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United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)

Afghanistan

Local Governance Programme (LoGo)

(October 2015-November 2017)

Midterm Evaluation Report

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I. Executive Summary

This report represents the Mid-Term Evaluation of the Local Governance Project (LoGo Project) in Afghanistan, which was undertaken by an independent evaluation consultant over a period of 35 working days (seven weeks) from 17 October to 4 December 2017.

The Mid-Term Evaluation methodology included a review of United Nations Development Programme's files, project files, relevant government policies and reports; primary data collection through semi-structured interviews with project stakeholders, and debrief of preliminary findings to UNDP, donors, Independent Directorate of Local Governance and LoGo project staff.

The process also faced few limitations, the major one included security and logistic challenges in arranging a field visit to Bamyan Province to meet beneficiaries at the subnational level.

Overall, LoGo project is filling a critical capacity gap and meeting needs and priorities in Afghanistan subnational governance and is in line with officially endorsed national policies; Afghanistan National Peace and Development Framework (ANPDF) for building capacities at subnational level.

There was clear evidence that LoGo project was considered both necessary and relevant at all levels, including at central government, provincial and district level, as well as in the municipalities. Based on the evaluation below summary of key findings and recommendations:

1. Relevance:

Finding One: The Project is aligned with the Afghanistan National Peace and Development Framework, 2017-2021.

Afghanistan National Peace and Development Framework was developed in 2016, one year after the LoGo project was designed. However, the project remains within the priorities, as stated in the Afghanistan National Peace and Development Framework, pertaining to the government's strategic approach in promoting national peace, state building, and development.

Finding Two: The project is relevant to national policies and priorities while lack guiding subnational governance National Priority Programme and Sub National Governance Policy.

Though there is an alignment between the project and the Afghanistan National Peace and Development Framework; however, the project still lacks the guiding policy framework (Sub National Governance Policy and a National Priority Programme). The LoGo project complements the national government priorities

as specified in the Citizens' Charter.

Finding Three: The project is aligned with UNDP priorities in Afghanistan.

The LoGo project is aligned with the five highest development priorities of Afghanistan in the United Nations Development Assistance Framework:

- (i) *Economic growth,*
- (ii) *Social services,*
- (iii) *Inclusion,*
- (iv) *Rule of law and*
- (v) *Accountable governance.*¹

Finding Four: The project is aligned with Sustainable Development Goals.

LoGo project was designed to improve service delivery at subnational and local levels, technical support to develop capacities of the government, subnational players in providing better service to their constituencies.

2. Effectiveness:

Finding Five: The LoGo project was partially effective in terms of planned activities to achieve its outputs.

The LoGo project planned activities could have been more effective in its design for each output to achieve strategic results. An example is the design of the civil society support activities that were heavily focused on capacity development that is not guided by a strategy to empower community participation and public oversight, hence achieving partial results.

Finding Six: In the absence of a Sub National Governance Policy and provincial budgeting processes, provincial strategic plans and provincial development plans did not find its way to funding and implementation.

The development of Provincial Strategic Plans and the Provincial Development Plans were perceived as the target while implementation of these plans by the government and ways of ensuring a high percentage of inclusion and implementation should have been the target and associated with its development.

Finding Seven: Technical support provided by the LoGo project team is minimal and centralized.

LoGo project is designed to provide technical support to the subnational levels;

¹ UNDAF Mid Term Review draft, September 2017, page 21: *The five highest level development*

province, district, and municipalities in addition to the Independent Directorate of Local Governance at the central level while the project team is centered in Kabul.

Having pointed the fact above, UNDP exerted efforts to have more presence in the field through outsourcing to a third party as in the case of AHEAD non-government organization and through the recruitment of National Technical Assistance staff who also provide support to the implementation of project activities.

Finding Eight: Coordination between LoGo project and other projects implemented by international agencies and Independent Directorate of Local Governance needs further improvement.

Coordination with government, local government and international implementing agencies active in the same field was weak which was obvious in the case of negative overlapping between LoGo and City for All projects in providing technical support in property tax registration and survey in Bamyan Province in 2016 and the first quarter of 2017 and improved in the second half of 2017.

3. Efficiency:

Finding Nine: The project is very slow in delivery, which reflected low expenditures per each of the four outputs.

Albeit, the project activities were planned for \$12 million for 2017 while reduced by the project board for \$ 9 million due to none availability of cash at the time planned activities were delayed and resulted in slow project delivery.²

Finding Ten: LoGo project's planned activities were partially based on the assessment and analytical reports that were developed prior to the design of LoGo on each of its four components to guide the better design of activities.

In each of the four components, the LoGo project was based on analytical assessments or diagnostic reports on each of the four thematic areas of its components, which should have formed the solid basis for the design of the project activities and better informed the development of baselines, indicators, and targets.

² European Union funding share was delayed in 2017 and was transferred to UNDP in November 2017 the fact it limited project expenditure and delayed implementation of project activities.

4. Sustainability:

Finding Eleven: The project has a clear exit strategy that is partially followed.

This LoGo project's overall exit strategy is being partially followed through capacity development in relation to the four outputs. While the capacity development activities are all essential, it lacks a clear role of all players at the subnational level that justifies the capacity development efforts.

In other words, the capacity development interventions are not targeting to the gaps that are currently filled by the project team to enable a successful exit and handover of the functions to government staff.

Finding Twelve: Weak buy-in from the government side of the Civil Society component.

Although community participation is a central element of Afghanistan National Peace and Development Framework and the Citizens' Charter, the Independent Directorate for Local Governance expressed concerns in terms of legitimacy of the role of civil society organizations in public oversight at the subnational, district and municipal level.

Finding Thirteen: Capacity development of the provincial council members on strategic, development planning, budgeting, and oversight is at stake as a long-term objective.

To further empower the provincial council members to practice their monitoring role, they need the capacity development oversight, accountability, and transparency monitoring tools to apply in measuring the performance of the Provincial Governor and sector ministries' directorates at the provincial level.

Recommendations:

Based on the analysis of the project's four outputs, activities and results achieved up to date, findings, lessons learned and conclusions of this report, for the project board members, UNDP and the LoGo project to take correction measures and decisions to put the LoGo project on a more strategic track, following are summary of the recommendations:

Recommendation One: National Technical Assistance modality must come to a successful end where category (A) staff should be absorbed by Tashkeel.

Based on the analysis on the National Technical Assistance modality on page 33 of this report, the A category of National Technical Assistance Staff should be

absorbed by Tashkeel³ while a functional and performance evaluation should be conducted as early as possible in the first quarter of 2018 to develop an exit plan for the remaining National Technical Assistance staff.

[Recommendation Two: LoGo project needs to change course of activities to adapt to the draft of the Sub-National Governance Policy.](#)

Considering the sub-national governance policy recent draft (October 2017), which included new functions to be transferred from the central to the subnational level, such as in the case of spatial planning, health, and education and more roles for the provincial governors, the LoGo project needs to redesign its activities accordingly.

[Recommendation Three: UNDP is highly recommended to provide tangible technical support to the finalization and implementation of the Sub-National Governance Policy](#)

Following the endorsement of Afghanistan National Peace and Development Framework in, 2016 each government sector institution is to develop its National Priority Program, which is expected to spell out the priority strategic interventions in supporting the development of the subnational sector. UNDP is recommended to provide technical assistance to the Independent Directorate of Local Governance to develop the subnational priority programme.

It is recommended that UNDP provides substantial technical support to the Independent Directorate of Local Governance in finalizing the Subnational Governance Policy draft in light of the donors' comments presented to the Independent Directorate of Local Governance in their last meeting in November 2017.

[Recommendation Four: The support to enhance municipal revenues should be the flagship component in the LoGo project.](#)

This fiscal decentralization window should be capitalized on by LoGo project and approached more strategically through developing a comprehensive analytical assessment report that analyzes the existing decentralized own source revenue versus mandated responsibility in service delivery to guide the strategic design of activities under this component.

[Recommendation Five: Technical capacities of the LoGo project team component leads should be re-evaluated and developed.](#)

To re-asses, the technical capacities of LoGo project component lead in providing technical support to the project beneficiaries and technically assisting the LoGo project manager.

³ In Afghanistan Tashkeel staff is the government staff officially on the payroll.

Additionally, decisions on the staff category, grades should be equivalent to the profile of the jobs. Therefore, in some areas, local capacities are useful, while in others, the project needs to increase use of short-term external experts.

Recommendation Six: Specialised technical expertise should be made available to the LoGo project management team.

In the project document, a Chief Technical Advisor position was planned but never recruited. The Chief Technical Advisor, as part of the LoGo team, is one way of providing technical assistance to the LoGo project team while on the other hand, it is possible to establish a pool of national and international consultants specialised in all areas of the project focus (Outputs) who can fill in the gap of the absence of the chief technical advisor.

Recommendation Seven: UNDP should seek partnership with UN sister agencies in providing technical support at the subnational and local levels.

It is recommended for UNDP to explore partnership and synergies with UN Habitat on property tax registration and survey. Also, to explore partnership with other members of the UN country team UNCDF, ILO, UNICEF, UN Women is likely to enrich the LoGo project results.

Recommendation Eight: Management arrangements of the LoGo project should be revised to allow the better role of the Independent Directorate of Local Governance in decision-making.

Since the LoGo project is following a Direct Implementation Modality and could not follow the National Implementation Modality as agreed due to high and significant risks as identified in the micro assessment, a joint management is recommended, where UNDP and the Independent Directorate of Local Governance jointly develop a management matrix that specifies roles, responsibilities and authorities of both parties in managing the LoGo project to enhance partnership.

II. Introduction

In October 2015, UNDP developed the local governance project (LoGo) in line with the government priorities to support the local administration system in Afghanistan. The LoGo project was designed for five years (2015-2020) to provide technical support to the sub-national government aiming at empowering the local governance system.

Considering available resources, the project Results Resource Framework was revised during 2016 and the project duration was reduced by nine months in September 2017. Consequently, the project will run until 31 December, 2019 (this was approved by the project board in September 2017).

The LoGo project was designed to contribute to achieving the Country Programming Document outcome: **Improved legitimate, transparent and inclusive governance at all levels that enables progressive realization of human rights** through achieving the following outputs:

- a) Capacity of Provincial Governors Offices and Provincial Councils improved accountability and transparent service delivery;
- b) Municipalities with improved revenue generation can deliver services in an accountable and participatory manner;
- c) Civil Society has improved oversight capacity of local governance; and
- d) Independent Directorate for Local Governance can develop policies to improve local government accountability and service delivery⁴.

The LoGo project is in its second year of implementation with two additional years for implementation ahead. UNDP, in line with its evaluation policy and with the project document, decided after approval of the project board to conduct a mid-term evaluation of the project.

The mid-term evaluation will focus to reassess project's relevance, impact, sustainability, progress achieved, lessons learned, management arrangements, national technical assistance modality, and recommendations for improvements. In the last two years, based on the project implementation experience, it will help decision-making that is based on evidence and thorough analysis of the four project outputs and results achieved to date.

The mid-term evaluation serves the project board, UNDP, as the implementing agency, national counterparts namely the Independent Directorate for Local

⁴ LoGo project document, October 2015- September 2020

Governance and donors; European Union, Sweden, Government of Italy and Switzerland and project stakeholders at the subnational level.

This report is structured as follows:

- I. **Executive Summary:** Summarizes the whole report with special lens on the main findings and the recommendations for decision making to improve the project towards better achieving its results.
- II. **Introduction:** Provides introductory information of the project and explains why the mid-term evaluation is taking place at this stage and the beneficiaries of the mid-term evaluation report is expected to serve.
- III. **Description of the Intervention:** This section provides the basis for the report users to understand the logic of the evaluation and understand the applicability of the evaluation results.

Furthermore, this section will provide a description of what is being evaluated, implementation strategies, key assumptions, linkages of the project with the national priorities, United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF), key partners, scale of the project, project political and institutional factors, implementation constraints and possible design strengths and weaknesses in the project.

- IV. **Evaluation Scope and Objective:** Provides detailed information on:
 - a) Evaluation scope with focus on the four project outputs;
 - b) Evaluation objective in providing evidence based analysis and information to be considered by decision makers if they decide to take recommended amendments and the decisions should be taken to improve the project;
 - c) Evaluation criteria that was adopted in the evaluation; and
 - d) Evaluation questions that were used in discussions and meetings with all project partners.
- V. **Evaluation Approach and Methods:** The approach in evaluating the project is based on reviewing the relevant documentation: project document, progress reports, relevant documents produced by the government.

Additionally, through meetings with central government counterparts, donors funding the project, representatives of implementing international partner agencies that are implementing similar interventions in the sector, LoGo project team, and heads of UNDP governance unit, lists of questions were prepared to stimulate the discussion. Discussions were focused around: relevancy, impact, sustainability, lessons learned, challenges, successes and possible shortcomings

to identify strengths and weaknesses in the project and to come up with practical recommendations for improvements.

VI. Data Analysis: It was based on the qualitative data obtained from reviewing the project literature (related documents in desk review⁵) focusing on the main project outputs and tangible results achieved, rather on quantitative data, as the nature of the LoGo project focuses on soft components in its four outputs.

The source of data was mainly the project related documents, such as project document, progress reports, implementing partners and government documentation. Furthermore, analysis of the information obtained from meetings and discussions with the different partners formed the basis for drawing findings, conclusions, and recommendations.

VII. Findings and Conclusions: based on the analysis pertaining activities that has been implemented by the LoGo project in the last two years and set targets to achieve results as set in the project document, findings are framed in relation to its relevancy, validity, sustainability, achievements, lessons learned, challenges, possible bottlenecks, and shortcomings.

Based on findings, conclusions are developed to the end of what worked, what did not, why and how to better improve and more importantly if there is a need to change the course of outputs or activities planned in the project and justification.

VIII. Recommendations: In this section, a number of recommendations were developed based on data analysis, findings, and conclusions. These recommendations aim at improving and changing the course of activities under each of the four project outputs to better achieve sustainable results based on recent development in the sector.

IX. Lessons learned: Based on previous sections, a number of lessons learned will be presented including successes and shortcomings covering all areas under the scope of this mid-term evaluation as articulated in the Terms of Reference. Lessons learned are expected to be useful for the project board, UNDP senior management, donors, LoGo project management team, and national partners to take corrective measures and decisions to improve project delivery.

⁵ Please see list of documents reviewed in annex 1, page 50-51 of this report

III. Description of the LoGo Project

A. Subnational Governance Setting in the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan:

“The country is administratively divided into 34 provinces (Wilayat), with each province having its own capital and a provincial administration. The provinces are further divided into about 385 smaller provincial districts, each of which normally covers a city or a number of villages. Each district is represented by a district governor, who is appointed by the President.

In addition, there are 153 municipalities across Afghanistan; these are the provincial capitals (34) and at the district level. These are the most devolved subnational governance units as they are allowed to raise revenues and taxes and are responsible for delivering some of the urban services.”⁶

The provincial governors are appointed by the President of Afghanistan. As representatives of central government, they are responsible for all provincial administration and management issues.

