***Final Evaluation of the   
“Institutional and Capacity Support to the Parliament of Afghanistan (ICSPA)”2014-2019***

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# List of abbreviations

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  |  |
| ANDS | Afghanistan National Development Strategy |
| ANPDF | Afghanistan National Peace and Development Framework 2017-2020 |
| ALBA | Assistance to Legislative Bodies of Afghanistan |
| ASGP | Association of Secretaries General in Parliaments |
| CTA | Chief Technical Advisor |
| DAC | Development Assistance Committee of the OECD |
| DFID | Department for International Development |
| EC | European Commission |
| EU | European Union |
| FE | Final Evaluation |
| GoA | Government of Afghanistan |
| ICSPA | Institutional and Capacity Support to the Parliament of Afghanistan |
| IPU | Inter- Parliamentary Union |
| MJ | Meshrano Jirga (House of Elders) |
| NAA | National Assembly of Afghanistan |
| OVI | Objectively Verifiable Indicator |
| PDG | Parliament's Donors Group |
| PMB | Project Management Board |
| PMU | Project Management Unit |
| PSA | Parliamentary Service Act |
| PSC | Project Steering Committee |
| RAP | Reform Action Plan |
| SEAL | Support to the Establishment of an Afghan Legislature |
| SGs | Secretary Generals |
| SOPs | Standard Operating Procedures |
| SoV | Sources of Verification |
| ToR | Terms of Reference |
| TwG | Technical Working Group |
| UN | United Nations |
| UNAMA | United Nations Mission to Afghanistan |
| UNDAF | United Nations Development Assistance Framework |
| UNDP | United Nations Development Programme |
| USAID | United States Agency for International Development |
| WB | World Bank |
| WGI | Worldwide Governance Indicators |
| WJ | Wolesi Jirga (House of People) |

# 1. Executive summary

The fundamental objective of the project “Institutional and Capacity Support to the Parliament of Afghanistan” (ICSPA) 2014-2019 that was implemented in two interlinked phases, was to assist the two houses of the National Assembly of Afghanistan (Wolesi Jirga and Meshrano Jirga), within the Afghan Parliament’s constitutional and legal mandate, in becoming more effective parliamentary institutions, both reflecting and contributing to a growing culture of legitimate and inclusive governance. The first phase of the project was implemented from 2014 to 2016. The outputs of this phase of the project were: i. Self-Assessment Framework and Reform Action Plans (RAPs) developed and adopted by Parliament; ii. Staffing and financial management capacity of Parliament enhanced; and iii. The capacity of Parliament’s leadership to undertake reforms enhanced.

During this phase, the ICSPA project was effective and provided technical assistance to the National Parliament to conduct a comprehensive self-assessment and identify priority areas for further institutional development. Based on the results from the self-assessment, comprehensive Reform Action Plans were prepared, identifying numerous challenges facing the Secretariats of the Wolesi and Meshrano Jirgas. These problems ranged from lack of qualified staff in all the major departments of both Houses to severe weaknesses in ICT infrastructure, shortfalls in information management capabilities, a lack of consistency and coordination between International Relations Departments and high turnover of qualified staff.

Following the adoption of the Reform Action Plans (RAPs), the ICSPA project intervention logic was revised with an objective to fully support the Parliamentary leadership to meets the aims and objectives in their RAP. Accordingly, project objectives were revised and outputs were aligned to the activities of the Parliament’s Reform Action Plan. Hence, in mid-2016 the modified ICSPA project document was signed, focusing on the expected outputs: 1) Secretariats are strengthened to support the law-making and oversight functions, including committee management, legal and policy research, and plenary sessions; 2) Finance, Procurement, Auditing, and Human Resources capacity of Secretariats is strengthened to manage resources better and provide effective support to operational functions; 3) Representative role reinforced through support for improved communication and outreach capacities; and 4) The capacity of Parliament’s leadership to undertake reforms enhanced.

The purpose of the ICSPA final evaluation, as highlighted in the Terms of References, was to assess the degree to which the project has contributed to adoption of reforms promoted by the leadership that increase the secretariats’ compliance with international parliamentary standards. The evaluation also analysed the extent to which these results have contributed to the Afghan Parliament’s long-term sustainable institutional development, including transparency and oversight

The FE adhered to the UNEG evaluation guidelines[[1]](#footnote-1) and the OECD DAC criteria for assessment of development assistance[[2]](#footnote-2). The Terms of Reference indicated the core areas for the evaluation through the proposed questions and the FE designed the tailor-made methodology to answer all these questions. The desk review of literature, key informant interviews and on-the-spot visits served to collect critical information and capture different perspectives about the ICSPA project and its implementation.

The FE applied triangulation of the collected data to validate findings and identify points of convergence and divergence. The FE started in the beginning of June 2019, with in country mission from 07 until 16 June and was completed by the end of July 2019.

During the evaluation, the following critical findings have emerged:

*Reelevance:*

* In the rapidly changing context of Afghanistan, the ICSPA has been designed to provide responsive and agile assistance to the National Assembly of Afghanistan (NAA) by addressing the most urgent needs of the secretariats and setting the foundation for the long-term institutional development of the Wolesi and Meshrano Jirga

The support available during the first phase of the project (2014-2016) was gradually moved to more targeted assistance that prioritized reform needs of the NAA. The ICSPA project supported nationally-driven approach to organizational development that started with self-assessment to identify needs and capacity gaps and continued with preparation of the Reform Action Plans that set priorities and served as a core reference for institutional development of the NAA. This approach that the ICSPA project adopted and followed has been one of the best practices in organizational development of public institutions.

* The ICSPA project has also ensured consistency between its goals with the national policies and the priorities in the areas of good governance and public institutions reform in Afghanistan
* The ICSPA project has been effective in proposing and adopting appropriate measures to timely identify and address risks and challenges. The project was responsive to emerging priorities of the NAA and flexible to challenges that have occurred during its implementation.

This has contributed to the achievement of results and quality and relevance of the assistance available through the ICSPA project

* The ICSPA project intervention logic has, in general, a well-established hierarchy of objectives and satisfactory internal coherence. The project has established a clear links between the project intervention logic (hence, outcome and outputs and activities) and the needs of the both houses of the NAA. The ICSPA’s indicators have been in principle useful to measure progress and validate achievements.

*Effectiveness*

* The ICSPA project was in general effective in ensuring progress under the planned outputs, while in results in some areas contributed to sustainable organizational changes that exceeded anticipated benefits.

The project and UNDP as the implementing partner has been and remained valuable partners in supporting achievement of development priorities for the NAA. Strong and effective partnerships and UNDP collaborative advantages, paved the road for implementation of the ICSPA project, with recognized impact on sustainable improvements in the functioning of the NAA

* The ICSPA project has effectively complement intervention of other development partners, although being the single intervention working on development of permanent (non-political) structures of the NAA.
* The ICSPA project has in general cooperated and coordinated the implementation of activities with the NAA and other development partners in the sector. These efforts were recognized through the work and advocacy of the Chief Technical Advisor and the ICSPA project team. The role of UNDP Country Office, its Governance Unit and the Programme Officer has been effective, with increasing importance during the last year of the ICSPA project.

*Efficiency:*

* The ICSPA steering and advisory structures were timely established, ensuring nationally ownership and contributing to more efficient project implementation

The Project Management Unit headed by the Chief Technical Advisor was implementing ICSPA project. However, the PMU has never been at the full operational capacity, as the highly important (international) Technical Expert was not recruited until the end of the project. Also, personal issues between the management of the project and UNDP structures created tension and minimized interaction between the ICSPA project and other UNDP initiatives in the area of governance.

UNDP Country office provided timely and quality support for the ICSPA project; still, some challenges related to procurement and recruitment occurred.

* ICSPA project has in general well-established reporting practice. Still, some indicators have been weak and sources of verification were not provided.

*Impact and sustainability:*

* Overall, the ICSPA project has made important contribution to the National Assembly of Afghanistan’s long-term sustainable institutional development. The stakeholders from the NAA have in general expressed positive views about sustainability of results achieved by the ICSPA project in the context of the long-term sustainable institutional development of the NAA.
* At the level of leadership of both houses, the ICSPA project has been recognized as an effective support that contributed to altering mind-sets of the parliamentary leadership in adopting and implementing reforms towards compliance with international parliamentary standards.
* The technical capacities of the ICSPA team particularly through the involvement of the CTA and direct interaction with the Inter-Parliamentary Union have been critical factors that have generated and maintained high degree of commitment to reforms within the NAA. Also, the project contributed to increased transparent practices of the NAA and its both houses (Wolesi and Meshrano Jirga).
* The project has employed an innovative model for organizational development of the National Assembly of Afghanistan, starting with the self-assessment through a NAA-driven setting of reform priorities to implementation of activities. The ICSPA project has fully adjusted its intervention logic, aligning it with the identified reform priorities.

*Gender equality*

* The ICSPA project has been effective in enhancing the role of women in Afghanistan by providing support to the Parliament to test laws and draft laws for gender equality. Also, the Reform Action Plans includes recommendations to improve the role of women in the National Parliament.

The project has been providing support to the Gender Directorates in both Houses to work towards the achievement of gender-related targets for the Meshrano Jirga and Wolesi Jirga, as highlighted in Afghanistan’s National Action Plan for Women of Afghanistan

The analysis of the findings resulted in the following critical **conclusions**:

* The ICSPA project has been fully aligned with the priorities of the NAA, summarized in the Reform Action Plan, while also addressing some of the critical governance and public sector reform priorities for Afghanistan
* During the preparation and implementation of the ICSPA project, UNDP confirmed itself as a responsive and adaptive partner. Long-term presence and partnership with the NAA, technical capacities of the staff and especially the Chief Technical Advisor, and strong accountability for results were recognized as the critical factors for successful implementation of the ICSPA project.
* The ICSPA project was in general effective in delivering planned results, while results in some areas contributed to sustainable organizational changes that exceeded planned benefits.
* The efficiency of the ICSPA project was satisfactory, and the support from UNDP CO was timely and adequate. However, cooperation between the ICSPA project and UNDP Governance Portfolio has been limited, and strategic approach in this context was lacking.
* Coordination between the NAA, the ICSPA project and other development partners implementing projects in support to the NAA, has generally been in place.
* Monitoring of the ICSPA project has been based on the RAP indicators; however, these indicators have not been sufficient or adequate in many cases to measure the progress or verify achievements
* Implementation of the ICSPA project over the entire period have brought concrete, visible results, contributing to institutional strengthening and establishment of transparent services of the National Assembly of Afghanistan.
* The sense of ownership of the NAA leadership and employees over the results achieved during the implementation of the ICSPA project was satisfactory, and the strong content with the extent of their involvement in the specific project activities was evident
* Through the ISCPA project support was available to the NAA to increase awareness of the complexities of gender equality. Also, the ICSPA project has supported the NAA to mainstream gender issues into its activities.

The following **recommendations** have emerged after the analysis of findings and conclusions:

* It is recommended to continue activities and assistance that were available through the ICSPA project
* Support for the elected members of the Parliament and the committees for policy making and law drafting is highly required and recommended.
* It is recommended to link the support to the NAA with the Sustainable Development Goals and the achievement of the SDG targets for Afghanistan
* It is recommended to prioritize adoption of the Parliamentary Service Act
* It is recommended to continue support to the NAA for its active role to ensure of greater gender equality in Afghanistan

# 2. Background

The bicameral National Assembly of Afghanistan (NAA), established in 2005, is composed of the Wolesi Jirga (WJ- House of the People) and the Meshrano Jirga (MJ- House of Elders). The Article 90 of the Constitution enumerates the law-making, oversight, and representative functions to the NAA. The Wolesi Jirga is responsible for making and ratifying laws and approving presidential decrees and actions. The Meshrano Jirga plays an advisory role but also wields veto powers.

The WJ Secretariat has eight departments: 1) Parliamentary Affairs and Plenary Sessions 2) Information and Public Relations 3) International Relations 4) Research 5) Human Resources 6) Procurement and Services 7) ICT DG and 8) Security. The ICT and Security are within the organizational structure of WJ, however, they serve both houses. The independent directorates in the WJ are: 1) Finance and Budget 2) Internal Audit and 3) Gender. The MJ Secretariat consists of five departments, specifically, 1) Human Resources 2) Finance and Administration 3) Information and Public Relations 4) Legislative Affairs 5) International Relations. There are two independent directorates in MJ: 1) Internal Audit and 2) Gender.

The Provincial and District Councils, each of them respectively, directly elects one-third of the members of the MJ. Representatives of Provincial Councils serve a term of four years, while representatives of District Councils serve a term of three years. Currently, without District Councils in place, the Provincial Councils also select an additional member in place of a District.

The President of the Republic appoints one-third of the members, out of which half must be women, of the MJ. Also the President has veto power over the Parliament's legislative enactments. This shows that the presidential powers extend substantially into the realm of the judiciary and legislative estates.

Thus, Parliament is significantly constrained to deliver on its core functions: it lacks financial resources and institutional autonomy compounded by a weak capacity to initiate and implement reform.

UNDP has supported the National Assembly of Afghanistan (NAA) during the run up to its opening in November 2005 and subsequently through a number of support projects: Support to the Establishment of the Afghan Legislature (SEAL 1- 2005-08) was a broad-based project covering secretariat support, legal and procedural support, outreach, legislative, oversight and representational capacity development, and external donor coordination mechanisms established - directed towards assisting parliament to launch and establish itself successfully; Support for an Effective Afghan Legislature (SEAL 2 - 2008-12) had a focus on strengthening parliament’s ‘core’ legislative, oversight, representational and outreach capacities; and the Strategic Support to the Afghan Parliament (SAAP - 2012-13) was designed mainly to identify an appropriate framework for future support which resulted in the Institutional and Capacity Support to the Parliament of Afghanistan (ICSPA - 2014-19).

The fundamental objective of the project, entitled: "Institutional and Capacity Support to the Parliament of Afghanistan" (*hereafter*, “ICSPA” or “Project”), 2014-2019, is to assist the two Houses of the National Assembly of Afghanistan, within the Afghan Parliament’s existing constitutional and legal mandate, in becoming more effective parliamentary institutions, both reflecting and contributing to a growing culture of legitimate and inclusive governance.

An initial Institutional and Capacity Support to the Parliament of Afghanistan project document (PRODOC) was signed with partners in March 2014. Following delivery of the parliament’s self-assessment report and its reform action plan, the initial project document was subsequently revised and replaced with a second project document in June 2016 in alignment with the NAA reform action plan.

*The ISCPA project in the period 2014-2016 aimed* to provide capacity support to the Afghan Parliament to undertake a comprehensive self-assessment to identify priority areas for support and institutional development, guided by the principles of co-equality and cooperation with other institutions of government.

The outputs in the initial project document were as follows:

* Self-Assessment Framework and Reform Action Plan developed for, and adopted by, Parliament;
* Staffing and financial management capacity of Parliament enhanced; and,
* Capacity of Parliament’s leadership to undertake reforms enhanced.

Upon the revision, the project in the period 2016-2019 aimed to provide institutional development support to areas identified by the Afghan Parliament through its Self-Assessment Report (2015) and its Project Reform Plan (2016), as requiring prioritized attention, guided by the principles of co-equality and cooperation with other institutions of government.

Over the period July 2016 – March 2019 the ICSPA project aimed to deliver the following outputs:

* Secretariats are strengthened to support law-making and oversight functions, including committee management, legislative and policy research, and plenary;
* Finance, Procurement, Auditing, and Human Resources capacity of Secretariats is strengthened to better manage resources and provide effective support to operational functions;
* Representative role reinforced through support for improved communication and outreach capacities; and
* Capacity of Parliament’s leadership to undertake reforms enhanced

Key project activities, strategies and indicators were defined in the project documents dated 26 March 2014 and 23 June 2016, which were used during the final evaluation.

# 3. The scope and the objective for the final evaluation

**The scope of the final evaluation:**

The initial project document foresaw an independent Final evaluation, to cover ICSPA implementation throughout its life, 1 April 2014 to 31 March 2019. This included the project start-up phase; the first project phase of implementation related to supporting the Parliament’s preparation of its self-assessment framework and reform action plan. The evaluation included also the revision of the project document, the launch/ implementation of activities during the project’s phase II until the closure of the project.

**The purpose of the final evaluation**

The purpose of the ICSPA final evaluation, as highlighted in the Terms of References, was to assess the degree to which the project has contributed to adoption of reforms promoted by the leadership that increase the secretariats’ compliance with international parliamentary standards. The evaluation analysed the extent to which these results have contributed to the Afghan Parliament’s long-term sustainable institutional development, including transparency and oversight.

The purpose of the final evaluation was also to provide recommendations, with the objective to address the weaknesses identified and reported during the implementation of the project and also provide the analysis of lessons learned.

# 4. Methodology for the final evaluation

This part provides a description of data collection methods and data sources that were employed during the evaluation, including the rationale for their selection (how they have informed the final evaluation) and their limitations. In addition, this part reflected on data collection tools and instruments, highlighting reliability and validity for the evaluation.

The FE adhered to the UNEG evaluation guidelines[[3]](#footnote-3) and the OECD DAC criteria for assessment of development assistance[[4]](#footnote-4). The Terms of Reference indicated the core areas for the evaluation through the proposed questions. The FE designed the tailor-made methodology to answer all these questions, grouping them around the following criteria: **i) *Relevance; ii) Effectiveness; iii) Efficiency; iv) Impact and Sustainability and v) Gender mainstreaming.*** The FE will be primarily focused on criteria I, II III and V. Formally, evaluation of impact and sustainability is not feasible until at least 2-3 years after the end of the development intervention. However, the FE allows anticipating impact and sustainability and this approach will be followed.

The desk review of literature, key informant interviews and on-the-spot visits served to collect critical information and capture different perspectives about the ICSPA project and its implementation.

**The FE applied triangulation of the collected data to validate findings and identify points of convergence and divergence.**

## 4.1. Data collection methods

The evaluation followed a mixed-method approach to enable gathering of qualitative and quantitative information through a well-balanced combination of desk research and interviews with key informants, at various level of analysis. The evaluation used desk research to analyse collected secondary information. In-person and teleconference interviews during the field phase will serve to collect primary data and to validate findings and conclusions from the desk phase.

The following table presents the main data collection methods and sources

***Table 1. Main data collection approaches***

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Approach | Activities |
| Document review | * Review the ICSPA project document (phase 1 and phase 2), with particular focus on the Results and Resources Framework, the areas of intervention, and its intervention logic, including indicators, baselines and targets; * Analyse progress reports, the mid-term evaluation report, monitoring reports and * Review documented results from the ICSPA project (e.g. National Assembly of Afghanistan Staff Surveys; ICT Strategy for the NAA, etc) * Analyse ICSPA Project Board Meetings through available meeting minutes * Review national policies and strategies and also priorities and needs of the National Assembly of Afghanistan (Wolesi and Meshrano Jirgas) policies and strategies to ensure insight into the environment in which ICSPA was implemented. * Analyse international parliamentary practices and the international obligations of the National Assembly of Afghanistan. Review web sources, video materials, etc related to the ISCPA project * Analyse key governance indicators for Afghanistan, national reports and strategies related to good governance and the Parliament * Analyse products (reports and analysis) of other organizations and development partners in the area of Parliamentary support * Identify key horizontal issues, themes, best practices and success stories for follow- up, further investigation, verification, and triangulation. Also, identified needs for interviews. |
| Field phase | * Organize and deliver interviews with the leadership and management of the Secretariats from Wolesi and Meshrano Jirga (the Secretary Generals and the Deputy Secretary Generals; Heads of the HR Departments; Heads of IT Unit; Head of Communication; Gender Directorates, and other) * Carry out interviews with the UNDP management, ICSPA project team and other UNDP units that were involved in the implementation of the project. * Prepare and carry out interviews with other development partners involved in supporting the National Assembly of Afghanistan |

## 4.2. Data-analysis

To respond to the requirements from the ToR, the evaluation has developed a tailor-made methodology for the evaluation of complex programs[[5]](#footnote-5) focusing to make credible causal claims about interventions and their results[[6]](#footnote-6)..

The scope, complexity, and the period covered by the evaluation will require a sophisticated analytical approach that encompasses different analytical tools and models. The evaluation will analyse collected information and the Results and Resources Framework through causality and causal effects model, complementing it with the political economy and conflict analysis and the timelines analysis when necessary.

The analysis of the ICSPA intervention logic and the Results and Resources Framework will be in the centre of this evaluation and understanding of the ICSPA. The evaluation included the assumption that ICSPA was relevant, necessary and sufficient to contribute to changes under the outcomes.

The results of the political economy and conflict analysis and the timeline analysis together with the analysis of the primary and secondary data served to identify challenges or obstacles that affected progress and contribution towards the achievement of outputs and outcomes. The initial review served to identify needs for a more substantive analysis, through the causal chain to identify points of break.

The final evaluation in general has been organized around the following interlinked steps:

#### Analysis of ICSPA relevance- from the design phase to the current moment

The review of the design phase explored links between the ISCPA intervention logic and the development priorities for the National Assembly of Afghanistan (Wolesi and Meshrano Jirga) and alignment with the needs of the General Secretariats of both Meshrano and Wolesi Jirga.

The broad scope and thematic areas, as well as the long period covered by the evaluation required a holistic approach that combined the analysis at the strategic and policy developments of the governance system in Afghanistan, with focus on the National Assembly of Afghanistan (analysing institutional priorities and challenges of its two houses).

