour. However, the evidence gathered from several sources suggest that the UN as well as other international donors need to do more to ensure that these immediate outcomes achieved forms the basis for long-term sustainability (i.e., intermediate outcomes). Specifically, this means that capacity building achieved at the programme level can be "handed off" completely to national government counterparts.

The existence of Project Management Units (PMUs) funded by international donors such as ARTF suggests parallel administrative systems exists in Line Ministries, indicating the need for further sustainable capacity building interventions on the part of the UN and other donors. The rationale for these PMUs is that capacity will eventually be transferred to the Line Ministry to administer project interventions supported by donors including the UN. Therefore, an indication that capacity building interventions of donors are sustainable in the long-run is a complete phasing out of PMUs.

Along with the existence of parallel systems in Line Ministries, which indicate more action on sustainable capacity building, there also exists the issue of a sustainable funding model which the national government can adopt on fully inheriting interventions supported by the UN and other donors. Government counterparts expressed the opinion that the funding model for donor supported interventions cannot be sustained by the national government. As an example, government counterpart key informants mention the use by the UN and other donors of international advisors to provide capacity building to line ministries, and who are paid international rates, which cannot be matched by the national government. The UN could further reduce transaction costs for external stakeholders such as government counterparts by ensuring that these external stakeholders are sufficiently able to take possession of UN-supported interventions.

It is also important to provide capacity to civil society organizations that have an important role to play in achieving long term development goals. Therefore, civil society organizations needing capacity support not only include sectoral actors such as agriculture producer groups, or business

⁴⁵ UN, 2017. UNDAF – ONE UN Afghanistan 2015-19- Mid-Term Review Report. P. 43

organizations but also those that advocate for human rights, peacebuilding, or rule of law. There is evidence that these civil society organizations can be used effectively by the UN system to timely receive feedback on the efficiency and effectiveness of its interventions and as a way of identifying potentially negative unintended results.

1. *To what extent did the UN system promote and support inclusive and sustainable socio-economic changes and growth?*

In the previous discussion, it was highlighted that government counterparts could not see a path to sustainability given the levels of funding required by the government to continue independently with UN-supported interventions. Therefore, an important path to sustainability is the development of a strategy for inclusive and sustainable socioeconomic growth. It is argued that a path to an inclusive and sustainable socioeconomic growth given the proportion of the Afghan population participating in the agriculture sector (see Table below), is the strengthening of the agriculture value chain, which is in turn related to the transition from humanitarian assistance to early recovery and onwards to long term development, i.e., the nexus. The importance of the agriculture value chain to the socioeconomic development of Afghanistan is highlighted in the report *Afghanistan to 2030: Background Paper, Computable General-Equilibrium Modelling of Afghanistan Growth Opportunities*⁴⁶ The report conducts a number of simulations which estimates the impact of, among other factors the agriculture sector on the growth of GDP. It finds that an increase in agriculture production has the second highest positive impact on GDP, increasing GDP to 5.7% from 4.5% of baseline. While the report is silent on the effect of greater agriculture productivity on public expenditures, it is reasonable to believe that all things being equal, greater prosperity means an increase in tax revenue. This in turn should decrease the funding gap for the delivery of government services which was expressed as a concern by government counterparts. Macroeconomic indicators for agriculture point to an increased need to strengthen agriculture productivity. In the last fiscal year, Afghanistan imported six times more agriculture products that it exported⁴⁷. The influence of illicit agriculture production, specifically opium, is also a factor affecting agriculture productivity, as it competes for arable land that could be used for licit agriculture production.

Table 2 presents indicators which measures performance of the agriculture food chain, and the UN's contribution to results achieved. Despite positive results on indicators of agriculture productivity, such as average irrigated/ rain-fed wheat production and rehabilitation of areas that come under the irrigation system, livelihoods indicators from agriculture and indicators related to food insecurity increased from baseline. As mentioned above, the percentage of food insecure population measured mid-year 2020 is higher than baseline. Also, average yearly income of vulnerable families including women from the selling of livestock and agricultural products has declined, measured from the first six months of 2020 compared to baseline.

⁴⁶ Downloaded from <https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/bitstream/handle/10986/30039/Background-paper-on-MAMS-model.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y>

⁴⁷ *Afghan Exports Dropped 21% in Last Fiscal Year* TOLO News <https://tolonews.com/business-170752>

Table 4 Labour Employment by Sector⁴⁸

	Unskilled labor	Low-skilled labor	Medium-skilled labor	Skilled labor	Total labor
Agriculture	45.8	23.7	15.1	3.4	29.0
Opium	7.2	3.7	2.4	0.5	4.6
Mining	0.1	0.1	0.0	0.0	0.1
Industry	17.3	19.1	10.7	5.3	14.1
Government (Civilian)	1.9	3.0	6.8	23.5	6.4
Government (Military)	6.4	8.4	25.0	15.6	12.9
Donation (Civilian)	1.0	1.6	3.5	12.2	3.3
Donacion (Military)	0.3	0.3	1.0	0.6	0.5
Private services	20.0	40.2	35.5	38.8	29.2
	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Evaluation Questions

- To what extent did the UN system support building national and local capacities to ensure long-term gains?
- To what extent did the UN system promote and support inclusive and sustainable socio-economic changes and growth?

Evaluation sub questions

- 1.1. *To what extent has the UN system been able to engage private sector and civil society partners to ensure long-term financial, economic, social and environmental gains?*

In order to describe the extent to which the UN system has been able to engage private sector and civil society partners to ensure long-term financial economic and social environmental gains, it is useful to compare and contrast how private sector and civil society engagement is integrated into the HCT in comparison to the UNCT's Structure to coordinate long-term development. As will be described in greater detail in the subsequent section on UN Coherence, the HCT platform fully integrates participation of civil society, into its Sector/Cluster platform for organizing

⁴⁸ *Afghanistan to 2030: Background Paper, Computable General-Equilibrium Modelling of Afghanistan Growth Opportunities*

humanitarian interventions in Afghanistan. The HCT affords observer status to INGOs, select donor groups, and an NGO umbrella organization, ACBAR. In contrast, the UNCT development platform does not formally integrate civil society actors into the platform. However, the UNCT actively engages with civil society, albeit outside of the formal structures of the development coordination platform. Also, UN system key informants with direct knowledge mention the development of a new NGO working group within the development coordination platform.

1.2. To what extent UN Agencies, local and national private sector and civil society partners are able to deliver against national and sub-national goals and objectives agreed to?

With respect to the development coordination platform, UN agencies deliver against national and subnational goals and agreed objectives with civil society, by engaging local NGOs and INGOs as implementers. As described in greater detail below, in the section on UN Coherence, individual UN agencies will conduct consultations with government counterparts to coordinate national and subnational objectives, by extension, local NGOs and INGOs are participating in the achievement of subnational goals and objectives as reflected in the coordinated Annual Work Plan of the UN agency. Therefore, ability to deliver on national and subnational goals, occurs outside of the development coordination platform at the UN agency level, which has an effect on UN Coherence, and will be described in the next section.

1.3. To what extent has the Cooperation Framework provided an enabling environment for the government to ensure long-term gains?

The Cooperation Framework is an appropriate structure to describe mutual obligations between the UN and Government. However, as the midterm review of the last Cooperation Framework, points out a greater effort to articulate the obligations of Government is desirable. As described in the Effectiveness section of this report, to resolve specific issues such as the retention of highly trained Tashkeel members requires mutual obligations on the part of the UN.

2.1. To what extent is there progress on UNDAF outcomes related to progress in the areas of human development, inclusive growth, livelihoods, resilience governance and rule of law?

The extent to which the UN contributed to progress on the UNDAF outcomes in the areas of human development, inclusive growth, livelihoods, resilience, governance and rule of law is described in Table 2

above. Further contributions of the UN to UNDAF outcomes in the areas mentioned above also appear in the latest Common Country Analysis, which is represented in the figure below.



Reflection of what has been achieved in the last 20 years

Substantial improvements in development outcomes: access to water, sanitation and electricity, education, and health services. Afghanistan catching up with other low-income countries against key development indicators (WB 2019)

Rule of Law - over 582 laws and regulations drafted, promoted or passed, creating enabling environment for sustainable governance functions

Women now constitute just over 30% of the civil service and overall, 11% of Government high level planning and leadership positions. Progress is made in girls' education and economic empowerment as well.

Afghanistan is signatory to all 9 major conventions and global development and human rights frameworks.

Figure 7: Presentation excerpt from initial findings of *UN Common Country Analysis and Future Strategy Recommendations*

3.4 UN Coherence

Evaluation Questions

- How has the UNDS reform been implemented in Afghanistan?
- To what degree has it strengthened the coherence of the UN system support in Afghanistan?
- To what extent did the UNDAF/One UN strengthen the position, credibility and reliability of the UN system as a partner for the Government of Afghanistan and other actors?
- To what extent did the UNDAF/One UN reduce transaction costs for partners through greater UN coherence and discipline?

Evaluation sub questions

1.1. *To what extent did the One UN promote or support policies that are consistent with each other and across sectors, given the multi-sectoral nature of social and economic development?*

The UN promotes and supports consistent, multi-sectoral policy development to the extent that platforms are in place within the UN system, for the coordination of humanitarian response as well

as long-term development. On the development side, the coordination platform consists of the UNCT, PMT, OMT, and the Thematic Working Groups. Evidence for the extent to which the development coordination platform promoted multi-sectoral policy development was derived from key informant interviews within the UN system. The process can be described in the following way, based on interviews with key informants having first-hand knowledge of the coordination platform. Individual UN agencies would align their Annual Work Plans with the UNDAF, and subsequently, as the coordination platform evolved, to Thematic Pillars. Individual UN agencies would then map their Annual Work Plans to the UNDAF, and later, to the relevant Thematic Pillars. Policy coordination, i.e., the coordination of UN agency Annual Work Plans, for the most part, would occur "bilaterally", outside of the coordination platform. The Thematic Working Groups would combine individual elements of UN agency Annual Work Plans and report on these as the activities related to the Thematic Pillar. Therefore, given the description of the process derived from UN system key informants with first-hand knowledge, policy coordination within the platform itself currently extends to coordination of reporting. According to key informants, any multi-sectoral coordination occurring outside of the platform depends on the individual initiatives of UN agencies.

It can be argued that a key to the development coordination platform evolving to become a multi-sectoral forum for policymaking is the PMT. Key informants with first-hand knowledge mention that, over the last few years, and notably since August 2019, the PMT has evolved and become higher functioning, increasing the chances of a formal platform for the coordination of multi-sectoral policy development.

Donor groups with which the UN interacts acknowledge not being aware of the UNCT development coordination platform. However, they are able to provide an opinion on the effects or level of coordination as an external stakeholder of the UN. Donor group key informants acknowledge that the context of Afghanistan is complex, and difficult to operate for all international actors. They also acknowledge that the reason donor countries, especially the smaller ones working in consortiums, engage with the UN as an implementing partner, is precisely because of the UN's reputation for working in complex environments. However, donor group key informants also mention that the UN system has the potential to improve its coordination. Also, the views expressed by the donor group key informants are consistent with those of UN system key informants with first-hand knowledge of the UNCT development coordination platform. Specifically, both expressed the opinion that the potential for coordination has increased in the near term. Donor group key informants mentioned that coordination performance was better for the Education and Health Thematics, which is a view expressed by UN key informants as well.

The UN also promotes and supports multi-sectoral policy development by participating in government counterpart technical coordination bodies. These groups are listed in Table 7 above. As can be seen, UN agencies participate in several government counterpart coordination mechanisms corresponding to the Thematic Working Groups. These include executive level coordination bodies in the form of High Councils. The UN also participates along with other donors in multi-sectoral coordination bodies. Not included in Table 7 above are coordination bodies within line ministries in which the UN participates as well.

In order to better describe how the development coordination platform composed of the PMT, OMT, and Thematic Working Groups promote or support policies that are consistent across sectors, it is useful to compare it with the UN platform which coordinates humanitarian response. Information on the Humanitarian Country Team (HCT) was derived from the HCT website⁴⁹ as well as information from interviews of UN system key informants, with direct knowledge. A finding of this evaluation is that the humanitarian coordination platform, based on the information contained in the HCT website, and information derived from key informant interviews is more mature in comparison to the development coordination platform. The Afghanistan HCT coordination platform is the standard structure, implemented across all countries in which the UN delivers humanitarian assistance. This is made up of technical sectors and clusters of stakeholders delivering for that sector, including a Cluster Lead Agency lead. There is also inter-cluster coordination, recognizing the need for a multi-cluster approach to humanitarian assistance. Clusters are also organized by global and national levels.

Other notable features of the HCT cluster in Afghanistan are sectors/working groups including a group for information management. Other knowledge management features of the HCT platform includes interactive dashboards. Based on interviews with UN system key informants, there exists a common funding framework for the platform, called the Afghanistan Humanitarian Fund. Comparing and contrasting the humanitarian platform in relation to the development platform will continue in the discussion below.

2.1. To what extent were the strategic interventions of the UNCT compatible with each other and with those of other development partners and the government so as to achieve the common goals/ outcomes and to deliver quality, integrated, SDG-focused policy support, particularly through joint programming?

As mentioned above, the fact that the UN participates in coordinating structures which involve multi-stakeholders including government counterparts and donor groups, organized by Thematic Area, means that there is potential for cross-sectoral and multi-stakeholder compatibility with respect to achievement of common goals/outcomes. The UN's participation in these bodies means that it can integrate into these interventions, SDG-focused policy support, enhancing the quality of such support. The UN's participation in these coordination bodies also raises the possibility of joint programming that is compatible with the strategic interventions of its development partners, including the government and donors. However, as mentioned above the status quo of the development cooperation platform composed of the PMT, Thematic Working Groups and OMT is for joint reporting, while joint programming remains an aspiration. However, as mentioned above, the OMT which it is asserted is the key to joint programming is becoming more and more highly functional, increasing the potential for the platform to become a body for joint programming. However, as mentioned earlier key informants, including government counterparts believe that joint programming should not completely replace individual UN agency

⁴⁹ <https://www.humanitarianresponse.info/en/operations/afghanistan/inter-cluster-coordination>

country programming. Key informants in the UN system believe there should be funding incentives for joint programming, instead similar to that of incentive funds at the global level.

The compatibility of UN agencies' interventions varies by sector. In some cases, the coordination of different agencies' work is easier to foster. For example, demining affects many of the other sectors and UNMAS seeks support from other UN agencies to support it in its endeavours where, although education is linked to other sectors, it is fully covered by UNICEF. This also relates to the fact that smaller agencies will be better off finding funds in collaboration with other agencies. Bigger agencies will normally be able to fund its initiatives on its own.

Even within agencies, programmes operate in silos one from the other, although clear efforts are now being implemented in reaction to this finding⁵⁰.

3.1. How effectively was the UNDAF/One UN used as a partnership vehicle?

Effectiveness of the UNDAF/ One UN as a partnership vehicle can be measured in two ways. The first is related to partnerships internal to UN i.e., coordination and cooperation between UN agencies. As mentioned above, coordination and cooperation, i.e., partnerships, is primarily related to joint reporting. The second measurement of partnership is related to collaboration between UN agencies and external stakeholders. There is no formal representation of external partners in the development platform. In contrast, external stakeholders are formally integrated into the HCT. For example, observer status is given to external stakeholders such as the Red Cross Movement, the Agency Coordinating Body for Afghan Relief and Development (ACBAR) and one donor representative (currently DG ECHO).

3.2. Has there been an increase in the availability of resources for implementation since progress on One UN, due to a reduction in transaction costs?

The Evaluation Team was not able to directly access documentary evidence that resources have become more available since progress on One UN, due to a reduction in transaction costs. However, a UN system key informant with direct knowledge of a report with respect to Business Operations Strategy Two (BOS2) projections cited an estimate in the document of "\$52-60 million" in savings.

4.1. To what extent did the UN system collectively prioritize outputs based on the needs (demand side) rather than on the availability of resources (supply side), and reallocate resources according to the collective priorities if necessary?

It is reasonable to assume that coordination of activities, leads to coordinated outputs. Within the HCT this is formally integrated into its structure, with its Sector/Cluster approach. With respect to coordination of activities for development, the potential is there for demand-driven, coordinated outputs by the UN System's participation in government counterpart-led, multi-stakeholder coordination bodies at executive and technical levels which are also organized by Thematic.

⁵⁰ UNICEF's Evaluation of UNICEF's coverage and quality in complex humanitarian situations: Afghanistan; pg 42, para-2-3

However, in contrast to the HCT, coordination of activities leading to outputs is currently limited to the mapping of activities developed by UN agencies individually, related by Thematic.

4.2. To what extent has the UNDAF/One UN facilitated the identification of and access to new financing partners?

With respect to the HCT, as mentioned above, there exists a specific financing instrument in the form of the Afghanistan Humanitarian Fund. There is no such equivalent on the development coordination platform. However, as mentioned above there exists partnership funds at the global level, but there is no such equivalent for the development platform at the country level in Afghanistan. Also, there is precedent for a donor to access financing partners in the private sector, philanthropic organizations such as: The Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, Google Challenge Fund, and Land O Lakes. However, it must be pointed out that such agreements with philanthropic organizations are reached the global level. Although the Evaluation Team is aware of a project in Ministry of Agriculture Irrigation and Livestock (MAIL) called Capacity Building Change Management Project (CBCMP), supported by the US State Department, implemented by International Executive Services Corps (IESC) and funded by Land O Lakes⁵¹.

4.3. Was UNDAF/One UN supported by an integrated funding framework and adequate funding instruments?

Answered above.

Findings

Findings	Conclusions	Recommendations ⁵²
Relevance		
1. Multiple key informants from different stakeholder groups both internal and external to the UN mentioned that at the agency level, UN programming's and AFPs' are overall aligned with stakeholders' priorities and needs. These positive perceptions extend to government counterparts who are directly supported by UN agency interventions. Those who are less positive about UN agency level programming are those with	1. The UN is in a unique position to resolve regional issues involving the strengthening of the agriculture value chain, such as the fact that agriculture imports to Afghanistan exceeds exports by many orders of magnitude. The UN is in a unique position to resolve issues of regional cooperation because it also works in countries that border on Afghanistan.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Recommendation #1 - Recommendation #2 - Recommendation #5 - Recommendations #9 - Recommendation #10 - Recommendation #11 - Recommendation #13

⁵¹ <https://iesc.org/tag/cbcmp/>

⁵² Please see below in the list of recommendations the detailed narrative.