There are also elected Provincial Councils through direct and general elections for a period of four years. While Provincial Councils provide recommendations and initial approval of budgets prior to submission to central government, their oversight role has remained unclear.

According to article 140 of the constitution and the presidential decree on electoral law, mayors of cities should be elected through free and direct elections for a four-year term. However, mayoral and municipal elections have never been held. Instead, mayors have been appointed by the government, while for the capital city of Kabul, the mayor is appointed by the president.⁷

B. Project outputs, activities, main results achieved up to date:

UNDP support to the development of the subnational governance system in Afghanistan dates back to 2006 when designed and implemented the Afghanistan Subnational Governance Programme (ASGP I & II 2006-2014). During that period, and in 2007, UNDP supported the establishment of the Independent Directorate of Local Governance.

As the main coordination body for subnational governance as currently defined

⁶ LoGo project Document, page 6

⁷ Afghanistan Subnational Governance Programme (ASGP phase II), 2010-2014, final evaluation report, 12 June 2014, page 4

by the National Unity Government, the Independent Directorate of Local Governance has identified four priorities as: 1) strengthen system of deconcentration; 2) increase accountability; 3) increase service delivery; and 4) ensure clear functions and mandates are needed for all subnational governance entities.⁸

In 2015 and following the Afghanistan Sub National Governance Policy draft that was drafted by the Independent Directorate of Local Governance, UNDP and based on identified priorities at the subnational level, designed the Local Governance Project (2015-2020) aiming at contributing to achieving '***Improved legitimate, transparent and inclusive governance at all levels that enables progressive realization of human rights***'.⁹

The LoGo project covers 13 provinces, and 22 municipalities; 8 provincial municipalities and 14 district municipalities and designed to achieve the following outputs through planned activities¹⁰:

1) Capacity of Provincial Governors Offices and Provincial Councils has improved accountability and transparent service delivery.

Planned Activities:

- A. Capacity development on provincial Planning and budgeting to the Provincial Development Council;
- B. Technical support to develop provincial development plans and provincial strategic plans;
- C. Support to provincial councils for public outreaches and accountability and oversight;
- D. Capacity development of the provincial council members on developing provincial development plans;
- E. Establishment of Citizens Service Center.

Summary of Main Results achieved:

- A. Conducted Capacity Development Workshop for Provincial Development Planning;
- B. Developed Provincial Planning Guideline;
- C. Gender analysis and mainstreaming for Provincial Development Plans and Provincial Strategic Plans;
- D. Provincial Development Plans implementation review jointly with Ministry of Economy in 10 provinces;
- E. Development of Monitoring plans for the Provincial Development Council

⁸ LoGo project document, page 4

⁹ CPD outcome that the LoGo project was designed to contribute to achieving

¹⁰ This section aims at giving the reader an idea of LoGo outputs, planned activities and main results achieved while detailed information on achievements are in annex 4 of this report on page 60-67

- members;
- F. Developed eight Provincial Development Plans for eight provinces;
- G. Developed Provincial Strategic Plans for six provinces;
- H. Construction of CSCs: two completed, two under construction and two on hold.

2) Municipalities with improved revenue generation are able to deliver services in an accountable and participatory manner.

Planned Activities:

- A. Technical support for municipal revenue management;
- B. Technical support for municipal financial planning;
- C. Technical support to improve service delivery through the establishment of citizen centers (Establishment of municipal advisory boards);
- D. Outreach and accountability.

Summary of Main Results achieved:

- A. Fourteen Revenue Enhancement Action plans were developed for fourteen municipalities resulted in 20% increase of municipal revenues in nine municipalities.
- B. Business registration rolled out in three municipalities.
- C. Floor price of municipal properties finalized defining minimum rentals for municipal properties in six municipalities.
- D. Monitoring and Evaluation frameworks for financial monitoring: finalized and operational in all 22 municipalities supported by LoGo.
- E. Monthly revenue and expenditure reporting in sixteen municipalities consistently reported on revenue and expenditure in 2017.
- F. Mobile service centers piloted in eleven municipalities.
- G. Social audits completed in two municipalities.

3) Civil Society has improved oversight capacity of local governance.

Planned Activities:

- A. Mobilization of Civil Society Organizations;
- B. Raising awareness of CSOs on local governance;
- C. Promote CSOs and government partnership;
- D. Technical support through capacity development of civil society organizations in oversight.

Summary of Main Results achieved:

- A. Capacity development workshops on planning, budgeting, management, monitoring, and advocacy.
- B. Conducted Gender analysis and mainstreaming for Provincial Development Plans and Provincial Strategic Plans.
- C. Fifty-four civil society organizations members jointly conducted public awareness campaign with municipalities.
- D. 105 Civil Society Organization members trained in coordination, outreach and oversight roles.
- E. Civil society organizations and government coordination mechanism drafted.
- F. Twenty-one civil society organization's representatives participated in Government and Civil Society Organizations Coordination Working Group.

4) Independent Directorate of Local Governance is able to develop policies to improve local government accountability and service delivery.

Planned Activities:

- A. Provide technical support to Independent Directorate of Local Governance in developing subnational governance policy.
- B. Capacity development of the Independent Directorate of Local Governance's staff.
- C. Provide national technical assistance to Independent Directorate of Local Governance through the recruitment of national expertise.

Summary of Main Results achieved:

- A. Recruited two consultants to develop the sub-national governance policy.
- B. Conducted capacity development workshops for the independent directorate of local governance staff on: public procurement, local planning, budgeting, public financial management, provincial budgeting, public administration, gender mainstreaming and implementation of the anti-harassment policy, office and human resource management.
- C. 26 provincial governor office gender focal points trained on gender and planning of gender-related activities.

C. Donors:

The LoGo project is a multi-donor project that is funded by the European Union, Switzerland, Sweden, and Italy, in addition to UNDP. Originally the project was planned for five years (USD 54.67 million while reduced for four years to USD 37 million).

D. Management arrangements:

In the LoGo project document, the project is a National Implementation Modality, where Independent Directorate of Local Governance is expected to manage and implement project activities. “A micro capacity assessment will be carried out by the Independent Directorate of Local Governance to decide upon the modality for the transfer of resources, and identify areas, where capacity building will be required.”¹¹

According to results of the micro assessment of the Independent Directorate of Local Governance that was carried out in November 2015, risk was found high at Independent Directorate of Local Governance as an implementing partner pertaining; funds flow, external audit and information systems while significant in; internal audit, procurement, reporting and monitoring, accounting policies and procedures, organizational structure and staffing.¹²

Based on the fact above, UNDP in agreement with IDLG agreed on a Direct Implementation Modality as well as accept Request for Direct Payments from IDLG however; UNDP is mainly managing and implementing project activities while continues to provide technical support to develop the capacities of the Independent Directorate of Local Governance.

E. National Technical Assistance to the Independent Directorate of Local Governance:

In the first and second phases of the Afghanistan Sub National Governance Project (ASGP, 2006-2014), UNDP provided funding for the recruitment of national experts to provide technical support during the establishment phase of the Independent Directorate of Local Governance.

UNDP LoGo project in continuation to support the establishment and the development of the capacities of the Independent Directorate of Local Governance continued to provide financial support covering the salaries of 125

¹¹ LoGo project document, page 35

¹² UNDP, Afghanistan, Micro assessment, implementing partner, Independent Directorate of Local Governance, page 4-6.

National Technical Assistants, where there are 55 National Technical Assistants are based at the Independent Directorate of Local Governance and 70 at the provincial and municipal levels.

National Technical Assistance experts follow eight categories, where A category are director generals and directors of the main directorates at the Independent Directorate of Local Governance, who are expected to develop the capacities of staff as part of the exit strategy of the national technical assistance modality.

The annual cost of National Technical Assistance is estimated around \$2.5 million USD in 2016 and \$2 million USD in 2017, which represents around 22% of the annual project budget.¹³

¹³ UNDP, Finance Unit

IV. Evaluation Scope and Objective

A. Evaluation Scope and Criteria

The mid-term evaluation aims at assessing the overall progress and results achieved up to date in relation to the project's objective and outcome with the special lens on achievements and results under each of the four project outputs as stated in the project document.

Furthermore, the mid-term evaluation focuses on sensing early successes and possible failures and provide analysis to pave the road for decision makers and project board to take corrective measures and decisions for possible recommended change or amendment in the project to better achieve set outcome, objectives, and outputs.

Also, the mid-term evaluation assess existing management arrangements of the project including the followed direct implementation modality and the National Technical Assistance modality pertaining its efficiency and sustainability and develop recommendations to better improve technical assistance provided under the National Technical Assistance modality.

Additionally, the mid-term evaluation examines the LoGo project in terms of its:

1. **Relevancy:** To what extend the project is contributing to achieving government policies and objectives, to what extend the project succeeded in implementing planned activities, results achieved and how it contributes to achieving set targets and new developments that needs to be taken into consideration or re-align the project to.
2. **Efficiency:** Whether/not necessary measures were taken to ensure effectiveness and efficiency in achieving its results, objectives, targets, and outputs through effectively managing the available resources. Moreover, if there are any developments in the sector the project should adopt and possible challenges and risks facing the project hindering achievement of outcome and objectives as specified in the project document.
3. **Impact:** Analyse possible impact the project possibly will achieve on the short and long run in the local governance sector and how strategic this impact can be seen in influencing strategic change in the subnational sector and its contribution to the overall impact in the governance sector in Afghanistan.
4. **Sustainability:** Investigate the sustainability of the project deliverables and achieved results with the focus on provincial development plans,

provincial strategic plans, citizens service centres and government ownership and buying in, and the project exit strategy.

5. **Partnership and cooperation:** Review existing partnership relations the project had with government partners; the Independent Directorate of Local Governance, donors, and beneficiaries and the level of satisfaction of all partner parties in the relation of existing coordination mechanisms and possible stumbling blocks, if any, and how can be better improved.
6. **Management arrangements:** Review the existing mechanism to monitor and assess the overall progress of the project in terms of its appropriateness. Review project staffing and management structure and recommend changes seems necessary based on the evaluation.

To what extent the project implementation modality and arrangements have been effective and efficient in achieving the overall objectives? Is resource allocation across outputs are effective? Or there is a need for re-alignment of project resources?¹⁴

7. **National Technical Assistance:** The value added of the 10 years continuous national technical assistance modality to the development of capacities of the Independent Directorate of Local Governance, provinces municipalities and its sustainability and its exit plan.

How effectively National Technical Assistance used? Was national technical assistance exit strategy implemented? What are the issues and possible solutions pertaining national technical assistance modality?

B. Evaluation Objectives

The overall objective of the mid-term evaluation is “to assess progress towards the achievement of the project objectives and outcomes as specified in the Project Document”.

Also, this mid-term evaluation aims at identifying possible successes, failures, necessary measures and decisions to be taken by the project board to amend the project. If necessary, to make sure that the project is on the right track towards achieving its set outcome, outputs, results and targets based on the analysis this mid-term evaluation will provide in all areas it covers as written in the terms of reference.

¹⁴ Please see annex 2, mid term evaluation terms of reference, page 4

C. Evaluation Questions

The questions were designed to inspire the discussions in the meetings with government counterparts, UNDP project staff and units, donors, beneficiaries and international implementing partner organizations.

Questions were designed for three categories of interviewees¹⁵: government counterparts, UNDP project team and units, donors and international implementing agencies active in the field.

¹⁵ List of all questions are in annex 5 page 68-71

V. Evaluation Approach and Methodology

The mid-term evaluation was carried out in a participatory and consultative approach with the UNDP/Governance Unit, project management team, Independent Directorate of Local Governance, sector line ministries, donors and project board, where the preliminary findings of the mid-term evaluation were presented and discussed to get all partners' views and comments to validate the findings and recommendations.

The following steps represent the mid-term evaluation approach:

- i. [Secondary data collection](#): At the inception phase, desk review was carried out by reviewing primary documents; project document, quarterly report, annual work plans, annual budgets, and government-related documents, which led to a draft inception report that was approved by UNDP.
- ii. [Primary data collection](#): A field mission was carried out by the mid-term evaluation consultant to Kabul /Afghanistan when had meetings with UNDP, Independent Directorate of Local Governance, sector line ministries (mainly Ministry of Finance and Ministry of Economy), donors, and selected project beneficiaries that was limited to a meeting with the deputy governor of Bamyán Province ([List and schedule of interviewees is in Annex 1](#)).

Primary data was collected and made available during the field mission. It enriched the in-depth knowledge of the LoGo project pertaining the scope of the mid-term evaluation establishing a solid base for qualitative analysis of both secondary and primary data ([list of documents reviewed are in Annex 3](#)).

- iii. [Qualitative analysis](#): Qualitative analysis of the collected data was undertaken to extract information linked to the evaluation questions and in line with the scope of evaluation as stated in the terms of reference and inception report.

Based on the qualitative analysis, preliminary findings and recommendations were presented to UNDP, Independent Directorate of Local Governance and Donors Representatives held at the Independent Directorate of Local Governance on 27 November, 2017 for discussion and validation of information, where comments were incorporated in this final draft of the mid-term evaluation report.

- iv. Limitations: The Mid-term evaluation faced security related difficulties in meeting project beneficiaries at the subnational level where a field visit was planned to Bamyan province and was cancelled twice due to the cancellation of flights to and from Bamyan. Furthermore, due to security constraints, it was impossible to visit a close province to Kabul using ground transportation.

VI. Findings and Conclusions

A. LoGo Project's Theory of Change

The final evaluation of the Afghanistan Subnational Project II highlighted a major shortcoming in lacking clear pathway for a theory of change by not engaging sector line ministries in the project as service providers at the subnational level namely the Ministry of Finance and the Ministry of Economy.¹⁶

Differently, the LoGo project had engaged both ministries and developed a theory of change in contributing to the development of the subnational governance sector in the absence of the Sub National Governance Policy at the time when the project was designed.

The LoGo project's theory of change is designed to contribute to state and peace-building through empowering state-citizens' relation through community active participation in planning, service delivery, oversight and accountability at the subnational¹⁷ through supporting:

- 1) "If LoGo strengthens planning processes in the provinces through providing technical support to develop Provincial Development Plans and in the municipalities with emphasis on enhancing outreach and consultation. *Then...* the local level service delivery will better reflect the priorities of the women and men in the constituencies and those of the local government.
- 2) *And if...* LoGo strengthens the capacity of the local and national authorities and the joint processes for planning, budgeting, and monitoring. *Then...* the effectiveness and transparency of the local level service delivery will be improved.
- 3) *And if...* LoGo supports local government processes that will enhance the envelope for local level services, such as assisting with the implementation of the Provincial Budgeting Policy and the municipal revenue generation. *Then...* the level of services will increase.
- 4) *And if...* LoGo strengthens the role of civil society in local governance. *Then...* civil society will play a key role as a third-party advocate and monitoring agent contributing to the improvement of the relationship between state and society.
- 5) *And finally, if...* LoGo supports the implementation of a revised local government policy, which clarifies the different planning, budgeting, accountability, and transparency. *Then...* devolution can be strengthened.