#### Effectiveness: Results of the ICSPA project

The FE assessed the overall progress of the ICSPA project to deliver planned outputs (results) and its contribution to the achievement of the outcome. The FE strived to identify critical factors and collaborative advantages that have contributed to the achievement of results, while also reflecting on the challenges and obstacles of the implementation[[7]](#footnote-7).

The FE analysed the indicators from the ICSPA Results Matrix, focusing on their relevance, frequency of collection, reliability, disaggregation and quality. This included analysis of accuracy and the extent of use of the indicators.

#### Management arrangements and efficiency in ICSPA project implementation

The FE analysed the ICSPA implementation, including management system for and delivery of results, and the existing implementation practices. The FE assessed adequacy and efficiency of the management approaches, also reflecting on the exitance of mechanisms of coordination and national ownership. Also, part of this efforts was to assess the degree of actual synergies established among different partners of the NAA to optimize results and avoid duplication.

#### Sustainability of the ICSPA achievements

In the context of assessment of sustainability, the FE will analyse the extent to which the benefits and achievements ensured during the implementation of the ICSPA project, particularly positive results would likely continue after the end of implementation cycle. The FE will analyse whether the longer-term impact of the ICSPA on institutional development of the secretariats of the Wolesi and Meshrano Jirga and increased transparency (in line with international parliamentary practices) could also be sustained.

The FE will analyse the degree to which the ICSPA project has enabled innovative approaches for institutional learning and development of national capacities, while assessing ownership of results and sustainability of the partnerships established within the framework of its implementation.

#### Preparation of recommendations for UNDP and the National Assembly of Afghanistan

The final report will be objective, balanced and substantiated; it will present findings, conclusions and recommendations following a logical cause-effect linkage. When formulating and presenting findings and conclusions, the report will describe the facts assessed, the judgement criteria applied and how this led to findings and conclusions.

The report will include a consolidated analysis of conclusions and lessons learned.

Recommendations will address the weaknesses identified and reported; they are operational and realistic in the sense of providing clear, feasible and relevant input for decision-making.

## 4.3. Limitations

The final evaluation included field visit and in-person interviews, complementing document review and enabling to collect in-depth information about the status of ICSPA project, its outputs and contribution to the sustainable organizational development of the NAA. However, this evaluation included limited time for in-country mission. Considering this, the final sample of key stakeholders for interviews has been agreed in cooperation with UNDP, while the involvement and importance of the stakeholders in the ICSPA implementation[[8]](#footnote-8) has been the main determining criteria. Although the evaluation met with different stakeholders, some of the important partners could have been missed.

The last months of the project lifetime have been affected by the absence of the Chief Technical Advisor due to health reasons; this also posed limits to this evaluation. The health status prevented the FE to organize an interview with the CTA to clarify certain topics and issues, identified during the desk and filed phases. However, the thorough communication with the CTA during the mid-term review and the notes from these meetings served to explain project related processes and developments to some extent. Also, an intensive dialogue with the ICSPA national technical expert and ICSPA Project Officer provided valuable information and mitigated these issues.

Implementation of the ICSPA project has also been affected by allegations of corruption and political infighting in the leadership of the Lower House. These factors, largely outside project control, comprised a challenging operational context. The issues have been somehow resolved, but soon after the Secretary General from the Lower House requested approval for absence due to private reasons, finally resigning from the SG position. The Secretary General from the Upper House took over a position with the Electoral Commission. The final evaluation could not organize meetings and interviews with the former Secretary Generals during the in-country mission. Still, the FE met with the Deputy Secretary Generals from both houses who have been involved in the ICSPA implementation since the beginning. These meetings served to collect information and opinions of the national stakeholders about the ICSPA project. Also, meeting with the newly appointed Secretary General of the Lower House served to discuss forward looking perspectives and future plans (and needs) of the Lower House and the NAA.

Although the ToR was not focused on the actual results and achievement of the ICSPA project; still, the FE assessed the extent to which the ICSPA project achieved its plans and contribute to the progress under its outcome. However, the final project report was in the draft version and not completed, with significant gaps in its content. Thus, the final evaluation used quarterly and annual reports to validate findings in the specific areas of the ICSPA performance.

Sustainability is an ex-post measure and ideally, measuring sustainability require a time-period between two to five years after the completion of the project. Therefore, the evaluation approach was to anticipate or forecast sustainability. The intention was to measure the extent to which the positive results achieved through the ICSPA implementation are likely to continue after the end of the implementation cycle and also if the longer-term influence on the development changes (in the specific sector) would have lasting nature.

# 5. Findings of the final evaluation

## 5.1. Relevance of the ICSPA project

Under the relevance, the final evaluation analysed the extent to which the ICSPA project is suited to the priorities and policies of the National Assembly of Afghanistan. The focus was to assess the extent of consistence of the ICSPA project with the needs of the National Assembly of Afghanistan and its validity to meet the identified needs of its both houses (Wolesi and Meshrano Jirga). The FE analysed if the assistance available through the ICSPA project was coherent, realistic and aligned with the priorities of the NAA. Within this context, the FE analysed challenges that the project faced and the extent of adaptability and flexibility of the ICSPA project in responding and addressing these changes and challenges.

Also, the FE assessed relevance and importance of the ICSPA project at any point during its life-cycle, answering if the intervention logic remained true in the context of possible changes on the demand side while identifying the response made to address changes and fine-tune the intervention. Part of the analysis included ICSPA targets and indicators, from the perspective if remained valid and achievable or whether there was a need to revise them to ensure full utilization of resources and achievement of results.

* **In the rapidly changing context of Afghanistan, the ICSPA has been designed to provide responsive and agile assistance to the National Assembly of Afghanistan (NAA) by addressing the most urgent needs of the secretariats and setting the foundation for the long-term institutional development of the Wolesi and Meshrano Jirga**

**The support available during the first phase of the project (2014-2016) was gradually moved to more targeted assistance that prioritized reform needs of the NAA.**

**The ICSPA project supported nationally-driven approach to organizational development that started with self-assessment to identify needs and capacity gaps and continued with preparation of the Reform Action Plans that set priorities and served as a core reference for institutional development of the NAA. This approach that the ICSPA project adopted and followed has been one of the best practices in organizational development of public institutions.**

The ICSPA focus on supporting general secretariats and respective departments of Wolesi and Meshrano Jirga was fully aligned with the needs and priorities of the NAA. The analysis from the identification/ formulation mission (in 2013) highlighted some of the core problems of the NAA, such as lack of fiscal and administrative autonomy that affects the NAA’s ability to carry out its responsibilities effectively. The core functions of both Houses have been affected by a lack of internal institutional capability, lack of infrastructure resources, including core information sharing capabilities and its general inability to attract and retain high-quality staff[[9]](#footnote-9). The FE finds that the design of the ICSPA project was satisfactory, as the project document reflected the needs and priorities of the NAA and its General Secretariats resulting that the final proposed action was explicitly tied to identification and assessment phase. This bottom up approach during the formulation and design phase with collaboration and involvement of the leadership of both houses of the NAA contributed to the relevance of intervention[[10]](#footnote-10). Additional contribution to the relevance of the ICSPA project has been ensured through the previous partnership and initiatives of UNDP implemented for the NAA[[11]](#footnote-11), including lessons learned and best pratcies generated during this period.

The initially approved project document defined activities for the period 2014-16; at the same time, this document provided the basis for full alignment of the ICSPA project with the priorities and needs of the NAA. Namely, the ICSPA Phase 1 supported a comprehensive and nationally driven setting of priorities for the NAA and the Secretaries-General of both houses took the lead in this self-development approach. The ICSPA was instrumental in supporting the leadership and employees of the NAA to identify challenges through a tailor-made methodology based on the IPU standards. The Self-Assessment Report (December 2015) was prepared, summarizing problems in the Secretariats’ departments, while also serving as the basis for a detailed Reform Action Plan (RAP). The RAP included over two hundred remedial actions in the core service areas of the NAA ranging from highly strategic to very operational[[12]](#footnote-12).

The result of the comprehensive self-assessment and the Reform Action Plans (RAP) for the Secretariats of the Wolesi and Meshrano Jirgas were critical references for the ICSPA project, as its intervention logic was revisited to accommodate these identified reform priorities. Hence, the focus of the project including its milestones and benchmarks were fully aligned with the Reform Action Plan, taking the central role for the implementation of the RAP and institutional development of the NAA[[13]](#footnote-13). The active involvement, experience and high-level expertise of the ICSPA project team, led by highly competent Chief Technical Advisor[[14]](#footnote-14), have been additional support to lasting relevance of the ICSPA project.

The ICSPA project provided a positive model for replication through a nationally-driven development approach[[15]](#footnote-15), and active involvement of the leadership and employees from the assessment of needs to implementation of priorities. Also, further efforts to create a culture for reforms towards greater transparency and accountability have remained relevant goals for the NAA.

* **The ICSPA project has also ensured consistency between its goals with the national policies and the priorities in the areas of good governance and public institutions reform in Afghanistan.**

The major constraint to development progress in Afghanistan has been (and remained) protracted armed conflict and deteriorating security that together with weak state institutions and dysfunctional societal relations, affect almost every aspect of development. In some areas (particularly in the management of public finances) progress has been recorded; however, the rule of law and the establishment of a more functional public administration system remained pressing problem for the country. Reliance on capacity substitution and externally contracted civil service capacity, remained evident while the core government functions are vulnerable to fluctuations in donor funding.

In this rather challenging environment, reform of the governance system remains particular challenge; still, the Government of Afghanistan working with other national partners have been active in defining strategic priorities. The ICSPA project has been aligned its intervention with the key national priorities, analysed and identified during the formulation period. Particular reference has been the Government proposed reforms in seven critical areas[[16]](#footnote-16) defined in 2014, with focus for building better governance and improving security and political stability. Following these initial priorities, the Government outlined its strategic vision in the document “Towards Self- Reliance: Commitments to Reform and Renewed Partnership[[17]](#footnote-17)”, and the National Peace and Development Framework[[18]](#footnote-18). The ICSPA project has been aligned with its objective of the Government of Afghanistan for “Improving governance and state effectiveness through public sector reform, rooting out corruption and strengthening governance”. The ICSPA also assisted with the implementation of the priorities under the part Building Better Governance and the actions under the National Priority Program for Effective governance. Furthermore, the ICSPA project has been aligned with the priorities of the Afghanistan National Peace and Development Framework 2017-2020 (ANPDF)[[19]](#footnote-19), as the main strategic platform for the achievement of the national overarching goal of self-reliance "through addressing economic, political and security development priorities". The project has contributed the ANPDF priority to improve governance system and support public sector reform.

* **The ICSPA project has been effective in proposing and adopting appropriate measures to timely identify and address risks and challenges. The project was responsive to emerging priorities of the NAA and flexible to challenges that have occurred during its implementation.**

**This has contributed to the achievement of results and quality and relevance of the assistance available through the ICSPA project**

The ICSPA project has been facing different challenges that periodically impeded progress in its implementation. Protracted armed conflict in Afghanistan and deteriorating security situation in Kabul with frequent terrorists’ attacks, caused serious hurt to the NAA staff. There were significant damages to the ICSPA project office within (the former) main parliamentary building, with disturbing effects on staff recruitment and retention. The 22 June 2015 Taliban attack directed at the Parliament building has had a traumatic impact on Parliament and project staff, which resulted in the suspension of project activities while staff was recovering[[20]](#footnote-20). In 2016, some of the important project national counterparts were murdered in Kabul and fled Afghanistan as refugees, including the Director of the Wolesi Jirga’s Human Resource Department and the Director of the Wolesi Jirga’s Gender Directorate[[21]](#footnote-21). In January 2017, at least 30 parliament staff were killed and more than 70 injured in a twin bomb attack perpetrated by Taliban terrorists in front of the Afghan Parliament administrative building in Kabul[[22]](#footnote-22). The attacks on the Afghan Parliament further exacerbated existing difficulties in recruiting or deploying qualified experts, consultants and staff for posts supporting the Parliament in Kabul. This included Experts from the Inter-Parliamentary Union who subsequently cancelled missions to Kabul[[23]](#footnote-23).

The project’s response and the reaction from UNDP as the implementing partner after these attacks, has been timely and adequate. The ICSPA project adopted various security measures, such as, for instance, authorizing alternative work modalities, installation of a safe room at the Parliament and formulation of security-related Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) for the NAA. In the absence of meetings with Parliament officials, the UNDP staff were also authorized to work remotely from the UN compound. All these measures granted flexibility in the completion of activities despite substantiated threats.

However, the ICSPA project has been directly affected by the absence of the CTA after the 2015 Taliban’s attack against the NAA. The project implementation and almost all its activities have been suspended as the CTA has been on recovery and recuperation leave for more than six months[[24]](#footnote-24). This was an important lesson learned for UNDP and the response during the next absence of the CTA on the health ground was more appropriate and the project continued with smooth implementation, until successful completion.

The ICSPA project has in general been responsive and flexible to the changes in the project external environment within the agreed programmatic framework. The existence and approval of the Annual Work Plans has been participatory, and ensured focused implementation. Still, the ICSPA project team was in some cases rigid in responding to the demands from the NAA. Some of the examples could be English language course for the senior management of the NAA[[25]](#footnote-25) or participation in the IPU conference on e-Parliament. The initial response from the ICSPA was positive but with the final decision these requests were rejected for support. This has created a certain degree of discontent and dissatisfaction with the ICSPA project team.

* **The ICSPA project intervention logic has, in general, a well-established hierarchy of objectives and satisfactory internal coherence. The project has established a clear links between the project intervention logic (hence, outcome and outputs and activities) and the needs of the both houses of the NAA.**

**The ICSPA’s indicators have been in principle useful to measure progress and validate achievements.**

Formulation of the ICSPA project was comprehensive, ensuring that the proposed action was explicitly tied to identification phase[[26]](#footnote-26). The initial project document provided for the revision of the project intervention. Specifically, the results of the Parliament’s self-assessment served for formulation of the reform action plans for both houses (Wolesi and Meshrano Jirga). Thus, the project document was subsequently revised (June 2016), ensuring full alignment with the reform priorities of the NAA[[27]](#footnote-27).

The formulation of the intervention logic has followed sound and inclusive process with involvement of the leadership of both Houses of the NAA, specifically the Speakers, General Secretaries and their deputies together with the heads of the respective departments that were involved in implementation of project activities[[28]](#footnote-28).The ICSPA internal structure has been well-established and solid[[29]](#footnote-29). The intervention logic has followed the principles of Results Based Management[[30]](#footnote-30), showing the chain of connections/ causality and attribution between input and activities and the results presented as outputs and outcome (also, the document indicated prospects for impact).

The hierarchy of objectives and benchmarks -indicators, baselines, targets and sources of verification during the first phase of the project (2014-2016) has been in general satisfactory. Still, the revised intervention logic was further improved being fully aligned with the NAA priorities and adopting the indicators and targets from the Reform Action Plans. All these indicators contain realistic and achievable benchmarks, baselines and targets for the planned period. The data sources provided were adequate and appropriate to validation progress and achievements. The analysis of project reports and meetings with the Project Team and representatives of the National Parliament has confirmed that data and sources of verification for these indicators were accessible and available. The NAA was reporting against these indicators as the main references for the implementation of the Reform Action Plans.

The sex-disaggregated indicators have been used to a satisfactory extent. Positive finding was that the ICSPA project designed alternative methods of data collection for systematization of gender-disaggregated information. One of the examples could be the technical assistance with the design of the staff perception survey that also included gender-focused questions. The intention was to identify perception and challenges related to gender dynamics and the existing inequalities (including gender related discrimination) within the Parliament.

## 5.2. Effectiveness of the ICSPA project

Effectiveness refers to the relationship between the planned and achieved results of the project; it could be considered as a measure of the extent to which the project achievements have enabled progress under the project outputs and contributed to the project outcome.

In this context, the final evaluation finds that the ICSPA project has been effective in achieveing its objectives, despite challenging implementation environment.

* **The ICSPA project was in general effective in ensuring progress under the planned outputs, while in results in some areas contributed to sustainable organizational changes that exceeded anticipated benefits.**

During the implementation of the project, the most important results have been

* Both Houses of the National Parliament carried out the self-assessment in October 2015 and prepared the Self-Assessment Report[[31]](#footnote-31) ensuring a substantial information about Parliament’s reform requirements to its political and administrative leaderships. Following this stage, the Secretary Generals (SGs) to both houses and their teams were leading the preparation of the Reform Action Plans (RAPs). The RAP’s actions included those of high and low levels covering virtually the entire operational life of Parliament: plenary session management, committees’ management, research, library, information and public relations, human resources, finance and administration, information and communications technology (ICT), international affairs, gender, internal audit, and procurement.

The fact that the SGs have led the self-assessment process and preparation of the Reform Action Plans with project support has created a real sense of ownership and the desire to speed ahead with the implementation of the identified priorities. However, the issue remains with regular monitoring and assessment of achievements and progress in implementation of the RAP.

The regular engagement with the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) has secured the additional commitment of the SGs: they have been able to make presentations on their progress and challenges to the IPU’s Association of Secretaries General in Parliaments (ASGP)while also improving their knowledge of parliamentary best practices.

* The ICSPA project was effective in supporting and encouraging the leadership of the NAA to embark on reform processes, with the Secretaries General and their deputies on forefront of these efforts. The ICSPA project, and particularly its CTA, has been the principal advisor to the SGs and their teams in formulating and implementing reforms.

Initiating reforms of one of the National Assembly of Afghanistan, as one of the most important public institutions, was associated with different challenges. The ICSPA project has ensured strong partnership with the leadership of the NAA, namely, the Speakers of the Parliament, the Secretary Generals, their deputies and heads of departments based on mutual trust and respect. Building partnership and gaining confidence, primarily based on technical expertise, required extensive involvement and efforts from the ICSPA project, and particularly important was personal engagement of the CTA.

Some of the most notable achievements during this initial period were improved system to share information about the Parliament’s functions and functioning, structures and proceedings. This information was made available to the public through the national media and the Parliament’s website. The NAA decided to reduce number of Parliamentary committees to ensure efficiency. Also, the NAA started publishing MP attendance records, fining and suspending MPs for non-attendance. These achievements have been highly important in gaining commitments to reforms.

The ICSPA project was effective in facilitating partnership with the Inter-Parliamentary Union. For example, the Secretaries General engaged with the Association of Secretaries General of Parliaments (ASPG), requesting assistance with the reform related issues[[32]](#footnote-32) . The ICSPA project in partnership with the IPU provided the National Parliament with technical assistance to design a Parliamentary Service Act. The central objective of the Act is to set the basis towards ensuring the autonomy of parliament staff from the Executive branch in alignment with international parliamentary best practice as well as towards establishing a sustainable human resource base required for its long-term institutional development;

* The project started work on establishing the required ICT infrastructure (local area network and media pool). The objective is to improve transparency by sharing parliamentary documentation and information with the media and the public but also between departments. The ICT infrastructure was also precondition to improve the financial, administrative, procurement and human resource work-flow processes.

Sustainability and national ownership of the entire process was ensured through a Secretary General-led Meshrano Jirga ICT governance group. The role of this group is to plan, coordinate department needs and ensure the compatibility and sustainability of its ICT infrastructure (including budgeting);

The ICSPA project assisted in instituting critical security-related improvements of the National Parliament - this was especially needed to mitigate attacks against the Parliament and its staff. The UNDP Security Unit carried out a security assessment of the Parliament, which led to the drafting of specific Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs), staff training and the identification of security gaps.