Findings	Conclusions	Recommendations ⁵²
<p>responsibility for guiding national-level development policy.</p> <p>2. Based on the proxy indicator of security developed from the HAG dataset, 38 districts out of 100 tracked, score at or above average for conflict. It is demonstrated below that these districts are not necessarily inaccessible to the UN for humanitarian interventions. However, the same cannot be said for long-term development interventions. Government's legitimate claim to ownership of these interventions would pose issues of access in these areas of conflict.</p> <p>3. UNDAF - ONE UN, although generally seen as critical for UN planning, is not necessarily seen by all key informants as the best tool that makes the UN relevant for national stakeholders. Key informants mentioned that another option would be to fully adopt ANPDF2 framework. However, the ET finds that this might not be a viable option, without the cooperation and coordination of other stakeholders to the government, and not just the UN. This is because, the UN also acts as implementing partner to donors, who will also need to be convinced to integrate their development results into the ANPDF2 framework.</p> <p>4. Outcome/ sector groups and Working groups are useful ways of keeping UN's work relevant for the national government institutions, because government-led coordination bodies are similarly structured.</p> <p>5. The UN's position, credibility and reliability as a partner for the government has deteriorated over the period covered by the evaluation. Some of these perceptions have some basis in fact. For example, donor country key informants expressed a preference for engaging UN</p>	<p>2. Not working in a coordinated, coherent manner renders the scaling of solutions difficult. In this case, "coordinated" refers to opportunities for multi-stakeholder dialogue. As was mentioned above, HCT explicitly integrates multi-stakeholder dialogue into its platform. The development platform is not as mature with respect to this type of coordination. A lack of this type of coordination also has an effect on scaling up, in this case it means access to as many districts as possible. A lack of stakeholder engagement, especially with government counterparts, leads to their perceptions that their legitimate right to ownership of development policy is not respected. This is a disincentive for the government to facilitate access to as many communities as possible for the delivery of long-term development interventions, therefore hampering efforts to scale long-term development efforts on the part of the UN.</p> <p>3. If there is a peaceful transition, the political mission might become less important and the UNCT might then become prominent. Therefore, it is even more important to strengthen the current development platform.</p> <p>4. UN's approach to the nexus of humanitarian and development interventions should continue to strengthen the agriculture value chain, given its importance to Leaving No One behind, as it is a source of livelihoods for a significant proportion of the Afghan population.</p>	

Findings	Conclusions	Recommendations ⁵²
<p>agencies as implementing partners because: of its reputation for delivering humanitarian assistance; the transparency and quality of its administrative systems; expertise on normative interventions such as human rights gender equality and Leaving No One Behind. Therefore, the potential value of non-core budget funding streams is potentially proportionately greater than for core budget for UN agencies. This then forms the foundation for perceptions of certain government counterparts (emphasis on certain) that the UN is in "competition" with the government for donor support.</p> <p>7 With respect to the relevance of UN interventions to direct beneficiaries, humanitarian assistance is generally seen as relevant, although this perception is blunted by the perception that humanitarian interventions are not always delivered in a timely manner.</p> <p>8. The more local (i.e. District level) the focus on interventions, the less positive the perceptions. Specifically, more permissive districts are seen to be over-served with interventions while less secure areas are under-served or not at all served.</p> <p>9. Taking a gender lens, beneficiary perceptions are that the UN could to more to develop relevant gender-based programming. A specific example was given about over-emphasizing the changing of attitudes regarding the position of women in society while not putting enough emphasis on making sure that women are able to make a living.</p>		
Effectiveness		

Findings	Conclusions	Recommendations ⁵²
<p>1. The HCT platform is responsive and strategic in delivering humanitarian assistance. Overall, the UN system has been effective in addressing the Covid-19 pandemic in a coordinated manner.</p> <p>2. It is difficult to assess the progress towards A-SDGs with recent monitoring (the latest dates back to 2017).</p> <p>3. The outcomes defined in the UN UNDAF/One UN for Afghanistan (the A-SDGs) are not all being achieved and so the UN is not fully contributing to their realization. While not part of Table 2 detailing achievement of our communicators by the UN, key informants mentioned process related indicators, which can be considered as achieved. There is evidence that capacity building at the technical level provided to government counterparts yielded results. These are a direct result of UN interventions and therefore are considered immediate outcomes achievement.</p> <p>4. However, there are UN interventions which are not seen as particularly effective. One such example, is the retention of highly trained UN supported staff in the Tashkeel. As mentioned above, this specific issue requires the close cooperation of government counterparts and international donors, including the UN.</p>	<p>1. The HCT platform is more mature than the development platform, especially with respect to integrating fully, multi-stakeholder consultations, a structure for collecting, analysing, and visualizing data, as well as an explicit strategic focus on information/knowledge management.</p> <p>2. As mentioned above, the development platform lacks a proper strategy for knowledge/information management in the collection of data to measure progress on results specifically SDGs A-SDGs</p> <p>3. For those government counterparts who were directly supported by UN agency interventions within Ministry units, perceptions are uniformly positive that capacity building activities are effective. There is also factual evidence which leads to the finding that technical support, for example around legislation regulating agriculture food products is an indication that the support given by the UN is effective.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Recommendation #1 - Recommendation #2 - Recommendation #5 - Recommendation #9 - Recommendation #10 - Recommendation #11 - Recommendation #13
<p>Efficiency</p>		
<p>1. External stakeholders (specifically, government counterparts) mentions operational costs as too high, and business services are not coordinated, leading to inefficiencies that affect project and program activities. On the other hand, UN key informants especially those from smaller agencies say that if not for</p>	<p>1. The ET could not make any definitive conclusions with respect to expenditures, given the information available at the time this report was written. Theoretically, the ET was promised expenditure information subnational level for specific provincial governments, which should have been</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Recommendation #2 - Recommendation #14

Findings	Conclusions	Recommendations ⁵²
<p>consolidation of premises for work and shelter in compounds, they would not be able to operate in-country. With respect to the COVID pandemic, and its effect on the efficiency of UN interventions, mention was made that mobility restrictions did affect delivery of interventions. However, those with direct knowledge also mentioned that re-establishing staff to the field occurred relatively early in the pandemic.</p> <p>2. Some government counterparts mention that the UN does not make available enough financial information to calculate its true cost of delivering long-term interventions. Specifically, government counterparts mentioned that, when UN agencies are asked for a portfolio review, there is not a sufficient mapping of overall financing flows with respect to the national government delivering the SDGs.</p> <p>3. A subgroup of government counterparts mentioned that the UN is not sufficiently demonstrating effectiveness of UN interventions on a national scale.</p> <p>4. The OMT is taking concrete steps to implement BOSS2. In addition, projected benefits of implementing BOSS2 range from between 50 and \$60 million. Also, much of the decisions which would make the consolidation of business services into a single technology platform occur at the global headquarters level.</p>	<p>provided by UN agencies. But this information was not provided by the provincial governor's office, in time for this valuation report. The same information was hypothetically available from the Ministry of Finance; however, this too is not available at the time of this writing.</p> <p>2. As per the HAG data set, cross-validating this with evidence from other secondary sources, and with key informant perceptions, there are about 100 districts that are inaccessible to long-term development interventions. This does not seem to be the case for humanitarian interventions, as described above, where evidence is that with respect to humanitarian assistance, the UN can access areas rated as high in conflict..</p> <p>3. The modest financial analysis conducted for this evaluation demonstrates that the administrative fees charged by the UN broadly fall within international norms. As discussed in the sustainability section of the findings, the underlying issue is not necessarily about the efficiency of donor-administered foreign aid but fostering economic growth in the Afghan economy so that government is able to generate enough revenues to create robust international-standard systems for the administration of government services.</p>	
Sustainability		
<p>1. For many government counterpart key informants, the issue related to UN partnership is about ownership of long-term development policy. For government</p>	<p>1. The ET has collected information demonstrating that participation of the UN in several multi-stakeholder coordination bodies led by the</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Recommendation #1 - Recommendation #5 - Recommendation #9 - Recommendation #10

Findings	Conclusions	Recommendations ⁵²
<p>counterparts from Ministries whose role is to set strategic direction or national development policy, there is general negative perception about the sustainability of interventions and the link to national development goals.</p> <p>2. Key informants and government express reservations about being able to independently manage interventions handed off to them by UN agencies. They mention that government counterparts asked to take over UN activities prematurely when they are not sufficiently capacitated to do so. A specific mention was made that the funding model for UN interventions is not something that the government can sustain.</p>	<p>government, both at the executive and technical levels, organized by theme. Given this level of multi-stakeholder engagement on the part of the UN, there exists a strong potential for sustainability of UN interventions</p> <p>2. The issue of the lack of access for development interventions is complicated. Limited access, therefore, reinforces the negative sentiments already existing on the part of government counterparts, resulting in a negative feedback loop.</p> <p>3. Donor sector currently makes up 3.3% of the Afghan labour force⁵³. The productivity of the Afghan economy has to be increased so that it can produce domestically the revenues required to reduce dependence on foreign aid, while at the same time generating the necessary funds to sustain interventions currently delivered by UN agencies and other international donors.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Recommendation #11 - Recommendation #15 - Recommendation #16
UN Coherence		
<p>1. During an external shock such as the COVID pandemic, a political response is less important than the technical one. According to key informants, this has a tendency to increase coordination between UN agencies, and its external stakeholders, including government counterparts. There is no analogous process when it comes to long-term development, that will drive UN agencies to coordinate system wide.</p> <p>2. UN agency coordination, system-wide in the context of long-term</p>	<p>1. As discussed above, government ownership involves a political dimension. As the process becomes politicized, and in fact a UN political response may be required to drive coordination.</p> <p>2. The functioning of the long-term development platform to be used as a true UN system-wide coordination mechanism, depends on the integration of elements into the platform such as multi-stakeholder participation, a process for gathering evidence of results</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Recommendation #3 - Recommendation #4 - Recommendation #6 - Recommendation #7 - Recommendation #8 - Recommendation #10 - Recommendation #12 - Recommendation #15 - Recommendation #16 - Recommendation #17 - Recommendation #18 - Recommendation #19

⁵³ *Afghanistan to 2030: Background Paper, Computable General-Equilibrium Modelling of Afghanistan Growth Opportunities*

Findings	Conclusions	Recommendations ⁵²
<p>development interventions, has improved in a sense that the PMT, which it is argued is the key to inter-agency coordination of long-term development activities, is as higher-functioning as ever before.</p> <p>3. A common fund for inter-agency programming represents an important element of joint programming and mentioned by key informants within the UN system.</p>	<p>achieved on long-term development indicators, including SDGs and A-SDGs, and a focus on the use of information and knowledge management to drive decision-making with respect to interventions in each thematic area.</p> <p>3. A UN key informant with direct knowledge mentioned the fact that a Social Protection fund is being planned for the long-term development platform. This would represent another important element that would make the PMT, Thematic Working Group, OMT Groups evolve into a fully functioning long-term development platform. This is because, similar to the Humanitarian platform, the long-term development platform will have its own funding facility independent of the individual UN agencies.</p> <p>4. While it would be an exaggeration to say that the UN enjoys broad-based support in government, it is also inaccurate to say that the UN does not have its supporters in the government. When asked to provide opinions in confidence subgroups of government counterparts freely admitted the positive effects of UN interventions both on the humanitarian and long-term development sides. At technical level, government counter-part relationships are good where government counterparts were directly supported by UN agency interventions in their technical units. Executive leadership (i.e., Ministers and Deputy Ministers) are more positive about counterpart relationships at the technical level versus those lower down the management hierarchy, and who are not directly supported by UN agency interventions. Those who are least satisfied with the interventions of the UN are those key informants who belong to Ministries that</p>	

Findings	Conclusions	Recommendations ⁵²
	<p>manage overall national development policy.</p> <p>5. The need for a common fund and joint programming should be balanced against other key informant perceptions, . A that individual UN agencies should continue to program independently in order to take advantage of each UN agencies' specific expertise.</p>	

3.4. Conclusions

The findings of the evaluation suggest that when speaking about relevance effectiveness, and sustainability of UN interventions, it is useful to distinguish between immediate and intermediate outcomes. The evidence from this evaluation shows that the UN can demonstrate achievement of expected outcomes as a direct result of its interventions. UNCT does have the systems in place to demonstrate the efficiency of its operations in achieving these immediate outcomes. At the broad level, the UN can relate its interventions to national development goals, and SDGs, proving relevance of their direct interventions. However, the evaluation did discover instances where UN interventions could be made more relevant. The scope of these interventions extends from those directly affecting beneficiaries at the community level to capacity building of government. The path to making UN interventions more relevant is complicated. This is because greater relevance involves the cooperation of many stakeholders apart from UN government counterparts. One such group are international donors, who have a responsibility to demonstrate relevance of their investment in Afghanistan to development priorities set at the global level or by donor-country governments in their respective capitals. Evidence across different stakeholders from this evaluation suggests that it is difficult to perfectly align national government development priorities with those of international partners. Difficulty of alignment is related to negative perceptions of some UN government counterparts related to the relevance, and sustainability of UN interventions. With respect to UN Coherence, the coordination platform for Humanitarian interventions is mature and it is the conclusion of this evaluation that it provides for a level of UN Coherence, as evidenced by its response to the initial stages of the COVID-19 pandemic . The UNCT platform for coordinating long-term development interventions is not as mature as the Humanitarian platform and continues to evolve. Because of recent initiatives, the probability is high that the UNCT platform will fulfill its potential as a way of providing a coherent response for long-term development. However, more can be done to improve UN Coherence. For one, a stronger UNCT platform means stronger linkages between the humanitarian response programmes and the social protection programmes.

By definition, factors affecting the achievement of intermediate outcomes by the UN are not in the full control of the UN. An example of this was provided above where UN's targets for agriculture productivity (rehabilitation and irrigation systems) did not lead to a corresponding increase in livelihoods or food security. This implies that achievement of intermediate outcomes involves addressing a number of complex factors simultaneously. Some of these factors are referenced by the Common Country Analysis (CCA) for Afghanistan and appears in the Theory of Change in section 2.7, as “preconditions” or contextual factors. These factors include the following.

- Resilience to shocks including disasters and conflict
- Developed market economy
- Rights and a needs-based allocation
- Infrastructure and system investment
- Functional, strong civil society in civic space
- Rule of law and effective governance

The table below is a listing of global benchmarks on these preconditions as they appear in the Theory of Change. Note that indices in yellow are those where Afghanistan ranks in the bottom 5% of countries surveyed. Afghanistan is therefore a complex environment in which to work where interventions need to be coordinated so they simultaneously reinforce several of the factors mentioned in the Theory of Change.

Table 5: Relevant Global Indices for Afghanistan

	Index/Statistic	+/-	Trend	Period	World Rank 2019	Rank (0= worst 100= best)
SDGs	1. Sustainable Development Index	+	36.5-54.2	2016-2020 ^f	139/166	16.26
	2. Intergenerational Solidarity Index	N/A	33.3	2019 ⁱⁱ	99/122	18.85
PEACE	3. Fragile States Index	-	99.8-105	2006-2019 ⁱⁱⁱ	169/178	5.06
	4. Global Peace Index	-	3.1-3.644	2008-2020 ^{iv}	163/163	0.0
	5. Global Terrorism Index	-	8.6-9.6	2012-2019 ^v	138/138	0.0
	6. Positive Peace Index	-	4.15-4.25	2018-2019 ^{vi}	154/163	5.52

	Index/Statistic	+/-	Trend	Period	World Rank 2019	Rank (0= worst 100= best)
STATE-BUILDING	7. Global Hunger Index	+	51.0-30.3	2000-2020 ^{vii}	99/107	7.69
	8. Happiness Index	N/A	2.567	2017-2019 ^{viii}	153/153	0.0
	9. HDR Education Index	+	0.226-0.365	2000-2013 ^x	169/187	9.63
	10. HDR Gender Inequality Index (GII)	+	0.674-0.575	2005-2018 ^x	143/162	11.73
	11. HDR Human Development Index (HDI)**	+	0.298-0.511	1990-2019 ^{xi}	169/189	10.58
	12. Health Systems Performance	N/A	0.325	2000 ^{xii}	173/191	9.42
	13. Human Capital Index (World Bank)	N/A	0.39	2018 ^{xiii}	133/157	15.29
	14. Liberal Democracy Index	-	0.233-0.212	2017-2020 ^{xiv}	125/179	30.16
	15. Population in need of Humanitarian Aid	N/A	3.3-6.3 million people	2017-2018 ^{xv}	N/A	
	16. Poverty (Monetary)	-	34% - 54.5%	2008-2017 ^{xvi,xvii}	124/140	11.43
	17. Poverty (Multi-dimensional)	N/A	51.7%	2017 ^{xviii} (1 st yr)	79/101	21.78
	18. Proteus Food Security Index (WFP)	-	0.797-0.661	2000-2017 ^{xix}	180/185	2.7
	19. Public Services Index	-	8-10	2007-2018 ^{xx}	176/176	0.0
	20. Quality of Nationality Index	+/-	15.4-15.4 (varies)	2011-2018 ^{xxi}	158/160	1.25
	21. Rule of Law Index	+	0.35-0.36	2015-2020 ^{xxii}	122/128	4.69

	Index/Statistic	+/-	Trend	Period	World Rank 2019	Rank (0= worst 100= best)
	22. Social Institutions & Gender Index	-	32.2%-52.6%	2014-2019 ^{xxiii}	112/120	6.67
	23. Social Progress Index	+	35.2-42.29	2014-2020 ^{xxiv}	155/163	4.9
	24. Universal Healthcare Coverage Index	+	34-37	2015-2017 ^{xxv}	176/183	3.83
	25. Women, Peace & Security Index	-	0.385-0.373	2017-2019 ^{xxvi}	166/167	5.99
	26. Global Gender Gap Index			2021 ^{xxvii}	156/156	
MARKET-BUILDING	27. Annual % GDP Growth Rate	-	8.83%-2.90% (\$190-\$502/capita)	2003-2019 ^{xxviii}	163/212	23.11
	28. Climate Change Performance Index	N/A	Results not yet reported for Afghanistan ^{xxix}	N/A	N/A	
	29. Corruption Perceptions Index	+	8-16 (max possible score = 100)	2012-2019 ^{xxx}	173/180	3.89
	30. Doing Business Index (World Bank)	+	41.16-44.1	2015-2019 ^{xxxi}	173/190	8.95
	31. Economic Openness Index	+	48.4-51.5	2017-2019 ^{xxxii}	148/157	5.73
	32. Gini Coefficient (Income inequality)	N/A	27.82 (*note unreliable)	2007 ^{xxxiii}	63/77	18.18
	33. Prosperity Index	+/-	(rank same since 2009)	2009-2019 ^{xxxiv}	163/167	2.4
	34. Resource Governance Index				71/89	20.22
ENVIRONMENT	35. Ecological Footprint (EF)*	-	1.2-0.73 ha/person (global)	1961-2016 ^{xxxv}	07/175	96.00
	36. Ecological Threat Register	N/A	6 Threats (Highest exposure of any country assessed)	2020 ^{xxxvi}	141/141	0.0

	Index/Statistic	+/-	Trend	Period	World Rank 2019	Rank (0= worst 100= best)
	37. Environmental Performance Index	-	31.4-25.5	2008-2020 ^{xxxvii}	178/180	1.11
	38. Environmental Vulnerability Index	N/A	289 [+265 = Vulnerable]	2004 ^{xxxviii}	96/234	58.97
	39. Global Risk Index for Humanitarian Crises & Disasters	-	7.88-7.8	2015-2019 ^{xxxix}	188/191	1.57
	40. Notre Dame Global Adaptation Index		31.4	2020 ^d	176/181	2.76

4. LIST OF RECOMMENDATIONS AND LESSONS LEARNED


4.1. List of Recommendations

	Relevance	Effectiveness	Efficiency	Sustainability	UN Coherence
1. The UN should follow up on intermediate outcomes achieved as a result of its technical support, to ensure that there are no unintended negative consequences to the intervention. This implies development of an M&E system specifically developed to monitor results achieved, over time					
2. The UN should develop a plan to eventually phase out the use of PMUs, in favour of completely utilizing the administrative systems of line ministries. In the interim, the UN should make every effort to locate its PMUs in line ministries.					