¹⁶ ASGP final evaluation, 12 June 2014, finding 1, pages 16-17

¹⁷ LoGo project document, theory of change, Box 2 and pages 20-24

The combined efforts (1-5) will contribute to enhancing the degree to which services are implemented according to local priorities and to improving the overall local level service delivery.

Additionally, it will facilitate **enhanced accountability, transparency, and effectiveness of the service delivery** contributing to poverty reduction at the local level. By showing the women and men of Afghanistan that they are involved in local governance and that services are delivered effectively this will eventually **improve state-society relations and the legitimacy of the Government** (overall impact).¹⁸

While this theory of change is valid, it missed the need for restructuring of the subnational level in terms of its three layers; provinces, districts, and municipalities both provincial and district and the possible transfer of functions from central to subnational.

It also missed the need for articulating the roles and responsibilities of all three layers at the subnational level; province, district and municipal versus the role of the sector line ministries at the provincial and central¹⁹ levels, which is vital in holding all players accountable to the functions they are mandated for. Nevertheless, it also could clear the path for empowering community participation and increase transparency at the three layers of local governance at the subnational level.

B. Findings

1. Relevance:

Finding One: The Project is aligned with the Afghanistan National Peace and Development Framework (ANPDF), 2017-2021

The Afghanistan National Peace and Development Framework was developed in 2016 after the LoGo project was designed. The project remains within the priorities as stated in the Afghanistan National Peace and Development Framework pertaining to the government's strategic approach in promoting national peace and development.

¹⁸ LoGo project document, page 21

¹⁹“*Subnational governance refers to a restructuring of authority so that there is a system of co-responsibility between institutions of governance at the central, regional and local levels according to the principle of subsidiarity. Based on this principle, functions (or tasks) are transferred to the lowest institutional or social level that is capable (or potentially capable) of completing them. Subnational governance relates to the role of and the relationship between central and sub-national institutions.*” *UNDP, 2004, Decentralised Governance for Development: A Combined Practice Note on Decentralisation, Local Governance and Urban/Rural Development.*

The Afghanistan National Peace and Development Framework gives strategic attention to the subnational level as a main player in bringing peace to citizens²⁰ to be strengthened and capable of providing service to citizens in a transparent and participatory approach through identified strategic thematic priority areas in subnational governance and municipalities as follows:

“Our efforts to support and strengthen subnational governance systems will include:

- a) Enhancing links between all level of government from the community to the national level;
- b) Improving support and coordination for budgeting, planning, and implementation;
- c) Strengthening municipal capacity for revenue collection and service delivery;
- d) Increasing government presence at the district level;
- e) Strengthening the capacity of provincial and district governors.”²¹

The above five priorities are translated into the four outputs of the LoGo project despite it was developed prior to the Afghanistan National Peace and Development Framework. The LoGo project outputs²² are:

1. Capacity of Provincial Governors Offices and Provincial Councils has improved accountability and transparent service delivery.
2. Municipalities with improved revenue generation can deliver services in an accountable and participatory manner.
3. Civil Society has improved oversight capacity of local governance
4. Independent Directorate of Local Governance is able to develop policies to improve local government accountability and service delivery.

Finding Two: The project is relevant to national policies and priorities while lack guiding subnational governance National Priority Programme and Subnational Governance Policy

Though there is an alignment between the project and the Afghanistan National Peace and Development Framework, however, the project still lacks the guiding policy framework (Sub National Governance Policy and a National Priority

²⁰ “When a state is weak, citizens seek other forms of protection such as patronage, militias, and armed net- works. We must provide a physical and administrative presence in all districts to ensure public safety and maintain oversight of security, legal, and social service agencies. An investment program to extend a permanent government presence to provinces and districts combined with increasing the share of spending through subnational governments and reforming the electoral process, including direct elections for mayors by 2019, will strengthen subnational governance.” ANPDF, 2017, page 14

²¹ ANPDF, 2017, page 14

²² LoGo project document, page 21

Programme). The LoGo project complements the national government priorities as specified in the Citizens' Charter.

The government had developed the Afghanistan National Peace and Development Plan (ANPDF) and the Citizens' Charter (National Priority Program, December 2016) that lays down the strategic priorities in all sectors grounded with a vision of government self-reliance and commitment to peace building and stability in the country and improving service delivery, community participation in prioritising their service delivery needs, planning, public budgeting and to exercise oversight role.²³

The line ministries have to develop its sector policy and national priority plan with the focus on sectoral priorities guided by the Afghanistan National Peace and Development Framework. The LoGo project provided support to the Independent Directorate of Local Governance to develop the Subnational Governance Policy through the recruitment of two consultants under output 4: "Independent Directorate of Local Governance is able to develop policies to improve local government accountability and service delivery"²⁴.

Additionally, LoGo project is designed to provide support to empower civil society in public oversight, enhance municipal revenues to improve service delivery. Moreover, LoGo is supporting participatory planning and budgeting at the subnational and municipal level, which all complements of the Citizens' Charter programme is government planned and owned.

Considering the above standpoint and in line with the Afghanistan National Peace and Development Framework, LoGo project remains relevant to national government priorities as specified in relation to its four outputs that came in line with the five priority thematic areas in the Afghanistan National Peace and Development Framework as mentioned earlier in finding one.²⁵

Almost certainly, the LoGo project could have been more relevant if the Subnational Governance Policy and the National Priority Plan for local governance were developed at the time the LoGo project was designed.

²³ The Citizens' Charter is a foundation stone for realizing the government's self-reliance vision. It is a promise of partnership between the Afghan state and its thousands of communities. The Charter is a government commitment to provide every community/village in Afghanistan with basic services, based on community's own prioritization. Built around the use of unified community-level budgeting and financial reporting. Under the Charter communities can oversee their own development goals, monitor the quality of service delivery, and report grievances to authorities and civil society. The Charter will promote inclusive development and accountability at all governance levels. It will give a voice to vulnerable groups such as women, returnees, and the poor.

²⁴ LoGo project document, page 5

²⁵ Please see finding one on page 24

In line with the Afghanistan National Peace and Development Framework as a government-owned program, there is a need to provide technical assistance to the Independent Directorate of Local Governance to develop the local governance National Priority Plan (NPP) and to the finalization of the Subnational Governance Policy, which was drafted in October 2017.

As announced by Independent Directorate of Local Governance that the Sub national Governance Policy is likely to be approved by the end of December 2017. If that happens, it will provide a real chance for LoGo to adjust to respond to strategic national priorities, such as spatial planning and division of roles and responsibilities between the different layers of subnational government that remains lacking and a major obstacle for capacity development endeavors, which should be designed on the basis of mandates and functions of target groups.

Finding Three: The project is aligned with UNDP priorities in Afghanistan.

Additionally, the LoGo project is aligned with the five highest development priorities of Afghanistan in the United Nations Development Assistance Framework: *(i) economic growth, (ii) social services, (iii) inclusion, (iv) rule of law and (v) accountable governance.*²⁶

LoGo implemented activities to increase accountability at the municipal and provincial level by establishing Citizen Service Centers and one-stop shops, which contributes to increase accountability in the governance sector.

Additionally, technical support in public awareness, advocacy, outreach, and capacity development activities targeting civil society organizations and community to enhance public oversight under output 3: civil society has improved oversight capacity of local governance and community participation in planning and public budgeting contributes to social services.

While output 4 contributes to accountable governance through policy development, capacity development, technical support provided to the Independent Directorate of Local Governance and the technical support to Provincial Governors Offices in participatory planning for development, outreach, and public accountability.

²⁶ UNDAF Mid Term Review draft, September 2017, page 21: *The five highest level development priorities for Afghanistan in UNDAF are (i) economic growth, (ii) social services, (iii) inclusion, (iv) rule of law and (v) accountable governance. UNDAF through these pillars enhance local and national government capabilities with explicit attention to relevant technical assistance and policy development and services delivered in an integrated, multi-sectoral approach.*

Finding Four: The project is aligned with Sustainable Development Goals.

LoGo project was designed to improve service delivery at the subnational and local levels, technical support to develop the capacities of the government, subnational players in providing a better service to their constituencies.

Moreover, the project provides technical support to empower community participation in planning for development and oversight aiming at increasing social accountability, which contributes to a better governance, local governance, gender equality and accountability that is aligned with five Sustainable Development Goals in improving health, education, clean drinking water, sanitation and gender equality.

2. Effectiveness:

Finding Five: The LoGo project was partially effective in terms of planned activities to achieve its outputs.

Lack of strategy for each output in the project document that alternatively provided sections on what and how to be achieved, and when²⁷ came to the design in the implementation phase where not taken into consideration in a strategic manner.

A clear strategy based on analytical assessments for each output would have provided and guided, if was in place, a better design of activities, baselines, and indicators for the project.

For example, in the case of the support to civil society organizations, where the technical support and planned activities to empower community participation, public accountability and oversight lacked a guiding strategy²⁸ that should have been developed jointly with community representatives across the spectrum, subnational representatives, central government representatives to ensure systematic intervention and sustainability.

Another example is the design of activities of the municipal revenue enhancement that should have been based on a comprehensive assessment of the municipal revenues which are being managed directly by municipalities and

²⁷ LoGo Project document, outputs, pages 25-33

²⁸ The European Union, RoM report highlighted the need to develop a gender policy under the Civil Society Organizations component of the LoGo project which have not been developed yet and is recommended since it provides guidance to better design of activities aiming at empowering community participation and gender mainstreaming.

the share it forms of the municipal budget, in addition to the existing collection rate to inform the design of a comprehensive fiscal reform of municipal own-source revenues.

Moreover, this strategy could have been based on the Afghanistan National Peace and Development Framework and aligned with the Citizens' Charter vision in state building that focuses on service delivery and community participation in the development process. Alternatively, LoGo project focused on implementation of public awareness activities, advocacy, training, and oversight, which are important but could have been supported by a strategy that justifies why, what to do, and what to achieve to ensure sustainable results.

Development of public oversight and transparency tools for the civil society to use in monitoring the performance of the provincial councils, governors, and municipalities should have been a major planned activity as it contributes to the sustainability of the civil society's oversight role in subnational governance.

Finding Six: In the absence of a Sub National Governance Policy and provincial budgeting processes, provincial strategic plans and provincial development plans did not find its way to funding and implementation.

The development of Provincial Strategic Plans and the Provincial Development Plans were perceived as the target, while its implementation or ways of ensuring a high percentage of implementation should have been the target and associated with its development.

For example, the actual percentage of what has been implemented of Provincial Development Plans for seven provinces targeted by LoGo was 9.5% as reported in the third quarterly report of the LoGo project²⁹. This fact puts a question mark on the value of developing these plans if they have minimum chances to be implemented due to technical critiques of these plans in being a "wish list" and lacks concept notes for its development projects³⁰. Additionally, the lack of delegation of budgetary resources from the central government to the subnational level is another major obstacle in implementing these plans.

Furthermore, national government have limited financial resources to respond to all development needs across the country, where 68% of funding the national

²⁹ LoGo third quarterly report, 2017, page 5: "*Data from the 1396 Provincial Development Plan (PDP) implementation review showed that to date 9.5 percent of proposed PDP projects have been implemented in seven provinces of Paktia, Paktika, Khost, Helmand, Sar-e-Pul, Nimruz and Bamyan*".

³⁰ The director general of the planning department at MoEc reported in a meeting with the MTE consultant that PDPs developed by LoGo were very much of a wish list rather than a development plan because it lacked concept notes for each of the proposed projects in the plan and failed to align with national priorities as perceived by both MoEc and MoF.

budget comes from donors and only 38% of it comes from the national government, where only 5% of the national resources (38%) is allocated for development projects that are chosen on national criteria rather than subnational.³¹

Finding Seven: Technical support provided by the LoGo project team is minimal and centralized.

LoGo projects' nature is designed to provide technical support to the subnational levels: province, district, and municipalities, in addition to the Independent Directorate of Local Governance at the central level.

This requires heavy technical engagement, technical leadership, coaching and guidance at the LoGo project team side in the field,³² where activities are being implemented in the field.

The project team is centered at UNDP/Kabul and alternatively partially depends on national technical assistance staff at the local level and outsourcing to private consulting companies in implementing, which resulted in poor performance³³ in the case of AHEAD Non Government Organisation and arrived to not extending their contract from UNDP side.

Also, the fact that LoGo senior technical team members (project manager and component lead) are based in Kabul with limited physical access to provinces, districts, and municipalities, where project activities are being carried out, it limits their technical contribution and hinders monitoring and supervision of the project activities at the subnational level.

The above facts were articulated in the European Union's RoM report³⁴, which rightly criticized the centralism of LoGo project team in Kabul, which minimizes the team's field supervision and technical engagement in the field. LoGo project team should make the effort to be more present in the field and better engaging with LoGo project beneficiaries.

³¹ As reported by the director general of budget directorate at MoF in a meeting with the MTE evaluation consultant

³² "The provincial UNDP offices are not in charge of the management of the LoGo project and indeed have only partial and superficial knowledge about it." EU RoM report 10 April 2017, page 5

³³ "Still, management is very Kabul-centered. When UNDP could not find competent staff in the provinces (whereas a similar Local Governance project did find highly qualified personnel), it sub-contracted to AHEAD (Assistance for Health, Education and Development), an organization defining itself on Facebook as "former non for profit". The risk is that this sub-contracting modality (some call it an implementing partner, others merely a provider of human resources) goes unmonitored and unmanaged." EU, RoM report, April 2017, page 5

³⁴ European Union, RoM report, April 2017, page 4.

Finding Eight: Coordination between LoGo project and other projects implemented by international agencies and Independent Directorate of Local Governance needs further improvement.

Coordination of LoGo project with the government, local government, and international implementing agencies active in local governance was weak in 2016 and the first half of 2017 and improved in the second half of 2017.

For example, lack of coordination had resulted in negative overlapping in activities implemented by the City For All project/UN Habitat in relation to property tax registration and survey in Bamyán province. This negative overlap was not detected by both UNDP and UN Habitat till was by the European Union consultant when reported in the RoM report in April 2017.

Having pointed out the fact above, coordination had improved with international implementing agencies; USAID/Tetra Tech Institutional Support to Local Administration project (ISLA) and UN Habitat, City For All project, where recently a number of coordination meetings were held between project managers.

First fruits of coordination were when the Institutional Support for Local Administration project borrowed training manuals and materials from the LoGo project on provincial development planning guidelines.³⁵

Also, and as rightly pointed out in the European Union RoM report that LoGo project and UN habitat should explore and develop synergies pertaining the property tax activities.

Suggested synergies can be that LoGo project considers working on enabling property tax collection in the areas, where UN Habitat had completed property registration and survey.

A sustainable coordination mechanism is recommended to be developed jointly by UNDP, USAID and UN Habitat to guarantee periodic coordination of activities of the three projects: LoGo, ISLA and CFA. The project managers of the three projects should meet on quarterly basis to discuss synergies and cooperation in addition to ensuring positive overlapping and avoiding negative overlaps.