The analysis of the effectiveness during the period 2014-2016 (ICSPA phase 1)

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| **Outcome** | | **Indicators and baselines** | **Assumptions** |
| **Outcome:** | **Political processes are more inclusive and representative institutions are enabled to hold government more accountable at all levels** | **Indicator 1.1.** Progress towards meeting IPU benchmarks for democratically elected legislatures  **Baseline:** Legislature does not meet any IPU benchmark (2013)  **Target:** 50% IPU benchmarks are met |  |
| **Comments and analysis** | This output is relevant and fits within the intervention logic of the ICSPA phase 1.  The ultimate objective of first phase of the ICSPA project was to support both houses of the National Assembly of Afghanistan in becoming more effective parliamentary institutions, both reflecting and contributing to a growing culture of legitimate and inclusive governance. In light of this priority, it is expected that functional and independent Parliament would ensure more accountable government at all levels. | The Indicator 1.1. is measurable and directly correlated to the Outputs 1; however, the missing part is to links with the specific references and bIPU benchmarks (areas, values, for example). The Inter-Parliamentary Union makes clear reference to a democratic parliament, as representative of the political will and social diversity of the population, and is active in its legislative and oversight functions, at national and international level. Crucially, it is also transparent, accessible and accountable to the citizens that it represents. The study “Benchmarking for the Parliament[[33]](#footnote-33)” provides guidelines and suggestions how to establish benchmarks. Also, the core values are set out in IPU’s ground-breaking study Parliament and democracy in the twenty-first century: A guide to good practice[[34]](#footnote-34). This document provide the basis to understand and analyse democratic parliament, that is representative, transparent, accessible, accountable and effective. The study argues through examples put forward by parliaments themselves that a strong parliament is one that puts these values into practice. However, none of these documents provided clear and definition and values for the IPU benchmarks. | No assumptions at this level |
| **Validation of the Outcome from evaluation evidence** | | | |
| The analysis of the essential elements of the legitimate, transparent and inclusive governance shows that it is the range of processes through which a society reaches consensus on and implements regulations, human rights, laws, policies and social structures—in pursuit of justice and human rights, welfare, and environmental protection. Policies and legislation are agreed on and carried out by many institutions: the legislature, judiciary, executive branch and formal and informal organizations of civil society. Considering this, democratic governance for human development brings to the fore the question of how a society organizes itself to ensure equality (of opportunity) and equity (social and economic justice) for all citizens. It stresses both the outcomes and processes of governance because the policy-making process is as important as its result. Rooted in a rights-based approach to help governments and citizens fulfil their commitments and obligations, it promotes constructive interaction among the three governance actors, and it is infused with the principles of good governance.  The principles at the heart of good governance are the same as those at the heart of democracy: Equity; Participation; Pluralism; Partnership; Subsidiarity; Transparency; Accountability; Rule of law; Effectiveness; Efficiency; Responsiveness; Sustainability  The ICSPA project was working to support the establishment of good governance in Afghanistan, by mainstreaming and promoting all principles of good governance in all its activities. This is confirmed in the primary goal of the ICSPA project: "to assist the two houses of the National Assembly of Afghanistan (Wolesi Jirga and Meshrano Jirga), within the Afghan Parliament’s constitutional and legal mandate, in becoming more effective parliamentary institutions, both reflecting and contributing to a growing culture of legitimate and inclusive governance." | | | |
| **Outputs** | | **Indicators (including Baselines and targets)** | **Assumptions** |
| **Output 1:** | **Self-assessment framework and Reform Action Plan developed for and adopted by the Parliament** | **Indicator 1.1 -** Availability and use of a Self-Assessment Framework for Parliament  *Baseline 1.1 - No self-assessment process undertaken by Parliament since it first convened in 2005*  *Target 1.1. Core Project Team established; Self-Assessment Framework designed and implemented, in collaboration with Parliament*  **Indicator 1.2 -** A Reform Action Plan developed and implemented  *Baseline1.2 - No institutional development plan exists for Parliament*  *Target 1.2. Self-assessment framework rolled-out and implemented*  **Indicator 1.3 -** Continuing collaboration of Parliament with UNDP and its experts on self-assessment  *Target 1.3. The outcome of self-assessment adopted by Parliament, and the Reform Action Plan developed and institutionalized* | 1. Formal institutions and processes serve wider Afghan interests  2. Executive Branch does not subvert efforts to strengthen Parliament  3. Parliament builds capacity in these areas  4. MoF, MoJ, MoPA, CSC and other agencies of Government are keen to support Parliament’s efforts  5. UNDP able to recruit and deploy high quality staff to implement activities in a timely manner  6. UNDP and Parliament agree on the activities to be undertaken in pursuit of Output 1 |
| **Comments and analysis** | The Output 1. is directly linked with the Objective 1. The self-assessment is rightly defined as a starting point to identify challenges and shortcomings in the functioning of the NAA. This document should serve as comprehensive organizational development of the Parliament towards more inclusive and representative institution. | Indicators have been weakly formulated as they only communicate the process, but not the result of the process or the relationship/ measure of the particular objective.  The Indicator 1.2. is defined to measure that “Reform Action Plan is developed and implemented”. As formulated, this indicator is rephrased Output 1, and even exceeds its original focus. The output has been limited to the preparation and adoption of the RAP, while the measure of progress includes also “implementation”.  The targets are just reformulated indicators. | The project document has rightly identified assumptions that are required to hold true to ensure that reform framework is in place. Thus, assumptions established at the level at the Output 1 are reasonable. However, some of these assumptions remained very general statements (for example, number 1). Other assumptions such as for example nr 2 are reasonable but applicable to all elements of the intervention logic.  The stated assumptions 5 and 6 are under direct project control and should be considered as prerequisites, required conditions, to initiate the project. |
| **Validation of the achievements under the Output 1** | | | |
| The ICSPA project was effective in ensuring progress under this output. The project developed a self-assessment framework to analyse secretariat functions of the Parliament. This tailor-made approach supported by the ICSPA project was based to a large degree on the Inter-Parliamentary Union’s self-assessment toolkit[[35]](#footnote-35), with the focus on the areas relevant to the Afghan Parliament secretariat departments and directorates.  The ICSPA project documentation provided that "the self-assessment process, rather than a needs assessment, has importantly permit the leadership to identify areas requiring reforms which they are now committed to implementing[[36]](#footnote-36)". Through an entirely self-led process the project supported the heads of each department and their staff in both houses to complete extensive reviews of secretariat performance as well as formulate recommendations at their own pace. The ICSPA project was effective in providing technical assistance during the departmental and directorate self-assessments: experts deployed by the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) and a Senior Committee Clerk on secondment from the British House of Commons together with the CTA were the central technical node during the process.  The departmental and directorate self-assessment reports prepared from January through end-June 2015 were compiled and adopted by the Secretaries General and their heads of department in October 2015 (with the delay between the two a result of the end-June Taliban attack on the Afghan Parliament). The actual implementation exceeded originally planned timeframe and schedule. However, self-assessment is always time-consuming exercise, whereby the importance of the process is as important as the end results. Therefore, involving all employees and enhancing national ownership was in the centre of the approach.  Assumptions established at the level of the Output 1.1 were well identified; these are key factors that are external to the project, but which represent conditions that must be met if the project is to succeed. Assumptions should be closely monitored: therefore, the project conducted a thorough project appraisal during the starting moths to identify if the assumptions are still holding true. The FE finds that the assumption 2: Executive Branch does not subvert efforts to strengthen Parliament is crucial for sustainability of the project results and is almost an objective to achieve. | | | |
| **Output 2:** | **Staffing and financial management capacity of the Parliament enhanced** | **Indicator 2.1.1** RevisedParliamentary staffing structure approved by the, Ministry of Finance and Civil Service Commission  **Indicator 2.1.2** Optimal Parliament staffing, with the academe and other providers as a ready human resource pool for recruitment to the Parliament  **Indicator 2.1.3** Favourable perception of Parliament staff towards working with the Parliament on the following dimensions (as measured through an annual staff survey): Parliament as employer; Staff engagement; Business process efficiency  *Baseline 2.1 Attrition of competent and development-oriented Secretariat staff is a continuing problem*  *Target 2.1. Comprehensive and integrated Human Resource Development Plan for Parliament established* | 1. The Project Document has been revised based on both the PEA and the self-assessment exercise.  2. Formal institutions and processes serve wider Afghan interests  3. Executive Branch does not subvert efforts to strengthen Parliament  4.. Parliament builds capacity in these areas  5. MoF, MoJ, MoPA, CSC and other agencies of Government are keen to support Parliament’s efforts  6. UNDP able to recruit and deploy high quality staff to implement activities in a timely manner  7. UNDP and Parliament agree on the activities to be undertaken in pursuit of Output 2 |
| **Indicator 2 .2.1 -**  A comprehensive Human Resources Development Plan formulated  **Indicator 2.2.2 -** Number and quality of HR practices and processes improved (e.g., annual self-survey; recruitment manuals; capacity building plans; gender action plans; *etc.*)  **Indicator 2.2.3 -** The extent to which institutional plans are developed and implemented (e.g., Reform Action Plan and other cross-cutting-departmental plans); and number of SoPs  *Baseline 2.2 - No comprehensive Human Resources Development Plan developed*  *Target 2.2. Parliament’s Financial Management System improved* |
| **Indicator 2.3.1 -**  Improved number and quality of budgeting, financial management, procurement and auditing processes observed by and for Parliament  **Indicator 2.3.2 -** Parliament operates pursuant to its own, independent administrative regulations governing its financial management system, with full optimum capacity and control over its Budget  **Indicator 2.3.3** – Robust budget submissions tabled to the Ministry of Finance  **Indicator 2.3.4 -** The auditor’s favourable opinions on the Parliament’s operational management  *Baseline 2.3 - The financial management system - budgeting, accounting, auditing and procurement - being observed by and for Parliament is inconsistent, unreliable, and non-compliant with existing national legislation and applicable international standards*  *Target 2.3. Robust budget submissions by Parliament tabled to the Ministry of Finance* |
| **Analysis of the Output and its verification** | There is a link between this output and the UNDP CPD Output.  The output is addressing core elements of the organization- the financial management and human resources. Hence, its achievement will strengthen organizational and functional capacities of the National Assembly of Afghanistan. | The indicators are adequate and appropriate to measure progress in the specific areas related the Output 1.  Indicator 2.1.1, 2.1.2 and 2.1.3 are defined within a context of improvement of organizational aspects of human resources within the National Assembly of Afghanistan. Still, indicators 2.1.1 and 2.1.2 could be merged in one indicator related to availability of the organizational chart, with well-defined positions.  Indicators 2.2.1, 2.2.2 and 2.2.3 are well-established and serve the purpose to measure progress in establishment of a sound human resources management system. The indicator 2 .2.1 (A comprehensive Human Resources Development Plan formulated) could be defined as yes/no indicator, although it could be a target. The target 2.2 Parliament’s Financial Management System improved is not linked with the indicators under 2.2 mark.  The Indicator 2.3.1 - Improved number and quality of budgeting, financial management, procurement and auditing processes observed by and for Parliament is appropriate indicator, and well- defined. However, the indicator 2.3.2. (“Parliament operates pursuant to its own, independent administrative regulations governing its financial management system, with full optimum capacity and control over its Budget”), is a expected target related to the indicator 2.3.1. The Indicator 2.3.3. Robust budget submissions tabled to the Ministry of Finance is identical with the Target 2.3. Robust budget submissions tabled to the Ministry of Finance  Another challenge is that sources of verification were not provided to validate indicators and follow on the progress towards the achievement of the targets. | The assumptions established at the level at the Output 3 are copied from the Output 2.  Some of the important assumptions for the achievement of this output were not identified. Examples could be: i) Leadership of the NAA remains committed to reforms; or ii) International development partners recognize importance of organizational development of the NAA and are ready to coordinate its activities; iii) Reform priorities are clearly formulated and sufficient resources are allocated to their implementation… |
| **Validation of the achievements under the Output 2** | | | |
| During the first phase of the ICSPA project there were no activities organized within this output. It was envisaged, however, that the activities will be programmed and implemented under this output following adoption of the Parliament’s Reform Action Plan.  The ICSPA project provided assistance to preparation of the Reform Action Plan, as the basis for introduction of a sound financial management and more appropriate system for management of human resources. Support to this output has accordingly been operationalized through the revised (phase II) project document. | | | |
| **Outputs** | | **Indicators and baselines** | **Assumptions** |
| **Output 3:** | Capacity of Parliament’s leadership to undertake reforms enhanced | **Indicator 3.1.1 –** The Regulations on Internal Duties (as amended) clearly state the powers and functions available to Parliament, and who may exercise them  **Indicator 3.1.2** – High level of engagement and awareness of the leadership of both Houses in leading the reform process  *Baseline 3.1 - Weak RAP and low level of engagement by Parliament leadership offices, the Office of SGs and the Committee of Chairs in leading the reform and institutional development process*  *Target 3.1. Ability of parliamentary leadership to champion reforms strengthened*  **Indicator 3.2.1 –** The extent to which the leadership efficiently and effectively coordinates external assistance to Parliament (measured through the number of donor meetings, quality of minutes, agenda and follow up action points)  *Baseline 3.2- Parliament’s role in coordination of stakeholder activities needs to be strengthened*  *Target 3.2. Parliament’s capacity to manage stakeholders’ activities strengthened* | 1. The Project Document has been revised based on both the PEA and the self-assessment exercise.  2. Formal institutions and processes serve wider Afghan interests  3. Executive Branch does not subvert efforts to strengthen Parliament  4. Parliament builds capacity in these areas  5. MoF, MoJ, MoPA, CSC and other agencies of Government are keen to support Parliament’s efforts  6. UNDP able to recruit and deploy high quality staff to implement activities in a timely manner  7. UNDP and Parliament agree on the activities to be undertaken in pursuit of Output 3 |
| **Comments and analysis** | This output is well-defined and directly linked with other two outputs and with the CPD Output.  Organizational development and change management in organization is inherently linked with the commitment and readiness and finally the capacity of its leadership to define and implement reforms. Therefore, development of capacities of the Parliament’s leadership to grasp and pursue reforms remain high priority. | The FE finds that the indicators require some adjustment to adequately measure progress in enhancing capacities of the Parliament’s leadership for reforms.  For example- indicator 3.1.2 intends to measure “a high level of engagement and awareness of the leadership”. Determining if the level of engagement and awareness is high remains challenging. This is becoming even more difficult as the baseline is identified as “low level of engagement”. Therefore, more appropriate would be if the Indicator 3.1.2 is reformulated “Increase in engagement and awareness of the leadership of both houses in leading the reform process- measured through number of implemented reform activities from the RAP”.  The indicator 3.2.1 is adequate to measure increase in capacities of the leadership of the Parliament to coordinate international development assistance. The proposed “units”- the number of donor meetings, quality of minutes, agenda and follow up action points as appropriate to reflect on progress within this indicator. | The assumptions established at the level at the Output 3 are almost identical to the assumptions for the Output 1. Even though these assumptions are reasonable, they are more appropriate for the CPD Output.  Some of the assumptions relevant for the Output 2 could be: i) Leadership and staff of both houses are committed to work on improvement of human resource and financial management; or ii) Employees from the NAA are well-informed and participate in programs related to improvement of human resources  The proposed assumption could be rather a target. The FE finds that the Assumptions 5 and 6 are prerequisites, required conditions, to initiate the project. |
| **Validation of the achievements under the Output 3** | | | |
| During the first phase the ICSPA project was effective in addressing capacity gaps and providing technical assistance to boost reform abilities of the leadership of both houses of the Parliament. Some of the most significant achievements, as reported by the project:   * During the departmental/ organizational self-assessment process, the ICSPA project provided assistance to establish accountability mechanism. The structure involved the Administrative Boards in both Houses, the Secretaries General and the Speakers of the Parliament***.*** This approach enhanced the triangulation of information required for ensuring its accuracy and relevance while also raising awareness about the main issues among the parliamentary leadership; * The Secretaries General became aware of the key challenges of the departments- high-staff turnover was the primary impediment to sustainable strengthening of the departments. The need for preparation and adoption of the Parliamentary Service Act was highlighted as the crucial element for sustainable functioning of the Parliament * The Secretaries General engaged with their peers through the Association of Secretaries General of Parliaments (ASGP) to share lessons learned on how to deal with Member interference in internal administration, procurement and recruitment related decisions; Members abuse of parliament staff; or political interference obstructing the SGs from publishing Member attendance or voting records. The Secretaries General made presentations of the key issues they face and engaged with their peers on potential solutions through the ASGP meetings at the Inter-Parliamentary Union Assemblies (in March and October 2015). The FE finds that these meetings were important to further enhance commitment to reform of the Secretaries General; this was moral support and motivation to continue to pursue implementation of reforms in accordance with international best practice, as their peers explained that they faced the same issues; * The ICSPA project provided support to the Wolesi Jirga and Meshrano Jirga International Relations Department staff to work together to prepare a single database of development partners supporting both Houses; identifying their areas of support; compiling contact details; and establishing archives of development partner support to both Houses. This was an important step towards the establishment of sound coordination mechanism for implementation of the Reform Action Plan. * The project supported the Secretaries General and their staff to organize and co-chair the Parliament’s first Development Partner meeting in over five years. It was the first time that the Parliament called and led a meeting of their development partners for themselves. | | | |

The analysis of the effectiveness during the period 2016-2019 (ICSPA phase 2)