	Relevance	Effectiveness	Efficiency	Sustainability	UN Coherence
<p>3. A common fund for the development platform such as the planned Social Protection fund, should be structured in such a way as to provide incentives for inter--agency cooperation. However, it should be sufficiently flexible such that it would not preclude UN agencies to access the fund for UN agency-specific programming.</p> <p>The proposed fund should also be sufficiently flexible to incentivize partnerships between larger UN agencies focused on humanitarian assistance and early recovery to partner with smaller agencies, which are more geared to long-term development⁵⁴.</p>					
<p>4. The UN should develop a plan for involving its country offices bordering on Afghanistan to strengthen the agriculture value chain that has to do with regional cooperation and trade of agricultural goods with a view to resolving the trade imbalances related to agricultural products between Afghanistan and neighbouring countries.</p>					
<p>5. The UNCT should, as a priority, formally integrate a multi-stakeholder consultation process into the development platform⁵⁵.</p>					
<p>6. The OMT should create a working group whose mandate it is to develop an information/knowledge management strategy related to</p>					

⁵⁴ For example, the proposed fund could further incentivize UNICEF, which constructs temporary shelters during the emergency and early recovery phases to partner with UN Habitat which specializes in developing durable shelters.

⁵⁵ As with the HCT, external stakeholders can be granted observer status.

	Relevance	Effectiveness	Efficiency	Sustainability	UN Coherence
supporting the technical work of the development platform ⁵⁶ .					
7. The UNCT should transform its main technology platform i.e. its a website into one which supports the development platform's technical work, instead of its currently predominant function as a method for strategic communications ⁵⁷ .					
8. The UN should reassess its participation in the many government coordination bodies of which it is a member as presented in Table 7 above ⁵⁸ .					
9. The UNCT should develop a coordinated plan to systematically engage provincial governments, with respect to information sharing, and access to local communities via introductions to DDCs, CDCs and Shuras ⁵⁹ .					
10. The UN should continue to press its advantage with respect to its expertise regarding normative interventions, as well as achievement of SDGs, by facilitating multi-stakeholder dialogue between government and donors who also place a premium on normative interventions ⁶⁰ .					




⁵⁶ This is similar to that implemented by the HCT, which uses a cluster/working group arrangement

⁵⁷ The HCT model of developing interactive dashboards per theme or special crosscutting topics is the recommended format



⁵⁸ Despite memberships in these coordinating bodies led by government, there seems to be little return with respect to generation of good faith between the government and the UN. Nor has there been any reported reduction in reduced the transaction costs for applying to access communities and districts in order to implement long-term development interventions.

⁵⁹ Currently, engagement with local provincial government seems to occur on an ad hoc basis.

⁶⁰ .This is related to the recommendation about integrating into the development platform opportunities for multi-stakeholder dialogue.

	Relevance	Effectiveness	Efficiency	Sustainability	UN Coherence
11. The OMT's should be establish a mechanism so that it can be tasked to support the technical interventions of the Thematic Working Groups related to information/knowledge management.					
12. Similar to the HAG on the humanitarian platform, the PMT,Thematic Working Group,OMT Groups, should create an entity with the mandate to develop evidence on performance of ANPDF2, SDGs, and A-SDGs.					
13. It is recommended that UNCT develop data sharing agreements with the entities which hold evidence required to monitor development performance ⁶¹ .					
14. The UNCT should create a special technical working group on capacity building as a structure to address technical issues, which require multi-stakeholder dialogue.					
15. It is recommended that the envisioned technical working group on capacity building address as its initial issue the retention in the Tashkeel of trained staff. The objective is to ensure UN-trained Tashkeel staff remain staff which would have a positive aspect on the sustainability of the results achieved by the UN as the newly acquired knowledge and know-how would serve the government needs					

⁶¹ It is recommended that UNCT develop data sharing agreements with the entities which hold evidence required to monitor development performance.

	Relevance	Effectiveness	Efficiency	Sustainability	UN Coherence
<p>16. The UNCT should develop a strategy for the role UNAMA can play in facilitating the relationship between the UN and government with respect to long-term development interventions⁶².</p> <p>The UNCT should develop a transition plan in case of a negotiated peace in the near term, where the emphasis starts to shift from the political mandate to that of technical implementation⁶³.</p>					
<p>17. The UNCT should develop within the structure of the PMT, Thematic Working Group, OMT Group development platform a working group on how to leverage the unique skills of individual UN agencies to further enhance the long-term development platform⁶⁴.</p>					

4.2. Lessons Learned

The following are indicative lessons learned of this evaluation. These lessons learned are indicative because of the limitations of this draft as described in section 2.5.7.

1. More could have been done to analyse the HCT platform for elements that could be used as exemplars for the development platform. These include but are not limited to: the way in which multi-stakeholder involvement was built into the HCT platform; the use of a technology platform to support technical interventions; and cross-cutting themes;

⁶² This is related to the finding that there is a political dimension to government ownership of long-term development policy. UNAMA, could therefore act as a catalyst for coordination with the cooperation between the government and the UN. It is also argued that political work could be a catalyst for UN agencies to collaborate if barriers are removed to the development of long-term interventions by the UN positively engaging with government.

⁶³ This is related to the finding that the political dimension of the UN's intervention in Afghanistan would diminish in favour of the technical role of the UNCT if there is a negotiated peace.

⁶⁴ For example, OCHA is uniquely placed to provide capacity to the long-term development platform with respect to the development of information and knowledge management products.

and explicit emphasis on the strategic use of information/knowledge management technology, and the development of an entity (i.e. HAG) to generate results in performance data.

2. The UN could have been more systematic and strategic, harnessing the unique skills of individual UN agencies, to create a development platform to manage long-term development. Instead, the evolution of the development platform grew organically, relying on the efforts of individuals. This may mean that not enough resources were devoted to evolving the platform. It would have been advisable early on in the process to develop a system for the preservation of knowledge to compensate for the short rotation of staff. More effort should have been placed on developing an M&E system on a technology platform that would have enabled the continuous collection of performance indicators (i.e., monitoring). The status quo is to collect data on performance at the evaluation stages of the program or project. The situation rules out continuous monitoring and the possibility of making mid-course corrections to project or program interventions
3. The UN should have been broader in its application of normative interventions. Both the UN and donors placed a priority, quite rightly, on normative interventions related to women's equality, leaving no one behind, and human rights. But priority did not seem to be placed on normative interventions which would also have a beneficial effect on Afghanistan as a whole, such as terms of trade, specifically in agricultural products, good governance (anti-corruption), the environment and counter-narcotics.
4. Early on, there should have been a realization that the UNCT could have been used not only to organize the consolidation and business services, but also to provide support, specifically around technology related to information/knowledge management, to support the technical work of the development platform.

ANNEXES

ANNEX 1: EVALUATION MATRIX

EVALUATION CRITERIA	KEY EVALUATION QUESTIONS	SUB-QUESTIONS/QUESTIONS	INDICATORS
<p>Relevance</p>	<p>1. To what extent has UNCT programming produced the expected results as described in the UNDAF/One UN for Afghanistan?</p> <p>2. To what extent were the UN AFPs comparative advantages and unique mandates relevant to government strategic areas related to international standards on gender equality, human rights, and citizen centered reforms?</p> <p>3. To what extent did the UNCT help strengthen the UN position, credibility and reliability of the UN as a partner for the government and other actors in the efforts to achieve both SDGs and A-SDGs?</p>	<p>1.1 Did the UNDAF support government efforts at implementing international standards related to leaving no one behind, gender equality and human rights standards and principles?</p> <p>2.1. Has the UN system supported achievement of national development goals and targets, by leveraging its: reputation for impartiality; global links with partner institutes and governments; objectively tested policy options; global experience with realization of SDG's, and its robust, and tested normative voice on human rights, equity and citizen centered reforms?</p> <p>3.1. To what extent are UN Agencies invited by government to participate in strategic discussions around the ANPDF-1?</p>	<p>1.1.1 Perception of UNDAF stakeholders regarding contribution of UN to development of national and sub-national partnership frameworks and related networks. Methods: KII, FGD and survey. Sources: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> All types of stakeholders </p> <p>2.1.1. Evidence that UNDAF support has contributed to the results under the NPPs Methods: Document review, KII, FGD. Sources: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> All types of stakeholders </p> <p>3.1.1. Perceptions of UN's unique contribution to implementation of ANPDF-1/NPPs. Methods: KII, FGD and survey. Sources: National and local governments, international organizations and donors, NGOs and civil society directly involved with the UNDS.</p> <p>3.1.2. Membership of UN Agencies in high-level government strategic decision-making bodies. Method: document review</p>

EVALUATION CRITERIA	KEY EVALUATION QUESTIONS	SUB-QUESTIONS	INDICATORS
Effectiveness			<p>3.1.3. Stakeholder perceptions on the value of contributions by UN Agencies to normative discussions with government on gender equality and human rights. Methods: KII, FGD and survey. Sources: National and local governments, international organizations and donors, NGOs and civil society.</p> <p>4.1.1. Number of specific cases mentioned by stakeholders and counterparts where government invited UN Agencies to discuss strategic issues. Methods: KII, FGD and survey. Sources:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • UN Agencies and National and local governments.
	<p>1. To what extent has the UNCT contributed to, or is likely to contribute to, the outcomes defined in the UNDAF/One UN for Afghanistan?</p> <p>2. How responsive and strategic was the UNCT in addressing emerging and emergency needs?</p>	<p>1.1. Has the UNCT been effective in coordinating and mobilizing resources of the various UN agencies, government, and donors to achieve government outcomes?</p> <p>1.2. Are the institutional capacity building components of the Cooperation Framework likely to contribute to the outcomes defined in the UNDAF/One UN for Afghanistan?</p> <p>2.1. How effective was UNCT in mobilizing UN Agencies, counterparts, and donors in support of government response plans for COVID-19?</p>	<p>1.1.1. UN/Government stakeholder perceptions of UNDAF common budgetary framework and its effectiveness for mobilizing resources for achievement of SDG, A-SDG government targets. Methods: KII, FGD and survey. Sources:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National and local governments, and UN agencies. <p>1.1.2. Extent to which the Cooperation Framework has contributed to effectiveness of government in achieving its national priorities, related to SDGs and A-SDGs. Methods: Document review, KII, FGD and survey. Sources:</p>

EVALUATION CRITERIA	KEY EVALUATION QUESTIONS	SUB-QUESTIONS	INDICATORS
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National and local governments, international organizations and donors, NGOs and civil society directly involved with the UNDS. <p>1.1.3. Extent of progress toward SDGs and A-SDGs. Methods: Document review, KII, FGD and survey. Sources:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National and local governments, international organizations and donors, NGOs and civil society directly involved with the UNDS. <p>1.1.4. Extent to which government effectively monitors progress on SDGs and A-SDGs. Methods: Document review, KII, FGD. Sources:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • UN agencies, National and local governments, international organizations and donors, NGOs and civil society directly involved with the UNDS. <p>1.2.1. Perceptions related to the effectiveness of government institutional capacity-building, under UNDAF/One UN Afghanistan. Methods: KII, FGD. Sources:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National and local governments, international organizations and donors, NGOs and civil society directly involved with the UNDS. <p>2.1.1. Perceptions of UNDAF stakeholders regarding contribution of UNDAF in supporting government COVID-19 response. Methods: KII, FGD and survey.</p>

EVALUATION CRITERIA	KEY EVALUATION QUESTIONS	SUB-QUESTIONS	INDICATORS
			<p>Sources:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> National and local governments, international organizations and donors, NGOs and civil society directly involved with the UNDS.
<p>Efficiency</p>	<p>1. To what extent have outcomes been achieved with the appropriate amount of resources within the planned time-framed?</p>	<p>1.1 To what extent are the UN systems able to accurately record performance on outcomes achieved, including SDGs?</p> <p>1.2 Has the Cooperation Framework reduced transaction costs for UN Agencies, in their interactions with external stakeholders?</p> <p>1.3 Has the Cooperation Framework increased the level of joint cooperation between UN agencies? To what extent does One UN contribute to UN Agencies' capacity to efficiently collect evidence of SDG and A-SDG results achieved?</p>	<p>1.1.1. Perceptions of UN System stakeholders that they have the evidence to manage risks to efficient use of resources. Methods: KII, FGD and survey. Sources:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> UN Agencies. <p>1.1.2. UN Agencies' budget execution rate. Method: Document review.</p> <p>1.1.3. Actions taken to mitigate risks in schedule, budget or results achieved, specifically related to dealing with COVID or other unforeseen circumstances affecting operations of UN System stakeholders. Methods: Document review, KII, FGD. Sources:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> UN agencies. <p>1.2.1. External and internal stakeholders' perception on achieving jointly reported results. Methods: KII, FGD and survey. Sources:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> UN agencies, National and local governments, international organizations and donors, NGOs and civil society directly involved with the UNDS.

EVALUATION CRITERIA	KEY EVALUATION QUESTIONS	SUB-QUESTIONS	INDICATORS
			<p>1.2.2. Evidence that the appropriate resources (financial and human) were applied by UN Agencies to achieve results. Methods: Document review, KII, FGD and survey. Sources:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> UN agencies, National and local governments, international organizations and donors, NGOs and civil society directly involved with the UNDS. <p>1.3.1. Evidence of opportunities taken and missed by UN agencies for joint cooperation. Methods: Document review, KII, FGD and survey. Sources:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> UN agencies, National and local governments, international organizations and donors, NGOs and civil society directly involved with the UNDS. <p>1.3.2. Extent to which UN Agency M&E and other administrative systems able to identify positive or negative unintended consequences affecting achievement of outcomes. Methods: Document review, KII, FGD and survey. Sources:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> UN agencies, National and local governments, international organizations and donors, NGOs and civil society directly involved with the UNDS.

EVALUATION CRITERIA	KEY EVALUATION QUESTIONS	SUB-QUESTIONS	INDICATORS
<p>Sustainability</p>	<p>1. To what extent did the UN system support building national and local capacities to ensure long-term gains?</p> <p>2. To what extent did the UN system promote and support inclusive and sustainable socio-economic changes and growth?</p>	<p>1.1. To what extent has the UN system been able to engage private sector and civil society partners to ensure long-term financial, economic, social and environmental gains?</p> <p>1.2. To what extent UN Agencies, local and national private sector and civil society partners are able to deliver against national and sub-national goals and objectives agreed to?</p> <p>1.3. To what extent has the Cooperation Framework provided an enabling environment for the government to ensure long-term gains?</p> <p>2.1. To what extent is there progress on UNDAF outcomes related to progress in the areas of human development, inclusive growth, livelihoods, resilience governance and rule of law?</p>	<p>1.1.1. Number of private sector and civil society partners engaged during life of current UNDAF. Methods: Document review.</p> <p>1.2.1. Perceptions of private sector and civil society partners regarding coordination of outputs to achieve anticipated results.</p> <p>1.2.2. Assessment by UN Agency stakeholders of their private sector and/or civil society partners' ability to deliver on sub-national and national goals and objectives agreed to. (For both indicators) Methods: Document review, KII, FGD. Sources:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> UN agencies, National and local governments, international organizations and donors, private sector, NGOs and civil society directly involved with the UNDS. <p>2.1.1. % of targets achieved on UNDAF outcomes related to human development, inclusive growth, livelihoods, governance and rule of law. Methods: Document review</p>

UN Coherence

1. How has the UNDS reform been implemented in Afghanistan?
2. To what degree has it strengthened the coherence of the UN system support in Afghanistan?
3. To what extent did the UNDAF/One UN strengthen the position, credibility and reliability of the UN system as a partner for the Government of Afghanistan and other actors?
4. To what extent did the UNDAF/One UN reduce transaction costs for partners through greater UN coherence and discipline?

- 4.4. To what extent did the One UN promote or support policies that are consistent with each other and across sectors, given the multi-sectoral nature of social and economic development?
- 5.1. To what extent were the strategic interventions of the UNCT is compatible with each other and with those of other development partners and the government so as to achieve the common goals/ outcomes and to deliver quality, integrated, SDG-focused policy support, particularly through joint programming?
- 6.1. How effectively was the UNDAF/One UN used as a partnership vehicle?
- 6.2. Has there been an increase in the availability of resources for implementation since progress on One UN, due to a reduction in transaction costs?
- 7.1. To what extent did the UN system collectively prioritize outputs based on the needs (demand side) rather than on the availability of resources (supply side), and reallocate resources according to the collective priorities if necessary?
- 7.2. To what extent has the UNDAF/One UN facilitated the identification of and access to new financing partners?
- 7.3. Was UNDAF/One UN supported by an integrated funding framework and adequate funding instruments?

1.1.1. Perceptions of UN Agency stakeholders regarding UN System coordination and progress on UN One.

1.2.1. Perceptions of UN external partners (counterparts, private sector and civil society partners) regarding the quality of UN strategic interventions and progress on UN One.

1.2.2. Perceptions of satisfaction with joint programming.

(For both indicators) Methods: Document review, KII, FGD survey.

Sources:

- UN agencies, National and local governments, international organizations and donors, private sector, NGOs and civil society directly involved with the UNDS.

2.1.1. UN stakeholders' perceptions of change in engagement level of private sector and civil society partners since progress on One UN.

Methods: Document review, KII, FGD.

Sources:

- UN agencies, National and local governments, international organizations and donors, private sector, NGOs and civil society directly involved with the UNDS.

2.1.2. Historical change in Administrative Budget as % of Operational of UN System stakeholders.

2.1.3. Historical change in percentage of UNDAF stakeholders completing annual work plans.

(For both indicators) Methods: Document review

3.1.1. Perceptions of UN external partners (counterparts, private sector and civil society partners) on the effectiveness (contribution to workplan) of UN support to them.

Methods: KII, FGD survey.

Sources:

- National and local governments, international organizations and donors, private sector, NGOs and civil society directly involved with the UNDS.

3.2.1. Perceptions of UN stakeholders regarding potential funding from non-traditional sources (ex. private philanthropic, INGOs)

Methods: KII, FGD

Sources:

- UN agencies.

3.3.1. Progress on a finalized funding framework for the next UNDAF.

Methods: Document review, KII, FGD.

Sources:

- UN agencies.

4.1.1. Perceptions of the level of programming flexibility because of implementing UNDAF/One UN.

4.2.1. Number of private sector and civil society partners engaged during life of current UNDAF.

Methods: Document review, KII, FGD survey.