³⁵ As reported in separate meetings with the Mid Term Evaluation consultant, All three project managers of LoGo, Intuition Support to Local Administration (ISLA) and City For All (CFA) expressed deep interest in not only coordinating their project activities, but also positions with government counterparts to follow a mutual strategy in providing technical assistance to local governance/subnational governance.

3. Efficiency:

Budget Expenditure

Finding Nine: The project is very slow in delivery, which reflected low expenditures per each of the four outputs,

Albeit, the project activities were planned for \$12 million for 2017, while reduced by the project board for \$ 9 million due to none availability of cash at the time activities were planned, which resulted in considerable delays³⁶. The table below shows slow expenditure rates per outputs³⁷:

Output	Quarter	Expenditure rate	Percentage for the 3 Quarters, 2017
Output 1: Capacity of PGOs and Provincial Councils has improved for accountability and transparent service delivery	Q1, 2017	17%	28%
	Q2, 2017	32%	
	Q3, 2017	46%	
Output 2: Municipalities with improved revenue generation are able to deliver services in an accountable and participatory manner	Q1, 2017	2%	14%
	Q2, 2017	14%	
	Q3, 2017	24%	
Output 3: Civil Society has improved oversight capacity of local governance	Q1, 2017	6%	22%
	Q2, 2017	25%	
	Q3, 2017	35%	
Output 4: IDLG is able to develop policies to improve local government accountability and service delivery	Q1, 2017	15%	27%
	Q2, 2017	26%	
	Q3, 2017	40%	
Average percentage of project expenditure for the 3 quarters in 2017			23%

This very low delivery rate was due to the following reasons:

- i. Late release of funds by the European Union.
- ii. Slow procurement procedures: the project team submits the annual procurement plan in the mid-February, while it should be submitted early January of each year.³⁸ This delay adds to existing problem at the

³⁶ EU funding share was delayed in 2017 and was transferred to UNDP in November 2017 the fact it limited project expenditure and delayed implementation of project activities.

³⁷ Expenditure percentages in the table were taken from project quarter reports 1,2, and 3 for 2017

³⁸ As reported by the head of the procurement unit in meeting with the MTE consultant on 14 November 2017

procurement unit, which is understaffed and overloaded since it only has, 10 staff out of which are only 4 staff working on procurement for 30-40 million USD per annually.

LoGo project management could have solved this issue by submitting procurement plans on time and provided financing to recruit an additional procurement officer to serve LoGo within the procurement unit which is expected to speed up the procurement for the LoGo project.

- iii. Slow and long human resources support procedures: Similarly, LoGo project team submits human resource plans later than should to Human Resource Unit, moreover, these late plans keep changing by the project team.
- iv. Weak technical capacities and understaffing of LoGo project field team that minimizes the technical and logistic support in the field where the actual activities of the project are being implemented.
- v. Poor services provided by project contractors as in the case of AHEAD, which is a Non-Government Organization that lacked capacities to perform duties as stated in the Terms of Reference.
- vi. Convoluted security procedures by UNDP due to the overall security situation in the country.

[Finding Ten: LoGo project's planned activities were partially based on the assessment and analytical reports that were developed prior to the design of LoGo on each of its four components to guide the better design of activities.](#)

In each of the four components, LoGo project missed an important step that should have been the starting point in conducting a comprehensive analytical assessment or diagnostic report on each of the four thematic areas of its components, which could have provided the basis for the project components kick off on thorough technical analysis, findings, and recommendation for relevant activities to respond to existing possible gaps.

Alternatively, for example, the project assumed that there is a need for capacity development in all components without proper analysis that identifies capacity development needs for the provincial governors' offices, civil society organizations, municipalities, and the Independent Directorate of Local Governance.

In the case of municipal revenue and service delivery component, the main objective is to improve municipal revenue sources and service delivery. A diagnostic report that provides analysis of assigned own source revenues for municipalities verse mandated responsibilities in service delivery could have

identified possible fiscal gaps, if exist, in service delivery and better lighted the road for strategic interventions.

Also, based on technical analysis it could have provided the percentage of a collection in each of the assigned own source revenues and the percentage that each form of the municipal annual budget to guide the development of more relevant, responsive and strategic activities to fill in possible gaps and contributes to the achievement of strategic results.

Alternatively, under the municipal component activities were designed based on the rapid assessment of in revenue management yet a plan to be developed by municipalities to improve with technical assistance from LoGo.

While this is a partial strategic approach, it also lacks solid base and strategic direction due to lack of in-depth analysis and diagnosis of the existing own source revenue system at the municipal level.

In the civil society component, the project missed the development of a community participation and social accountability policy, strategy and action plan that could have provided strategic guidance to better design of component activities that justifies the capacity development, public awareness, outreach and advocacy activities, which are all vital, but they lack a steering guiding vision, policy, strategy and action plan and SMART objectives.

Also, the civil society component could have fundamentally included development of public oversight tools or mechanisms for the community to use that are missing to apply in exercising social accountability and oversight on performance of local governments the fact hinders the sustainability of the results of effective community participation, which should have been the overall target and not limited to civil society organizations.

On the policy and capacity development technical support to the Independent Directorate of Local Governance component, LoGo project technical support to the development of the Subnational Governance Policy was limited to the financing the cost of the two consultants that were recruited by the Independent Directorate of Local Governance to draft the policy.

UNDP's support should have exceeded to providing technical expertise and advice building on its technical comparative advantage in policy development, where UNDP has considerable rich technical experience, instead, UNDP was watching the drafting of the policy and provided comments on the first draft same as other donors, who saw the policy for the first time.

4. Sustainability:

Finding Eleven: The project has a clear exit strategy that is partially followed.

The project document articulated an exit strategy for LoGo project that was built around developing the capacities of the government, subnational, district, municipal and civil society organizations levels.

Moreover, the exit strategy highlighted the need to train government (Tashkeel) staff by the national technical assistance staff, who were recruited to provide technical assistance and transfer knowledge and expertise to government staff, subnational, district and municipal staff based on capacity assessment to be conducted at the start phase of the project in relation to project activities and required technical capacity skills.

The exit strategy for national technical assistance staff lacked a plan that articulates milestones for national technical assistance staff to reach in developing in the capacities of the (Tashkeel) staff yet a plan to end the technical assistance once capacities of the Independent Directorate of Local Government staff's is developed.

Against the fact above, the exit plan for national technical assistance has not worked pertaining the foreseen role for national technical assistance staff to train Tashkeel staff at least at the central level since the national technical assistance staff is occupying the Tashkeel positions.

This LoGo project's overall exit strategy is being partially followed through capacity development designed activities in relation to the four outputs³⁹. These capacity development activities are focused on provincial planning and budgeting, accountability, outreach, public awareness, and advocacy for civil society organizations, municipal planning, and budgeting, which are all essential in developing capacities of the counterparts the fact that goes along with the project exit strategy.

A partial failure in implementing LoGo's exit strategy is the focus on the development of provincial and development plans that are not finding their ways to be included in the national budget and limited to 5-10% due to two main reasons:

- a) Limited national development budget that should have been identified as a major challenge prior to development of these plans and
- b) Poor quality of these plans and poor coordination with the two main line ministries; Ministry of Economy that is mandated for the development of development plans and the Ministry of Finance mandated for the

³⁹ Please see table of project outputs, main activities and results achieved on pages 8-15 of this report.

allocation of national funds for development plans.

Finding Twelve: Weak buying in at the government side of the Civil Society component.

In democratic subnational/local governance systems, where local officials are elected, accountability of these officials to their constituencies become increasingly important, as elected officials should be held accountable by the community, who delegated their affairs; service delivery and financial resources to be managed by the subnational and local officials.

Although community participation is a central element in the Afghanistan National Peace and Development Framework, the Independent Directorate for Local Governance expresses concerns in terms of legitimacy of the role of civil society organizations in public oversight at the subnational, district, and municipal level.

These concerns are perceived invalid and work against the government's strategic policies as in the Citizens' Charter and the Afghanistan National Peace and Development Framework.

With above in consideration, advocacy on the effectiveness and efficiency of the role of the community in subnational and local affairs, in addition to the development of the partnership between community representatives, subnational, district, municipal and Independent Directorate of Local Governance deems vital.

LoGo project management team should lead the development of complementarities and synergies in public and government oversight the fact it serves both the Independent Directorate of Local Governance that is mandated to monitor the performance of the different layers of the subnational bodies and the community to ensure the ultimate use of the subnational and local resources in improving service delivery and the overall service provided at the subnational and local levels.

Finding Thirteen: Capacity development of the provincial council members on strategic, development planning, budgeting, and oversight is at stake as a long-term objective.

At the provincial level, provincial council members are elected and mandated, amongst many other functions, to set out strategic and development planning and budgeting guidelines, yet review and endorse provincial strategic development and provincial development plans, which is an essential role that requires relevant technical skills and capacities to perform.

LoGo project under its first output; "Capacity of Provincial Governors Offices and Provincial Councils has improved accountability and transparent service delivery"

through capacity development to the provincial council members to actively participate and lead the strategic and provincial development plans with sector line ministries, mainly Ministry of Economy and Ministry of Finance.

A clear evidence of improved accountability and transparency at the provincial level is the monitoring missions that are covered in the QPRs and accountability mechanism, where Provincial Council members and sector line ministries departments conduct public hearings and listen to the concerns of the public.

The capacity development of the provincial governors and provincial council members empowers both to exercise their mandated role to monitor the performance of sector line ministries at the provincial level.

To further empower the provincial council members to practice their monitoring important roles they need, in addition to capacity development oversight, accountability and transparency monitoring tools to apply to measure the performance of the provincial governor and sector line ministries directorates at the provincial level, which should be designed in line with the Provincial Council approved oversight regulations in March 2017.

Such tools are not in place and were not taken into consideration in the LoGo project design, the fact it hinders the sustainability of the provincial council's role as described above since it is limited to capacity development of its members, who are likely to change as they are elected.

5. National Technical Assistance Modality (NTA)

Needless to say, the technical assistance is essential at the setup phase of a newly established institution, such as in the case of the Independent Directorate of Local Governance to develop its capacity to perform its mandate.

In 2008, and upon the establishment of the Independent Directorate of Local Governance, under the Afghanistan Subnational Governance Project I and II, UNDP provided technical and financial support to recruit national experts to provide technical assistance to Independent Directorate of Local Governance through developing the capacities of its newly recruited staff, which by then, made lots of sense as it was designed for a short term.

250 national experts were recruited through the national technical assistance modality during the Afghanistan Subnational Governance Project. Two phases were paid through the project's budget, while recruited and supervised directly by Independent Directorate of Local Governance and mandated to monitor and evaluate their performance, and make sure they are transferring knowledge and develop the capacities of the Independent Directorate of Local Governance tashkeel staff.

UNDP had the final approval on the selection of the national technical assistance experts, where UNDP provides a Letter of Approval endorsing the selection according to terms of reference that were developed jointly by the Independent Directorate of Local Governance and UNDP. It also reviews the annual performance evaluation of national technical assistance staff, which is conducted by Independent Directorate of Local Governance according to civil servants' relevant performance evaluation forms.

National technical assistance staff is categorized in ten categories (A-J), where in A category are the director generals and directors of main directorates at the Independent Directorate of Local Governance and senior advisers that originally should be on Tashkeel. By now some of them have been sitting on national technical assistance contracts for the last 10 years⁴⁰.

The A and B categories receive the highest salaries amongst other national technical assistance categories, which is not even close to the government salary scale. The remaining categories perform functional duties and some are based at the provincial and municipal levels.

On October 9th, 2016, the Independent Directorate of Local Governance jointly with UNDP developed a national technical assistance exit plan, where the Independent Directorate of Local Governance is committed to undertake a gradual downsizing and eventual abolition of the national technical assistance staff through a carefully designed handover to tashkeel staff recruited under the merit-based system.

This handover to be effectively coordinated with the Capacity Development Directorate of the Independent Directorate of Local Governance and the Afghanistan Independent Civil Service Reform Commission to ensure that the recruited tashkeel have appropriate functional skills.

The exit plan aims at gradual reduction of central Independent Directorate of national technical assistance staff, where there was 79 national technical assistance staff at the Independent Directorate of Local Governance in 2016. Among them, 30% expected to be transferred to Tashkeel by January 2017 and 20% in 2018 and 2019, which translates into 55 staff in 2017, 40 in 2018 and 24 in 2019 until the end of the project in 2020.⁴¹

The exit plan lacks clarity on categories of national technical assistance staff to be transferred to Tashkeel. Especially category A, who occupy core positions at the Independent Directorate of Local Governance and were recruited to develop the capacities of the Tashkeel staff in these positions they are already occupying.

⁴⁰ As in the case of the director of Human Resources at the Independent Directorate of Local Governance

⁴¹ ⁴¹ National Technical Assistance (NTA) Exit Plan for IDLG, 9th October 2016, page 1

Also, the exit plan is being partially followed, as there has been transferring of some national technical assistance staff to Tashkeel as in the case of the Director General of Municipal Affairs Directorate, while there has been recent national technical assistance staff new appointment at the Independent Directorate of Local Governance the fact it works against the exit plan.

While the overall number of national technical assistance staff was reduced from 250 to in 2015 to 134 in 2016 and to 125 in 2017, it remains considerably high. The fact that forms a budget burden on the LoGo project as national technical assistance staff, total annual cost reached \$2.5 million USD in 2016 and \$2 million in 2017, which forms 22% of the LoGo annual planned budget and 40% of the actual disbursement.

There is an urgent need for the Independent Directorate of Local Governance and UNDP to take a prompt decision to transfer the A category national technical assistance staff to Tashkeel and to develop a new exit plan to reduce the remaining categories “field” of national technical assistance staff by transferring to Tashkeel by mid-2018.

Regarding the “field”⁴² national technical assistance staff at the provincial and municipal level, LoGo project jointly with the Independent Directorate of Local Governance, Provincial Governors Offices and Municipalities should conduct an assessment and performance evaluations to determine the value added of each “field” national technical assistance staff and develop a new exit plan to transfer to Tashkeel by mid-2018.

At interim, it is essential for the Independent Directorate of Local Governance with the support of LoGo project to develop a result based annual work plan for each of the national technical assistance staff that should be the base for monthly payments.

6. Management Arrangements:

The LoGo project document stated that project implementation is to be National Implementation Modality, where the Independent Directorate of Local Governance implements and coordinates the project activities according to government procedures.⁴³ On the other hand, the reality the project is following a

⁴² National Technical Assistance staff at the field level perform technical duties in supporting the implementation of the LoGo project activities the fact that should be taken into consideration in the assessment to avoid possible negative impact and ensure careful downsizing of their numbers

⁴³ “The project will be nationally implemented. Under National Implementation, the implementing partner will apply government’s rules and procedures to project implementation. The IP is responsible for nominating National Project Director who carries the responsibility for implementation of project activities and adequate administration of project’s inputs in line with UNDP’s financial rules. (Further details will be elaborated in the letter of Agreement and exchange of letters between UNDP and implementing partner”. *LoGo project Document, Page 35*

Direct Implementation Modality, where UNDP is carrying out the implementation of the project activities following UNDP work procedures.