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| **Outputs** | | **Indicators and baselines** | **Assumptions** |
| **Output 1:** | ***Secretariats are strengthened to support law-making and oversight functions, including plenary, committee work, legislative and policy research.*** | ***Indicator 1.1***Availability of information (facilitated by the Secretariats) to CSOs/ constituents/ media; and Members prior to debate and votes:  (a) MP attendance and absences from plenary sessions  (b) upcoming parliamentary business  (c) Parliamentary Papers  (d) Voting records  *Baseline*  *1.1 Low. (a) No, (b) No, (c) No, (d) No.*  *Targets:*  *2016: Medium-Low (a) Yes, (b) No, (c) No, (d) No.*  *2017: Medium (a) Yes, (b) Yes, (c) Yes (d) Yes*  *2018: High. Continued support based on the project’s annual work plan prepared in accordance with the Parliament’s Reform Action Plan and annual priorities set by the parliamentary leadership*  *2019: High. Continued support based on the project’s annual workplan prepared in accordance with the Parliament’s Reform Action Plan and annual priorities set by the parliamentary leadership* | * Formal institutions and processes serve wider Afghan interests * Executive Branch does not subvert efforts to strengthen Parliament * Parliament builds capacity in these areas * MoF, MoJ, MoPA, CSC, and other agencies of Government are keen to support Parliament’s efforts * UNDP able to recruit and deploy highlight quality staff to implement activities in a timely manner * UNDP and Parliament agree on the activities to be undertaken in pursuit of Output |
| ***Indicator 1.2***  *(a) Level of ability of Library/Archives and Research departments to deliver services in a timely and professional manner (scale of 1 (low) to 5 (high))*  (b) # of policies in place governing relevant libraries/archives  *Baseline 1.2*  *(a). 1: Low.*  *(b) 0 policies*  *Targets:*  *2016: Audio-visual records digitally available to Members and the public*  *2017: (a) 3. Key parliamentary records are sustainably retained in digital archives and available to committee and research staff; (b) 4(four) policies in place*  *2018: Continued support based on the project’s annual work plan prepared in accordance with the Parliament’s Reform Action Plan and annual priorities set by the parliamentary leadership*  *2019 Continued support based on the project’s annual work plan prepared in accordance with the Parliament’s Reform Action Plan and annual priorities set by the parliamentary leadership* |
| **Indicator 1.3** Level of / functionality of Secretariats as confirmed by the Administrative Board and the Chairs Committee; as well as annual staff survey results (scale of 1-5, low-high)  *Baseline 1.3*  *Low (1). Efficient and effective functioning of both Houses impeded by Members’ failure to respect impartial nature of Secretariats*  *Targets 1.3.*  *2016: (medium-low): Existence of a Code of Conduct* *for Members that provides standards for ethical conduct including related to conflict of interest.*  *2017: (medium) Members trained to understand the conduct expected of them as elected and accountable representatives*  *2018: (Medium-high) Members trained to understand the conduct expected of them as elected and accountable representatives*  *2019: Members trained to understand the conduct expected of them as elected and accountable representatives and acting accordingly.* |
| **Comments and analysis** | There is a link between this output and the UNDP CPD Output. The support that is envisaged within this output represents the core of the organizational development of the Parliament. The assistance under this output will strive to enhance law-making and oversight functions of the NAA. Some of the areas that will be addressed are plenary, committee work, legislative and policy research. | The indicators under the Output 1 have been captured from the Reform Action Plan; however, these indicators have limited relevance and could only partially measure the extent to which abilities of the Secretariats have been increased to assist with law making and oversight functions of the NAA. The adopted indicators could be more appropriate to reflect on the part of the output focused on the improved “plenary, committee work, legislative and policy research”.  Another challenge with these indicators from the RAP is absence of credible sources of verification, data collection tools and the data collection protocols.  The Indicator 1.1. has been focused on the availability of information on MPs attendance and absence from plenary sessions, voting records and parliamentary papers and information on upcoming parliamentary business. The role of the Secretariats should be to facilitate access to this information. However, timely availability of information could serve to measure efficiency and transparency of the NAA and its Secretariats. Still, this indicator is not adequate to measure capacities of the Secretariats to deliver its core functions.  The indicator 1.2. has been mainly focused on the specific department, Library/ Archives and Research and included both, qualitative and quantitative, dimension. First part is focused on the ability of the Library/ Archives and Research departments to deliver services (“in a timely and professional manner”). Still, the indicator did not provide protocols and instruments to ensure neutral/ impartial system to measure level of ability of these departments. The FE finds that this could be done by measuring users’ perception (MPs or other users). This “subjective” part should be complemented with stricter and “objective” measure, but counting number of policies governing relevant libraries and achieves could not appropriately complement it.  The indicator 1.3 could be the most relevant to the Output 1 as intended to measure “level of functionality of Secretariats” in the context of the overall capacity of Secretariats to deliver core services. However, the unclarity concerning the dimension “functionality of Secretariats” remained- as it was not specified what “functionality” entails. Furthermore, the “functionality of Secretariats” was planned to be assessed only through perception surveys (of the Administrative Boards and Chairs of Committees and staff survey). Measuring perception could be useful in many instances but the need to reduce bias and external influences should be prioritized and addressed.  The values of targets were mixed: while proposed targets for 2016 and 2017 were realistic and achievable, targets for 2018 and 2019 remained rather broad and general. Also, achievement of some of the targets remained associated with changes in the rules of procedures of the NAA and these issues have not been adequately recorded under the assumptions | The project document included number of assumptions at the level of this Output:  As indicated in the previous paragraphs, these assumptions are at the level of the project outcome- not at the level of this output. Two last assumptions are more conditions internal to the project- prerequisite to initiate this intervention. |
| **Validation of the achievements under the Output 1** | | | |
| In the absence of the final project report, the FE was using annual and quarterly progress reports to analyse effectiveness and progress under the outputs; these findings from the desk review have been further validated during the field mission. Overall, the FE finds that the ISCPA project was in general successful in ensuring progress under this output.  Under Output 1, the ICSPA project was successful in supporting major improvements of the plenary and committee operations of the NAA. The results concerning greater transparency of the NAA have been ensured: encouraging Secretariats to start with the timely publication of essential parliamentary papers on the website has been a primary achievement. The implementation of an e-voting system for the plenary of the Lower House has been initiated to rationalize processes and events of vital importance for the functioning of the NAA; however, full implementation of the e-voting system has been affected by belated procurement and software issues. The recording and broadcasting of committee oversight sessions was a major achievement for both Houses; the need has been expressed for all other committees to be involved in regular "televising" of their sessions.  Still, the ICSPA project was effective in supporting the NAA to increase transparency of its work. The Wolesi Jirga’s started publishing MP attendance records. The availability of this information contributed to accountability of the MPs to the voters, while at the same time enabled the management of the NAA to implement the rules of procedure by pursuing fines for the MPs non-attendance. These became a regular practice that will continue in the future, although significant resistance (including threats from the MPs) has been evident. Additionally, following support and advice from the ICSPA project, the parliamentary leadership agreed to increase transparency by i) publishing the weekly parliamentary agendas (the Order Papers) on the parliament’s websites in advance; ii) publishing up-to-date Admin Board, MP, Senator and parliamentary committee composition and contact details on the websites; iii) creating You Tube channels for each House, with daily uploads of plenary session proceedings to keep the public better informed of the parliament’s work. The publication of the weekly parliamentary agenda importantly allows MPs time to consider and prepare for plenary sessions in advance as well as for CSOs and the media to raise concerns with Members before the debate.  The ICSPA project has prepared the initial Archive Policy for the Parliament; this is for the first time that to propose and adopt sound approach to capture, codify and archive information and documents that the NAA is producing. The ICSPA project is working on preparation of the Code of Conduct for Members that will provide standards for ethical conduct including related to conflict of interest. These deliverables were planned for 2016; however, the delay was due to belated start of the second phase of the project.  The ICSPA project was less successful with the adoption of the Code of Conduct for the NAA, although the existence of a code of conduct is a norm for the effective functioning of a parliament. The ISCPA project provided technical support to prepare the Code of Conduct for the Lower House, but it was not officially adopted. In the case of Upper House, the progress is even less apparent as they did not initiate preparation of the code of conduct.  The new leadership of the NAA recognized the priority and necessity to prepare and implement codes of conduct for two houses, showing commitment to embark on this process[[37]](#footnote-37). | | | |
| **Output** | | **Indicators and baselines** | **Assumptions** |
| ***Output 2*** | ***Human Resources, Administration, Finance, Procurement and Internal Audit capacity of Secretariats is strengthened to better manage*** ***resources and provide effective and equitable support to operational functions*** | **Indicator 2.1** Existence of a Parliamentary Service Act that provides for parliamentary staffing autonomy from the Executive and Amendments to the Rules of Procedures in both Houses proposed  *Baseline 2.1 No[[38]](#footnote-38).*  *Target: 2016 Yes* | The project document included number of assumptions at the level of output 2:   * Formal institutions and processes serve wider Afghan interests * Executive Branch does not subvert efforts to strengthen Parliament * Parliament builds capacity in these areas * MoF, MoJ, MoPA, CSC, and other agencies of Government are keen to support Parliament’s efforts * UNDP able to recruit and deploy highlight quality staff to implement activities in a timely manner * UNDP and Parliament agree on the activities to be undertaken in pursuit of Output 2 |
| **Indicator 2.2** Existence of Conditions of Service for the Parliamentary Service; and subsequent human resource policies and strategies  *Baseline 2.2 No.*  *2016: No (partial); 2017: Yes.* |
| **Indicator 2.3.** % of staff that declares itself satisfied with parliament as an employer  *Baseline 2.3 TBD July 2016.*  *2016: TBD. July.*  *2017/ 2018/ 2019: TBD X% based on results of the baseline* |
| **Indicator 2.4** Efficiency of the systems in place to facilitate inter-departmental financial transactions and preparation of secretariat financial reports in both Houses (scale of 1-5, low-high)  *Baseline 2.4 Low (1) While the departments of finance use the national AFMIS for reporting on institution level expenditures, no systems are in place to facilitate in-house transactions or preparation of detailed internal financial reports*  *Targets:*  *2017: medium-low (2) Automated systems in place to facilitate inter-departmental financial transactions*  *2018: Medium (3) Secretaries General and parliamentary leadership informed of parliamentary financial autonomy practices and structural options, including checks and balances*  *2018: TBD; 2019: TBD* |
| **Indicator 2.5** Existence of legislation for the financial autonomy of Parliament (Yes/No)  *Baseline 2.5 NO*  *Targets: 2016 N/A*  *2017 Yes. Development of a draft Financial Autonomy of Parliament Act, as required*  *2018/ 2019: Continued support based on the project’s annual work plan prepared in accordance with the Parliament’s Reform Action Plan and annual priorities set by the parliamentary leadership* |
| **Indicator 2.6** Level of functionality of the Heads of the Gender Units in each House to take actions to improve the equitable management of resources and support to staff (1-5)  *Baseline 2.6 Low (1) The Gender units lack clear terms of reference outlining their roles and responsibilities. As a result they are unable to set targets and objectives against which to promote equitable management of resources and policies.*  *2016: 2 Heads of the Gender Units have clarity on their roles and responsibilities; as well as clear unit objectives and targets against which to work*  *2017: Medium 3. Continued support to the Gender Units based on their unit targets and objectives in accordance with the Reform Action Plan*  *2018/ 2019: Continued support to the Gender Units based on their unit targets and objectives in accordance with the Reform Action Plan* |
| **Indicators 2.7** #/type of systems and policies in place to permit effective control over assets as well as efficient procurement free from conflict of interest  *Baseline 2.7 0 (Inventory lists are prepared manually in hard copy; assets are not individually tagged; no central electronic repository exists with names and contact details of suppliers in either House; no electronic system linkages exist between the procurement and other departments, including budget and finance, through which to share documents or information required to prepare procurement plans)*  *2017: 3 (All assets in the Meshrano Jirga are tagged with inventory numbers and valued; Conflict of Interest policies; Common document management system)*  *2018/ 2019: Continued support based on the project’s annual work plan prepared in accordance with the Parliament’s Reform Action Plan and annual priorities set by the parliamentary leadership* |
| **Comments and analysis** | This output is well-formulated and linked with UNDP CPD output as provided in the intervention logic. Under Output 2, the ICSPA project envisaged support to the core functions of the Secretariats by working on sustainable finance, human resources, and other necessary administrative work. The central idea behind this output was to ensure “functional autonomy” of the NAA; hence, to enable its more independent functioning (from the executives) hence, to set its budget, appoint and manage staff, and administer itself generally.  The governance system of Afghanistan has been and remained affected by the dominance of the executive branch. The NAA is being administered as one of the state departments, as it does not have any responsibility related to appointment of its staff or management of its budget. Considering that one of the primary roles of a parliament is to hold government accountable for its policies and actions on behalf of the citizens, this creates a constitutional conflict of interest. Therefore, under this output and through the preparation of the Parliamentary Service Act, the ICSPA project intended to facilitate “separation of powers” between executive and Parliament. | The indicators under the Output 2 are in principle relevant and could serve to measure progress under the output. However, some comments on these indicators have been prepared in the following paragraphs:  Indicator 2.1 is the critical for this output, as the existence of the Parliamentary Service Act is prerequisite for functinal and institutional sustainability, financial and operational independence of the Parliament. However, the indicator could have benefited from more appropriate wording- the PSA currently exists in the draft form, but it was not adopted by the NAA. The indicator 2.2 is closely linked with the Indicator 2.1- without the approved/ adopted PSA, it would be difficult to have sound Conditions of Service for the Parliamentary Service, including subsequent human resource policies and strategies. Currently, the NAA is not authorisded to plan engagement or professional development of human resources.  Under the Indicator 2.3 the intention was to measure the perception of the employees about the NAA as the employees, including their satisfaction with the content and the quality of the work space. The ICSPA project supported staff surveys in 2016, 2017 and 2018. The initial 2016 survey showed that large majority (78%) of the participants in the survey stated they are proud to work for the Parliament, as the work for the Parliament contributes to rebuilding the state structures and creating better lives in Afghanistan. This positive impression prevailed despite the challenges with motivation (47% feeling motivated), but also with weak recognition of high performance of work (45% positive) and inadequate treatment (66% positive about treatment with respect and dignity). The 2017 survey showed similar pattern, with a large majority (82%) of the participants stating they are proud to work for the Parliament. This positive impression prevailed despite the challenges with motivation (45% feeling motivated), but also with weak recognition of high performance of work (29% positive). The employees are treated with respect and dignity; this is the prevailing opinion among the participants in the survey (71% positive). Still, there are cases of discrimination and abuse with dominance of Abuse of Authority (20%), Linguistic (18%) and Ethnic Discrimination (14%) and less apparent Professional Harassment (6%), Gender Discrimination (5%) and Sexual Harassment (2%).  Indicators 2.4 and 2.5 are related to the financial management of the Parliament. The indicator 2.4 is focused on the efficiency of the finance management practices within the Parliament; in the context of the high financial unpredictability and lack of sustainable finances for the Parliament improvement of the efficiency side remains possible priority area. The focus of the indicator 2.5 is on the existence of the legislation for the financial autonomy of Parliament. Both these indicators have been highly relevant and appropriate to measure institutional development and the extent to which the NAA is progressing in ensuring financial autonomy; however, the validity of these indicators depends on the achievement of the Indicator 1.1. and the adoption of the Parliamentary Service Act.  The indicator 2.6 intends to measure the “level of functionality of the Heads of the Gender Units” expressed through their capacities to take actions to improve the equitable management of resources and support to staff. This indicator is only partially relevant; as it was not clarified the meaning of “equitable management of resources and support to staff” and in the absence of this, it is even more difficult to measure it. Also, the Heads of Gender Departments could be capacitated and able to display high degree of functionality; still, improved functioning of the respective department and higher degree of gender sensitivity within the NAA will depend on other conditions also.  The indicator 2.7 encompasses two distinct and not necessarily connected elements. The indicator intends to measure number and type of systems and policies in place to permit effective control over assets and this is valid requirement to assess functioning of property and assets management. However, the same indicator includes measuring of the “efficient procurement free from conflict of interest”. Having an efficient (and effective) procurement, free of conflict of interests could be a target in itself, and could be measured through the existence of the assets lists, timely preparation of procurement plans; allocation of resources for procurement of goods and services, etc. The FE finds that this indicator would require revision and further adjustments. | As indicated in the previous paragraphs, these assumptions could be considered as relevant and appropriate for the outcome level; however, the FE finds that these assumptions are not suitable for this output.  Two last “assumptions” are not real assumptions (conditions external to the project but required for project implementation)- rather, these are actually preconditions, closely linked and internal to the project. These preconditions must be in place to initiate and implement the project. |
| **Validation of the achievements under the Output 2** | | | |
| Progress under Output 2 is closely linked with changes in the power relation between executive and Parliament; thus, ensuring parliamentary "functional autonomy" during the lifetime of the ICSPA project was highly ambitious. Still, UNDP as the implementing partner together with other partners in this project and the leadership of the General Secretariats of the NAA, despite these challenges, continued its efforts for greater autonomy and sustainable organizational development.  The critical requirement for greater independence of the NAA has been the adoption of the Parliamentary Service Act, as the central for separation of powers. The executive in principle disagreed to the proposal for full "functional autonomy" that the PSA proposed. This has affected the holistic approach envisaged under Output 2, but the project remained effective in document management, human relations, finance, and procurement.  The most important deliverables under Output 2 have been:   * Preparation of a Parliamentary Service Act, that is instrumental in ensuring an autonomous parliamentary service. The FE finds that the PSA provides the legislative framework for establishing an autonomous Parliamentary Service with sustainable human resources base and finances capacitated to deliver services and implement effective government oversight; * Supported the departments of Human Resources to administer a perception survey to staff in both Houses in 2016, 2017 and 2018. The involvement and oversight of the project team in the collection and compilation of survey results reassured parliament staff of transparency and non-retaliation for their providing honest feedback; * The ICSPA project supported the Meshrano Jirga to establish an ICT Governance Group (working group) comprised of all department directors and chaired by the Secretary General to prepare Terms of Reference for development of an Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) software system in Dari and Pashto to streamline workflow process between the departments parliamentary with a sustainable human resource base. An electronic inventory and tagging system for all assets is being included in the terms of reference for the Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) planning system being developed by the ICT Governance Groups with project support * the project supported the Director of the Meshrano Jirga Gender Unit to review and better understand the role and to define activities that would better contribute to targets in the National Action Plan for Women of Afghanistan, through which her unit was established. To date the Gender Unit’s work has focused exclusively on organizing workshops supporting the development of an Enterprise Resource Planning system to improve workflow processes in all departments, including electronic inventories of assets. Importantly, the project supported Gender Directorates to prepare and deliver trainings for women-based CSOs, that was considered as one of the most relevant and effective for the participants. | | | |
| **Output** | | **Indicators and baselines** | **Assumptions** |
| **Output 3** | ***Representative role reinforced through support for improved communication and outreach capacities*** | **Indicator 3.1.a.** Existence of ICT Governance Groups in both Houses that plan for and manage ICT systems. (this is a pure Yes/No indicator)  *Baseline 3.1 No (There is no internal parliament management of or planning for ICT needs, maintenance or compatibility.)*  *Targets:*  *2016 3.1.a.1 Yes*  *2017 3.1.a.2 Continued support based on the project’s annual work plan prepared in accordance with the Parliament’s Reform Action Plan and annual priorities set by the parliamentary leadership*  *2018 3.1.a.3 Continued support based on the project’s annual work plan prepared in accordance with the Parliament’s Reform Action Plan and annual priorities set by the parliamentary leadership*  **Indicator 3.1.b**. Existence of ICT system to permit inter-connectivity and sharing of documents between departments and the public  *Baseline 3.2 No.*  *Targets:*  *2016 3.1.b.1 YES*  *2017/ 2018/ 2019 3.1.b.2 Continued support based on the project’s annual work plan prepared in accordance with the Parliament’s Reform Action Plan and annual priorities set by the parliamentary leadership* | * Formal institutions and processes serve wider Afghan interests * Executive Branch does not subvert efforts to strengthen Parliament * Parliament builds capacity in these areas * MoF, MoJ, MoPA, CSC, and other agencies of Government are keen to support Parliament’s efforts * UNDP able to recruit and deploy highlight quality staff to implement activities in a timely manner * UNDP and Parliament agree on the activities to be undertaken in pursuit of Output 3 |
| **Indicator 3.2** Availability of Parliamentary documentation and plenary and committee proceeding coverage to the public and journalists  *Baseline 3.2 No[[39]](#footnote-39). ()*  *Targets:*  *2016 Yes. media database; Parliament of Afghanistan You Tube pages; media pool in the Meshrano Jirga*  *2017/18/19: Continued support based on the project’s annual work plan prepared in accordance with the Parliament’s Reform Action Plan and annual priorities set by the parliamentary leadership* |
| **Comments and analysis** | This output was designed to address some of the weaknesses related to the overall communication capacities of the Parliament, identified during the formulation phase and critical analysis of the environment in which the project was implemented. Thus, this output aimed to reinforce Parliament's representative role, through strengthening its communication channels and options and enforcing its outreach abilities. Parliament’s ability to connect to electronic media, in particular, provides a critical engine of outreach. Under this output, the project strived to enhance the use of ICT support and facilities to improve the dissemination of the NAA's messages and information. | The indicators 3.1.a and 3.1.b were relevant; however, these indicators measured and captured just limited aspect of the progress towards the achievement of the output. The indicator 3.1.a is a clear Yes/ No indicator, and it refers to the existence of ICT Governance Groups in both Houses that plan for and manage ICT systems. Therefore, after the institutionalization of the ICT group, this indicator becomes obsolete, and targets for 2017 and 2018 have not been valid.  Similarly, the indicator 3.1.b is a “yes-no” and focuses on the existence of the ICT system. With the establishment of the ICT system, this indicator became obsolete. Still, there were some improvements of the system and implemented activities but in the absence of clear annual targets, it was difficult to validate actual progress. Still, the missing dimension was to measure relations between the ICT systems and improvements in organizational processes and delivery of services.  The indicator 3.2 is related to improved transparency in the work of the Parliament; and the measure is availability of Parliamentary documentation and plenary and committee proceeding coverage; hence, this was a relevant and adequate indicator. The intention was to ensure that the Departments of Public Information and Relations systematically share press releases or parliamentary documentation with the public or journalists and enhance means of electronic communication. Also, committee proceedings have been recorded and shared with the public. Although important, other dimensions of increased transparency have not been measured adequately through the existing indicators. | The project document identified several assumptions at the level of the Output 3. As indicated in the previous paragraphs, these assumptions have already been suggested under the Output 1 and Output 2.  Two last “assumptions” are actually internal to the project- these are actually preconditions required to initiate and implement the project. |
| **Validation of the achievements under the Output 3** | | | |
| The ICSPA project has been effective under Output 3 striving to establish a sustainable institutional basis for the e-based systems to ensure greater transparency. The main support has been through the Parliament’s unified ICT Department, resulting in highly important achievements, such as the YouTube channels for each House, Media Pool and a television channel in the Upper House. More specifically, some of the most important results under this output were:   * Following the action point 8.2 from the Reform Action Plan, the project assisted the Meshrano Jirga to establish an ICT Governance Group to plan for and sustainably manage its ICT systems. This Group was formally established through a memo from the Secretary General approved by the Admin Board with Terms of Reference for its work. The ICT Group prepared technical specifications and system requirements for establishing an Afghan Parliament Local Area Network (LAN) and Meshrano Jirga media pool to permit the sharing of documentation and information between departments and with public. The Wolesi Jirga established the ICT Governance Group in the last quarter of 2016. * The ICSPA project has completed procurement of the IT equipment and equipment for the media pool. The LAN system and the media pool should be establsihed by end of second quarter of 2017. The FE finds high commitment and ownership of the process by the Parliament. During the meetings, the importance of the LAN system and media pool was clearly emphasized and prioritized, and co-financing was provided by the parliament. * The parliament had established Wolesi Jirga and Meshrano Jirga You Tube Channels uploaded with videos of current session plenary session coverage as well as updated their respective websites with current parliamentary committee composition. The Departments of Public Information and Relations confirmed they systematically share press releases and parliamentary documentation with the public and journalists. The Meshrano Jirga started introducing digital feeds of plenary proceedings. The FE finds commitment of the leadership of both houses to ensure availability of all materials and products of the Parliament. * The project supported the Parliament to release information with contact details of the MPs, Senators and Admin Board members. In addition, all parliamentary agendas are regularly uploaded and available via web-site | | | |
| **Output** | | **Indicators and baselines** | **Assumptions** |
| **Output 4** | ***Capacity of Parliament’s leadership to undertake reforms enhanced*** | **Indicator 4.1** # of actions taken by the parliamentary leadership to implement reforms from the Parliament’s Reform Action Plan requiring political will  *Baseline 4.1 Zero (0)[[40]](#footnote-40)*  *Targets:*  *2016: 3 actions (Publication of Wolesi Jirga MP attendance records; fining members for non-attendance; Reduction in the number of Wolesi Jirga committees)*  *2017: 3 actions (Increased sharing of information with the public in regard to plenary and committee plans and proceedings, and TBD)*  *2018/ 2019 Adoption of practices consistent with IPU standards for democratic legislatures as set out in the Parliament’s Reform Action Plan and in project annual work plans* | * Formal institutions and processes serve wider Afghan interests * Executive Branch does not subvert efforts to strengthen Parliament * Parliament builds capacity in these areas * MoF, MoJ, MoPA, CSC, and other agencies of Government are keen to support Parliament’s efforts * UNDP able to retain highl quality staff to implement activities in a timely manner |
| **Indicator 4.2** # of coordination meetings held by the Parliament  *Baseline 4.2 Zero (0)[[41]](#footnote-41)*  *Targets:*  *2016: 2; 2017: 3; 2018: 3; 2019: 1* |
| **Comments on the elements of the Output 4** | The FE finds that this output is highly relevant and directly contributes to the achievement of higher elements of the intervention logic (UNDP CPD Output and UNDAF Outcome). Organizational development and successful introduction of changes in an organization is inevitably linked with the involvement of its leadership; this is prerequisite to start with reforms. Therefore, the work of the project to enhance reform capacities of the Parliament’s leadership remains highly relevant and needed for further development of the Parliament. | The indicator 4.1. was well-chosen as adequate and relevant to measure the progress in the context of increased reform capacities of the NAA’s leadership. Managing changes and implementing reform efforts require full involvement and commitment of the organizational leadership. Hence, implementation of the Reform Action Plan for the NAA required involvement of the leadership of both houses (Secretary Generals and in some cases Speakers of the Parliament) This indicator was highly relevant and it captured and reflected on the decisions and involvement of the Parliament’s leadership in the specific activities planned in the RAP. Annual targets that have been realistic and achievable.  The indicator 4.2. reflects on number of coordination meetings held by the Parliament. This is indicator is relevant to measure the ability of the Parliament to organize coordination meetings. Still, in combination with a qualitative indicators lower level indicator (compared to 4.1), as it measures only number of meetings. There is no measure of results/ products of these meetings. | As indicated in the previous paragraphs, these assumptions are almost identical as for the previous outputs. Hence, these assumptions are more appropriate for the achievement of the outcome and less for the achievement of output.  The last “assumption” is part of the UNDP management practice- UNDP is implementing this project as the partners expect that UNDP can retain high-quality staff. Therefore, this is prerequisite to starting the project |
| **Validation of the achievements under the Output 4** | | | |
| The ICSPA project was in general effective under Output 4, as the parliamentary leadership exceeded planned target (of 3 in 21016) and implemented 5 actions from its Reform Action Plan requiring political will. All of these measures executed by the leadership – for the first time since the parliament’s inception in 2005 – were met with resistance and strong objections from the MPs.  Some of the most important activities implemented by the leadership of the Parliament have been that the Wolesi Jirga’s leadership agreeing to publish MP attendance records (Reform Action Plan point 1.3); also, the Parliament was enforcing the rules of procedure and fining MPs for their non-attendance and deducting MP pay related to their unexcused absences (Reform Action Plan point 1.6). Another important achievement was that the leadership of the Wolesi Jirga reviewed committee remits and reduced the number of Wolesi Jirga committees from 18 to 15 (Reform Action Plan point 2.5). Additionally, the parliamentary leadership agreed to increase transparency by publishing the weekly parliamentary agendas (the Order Papers) on the parliament’s websites in advance (Reform Action Plan point 1.1.) and publishing up-to-date Admin Board, MP, Senator and parliamentary committee composition and contact details on the websites. The publication of the weekly parliamentary agenda served to the MPs to consider and prepare for plenary sessions in advance. Also, this provided the ground to the CSOs and the media to raise concerns with Members prior to debate.  The leadership approved and agreed to start with You Tube channels (Reform Action Plan point 8.17) for each House; the NAA remained active with regular updates and daily uploads of plenary session proceedings. Easy access to the materials from plenary sessions enabled public to remained regularly informed of the parliament’s work.  Compliance with international parliamentary standards has become stated objective of the leadership of the NAA and it was recognized the importance of the ICSPA project in contributing to reforms’ spirit within the NAA. The assistance and policy advice from the ICSPA team, and particularly from the CTA, twinned with direct work with the Inter-Parliamentary Union were some of the critical factors to create greater understanding of reform needs and create spirit for reforms and changes.  There are no evidences that the recent changes of the NAA’s leadership (new Secretary Generals and recently elected Speakers of both houses) would affect achieved results and reform efforts. The new leadership confirmed commitment and readiness to continue with reforms. Furthermore, adoption of the Parliamentary Service Act has been and remained stated priority of the new leadership.  Concerning the efforts to improve coordination of development assistance, the ICSPA project assisted to the leadership of the NAA, the Speakers and the Secretary generals, to take the central role. Among other activities, it included support for coordination of development partners in the Parliament, and involvement and co-chairing the ICSPA’s Project Management Board and the Technical Working Group meeting. Also, the Parliament was leading on four donor coordination meetings (one per year, from 2014 until 2017). Deteriorating security and attacks on the Parliament resulted in cancellation of the planned meetings (in 2015 and 2017). However, as the number of international development partners supporting the NAA decreased in 2018 the need for coordination of donors’ activities , with ICSPA and UNFPA small scale support to the Youth Parliament of Afghanistan under the auspices of the Upper House as the interventions. | | | |