Sources:

- UN agencies, National and local governments, international organizations and donors, private sector, NGOs and civil society directly involved with the UNDS.

EVALUATION CRITERIA	KEY EVALUATION QUESTIONS	SUB-QUESTIONSQUESTIONS	INDICATORS
			<p>4.3.1. Implementation of a pooled fund to support the Common Budgetary approach as described in the One UN for Afghanistan document.</p> <p>Methods: Document review, KII, FGD survey.</p> <p>Sources:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • UN agencies, international organizations and donors, private sector, NGOs and civil society directly involved with the UNDS.

ANNEX 2: UNDAF AFGHANISTAN- LIST OF DOCUMENTS CONSULTED

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- United Nations Evaluation Group (2016). Norms and Standards for Evaluation. New York: UNEG.

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- United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund in Afghanistan (2020). Adolescents in Afghanistan: A Portfolio Evaluation with a Gender Lens (2015–2019).
- United Nations Institute of Peace (2021). Afghanistan Study Group Final Report.
- United Nations Office of Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (2020). Humanitarian Response Plan Afghanistan 2018-2021.
- United Nations Population Fund (2019). UNFPA CPAP, Afghanistan, 2015-19 Mid-term Review Final Report (January 2015-December 2017).
- United States Agency for International Development (2019). Mid-Term Evaluation of the Increasing Access to Basic Education and Gender Equality Programme (Afghanistan) (2015-2019).

ANNEX 3: DATA COLLECTION TOOLS/ PROTOCOLS-DISTRIBUTION LIST

INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

The KII and Focus Group interview schedules contained in this document should be considered within the context of a broader qualitative data collection methodology. First, it is intentional that the KII and Focus Group schedules ask identical questions. Standardized questions across different types of data collection tools (KII and Focus Groups) means comparability of responses across different types of qualitative methods. Also, there is no direct link between the data collection question items presented here and the questions contained in the evaluation matrix. This is also intentional. The overall goal of qualitative analysis is to allow respondents the freedom to freely express a wide range of ideas, and to perhaps identify unanticipated themes not addressed by questions contained in the evaluation matrix. So, the schedule items are meant only to guide discussion. However, the interviewer is provided with a list of suggested prompts which she can use to guide the discussion consistent with questions in the evaluation matrix. In addition, at the point in time at which the interviewer codes responses, a link can be made between responses and questions in the evaluation matrix. The interviewer is asked to specifically identify which evaluation sub questions was mentioned by the respondent. In addition, the interviewer is asked to provide a lengthy narrative detailing the responses of the interviewee.

In addition, the interviewer/ facilitator can choose at her discretion, to slightly amend the sequence and choice of questions to be asked depending on the type of stakeholder. For example, one focus group will be devoted to those who are involved in UN business operations such as HR and finance. Some of the questions in the schedule may not completely apply to this group of stakeholders. The facilitator may therefore elect to deemphasize certain questions and allocate more time for others, related to Efficiency and Coherence, for example.

Given the discussion above, the introductory scripts provided are also only for guidance. Each facilitator and interviewer will be given the latitude to change the exact wording of the script depending on the stakeholder type.

KII/Focus Group Interview schedule

For Focus Group Facilitators

Hello, my name is [name of evaluator]. First, thank-you for agreeing to participate in this group discussion. I am here today to discuss about the Evaluation of UNDAF for Afghanistan 2017-2021. Before going any further, we would like to thank you for the time you are giving us, so we can better understand how you perceive UN support Afghanistan. We have been asked to evaluate work carried out so far by the UNDAF, and as such it is important for us to consult with key persons who can provide us with valuable insights. Please note that what you say will remain strictly confidential.

We have a lot of ground to cover and may not have enough time to do so today. However, please don't feel rushed to share your thoughts at the point. If, at the end of our discussion, there are still a number of outstanding questions, we can send you a list afterwards. This way, you will have a chance to review the questions at leisure and supply us with written answers if you wish.

Before we begin, do you have any questions for me or clarifications that you would like me to make?

For Key Informant Interviewers

Hello, my name is [name of evaluator], and I am here today to discuss about the Evaluation of UNDAF for Afghanistan 2017-2021. Before going any further, we would like to thank you for the time you are giving us, so we can better understand how you perceive UN support Afghanistan. We have been asked to evaluate work carried out so far by the UNDAF, and as such it is important for us to interview key persons who can provide us with valuable insights. Please note that what you say will remain strictly confidential.

[Ask if the person has questions before beginning]

If you agree to be interviewed, you will be asked to share openly your opinion regarding your experience with the UNDAF and One UN.

We have a lot of ground to cover and may not have enough time to do so today. However, please don't feel rushed to share your thoughts at the point. If, at the end of our discussion, there are still several outstanding questions, we can send you a list afterwards. This way, you will have a chance to review the questions at leisure and supply us with written answers if you wish.

Before we begin, do you have any questions for me or clarifications that you would like me to make??

Introduction

Question: I would first ask you to tell me a little about yourself. Can you describe what your position is and what it is that you do?

[Suggested Prompts]

What is the official name of your position?

What roles do you play, and responsibilities do you have?

Who do you report to and who reports to you?

In your position, to what extent do you deal with Afghanistan achieving development goals like the SDGs, A – SDGs or the NPPs

<p>Can you give examples? In your position, to what extent do you deal with ensuring that the government is able to adhere to international standards, such as in the areas of: equality, human rights, the environment, and trade. Can you provide examples?</p>
<p>Question: How familiar are you with the UNDAF and One UN?</p> <p>[Interviewer will need to be prepared to summarize for the respondents what is UNDAF and One UN]</p> <p>[Suggested Prompts]</p> <p>Can you explain in your own words what is meant by the UNDAF and One UN? What do you think are your responsibilities in relation to the UNDAF and One UN? Can you provide examples? In your position, who or what organizations do you deal with regarding UNDAF and One UN? Can you provide examples of your interactions with these organizations or people?</p>
<p>Relevance</p>
<p>Question: To what extent do you think your organization is able to meet its overall, goals and objectives?</p>
<p>[Interviewer should choose which prompts to mention based on answers above.]</p> <p>[Suggested Prompts]</p> <p>To what extent are you able to achieve development goals like the SDGs, A - SDGs or the NPPs To what extent do you deal with ensuring that the government is able to adhere to international standards, such as in the areas of: equality, human rights, the environment, and trade.</p>
<p>Question: Do you think that the UN and government are cooperating enough, so they are able to meet their common goals and objectives?</p> <p>[Suggested Prompts]</p> <p>What worked and what didn't work? Is UN/ government working well together with respect to international cooperation agreements? Is the UN/ government working well together with respect to subnational issues? How does the UN/ government involve each other when it comes to achieving common goals and objectives? Can you give some examples? [Examples of each of the above]</p>
<p>Question: What role does each partner play in the cooperation between the UN and government?</p> <p>[Suggested Prompts]</p> <p>Does each partner bring something unique to the cooperation agreements between UN and government? Can you provide examples?</p>
<p>Effectiveness</p>
<p>I would like to ask you specifically about the cooperation agreement between the UN and government as it relates to the UNDAF/ One UN.</p>

Question: Do you think that the objectives described in the UNDAF/One UN agreement will be reached?

[Suggested Prompts]

- Which objectives will be reached, and which won't?
- What are the reasons for achievement/ non-achievement of specific goals and objectives?

Question: Do you think that the way in which the UN system is managed contributes to goals and objectives as defined in the UNDAF?

[Suggested Prompts]

What works and what doesn't?
How would you like to see the UN system managed in the future to better contribute to goals and objectives as defined in the UNDAF?

Question: How well does the UN system respond to unanticipated national issues or emergencies such as COVID-19?

[Suggested Prompts]

Can you provide examples?
Can you provide examples specific to how the UN assisted government to respond to COVID-19?
How would you like to see the UN system managed in the future to better deal with unanticipated issues or emergencies?

Question: How effective was the support given to government by the UN so it could meet its national goals and objectives.

[Suggested Prompts]

Can you provide examples of what worked and what didn't work?
What would you like to see in terms of supports to government by the UN in the future?
What parts of the cooperation agreement in the UN and government worked and didn't work?

Sustainability

I would like to ask you the extent to which UN support contributes to lasting change in Afghanistan.

Question: To what extent do you think UN support to government at all levels will lead to long-term gains?

[Suggested Prompts]

What support worked and what didn't work?

Question: To what extent did UN support to government support national and subnational long-term social and economic changes?

[Suggested Prompts]

Which social and economic changes will be permanent, and which might not be?
Can you give some examples?

Efficiency

[Ask of UN System Stakeholders Only]

Question: Do you think sharing business services, and other aspects related to One UN allowed UN agencies in Afghanistan to achieve desired outcomes more efficiently?

[Suggested Prompts]

- What about One UN worked and didn't work?
- To what extent can UN systems measure progress on outcomes such as SDGs and A-SDGs?
- What aspects of a unified UN business operations strategy in Afghanistan would you like to see implemented in the future?

UN Coherence

[Ask of UN System Stakeholders Only]

I would like to ask you about how UNDS reform has been implemented in Afghanistan.

Question: To what degree has UNDS reform strengthened the coherence of UN system support in Afghanistan?

[Suggested Prompts]

- Can you provide examples?
- Did reform lead to more consistent policy support?
- Did it lead to compatibility of strategic interventions by the UN?
- Did reform lead to more demand-side programming?
- Did it act as an effective partnership identification vehicle such new financing partners?
- To what extent was an integrated funding framework implemented?

Wrap-up

Thank you very much for your cooperation, this concludes our session. Before closing, I would like to mention that you will be sent a survey questionnaire by email. Participation in the survey is completely voluntary. However, we would appreciate a response to the survey from you. It will give us a chance to ask you for further information that is important to this evaluation.

INTERVIEW PROTOCOL- FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSIONS

A brief overview of the project and goals for the FGD/Roundtable are provided below. This full description is not likely to be needed but it is useful to have in case it is needed to respond to questions. Participants will be provided with information about process, time, breaks, location of bathrooms and other details.

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Baastel, an evaluation consulting firm headquartered in Gatineau, Canada, was mandated to carry out independently, an evaluation (with some formative and summative elements) of the Afghanistan UNDAF/ONE UN. More specifically, the evaluation is taking place on two levels: 1. At the formative level to assess the function of the current UNDAF/ONE UN and gain insights and recommendations for improvements and, 2. At the summative level to assess results achieved by the UNDAF/ONE UN 2017-2021 to determine the success of the UN's/Afghanistan government's implementation and development of a sustainability plan and method.

In scope - The scope of this evaluation is limited to the current UNDAF (2015-2020). The evaluation studied information provided on the current UNDAF. Since UNDAF/ONE UN is designed to be implemented across the country to all peoples, the evaluation is national. The evaluation will also make recommendations for the UNSDCF 2022-2025.

We are currently in the data collection phase and are therefore consulting the UN and the Government of Afghanistan, as well as other local implementing partners of the UNDAF/ONE UN and seeking their views of these stakeholders in the country.

Presentations

- Presentation of evaluation process, explanation of purpose of focus group and obtaining consent
 - Consent forms – Templates used will be approved by UN prior to this FGDs/Stakeholder Roundtable. (Participants will be asked to review the templates, ask questions, and sign the consent forms. A copy of a consent form, unsigned, will be offered to each participant. Some will want a copy, others will not, but the Evaluation Team will always offer to provide one).
- Please ensure that all members of the focus group respond to the following:
 - Specify your position and your level of seniority
 - Present your organization / department / section (since the focus group roundtable will include cross stakeholder groups)
 - Present your links to the UNDAF/One UN and/or to partnership arrangements (if applicable).
- Name tags will be distributed for the FGD/roundtable (first names only) for face to face sessions.
- Basic guidelines will be provided for the focus group/roundtable. These will be reviewed with participants and posted for everyone to see. These guidelines will include the following:
 - If you feel uncomfortable during the meeting, you have the right to leave or to pass on any question. There is no consequence for leaving. Being here is voluntary.
 - Keep personal stories “in the room”; do not share other participants’ information or what anybody else said outside of the focus group/roundtable.
 - Everyone’s ideas should be respected.
 - One person talks at a time please...Everyone has the right to talk. (The facilitator(s) may ask someone who is talking a lot to step back and give others a

chance to talk and may ask a person who isn't talking if he or she has anything to share).

- Everybody has the right to pass on a question.
- Participants should know that evaluators will be taking notes about what is discussed, but that individual names or identifying information will not be attached to comments.
- At the end of the process all those participating will be thanked and told how important their participation has been to the evaluation being conducted.

If you have questions about the evaluation, or to obtain more information, ask questions about the research procedures, express concerns about your participation, or report illness, injury or other problems, please contact UN Afghanistans:
banthida.komphasouk@un.org

Agreement: Unless you say otherwise prior to beginning the interviews, our understanding will be that you agree to participate in the evaluation of the UNDAF/One UN as described above.

Signature of key informant _____ Date

Name of key informant _____

Signature of witness _____ Date

Name of witness _____

Relationship between witness and key informant _____

Evaluation Questions and Responses:

Especially in mixed groups, the facilitator(s) should take pains to ensure that views of all stakeholders participating in the focus group are considered:

This includes gender equity sensitivities and other intersectional matters (e.g., ethnic minorities).

All have a right to have their unique perspective heard.

The questions below are partly from the Terms of Reference and partly probes or questions added to explore with the participants several issues discovered during data gathering.

SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRE

FOR Government REPRESENTATIVES

EMAIL INVITATION

Subject: Survey for the Evaluation of the “United Nations Development Assistance Framework for Afghanistan and One UN for Afghanistan (2015–2020)”

The Afghanistan UN Country Team (UNCT) is currently evaluating its UNDAF. The purpose of this evaluation is to assess the extent to which the UNDAF outcomes are aligned and contribute to the national development priorities set forth in the 8th NSEDP and to determine the extent to which UNDAF outcomes have been attained. As you have been informed in a previous email, the UNDAF is presently being evaluated by an independent Evaluation Team of consultants employed by Le Groupe-conseil Baastel. As an important component of this evaluation, our team has prepared this online survey (OLS) for government representatives working with UNCT agencies.

Our records indicate that your institution was involved with a UN Agency, which is why we are requesting your participation to an OLS (see below for survey link) administered within the context of the evaluation. This survey has been prepared and is managed directly by us, at Le Groupe Conseil Baastel. It will take approximately 10–15 minutes of your time to fill out the OLS questionnaire. We invite you to provide additional qualitative information to explain and/or detail your responses when you believe it to be relevant in the available answer boxes.

All your contributions will be **strictly confidential** and will be highly valuable to help understand the relevance and the effectiveness of the UNDAF/ONE UN as well as to improve them in the future. Your responses will be transferred to a database accessible solely by the independent evaluator.

We thank you in advance for your help and your responses.

SURVEY INTRODUCTION

UNDAF Afghanistan- External Stakeholder Survey



Start of Block: Survey Introduction

Q1 Dear Colleague, Welcome to the online survey (OLS) for the evaluation of the Afghanistan UNDAF/ One UN Framework. The OLS is designed to provide useful information that will help

improve the UNDAF/One UN as a whole and help generate constructive recommendations in order to strengthen all UN agencies work in Afghanistan. Your participation in this OLS is especially important. A summary of the recommendations will be made available to relevant stakeholders. We kindly request you to respond to this survey by June 22, 2021. Your insights and responses are greatly appreciated and are valuable to the success of the UNDAF. Your individual feedback will be kept confidential to Baastel. This survey has been designed and is managed by Mr. Alexandre Daoust. You may contact Mr. Daoust via alexandre.daoust@baastel.com if you have any questions on the survey. We thank you in advance for your valuable contribution to this important evaluation exercise. Ronald Santos Team Leader One UN/UNDAF

End of Block: Survey Introduction



Start of Block: Respondent Profile

Q2 Please specify your gender

- Male (1)
 - Female (2)
 - Prefer not to say (3)
 - Gender diverse (specify) (4) _____
-

Q3 Please choose from the statements below, which best describes yourself.

- I am from the Donor community (2)
- I represent a local NGO (3)
- I represent an International NGO (4)
- I am a Government Counterpart to the UN (5)

End of Block: Respondent Profile

Start of Block: Interaction with UN

Q9 With which UN agency have you been interacting? (please select from list, more than one response possible)

Please note all questions will be related to the agency (ies) selected here

- FAO (1)
- IFAD (2)
- ILO (3)
- IOM (4)
- OCHA (5)
- OHCHR (6)
- UNAIDS (7)
- UNCTAD (8)
- UNDP (9)
- UNDSS (10)
- UNEP (11)
- UNESCO (12)
- UNFPA (13)
- UN Habitat (14)
- UNHCR (15)

- UNICEF (16)
- UNIDO (17)
- UNMAS (18)
- UNODC (19)
- UNOPS (20)
- UN Women (21)
- WFP (22)
- WHO (23)

End of Block: Interaction with UN

Start of Block: Government Counterpart Information

Display This Question:

If Please choose from the statements below, which best describes yourself. = I am a Government Counterpart to the UN

Q4 Please choose the response below, which describes your level of Government.

- National (1)
- Provincial (4)

Display This Question:

If Please choose the response below, which describes your level of Government. = Provincial
And Please choose from the statements below, which best describes yourself. = I am a Government Counterpart to the UN

Q5 Please choose the response below, which best describes your position in provincial government.

- I am or represent the Provincial Governor (1)
 - I hold a Senior Manager or Advisor Position in Provincial Government (2)
 - Other (3)
-

Display This Question:

If Please choose the response below, which describes your level of Government. = National

And Please choose from the statements below, which best describes yourself. = I am a Government Counterpart to the UN

Q6 Please choose the response below, which best describes your position in central government.

- I am a Minister or Deputy Minister (4)
 - I am a Director General, or hold another Senior Manager or Advisor position (5)
 - Other (7)
-

Display This Question:

If Please choose from the statements below, which best describes yourself. = I am a Government Counterpart to the UN

Q7 Please choose the type of Ministry where you hold your position, in Central Government.

- Central Ministry or other Entity such as the Ministry of Finance or Economy, President or VP Offices (1)
 - Line Ministry (2)
-

Display This Question:

If Please choose from the statements below, which best describes yourself. = I am a Government Counterpart to the UN

Q8 To What Extent Does Your Position Involve Donor Coordination?

- Not at all Involved (1)
- Somewhat Involved (2)
- Very involved (3)
- Very much involved (4)

End of Block: Government Counterpart Information



Start of Block: Section B: Relevance

Q10 How satisfied are you, in general, with the process followed for the identification and planning of the UN agency activities?

- Very satisfied (1)
 - Somewhat satisfied (2)
 - Somewhat unsatisfied (3)
 - Very unsatisfied (4)
-

Q11 To what extent is the UN approach aligned with the approach of your institution?

- Very aligned (1)
 - Aligned (2)
 - Misaligned (3)
 - Very misaligned (4)
 - N/A Do not know (5)
-

Q12 To what extent has the UN's actions and support been aligned with your institutional plans and frameworks for national plans and frameworks such as the ANPDF/NPPs?