Based on the Micro Assessment of the Implementing Partner, “the Independent Directorate of Local Governance”, conducted in November 2015, the overall risk results were high in relation to the implementing partner, funds flow, external audit and information systems, while significant pertaining procurement, reporting, and monitoring, internal audit, accounting policies and procedures, organizational structure and staffing.⁴⁴

UNDP has restricted security procedures to follow in the field which limits its presence and results in slow implementation. In addition to the high cost associated with security of staff and contractors, which adds a financial burden on the project.

LoGo project was not successful in outsourcing the implementation of project activities as in the case of AHEAD company that resulted in poor performance. Furthermore, property tax registration and survey planned activities under the municipality component has been experiencing serious delays in procuring the services of a company to carry out this activity.

On the other side, the Independent Directorate for Local Governance had partially developed its capacities since it has been engaged in the Afghanistan Subnational Governance Project two phases in addition to LoGo project the fact it accumulated considerable experience in implementation of the LoGo field project activities in.

UNDP and the Independent Directorate of Local Governance are advised to further empower partnership in decision making and implementation of the LoGo project activities and develop a matrix that shows UNDP’s and Independent Directorate of Local Governance’s responsibilities, which can be taken as on job capacity development of the Independent Directorate of Local Governance to be capacitated in designing and implementing its own projects in the future in supporting the development of subnational governance.

UNDP should maintain the overall financial management and monitoring to ensure efficient use of donor’s funds and achievement of the project planned outcome, outputs, targets and results while the Independent Directorate of Local Governance facilitates the implementation of project activities in the field the fact will soften the security requirements and expected to reduce cost of services.

⁴⁴ UNDP, Afghanistan Micro Assessment, Implementing Partner, Independent Directorate of Local Governance, Moore Stephens LLP Chartered Accountants, London, November 2015, pages 4-5

Such suggested approach in managing the LoGo project is likely to succeed since the LoGo team will be moving offices to Independent Directorate of Local Governance in December 2017. The fact that will enable day-to-day communications and coordination, in addition to a good chance for the LoGo project team to transfer knowledge and develop the capacity of the Independent Directorate of Local Governance staff in project management.

7. Conclusions

Conclusion one: The National Technical Assistance modality is going off its track

The overall cost of national technical assistance is considerably high and does not match its results. Furthermore, this high cost forms a real financial burden on the LoGo project, which is facing limited financial resources due to a number of reasons. The main one is that donors are rightly questioning the technical value added of the national technical assistance modality.⁴⁵

The A category of the national technical assistance staff should be absorbed on Tashkeel as soon as possible and can't continue to occupy senior Tashkeel positions as the national technical assistance philosophy was for the National Technical Assistance staff to train the Independent Directorate of Local Governance staff which is not being the case so far.

A functional review and performance evaluation of the remaining seven categories of the national technical assistance staff should be conducted as soon as possible to determine those who are providing technical assistance and support to the LoGo project activities in the field and develop an exit plan in the first quarter of 2018 to phase out the national technical assistance modality by the end of 2018, where all National Technical Assistance to be absorbed by Tashkeel.

Conclusion two: LoGo project comes in line with national strategic priorities in state and peace building.

In the absence of a Subnational Governance Policy and National Priority Programme for local governance, LoGo project remains relevant to national strategic priorities in line with Afghanistan National Peace and Development Framework and policies of the government of Afghanistan in state and peace building through its contribution to the development of the subnational sector at the provincial and the municipal levels. In addition to the support provided to the Independent Directorate of Local Governance in developing sector policy which is expected to leave sustainable impact on the local governance system in the country.

⁴⁵ Representatives of project donors; EU, Sweden and Switzerland reported their concern of the continuation of the National Technical Assistance modality and its efficiency in meetings with the Mid Term Evaluation consultant in November 2017.

Furthermore, the support provided to the community through capacity development on oversight, public awareness, advocacy and community service centres to improve accountability, transparency, and oversight of public services by the different tiers of the subnational level is contributing to empowering state-citizen relations in governance and peace building. This is all evidence-based as reported by government and subnational government officials met during this mid-term evaluation.

Similarly, the support LoGo is providing to municipalities in increasing own source revenues paves the road for advocacy for more decentralisation especially with declared target date for local elections to be conducted in 2019 which by then, if takes place, there will be elected municipal mayors and council members, who will have a more powerful position to demand more administrative and fiscal decentralisation.

Conclusion Three: UNDP needs to rebuild its strategy in the project to focus more on local governance rather than subnational.

While activities being implemented to support the provincial governance offices and the Independent Directorate of Local Governance in developing their capacities and policy development, which is essential and comes in line with the overall objective to improve service delivery. However, LoGo project lacks a strategy in providing support to the municipal level, which is the local governance tier, where citizens get to feel the quality and the provision of local services on daily basis.

Henceforth, UNDP should have a strategic focus through the development of a local finance policy on increasing assigned own source revenues for municipalities that are collected directly by the municipalities across the country the fact forms a decentralized fiscal revenue system for municipalities, which should have the main strategic attention by UNDP.

Conclusion Four: UNDP missed the chance to technically contribute to the Subnational Governance Policy (SNGP).

It is outward that the Independent Directorate of Local Governance was not successful in four previous attempts to develop and finalise a Sub-National Governance Policy, which was basically for two reasons: a) lack of responsive Sub-National Governance Policy content that wins consensus from all government players due to poor consultative process during drafting the policy and b) weak political will and hesitance in finalising a Sub-National Governance Policy due to lack of security and full government jurisdiction on its soil.

Taking into consideration the first reason, UNDP missed facilitation of the Sub-National Governance Policy drafting process, in addition to the absence of direct significant technical input that could have been provided by UNDP based on its

intensive rich experience in the development of policies and strategies in many sectors and more precisely in the local governance sector.

Conclusion Five: UNDP missed the chance to lead and coordinate the UN agencies efforts in developing the local governance sector.

UNDP is missing the chance to lead the UN efforts in developing the subnational sector with other sister UN agencies active in the country, such as: UNICEF, ILO, UN Habitat, UN Women, and UNCDF that can with UNDP form a good team in supporting subnational and municipal levels bringing diverse expertise and knowledge in different areas, education, Local Economic Development (LED), urban planning, women empowerment, and fiscal decentralisation respectively.

Models of such cooperation and partnership already exist and led by UNDP in other countries as in the case of the United Nations Joint Programme for Local Governance in Somalia⁴⁶ that is led by UNDP providing policy support, UNICEF education and health service delivery, ILO providing technical assistance in Local Economic Development, UN Habitat in urban and city planning and UNCDF providing support in fiscal decentralisation.

Conclusion Six: Coordination between the LoGo project and International Implementing Agencies active in the sector improved in 2017.

Notably in 2015-2016 coordination was weak between the LoGo project and international implementing agencies active in the field; UN Habitat (City For ALL project) and USAID, Tetra Tech, Institutional Support to Local Administration (ISLA project) as pointed out by the European Union evaluation mission where there was negative overlapping in property tax support activities by UN Habitat and the LoGo project in Bamyán Province.⁴⁷

While there are positive signs of improved coordination in the second half of 2017, where project managers of LoGo project, Institutional Support to Local administration and City For All project managers meet regularly, the need remains for a sustainable coordination mechanism that brings all project managers around the table regularly on quarterly basis to share exchange information, develop synergies and complementarities between the three projects and avoid negative overlapping.

⁴⁶ <http://www.jplg.org>

⁴⁷ European Union, RoM report, 10 April 2017

VII. Recommendations

Based on the analysis in this report including findings, relevancy, efficiency, effectiveness, and sustainability in addition to National Technical Assistance modality and management arrangements that are part of the scope of this Mid-term Evaluation as stated in the Terms of Reference. The Mid-term Evaluation presents the following recommendations to further improve the LoGo project's in deliverables in better meeting the set outcome, outputs, and results:

Recommendation One: National Technical Assistance modality must come to a successful end where category (A) staff should be absorbed by Tashkeel

Based on the analysis on the national technical assistance modality on page 33 of this report, the A category of National Technical Assistance Staff should be absorbed by Tashkeel as they are occupying the senior positions as senior advisors, director generals and directors of directorates at the Independent Directorate of Local Governance.

For the remaining national technical assistance staff especially those in the field providing technical support to the implementation of LoGo project activities and in addition to other tasks, a functional and performance evaluation should be conducted as early as possible in the first quarter of 2018 to develop an exit plan in which all national technical assistance staff at the field level should be absorbed by Tashkeel at the subnational and municipal levels by the end of 2018.

Based on the outcome of the performance assessment of the National Technical Assistance and if there will be a need for National Technical Assistance at the subnational level then there should be a very specific deliverable based Terms of Reference with clear capacity development orientation for a very short period of time (maximum 1 year)

Recommendation Two: LoGo project needs to change course of activities to adapt to the draft of the Sub-National Governance Policy.

In October 2017, a new draft of the Sub-National Governance Policy came out and included strategic changes in the subnational sector the fact it opens a door for LoGo to readapt with the government's new priorities, which are expected to inform the finalisation of the Sub-National Governance Policy and the National Priority Programme for local governance (Recommended areas where LoGo can engage to sharpen its strategic contribution are in Annex 7).

Recommendation Three: UNDP is highly recommended to provide tangible technical support to the finalization and implementation of the Sub-National Governance Policy

The new draft Sub National Governance Policy needs more clarity on the different components it touched upon. For example, it lacked clarity of roles and responsibilities of the provincial, district governors and mayors in spatial planning.

Moreover, it lacked a mechanism and needs implementation plans for delegating responsibilities from central to provincial level and role of sector line ministries at the provincial level remains unclear in light of the new delegation of responsibilities to provincial governors.

UNDP is encouraged to actively engage in providing substantial technical support to the Independent Directorate of Local Governance in finalizing the Sub-National Governance Policy considering the donors' comments presented to the Independent Directorate of Local Governance in their last meeting in November 2017.

Recommendation Four: The support to enhance municipal revenues should be the flagship component in the LoGo project.

As mentioned before, municipalities are the local governments in many countries. In Afghanistan, municipalities enjoy a considerable high degree of fiscal decentralization through its mandate to directly collect and manage revenues from more than 50 sources as articulated in the municipal law.

This fiscal decentralization window should be capitalized on by LoGo project and approached more strategically through developing a comprehensive analytical assessment report that analyzes the existing decentralized own source revenue versus mandated responsibility in service delivery to guide the strategic design of activities under this component.

Recommendation Five: Technical capacities of the LoGo project team component leads should be re-evaluated and developed.

In light of the new developments in terms of recommended new areas for LoGo to engage there is a need to reassess the existing LoGo staff pertaining their qualifications and competencies in relation to new thematic areas if LoGo ends up engaging in new areas. For example, in the case of providing support in spatial planning, where LoGo needs specialised staff to lead and provide technical assistance to counterparts.

Also, to re-assess LoGo staff technical capacities in providing technical support to the project beneficiaries and technically assisting the LoGo project manager. Additionally, decisions on the staff category, grades should be equivalent to the

profile of the jobs, therefore, in some areas local capacities are useful and others project needs to increase use of short-term external experts.

[Recommendation Six: Specialised technical expertise should be made available to the LoGo project management team.](#)

The nature of the LoGo project outputs requires highly specialized technical expertise in the four thematic areas the project is designed to provide technical assistance to.

In the project document, a Chief Technical Advisor position was planned but never recruited. An international Chief Technical Advisor would have brought international experience to the project that is fundamentally needed.

The chief technical advisor as part of the LoGo team is one way of providing technical assistance and guidance to the LoGo project team, while the other way is to establish a pool of international consultants specialised in all areas of the project focus (Outputs), who can fill in the gap of the absence of the chief technical advisor.

[Recommendation Seven: UNDP should seek partnership with UN sister agencies in providing technical support at the subnational and local levels.](#)

UNDP has the opportunity to work jointly with UN sister agencies that are active in providing service delivery support and soft components support in local governance.

Partnership with UN Habitat on property tax registration and survey is an area that UNDP/LoGo project should give special attention where LoGo could work on enabling property tax collections in the areas where UN Habitat have completed registration and survey.

Also, to explore partnership with other UN sister agencies such as UNCDF, ILO, UNICEF, UN Women is likely to enrich the LoGo project results and presents UNDP and the UN sister agencies in better way to the government, international implementing agencies and better attract donor funding.

[Recommendation Eight: Management arrangements of the LoGo project should be revised to allow the better role of the Independent Directorate of Local Governance in decision-making.](#)

Since the LoGo project is following a Direct Implementation Modality and could not follow the National Implementation Modality as agreed due to high and significant risks as identified in the micro assessment, a joint management is recommended, where UNDP and the Independent Directorate of Local Governance jointly develop a management matrix that specifies roles,

responsibilities and authorities of both parties in managing the LoGo project to enhance partnership.

The LoGo project team is moving offices to the Independent Directorate of Local Governance by the end of 2017. The fact opens a wide door for the project team to develop the capacities of the Independent Directorate of Local Governance staff in project management that is expected to contribute to the sustainability of capacities of the Independent Directorate of Local Governance.

VIII. Lessons Learned

Lesson one: There was lack of strategy and prioritization by not recruiting the project manager and the Chief Technical Advisor before recruiting the project team.

UNDP should have prioritized the recruitment of the project manager and the Chief technical advisor, who is supposed to have advanced technical skills that could have been of great benefit in the design and implementation of the project activities that require, advanced technical skills.

Lesson Two: UNDP failed to build on the early experience and lessons learned on National Technical Assistance in ASGP I & II.

The national technical assistance modality started in 2007 during the implementation of the Afghanistan Subnational Governance Project. It gave UNDP all the time needed to evaluate the impact of this modality and the chance to take corrective measures with the counterpart.

Also, at the time the Afghanistan Subnational Governance Project came to its end in 2014, UNDP and the Independent Directorate of Local Governance missed the chance of conducting a comprehensive evaluation of the National Technical Assistance modality to assess its impact of the development of the capacities of Independent Directorate of Local Governance.

UNDP and the Independent Directorate of Local Governance had the chance to develop an exit plan during the relatively long life of the Afghanistan Subnational Governance Project two phases, which were missed. Alternatively, UNDP and the Independent Directorate of Local Governance resumed the National Technical Assistance modality in the LoGo project putting themselves back to square one.

Lesson Three: UNDP should have conducted comprehensive assessments/diagnosis of each of the four output's thematic areas to better identify project baselines, indicators, and targets.

Assessments and diagnostic reports are the fundamental starting step in project initiation as it provides thorough and comprehensive analysis of thematic areas of intervention.