* **The ICSPA project (and UNDP as the implementing partner) has been and remained a valuable partner in supporting achievement of development priorities for the NAA. Strong and effective partnerships and UNDP collaborative advantages, paved the road for implementation of the ICSPA project, with recognized impact on sustainable improvements in the functioning of the NAA.**

The stakeholders from the NAA recognized “strong comparative advantages”[[42]](#footnote-42) of UNDP as the implementing partner for ICSPA project, also stating that UNDP remains “an important, credible and widely accepted partner in achieving development priorities for the Parliament of Afghanistan,”. This opinion evolved from the practical experience in working with UNDP in Afghanistan[[43]](#footnote-43). The long-lasting presence, technical capacities and profound understanding of the organization-specific constraints and development needs of the NAA, but also its proven independency and impartiality[[44]](#footnote-44) have been the backbone of UNDP’s comparative advantage. In addition, “UNDP through the ICSPA project and previous interventions in the NAA demonstrated strong abilities to establish and maintain effective partnerships based on trust, responsiveness and mutual respect[[45]](#footnote-45)”. Also, the stakeholders from the NAA recognized the added value of the ICSPA project through its technical support and enhanced efforts to ensure compliance of the NAA with international norms and standards (adopted at the level of Inter-Parliamentary Union)[[46]](#footnote-46).

The genuinely nationally driven approach has been emphasized[[47]](#footnote-47) and capacity support available through the ICSPA project has been based on needs assessment and reform priorities[[48]](#footnote-48). This approach has generated fairly strong sense of ownership of processes and results achieved with support from the ICSPA project[[49]](#footnote-49). During the field phase, the stakeholders from the NAA commented on the draft ICSPA final report, clearly stating that the results of the ICSPA project have been achieved in partnership and that the report has insufficiently captured this. Also, formulation and implementation of the staff survey could be another example. The leadership of the NAA recognized the role of the ICSPA project (and the IPU) in formulating and implementing surveys as a tool that enabled a unique view of their human capital[[50]](#footnote-50) . Still, they have emphasized their involvement in ensuring understanidng and participation and forlumating management response. The NAA leadership stated willingness and confirmed existence of capacities of to continue Surveys in subsequent years as a basis for further staff capacity development.

* **The ICSPA project has effectively complement intervention of other development partners, as the single intervention working on development of permanent (non-political) structures of the NAA.**

The ICSPA project was uniquely placed and focused on supporting the professional development of Parliament’s secretariats, non-political structures of the NAA[[51]](#footnote-51). This focus together with the nationally-driven capacity development approach set the basis for effective complementarity.

The example could be between complementarity between the ICSPA project and USAID funded Assistance to Legislative Bodies of Afghanistan (ALBA). While the ICSPA project provided assistance to the General Secretariats and the departments of the NAA, the ALBA project focused on committees. Also, the ALBA project was also working to improve parliament’s constituency outreach efforts, communications and coordination at the sub-national level, while ICSPA project was working to develop capacities of journalists and also put in place communication channels (e.g. media pool in the Wolesi Jirga, youtube channels, etc).

The ALBA and ICSPA teams had an established practice of regular meetings to share information and ensure continued project complementarity. The heads of both projects also organized joint meetings with the Speakers and the Secretaries General of both Houses to ensure the leadership well understood the delimitations of both projects.

Another example of complementarity could be with the efforts of UN Women in the NAA[[52]](#footnote-52). UN Women provided short-term technical assistance to the Wolesi Jirga Women’s Commission, comprising legal and research support to review legislation and policies from a gender perspective. Complementary to this, the ICSPA project provided support to the Gender Directorates of both houses to perform their core duties. Some of the important achievements could be discussion and follow up measures on the content of Staff Perception Reports and particularly the allegations of sexual harassment, abuse of authority, and discrimination in departments for management action[[53]](#footnote-53).

* **The ICSPA project has in general cooperated and coordinated the implementation of activities with the NAA and other development partners in the sector. These efforts were recognized through the work and advocacy of the Chief Technical Advisor and the ICSPA project team. The role of UNDP Country Office, its Governance Unit and the Programme Officer has been effective, with increasing importance during the last year of the ICSPA project.**

The ICSPA project team contributed to a well-targeted and functional coordination and cooperation of activities and interventions for the NAA. ***T***he project assisted the Secretaries General to jointly organize and co-chair meetings of their development partners, for the first time since the establishment of the National Assembly in 2005. To further support national ownership, the project prepared Terms of Reference (TORs) and principles for development partner engagement with the Parliament, primarily aiming to ensure alignment with the Parliament’s priorities. The coordination principles, adopted by all partners in May 2016, required that all partners submit their work plans as well as technical TORs for the procurement of goods and services to the Secretary Generals for approval prior to the implementation of activities or procurements so that the Parliament may ensure that equipment is technically compatible and also to enable them to budget the maintenance costs.

The Development Partner Coordination meetings, usually led by Secretary Generals, were the main coordination platforms. The meeting included representatives of parliament’s implementing partners: USAID funded Assistance to Legislative Bodies of Afghanistan (ALBA)[[54]](#footnote-54), UN Women[[55]](#footnote-55), UNFPA[[56]](#footnote-56), Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) and others. The findings suggest that these coordination meetings were effective, prevention duplication and avoiding overlaps (and competition). In this context, the meeting notes from the recent Development Partner Coordination meeting[[57]](#footnote-57) concluded that activities of the remaining partners were appropriately coordinated[[58]](#footnote-58). The ICSPA project coordinated activities with the national Civil Society Organizations. Some of the examples could be increasing capacities of the gender CSOs to cooperate with the NAA[[59]](#footnote-59).

The active role of the Chief Technical Advisor and support from UNDP Country Office have contributed to maintain an active dialogue with the NAA, the donors and other partners involved in this area, were appreciated by stakeholders in Afghanistan.

## 5.3. Management arrangements and efficiency of the ICSPA project

Efficiency refers to the extent to which the project results have been achieved by rational use of inputs, such as financial resources, expertise, time, etc. The analysis of the ICSPA project efficiency reflected on the overall implementation approach, management, and operational mechanisms. UNDP provided information on the project governance structure and implementation mechanisms that were in place during the project implementation. The filed visit served to confirm these inputs.

UNDP with its technical and administrative capacities, was in charge for implementation of activities and delivery of outputs, under the Direct Implementation Modality (DIM). Considering the specific situation of Afghanistan and capacities of the national institutions, namely the National Assembly of Afghanistan, the DIM was adequate and appropriate implementation arrangement[[60]](#footnote-60). Still, the nature of the ICSPA project- aimed at institutional development of the NAA required an intensive cooperation and involvement of the national partner. The ICSPA project was working continuously to ensure national ownership and involvement.

Within this context, the implementation of the ISCPA project required multi-layered advisory and management structures, to ensure national ownership and participation of the stakeholders through the implementation cycle.

* **The ICSPA steering and advisory structures were timely established, ensuring nationally ownership and contributing to more efficient project implementation.**

At the strategic level, the ICSPA project included the following structures:

*The Project Management Board (PMB)* was established to provide strategic support and make management decisions, including approval of project annual work plans and reports. The Speakers of the Wolesi Jirga and the Meshrano Jirga, together with the UNDP Resident Representative, co-chaired the PMB meetings. Other members of the PMB were the donors of the project, represented by Ambassadors, and the CTA.

The ICSPA project document envisaged the PMB meetings every three months or as often as may be necessary. Considering the role of the PMB and high-level representation, this frequency was unnecessary and overambitious. Finally, the PMB was meeting once per year, successfully performing its role while also creating supporting environment for the parliamentary leadership to implement politically challenging reforms

*The Project's Technical Working Group (P-TWG)* was established to provide technical oversight, quality assurance advice and recommendations to the PMB on emerging priorities during the project implementation. The P-TWG reviewed progress updates and provided technical feedback on issues, such as, for example, changes to the budget and staffing structure; monitoring and responding to risks, reporting on progress. The ICSPA project document planned for bi-monthly meetings (or as often as may be necessary). Finally, the P-TWG meetings were organized twice per year; considering the role of the P-TWG this frequency was appropriate.

Also, the *Parliament's Donors Group* was established as a discussion forum for international stakeholders to facilitate cooperation and coordination and also provide updates and discuss issues on the implementation of the ICSPA Project.

* **The Project Management Unit headed by the Chief Technical Advisor was implementing ICSPA project. However, the PMU has never been at the full operational capacity, as the highly important (international) Technical Expert was not recruited until the end of the project. Also, personal issues between the management of the project and UNDP structures created tension and minimized interaction between the ICSPA project and other UNDP initiatives in the area of governance.**

The Project Management Unit (PMU) has been in charge of the actual implementation of activities and the delivery of results. The Chief Technical Advisor had the overall responsibility for the management of the project and also for policy advice to the NAA. The project document planned for additional "technical" members of the PMU; the International Technical Specialists had the roles in monitoring, evaluation and reporting for the project and also providing the NAA with specifically demanded assistance. The PMU included also operational staff (IT support, Administrative and Finance support, Interpretation and translation and transport).

However, the PMU was never established to its full operational capacity, affecting functioning and to a large degree efficiency of the project. The inception phase of the ICSPA project was marked with the lengthy recruitment process, that caused a four-month delay in deployment of the CTA (the ICSPA’s first phase). This phase of the project ensured an International Technical Expert; however, this member of the PMU was dismissed due to “insufficient competence and expertise, resulting in underperformance[[61]](#footnote-61)”. Another attempt to engage International Technical Expert ended with the similar comment on poor technical capacities. Also, the ICSPA project failed with the engagement of the international Monitoring Expert, while the comment on weak capacities of the M&E expert was repeated.

The proposed structure for the PMU for implementation of the second phase of the ISCPA project suggested to merge two international positions into a single Technical Specialist. The mid-term evaluation reflected on the challenge from the first phase of the project: after the attack against the Parliament in 2015, the CTA was absent for more than a six-month long recovery sick leave, with immense negative effects on the project implementation as majority activities were on hold. Based on lessons learned from the first phase of the project, the mid-term evaluation strongly recommended to recruit the Technical Specialist. However, this position remained vacant until the end of the project. The negative side of this decision was confirmed during the last quarters of the project, when the CTA has left for another sick leave. Although UNDP’s reaction was prompt by bringing temporary replacements, this had some implications on the project performance and deliverables[[62]](#footnote-62).

The implementation of the ICSPA project was highly centralized, relying heavily on the performance of the Chief Technical Adviser (CTA). The CTA has built a strong relationship with the leadership of both houses on the basis of mutual trust and respect. Also, the CTA maintained rather intensive communication with international project donors. These relationships have in general contributed importantly to the achievement of results, particularly in the challenging reform areas. However, the CTA’s relationship with UNDP structures was suboptimal. A good example for this could be that due to personal issues between the CTA and the head of the Governance Unit, the project was re-allocated from the Governance Unit, reporting directly to the UNDP Deputy Country Director. This decision prevented further tensions and negative scenarios, while at the same time avoided closer interaction between the ICSPA project and other governance specific projects. The ICSPA project, therefore, did not benefit from some possible opportunities, such as for example lobbying channels and additional pressure for the adoption of the Parliamentary Service Act or sharing experience on institutional reform.

* **UNDP Country office provided timely and quality support for the ICSPA project; still, some challenges related to procurement and recruitment occurred.**

The operational support to the ICSPA project provided by the UNDP office was adequate and timely. Still, some issues related to procurement and recruitment of experts occurred. The belated preparation of the procurement plans for the ICSPA project and insufficiently clear and elaborated Terms of References resulted in the procurement dispute; the particular reference is installation of telephone lines for the NAA. The management of the ICSPA project remained rigid on advices from UNDP CO and the dispute is being resolved at the arbitration[[63]](#footnote-63).

* **ICSPA project has in general well-established reporting practice. Still, some indicators have been weak and sources of verification were not provided.**

The ICSPA project has established the basis for results-oriented reporting procedure with Annual and Quarterly Progress Reports. The ICSPA project reported progress towards the achievement of planned results/ targets, while using proposed indicators from the Results and Resources Framework ((equivalent to a "logical framework" in the UNDP's programming structure) to measure the progress.

The ICSPA project has not established a sound monitoring system, although it was a requirement from the project document. Still, the basis was established, as the RRF of the project provided indicators. Specifically, the revision of the ICSPA project document in 2016 enabled that the indicators from the National Parliament's Reform Action Plans were adopted, with its targets and milestones and the project was regularly reporting progress[[64]](#footnote-64). The indicators were sex-disaggregated to the extent possible. The ICSPA project designed alternative methods of data collection, aimed at facilitating the systematization of gender-disaggregated information. For instance, the ICSPA project drafted a perception survey, which included gender-focused questions in order to identify and properly assess gender dynamics and existing inequalities within the Parliament. More details on indicators and targets have been provided under the effectiveness part of this report.

## 5.4. Sustainability and impact

* **Overall, the ICSPA project has made important contribution to the National Assembly of Afghanistan’s long-term sustainable institutional development.**

**The stakeholders from the NAA have in general expressed positive views about sustainability of results achieved by the ICSPA project in the context of the long-term sustainable institutional development of the NAA.**

The ICSPA project has been instrumental in initiating organizational development processes in the Wolesi and Meshrano Jirgas. As indicated in the previous paragraphs of this report, the self-assessment of all Wolesi Jirga and Meshrano Jirga Departments and Directorates[[65]](#footnote-65) has been the initial step and joint working groups of directors and staff from similar departments in each House have been working to prepare plans per department [[66]](#footnote-66). These processes resulted in the Parliament Secretariats’ Reform Action Plans (RAP).

The ICSPA prepared its support to the self-assessment methodology in close interaction with the management of the NAA[[67]](#footnote-67), while adhering to the IPU standards[[68]](#footnote-68). The Self-Assessment Committee, comprising of the Wolesi and Meshrano Jirga’s senior management[[69]](#footnote-69) was established and reported regularly to the Speakers and Administrative Boards. The joint involvement of two Houses during the process ensured exchange of expertise and lessons between the houses. The self-assessment revealed a wide range of issues and recommendations to support the Parliament’s institutional development and the ICSPA project remained involved in some of the priority areas of reform[[70]](#footnote-70) (

The ICSPA project has been perceived as balanced and neutral support[[71]](#footnote-71), and its assistance (through partnership) was essential to enable the Houses of the NAA to undertake this exercise[[72]](#footnote-72). The NAA expressed strong ownership and leadership during the self-assessment process[[73]](#footnote-73), stating that the NAA has established internal capacities to continue with similar analysis in the future[[74]](#footnote-74). Organizational, operational and technical capacities of the Wolesi and Meshrano Jirgas have been strengthened through sound technical assistance/ mentoring and transfer of knowledge provided through direct interaction with the Inter-Parliamentary Union; the ICSPA project has initiated this partnership and cooperation[[75]](#footnote-75). Preparation of the draft Parliamentary Service Act has been one of the most important results of this partnership.

Highly important staff perception surveys have been introduced as a regular practice[[76]](#footnote-76) to assess staff perception of the NAA’s performance in different areas using quality standards from the IPU as points of reference. The project also assisted with the development of operating procedures and policies for the NAA. Some examples are the: Archives policy; the Library Policy; the Gender Mainstreaming Policy for the NAA; annual action and work planning procedures, etc.

The ICSPA project was working on development of capacities of the professional staff of General Secretariats of both houses for policy and law-making. However, the confidence about sustainability of these results has been less evident, as the partners clearly stated that capacity gaps in these areas (policy and law making) remain apparent and require immediate assistance. This is especially evident in the context of recent elections and the needs of the newly elected members of the Parliament and the NAA Commissions.

* **At the level of leadership of both houses, the ICSPA project has been recognized as an effective support that contributed to** **altering mind-sets of the parliamentary leadership in adopting and implementing reforms towards compliance with international parliamentary standards.**

**The technical capacities of the ICSPA team particularly through the involvement of the CTA and direct interaction with the Inter-Parliamentary Union have been critical factors that have generated and maintained high degree of commitment to reforms within the NAA.**

The ICSPA project, closely working with the Inter-Parliamentary Union, was instrumental in changing and developing mind-sets and the approach of the parliamentary leadership in adopting and implementing reforms towards compliance with international parliamentary standards. Specifically, the Secretary Generals, the Deputy Secretary Generals and other members of the leadership/ management teams from the Wolesi Jirga and the Meshrano Jirga increased their capacities on practical aspects of institutional reforms (e.g. organizing and implementing self-assessments; identifying reform priorities and preparing action plans).

There is evident commitment and readiness to implement reform priorities and work towards transparent and accountable governance system in Afghanistan[[77]](#footnote-77). Particularly important remained the adoption (and also implementation) of the Parliamentary Service Act. The PSA has been based on the concept of "separation of powers" between the executive and legislative branches and its adoption should set the basis for parliamentary "functional autonomy"; namely, to establish the NAA as a modern and effective parliament that “demonstrates impartiality in the NAA's oversight of government”[[78]](#footnote-78), with a sustainable human resource base required for its long-term institutional development. At the same time, the NAA's leadership reported important achievements in the implementation of the Reform Action Plans particularly related to document management, human resources, gender equality, finance, and procurement[[79]](#footnote-79). Specific results have been: i) regular uploads on the NAA website all the key plenary and committee program papers; ii) functioning of the Legislative Tracking System that ensured public availability of all the laws and by-laws; iii) e-archiving for the secretariats to modernize their paper handling; implementation of rules of procedures, including regular updates of the attendance records (these efforts for increased transparency will be further advanced and institutionalized through e-voting system and iv) the NAA has established televised oversight of government sessions held by committees of the Upper and Lower Houses.

The Staff Perception Surveys (SPS), prepared and piloted in 2016 (and also implemented in 2017 and 2018[[80]](#footnote-80)) with technical support from the ICSPA project and in coordination with the IPU, has been institutionalized**[[81]](#footnote-81)** as an important element for continuous reform efforts**[[82]](#footnote-82)**, providing the leadership of the NAA and other stakeholders with “useful management information”. Some examples could be the results related to perception of harassment and abuse of authority that allowed the Secretaries-General to take immediate actions[[83]](#footnote-83). Substantial and successful support was delivered for the Houses’ Gender Units to improve their work plans and strengthen engagement of women journalists and civil rights bodies with Parliament[[84]](#footnote-84).

* **The ICSPA project has been, in general, effective in contributing to increased transparent practices of the NAA and its both houses (Wolesi and Meshrano Jirga).**

The main contribution of the ICSPA project to transparency, accountability and public participation is through the e-parliament techniques, namely, through the establishment of e-voting and e-attendancesystem**.** In addition to e-voting, the new system would allow instantaneous publishing of MP plenary attendance and voting records[[85]](#footnote-85) and allow sharing of documents electronically, enabling the creation of MP groups and making instantaneous communication between group members during plenary meetings possible. This could facilitate coordinated voting and also could encourage collective decision-making[[86]](#footnote-86).