- Very aligned (1)
 - Aligned (2)
 - Misaligned (3)
 - Very misaligned (4)
 - N/A Do not know (5)
-

Q13 Please provide additional comments, details or explanations related to relevance questions above

Q14 Are you able to clearly identify activities delivered by the UN agency you work with among those delivered by other programs?

- Yes (1)
- No (2)
- I don't know (3)

End of Block: Section B: Relevance



Start of Block: Section C : Effectiveness

Q15 (If worked with multiple agencies) To what extent do you consider the UN agencies you have worked with have coordinated their efforts?

- A lot of coordination (1)
 - Some coordination (2)
 - Minimal coordination (3)
 - No coordination (4)
-

Q16 To what extent has UNCT/UN agencies contributed to, or is likely to contribute to, the outcomes defined in the UNDAF/ One UN for Afghanistan?

- Significant contribution (1)
 - Some contribution (2)
 - Minimal contribution (3)
 - No contribution (4)
-

Q17 To what extent has the UN agencies been effective in coordinating and mobilizing various resources from government and donors to achieve SDG targets and national frameworks such as ANPDF/NPPs?

- Very effective (1)
- Somewhat effective (2)
- Minimally effective (3)
- Not at all effective (4)

Q18 To what extent do you think the UN agencies have been effective in communicating the benefits of One UN to your institution?

- To a large extent (1)
 - To some extent (2)
 - To a small extent (3)
 - Not at all (4)
-

Q19 To what extent do you think the UN agencies have been effective in coordinating among themselves and mobilizing donors for the government to respond to COVID-19?

- To a large extent (1)
 - To some extent (2)
 - To a small extent (3)
 - Not at all (4)
-

Q20 To what extent do you consider that during the last five years, the UN has enhanced its credibility and reliability for your institution ?

	To a large extent (1)	To some extent (2)	To a small extent (3)	Not at all (4)
Credibility (1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Reliability (2)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Q21 In your opinion, to what extent has the UN advanced the establishment of partnerships between national and regional counterparts, civil society, and/or the private sector?

	To a large extent (1)	To some extent (2)	To a small extent (3)	Not at all (4)	I do not know (5)
National counterparts (1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Regional counterparts (2)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Civil society (3)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Private sector (4)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Q22 To what extent has interagency cooperation and collaboration with other entities enhanced the possibility of achieving joint results with your institution?

	To a large extent (1)	To some extent (2)	To a small extent (3)	Not at all (4)
Interagency cooperation (1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Collaboration with other entities (2)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Q23 To what extent has the UN contributed to increasing coordination among national/ regional institutions and organizations ?

	To a large extent (1)	To some extent (2)	To a small extent (3)	Not at all (4)
increasing coordination among national institutions/organizations (1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
increasing coordination among regional institutions/organizations (2)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Q24 Please provide additional comments, details or explanations related to effectiveness questions above

End of Block: Section C : Effectiveness



Start of Block: Section D: Efficiency

Q25 How satisfied are you with the human, knowledge and material resources made available by the UN to achieve the joint results ?

	Very satisfied (1)	Somewhat satisfied (2)	Somewhat unsatisfied (3)	Very unsatisfied (4)
Human resources (1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Knowledge resources (2)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Material resources (3)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Q26 How satisfied are you with the timeliness and budget with which UN activities were delivered?

- Very satisfied (1)
 - Somewhat satisfied (2)
 - Somewhat unsatisfied (3)
 - Very unsatisfied (4)
-

Q27 To what extent are UN M&E and other administrative systems able to accurately record performance on outcomes achieved, including SDGs?

- To a large extent (1)
 - To some extent (2)
 - To a small extent (3)
 - Not at all (4)
-

Q28 How satisfied are you with the exchange of evidence for achievement of outcomes, including SDGs between counterpart systems and that of UN Systems?

- Very satisfied (1)
 - Somewhat satisfied (2)
 - Somewhat unsatisfied (3)
 - Very unsatisfied (4)
-

Q29 Please provide additional comments, details or explanations related to efficiency questions above (e.g. challenges or constraints that affected the timeliness implementation):

End of Block: Section D: Efficiency



Start of Block: Section E : Sustainability

Q30 How satisfied are you with the involvement of your institution in UN's planning and implementation process?

- Very satisfied (1)
 - Somewhat satisfied (2)
 - Somewhat unsatisfied (3)
 - Very unsatisfied (4)
-

Q31 To what extent do you think that the UN system supports building national and local capacities to ensure long-term gains?

- To a large extent (1)
 - To some extent (2)
 - To a small extent (3)
 - Not at all (4)
-

Q32 To what extent do you think UN agencies have been successful in recruiting private sector and civil society partners to ensure long term gains?

- To a large extent (1)
 - To some extent (2)
 - To a small extent (3)
 - Not at all (4)
-

Q33 How satisfied are you with the progress on UNDAF outcomes related to the areas of human development, inclusive growth, livelihoods, resilience, governance, and rule of law?

- Very satisfied (1)
 - Somewhat satisfied (2)
 - Somewhat unsatisfied (3)
 - Very unsatisfied (4)
-

Q34 To what extent has the UN programming assisted the government to scaled-up to achieve its goals as outlined in the ANPDF/NPPs?

- To a large extent (1)
- To some extent (2)
- To a small extent (3)
- Not at all (4)

Q35 Please provide additional comments, details or explanations related to sustainability questions above

End of Block: Section E : Sustainability

Start of Block: Cross-cutting Principles

Q36 To what extent has the UN system’s support been extended in a way that promotes gender equity, human rights, environmental sustainability, RBM use in Afghanistan?

	To a large extent (1)	To some extent (2)	To a small extent (3)	Not at all (4)	I do not know (5)
Gender equity (1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Human rights (2)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Environmental sustainability (3)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
RBM use (4)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Q37 Please provide comments, details or explanations related to your answer

End of Block: Cross-cutting Principles

UNDAF Afghanistan- UN Agencies

Start of Block: Survey Introduction

Q1 Dear Colleague, Welcome to the online survey (OLS) for the evaluation of the Afghanistan UNDAF/ One UN Framework. The OLS is designed to provide useful information that will help

improve the UNDAF/One UN as a whole and help generate constructive recommendations in order to strengthen all UN agencies work in Afghanistan. Your participation in this OLS is especially important. A summary of the recommendations will be made available to relevant stakeholders. We kindly request you to respond to this survey by June 22, 2021. Your insights and responses are greatly appreciated and are valuable to the success of the UNDAF. Your individual feedback will be kept confidential to Baastel. This survey has been designed and is managed by Mr. Alexandre Daoust. You may contact Mr. Daoust via alexandre.daoust@baastel.com if you have any questions on the survey.

We thank you in advance for your valuable contribution to this important evaluation exercise.
Ronald Santos Team Leader One UN/UNDAF



End of Block: Survey Introduction

Start of Block: Section A: Identification

Q2 For which UN agency have you been working? (please select from list)
Please note all questions will be related to the agency(ies) selected here.

- FAO (1)
- IFAD (2)
- ILO (3)
- IOM (4)
- OCHA (5)
- OHCHR (6)
- UNAIDS (7)
- UNCTAD (8)
- UNDP (9)
- UNDSS (10)
- UNEP (11)
- UNESCO (12)
- UNFPA (13)
- UN Habitat (14)
- UNHCR (15)
- UNICEF (16)
- UNIDO (17)

UNMAS (18)

UNODC (19)

UNOPS (20)

UN Women (21)

WFP (22)

WHO (23)

Q3 What is your current position?

Q4 With which national and regional institutions and organizations do you work with?

Q5 Please specify your gender

Male (1)

Female (2)

Rather not to say (3)

Gender diverse (specify) (4) _____

Q6 How long have you been working for the UN agency?



End of Block: Section A: Identification

Start of Block: Section B: Relevance

Q7 To what extent is the process followed for the identification and planning of the UN agency activities participative (with national and regional institutions and organizations)?

	To a large extent (1)	To some extent (2)	To a small extent (3)	Not at all (4)
with national institutions and organizations (1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
with regional institutions and organizations (2)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Q8 To what extent has the UN System supported/contributed to achievement of national development goals and targets in alignment to relevant national plans and frameworks such as the ANPDF/NPPs?

- To a large extent (1)
 - To some extent (2)
 - To a small extent (3)
 - Not at all (4)
-

Q9 Has the UN system paid proper attention to and aligned itself to regional and cross-border issues of importance to the government?

- Very aligned (1)
 - Aligned (2)
 - Misaligned (3)
 - Very misaligned (4)
 - N/A Do not know (5)
-

Q10 To what extent is your institutional plans and frameworks aligned with UNDAF and One UN framework and national plans and frameworks such as the ANPDF/NPPs?

- Very aligned (1)
 - Aligned (2)
 - Misaligned (3)
 - Very misaligned (4)
 - N/A Do not know (5)
-

Q11 To what extent has the UNDAF contributed to government efforts at implementing international standards related to leaving no one behind, gender equality and human rights standards and principles?

- To a large extent (1)
 - To some extent (2)
 - To a small extent (3)
 - Not at all (4)
-

Q12 To what extent does the government involve UN agencies in strategic discussions, related to sensitive issues?

- To a large extent (1)
 - To some extent (2)
 - To a small extent (3)
 - Not at all (4)
-

Q13 Do you think that the UN agencies has comparative advantages and unique mandates relevant to government strategic areas?

- Yes (1)
 - No (2)
 - N/A Do not know (3)
-

Q14 To what extent are the UN agencies invited by government to participate in strategic discussions around the ANPDF/NPPs?

- To a large extent (1)
 - To some extent (2)
 - To a small extent (3)
 - Not at all (4)
-

Q15 Please provide additional comments, details or explanations related to relevance questions above



End of Block: Section B: Relevance

Start of Block: Section C : Effectiveness

Q16 To what extent do you consider the UN agencies have coordinated their efforts to support the country towards achieving SDGs and national plans and frameworks such as the ANPDF/NPPs?

- A lot of coordination (1)
- Some coordination (2)
- Minimal coordination (3)
- No coordination (4)

Q17 To what extent has UNCT has contributed to, or is likely to contribute to, the outcomes defined in the UNDAF/ One UN for Afghanistan?

- To a large extent (1)
 - To some extent (2)
 - To a small extent (3)
 - Not at all (4)
-

Q18 To what extent do you think the UNCT is effective in coordinating and mobilizing various resources of the UN agencies government and donors to achieve SDG targets?

- To a large extent (1)
 - To some extent (2)
 - To a small extent (3)
 - Not at all (4)
-

Q19 To what extent do you think the UNCT has been effective in communicating the benefits of One UN to counterparts, donors and other stakeholders?

- To a large extent (1)
 - To some extent (2)
 - To a small extent (3)
 - Not at all (4)
-

Q20 To what extent do you think that the UNCT was effective in mobilizing UN agencies, counterparts and donors for the government to respond to COVID-19?

- To a large extent (1)
 - To some extent (2)
 - To a small extent (3)
 - Not at all (4)
-

Q21 In your opinion, to what extent has the UN advanced the establishment of partnerships between national and regional counterparts, civil society, and/or the private sector?

- To a large extent (1)
 - To some extent (2)
 - To a small extent (3)
 - Not at all (4)
 - I do not know (5)
-

Q22 To what extent has UN interagency cooperation and collaboration with other entities enhanced the possibility of reaching SDGs targets ?

	To a large extent (1)	To some extent (2)	To a small extent (3)	Not at all (4)
Interagency cooperation (1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Collaboration with other entities (2)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Q23 To what extent has the UN contributed to increasing coordination among national/ regional institutions and organizations ?

	To a large extent (1)	To some extent (2)	To a small extent (3)	Not at all (4)
Increasing coordination among national institutions and organizations (1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Increasing coordination among regional institutions and organizations (2)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Q24 Please provide additional comments, details or explanations related to effectiveness questions above



End of Block: Section C : Effectiveness

Start of Block: Section D: Efficiency

Q25 How satisfied are you with the human, knowledge and material resources made available by the UN to reach SDG targets ?

	Very satisfied (1)	Somewhat satisfied (2)	Somewhat unsatisfied (3)	Very unsatisfied (4)
Human resources (1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Knowledge resources (2)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Material resources (3)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Q26 How satisfied are you with the timeliness and budget with which UN activities were delivered?

- Very satisfied (1)
- Somewhat satisfied (2)
- Somewhat unsatisfied (3)
- Very unsatisfied (4)

Q27 To what extent are UN M&E and other administrative systems able to accurately record performance on outcomes achieved, including SDGs?

- To a large extent (1)
- To some extent (2)
- To a small extent (3)
- Not at all (4)

Q28 How satisfied are you with the exchange of evidence for achievement of outcomes, including SDGs between counterpart systems and that of UN Systems?

- Very satisfied (1)
 - Somewhat satisfied (2)
 - Somewhat unsatisfied (3)
 - Very unsatisfied (4)
-

Q29 To what extent do you think that the UNDAF sufficiently supports government systems to collect evidence of Global SDG and A-SDG results achieved?

- To a large extent (1)
 - To some extent (2)
 - To a small extent (3)
 - Not at all (4)
-

Q30 Please provide additional comments, details or explanations related to efficiency questions above (e.g. challenges or constraints that affected the timeliness implementation):



End of Block: Section D: Efficiency

Start of Block: Section E : Sustainability

Q31 How satisfied are you with the participation of national and regional institutions and organizations in UN's planning and implementation process ?

	Very satisfied (1)	Somewhat satisfied (2)	Somewhat unsatisfied (3)	Very unsatisfied (4)
National institutions/organizations (1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Regional institutions/organizations (2)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Q32 To what extent do you think that the UN system supports building national and local capacities to ensure long-term gains?

- To a large extent (1)
 - To some extent (2)
 - To a small extent (3)
 - Not at all (4)
-

Q33 To what extent do you think UN agencies have been successful in recruiting private sector and civil society partners to ensure long term gains?

- To a large extent (1)
 - To some extent (2)
 - To a small extent (3)
 - Not at all (4)
-

Q34 How satisfied are you with the progress on UNDAF outcomes related to the areas of human development, inclusive growth, livelihoods, resilience, governance, and rule of law?

- Very satisfied (1)
 - Somewhat satisfied (2)
 - Somewhat unsatisfied (3)
 - Very unsatisfied (4)
-

Q35 Please provide additional comments, details or explanations related to sustainability questions above



End of Block: Section E : Sustainability

Start of Block: Cross-cutting Principles/ UN Coherence

Q36 To what extent has the UN system's support been extended in a way that promotes gender equity, human rights, environmental sustainability, RBM use in Afghanistan?

	To a large extent (1)	To some extent (2)	To a small extent (3)	Not at all (4)	I do not know (5)
Gender equity (1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Human rights (2)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Environmental sustainability (3)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
RBM use (4)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Q37 To what extent do you think UNDS reform been successfully implemented in Afghanistan ?

- To a large extent (1)
 - To some extent (2)
 - To a small extent (3)
 - Not at all (4)
 - I do not know (5)
-

Q38 Do you think that One UN promote or support policies that are consistent with each other and across sectors?

- To a large extent (1)
 - To some extent (2)
 - To a small extent (3)
 - Not at all (4)
 - I do not know (5)
-

Q39 To what extent do you think that One UN implementation in Afghanistan has strengthened the coherence of the UN system support in Afghanistan?

- To a large extent (1)
 - To some extent (2)
 - To a small extent (3)
 - Not at all (4)
 - I do not know (5)
-

Q40 To what extent do you think the strategic interventions of UN Agencies is compatible with each other and with those of other development partners?

- To a large extent (1)
 - To some extent (2)
 - To a small extent (3)
 - Not at all (4)
 - I do not know (5)
-

Q41 To what extent do you think the UNDAF /One UN strengthens the position, credibility, and the reliability of the UN system as a partner for the Government of Afghanistan and other actors?

	To a large extent (1)	To some extent (2)	To a small extent (3)	Not at all (4)	I do not know (5)
Position (1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Credibility (2)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Reliability (3)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Q42 To what extent do you think UNDAF/One UN is being used effectively as a partnership vehicle?

- To a large extent (1)
 - To some extent (2)
 - To a small extent (3)
 - Not at all (4)
 - I do not know (5)
-

Q43 Has there been an increase in the availability of resources for implementation since progress on One UN, due to a reduction in transaction costs?

- Yes (1)
 - No (2)
 - I don't know (3)
-

Q44 Do you think that progress on One UN reduces transaction costs for partners through greater UN coherence and discipline?

- Yes (1)
 - No (2)
 - I don't know (3)
-

Q45 Do you think because of progress on One UN, UN Agencies collectively prioritize activities based on the needs (demand side) rather than on the availability of resources (supply side), and reallocate resources according to the collective priorities if necessary?

- Yes (1)
 - No (2)
 - I don't know (3)
-

Q46 Do you think progress on One UN facilitated the identification of and access to new financing opportunities?

- Yes (1)
 - No (2)
 - I don't know (3)
-

Q47 To what extent do you think that UNDAF was supported by an integrated funding framework and adequate funding instruments?