The LoGo project developed its activities without solid technical basis that could have identified gaps to be filled not only as activities to implement but more based on technical analysis of the subnational system and way forward to set clear targets and objectives for each output.

In other words, capacity development activities were designed on the existing role of the different players at the subnational level without a vision on future roles and responsibilities that might differ of the existing ones as the sector develops.

Moreover, there is no clear cut on roles of provincial governor, district governor and mayors the area the project should have articulated in light of a functional review assessment, which is expected to inform the capacity development initiatives under each of the four components.

Lesson Four: Mapping of active international agencies in the sector should have been done at the early stage of the project start and robust coordination mechanism should have been in place with international implementing agencies.

In addition to UNDP, there are four international organizations active in the subnational governance field and have tangible technical support ongoing in the sector: USAID/Tetra Tech, GIZ, UN-Habitat and the World Bank.

Ongoing initiatives by these agencies have activities that overlap either positively or negatively with the LoGo project. The chance of developing synergies and complementarities with the LoGo project outputs and activities remains to wait for the initiative to be taken by the four organizations.

Coordination between the LoGo project and other international initiatives was weak in 2015-2016 and improved in the second half of 2017. UNDP has a chance in leading coordination through the establishment of a technical coordination committee at the project manager's level.

IX. Report Annexes

Annex 1: List of documents reviewed

1. Afghanistan National Peace and Development Framework, ANPDF, 2017-2022
2. Afghanistan Peace and Reintegration Program (APRP), July 2010
3. Afghanistan Subnational Governance Programme, Phase II, January 2010-December 2014, Final Evaluation Report, 12 June 2014
4. Annual report, Local Governance Project, United Nations Development Programme, 2016
5. Bringing Government to the People: Subnational Governance for Better Service Delivery, National Priority Program, Pre-concept note, January 8, 2018
6. Capacity Assessment Report, Balkh Municipality, LoGo Project, August 2016
7. Citizens' Charter, National Priority Program, Government of Islamic Republic of Afghanistan, December 2016
8. City For All Project Progress Report, October 2017
9. City For All Project, Quarterly Report, October 2017
10. Concept Note on the Development of a Sub-National Governance Transformation Strategy (S-NGTS), August 2017, Sareer Ahmad Barmak, Office of the President.
11. Country Programme Document for Afghanistan, 2015-2017
12. First, second, and third quarterly reports, LoGo project, UNDP, 2017.
13. Micro Assessment, Implementing Partner "Independent Directorate of Local Governance, UNDP Afghanistan, November 2015
14. Monitoring Plan for LoGo project, Updated, 2017.
15. National Technical Assistance (NTA), Exit Plan for IDLG, LoGo project, 9th October 2016
16. Provincial Development Planning Guideline, Ministry of Economy, February 2017.
17. Provincial NTA agreement, IDLG, 01 April 2016 - 31 December 2016.
18. RoM report, European Union, 10 April 2017
19. Sub National Governance Policy, 28th October 2017, Independent Directorate of Local Governance,
20. United Nations Development Assistance Framework, Afghanistan 2015-2019, Mid Term Review Draft, Subhash Misra, 30 September 2017

Annex 2: Terms of Reference of the Mid Term Evaluation

INDIVIDUAL CONSULTANT PROCUREMENT NOTICE/TERMS OF REFERENCE	
Title of Individual Consultant:	International Consultant (Midterm Evaluation)
Project title:	Local Governance Project – Afghanistan (LoGo)
Duration of assignment:	7 weeks (with Maximum 35 working days)
Duty station:	Kabul, AFGHANISTAN
BACKGROUND	
UNDP Global Mission Statement: UNDP is the UN’s global development network, an organization advocating for change and connecting countries to knowledge, experience, and resources to help people build a better life. We are on the ground in 166 countries, working with national counterparts on their own solutions to global and national development challenges.	
UNDP Afghanistan Mission Statement: UNDP supports stabilization, state-building, governance and development priorities in Afghanistan. UNDP support, in partnership with the Government, the United Nations system, the donor community and other development stakeholders, has contributed to institutional development efforts leading to positive impact on the lives of Afghan citizens. Over the years UNDP support has spanned such milestone efforts as the adoption of the Constitution; Presidential, Parliamentary and Provincial Council elections; institutional development through capacity-building to the legislative, the judicial and executive arms of the state, and key ministries, Government agencies and commissions at the national and subnational levels. UNDP has played a key role in the management of the Law and Order Trust Fund, which supports the Government in developing and maintaining the national police force and in efforts to stabilize the internal security environment. Major demobilization, disarmament and rehabilitation and area-based livelihoods and reconstruction programmes have taken place nationwide. UNDP Programmes in Afghanistan have benefited from the very active support of donors. UNDP Afghanistan is committed to the highest standards of transparency and accountability and works in close coordination with the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan and the UN system as a whole to maximize the impact of its development efforts on the ground.	
Organizational context: Local Governance Project-Afghanistan (LoGo) is a new project (October 2015 – September 2020), building upon the lessons from UNDP’s Afghanistan Sub-National Governance Programme (ASGP). Through LoGo project, the Independent Directorate of Local Governance (IDLG) and UNDP will jointly address the top three priorities of IDLG which are: 1) service delivery; 2) accountability; and 3) clear functions and mandates. The project builds on a theory of change aimed at improving service delivery by enhancing the accountability and transparency of the local governments to the women and men of Afghanistan and building the capacity of the local governments to plan, budget and monitor service delivery effectively with the ultimate aim of increasing the legitimacy of the government and the trust between the state and society. The GIRoA, with UNDP support, will focus on the following areas: a) Capacity of PGOs and Provincial Councils has improved for accountability and	

- transparent service delivery;
- b) Municipalities with improved revenue generation are able to deliver services in an accountable and participatory manner;
 - c) Civil Society has improved oversight capacity of local governance;
 - d) IDLG is able to develop policies to improve local government accountability and service delivery.

In accordance with the project document, UNDP should conduct a Midterm Evaluation of the project to provide a comprehensive independent assessment of project performance and governance arrangements and provide recommendations for improvement including on additional monitoring and oversight measures and modalities for outputs 2, 3, and 4 and assess the progress made in transitioning the NTA position to IDLG. The outcome of the evaluation is expected to lead into i) substantive revision of the project ii) alignment of the project scope with the emerging priorities and ii) revision of project human resources and management arrangements.

With that background, UNDP is hiring an independent consultant to carry on the midterm evaluation of the project, which will be conducted through a consultative process with UNDP, IDLG, Project donors, and beneficiaries.

Scope and Objectives of Mid-Term Evaluation (MTE):

The Mid Term Evaluation will assess progress towards the achievement of the project objectives and outcomes as specified in the Project Document, and assess early signs of success or failure with the goals of the identifying the necessary changes to be made in order to set the project on-track to achieve its intended results. The MTE will also review the project strategy, modality of implementation, management arrangement and its risk to sustainability. Besides, it will cover a review of the provision of National Technical Assistance (NTA) to IDLG.

Approach and methodology:

The Evaluation must provide evidence-based information that is credible, reliable and useful. The consultant will review all relevant sources of information. The consultant is expected to follow a collaborative and participatory approach ensuring close engagement of all stakeholders.

The consultant will produce an inception report based on a review of all relevant documents and present it to the UNDP Governance Unit and other stakeholders to explain the objectives and methods adopted for the midterm Evaluation.

The consultant will work under the overall guidance of the Head of Governance Unit and direct supervision of the portfolio manager, the consultant will conduct the evaluation based on bellow principle:

1. **Impartiality:** Impartiality is the absence of bias in due process, methodological rigor, consideration, and presentation of achievements and challenges. It also implies that the views of all stakeholders are taken into account. In the event that interested parties have different views, these are to be reflected in the evaluation analysis and reporting;
2. **Independence:** The evaluation function has to be located independently from the other management functions so that it is free from undue influence and that unbiased and transparent reporting is ensured. It needs to have full discretion in submitting directly its reports for consideration at the appropriate level of decision-making pertaining to the subject of evaluation;

3. **Transparency and Consultation:** Transparency and consultation with the major stakeholders are essential features in all stages of the evaluation process. This improves the credibility and quality of the evaluation. It can facilitate consensus building and ownership of the findings, conclusions and recommendations;

Areas of Assessment:

1. Overall assessment of the project (context and rationale) Relevance.

- To what extent are the project logic, concept and approaches appropriate and relevant to achieving the governments' policies and objectives?
- To what extent has the project managed to implement project activities across the targeted project locations?
- What are the intended results and if the project is on track meeting its targets?
- What are the changes, new priorities, and emerging opportunities the project should align its scope to?

2. Attainment of the projects objective; Effectiveness /Efficiency:

- Were necessary measures taken to ensure the effectiveness and efficiency of the project?
- To what extent has the project achieved its intended objectives to date?
- Has the project set baselines for the set indicators and targets?
- Have the resources been mobilized and utilized efficiently?
- What are the immediate changes brought about by the project? Any specific evidence documented?
- What are the potential challenges/risks that may prevent the projects from producing the intended results?

3. Impacts (long-term effects):

- What are the potential impacts of the project?
- To what extent can the project expect to achieve the positive impacts based on project results observed at the moment?

4. Sustainability:

- To what extent are the project interventions sustainable?
- Does the project have an exit strategy?
- Is there evidence of government ownership over completed tasks (Provincial Development Plans (DPs), Provincial Strategic Plans (PSPs), Citizen/Customer Service Centers (CSCs)

5. Partnership/ cooperation:

- Level of satisfaction of the Government counterparts, Donors and Beneficiaries;
- Effectiveness of coordination mechanisms with project stakeholders;

6. Management Arrangement:

- Is there an appropriate mechanism in place to monitor and assess the overall progress of the project?

- Is there a need for revision of project staffing and management structure?
- How effectively are NTAs used, was NTA exit strategy implemented? What are the issues and possible solutions?
- To what extent the project implementation modality and arrangements been effective and efficient in achieving the overall objectives?
- Is resource allocation across outputs are effective? Or there is a need for re-alignment of project resources?

Evaluation Target Groups and sources of information:

The consultant should strive to reach as many people as possible as well as to review existing reports and data for an enriched evaluation.

A provisional list of stakeholder groups that should be consulted during the evaluation is given below and will be updated one the consultant is on board:

1. Government of Afghanistan: IDLG and its various departments at the centre and provinces if needed, Ministry of Finance, Ministry of Economy, Provincial and District Governor Offices, Provincial Councils and Municipalities.
2. Beneficiaries: Direct and indirect beneficiaries of projects Like Municipalities, CSOs, Government Staff and users of Service centers.
3. International Organizations: USAID ISLA and SHAHAR Projects, UN-Habitat.
4. Donors: EU, SDC, SIDA, Italy
5. UNDP Country Office
6. LOGO project staff

Documents for Review:

1. Project Document and RRF
2. Periodic project reports
3. Partner reports like government and donor’s periodic reports
4. Sub-national Governance Policy and National Priority Programme
5. Afghanistan National Peace and Development Framework (ANPDF)

Evaluation Products/ Deliverables; Estimated duration to complete and Payment percentage:

Final Deliverable:

<p>The key Deliverables of the consultancy are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inception Report with detailed Evaluation plan, evolution questionnaire, outline of the report and list of key informants. • Submission of Evaluation Matrix based on the format provided by 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • first week of the assignment (20 % of total daily professional fee)
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<p>Governance unit</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Completion of Field work and consultations with stakeholders which should lead to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Summary of key findings through the first draft of the report; - Presentation of key finding in a debriefing session with key stakeholders; - Presentation of work plan for pending work and information required • Final report submitted and accepted by UNDP including the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Output by output evaluation of the project based on the evaluation criteria - Complete report addressing comments and suggestions of UNDP and other stakeholder - A details presentation of key finding and recommendation for presentation at the project board - All annexes of the report like list of key informants, documents reviewed, pictures an other data collected during the assignment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Second, Third, fourth and sixth weeks of the assignment (50% of the Total daily professional Fee) • End of Assignments but not later than 10 days from the completion of the consultations (30% of the total daily professional fee)
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The inception report should outline a clear overview of the mid-term review approach, including:

- The purpose, objective, and scope of the review
- The approach should include a summary of the data collection method, and the criteria on which the methodologies were adopted
- A proposed work plan including a schedule of tasks, activities, and deliverables
- A mid-term evaluation matrix, specifying the main review criteria and the indicators or benchmarks against which the criteria will be assessed
- Any limitations for the mid-term review

Working Arrangements:

The Consultant will work under the overall guidance of the Head of Governance Unit and direct supervision of the portfolio manager in close collaboration with LoGo project manager and project team.

Duration of the Work

- The whole assignment is foreseen for a period of seven weeks with maximum of 35 working days (5 days a week).

Duty Station

- The consultant is expected to be in Kabul for a period of 5 weeks and two weeks home based for desk review, report writing and editing before and after the field work.

Evaluation Competencies and Ethics: The evaluator should be sensitive to beliefs, manners and customs and act with integrity and honesty in their relationships with all stakeholders.

PRICE PROPOSAL AND SCHEDULE OF PAYMENTS

The contractor shall submit a price proposal as below:

- **Daily Fee** – The contractor shall propose a daily fee which should be inclusive of his/her professional fee, local communication cost and insurance (inclusive of medical evacuation). The number of working days for which the daily fee shall be payable under the contract is **35 Working days**.
- **Living Allowance, LA** - The contractor shall propose a LA at the Kabul applicable rate of **USD 162 per night** for his stay at the duty station. The maximum number of days for which the LA shall be payable under the contract is **35 nights**. The contractor is **NOT** allowed to stay in a place of his choice other than the UNOSSC approved places. UNDP will provide MORSS compliant accommodation in UNOCA complex. The payment of accommodation shall be made directly by the contractor.
- **Travel & Visa** – The contractor shall propose an estimated lump sum for home-Kabul-home travel and Afghanistan visa expenses.

The total professional fee, shall be converted into a lumpsum contract and payments under the contract shall be made on submission and acceptance of deliverables under the contract in accordance with the abovementioned schedule of payment.

REQUIREMENTS FOR EXPERIENCE AND QUALIFICATIONS:

Academic Qualifications:

- Master’s Degree or equivalent, in, Political Science, Governance, Development studies or related disciplines.

Experience:

- At least 10 years of working experience in evaluation and/or social research, with at least 5 years working with developing countries and a demonstrated understanding of the challenges and opportunities faced by post conflict countries;
- Strong analytical and research skills with sufficient understanding of survey design, quantitative/qualitative methods and data analysis;
- Experience reviewing projects/programmes of UN agencies (preferably UNDP).
- Familiarity with UN (preferably UNDP) evaluation guidelines and processes is a plus.

- Experience working with the UN and with multi-stakeholders: governments, NGOs, the UN/ multilateral/bilateral institutions and donor entities;
- Public admin reform experience in a post-conflict setting is preferred;

Language:

- Fluency in written and spoken English is a requirement. Knowledge of Dari, Pashto is an advantage.