Another example of the improved transparency practice in the NAA supported through the ICSPA project have been publishing weekly parliamentary agendas (the Order Papers) on the parliament’s websites in advance[[87]](#footnote-87). The publication of the weekly parliamentary agenda allowed MPs time to consider and prepare for plenary sessions in advance[[88]](#footnote-88); it also enabled the CSOs, trained journalists and the media to raise concerns with Members prior to debate[[89]](#footnote-89) Also, making public information about parliamentary proceedings publicly available has been one of the main objectives of the ICSPA project and the project supported the NAA in production of Hansard through capacity development and software utilisation. Installing foot-pedals for the stenographers and installing transcription software, Hansard reporters can more efficiently record plenary and committee hearings[[90]](#footnote-90). Both Houses publish Hansard electronically as a bilingual report (reflecting the language spoken) usually on the third or fourth day after a plenary meeting takes place, depending on how long the plenary session lasts. In the past, Hansard reports took a longer time and were not published on parliamentary websites[[91]](#footnote-91).

Part of the efforts to increase transparency also included publishing up-to-date Admin Board, MP, Senator and parliamentary committee composition and contact details on the websites[[92]](#footnote-92).

The ICSPA project supported both houses of the NAA to establish You Tube channels and update them with daily uploads of plenary session proceedings to keep the public better informed of the parliament’s work. The ICSPA supported the NAA to broadcast Wolesi Jirga and Meshrano Jirga Commission hearings on national television. These broadcasts were unique in the history of the NAA that also contributed to accountability role of the NAA to the nation, “demonstrating relevance of the NAA to the governance system of Afghanistan[[93]](#footnote-93)”.

* **The ICSPA project has employed an innovative model for organizational development of the National Assembly of Afghanistan, starting with the self-assessment through a NAA-driven setting of reform priorities to implementation of activities. The ICSPA project has fully adjusted its intervention logic, aligning it with the identified reform priorities.**

The ICSPA project employed an innovative model for organizational development, uniquely implemented in the public sector in Afghanistan. The stakeholders from the NAA received assistance to improve procedures, modernize processes, and advance functioning, thus enhancing their operational efficiency[[94]](#footnote-94). Overall, the NAA and its leadership has reported performance improvements [[95]](#footnote-95).

This nationally driven problem identification and priority setting through technical, advisory, and secretariat support for the management and employees from the NAA has been an essential change in the development paradigm, from from external and donors' driven to fully nationally led and owned processes.

The NAA partners suggested several reasons to justify innovativeness of the ICSPA model and its efforts to diagnose institutional problems through self-driven, participatory assessment of the Wolesi and Meshrano Jirga's and generate forward-looking reform agenda:

* Leadership from both houses of the NAA have initiated and took the lead in reforms. They have been the driving force for reforms and together with the employees from the NAA carried out the analysis of the organizational challenges vis-à-vis delivering core functions. These findings have been reflected in the *Self-assessment Report* with management information for the political and administrative leaderships about Parliament’s reform requirements.

Thus, the involvement of the leadership of Meshrano and Wolesi Jirga, including the Secretary Generals, their deputies and the management teams, has created a real sense of ownership and commitment, while enhancing readiness to address challenges and implement reforms. The overarching priorities have been defined in light of increased transparency, accountability, and responsiveness of the Parliament to the citizens.

* The reform efforts that the ICSPA supported have been also innovative for the employees. They have been working to identify issues and challenges that required attention; thus, discussed and adopted the system to gather and analyse data necessary for informed discussions and performance rating. Employees discussed the issues in the department-based teams and proceeded to present their findings and indicators in plenary, freely challenging the results of other departments. The assessment process included all the units and departments of the NAA and revealed different performance categories – sets of related skills, procedures, and capabilities defining particular institutional performance areas. Certain obstacles related to the functioning of the NAA – such as weak communication between two houses; turn-over of staff including the facts that the executives frequently take over employees of the NAA, deteriorating security situation and attacks against the NAA-- were considered as familiar to the entire institution. Still, employees, staff were able to identify the strengths and weaknesses of their units, providing an effective springboard for a holistic Reform Action Plan.
* Progress was made on a draft Code of Conduct for MPs and a draft Parliamentary Service Act though plenary agreement remains and this will remain as a priority for the new parliament and new support to the NAA.

Political preparations for the election in late 2018 disrupted the planned government oversight hearing on SDGs in the Wolesi Jirga. There is perception among the stakeholders to intensify work of the Parliament for the SDG achievement in Afghanistan. Putting in place system and structures in form of SDGs working group/ad-hoc committee and increasing capacities to control and report on national efforts towards the achievement of SDG targets has been recognized as a priority.

## 5.5. Gender mainstreaming

* **The ICSPA project has been effective in enhancing the role of women in Afghanistan by providing support to the Parliament to test laws and draft laws for gender equality. Also, the Reform Action Plans includes recommendations to improve the role of women in the National Parliament.**

**The project has been providing support to the Gender Directorates in both Houses to work towards the achievement of gender-related targets for the Meshrano Jirga and Wolesi Jirga, as highlighted in Afghanistan’s National Action Plan for Women of Afghanistan**

The ICSPA project provided support to the Wolesi and Meshrano Jirgas ’ Gender Units; the management of the Units recognized this support as instrumental in preparing their work plans (also involving male peers throughout the whole process). The assistance from ICSPA was important in coordinating activities reaching out specifically in seminars and briefings to women journalists and women focused CSOs. The confidence demonstrated by the Units in taking this lead reflects the project’s encouragement and active support, and its advocacy for gender with the political and administrative leadership.

It is also important to record the support ICSPA provided to the televised public hearings of committees of the Houses, including the Meshrano Jirga Women’s Affairs and Civil Society Commission and the Wolesi Jirga Women’s Affairs, Civil Society and Human Rights Commission in 2018. These sessions raised the profile of the committees, and most importantly, brought public attention to the highly topical subjects of the commission inquiries, namely, the status of women’s involvement in the current ‘peace process’, and the implementation of the anti-harassment law passed to protect women and children, respectively. The commission hearings were made possible by ICSPA’s drive to assist Parliament institutionally with ICT enhancements and in developing the pace of Parliament’s communications and outreach effort.

The ICSPA project supported preparation of the Reform Action Plan, that included also gender related consideration. Also, the draft Paliamentary Service Act included provisions to institutionalize a wide range of policies aimed at releasing the benefits of equalizing gender opportunities in a systematic way. ICSPA project supported the NAA to organize and deliver annual Staff Perception Surveys, exposing a range of data relating to gender issues in the secretariats, such as significant gender imbalance and unacceptable workplace practices such as harassment and bullying directed largely (though by no means exclusively) to women members of staff.

The information assembled by the Survey process afforded the senior management of the Houses an excellent opportunity to institutionalize remedial action aimed at enhancing the working environment for all staff, with women as a priority.

# 6. Conclusions and lessons learned

## 6.1. Conclusions

The analysis of the findings resulted in the following core conclusions:

**Conclusion 1: The ICSPA project has been fully aligned with the priorities of the NAA, summarized in the Reform Action Plan, while also addressing some of the critical governance and public sector reform priorities for Afghanistan**

The presence of substantive problem analysis and needs assessment of the NAA that continued through priority setting facilitated process of ICSPA’s gradual adjustments and more targeted assistance, increasing its relevance in the context of the needs of the NAA. The second phase of the project (2016-2019) was especially relevant as the reform vehicle, and the ICSPA project contributed to some of the sensitive reform efforts. The project was instrumental in establishment of partnership between the NAA and the IPU; also, preparation of the Parliamentary Service Act has been one of the important milestones. The passage of the PSA remains an outstanding challenge, regardless of intensive advocacy and lobbying support from the project and its partners. Further support for the adoption and implementation of the PSA remains priority and stated goal of the NAA leadership.

**Conclusion 2. During the preparation and implementation of the ICSPA project, UNDP confirmed itself as a responsive and adaptive partner. Long-term presence and partnership with the NAA, technical capacities of the staff and especially the Chief Technical Advisor, and strong accountability for results were recognized as the critical factors for successful implementation of the ICSPA project.**

UNDP as the implementing partner was recognized and appreciated by the NAA and other international development partners (and donors) as highly effective in delivering results and adaptive to the changes in the difficult implementation environment. In this context, the ICSPA was relatively flexible within the defined project framework and approved Annual Work Plans, while being responsive to the needs and priorities of the national partners from the NAA.

Based on the positive experience and comparative advantages of UNDP, the need for further engagement of UNDP in the institutional development of the permanent and political structures of the NAA has been articulated.

**Conclusion 3: The ICSPA project was in general effective in delivering planned results, while results in some areas contributed to sustainable organizational changes that exceeded planned benefits.**

During the implementation of the project, the most important results have been that both Houses of the National Parliament carried out the self-assessment in October 2015 and prepared the Self-Assessment Report and the Reform Action Plans (RAPs). The ICSPA project was effective in supporting and encouraging the leadership of the NAA to embark on reform processes, with the Secretaries General and their deputies on forefront of these efforts. The ICSPA project, and particularly its CTA, has been the principal advisor to the SGs and their teams in formulating and implementing reforms and improving transparency of the NAA. Some of the most notable achievements were improved system to share information about the Parliament’s functions and functioning, structures and proceedings. This information was made available to the public through the national media and the Parliament’s website. The NAA decided to reduce number of Parliamentary committees to ensure efficiency. Also, the NAA started publishing MP attendance records, fining and suspending MPs for non-attendance. These achievements have been highly important in gaining commitments to reforms.

The project started work on establishing the required ICT infrastructure (local area network and media pool). The objective is to improve transparency by sharing parliamentary documentation and information with the media and the public but also between departments. The ICT infrastructure was also precondition to improve the financial, administrative, procurement and human resource work-flow processes. Sustainability and national ownership of the entire process was ensured through a Secretary General-led Meshrano Jirga ICT governance group.

The ICSPA project was effective in facilitating partnership with the Inter-Parliamentary Union. As result of this partnership, the technical assistance was provided to design a Parliamentary Service Act, setting the basis towards ensuring the autonomy of parliament staff from the Executive branch.

**Conclusion 4: The efficiency of the ICSPA project was satisfactory, and the support from UNDP CO was timely and adequate. However, cooperation between the ICSPA project and UNDP Governance Portfolio has been limited, and strategic approach in this context was lacking.**

The ICSPA project has been implemented efficiently: there were issues during the implementation that were addressed in general efficiently. However, some of the core staff for the project team have not been recruited and this had negative effects on the implementation of the project during the absence of the CTA.

The position and focus of the ICSPA project on the legislative governance branch (and the National Assembly of Afghanistan as the central institution) was unique. Still, opportunities for cooperation internally, for example between ICSPA project and other large-scale programs that were supporting executives in the areas of SDG planning, establishment of sound and transparent elections system, strengthening governance at sub-national level, have not been utilized. Particularly, the ICSPA project could benefited from stronger advocacy for the adoption of the Parliamentary Service Act, using lobbying and advocacy channels through other UNDP projects.

**Conclusion 5. Coordination between the NAA, the ICSPA project and other development partners implementing projects in support to the NAA, has generally been in place.**

The ICSPA project has been in general effective in supporting leaderships of both houses of the NAA, the Speakers, Secretary Generals and their deputies, and working with other international development partners to establish a coordination mechanism of the interventions for the NAA. The efforts for the establishment of the Technical Working Group and the Donor Working Group within the ICSPA project have been important for institutionalization of coordination principles within the NAA

Day-to-day cooperation and coordination between the project and the leadership of the NAA has been adequate, as the PMU was based in the NAA premises.

**Conclusion 6: Monitoring of the ICSPA project has been based on the RAP indicators; however, these indicators have not been sufficient or adequate in many cases to measure the progress or verify achievements**

The revised ICSPA project (in 2016) adopted indicators from the RAP as the main references to measure progress. However, there were gaps in reporting and collecting information related to these indicators – e.g. monitoring assignment, reporting on progress, disaggregation of data. Although the ICSPA project adopted results-oriented reporting practice, the quality of indicators did not facilitate this process.

Capacity development has been implemented steadily across different activities of the ICSPA project, being probably the main technical assistance tool. However, the project did not have specific indicators to measure developed capacities or utilization of developed capacities. Thus, capacity development support has been implemented without considering fine tuning or adjustments that could contribute to higher level results in relation to overall reform agenda.

**Conclusion 7. Implementation of the ICSPA project over the entire period have brought concrete, visible results, contributing to institutional strengthening and establishment of transparent services of the National Assembly of Afghanistan.**

Overall sustainability of results is likely to be ensured to the satisfying degree, particularly at level of individual employees and leadership of the NAA; it is also likely that the results related to the NAA as an institution will remain. However, the results and expected changes at the systemic level could be less sustainable without the adoption of the Parliamentary Service Act.

UNDP is regarded as an independent, fair and impartial partner, making also noteworthy contribution to confidence-building among the partners and different stakeholders involved in the work with the NAA. Continuation of support will be needed in the ICSPA priority areas, to further enhance sustainability prospects of achieved results, thus, advance and “institutionalize”. More specific aspects of the future support would depend on substantive problem analysis of the needs and priorities of the NAA

**Conclusion 8. The sense of ownership of the NAA leadership and employees over the results achieved during the implementation of the ICSPA project was satisfactory, and the strong content with the extent of their involvement in the specific project activities was evident**

The content and areas of intervention of the ICSPA project has clearly reflected the needs of the NAA, as spelled out in the Reform Action Plan. Also, implementation of the ICSPA project included direct involvement and cooperation with the leadership and staff from the NAA. Practically, the NAA leadership was involved in the preparation and approval of the Annual Work Plans and participated in project implementation, through the steering and supervisory mechanisms and participation in activities. These specific management and implementation arrangements for the ICSPA project have been satisfactory, contributing to increased sense of ownership.

Still, there are external factors that are affecting and could further affect sustainability of results; namely, governance arrangements with the control authority of the executives over legislative branch with shown resistance to the adoption of the Parliamentary Service Act, while also the state of tensed security and unstable political situation, policy reorientation and weak capacities, particularly to embark on reforms.

**Conclusion 9:** **Through the ISCPA project support was available to the NAA to increase awareness of the complexities of gender equality. Also, the ICSPA project has supported the NAA to mainstream gender issues into its activities.**

However, these interventions have been less effective in expanding focus from gender participation toward more gender responsive and gender transformative approaches. Gender mainstreaming has not been strongly linked to transformation of gender relations in the functioning of the NAA. Also, the ICSPA project has been less effective at measuring and monitoring gender results.

## 6.2. Lessons learned

The final evaluation has analysed results, conclusions and findings that were generated during the implementation of the ICSPA project and generated the following lessons learned have generated:

**Ensuring ownership of reform processes and results is inevitably linked with sustainability of reform efforts**

Ownership is the exercise of control and command over development activities; practically, national stakeholders “owe” the development process when they are committed to it and able to translate its commitment into effective action. This definition incorporates institutional dimensions such as the control of resources and abilities to implement activities and achieve results. The ICSPA project was working steadily to ensure national ownership, starting from reform ideas for the NAA, to organizational development priorities to implementation. The ICSPA national partners stated that the ICSPA was flexible and responsive to their needs, while also expressing high degree of satisfaction with actual involvement in implementation of activities. The ownership of implementation processes has been particularly important for the identification and preparation of reform plans and implementation of some of the most challenging reforms.

**Recognizing and responding to the needs of the national partners from the NAA was crucial to successful implementation**

Responsiveness and flexibility, alignment with the development priorities and the needs of the NAA and also a long-term strategic commitment of UNDP and other international development actors through the ICSPA project was among the most critical factors that have contributed to the achieved results. Also, cooperation and coordination between ICSPA and other interventions for the NAA proved to be beneficial for more effective implementation.

Maintaining strong cooperation with the leadership of the NAA, other partners and donors contributed to good results during the implementation of ICSPA project and proved to be an excellent operational model.

**Exposure to best international parliamentary practices and learning from the international partners has directly contributed to reform efforts and commitments**

The reform capacity and commitment for transparent and accountable functioning of the Secretary Generals and key personnel in both Houses of the National Parliament have increased significantly through the support of the ICSPA project. Engagement with the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) was one of the most important moments, especially its assistance with the finalization and presentation of the Parliament Reform Action Plans and with the drafting of the Parliamentary Service Act. Thus, exposure to international best practices and participation in different IPU forums and bodies further advanced through direct exchange of experience with the IPU experts proved to be highly important for reform commitments.

Continued engagement and cooperation with IPU remains critical and required for further advancement of planned and initiated reforms.

**Timely established and competent project management unit could minimize risks that could occurred during the project implementation**

The ICSPA Project Management Unit (PMU) has never been established at full capacity, as some of the core positions has remained vacant. The functioning of the project has relied heavily on the Chief Technical Adviser (CTA) who has been great asset but at the same a bottleneck to (timely) implementation of the project, due to extended absence on the health basis. Therefore, the PMU optimal structure with clear roles of each position is required to ensure adequate delivery capacities and also provide technical advice to the national partners.

**Organizational development of public institutions requires time and commitment of all partners**

The longer-term support ensured through the ICSPA project and demonstrated commitment of all partners have contributed to institutional development of the NAA. Longer-term intervention and technical assistance available through the ICSPA project set the stage for more comprehensive strategic and programming approach that would lead to more substantial gains and measurable progress in the functionating of the NAA and the overall governance system in Afghanistan.

# 7. Recommendations

Based on the analysis of findings and conclusions the evaluation has prepared the following core recommendations:

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| **R1: It is recommended to design new project that will continue and further build on activities that were available through the ICSPA project** |
| The National Assembly of Afghanistan, with the newly elected Speakers and Secretary Generals of both houses and also newly elected members of the Parliament has reached challenging stage of its development. At the same time, technical assistance that was available through international development assistance ceased: the USAID/ ALBA Project as the principle technical research and legislative drafting assistance provided to committees has been completed. Similarly, other initiatives such as UN Women support to women MPs and ICSPA project have been completed.  Further support is needed – as requested by Parliament’s leadership - to ensure consolidation and development of the gains made by the secretariats with the help of ICSPA and previous projects. It is recommended to consider large, multi-annual programmatic framework to support the NAA, following, aligned with the successful ICSPA’s approach. Hence, for the follow up project it is recommended to continue support to the General Secretariats and directorates of the Wolesi and Meshrano Jirgas. Considering best practice from the ICSPA project, it is recommended to include revision of the Reform Action Plan as one of the first activities, and set clear priorities for the period 2020-2022. The RAP should resolve the issues from the previous period, particularly concerning the roles and responsibilities for implementation of priorities, timelines and clearer indicators to measure progress.  It is recommended to continue and expand efforts for preparation/ finalization and adoption of the Code of Conduct for each house of the NAA.  Also, it remains the priority to continue support to define and improve rules and regulations that would regulate the core areas of the NAA performance. |
| **R2: It is recommended for the follow up project to include support for the elected members of the Parliament and the committees. Particularly recommended is to consider development of capacities of the MPs for policy making and law drafting** |
| It is recommended for UNDP to use its technical capacities and expertise and support newly elected members of the Parliament and strenghten their capacities to implement core functions, namely, lawmaking, oversight, and representation. Large number of the MPs are elected for the first time, and do not have any political experience. Therefore, it is recommended to prepare and deliver basic training on the core functions of the Parliament.  Also, there will be a need for more specialized training programs. Particularly important will be to address and develop capacities of the MPs for the overall policy cycle (from issue definitiation, to policy drafting and allocation of resources, to policy implementation, including monitoring and evaluation to reporting on progress). It remains critically important to strenghetn law-making capacities of the MPs, from preparation to analysis of possible impacts of laws. |
| **R3: It is recommended to link the support to the NAA with the Sustainable Development Goals and enhance the role of the NAA in the achievement of the SDGs for Afghanistan** |
| Parliamentarians have an opportunity, and a constitutional responsibility, to play a significant role in supporting and monitoring SDG implementation. The Agenda 2030 Declaration acknowledges the “essential role of national parliaments through their enactment of legislation and adoption of budgets, and their role in ensuring accountability for the effective implementation of our commitments.” Members of parliament are uniquely positioned to act as an interface between the people and state institutions, and to promote and adopt people-centered policies and legislation to ensure that no one is left behind.  Therefore, it is recommended to design support that would start with an overview of the SDGs and their relevance to parliamentarians. It is recommended to demonstrate and highlight that almost all the issues that come before a parliament for consideration concern the SDGs.  Implementation of the SDGs in Afghanistan would require to use a wide range of policy and programme approaches. In this context, legislation is the necessary policy response to address challenges that the NAA should carry out. The NAA plays a vital role in the adoption of the state budget (enacted as a law of the NAA). Thus, the NAA has critical importance in creating enabling environment and ensuring that funds are directed towards the most vital national SDG priorities.Based on a review of the core functions of a parliament - lawmaking, oversight, and representation- it is recommended to identify specific methods and tools for the parliamentarians to actively deliver results for the people whom they represent that support SDG implementation.  Some of the recommended activities could be:  i) Possible activities and recommendations related to lawmaking  The achievement of the A-SDGs would require law reform in different sectors. Therefore, a systematic approach is recommended that will enable the NAA to undertake more comprehensive law reform, to contribute to the implementation of national development priorities. This process should start with an SDG Law Reform Needs Assessment. The assessment should enable to identify legal reform priorities for progress under the A-SDGs.  ii) Possible activities and recommendations related to budget approval and oversight  The annual state budget law should be the primary funding instrument to direct resources towards SDG implementation. Therefore, the role of the NAA will be highly instrumental in the process of budget formulation and endorsement. The NAA should ensure that the budget is primarily focused on outcomes within the SDG framework. This would require that MPs develop their technical capacities for budget preparation and analysis. At the same time, the guiding principle should be to ensure that efforts are “people-centered” and that no-one – especially from marginalized and vulnerable groups – is left behind.  The NAA should develop capacities to analyze and ensure that the funding allocated for SDG achievement (through the national budget) is effectively and accountably spent. The focus should be on sustainable and impactful results.  Particularly important will be to provide technical support to the specialized parliamentary committees mandated with reviewing the government’s expenditures at the end of the budget cycle. It is recommended to carry out hearings and field monitoring activities, and provide technical support to the committees through direct interaction to assist with the analysis and reporting.  iii) Possible activities and recommendations related to oversight role of the NAA  It is recommended to strengthen committee oversight role, as one of the most reliable mechanisms available to the NAA to engage in SDG implementation. The priority will be to enhance capacities of the MPs to assess in more depth if and to what extent policies, laws, and programmes are supporting attainment of the SDGs. The MPs should be capacitated to provide recommendations on how to improve implementation. The MPs through the committees have the opportunity to undertake detailed examinations of critical issues, by allocating more time to individual issues and engaging a wide cross-section of stakeholders in their deliberations. In this regard, parliamentarians can play an essential role as a link between the State and the people, including the most marginalized and vulnerable. Ideally, it is recommended that the committees consider public engagement as a core part of their functions. This could become one of the most active domestic accountability mechanisms available to make sure that SDG implementation stays on track.  iv) Possible activities and recommendations related to the representation role of the NAA in implementation of the SDGs  It is recommended to build on the results of the ICSPA project and further strengthen policy-oriented dialogue with the citizens. The objective should be to establish continues dialogue and gain insight from the experiences of people if the laws passed and the monitoring conducted by parliament reflects interests and concerns of people. It is recommended to explore opportunities to get comments and insights from the most vulnerable citizens of Afghanistan.  Finally, it is recommended for the NAA to work with other implementing institutions from the public management system and also with civil society and the media to ensure progress towards the A- SDGs. |
| **R4: It is recommended to prioritize adoption of the Parliamentary Service Act** |
| Adoption and implementation of the Parliamentary Service Act remains a critical requirement for the long-term institutional development of the NAA. However, the current governance system in Afghanistan including division of power remains particular challenge and the executives will resist the adoption of the PSA. It is recommended that the new project consider carefully approaches and scenarios to advocate for the adoption of the PSA. The strong argument could be that the enactment of the Parliamentary Service Act would ensure adequate oversight of the SGDs and control of the national resources and budgetary support from the EU and other international partners.  It is recommended to subsequent to the adoption of the Parliamentary Service Act, UNDP and development partners provide more specific assistance to facilitate full implementation of the PSA. |
| **R5: It is recommended to continue support to the NAA for its active role to ensure of greater gender equality in Afghanistan** |
| The need remains high to ensure effective gender equality processes within the National Parliament. It is recommended to design activities to foster women empowerment and gender mainstreaming within the Afghan Parliament. Some of the recommended actions could be capacity building for female employees to increase their participation in decision-making; capacity building for all employees to understand the basic principles of gender equality and gender mainstreaming in policy formulation. Support to the Gender Directorates in both Houses should intensify in the next period.  It is recommended to consider gender transformative approach (not only participation as the mean feature of gender equality) in all interventions within the new project. Also, the new project should include more elaborate gender-specific targets and gender disaggregated indicators.  For the new intervention, it is recommended to explore opportunities and introduce gender-sensitive reporting practice (to the extent possible) especially in the preparation of annual reports. |