- Adequately supported (1)
 - Somewhat adequate (2)
 - Minimally supported (3)
 - Not supported (4)
-

Q48 Please provide comments, details or explanations related to your responses to sustainability questions above



End of Block: Cross-cutting Principles/ UN Coherence

ANNEX 4: LIST OF PEOPLE CONSULTED

Name	Title	Stakeholder Type
Anubha Sood	OIC, UNODC	UN System
Abdallah Al Dardari	Resident Representative, UNDP	UN System
Sheema Sen Gupta	Country Representative, UNICEF	UN System
Rajendra Aryal	Country Representative, FAO	UN System
Paul Cruickshank	Director, UNOPS	UN System
Jordan Naidoo	Director, UNESCO	UN System
Ramiz Alakbarov	DSRSG/RC/HC	UN System
Aleksandar Bodiroza	Country Representative, UNFPA	UN System
Mohammad Shakir Majeedi	Country Representative, UNIDO	UN System
Narendra Singru	Country Director, ADB	Donor
Artur Andrysiak	Deputy Country Director, ADB	Donor
Caroline Van Buren	Country Representative, UNHCR	UN System
Paul Heslop	Programme Manager, UNMAS	UN System
Dr. David Lai	Health Cluster Coordinator, WHO	UN System
Mary-Ellen McGroarty	Country Representative, WFP	UN System
Ashley Carrl	Country Representative, IOM	UN System
Ian Ridley	Head of Office, OCHA	UN System
Ramin Behzad	Senior Coordinator, ILO	UN System
Geeta Kuttiparambil	Country Representative, UN Women	UN System
Dr Olivier Bangerter	Director of Cooperation	Donor/ Switzerland
Farhat Hasanzoi	Communication Director, VP Office	UN System
Alison Davidian	UN Women	UN System
Fernando Da Cruz	Country Programme Manager, UN-Habitat	UN System
Sarwat Adnan	UN-Habitat	UN System

Name	Title	Stakeholder Type
Mr. Nabi Sroosh	Acting Deputy Minister MoEc	Government
Mr. Farhad Hashimi	Senior Economic Advisor, MoEc	Government
Dr. Mohammad Younus Alikhil	RH In Emergency Project	NGO
Lisa K. Piper	Director	NGO
Candra Samekto	Country Director, IFAD	UN System
Lorna Morris		UN System
Mr. Bashir Ahmad Tayenj		Government
Mr Ahmad Javed Rasooli	Director General NSIA	Government
Mr Hasibullah Mowahed	Deputy Director NSIA	Government
Mr Wafiullah Kakar	Deputy Minister MoRR	Government
Mohammad Hashem Aurtaq	Deputy Minister, Mol	Government
Evan Jones	Coordinator, Asia Displacement Solutions Platform	NGO
Mark Ward	Country Director, IMC (International Medical Corps)	NGO
Mohammad Hasnain	UNEP	UN System
Fiona Frazer	OHCHR	UN System
Popal Habibi	Deputy Minister, MRRD	Government
Haseena Safi	Minister, MoWA	Government
Hosna Jalil	Deputy Minister, MoWA	Government
Bashir Noormal	Deputy Minister, MoPH	Government
Hashmatullah Ghafoori	Deputy Minister, MAIL	Government
Tahir Zuhair	Minister, MoIC	Government
Mohamad Hashim Hortaq	Deputy Minister , Mol	Government
Mahmood Mujtaba Mastoor	Director , Mol	Government
Ghulam Bahaudin Jilani	Deputy Minsiter, ANDMA	Government
Oasem Haidari	DM, ANDMA	Government
Taher Zohair	Minister, MoIC	Government
Aziz Ahmad Gulistani	Deputy Director, MUDL	Government
Gul Mohammad Gulzai	Deputy Minister, MoJ	Government

Name	Title	Stakeholder Type
Christopher Nyamandi	Country Director for SCI	NGO
Andrew McCoubrey	Development Director	Donor/UK
Joanne McFadden	Statistics Adviser	Donor/UK
Fernandescardy	DFID Gov	Donor
Domenico Frontoni	Logistics	Donor/Italy
Gianna Dare	Senior Expert Rural Development Private Sector, Environment	Donor/Italy
Sanna Kaki		Donor/Nordic
Michael VonSchoenberg	Head of Cooperation, Embassy of Canada	Donor/Canada
Renata Pistone	Deputy Head of cooperation, Embassy of Canada	Donor/Germany
Natalija Waldhuber		Donor/Europe
Richard Rodgers		Donor/Australia
Basir Mohamadi		Donor
Erito		Donor
Melle Van Dijk	Minbuza	Donor
Aleksandar Bodirosa	UNFPA	UN System
Ashif Hasham	AKDN	Donor
Laila Taj		Donor
Pamela Husain	Head, RCO/Sr. Strategic Planning & Coord. Officer	UN System
Esther Kaggwa	UNICEF	UN System
Yumiko Kanemitsu	WFP	UN System
Stuart Simpson	Special Envoy & Chief of Mission, IOM	UN System
Mark Colhoun	Country Representative, UNODC	UN System
Aleta Miller	Country representative, UN Women	UN System
Peter Graaff	WHO Representative a.i	UN System
Henry Kerali	Country Director WB	UN System
Homa Fotouhi	Operations Manager WB	UN System
Savita Hande	Principal Security Adviser, UNDSS	UN System
Mohammad Shakir Majeedi	Country Representative, UNIDO	UN System

Name	Title	Stakeholder Type
Dmitry Godunov	Regional Director based in Geneva, UNCTAD	UN System
Reza Mohammadi	Field Coordinator (based in the MoF), UNCTAD	UN System
Maria Elena Filio Boromeo	UNAIDS Pak Afghan Country Director, UNAIDS	UN System
Sabahuddin Sokout	Programme Coordinator, UNAIDS	UN System
Shin Ohinata	Coordination Officer -Economist, RCO	UN System
Moqamuddin Siraj	Coordination Officer- Partnership, RCO	UN System
Deborah Ann Lyons	Secretary-General's Special Representative, SRSB	UN System
Denise Wilman	UNAMA Chief of Staff, COS	UN System
Jorge Goncalves	UNAMA Chief of Mission Support, CMS	UN System
M. Hashem Ghazniwal	Head, Wheat Flour Millers' Association, Fortified Wheat Flour Millers Association	NGO
Najibullah Enayat	Managing Director, Afghanistan National Horticulture Development Organization (ANHDO)	NGO
Amiruddin Salimi	Program Coordinator, Shelter For Life International (SFL)	NGO
Noor Agha Noori	Director Institute of Archaeology	NGO
Najib Sharifi	Director Afghanistan Journalists Safety Committee	NGO
Mujeeb Khelwatgar	Director Nai	NGO
Hamdullah Arbab	Commissioner, AIC	NGO
Najib Baleegh	Program Director, AADA	NGO
Yasamin Yousfuzai	General Director, MOVE	NGO
Farhad Farahmand	Managing Director, AHEAD	NGO
Said Husain Shah Hashimi	Executive Director, BARAN	NGO
Farhad Paiman	Managing Director, OHPM	NGO
Younus Alikhil	RH In Emergency Project Coordinator, ARCS	NGO
Mark Ward	Country Director, IMC	NGO
Abdul Majeed Sediqi	Head of Mission, HNTPO	NGO
Sultan Mohammad	Acting Director, HEWAD	NGO
Shakeela Abdaly	Director, AMA	NGO

Name	Title	Stakeholder Type
Naikmal Shah	Chief Executive Officer, AFGA	NGO
Raymond Briscoe	Country Director, DCA	NGO
Faridon Qaumi	Project Manager, DCA	NGO
Nigamananda Swain	Country Manager, ICARDA	NGO
Homayou Niksear	Head of Products & Marketing, FMFB	NGO
Waheed Afghan	Deputy of Section, Kardan University	NGO
Rangina Hamidi	Acting Minister, MoE	Government
Ataullah Wahidyar	DM, MoE	Government

UN	# of Kils requested	Status
RC	1	Done
FAO	1	Done
IFAD	2	Done
ILO	1	Done
IOM	2	Done
OCHA	1	Done
OHCHR	1	Done
UN Habitat	1	Done
UNAIDS	2	Done
UNAMA	2	Done
UNCDF	1	Done
UNCTAD	1	Done
RCO	3	Done
UNDSS	1	Done
UNDP	1	Done
UNEP	1	Done
UNESCO	1	Done
UNFPA	1	Done
UN-Habitat	2	
UNHCR	1	Done

GOV.	# of Kils requested	Status
VP Office	1	Done
	1	Done
MoEc	1	Done
	1	Done
MoRR	1	Done
NSIA	1	Done
	1	Done
MoI	1	Done
	1	Done
	1	Done
MoWA	1	Done
MoJ	1	Done
SCI	1	Done
MoE	3	
MUDL	1	Done

Other Partners	# of Kils requested	Status
ADB	2	Done
Australia DFAT/Australian Embassy	1	Done
European Union	1	Done
Germany	1	Done
Swiss Development Cooperation	1	Done
Donor	5	Done
Minbusza	1	Done
World Bank	2	Done
AKDN	1	Done
UK - DFID	2	Done
Italy	2	Done
Nordic	1	Done
Global Affairs Canada	4	Done
NGO	17	Done
Oxfam		Done
Total	41	41

UNICEF	2	Done
UNIDO	2	Done
UNMAS	1	Done
UNODC	2	Done
UNOPS	1	Done
UNWOMEN	3	Done
WFP	2	Done
WHO	2	Done
UNDESA	1	Done
Total	43	43

MoIC	1	Done
	1	Done
MRRRD	1	Done
MoPH	1	Done
MAIL	1	Done
ANDMA	1	Done
	1	Done
Total	26	26

ANNEX 5: KEY STAKEHOLDER MAPPING FOR THE FIVE THEMATIC AREAS

Stakeholder Category	Education	Food Security, Nutrition and Livelihoods	Health	Return and Reintegration	Rule of Law and Governance	Role
National Government	MoE, MoF, MoHE, MoLSAMD, MoPH, MoWA, MoRR, MoRRD	CEO, MoPH, MAIL, MoLSAMD, MoRRD, MoWE, MoF, MoFA, MoE, MOCI, MoEC, MoJ, MoWA, ANDMA, DiREC, IDLG, CSO	MoPH, MoF, MoRRD, MoHE, MoLSAMD, MoE, MoWA, MAIL, MoI, MoIC, Ministry of Religious Affairs, Ministry of Tribal and Borders Affairs, ARCS, ANDMA	MoRR, Council of Minister's Sub-Committee on Migration Affairs, ARAZI, DiREC, MoRRD, MoLSAMD, MoWA, MoPH, AIHRC, MAIL, MUDA, MoF, IDLG, CSO, MoIA, ACCRA, Deputy Ministry for Youth and Culture, MUDH, IDLG	MOJ, MOIA, MoIC, Attorney General, Supreme Court, Independent Bar Association, MoWA, IDLG, Parliament, OCAI, the High Office of Oversight	Funding/Decision Makers
Independent Bodies					Independent Joint Anti-Corruption Monitoring and Evaluation Committee, the Independent Anti-Corruption Justice Centre	Guidance/Oversight
Local Government	Provincial and District Education Directorates	Provincial and district offices in Ministries and Governors' offices	Municipalities, officials at province/district levels	Provincial and district MoRR offices, provincial governors office, municipalities, PDCs	Officials at Province/district levels	Decision Makers/ implementer supporters/ monitoring and reporting

Stakeholder Category	Education	Food Security, Nutrition and Livelihoods	Health	Return and Reintegration	Rule of Law and Governance	Role
United Nations	IOM, OCHA, UNAMA, UNESCO, UNFPA, UNICEF, UNIDO, UNHCR, UNOPS, UN Women, WFP, WHO	FAO, ILO, IFAD, IOM, UNICEF, UNODC, UNDP, WHO, UNHCR, OCHA, UN Women, WFP	WHO, UNICEF, UNFPA, UNDP and UNODC, UNAIDS	FAO, ILO, IOM, OCHA, UNAMA, UNICEF, UNDP, UNESCO, UNFPA, UNHABITAT, UNHCR, UNODC, UN Women, WFP, WHO	IOM, UNDP, UNHCR, UNICEF, UNESCO, UNFPA, UNAMA, UNODC, UN-Habitat	Partnership/Policy/Funding/Complementing Implementers/Consultants/Advocacy
International Organizations/ Donors	World Bank, FCDO	ADB, World Bank, FCDO	World Bank, USAID, GAVI, BMGF, GFATM, Rotary, FCDO International, CDC, KFW, EU, Japan, Italy, Korea, Canada, Australia, UAE	World Bank, USAID, FCDO	World Bank, ADB, USAID, EU, FCDO Canada, Australia, NATO/Resolute Support, CSTC-A	Partnership/Policy/Funding/Complementing Implementers/Consultants/Advocacy
Private Sector	ACCI, Trade Unions	ACCI, Trade Unions	ACCI, Trade Unions	ACCI, Trade Unions	ACCI	Policy/standards/implementers
NGOs	Local and International NGOs	Local and International NGOs	Local and International NGOs	Local and International NGOs	Local and International NGOs	Partnership/Advocacy
Academia	Academics, Universities	Academics, Universities	Academics, Universities	Academics, Universities	Academics, Universities	Consultants
Civil Society	Community Leaders and CDCs	Community Development Councils, Extension Workers, Agriculture Cooperatives, Lead Farmers, Community Leaders, Community Health Workers, Family Action	Community Leaders, Community Development Councils, NGOs, Health Volunteers, Women Networks, Religious Leaders, Professional Associations, Patients	Community Leaders and Decision Makers (incl. elders, religious leaders, influential community leaders, CDCs, Shuras, men, women, children), NUAWÉ	Community Leaders, CDCs, Health Volunteers, Men, Women, Religious Leaders, NUAWÉ	Participants and implementers

Stakeholder Category	Education	Food Security, Nutrition and Livelihoods	Health	Return and Reintegration	Rule of Law and Governance	Role
		Groups, WASH Mobilizers, Polio Mobilisers, Religious Leaders, Food Fortification Associations, Field Veterinary Units, National Union of Afghan Workers & Employees (NUAWE)	Associations and Networks			
Targeted Communities	Recipients of the education programme and their families	Recipients of the programme and their families	Recipients of the programme and their families (Children under 5, youth, women, marginalized groups, communities in security compromised, remote and underserved areas affected by emergencies, IDPs, returnees, persons with disabilities)	Recipients of the programme and their families	Recipients of the programme and their families	Decision Makers/participants
Service Provider Consortia	Telecommunications Firms, Mobile Money Agents	Millers, DABS, FINCA, Afghanistan Chamber of Commerce & Industry (ACCI)	Media, Professional Associations, Patients Associations and Networks, Banks, Telecommunications Firms, Mobile Money Agents	Telecommunications Firms, Mobile Money Agents, Banks, Research organizations, Social enterprises	Millers, POS retailers, Telecommunications Firms, Mobile Money Agents	Consultants

Stakeholder Category	Education	Food Security, Nutrition and Livelihoods	Health	Return and Reintegration	Rule of Law and Governance	Role
Retailers	Associations, Producers, Logistics providers, Retailers	Associations, Producers, Logistics providers, Retailers	Associations, Producers, Logistics providers, Retailers	Associations, Producers, Logistics providers, Retailers	Associations, Producers, Logistics providers, Retailers	Partnership/participants in procurement

ANNEX 6: UNDAF/ONE UN IN AFGHANISTAN - DOCUMENT REVIEW

This evaluation takes into consideration the overall United Nations Development Assistance Framework for Afghanistan (UNDAF) 2015-2019 and One UN for Afghanistan Framework 2018-2021, the ANPDF 2017-2021 and associated National Priority Programmes (NPPs) in alignment with the 2030 Agenda and its Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The ANPDF identified the development challenges of the population and described the Government's roadmap for ensuring peace and security, ending poverty, and achieving self-reliance. The evaluation also takes into account the Programming Principles (UNDAF Companion guidance document (2017) which all provide background to the development of the upcoming UNSDCF (UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework) 2022-2025.

In light of the launch of the ANPDF, the UN in Afghanistan undertook a comprehensive review of its work in 2017. The Mid-Term Review Report of UNDAF was produced in November 2017. This review showed that in 2016 and 2017 more than 90% of the money spent by UN agencies focused on five thematic areas: education; food security, nutrition and livelihoods; health; return and reintegration; and rule of law. An additional 1% of resources was dedicated to a sixth thematic area, namely the UN's normative work, including human rights advocacy and protection, and promoting international regulations and guidelines. Based on this review, the UN took the decision to focus on these six thematic areas, rather than trying to help address all or most of the challenges facing the country.

In the first half of 2020, the COVID-19 global pandemic affected Afghanistan as well, which in turn impacted the work of the UN in support of the Government and its people. The pandemic which started as a health crisis, has become an economic and human crisis as described by the SG Guterres. Afghanistan closed its borders and took steps to lockdown its population to contain the pandemic, economic activities were on hold, trade has been disrupted, thousands have lost their jobs, with many of them facing hunger and falling into extreme poverty⁶⁵⁶⁶.

Education Thematic Group

Afghanistan has witnessed major progress over the last decade and a half in socioeconomic terms. The under-25 generation represents close to 50 per cent of the population, with about 32.69 per cent of the population is aged between 15- 34⁶⁷, making Afghanistan one of the youngest countries in the world⁶⁸. This makes quality education particularly critical for the rapidly growing numbers of school aged boys and girls. There is a growing demand for education

⁶⁵ Michael Bamberger, 2012. *Real World Evaluation. 2nd Edition*. P. 405.

⁶⁶ One UN Afghanistan, Mid-Term Progress Report 1 January 2018-30 June 2020

⁶⁷ Estimated Population of Afghanistan 2020-2021, NSIA.

⁶⁸ Afghanistan-Promoting Education During Times of Increased Fragility, The World Bank, 2018

materials and resources such as textbooks, learning spaces, trained teachers that prepare young Afghans to join the workforce.

Important human development indicators including school enrollment has seen marked improvement. School enrollment increased from one million in 2001 to 9.5 million in 2013. Girls account for more than one-third of students compared to very few in 2012. Public and private universities enroll around 300,000 students, including around 100,000 women according to the Afghan Ministry of Higher Education.

However, the government acknowledges that the country's education system has been severely impacted by more than three decades of sustained conflict. Natural disasters such as floods, earthquakes, and landslides and insufficient disaster preparedness have only exacerbated the situation. In fact, without proper countermeasures, the Covid 19 pandemic is threatening to roll back the hard-earned achievements and further shake the already fragile sector. An estimated 3.7 million children are out-of-school in Afghanistan – 60% of them are girls. Youth and adult literacy rates in Afghanistan are among the lowest in the world at 31.7 per cent (, again with provincial and rural-urban variations. Out of 200,000 high school graduates every year, only 5 per cent undertake formal technical and vocational skills training.⁶⁹ The quality of education is also poor because only 48 per cent of their teachers have the minimum academic qualifications⁷⁰. Numerous structural inequalities and other forms of disparities, such as poverty, disability, gender discrimination, ethnic/cultural discrimination and digital divides that persist across gender, geography, age and income dimensions that together have made it difficult for the Afghan government to deliver education for all. The government's 2015 diagnostic on barriers to effective education identified academic supervision, over-centralization, ministerial fragmentation, poor data collection and ineffective management as primary challenges. Fighting and conflict-induced displacement, lack of sufficient girl only schools, female teachers, distance to schools and high prevalence of child early and forced marriages for girls contribute to the inequitable access to education for young Afghan girls. Consequently, there is a gap between the available skills and the market demand for these skills-labour force, especially in the private sector.

As of October 2020, more than 9.5 million children in public schools and 500,000 children enrolled in community-based education classes, in addition to the 3.7 million out-of-school children in Afghanistan, have been out of school for nearly seven months starting from 14 March 2020, due to lockdowns imposed to control the spread of COVID-19⁷¹. Public and private schools across the country have reopened in different stages from 22 August 2020. School closures and disruption of education have harmed many children in Afghanistan by further limiting access to education for marginalized children. There is growing concern of declining aid in the sector due to the pandemic, leading to fears of worsening of existing vulnerabilities and inequalities.

⁶⁹ Data extracted from UNDAF for Afghanistan 2015-2019

⁷⁰ Education and Healthcare at Risk: Key trends and incidents affecting children's access to healthcare and education in Afghanistan, UNAMA / OHCHR / UNICEF / OCHA, 2016

⁷¹ UNWomen Covid 19 Gender Alert for Afghanistan, Issue#15

In 2019, the UN focused in particular on supporting the Government of Afghanistan to ensure equitable access to quality education for all by supporting implementation of the NESP III 2017-2021 and review of the education sub-sector achievements through implementation of the NESP III, based on sector priorities and vision as outlined in the National Priority Programme (NPP) and Afghanistan National Peace and Development Framework (ANPDF). The NESP III contains the following three outcomes:

1. Quality and Relevance of Education: All learners are prepared to contribute to the welfare of society and equipped for viable employment in the labor market through increased knowledge, skills, attitudes and values needed to be productive, healthy and responsible citizens;

2. Equitable Access to Education: Increased equitable and inclusive access to relevant, safe, and quality learning opportunities for children, youth, and adults in Afghanistan, especially women and girls, including access to education for returnees, and inclusion of refugees and asylum seekers in the Afghan education system and curriculum; and

3. Efficient and Transparent Management: Quality education services at national and sub-national levels are delivered transparently, cost-effective and efficiently.