Competencies:

Corporate Competencies:

- Demonstrates integrity by modeling the UN’s values and ethical standards;
- Promotes the vision, mission, and strategic goals of UNDP;
- Maturity combined with tact and diplomacy;
- Displays cultural, gender, religion, race, nationality and age sensitivity and adaptability;
- Treats all people fairly without favoritism.

Special skills requirements

- Shows ability to communicate and to exercise advocacy skills in front of a diverse set of audience
- Focuses on impact and result for the client and responds positively to feedback;
- Demonstrates openness to change and ability to manage complexities;
- Consistently approaches work with energy and a positive, constructive attitude;
- Ability to work collaboratively with colleagues in a multi-cultural and multiethnic environment;
- Builds strong relationships with clients and external actors;
- Ability to work independently with strong sense of initiative, discipline and self-motivation.

Evaluation Method and Criteria:

The award of the contract shall be made to the individual consultant whose offer has been evaluated and determined as:

- 1) Responsive/compliant/acceptable; and
- 2) Having received the highest score out of a pre-determined set of weighted technical and financial criteria specific to the solicitation.

Technical Criteria weight 70%;

Financial Criteria weight 30%.

Only candidates obtaining a minimum of 49 points (70% of the total technical points)

would be considered for the Financial Evaluation.

Technical Criteria 70 points

Technical Proposal (30 marks)

- 3) Technical Approach & Methodology (20 marks) – Explain the understanding of the objectives of the assignment, approach to the services, methodology for carrying out the activities and obtaining the expected output, and the degree of detail of such output. The Applicant should also explain the methodologies proposed to adopt and highlight the compatibility of those methodologies with the proposed approach.
- 4) Work Plan (10 marks) – The Applicant should propose the main activities of the assignment, their content and duration, phasing and interrelations, milestones (including interim approvals by the Client), and delivery dates. The proposed work plan should be consistent with the technical approach and methodology, showing understanding of the TOR and ability to translate them into a feasible working plan.

Qualification and Experience (40 marks) [evaluation of CV]:

- General Qualification (15 marks);
- Experience relevant to the assignment (25 marks);

Documents to be included when submitting the proposals:

Interested individual consultants must submit the following documents/information to demonstrate their qualifications in one single PDF document:

- Duly accomplished confirmation of Interest and Submission of Financial Proposal Template using the template provided by UNDP (Annex II);
- Personal CV or P11, indicating all experience from similar projects, as well as the contact details (email and telephone number) of the Candidate and at least three (3) professional references.

Technical Proposal:

- Brief description of why the individual considers him/herself as the most suitable for the assignment;
- A methodology, on how they will approach and complete the assignment and;
- A work plan for the whole period of the assignment and linked with the methodology.

Annex 3: List and schedule of interviewees and meetings

Logo Project Mid-term Evaluation Meeting List⁴⁸

1. Abdul Baqi Popalat, Deputy Minister for Municipality Affairs at IDLG
2. Aimal Feroz Zalland, support to IDLG LoGo Component Lead, UNDP
3. Aminuddin Hamedi, Program Officer, Governance Unit, UNDP
4. Anis Siddique, Head of Human Resources, UNDP
5. Antony Lamba, Chief of Party, City For All Project, UN HABITAT
6. Debriefing meeting at IDLG with LoGo project board members
7. Douglas Armour, Head of Governance Unit, UNDP
8. Hassan Elhag, Head of Governance Unit, UNAMA
9. IDLG Directors of main central directorates at IDLG
10. Jocelyn Mason, UNDP Country Director a.i., UNDP
11. Johanna Johnson, Programme Manager at the Embassy of Sweden, Kabul SDC Office
12. Luce Bulosan, Chief of Party, Initiative to Strengthen Local Administrations (ISLA project)
13. Mirwais Baheej, Director General, Design and Consolidation at Ministry of Economy
14. Mohammad Asif Mobalegh, Bamyán Deputy Governor, Bamyán Province
15. Mohammad Moqim Azizi, Procurement Specialist, UNDP Procurement Unit
16. Mohammad Nasir Hamedi, General Director, General Directorate of Municipal Affairs, IDLG
17. Mohammad Zakir Stanikzai, Logo Civil Society Organizations Component Lead, UNDP
18. Nabila Wafeq, Gender Specialist, UNDP
19. Nasir Ahmad Salehzada, Logo Municipal Specialist, UNDP
20. Omar Abdul Hameed Omar, Logo Project Manager, UNDP
21. Sareer Barmak, President's Chief Advisor on Local Governance Affairs, President Palace
22. Sayed Fahimullah Ebady, Director of Budget at Ministry of Finance, MoF
23. Sayed Haroon Ahmadi, RBM Analyst, UNDP Programme Strategy & Results Unit, UNDP
24. Sub National Governance Forum Meeting to discuss comments on the SNGP (Sub-National Governance Policy), chaired by DM Sharan at UNAMA Palace 7
25. Temor Sharan, Deputy Minister for Policy & Technical Affairs at IDLG

⁴⁸ Names are organized in alphabetical order

26. Wadzanayi Mushandikwa, LoGo monitoring and evaluation specialist, UNDP
27. Winiger, Petra, Swiss Development and Cooperation, SDC Office
28. Yama Omari and Wali Ghafari, European Union, EU Office.
29. Yugesh Pradhanan, Logo Provincial Governors Offices Component Lead, UNDP

Annex 4: LoGo Project Achievements per output

The below table shows results achieved in the LoGo project per each output as reported by project team:

Output	Main activities	Results achieved up to date ⁴⁹
<p>Output 1 Capacity of PGOs and Provincial Councils has improved for accountability and transparent service delivery.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Capacity development on provincial Planning and budgeting to the PDC 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conducted Capacity Development Workshop for PDP – ToT planning, provincial planning consultation, orientation of provincial planning guideline, Gender etc. For PSP - orientation to PSP committees, provincial profiling and participatory workshop defining goals, objective, targets and outputs for five years. 970 (91 women) trained on PDP and PSP planning and development (Nimruz, Daikundi, Khost, Kapisa, Paktika, Kabul, Bamyan, Panjshir, Sar-e-Pul). Provincial Planning Guideline: 475 (54 women) oriented on the Participatory Planning Guideline, jointly with MoEc in Sar-e-Pul, Kapisa, Panjshir, Daikundi and Kabul. Gender analysis and mainstreaming (for PDP and PSP): 189 (83 women) oriented on gender analysis and gender mainstreaming in planning (Bamyan, Daikundi, Kapisa, Panjshir). PDP implementation review jointly with MoEc in 10 provinces (Bamyan, Daikundi, Kapisa, Khost, Kunduz, Nimruz, Paktika, Panjshir,

⁴⁹ As reported in the quarterly reports in 2017 and by component leads of the project.

		<p>Sarepul and Uruzgan) in 2016 and 7 provinces (Paktia, Paktika, Khost, Helmand, Sarepul, Nimruz, and Bamyan) in 2017.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PDP monitoring by PDC members: monitored 115 local service delivery projects in 2016 (Daikundi, Khost, Paktika and Kapisa) and monitored 90 projects in 2017 (Kapisa, Khost, Paktika, Panjshir, Bamyan and Daikundi) in line with PDC monitoring plans formulated with support from LoGo.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Technical support to develop provincial development plans and provincial strategic plans 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provincial Development Plans: eight (1397) PDPs have been developed in Kabul, Khost, Panjshir, Paktika, Daikundi, Bamyan, Sar-e-Pul and Kapisa. • Provincial Strategic Plans: six PSPs were developed in Kapisa, Paktia, Paktika, Daikundi, Nimruz and Sar-e-Pul provinces. Another two PSPs are being developed in Khost (provincial profile and 2017 to 2022 strategic plan completed), Kabul (provincial profile completed). In addition, one PSP is being revised for Bamyan.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support to PCs for public outreaches and accountability and oversight 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Outreach on PC roles and responsibilities: 5,307 (579 women) oriented on PC roles and provided feedback on issues affecting service delivery (Bamyan, Nimruz, Paktika, Panjshir, Sar-e-Pul, Daikundi, Khost, Kapisa and Paktia). • Accountability: 1,090 (140 women) participated in

		<p>accountability week sessions.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public hearings and public reporting: 3,113 (413 women) participated in public hearing and public reporting forums in Kabul, Kapisa, Bamyan, Daikundi, Paktika and Sar-e-Pul. • Orientation on PC Oversight regulation: 165 (9 women) oriented on the PC Oversight Regulation in Bamyan, Daikundi, Kapisa and Panjshir.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Capacity development of the provincial council members on developing provincial development plans. 	<p>PC representatives are present at all capacity development workshops mentioned above as they are part of the PDCs.</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establishment of Citizens Service Center 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Two operational CSCs: Kapisa (4,528 [935 women]) citizens served in 2016) and Sar-e-Pul (12,169 [2,7,29 women]) served in 2016). • Construction of CSCs: Bamyan and Daikundi (completed); Paktia 80 percent complete; Panjshir (on hold upon Governor's request), tendering ongoing for Paktika.
<p>Output 2 Municipalities with improved revenue generation are able to deliver services in an accountable and participatory manner</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Technical support for municipal revenue management 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Revenue Enhancement Action plans: developed for fourteen municipalities (Guzara, Injil, Hese Hawal-e-Kohistan, Aqcha, Balkh, Khulm, Sharana [Paktika], Khost, Surkhroad, Torghundi, Qarabagh, Torkham, Kuhsaan and Panjwayee) and revised for four municipalities in 2016 (Bamyan, Bazarak, Kunduz and Nili). • Increase in fixed revenue (1395 analysis): nine municipalities had at least 20% percent increases in fixed

		<p>revenue (Guzara, Injil, Khost, Kuhsaan, Nili, Panjwayee, Sharana [Paktika], Qarabagh and Shirkhan Bandar).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Business registration: rolled out in three municipalities (Surkhroad, Guzara and Balkh) • Floor price of municipal properties: finalized floor price defining minimum rentals for municipal properties in six municipalities (Aqcha, Balkh, Bamyan, Hese Hawal-e-Kohistan, Khulm and Turkham).
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Technical support for municipal financial planning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • M&E frameworks for financial monitoring: finalized and operational in all 22 municipalities supported by LoGo. • Monthly revenue and expenditure reporting: sixteen municipalities consistently reported on revenue and expenditure in 2017 [at least 8 out of 10 monthly reports (Aqcha, Balkh, Bazarak, HAK, Khulm, Kuhsaan, Kunduz, Nili, Panjwayee, Qarabagh, Sharana [Paktika], Shirkhan Bandar, Spin Boldak, Surkhroad, Turkham, Zaranj)].
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Technical support to improve service delivery through the establishment of citizen centers (Establishment of municipal advisory boards) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Operational MABs: eight provincial municipalities (Bamyan, Bazarak, Khost, Kunduz (jointly with UN-Habitat for these 3 MABs), Mahmoud Raqi, Nili, Sharana and Zaranj) and fourteen district municipalities (Khulm, Balkh, Torghundi, Qarabagh, Spin Boldak, Hese Awal-e-Kohistan, Shirkhan Bandar, Surkhroad, Turkham, Aqcha, Guzara, Injil,

		<p>Kuhsaan and Panjwayee).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establishment of CSCs: two CSCs completed (Bamyan and Nili) and construction ongoing for one CSC in Mahmoud Raqi (90% complete). • Mobile service centres: piloted in eleven municipalities (Balkh, Guzara, Hese Hawal-e-Kohistan, Mahmoud Raqi, Panjwayee, Qarabagh, Spin Boldak, Surkhroad, Zaranj, Turkham, Sharana [Paktika]) where 198 citizens were served.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Outreach and accountability 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accountability sessions: 3,692 citizens (392 women) participated in accountability sessions across the 22 municipalities supported by LoGo. • Social audits: completed in two municipalities (Bazarak and Guzara).
<p>Output 3 Civil Society has improved oversight capacity of local governance</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mobilization of CSOs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collaborated with UNAMA Civil Affairs Unit on Provincial CSO network mapping and in the selection of CSOs to work with in LoGo. • CSOs participate in the National CSO Support Working Group hosted by UNAMA. • Thirty-five (13 women focused) CSOs were selected for LoGo implementation in 2016. LoGo considered already existing CSO networks supported by UNAMA and inputs from the Regional UNAMA Civil Affairs staff in the selection process.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Raising awareness of CSOs on local governance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consultative forums: in collaboration with UNAMA consulted 31 CSO members of Balkh, Kapisa and Panjshir

		<p>provinces on challenges and operational context of CSOs.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Capacity development: 105 CSO members (40 women) trained on planning, budgeting, management, monitoring and advocacy. At least 35 CSO members (18 women) participated in CSO coordination, outreach and oversight roles workshop (Panjshir province). At least 26 CSO members (7 women) participated in advocacy workshop (Kandahar province). • Gender analysis and mainstreaming (for PDP and PSP): 13 (10 women) oriented on gender analysis and gender mainstreaming in planning (Kapisa and Panjshir).
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote CSOs and government partnership 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Twenty-one (2 women) drawn from Government, IDLG, UNAMA Civil Affairs Unit, LoGo and CSOs participated in Govt/CSO Coordination Working Group. • One CSO/Government Coordination Mechanism drafted. • Fifty-four CSO members (14 women) jointly conducted public awareness campaign with Municipalities of Bamyan, Guzara, Injil, Mahmoud Raqi and Khost on anti-corruption, its consequences and the role of citizens in minimizing corruption. • Sixteen CSO members (8 women) have collaborated in provincial development planning processes and outreach events in Daikundi

		<p>and Panjshir.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> CSO members of Kapisa and Bamyan are intentionally included in municipality planning processes.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Technical support through capacity development of CSOs in oversight. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Capacity development: 105 CSO members (40 women) trained on planning, budgeting, management, monitoring and advocacy.
<p>Output 4 IDLG is able to develop policies to improve local government accountability and service delivery</p>	<p>A. Provide technical support to IDLG in developing subnational governance policy</p>	<p>B. LoGo resumed support to the development of the Sub-National Governance Policy. The project supported IDLG to (1) recruit two international consultants to develop the SNGP, (2) conduct taskforce, technical working group meetings and consultation sessions in Kabul, (3) conduct taskforce field visit to Bamyan and (4) ongoing taskforce visit to Indonesia.</p>
	<p>C. Capacity development of the IDLG staff</p>	<p>D. Q1 2016: 83 central IDLG staff trained on public procurement, local planning and budgeting.</p> <p>E. Q1 2016: 14 IDLG staff trained in India on Public Financial Management and Provincial Budgeting and Public Administration courses through the South-South cooperation.</p> <p>F. Q2 2016: 83 IDLG staff (35 women) trained on gender mainstreaming and implementation of the Anti-Harassment Policy.</p> <p>G. Q2 2016: 153 IDLG staff (64 women) trained on different topics (office management, human resource, planning, budgeting, reporting, gender, performance appraisal and coordination) at the national and sub-national levels.</p>