# Annex 1: Terms of Reference

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|  | UNITED NATIONS DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME |

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| **INDIVIDUAL CONSULTANT PROCUREMENT NOTICE/TERMS OF REFERENCE** |
| **Title of Individual Consultant: International Consultant** **(Project Evaluation Expert)**  **Project: Institutional Capacity Support to Parliament of Afghanistan (ICSPA)**  **Duration of assignment: Maximum 25 working days**  **Duty station: Home based (5 days) Kabul, AFGHANISTAN (20 days)** |
| **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, and the Afghan Parliament – the National Assembly of Afghanistan.  **The National Assembly of Afghanistan**  The National Assembly of Afghanistan is a bicameral parliament comprised of the Wolesi Jirga (the House of the People – Lower House) of 249 seats (members directly elected in multi-seat constituencies by proportional representation vote to serve 5-year terms, at least 2 from each province being women); and the Meshrano Jirga (the House of Elders – Upper House) of 102 members (34 members indirectly elected by district councils to serve 3-year terms,[[96]](#footnote-96) 34 indirectly elected by provincial councils to serve 4-year terms, and 34 nominated by the president of which 17 are women, 2 represent the disabled, and 2 Kuchi nomads; members nominated by the president serve 5-year terms.  The duties of the NAA, as set out in Article 90 of the Constitution, are:   * Ratification, modification or abrogation of laws and legislative decrees; * Approval of plans for economic, social, cultural and technological development; * Approval of state budget, permission for obtaining and granting loans; * Creation, modification, and abrogation of administrative units; * Ratification of international treaties and agreements, or abrogation of Afghanistan’s membership of them; * Other authorities specified in the Constitution.   Each House is governed by an Administrative/Steering Board comprised of the Speaker, Deputy Speakers and Secretaries.  Secretaries General serve as the administrative heads of each House.  **Organizational Context**  The UNDP has supported the National Assembly of Afghanistan (NAA) during the run up to its opening in November 2005 and subsequently through a number of support projects: *Support to the Establishment of the Afghan Legislature* (**SEAL 1**- 2005-08) was a broad-based project covering secretariat support, legal and procedural support, outreach, legislative, oversight and representational capacity develoment, and external donor coordination mechanisms established - directed towards assisting parliament to launch and establish itself successfully; *Support for an Effective Afghan Legislature* (**SEAL 2** - 2008-12) had a focus on strengthening parliament’s ‘core’ legislative, oversight, representational and outreach capacities; and the *Strategic Support to the Afghan Parliament* (**SAAP** - 2012-13) was designed mainly to identify an appropriate framework for future support which resulted in the *Institutional and Capacity Support to the Parliament of Afghanistan* (**ICSPA** - 2014-19). ICSPA aimed at the sustainable institutional development of the House secretariats: its first phase supported the secretariats in carrying out self-assessments of their performance against international parliamentary standards resulting in a detailed *NAA Reform Action Plan*; a second phase (2016-19), based on a revised project document, supported the the *Plan’s* implementation.  **ICSPA closed on 31 March 2019 and the leadership of the National Assembly of Afghanistan has requested that the UNDP formulate a successor support project.** |
| **SCOPE OF WORK AND DELIVERABLES** |
| **Objective of the Assignment:**  The initial project document foresaw an independent Final evaluation following a mid-term evaluation which reported in April 2017. The Final evaluation should cover ICSPA implementation throughout its life, 1 April 2014 to 31 March 2019. This will include the project start-up phase; the first project phase of implementation related to supporting the Parliament’s preparation of its self-assessment framework and reform action plan; as well as revision of the project document, the launch/implementation of activities during the project’s phase II; and closure.  The focus of the evaluation is to be on the degree to which the project has contributed to adoption of reforms promoted by the leadership that increase the secretariats’ compliance with international parliamentary standards; as well as, in turn, how this may or may not be contributing to the Afghan Parliament’s long-term sustainable institutional development, including transparency and oversight.  As the ICSPA project focus is limited to supporting the parliamentary secretariats, the evaluation should remain limited to evaluating impact on secretariat structures and processes as identified in the results of the PRODOC. Afghan MPs and parliamentary committees were supported directly through a parallel USAID-funding project whose impact should be omitted from this evaluation.  In particular, the Final evaluation should address the following:   * Were the project interventions relevant and to what degree has the project contributed to the National Assembly of Afghanistan’s long-term sustainable institutional development? * Has the project contributed to altering mind-sets and the approach of the parliamentary leadership in adopting and implementing reforms towards compliance with international parliamentary standards for the Wolesi Jirga and Meshrano Jirga secretariats? * To what degree has the project contributed to increased transparent practices? * To what degree were the project based initiatives driven by the parliamentary leadership and are the initiatives undertaken to date sustainable? * Were project interventions aligned with the Afghan Parliament’s priorities and coordinated with the interventions of other development partners to prevent duplication and reduce transaction costs on the parliament? Were all development partner interventions well-coordinated in support of the Afghan Parliament’s priorities and driven by the parliament itself for sustainable institutional development? Did the ICSPA project interventions effectively complement interventions of other development partners? * Has the project employed any innovative models or approaches that may be applicable to other institutional development projects in Afghanistan or abroad? * What challenges did the project face and did it deal appropriately to overcome these by proposing mitigating measures related to issues and risks in advance? Has the project received adequate and timely support from national and international partners? * What are the lessons learned from the project that may be applicable to similar institutional development projects in Afghanistan or abroad? |
| **WORKING ARRANGEMENTS** |
| **Institutional Arrangements:**  The consultant will work under the overall supervision of the Governance Unit Head and Program officer. The contractor shall work in close collaboration with the UNDP Governance Unit staff as well as other units within the UNDP Country Office.  The Governance unit will provide office space and internet facility, logistical and other support service, including transport and security applicable to UNDP international personnel. The consultant however is expected to bring his/her own laptop and mobile phone and meet local communications costs (Governance unit will provide a local pre-paid SIM card). Costs to arrange meetings, workshops, travel costs to and DSA during field visits (if any), etc. shall be covered by the Governance unit.  **Duration of the Work:**  The performance under the contract shall take place over total contract duration of 25 working days maximum) following below schedule of activity.   | **Weeks / Dates** | **Description of activities** | | | --- | --- | --- | | 5 working days | Desk review of existing project information sources (home-based) | | 7 working days | Consultations with national and international partners in Kabul including consultations with beneficiaries | | | 5 working days | Drafting of Final Evaluation Report in Kabul and presentation of key findings to national and international partners in Kabul | | | 3 working days | Revision of report based on any feedback received from UNDP in Kabul | | | 1 working day | Submission and acceptance of finished Final Evaluation report in Kabul | |   **Stakeholder participation:**  Key stakeholders to be involved will comprise:   * The political and administrative leadership of the Wolesi Jirga (Lower House) and Meshrano Jirga (Upper House) of the National Assembly of Afghanistan including the respective Speakers, Secretaries General and Deputy Secretaries General; Heads of National Assembly of Afghanistan departments; and relevant department/directorate staff * Representatives of project donors comprising the Embassy of the Federal Republic of Germany, the European Union Delegation in Afghanistan and the UK Department for International Development. * UNDP Afghanistan Country Office Programme Management * Representatives of development partner entities providing, or having provided in the past, support to the Afghan Parliament through parallel projects/activities whether active or past including the USAID/ALBA project, UNWOMEN and UNFPA   **Accountabilities:**  UNDP Country Office Programme staff (Governance Unit) will be accountable for coordination of stakeholders involved, organizing field-visits, focus groups, and other logistical issues. Chief PSRT will provide technical support to reviewing inception reports, methodology, etc. as necessary. UNDP Country Office, PM, and CO Management will be accountable for reviewing/approving intermediate and final evaluation results. The evaluator shall be independent in the evaluation exercise, while taking into account sensitive issues which may arise during the course of assessment. There are no  **Duty Station:**  The duty station for the Consultant shall be in Kabul, Afghanistan for the duration of 20 working days and the remaining 5 working days the consultant will work from home. The consultant shall report to the Governance Unit (CO) located in the UNOCA compound during working hours, security conditions permitting. The contractor will follow the working hours and weekends as applicable to UNDP CO staff. The consultant’s movement for meetings and consultations are coordinated by the Governance Unit. The consultant is required to observe UNDP security rules and regulations. |
| **REQUIREMENTS FOR EXPERIENCE AND QUALIFICATIONS** |
| **Academic Qualifications:**   * Masters university degree in political science, development studies, parliamentary studies, public administration, international relations, or related field. * Substantive knowledge of gender mainstreaming and Human Rights * Knowledge of Afghanistan’s social, political and economic situation * Knowledge of UNDP and its mandate in the area of democratic governance and programme development * Excellent analytical/conceptual thinking * Excellent interpersonal/communication skills   **Experience:**   * At least 7 years of experience leading evaluations of governance related institutional development programmes or projects in developing countries; experience leading evaluations in conflict or post-conflict countries would be an advantage * At least 5 years of experience managing a governance sector project in a development context * Experience in conducting UNDP or UN project evaluations preferred * Prior experience conducting similar evaluations in Afghanistan would be a strong advantage * Master’s Degree in a related field (political and social sciences, international relations, economics) with strong background in research methodology * Fluent written and spoken English   **Languages:**   * Excellent written and spoken English. * Excellent report writing skills as well as communication and interviewing skills in English.   **Core competencies:**   * Promotes ethics and integrity and creates organizational precedents; * Builds support and political acumen; * Builds staff competence and creates an environment of creativity and innovation; * Builds and promotes effective teams; * Creates and promotes environment for open communications; * Leverages conflict in the interest of UNDP and sets standards; * Shares knowledge across the organization and builds a culture of knowledge sharing and learning. |
| **PRICE PROPOSAL AND SCHEDULE OF PAYMENTS** |
| The consultant shall submit a price proposal as below:   * Daily Fee – The consultant shall propose a daily fee, which should be inclusive of her/his professional fee, local communication costs and insurance (inclusive of medical health insurance and evacuation). The professional daily fee, all inclusive of the above elements, shall be paid upon submission of timesheet. The number of working days for which the daily fee shall be payable under the contract is 25 working days maximum. * UNDP will provide accommodation free of charge to the Consultant. The Consultant is NOT allowed to stay in a place of his choice other than the UNDSS approved locations. UN will provide MORSS compliant accommodation in UNOCA to the Consultant; * Travel & Visa – All airfare and travel within Afghanistan will be covered by the project. Costs for one round trip (1) trip to and from the duty station, including visa on arrival charges, should be included in the consultant’s financial proposal and daily rate. * Payment schedule - Payments shall be done upon verification of completion of specific deliverables, upon approval by the Head of the Governance/Programme officer Unit. |
| **EVALUATION METHOD AND CRITERIA** |
| Individual consultants will be evaluated based on the following methodology:   * Cumulative analysis   The award of the contract shall be made to the individual consultant whose offer has been evaluated and determined as:   * Responsive/compliant/acceptable, and * 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 Proposal (50 marks)**  **Technical Approach & Methodology**  This explains 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;  **Methodology:**   * The Evaluation and evaluation report will follow UNDP and UN Evaluation Group (UNEG) Norms and Standards for Evaluations. * The evaluation methodology will include a pre-mission desk review of all project related documentation noted in existing information sources above followed by a field visit to Kabul to meet with project partners and beneficiaries. The methodology for the field visit should include structured as well as unstructured interviews with partners and beneficiaries including focus group discussions as relevant. All national and international partners as well as representatives of the beneficiaries must be consulted including but not limited to the Secretaries General and Deputy Secretaries General as well as representatives of National Assembly of Afghanistan staff engaged in or impacted by project activities. International partners comprise project donor representatives as well as representatives of other development partner agencies which supported the parliament (including the USAID – funder of the closed ALBA project- UNFPA, UNWOMEN and some limited support from UNICEF) during the period of ICSPA’s operation.   **End products: Final Evaluation/Study/Survey Report, which should include:**   * Executive summary * Methodology: description of sampling and evaluation methodology used, assessment of methodology and its limitation, data collection instruments, and data processing (analysis methodology, and quality assurance) * Findings * Conclusions * Recommendations * Lessons learned * Annexes: List of indictors, questionnaires, and if survey, table of sample size and sample site as appropriate, list of names and titles of those engaged by the evaluator   The report should be provided in both hard copy and electronic version in English in the required format.   * Completed data sets (filled out questionnaires, records of individual interviews and focus group discussion, etc.) * The evaluation report will be required to follow and will be rated in accordance with “UNEG Evaluation Report Standards” and UNEG Evaluation Technical Notes * **Work Plan (20)** – The Consultant 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.   **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) as well as the contact details (email and telephone number) of the Candidate and at least three (3) professional references; * Personal CV indicating all experience from similar projects relevant to the assignment.   **Additional information and materials for supporting of project evaluation**  **Existing information sources:**   * Quarterly and Annual Project Reports * Project Donor Group Meeting Minutes * Technical Working Group Meeting Minutes * Project Management Board Meeting Minutes * Project documents dated 26 March 2014 and 23 June 2016, also containing RRF indicators * National Assembly of Afghanistan Development Partner Coordination Meeting Terms of Reference, principles of cooperation and meeting minutes * 2014-2019 Annual Work Plans * National Assembly of Afghanistan department and directorate self-assessment reports; and consolidated Self-Assessment Report * National Assembly of Afghanistan Reform Action Plan * Briefing Notes and Recommendations * 2016, 2017, 2018 Annual National Assembly of Afghanistan Staff Perception Surveys * Project related meeting minutes * Mid-term evaluation of the project “Institutional and Capacity Support to the Parliament of Afghanistan (ICSPA)” (2017) * ICSPA: Final Project Report to the Federal Republic of Germany (2017) * Analytic report of NAA Staff Perception Surveys 2016-18 (2019) * Lesson Learned report (2019)   **All materials developed will remain the copyright of UNDP Afghanistan. UNDP Afghanistan will be free to adapt and modify them in the future.** |

# Annex 2: List of People Interviewed

(alphabet order)

H.E Abdul Qader Aryubi Zazai, Secretary General WJ

Mr. A. Razaq Mowahed, Network Manager

Mr. Abdul Ahad Niazi, Committee Management Head

Mr. Abdul-Wali GHAFARI, Programme Manager, Governance and Accountability, EU Delegation

Mr. Adel, Director of IR

Mr. Ahmad Shoeb Fetry, ICT Director

Mr. Amal Sultanzai, HR Director, MJ

Mr. Ghayor Rahmani, Media pool Manager, WJ

Mr. Ghazi Wardak, Committee Management Head, MJ

Ms. Gul Makai Siawash, CSO

Ms. Habiba Meerzad, CSO

Mr. Hamid Ansary, Programme Analyst, Governance Unit, UNDP

Mr. Abdul Hameed Omar, Programme Officer, Governance Unit, UNDP

Mr. Shams Safi, Technical Specialist, ICSPA Project

Mr. Mohammad Turab Khan, HR Analyst, UNDP

Mr. Ahmad Zubair, Procurment Analyst, UNDP

Ms. Hamida, Legislative tracking System,

Ms. Laura O’raw, Political Inclusion and Accountability Team, DFID

Mr. M.Naeem Wahedyar, Legislative Director and acting WJ TV Director, WJ

Mr. Markus LEPINE, Team Leader – Security Sector Reform, Governance and Democracy Section, EU Delegation

Mr. Masoom Aminzad, Chief of Staff

Ms. Meena Habib, Nai Journalist

Ms. Nina Horré, First Secretary, Embassy of the Federal Republic of Germany

Mr. Qadam Ali Nekpai, Public Relation Director MJ

Mr. Rahimuallha Ghalib, Deputy Secretary General WJ

Ms. Sediqa, Documentation and Archive Department Head, MJ

Ms. Shahla Ata, Gender Unit Head (MJ)

Mr. Shamsulhaq SAFI, Technical Specialist – Parliamentary Development, ICSPA/UNDP

Ms. Shukria Jalazai, CSO

Mr. Temor sha Qawem, Deputy Secretary General MJ

Mr. Zabihullah Alemi, Programme Officer, Political Inclusion and Accountability Team, DFID

Ms. Zahra Nazari, Pazhwok Reporter

Ms. Zakira Wafaee, Gender Unit Head (WJ)

Mr. Ziya Mohiq, Database Unit

# Annex 3: List of documents consulted

Institutional and Capacity Support to the Parliament of Afghanistan, 2014, 3RD Quarterly Project Progress Report

Institutional and Capacity Support to the Parliament of Afghanistan, 2014, Annual Project Report

Institutional and Capacity Support to the Parliament of Afghanistan, 2015, 1st Quarterly Project Progress Report

Institutional and Capacity Support to the Parliament of Afghanistan, 2015, 2nd Quarterly Project Progress Report

Institutional and Capacity Support to the Parliament of Afghanistan, 2015, 3rd Quarterly Project Progress Report

Institutional and Capacity Support to the Parliament of Afghanistan, 2015, Annual Project Report

Institutional and Capacity Support to the Parliament of Afghanistan, 2016, Annual Project Report

Institutional and Capacity Support to the Parliament of Afghanistan, 2017, Annual Project Report

Institutional and Capacity Support to the Parliament of Afghanistan, 2018, Annual Project Report

Institutional and Capacity Support to the Parliament of Afghanistan, 2019, Draft Final Project Report

Project Board Meeting- 1st Meeting Minutes, November 2014,

Project Board Meeting- 2nd Meeting Minutes, June 2016

Project Board Meeting- 3rd Meeting Minutes, March 2018

ICSPA Project Document, 2014-2016

ICSPA Project Document 2016-2019

Technical Working Groups Meetings- Meeting Minutes

Reform Action Plan for the NAA

Policies and procedures development for the NAA

Other documents related and relevant for governance in Afghanistan

# Annex 4: ICSPA Final Evaluation Matrix

The Terms of Reference provided a list of questions, used for the preparation of the evaluation matrix. For each of these evaluation questions the final evaluation adopted indicators, judgement criteria and sources of verification, that were used to validate achievements and provide credible conclusions.