The Human Capital National Priority Program (NPP) 10 also commits to empowering and equipping adolescents, youths and women with increased skilled-based, occupational literacy and life skills knowledge. In the first half of 2020, the Competency-Based Curriculum Framework for General Education has been developed for finalization. The Youth and Adult Literacy and Basic Education Strategy (2021-2030) is being developed. It is built on the National Literacy Strategy (2013-2020) and is aligned with the National Education Strategic Plan and the Education Reform Plan of the government. The National Youth Development Policy 2018-2021 has been designed and developed in line with the Afghanistan National Development Strategy (ANDS), the National Priority Programmes (NPPs) and the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). The policy will guide design and implementation of short-, medium- and long-term strategies and programmes to develop youth talents, skills and potential in the economic, social, cultural and political spheres and address the lack of coordination between sectors involved in youth development⁷².

Food Security Nutrition and Livelihoods Thematic Group

Afghanistan's economy grew by 3.9 per cent in 2019, driven mainly by strong agricultural growth following recovery from drought in 2018, but is estimated to have declined by 6% in 2020 due to COVID. In 2019, the inflation rate was modest at 2.3 per cent but doubled in the first six months of 2020 to 5.32%⁷³. At 31 per cent of GDP, the trade deficit was extremely high. The structure of the domestic economy is driven by three major factors: foreign military and development aid, licit agricultural production, and illicit activities such as narcotics trafficking. At present, excluding military imports, Afghanistan imports nearly seven times more than it exports⁷⁴. With better

⁷² Afghanistan National Youth Policy 2018-2021

⁷³ Afghanistan National Peace and Development Framework (ANPDF) 2021-2024 (p. 45)

⁷⁴ Afghanistan National Peace and Development Framework (ANPDF) 2021-2024 (p. 10)

infrastructure and improved investment climate, the country's small and medium enterprises (SMEs) have the potential to produce locally and reduce this dependency on imports, thereby creating millions of jobs for the country's growing population. Fiscal performance has continued to improve with domestic revenues reaching 15.77 per cent of GDP in 2019⁷⁵. Economic growth and fiscal performance in the country is fuelled by consumption and driven by agriculture and sectors associated external aid namely transportation, construction, security, and support services.⁷⁶ UNDP Afghanistan estimates that between 80 to 90% of the economic activity in Afghanistan is derived from the informal economy although severe data limitations preclude accurate insight. Political uncertainties continue to undermine private sector confidence as well as service and industrial growth. The latter two sectors of the economy are estimated to have contracted sharply over the first half of 2020, due to the impacts of the COVID-19 crisis.

Income and expenditure poverty remain widespread. Child poverty is particularly pernicious. Afghanistan's poverty statistics remain unacceptably high, with 55%⁷⁷ of the population falling below the USD1.25/day global poverty threshold in 2017. Multi-dimensional poverty varies by region, by gender, social class and by access to resources. Unsurprisingly, poverty is particularly severe in rural areas characterized by low productivity, poor market integration, and recurrent shocks and deep-rooted criminal economy⁷⁸. Nearly four decades of armed conflict have devastated the country's traditional systems for sustainable natural resource management and contributed to deforestation, over-grazing, and food insecurity. Urban poverty is also on the rise due to growing rural-urban migration despite the absence of a developed urban economy to provide them with sustainable livelihoods.

Afghanistan has the third largest youth bulge in the world and 400,000 young people enter Afghanistan's labor force every year.⁷⁹ As of 2020, the unemployment rate stands at 11.73 per cent of total labor force.⁸⁰ The World Bank estimates that even in a high growth scenario, it will be enormously challenging to sustain current levels of employment generation over the next ten years. This is due to the relative low job-intensity of some of Afghanistan's potential growth drivers such as mining, energy, and long-distance trade, which are capital rather than labor intensive.

Growth in Afghan agriculture is hampered by underinvestment in water resource development, poor quality inputs such as seed and fertilizer, environmental degradation, and weak systems for domestic and export marketing.⁸¹ Climate change is causing more frequent droughts and flash flooding. In 2018, due to the widespread drought, progress to reduce household food security in the country was seriously affected as the number of food insecure according to the Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (IPC) reached between 12 to 16 million people in rural areas.⁸²

⁷⁵ Afghanistan National Peace and Development Framework (ANPDF) 2021-2024 (p. 46)

⁷⁶ Issues and Challenges for Transition and Sustainable Growth in Afghanistan, The World Bank, 2011

⁷⁷ https://cso-of-afghanistan.shinyapps.io/ALCS_Dashboard/

⁷⁸ Afghanistan National Peace and Development Framework (ANPDF) 2017-2021

⁷⁹ DHS, 2015

⁸⁰ <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SL.UEM.TOTL.ZS?locations=AF>

⁸¹ Afghanistan National Peace and Development Framework (ANPDF) 2017-2021

⁸² One UN Afghanistan, Mid-Term Progress Report 1 January 2018-30 June 2020

In the same year, 22 provinces across the country also faced severe decline in agricultural output due to the drought. Environmental degradation is a key factor in sustaining poverty as 80 per cent of the population rely on natural resources⁸³.

Covid 19, on top of the droughts, has dealt a double blow to the Afghan people's food security and nutrition. The pandemic quickly turned from a health emergency into a food and livelihood crisis in the country. In December 2019 before the pandemic, it was estimated that 14.33 million people were in crisis or emergency food insecurity⁸⁴. Between August and October of 2020, it was estimated that 11.3 million people were facing high levels of acute food insecurity (36 percent of the analysed population), and it was projected that this number would rise to 13.15 million people by March 2021 (42 per cent of the population)⁸⁵. The pandemic has resulted in increased prices of food commodities, reduced employment opportunities and declining purchasing power in the urban areas. The significance of this is that the impact of protracted malnutrition is long-term and inter-generational as it traps individuals and communities in the vicious circle of poverty. For example, currently, one in four children is underweight and in 2019 poor child nutrition led to 38.2% of children showing signs of stunting in Afghanistan⁸⁶ (the average for Asia is 21.8 per cent) with some provinces having up to 70 per cent stunting. Obviously, this also has immediate health impacts (SDG-3) in terms of reduced immunity and susceptibility to disease.

In order to improve food security, nutrition and livelihoods, the government aims to improve workforce quality by investing in preventative and curative health, including nutrition packages as assistance for the most vulnerable. To advance sustainable job creation, the government aims to build efficient and competitive markets, encourage domestic and international investment and expand vocational and technical education to make the young Afghan labour force more responsive to private sector and global requirements. For agriculture-based livelihoods, the ANPDF emphasizes expanding irrigation and wheat production through improved water management, a national wheat programme, livestock management, value chains, strategic grain reserves, and agroforestry and reforestation. This strategy may not be ecologically sustainable, however. The government also recognizes the impacts of climate change on agriculture-based livelihoods and is committed to address disaster risk reduction and natural resources management in the ANPDF. The UN's support to the government addressed food insecurity and malnutrition, particularly in relation to the severe drought and seasonal food insecurity, as well as on protecting and promoting sustainable and resilient livelihoods and food systems through agriculture, livestock assistance, value chain development and access to markets.

Health Thematic Group

⁸³ United Nations Development Assistance Framework for Afghanistan 2015-2019

⁸⁴ United Nations Office of Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), Humanitarian Response Plan Afghanistan 2018-2021, Issued June 2019

⁸⁵ Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (IPC), Afghanistan, IPC Acute Food Insecurity Analysis, April – November 2020, Issued in November 2020.

⁸⁶ Global Nutrition Report (2020). <https://globalnutritionreport.org/resources/nutrition-profiles/asia/southern-asia/afghanistan/>

Over the last 10 years the coverage of primary health care services has steadily been increasing in Afghanistan, and this has led to improvements in the delivery of services. Between 1990 and 2015, infant and maternal mortality declined by 45.5 per cent and 70.4 per cent respectively⁸⁷. Under-five mortality rate stood at 46.51 per 1000 live births in 2019⁸⁸. 67 per cent of the population uses at least basic drinking water services and 43 per cent of the population uses at least basic sanitation services as of 2019⁸⁹. Government resources for school WASH are extremely limited and the programme is mostly donor-funded. Efforts have been made to establishing national water quality standards and work has started on building capacities of national and sub-national laboratories of the MoPH and the MoRRD for surveillance and monitoring. Efforts to improve WASH policies include the establishment of a sector-wide approach, drafting guidelines for rural WASH, strengthening sector coordination and the creation of a sector-wide Management Information System to harmonize data collection on WASH indicators.⁹⁰ The government acknowledges that progress in health sector has been slow and has been impeded by many challenges which include low level of investment in health (8.8 per cent of GDP), poor quality of services, institutional fragmentation, poor planning, inequity in service provision and shortage of qualified health care providers (particularly females), especially in remote areas. Women receive the least benefit from the primary healthcare system. In addition, there is also limited availability of family planning services, gaps in the Health Information System (HIS), pharmaceutical regulatory and quality and supply chain issues, weakness in financial management, and weaknesses in systems for accountability and risk mitigation.

The Basic Package of Health Services (BPHS) is the foundation of the Afghan public health system, established by the Ministry of Public Health (MoPH) in 2003 to deliver primary health interventions⁹¹. Three donors - USAID, the EU and the World Bank finance BPHS through contracted NGOs. There is concern that delivery of health services including BPHS through NGO partners may prove difficult to sustain post-2020. The Essential Package of Hospital Services (EPHS) is a complement to the BPHS which standardizes hospital services as a basis for a referral system that integrates BPHS facilities with the hospital network. The upgrading of provincial hospitals has lacked attention due to operational and maintenance costs of the donor-built hospitals.

Afghanistan is facing a significant population shift. The total fertility rate is 4.4747 children per woman⁹². This represents a dramatic drop from a more or less constant rate of 7.5 from 1960-1997 when the rate reached a peak of 7.6 and then started to fall sharply each year. High fertility and declining mortality translate into high population growth rates, which is an estimated 2.33 per

⁸⁷ Levels and Trends in Child Mortality, UN IGME, UNICEF (2015); Trends in maternal mortality, 1990-2015, UN WHO (2015)

⁸⁸ <https://childmortality.org/data/Afghanistan>

⁸⁹ All data extracted from Data UNICEF, <https://data.unicef.org/country/afg/>

⁹⁰ United Nations Development Assistance Framework for Afghanistan 2015-2019

⁹¹ United Nations Development Assistance Framework for Afghanistan 2015-2019

⁹² <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SP.DYN.TFRT.IN?locations=AF>

cent annually⁹³. This demographic shift is impacting the government's ability to deliver quality health services to its population. There is high incidence of communicable diseases. Moreover, Afghanistan is one of the three remaining polio endemic countries in the world. Complete eradication of the disease is hampered by the inability of service providers to reach all children consistently with vaccines due to access or security issues and gaps in vaccination program coordination and management. The healthcare service delivery is also burdened by the increasing needs for emergency health services arising from rapid as well as protracted and evolving conflict and the associated ongoing waves of displacement, and natural disasters.

Development to the healthcare sector in Afghanistan is guided by the Citizens' Charter, the National Healthcare NPP (2020-2024), and the Health For All, the Human Capital Development and the National Health Policy 2015-2020 and Strategy 2016-2020. The government is committed to ensuring universal access to primary health services and improve the quality of services in addition to coverage. The Citizen Charter also guarantees the provision of the Basic Package of Health Services for the most vulnerable groups. Most importantly, the government is committed to increasing investment in health and define a sustainable model for health care financing, given the shift in demographics. There is also the wider government 'Master Plan' for responding to the impacts of COVID-19 and an initial three-month Multi-Sector Humanitarian Country Plan developed by MoPH with support from the World Health Organization (WHO). Over the last decade, the UN in Afghanistan has supported the government in strengthening, expanding and sustaining the health system with well-functioning institutions at all levels, focusing on improving public perception of the health sector, national and local capacity for effective and evidence based health planning, human resources, health information, health regulation, norms and standards for clinical practices, diagnostic capacity of the health facilities, access and quality of health services, health financing mechanisms and increased domestic and international resource allocation for health.⁹⁴

Return and Reintegration Thematic Group

Approximately 1 in 4 Afghans have been displaced at one point in their lives and since 2002 more than 6 million Afghans have returned from neighbouring countries. Over 820,000 Afghans returned from the Islamic Republic of Iran and Pakistan in 2018. This includes 13,600 refugees and 32,000 undocumented returnees from the Islamic Republic of Pakistan and some 2,000 refugees and over 770,000 undocumented returnees from the Islamic Republic of Iran⁹⁵. The country's capacity to absorb this new wave of returnees, in addition to the 610,000 refugees and undocumented Afghans who returned in 2017, remains under increasing strain. This is on top of the internal displacement induced by the ongoing conflict and natural disasters such as the droughts in 2018 and 2019. Civilian casualties in Afghanistan now ranks second behind Syria and ahead of Yemen for the most civilian casualties in the world.⁹⁶ The drought and the conflict

⁹³ <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SP.POP.GROW?locations=AF>

⁹⁴ One UN For Afghanistan 2018-2021

⁹⁵ Returns to Afghanistan, Joint IOM UNHCR Summary Report, 2018

⁹⁶ <https://aoav.org.uk/2019/2018-a-year-of-explosive-violence/>

forced 235,000 and 370,000 Afghans respectively, out of their homes in 2018⁹⁷. The top five challenges for returnees are food insecurity, shelter, land, livelihoods and access to services including civil documentation. There are over 2 million registered Afghan refugees in neighboring countries⁹⁸. As of 2020, the UNHCR has marked 25 priority areas for return and reintegration across the country in line with the Government of Afghanistan's priorities outlined in the Afghanistan National Peace and Development Framework (ANPDF) and the Citizens' Charter National Priority Programme and has identified over a million people of concern. The government faces significant challenge in the reintegration process due to capacity gaps in carry out voluntary return and repatriation, including establishing encashment and transit centres, registration and delivery of assistance to returnees and IDPs; identify and respond to gender-based violence; and manage data⁹⁹.

The ANPDF commits to 'Ensuring a better future for our refugees, returning migrants and internally displaced people', highlighting that returnees and IDPs are a valuable source of human capital that can contribute to economic growth and development. Both ANPDF and the Citizens' Charter emphasizes on finding sustainable solutions to ensure proper reintegration of returnees and IDPs. The government also called for the inclusion of returnees and IDPs in local governance, and technical and vocational training, especially for women, in order to provide them with sustainable livelihood opportunities and establish them as contributing members of the society.

The reintegration efforts of the Government of Afghanistan are guided by the Global Compact on Refugees (GCR) and the Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework (CRRF) developed in 2018. These two frameworks together support multi-stakeholder efforts to address the root causes of displacement. The four key objectives of the GCR are: easing pressure on host countries and host communities, enhancing self-reliance, expanding access to third-country solutions for refugees, and supporting conditions in countries of origin to facilitate return in safety and dignity. The UN agencies, especially UNHCR, operates within the framework of the regional Solutions Strategy for Afghan Refugees (SSAR) and facilitates a protection and solutions dialogue between the Islamic Republics of Afghanistan, Iran and Pakistan. UN agency programmes, particularly in the areas of high return and displacement contribute to the achievement of the following outcomes which impact returnees, IDPs and host communities¹⁰⁰:

1. Increase access to basic services for community resilience and social cohesion
2. Improve access to adequate land and housing
3. Improve access to livelihoods and jobs through market-based programming
4. Facilitate voluntary, gradual and safe return, regular and responsible migration and mobility by implementing well-planned and managed policies

⁹⁷ <https://www.humanitarianresponse.info/en/operations/afghanistan>.

⁹⁸ <https://data2.unhcr.org/en/situations/afghanistan>

⁹⁹ One UN For Afghanistan 2018-2021

¹⁰⁰ One UN For Afghanistan 2018-2021

Ensure access of the returnees, displaced populations, and host communities to the infrastructure services in areas of high return and displacement, including (or particularly) in the returnee townships.

Rule of Law and Governance Thematic Group

The country has made some progress in terms of the development and consolidation of governance values, institutions, policies and laws. Four decades of conflict have confounded its efforts to build an effective state with well-functioning institutions. The country has a long history of weak justice system, law enforcement and governance, low governmental capacity, poorly functioning representative governance structures, narcotics production and inadequate public service delivery mechanisms and the protracted conflict has further compounded these weaknesses by manifold. While institutions have been created, and have expanded, the purposes for which the institutions were established have not been achieved, and they have not succeeded in the effectively delivering on their mandate of bringing inclusive and accountable governance to the people of Afghanistan¹⁰¹. There is a general lack of public trust in government and socio-political institutions. This is mainly because for many Afghans, the formal justice and rule of law institutions remain inaccessible. This has also resulted in greater reliance on traditional dispute resolution mechanisms (TDRs) compared to formal institutions, as TDRs are generally more accessible and effective, especially for the poor, even though they are widely regarded by rights bodies as being irresponsible to human rights concerns. Afghanistan which is currently ranked at 172 out 180 countries assessed in 2019, has been consistently ranked among the ten most corrupt countries in the world by Transparency International, except for a brief moment in 2015 and 2016 when it rose into the bottom 20.¹⁰² Women and representation from other minority groups are almost non-existent in rule of law institutions and civil service. The country still faces severe external threats, widespread insurgency, and terrorism which continue to shape its security policies and the rule of law sector.

In view of the challenges, the government has adopted a five-year National Campaign Plan to increase the mobility and effectiveness of the country's security forces. The Plan is designed to improve the ANSF and the police in order to secure the country against armed opposition groups and reduce criminality such as extortion, kidnapping, and illegal seizure. The Plan focuses on three areas- reconciliation, security, and stability. The country's political and security concerns remain major deterrents to both domestic and international investments. The government has identified four interrelated challenges – conflict, corruption, criminality, and unemployment – as barriers to the country's development agenda. To address these challenges and advance political and socioeconomic stability, the government aims to reform the justice and public sector and strengthen subnational governance.

The Afghan government's efforts to improve governance and state effectiveness, and social capital and nation building are guided the High Council on Reforms, the High Council on Service

¹⁰¹ United Nations Development Assistance Framework for Afghanistan 2015-2019

¹⁰² <https://www.transparency.org/en/cpi/2019/results/afg#details>

Delivery, and the High Council on Rule of Law and Anti-Corruption, and the High Council on Poverty Reduction, Service Delivery and Citizen's Engagement. Four National Priority Programmes- the Effective Governance Programme, the Justice Sector Reform Programme and the Subnational Governance National Priority Programme, and the Citizen's Charter facilitates the achievement of the government's objectives in this area. The adoption and coming into force of the Anti-Corruption Law and the Whistle Blower Protection Law was of significant achievement for the implementation of the Anti-Corruption strategy (2017) for the country. The Anti-Corruption Law submitted in October 2018 but it is still pending approval by the parliament despite calls from donors to expedite the process at the 2020 Afghanistan Conference in Geneva. The strategy expired in 2019 and development of a successive strategy is delayed by Covid 2019.