		<p>H. Q3 2016: 26 PGO Gender Focal Points trained on gender and planning of gender related activities in PGOs.</p> <p>I. Q4 2016: 45 capacity development officers (5 women) trained on Provincial Budgeting, Provincial Planning and Gender.</p> <p>J. Q1 2017: 60 people (12 women) from the 34 provincial municipalities and 14 district municipalities on the draft CSC guideline.</p> <p>K. Q1 2017: 63 staff (13 female) trained on the M&E framework.</p> <p>L. Q2 2017: 308 staff (44 women) trained on good governance; public financial management; conflict management; planning; local governance; capacity development and general management.</p> <p>M. Q3 2017: 37 staff (9 women) trained on Policy formulation, implementation, monitoring and development of legal documents.</p> <p>N. Q3 2017: 63 staff (13 women) trained on Monitoring and Evaluation and Reporting.</p> <p>O. Q4 2017: 50 staff (2 women) trained on IDLG's M&E framework, Fundamentals of M&E, Data collection methods and tools, Data analysis, Information management system and Geographical Information system (GIS).</p>
	<p>P. Provide national technical assistance to IDLG through the recruitment of national expertise</p>	<p>LoGo is working with 55 Central level NTA staff and 61 Provincial NTA staff.</p>

Annex 5: List of questions

A. List of suggested questions to national counterparts:

1. How the LoGo project responds to the national priorities in local governance at this stage?
2. To what extent your organisation was involved in the design of the LoGo project?
3. What is the role of your organisation in the LoGo project? Which component and output? Do you evaluate planned activities relevant to the country context and sector priorities?
4. What is your contribution to the implementation of the LoGo project activities?
5. Is your organisation involved in the decision making of the LoGo project? Do you consider your organisation influential? How your role can be improved?
6. Did the LoGo project contribute to development of the capacities of your organisations? How? What impact the improved capacities had on your performance?
7. How do you see your partnership relations with UNDP in relation to the management of the LoGo project? How it can be improved?
8. How do you rate the transparency and accountability of the management of the LoGo project at UNDP side?
9. Based on your experience, are there any stumbling blocks, shortcomings or gaps in the LoGo project in relation to its outputs, inputs and activities? If yes, what needs to be improved? How do you suggest improving?
10. Does your organisation conduct periodic evaluation of the related activities of the LoGo project? How frequent this evaluation? Do you have documented reports and recommendations?
11. How relevant you find the LoGo project to your needs and priorities? How it responds to your needs and priorities? Is it still valid in terms of its outputs? If not, what do you suggest to amend?
12. What impact the LoGo project left so far? Do you see it sustainable and long term? If yes, how is that? And if not, what should be done differently?
13. Do you see your work improved as a result of the LoGo project interventions in general and in relation to capacity development in particular? What are the improvements? How do you see its sustainability?
14. What can be considered areas of successes as a result of the LoGo project in your work? Did it meet your expectations? If not, what went wrong and how it can be improved?

15. How your organisation coordinates the management of the LoGo project activities with other active international implementing agencies and donors in the sector? Do you see any positive or negative overlapping efforts? If yes, how it can be best coordinated?
16. In your opinion and based on your engagement in the LoGo project, are there any correction measures you recommend the LoGo project should take to improve?
17. Do you have any recommendations or messages to UNDP?

B. List of questions to UNDP:

In discussion of the project management arrangements and the project organisation and its relation with other projects in terms if possible complementarities and synergies and also to examine if there are any possible bottle necks and to detect areas for improvements, the following informative questions were asked in the discussions with UNDP/LoGo and other units:

1. How the LoGo project management team is structured? Do you consider that you have the needed and relevant human resources and technical expertise? If not, what is missing? Why?
2. How do you see the harmony and work environment for the LoGo project team? How it is with other units at UNDP?
3. How the project annual, quarter and financial plans are developed? Does it follow the project document and RRF? Is it prepared jointly with national counterparts?
4. Do you meet plans? If not, how much the deviation is? Why it happens? How it can be improved?
5. How do you evaluate your work relations with procurement, HR, and finance units? Do you experience delays? If yes, what are the reasons? How it can be improved?
6. To what extend you use national and international expertise in relation to technical contribution (consulting)? How do you evaluate the quality of these services? How do you procure the services of national experts? Is there any role for national partners in the process? If yes, what is their role?
7. What is the coordination mechanism with national partners? How frequent it is? How it is working? Do you see it efficient? How? If not, how it can be improved?
8. Is there a coordination and cooperation mechanism with international donors and implementing agencies? How it is working? Do you take collective decisions? Is there a follow up mechanism for these decisions to ensure implementation?

9. To what extent do you use the services of the senior management in supporting the LoGo project with national and international partners? Do you find it useful and effective? If not, how can it be improved?
10. Is there a coordination mechanism with other units at UNDP in relation to the LoGo project activities? How is it working? How can it be further improved?
11. How do you mitigate the project risks?
12. On what basis are the M7E reports developed? Do you find the set baselines and indicators in the RRF practical and applicable to the project activities? If not, what needs to be changed?
13. Do you follow the M&E Plan? How do you take correction measures based on the M&E results?
14. How frequently does the project team meet with the project manager? How useful are these meetings? What are the issues discussed? If decisions are taken, do these decisions find their way for implementation? If not, why?
15. How frequently does the project board meet? To what extent do you follow the decisions of the project board? How relevant and useful are these decisions?

C. The following are suggested informative questions to inspire the discussion with donors and International partners active in the field:

1. How do you see the relationship of the project your organisation is implementing with the LoGo project? Do you have a coordination mechanism in place? Is it working? How can it be improved?
2. Does your organisation coordinate its project outputs and activities with UNDP/LoGo project and other international organisations? How do you do it? Is there a periodic coordination committee and meetings? How effective is the coordination committee? How periodic are these meetings?
3. Are there any complementarities or synergies between the LoGo project and the project your organisation is implementing? How do you build on them?
4. Are there any overlaps or conflicts? How do you deal with it?
5. How do you evaluate your work relations with UNDP/LoGo project management and team? Are there any ideas for improving?
6. If any, what are the obstacles you face with national partners? How do you suggest solving?
7. Based on your work with national partners, how do you see the impact, efficiency, sustainability of the LoGo project outputs and activities?
8. How do you see the overall results of the LoGo project on its beneficiaries? Are there any areas that UNDP should pay more attention to? Are there any recommendations for improvements?

9. Do you consider the LoGo project still valid in terms of its planned outputs? If not, what should be amended?

Are there any recommendations, suggestions or advice for UNDP/LoGo project to improve?

Annex 6: Minutes of Meetings between LoGo project manager, UNDP and Chief of Party of the City For All project, UN Habitat

PROGRAMME COORDINATION MEETING

UNDP (LoGo)/UN-Habitat (MGSP)

Date: 5 February 2017

Venue: UN-Habitat

Notes:

1. UNDP (through a previous project, not LoGo??) has supported the formation of Gozar councils in the past in Mazar, Kunduz, Herat, Jalalabad, Nilli and Farah. These councils developed local development plans that were used to develop plans at nahia and municipal levels. MGSP will map and register CDCs and Gozar Assemblies in Herat, Mazar, Jalalabad, Nilli and Farah that will identify and prioritize Gozar level sub-projects through the action planning process (SNAPs). **Action: UNDP to share ToRs and lists of Gozar councils established in Herat, Mazar, Jalalabad, Nilli and Farah municipalities: The requested ToR were shared with DMM, the DMM has now converted them into guideline for establishing GC and NC. They are available with DMM.**

2. LoGo (under the Revenue Enhancement component) **supports DMM to produce guidelines and conduct** training to municipal staff on participatory budgeting and expenditure management including a role for MABs. Revenue enhancement plans have already been prepared for Bamyan and Nilli municipalities. MGSP will conduct targeted trainings for municipal revenue departments in 7 provincial cities (including Bamyan and Nilli) on increasing safayi revenue collection, recording and reporting. The project will also produce municipal financial self assessments in the 7 municipalities. **Action: A further meeting between the Municipal finance (MGSP) and Revenue enhancement (LoGo) components of the two projects is planned for tomorrow 6 February at DMM to compare/collaborate on the development of training materials/plans for municipalities and municipal finance/governance guidelines being prepared for DMM by both projects: The meeting took place and we provided the requested material to UNHABITAT.**

3. MGSP has commenced technical property surveys in 7 provincial cities. In Bamyan and Nilli municipalities, MGSP will survey and register 5,288 (Bamyan) and 2,398 (Nilli) properties by the end of March 2017. LoGo plans to conduct technical property surveys in 8 provincial municipalities (including Bamyan and Nilli) and 14 district municipalities starting later this year. As agreed with DMM, LoGo will use the same methodology that MGSP is already using. UNDP is

planning to sub-contract a local company to conduct the property surveys.
Action: It is suggested that LoGo revises its work plan/budget to exclude Bamyan and Nilli from its property survey schedule: This needs to be discussed with UNDP management

PROGRAMME COORDINATION MEETING

UNDP (LoGo)/UN-Habitat (MGSP)

Date: 2 May 2017

Venue: UNDP

Meeting Participants: Antony, Eng. Wahab and Mr. Aziz from UN-Habitat, Nadia, Abdul Hameed Omer and Nasir Ahmad Salehzada from UNDP:

Notes:

- UNDP better coordinate with IDLG management at macro level for strategic decision
- UN-Habitat overlaps with LoGo on property registration in Nili and Bamyán, but UN-Habitat already started registration in 2 of 4 Nahias of each cities. **Note that we have completed surveys in the targeted properties (numbers) in both Bamyán and Nili cities. DMM have now asked us to carry on the surveys for the rest of the properties in the two cities.**
- UN-Habitat answer the following questions on property registration
 - o Registration problem in the field due to not approved final forms which DMM also has concerns about?
 - § UN-Habitat replied that all system are final and no problem by now. **The question was whether the survey forms were consistent with the requirements of DMM. UN-Habitat confirmed that the content of the survey forms was provided by ARAZI, KM and DMM.**
 - o Does property owners need to sign on registration form as DMM thinks yes?
 - § UN-Habitat replied it is not required because other government and public measures for verification are put in place. **Correct.**
 - o Why IFMS software is not used by UN-Habitat now?
 - § UN-Habitat replied that they want to ensure sustainability even if IFMS is not maintained after SHAHAR ends. **UN-**

Habitat reiterated that they are collaborating with DMM and DAI/SHAHAR on IFMS, and that they have developed a backup database application just in case IFMS is not deployed to all the MGSP municipalities

- UN-Habitat focuses not only on registration but also in deed management, OC issuance etc. **The scope of CFA ends at production of occupancy certificates, but UN-Habitat will support ARAZI to process beneficiaries and issue the certificates**
- UN-Habitat briefed LoGo on their projects and project management structures
- UN-Habitat project staff for property registration in 7 cities are 428 staff.
- UNDP to consider standardized gozar (800-1250HH) in their implementation
- UN-Habitat will share with LoGo the summary of 190 questions they faced during implementation. **Wahab, please share the questions with UNDP colleagues**
- UN-Habitat is ready to technically review the LoGo TOR for property registration and LoGo will send it. **Done**
- UN-Habitat is ready to brief UNDP-LoGo on property registration process for unified implementation approach. Date will be set later. **Ok**
- UN-Habitat will share the 100 scenarios with LoGo as lesson learned for property registration. **Wahab, please share CFA property survey questionnaire with UNDP colleagues**
- UNDP will share budgeting training materials with UN-Habitat. **Please share these with us**

Annex 7: Recommended new areas for LoGo to engage in 2018-2019

- a) Spatial planning is to be initiated at the municipal and the provincial levels led by the deputy governor. This new approach can be considered a step forward in decentralising spatial planning which should be seized by UNDP to provide technical assistance in developing spatial planning regulations and clear division of role between the municipal level and the provincial level where UNDP has an opportunity to contribute to the decentralisation of the spatial planning process.
- b) More authority to the Provincial Governors at the subnational level, where UNDP could work on empowering their capacities to perform the new functions and authorities

The LoGo project outputs remain valid while activities and in order to strategize the planned activities under each of the four outputs, there are a number of recommended activities to include under each of the four outputs as follows:

a) Capacity of Provincial Governors Offices and Provincial Councils has improved for accountability and transparent service delivery

In light of the fact that very low percentage included of the Provincial Development Plans was in the national development plans, the LoGo project is recommended to put development of new plans on hold and follows on the implementation of the already developed.

Alternatively, under this output and in line with the new draft of the Sub National Development Policy should design additional core activity in providing support in spatial planning where technical support should be focused on:

1. Review existing regulations and legal frameworks on spatial planning.
2. Develop clear in spatial planning role for municipalities, district governors, provincial governors and higher national committee.
3. Assess the spatial planning capacities of all players at the subnational level and design capacity development plan to fill in possible gaps.

Such interventions will have more sustainability than the ongoing support to develop Provincial Strategic Plans and Provincial Development Plans which logically should be based on the spatial plans if exist.

b) Municipalities with improved revenue generation are able to deliver services in an accountable and participatory manner

While the municipal revenue assessment reports developed by the LoGo project team under this output are perceived useful and incomprehensive, an in depth

comprehensive diagnostic report that includes:

1. In depth analysis of already existing decentralized own source revenues, their percentage of the municipal budget and collection rate at the municipal level.
2. Mapping and analysis of already mandated service delivery functions and responsibilities to identify possible fiscal gaps to fill in.
3. Analysis of existing financial management at the municipal level
4. Develop a municipal finance policy and action implementation plan fiscal

c) Civil Society has improved oversight capacity of local governance

Undoubtedly that community participation at the subnational and municipal level is a corner stone in local governance. To further strategize LoGo project support to improve oversight capacity of local governance the focus is recommended on the following activities:

1. Develop a community participation policy based on the access of information law engaging all layers of the community: Civil Society Organizations, None Government Organizations, Academia, Public Local Figures and Government (both at the central and the subnational levels) where Civil Society Organizations can have a fundamental role to play but not the only player.
2. Develop public oversight and social accountability monitoring tools to be used by the community to monitor the performance of the subnational and local governance institutions.
3. Provide technical assistance to municipalities to establish e municipality where each municipality will have its own website and shares information on its activities, budgets, spatial plans, development plans...etc which facilitates access to information by the community.

d) Independent Directorate for Local Governance is able to develop policies to improve local government accountability and service delivery

In light of the latest draft of the Sub National Governance Policy, Afghanistan National Peace and Development Framework and the Citizens' Charter, it is recommended to consider the following activities under this output:

1. Provide technical support to the Independent Directorate of Local Governance to develop the National Priority Program for the subnational sector.
2. Develop a strategy and action plan to implement the sub national governance policy once is finalised and approved.
3. Develop a comprehensive diagnostic report on subnational and local governance in the last year of the LoGo project to assess the overall progress in the sector in light of technical support provided by all

international partners the fact it informs the government and donors on way forward in developing the subnational and the local governance system in the country.

If above recommended activities to be endorsed and adopted the LoGo project needs to revisit its results framework and re-design current capacity development activities accordingly to support the new activities.