The UN in Afghanistan invests in increasing human capacity in the public sector, build institutional capacity, and promotes simplification of government institutions, to ensure that the services and rights of people are provided for and protected from loss and corruption. The UN's support to the ANPDF aims to achieve five outcomes¹⁰³:

1. The government's Justice and Judicial Reform Plan supported leading to an impartial, transparent, and accountable justice system and application of law; improved delivery and enforcement of court judgements and decisions; improved access to, delivery, and use of the formal justice system; increased trust in judicial services; and a fully operational and independent Anti-Corruption Justice Centre
2. Strengthened electoral and representative institutions and systems better able to ensure full public participation, representation, and transparency in electoral processes
3. More capable and inclusive provincial and municipal governments better able to plan, monitor and budget for accountable and transparent service delivery in accordance with the Sub-National Governance Policy and National Priority Plan

Increased participation of women in civil service and public life; full implementation of the Government's National Action Plan for Women in Afghanistan; and improved security and reduced conflicts for communities and enhanced law enforcement capacity to combat drug trafficking and transnational organized crime.

¹⁰³ One UN For Afghanistan Framework 2018-2021

ANNEX 7: TERMS OF REFERENCE

POST TITLE: International consulting firm to undertake evaluation of United Nations Development Assistance Framework for Afghanistan and One UN for Afghanistan (2015–2020)

AGENCY/PROJECT NAME: UN Resident Coordinator’s Office (RCO)

LOCATION OF ASSIGNMENT: Home-based

DURATION OF ASSIGNMENT (Indicative): January to April 2021 (maximum 66 working days)

EXPECTED STARTING DATE (Indicative): 15 January 2020

Context and purpose

The UN’s assistance for Afghanistan for the period 2015–2021 is set out in two documents, the United Nations Development Assistance Framework for Afghanistan (UNDAF) and One UN for Afghanistan. UNDAF originally delineated the vision and actions of the United Nations Country Team (UNCT) for the period 2015–2019. In 2016, however, the Government of Afghanistan launched the Afghanistan National Peace and Development Framework (ANPDF) to carry the country forward from 2017 to 2021. The ANPDF identified the development challenges of the population and described the Government’s roadmap for ensuring peace and security, ending poverty, and achieving self-reliance.

In light of the launch of the ANPDF, the UN in Afghanistan undertook a comprehensive review of its work in 2017. The Mid-Term Review Report of UNDAF was produced in November 2017. This review showed that in 2016 and 2017 more than 90% of the money spent by UN agencies focused on five thematic areas: education; food security, nutrition and livelihoods; health; return and reintegration; and rule of law. An additional 1% of resources was dedicated to a sixth thematic area, namely the UN’s normative work, including human rights advocacy and protection, and promoting international regulations and guidelines.

Based on this review, the UN took the decision to focus on these six thematic areas, rather than trying to help address all or most of the challenges facing the country. A revised framework document – *One UN for Afghanistan (2018–2021)* – was produced to detail the actions to be taken by the UN to help Afghanistan achieve selected outcomes outlined in the ANPDF and associated National Priority Programme (NPPs).

Under the guidelines, an independent evaluation of the whole implementation to date (i.e. 2015–2020) is required and has been scheduled to take place from November 2020 to January 2021. The objective of the evaluation is to ensure the accountability of the UNCT’s collective contribution to Afghanistan’s progress towards the SDGs. It should result in learning and inform decisions regarding the design of subsequent Cooperation Framework cycles. A focus on development results and the identification of internal and external gaps and overlaps includes a critical

appraisal of the theory of change, UNDAF/One UN design and implementation, the application of the guiding principles, the Funding Compact and the Mutual Accountability Framework.

This evaluation will assess the extent to which the UNCT's outcomes are aligned and have contributed to the development priorities established in the ANPDF, as well as the extent to which these outcomes have been attained. To this end, the evaluation will examine the following aspects of UNCT's programme, namely: (1) relevance, (2) effectiveness, (3) efficiency, (4) sustainability, (5) impact, (6) UN coherence, and (7) adherence to the Guiding Principles.

The findings, recommendations and lessons learnt will inform the design of the 2022-2025 UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (commonly referred to as the Cooperation Framework). The process of formulating the Cooperation Framework will take place in 2021.

Scope

The evaluation should cover UN activities during the period from January 2015 to June 2020. It should examine contributions of all programmes, projects and activities conducted by the UNCT to the outcomes of UNDAF and One UN for Afghanistan. It will also assess the UNCT's performance in relation to the global UN programming principles (e.g. leaving no one behind LNOB, human rights, gender equality and women's empowerment, sustainability and resilience, and accountability).

The evaluation will take into account emerging issues, most notably the COVID-19 pandemic in both the evaluation contents (e.g. the UNCT's responsiveness, adaptation and reprioritization) and operation (e.g. methods for managing stakeholder participation and inclusiveness in the COVID context).

In principle, the evaluation does not evaluate the individual programmes or activities of UN agencies, but builds on the available programme and project evaluations conducted by each agency. Where a paucity of data necessitates a quick assessment of a contribution, this should be carried out using appropriate evaluation methodologies that identify contributions at the outcome level and ascertain the plausibility of causal relationships between activities and outcomes.

As a result of COVID-19, the evaluation will be conducted remotely/home-based. National evaluation support should be provided to arrange for stakeholder/KI interviews as needed.

The evaluation questions should assess the following dimensions: (1) relevance, (2) effectiveness, (3) efficiency, (4) sustainability, (5) UN coherence and (6) adherence to the Guiding Principles. The following list is an indicative list of questions to be considered in the evaluation. The final list will be determined as part of the inception report process.

(6) Relevance

- To what extent were the strategic areas and outcomes consistent with country needs, national priorities, the country's international and regional commitments, including on SDGs, leaving no one behind, human rights, sustainable development, environment, and gender equality?
- How resilient, responsive and strategic was the UNCT in addressing emerging and emergency needs? For example, in assessing the COVID-19 impacts and in reprioritizing/adapting its support to provide timely support to the country and to ensure the achievement of the outcomes.
- To what extent were the UN's comparative advantages and unique mandates (that other stakeholders would not/cannot have) relevant to the strategic areas (especially in

addressing sensitive issues). To what extent did they help strengthen the UN position, credibility and reliability of the UN as a partner for the Government and other actors in the efforts to achieve the SDGs?

(7) Effectiveness

- To what extent has the UNCT contributed to, or is likely to contribute to, the outcomes defined in the UNDAF/One UN for Afghanistan? The evaluation should also note how any unintended results have affected national development positively or negatively and to what extent they were foreseen and managed.

(8) Efficiency

- To what extent have the outcomes achieved with the appropriate amount of resources (funds, expertise, time, administrative costs, etc.) and within the planned time-framed?

(9) Sustainability

- To what extent did the UN system support building national and local capacities and ensure long-term gains?

(10) UN Coherence

- To what extent did the UN system promote or support policies that are consistent with each other and across sectors, given the multi-sectoral nature of social and economic development?
- To what extent did the UN system collectively prioritize activities based on the needs (demand side) rather than on the availability of resources (supply side), and reallocate resources according to the collective priorities if necessary?
- To what extent did the UNDAF/One UN strengthen the position, credibility and reliability of the UN system as a partner for the Government of Afghanistan and other actors? How effectively was the UNDAF/One UN used as a partnership vehicle? compatible with each other and with those of other development partners and the government so as to achieve the common goals/ outcomes and to deliver quality, integrated, SDG-focused policy support, particularly through joint programming?
- To what extent has the UNDAF/One UN facilitated the identification of and access to new financing partners?
- To what extent did the UNDAF/One UN reduce transaction costs for partners through greater UN coherence and discipline?
- Was UNDAF/One UN supported by an integrated funding framework and adequate funding instruments? What were the gaps?
- How has the UNDS reform been implemented in Afghanistan and to what degree has it strengthened the coherence of the UN system support in Afghanistan?

(11) Adherence to guiding principles

- To what extent does the design and implementation of the UNDAF/One UN promote gender equality?
- To what extent were the obligations of the duty bearers and rights of the right holders reflected in the UNDAF/One UN and supported/promoted in the implementation?

- To what extent was the UNDAF/One UN for Afghanistan designed and delivered with due consideration of environmental implications?
- To what extent was the principle of “leaving no one behind” adhered to in the UNDAF/One UN for Afghanistan?

The evaluation should assess the implementations of the recommendations in the Mid-Term Review Report of UNDAF.

The list of the questions will be finalized during the inception phase. The Evaluation Team should elaborate on and translate them into methodological sub-questions in their inception report as well as provide relevant suggestions and solutions in the final evaluation report.

Methodology

The evaluation is intended to be a summative evaluation of the strategic intent and outcomes. It will assess the Afghanistan UNCT’s contribution to national development outcomes as contained in the results framework. Given that contributions to the desired outcomes come from the work of many stakeholders (not only the UN), establishing attribution of UN interventions to an observed result at the outcome level is not always possible. Therefore, the evaluators will evaluate possible contribution of the UNCT to the achievement of the outcomes if proven attribution is not possible.

The evaluation will be independent and adhere to and implement UNEG Norms and Standards. Each Evaluation Team member will be provided and sign off on the UNEG Code of Conduct for Evaluators.

It is expected that the Evaluators will use a variety of methodologies, in accordance with the UN Evaluation Guidelines, to ensure quality data collection and analysis.

Data Collection: The evaluation will draw on a variety of data collection methods including, but not limited to, the following:

- *Document review* focusing on UNDAF and One UN planning documents, progress reviews, annual reports and past evaluation reports (including UN country programme evaluations, those on projects and small-scale initiatives, and those issued by national counterparts), strategy papers, national plans and policies and related programme and project documents. These should include reports on the progress against national and international commitments.
- *Semi-structured interviews* with key stakeholders including key government counterparts, donor community members, representatives of key civil society organizations, UNCT members, and implementing partners.
- *Surveys and questionnaires* including right holders meant to benefit from development programmes, UNCT members, and / or surveys and questionnaires involving other stakeholders.
- *Focus Group discussions* involving groups and sub-groups of stakeholders, decisionmakers.

Data Analysis

- Provide credible answers to the evaluation questions.
- Ensure that the information collected is valid, reliable and sufficient to meet the evaluation purposes, scope and approach and that the analysis is logically coherent and complete (and not speculative or opinion-based).

- Use a mixed method, employing the most appropriate qualitative and quantitative approaches, data types and methods of data analysis.
- Ensure triangulation of the various data sources to ensure maximum validity, reliability of data and promote use.
- Ensure a Leave No One Behind lens, particularly gender equality and human rights.
- Ensure the linkage with the SDGs.

An evaluation matrix will be prepared during the inception phase to present the links between data collection methods, evaluation questions, sources, etc.

Additionally, a simple exercise will be undertaken at the inception phase to identify existing data and data gaps. A proposal to address any limitation identified will be produced in order to inform the evaluation approach.

In addition, the precise data collection methods should identify following:

- Analysis of availability of existing evaluative evidence and administrative data
- Logistical constraints (no travel, costs, time, etc.)
- Ethical considerations (especially when evaluating sensitive topics such as GBV or collecting data in sensitive settings)

During the inception phase, the Evaluation Team will propose a detailed evaluation methodology. The methodology should propose innovative options for data collection methods (including remote data collection if necessary) considering the COVID-19 pandemic and the travel restrictions, as well as the security situation.

Management arrangements

The Evaluation Team will work under the supervision of a dual-tiered evaluation management structure:

1. **The Government of Afghanistan / UN Joint Steering Committee** (JSC) is co-chaired by a senior representative of the Government and the UN Resident Coordinator, with membership comprised of members of the UN Country Team and International Development Partners. It is the decision-making organ for all decisions related to the evaluation including but not limited to the review and approval of all reports and deliverables.
2. The Joint Steering Committee will appoint an **Evaluation Manager** who will be responsible for the day-to-day implementation of the evaluation and will directly supervise the Evaluation Team. The Evaluation Manager will closely work with the Programme Management Team and the Monitoring and Evaluation Working Group to liaise and coordinate with UN entities.
3. The independent external evaluators hired under this contract will act as the **Evaluation Team**. It has a team leader with extensive evaluation expertise and at least 2 members to allow triangulation of observations and validation of findings within the team. The Evaluation Team will conduct the evaluation in a timely manner and communicate with the Evaluation Manager on a regular basis and highlight progress made/challenges encountered. The team leader will be responsible for producing high quality draft and final reports described under the deliverables in English.

Expected deliverables

1. *Inception report*

This report elaborates on how the Evaluation Team will conduct the evaluation, containing:

- i. The objectives/purposes of the evaluation
- ii. An assessment of existing data, identification of data gaps and a proposal to address any limitation identified
- iii. A stakeholder analysis
- iv. An elaboration of the evaluation criteria and questions as well as methodologies for collecting and analysing data, including
 - Types of analysis and methods to be conducted
 - Key themes and variables to look
 - How the analysis relates to the evaluation questions; if possible, what data elements, pieces and sources will be answering which questions
 - A triangulation plan or ideas of how data will be triangulated to answer the questions
- v. Quality assurance of the products/deliverables
- vi. A concrete plan of evaluation activities and a timeline.

2. Evaluation report

The Evaluation will deliver a clear and concise evaluation report to the Evaluation Steering Committee that includes strategic high-level findings, conclusions, lessons learned and recommendations to support decision-making in the next Cooperation Framework cycle.

The Evaluation Report should provide answers to the evaluation questions in its conclusions and ensure clarity of connection between the questions and the conclusions.

A draft report with preliminary findings will be circulated for review/discussion by the Evaluation Steering Committee, Consultative Group and other key stakeholders, in advance of the final report.

Quality assurance

PMT/M&E Working Group will closely monitor the progress of the evaluation process by reviewing the drafts of the inception report and the evaluation report. The Joint Steering Committee will be responsible for the quality assurance of the final drafts.

The Evaluation Team and the Evaluation Manager will be supported by the United Nations Evaluation Development Group in Asia Pacific (UNEDAP) which provides technical advice for the evaluation process; reviews key products (including the inception report and draft evaluation report); and coordinates agency evaluations, to the extent possible, as inputs to the evaluation. The evaluation will also receive guidance and support from the UNDCO to safeguard the independence and quality of the evaluation and to intervene in case of dispute.

Planned process and timelines

Tasks/activities	Indicate Dates (Contract starting on 15 Jan. 2021)
1. Inception (1 month)	

• Briefing with RC, UNCT and PMT	17-21 Jan.
• First draft of the inception report submitted to PMT	29 Jan.
• PMT review of the first draft inception report	4 Feb.
• Final draft of inception report submitted	12 Feb.
2. Data collection and analysis (1 month)	
• Data collection	12 Feb. –
• Remote consultation of key stakeholders	19 Mar.
• Analysis	
3. Drafting of the evaluation report (1 month)	
• First draft evaluation report written and submitted to Task Team	26 Mar.
• PMT review of the first draft report	1 April.
• Penultimate draft evaluation report submitted for review	18 April.
• Final evaluation report submitted	15 April.

Principles

The evaluation exercise will be conducted in accordance with the principles as set out in the *United Nations Evaluation Group Norms and Standards for Evaluation*. <http://www.unevaluation.org/document/detail/1914>

Required expertise and qualifications

1. International Team Leader (1 person):

- Advanced university degree (Masters or PhD) in political science, development economics, public administration, development studies, law, human rights, or another relevant field;
- Minimum of 15 years of relevant professional experience;
- Experience of designing and leading evaluations;
- Extensive knowledge of, and experience in applying, qualitative and quantitative evaluation methods;
- Experience of conducting UN related evaluations, particularly UNDAF;
- Experience conducting evaluations in conflict/crisis environments, and
- Fluency in English with excellent communication and reporting skills.

The following skills/experience are an asset:

- Experience in Afghanistan;
- Knowledge of the UN, including its reform and country programming processes;
- Managerial experience of organizing and coordinating evaluation remotely;

- Knowledge of the five programming principles of the UN: human rights (the human rights-based approach to programming, human rights analysis and related mandates within the UN system); gender equality (in particular, gender analysis); environmental sustainability; results-based management; and capacity development.

2. International Team Member (Maximum 2 persons). The following are required:

- University degree in political science, development economics, public administration, development studies, law, human rights, or another relevant field;
- Minimum 10 years of relevant professional experience;
- Experience of conducting UN related evaluations, particularly UNDAF;
- Knowledge of the UN, including its reform and country programming processes, is an asset;
- Extensive knowledge of, and experience in applying, qualitative and quantitative evaluation methods;
- Experience of working with international organizations and
- Fluency in English with excellent communication and reporting skills

3. National Team Member (Maximum 2 persons). The following are required:

- University degree in the field of political science, governance, public administration, development studies, law, human rights, or another relevant field;
- Minimum of five years of relevant professional experience;
- Experience of conducting evaluation for an international organization
- Extensive knowledge of the Afghan National and Peace and Development Plan;
- Knowledge of the UN Country Team and its operations in Afghanistan;
- Process management skills such as facilitation skills and ability to negotiate with a wide range of stakeholders; and
- Fluency in Dari, Pashto and English; ability to provide translation and interpretation between English and Dari/Pashto is an asset.

Minimum Qualifications of Firm/Organization:

- Minimum of five years of experience in managing evaluations, producing high-quality analytical research/assessment, and providing technical advice or consulting services on issues pertaining to development;
- Back-stopping support and quality assurance systems;
- Strong record in conducting qualitative and quantitative evaluations, using UNEG norms and standards;
- Knowledge of the UN, including its reform and country programming processes, is an asset;
- Experience in conducting UNDAF evaluations is considered a strong asset;
- Previous work experience in the Afghan context is desirable, and an understanding of the political and social dynamics is also considered an asset.

All the members of the Evaluation Team should be independent from any organization involved in designing, executing, or supporting any aspect of UNDAF/One UN for Afghanistan.



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North American Office

Le Groupe-conseil Baastel Itée
92, rue Montcalm
Gatineau (Québec)
Canada, J8X2L7

P: +1 819 595 1421

F: +1 819 595 8586

European Office

Le Groupe-conseil Baastel srl
Boulevard Adolphe Max 55
B-1000 Brussels
Belgium

P: +32 (0)2 893 0032

F: +32 (0)2 503 3183

Representation France

Olivier Beucher & Gaetan Quesne
T: +33 7 82 92 44 98
E: olivier.beucher@baastel.com
gaetan.quesne@baastel.com

Representation Jamaica

Curline Beckford
P: +1 876 298 6545
E: curline.beckford@baastel.com