| Evaluation Question | Judgement criteria | Indicators | Evidences and Data Sources |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 1. Relevance | | | |
| *1. 1. Was the ICSPA project relevant to the National Assembly of Afghanistan?* | * The extent of consistence of the ICSPA project with the needs of the National Assembly of Afghanistan | * Opinions of the stakeholders about the extent of consistence of ICSPA intervention (outcomes and outputs) with the priorities and needs of the National Assembly of Afghanistan * Examples of reported and identified the ICSPA’s contribution to the NAA priorities and commitments | * Interviews with the representatives of the NAA * Interviews with other stakeholders * Analysis of the NAA strategic and policy documents |
| *1.2 Was the ICSPA project aligned with the priorities of the NAA?* | * The extent of alignment between the ICSPA intervention and the strategic priorities of the NAA | * Degree of correspondence between the priorities identified by the Meshrano and Woles Jirga and the ICSPA project * The opinion of the stakeholders about the validity and alignment of ICSPA objectives with the current needs of the NAA (Wolesi and Meshrano Jirga) | * Interviews with the stakeholders and representatives of the NAA * Analysis of the NAA strategic documents and needs |
| *1.3. What challenges did the project face and did it deal appropriately to overcome these by proposing mitigating measures related to issues and risks in advance? Has the project received adequate and timely support from national and international partners?* | * The degree to which ICSPA responded to the changes in planning and during the implementation * The extent to which project received adequate and timely support from national and international partners | * Factors/ examples of factors that have influenced the ICSPA responsiveness and flexibility to the emerging priorities and needs of the NAA and the overall governance system in Afghanistan * Opinions of the stakeholders about responsiveness and flexibility of ICSPA during its implementation * The examples and opinion of the ICSPA project team about timely and adequate support from the national and international partners | * Interviews with the NAA and other stakeholders * Interviews with the UNDP management and operations * Interviews with the ICSPA project team |
| *1.4. Has the ICSPA project included soundly formulated intervention logic including indicators for measuring progress?* | * The extent of consistence and coherence of the ICSPA intervention logic * The degree of alignment of the ICSPA intervention logic with the with RMB principles * The extent of adequate planning of resources for the ICSPA implementation | * The assessment of the internal coherence of the ICSPA project * The analysis of the extent to which RBM tools have been used in establish a logical chain of results (intervention logic) * The appropriateness of indicators including their adequacy for measuring progress under outcomes and outputs | * Analysis of the ICSPA results chain/ intervention logic * Analysis of ICSPA progress reports |
| 2. Effectiveness | | | |
| *2.1. To what extent the ICSPA project objectives were achieved? What are the major factors that facilitated or hindered the achievement of these objectives?* | * Extent to which the ICSPA project objectives have been achieved * Evidence of external factors that affected progress towards the achievement of objectives | * Examples of the main achievements during the ICSPA implementation including the extent of utilisation of inputs * Opinions of stakeholders on barriers, analysis of the challenges encountered during the implementation of the ICSPA project | * Interviews with the ICSPA stakeholders * ICSPA progress reports and other sources of information |
| *2.2. What were the collaborative advantages of the ICSPA project?*  *Did the ICSPA project interventions effectively complement interventions of other development partners?* | * The opinion of stakeholders about the ICSPA’s collaborative advantages * The extent to which ICSPA project intervention effectively complement interventions of other development partners | * Opinions of the stakeholders about the collaborative advantage of the ICSPA project towards the achievement of development objectives and reform priorities for the NAA * Examples and evidences of the ICSPA’s complementarity to other partners interventions | * Interview with the key stakeholders (USAID/ ALBA, UN Women, UNFPA, EC, DFID, representatives of the NAA |
| *2.3. How well-has the ICSPA project coordinated its efforts with the interventions of other development partners to prevent duplication and reduce transaction costs on the parliament?*  *Were all development partner interventions well-coordinated in support of the Afghan Parliament’s priorities and driven by the parliament itself for sustainable institutional development?* | * The extent to which ICSPA project coordinated its efforts with the interventions of other development partners * The extent to which the NAA has established capacities to coordinate all development partner interventions in support of the Afghan Parliament’s priorities | * Opinions of the stakeholders about the coordination capacities of the NAA * Examples and evidences of the ICSPA’s coordination with other development interventions * Stakeholders' opinions about the partnership, actual involvement and ownership of results achieved during the implementation of the ICSPA project * Existence of mechanisms to ensure sectoral coordination and national participation during ICSPA implementation | * Interview with the key stakeholders (USAID/ ALBA, UN Women, UNFPA, EC, DFID, representatives of the NAA * Analysis of documents produced by the ICSPA project |
| *2.4. What are the lessons learned from the project that may be applicable to similar institutional development projects in Afghanistan or abroad?* | * Examples of lessons learned from the ICSPA project related to institutional development | * The opinion of the stakeholders about the lessons learned from the ICSPA project * Analysis and examples of lessons learned from the ICSPA implementation | * Interviews with the ICSPA stakeholders * ICSPA progress reports and other sources of information |
| 3. Efficiency | | | |
| *3.1. Has the ICSPA project been implemented efficiently? To what degree has the efficiency of the ICSPA project implementation been ensured?* | * The extent to which ICSPA project has been implemented efficiently * Evidences of the established sound management practices for the implementation of the ICSPA project * Examples of factors that have contributed or undermined the efficiency | * Opinion of the ICSPA project team and UNDP about the efficiency in implementation of the project * Perception of the representatives of the NAA about the efficiency of the ICSPA project * Information about the existence of measures to increase efficiency including factors that have contributed to or undermined the efficiency of the ICSPA project * The degree of timely availability of inputs to implement activities and timely achievement of outputs * Existence of a sound monitoring system | * Primary data collection- interviews with the key stakeholders * Analysis of the ICSPA project reports and other documents |
| 4. Sustainability and Impact | | | |
| *4.1. Has the ICSPA project contributed to the National Assembly of Afghanistan’s long-term sustainable institutional development?* | * The extent to which the ICSPA project contributed to the National Assembly of Afghanistan’s long-term sustainable institutional development | * Opinion of the NAA stakeholders about sustainability of results achieved by the ICSPA project and its contribution to its long-terms sustainable institutional development * Analysis and conclusions about the factors that influenced sustainability and the likelihood for sustainability of the ICSPA results on institutional development of the NAA | * Primary data collection- interviews with the key stakeholders * Analysis of the ICSPA project reports and other documents |
| *4.2. Has the project contributed to altering mind-sets and the approach of the parliamentary leadership in adopting and implementing reforms towards compliance with international parliamentary standards for the Wolesi Jirga and Meshrano Jirga secretariats?* | * The extent to which the ICSPA project contributed to the reform efforts of the NAA and compliance with the international parliamentary standards | * Opinions of the NAA partners and the NAA staff about the reform commitments and the approach of the parliamentary leadership in adopting and implementing reforms towards compliance with international parliamentary standards for the Wolesi Jirga and Meshrano Jirga secretariats * Examples of implemented reform measures in line with the international parliamentary standards | * Primary data collection- interviews with the key stakeholders * Analysis of the ICSPA project reports and other documents |
| *4.3. Has the project contributed to increased transparent practices?* | * The degree to which the ICSPA project has contributed to increased transparent practices of the NAA | * Opinions of the stakeholders and examples of transparent practices and results that have been introduced with the support of the ICSPA project | * Interviews with the key stakeholders * Analysis of best practices in transparency from the project reports and other documents |
| *4.4. Has the project employed any innovative models or approaches that may be applicable to other institutional development projects in Afghanistan or abroad?* | * Examples of innovative models or approaches that may be applicable to other institutional development projects in Afghanistan or abroad | * Evidences (examples and opinion of stakeholders) about innovative models and approaches that the ICSPA project implemented | * Primary data collection- interviews with the key stakeholders * Analysis of the ICSPA project reports and other documents |
| *4.5. Has the ICSPA project responded adequately to enhance and promote the ownership of results by the NAA?* | * Degree to which ICSPA responded to the capacity development needs of the NAA * The extent to which the national stakeholders perceive ownership of ICSPA results | * Degree of alignment of capacity development support delivered within the ICSPA project with the capacity development needs of the national partners * Opinion about appropriateness and responsiveness of capacity development programs to the stakeholders’ needs * NAA management and staff opinion about the ownership of the results of the ICSPA project | * Interviews with the key stakeholders * Analysis of best practices in capacity development * Analysis of the ICSPA reports and other documents |
| 5. Gender Mainstreaming | | | |
| *5.1. To what extent have the human rights-based approach and gender equality been considered and mainstreamed in the ICSPA project?* | * The extent to which gender equality and HRBA approach have been considered and mainstreamed during ICSPA formulation and implementation | * The evidences that gender has been mainstreamed during the design of ICSPA project * Opinions of the UNDP and ICSPA team about the degree of mainstreaming of HRBA and gender equality during the ICSPA preparation * Examples of best practices in promotion and mainstreaming HRBA and gender mainstreaming during the implementation of the ICSPA project | * Primary data collection- interviews with the key stakeholders * Analysis of the ICSPA project reports and other documents |

# Annex 5: Interview guides

During the field phase the Final Evaluation used semi-structured interviews with the main questions provided in this interview guide. This enabled the FE to ask additional, more specific questions, in line with the Evaluation Matrix and the Terms of References.

## Interview Guide: UNDP Programme

Could you please introduce yourself?

*Relevance*

* Has the ISCPA project been aligned with the NAA (and also UNDP) priorities? Has the ICSPA project been well-integrated in the UNDP Governance portfolio?
* To what extent have the needs of the National Assembly of Afghanistan and its employees have been recognized during the planning and programming?
* What were the main challenges that the ISCPA project faced during its implementation? How has UNDP and the ICSPA project responded to these challenges? What was the support from UNDP CO (to the ICSPA project team)?

*Effectiveness*

* To what extent the ICSPA project objectives were achieved? What are in your opinion the main achievements of the ICSPA project?
* Were there barriers that prevented success? And were risks anticipated and mitigated against? In particular, were program responses appropriately designed to mitigate or prevent them?
* How effective was the ICSPA project in cooperating and coordinating its activities with other development initiatives and partners?
* What is your opinion about the coordination capacities of the NAA- to what extent has the NAA established its capacities to coordinate different development initiatives?

*Efficiency*

* Do you think that the ICSPA project team has been efficient in the delivery of the project? How well has they been supported by UNDP CO?
* What were the main challenges in the implementation?

*Impact and sustainability*

* Has the ICSPA project contributed to the National Assembly of Afghanistan’s long-term sustainable institutional development?
* Has the project contributed to increased transparent practices in the NAA? Have these practices been “institutionalized”?
* In your view, has the project generated any innovative practice during its implementation?
* Have you been satisfied with the extent to which the Secretariats of the Wolesi Jirga and Meshrano Jirga have been involved in the ICSPA project implementation?

## Interview Guide: UNDP ICSPA project team

Could you please introduce yourself and the position within the ICSPA project team?

*Relevance*

* Has the ICSPA project been relevant to the NAA and to what extent has been aligned with the priorities of the NAA?
* Is there a need to continue and build on the support that was available through the ICSPA project?
* What were the main challenges that the ICSPA team faced during its implementation? Has the project been flexible in adopting to the new situations (some examples)
* Has the project received adequate and timely support from the NAA and from UNDP CO?

*Effectiveness*

* How appropriate and realistic were the objectives of the ICSPA project? To what extent the ICSPA project objectives were achieved? What are the major factors that facilitated or hindered the achievement of these objectives?
* Were there areas in which the ICSPA project was underachieving and why?
* Were there any unexpected results (positive and negative) achieved?
* How would you mark coordination and cooperation between the ICSPA project and other interventions that supported the NAA? How did you avoid duplications and overlaps?
* To what extent has the NAA been effective in coordinating development support?
* What are the lessons learned from the project that may be applicable to similar institutional development projects in Afghanistan or abroad?

*Efficiency*

* To what extent has the ICSPA project delivered efficiently: Was the implementation of the ICSPA project according to the planned timeline? Were there any challenges encountered and how did these delays affect the achievement of the planned results?
* To what extent has the UNDP CO been supportive during the implementation
* Were the resources available for implementation of the project adequate to its scale, objectives, its complexity and the context? In what ways could efficiency have been improved?
* Were appropriate M&E mechanisms set up for implementation of the project?

*Impact and sustainability*

* Has the ICSPA project contributed to the National Assembly of Afghanistan’s long-term sustainable institutional development?
* Has the project contributed to altering mind-sets and the approach of the parliamentary leadership in adopting and implementing reforms towards compliance with international parliamentary standards for the Wolesi Jirga and Meshrano Jirga secretariats?
* Has the project contributed to increased transparent practices?
* Has the project employed any innovative models or approaches that may be applicable to other institutional development projects in Afghanistan or abroad?
* Has the ICSPA project responded adequately to enhance and promote the ownership of results by the NAA?

*Gender equality*

* To what extent have the human rights-based approach and gender equality been considered and mainstreamed in the ICSPA project?

## Interview Guide: The National Assembly of Afghanistan- Wolesi and Meshrano Jirga Secretary Generals/ Deputy Secretary General

Could you please introduce yourself?

*Relevance*

* Has the ICSPA project been relevant to the NAA and to what extent has been aligned with the priorities of the NAA?
* What are the main challenges that the Wolesi Jirga/ Meshrano Jirga is facing? Is there a need to continue with the support that was available through the ICSPA project and in what areas?

*Effectiveness*

* What have been the main results that the Wolesi Jirga/ Meshrano Jirga achieved with support of the ICSPA project?
* To what extent have these results been embedded in the Wolesi Jirga/ Meshrano Jirga?
* How would you mark cooperation with the ICSPA project team- has the management of Wolesi Jirga/ Meshrano Jirga been adequately involved in the ICSPA implementation and decision making?
* Do you think that the Wolesi Jirga/ Meshrano Jirga has adequate capacities to coordinate development support?

*Efficiency*

* How flexible was the ICSPA project during its implementation? Has the leadership of the Wolesi Jirga/ Meshrano Jirga been adequately consulted?
* Was the implementation of the ICSPA project according to the planned timeline? Were there any challenges encountered and how did these delays affect the achievement of the planned results?
* Were appropriate M&E mechanisms set up for implementation of the project?

*Impact and sustainability*

* To what extent has the ICSPA project contributed to institutional development of the Wolesi Jirga/ Meshrano Jirga? What would be examples?
* What have been the new practices that have been introduced with the support from the ICSPA project?
* To what extent has the project contributed to increased transparent practices in Wolesi Jirga/ Meshrano Jirga?
* To what extent has the ICSPA project succeeded in the development of capacities of the employees from the General Secretariat?
* How effective has been the project in promoting and mainstreaming gender? To what extent has gender mainstreaming perceived as a priority for the Wolesi Jirga/ Meshrano Jirga?

## Interview Guide: EC Delegation, DFID and the Embassy of Germany

Could you please introduce yourself?

*Relevance*

* Has the ISCPA project been aligned with the NAA priorities and needed by the NAA?
* What were in your view the main challenges in working with the NAA and that the ISCPA project faced during its implementation? How has the ICSPA project responded to these challenges?

*Effectiveness*

* To what extent the ICSPA project objectives were achieved? What are in your opinion the main achievements of the ICSPA project?
* What is your opinion about the coordination capacities of the NAA- to what extent has the NAA established its capacities to coordinate different development initiatives?

*Efficiency*

* Do you think that the ICSPA project team has been efficient in the delivery of the project? What were the main challenges from your point of view?

*Impact and sustainability*

* Has the ICSPA project contributed to the National Assembly of Afghanistan’s long-term sustainable institutional development?
* Has the project contributed to increased transparent practices in the NAA?
* Have you been satisfied with the extent to which the Secretariats of the Wolesi Jirga and Meshrano Jirga have been involved in the ICSPA project implementation?
* What are in your view priorities for the next phase of development of the NAA?

## Interview Guide: International development partners

Could you please introduce yourself, your organisation and your role in this organisation?

Brief objective of the evaluation and a brief about the project objective and results

Are you familiar with the ICSPA project? If yes, how is your work related to the areas of intervention of the ICSPA project?

*Relevance*

What have been the priority development needs of the NAA?

Which specific development priorities of the NAA your organisation is addressing?

How did you coordinate your activities with the ICSPA project? To what extent has the NAA established capacities to coordinate development assistance?

*Effectiveness*

What is your opinion about the results of the ICSPA project? Are these results contributing to improved functioning of the NAA?

*Impact and sustainability*

To what extent has the NAA improved its capacities in the recent years? Could some of these achievements and progress be associated with the ICSPA project?

Has the Wolesi Jirga/ Meshrano Jirga operate in more transparent manner?

What are priorities for the future development of the NAA?

## Interview Guide: Final Beneficiaries (if appropriate)

Could you please introduce yourself,

* How did you become involved in the activities of the ICSPA project?
* How did you benefit from the support from the ICSPA project? Please provide specific examples.
* Do you know about other results of support from the ICSPA project?
* What were your needs and did the ICSPA project address these needs?
* Do you have any suggestions on how to improve support to the NAA and what are the needs for the future?

1. The United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG) Norms and Standards for Evaluation, adopted in 2005, has served as a landmark document for the United Nations and beyond. In June 2016, the updated United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG) Norms and Standards for Evaluation was released. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. OECD DAC Criteria for Evaluation of Development Assistance;  
   <http://www.oecd.org/dac/evaluation/daccriteriaforevaluatingdevelopmentassistance.htm> [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. The United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG) Norms and Standards for Evaluation, adopted in 2005, has served as a landmark document for the United Nations and beyond. In June 2016, the updated United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG) Norms and Standards for Evaluation was released. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. OECD DAC Criteria for Evaluation of Development Assistance;  
   <http://www.oecd.org/dac/evaluation/daccriteriaforevaluatingdevelopmentassistance.htm> [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. Line Dybdal, Steffen Bohni Nielsen, Sebastian Lemire (Ramboll Management Consulting and Aarhus, Denmark): “Contribution Analysis Applied: Reflections on Scope and Methodology”, The Canadian Journal of Program Evaluation Vol. 25 No. 2 Pages 29–57 ISSN 0834-1516 [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. John Mayne: „Contribution analysis: Coming of age?” from Evaluation, 2012, Sage Publication, DOI: 10.1177/1356389012451663 [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. Considering the complexity of the ICSPA project, and the time available for this evaluation, the FE was using quarterly and annual ICSPA reports, and the findings were validated during the field phase. [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. A detailed list of interviewed people is provided in the Annex 1 to this document. [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
9. More details have been provided in the project documents for the first phase of the ICSPA project [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
10. The analysis of the Project document and the notes from the formulation phase. Also, inputs from the KII- UNDP, ICSPA project team and the National Assembly of Afghanistan. [↑](#footnote-ref-10)
11. UNDP has supported the National Assembly since 2005 and subsequently through a number initiatives : Support to the Establishment of the Afghan Legislature (SEAL 1- 2005-08) a broad-based project directed to support establishment and the initial period of functioning of the NAA, itself; Support for an Effective Afghan Legislature (SEAL 2 - 2008-12) focused on strengthening parliament’s ‘core’ legislative, oversight, representational and outreach capacities; Strategic Support to the Afghan Parliament (SAAP - 2012-13). [↑](#footnote-ref-11)
12. The RAP provided recommendations for all the core areas of work of the NAA, from plenary session management, committees management, research, library, information, and public relations, human resources, finance and administration, information and communications technology (ICT), international affairs, gender, internal audit, and procurement [↑](#footnote-ref-12)
13. KII notes NAA\_01 [↑](#footnote-ref-13)
14. KII notes NAA\_01, NAA\_02. Also, KII notes UNDP\_02 [↑](#footnote-ref-14)
15. KII notes NAA\_01 and NAA\_02 [↑](#footnote-ref-15)
16. The priorities of the Government of Afghanistan have been (i) improving security and political stability; (ii) tackling the underlying drivers of corruption; (iii) building better governance; (iv) restoring fiscal sustainability; (v) reforming development planning and management; (vi) bolstering private sector confidence and creating jobs; and (vii) ensuring citi- zen􏰓s development and securing human rights. These priroties have been further elaborated in the strategic and policy documents. [↑](#footnote-ref-16)
17. “REALIZING SELF-RELIANCE Commitments to Reforms and Renewed Partnership”, December 2014 <http://www.afghanistan-un.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/12/REALIZING-FINAL-SELF-RELIANCE-25-November-2014.pdf> [↑](#footnote-ref-17)
18. The National Priority Programs are: (i) National infrastructure and connectivity program; (ii) Citizens’ Charter program; (iii) Rural development; (iv) National economic empowerment; (v) Justice sector reform; (vi) Effective governance program; (vii) Private sector development (banking reform, small and medium enterprises, investment climate, trade and informal sector); (viii) Human capital development; (ix) Urban development program; (x) Revenue enhancement program (tax and non-tax revenue); (xi) Comprehensive agricultural development program; and (xii) National mineral and resource development program. [↑](#footnote-ref-18)
19. . Afghanistan National Peace And Development Framework, (ANPDF) 2017 To 2021. This document outlined as a part of the strategic vision “justice and the rule of law require that we step up the fight against corruption, reform our courts, and make sure that ordinary citizens can exert their constitutional rights with confidence”- more details https://www.refworld.org/pdfid/5b28f4294.pdf [↑](#footnote-ref-19)
20. Project reports and other project related materials [↑](#footnote-ref-20)
21. KII notes UNDP\_02, NAA\_01 and also project documentation [↑](#footnote-ref-21)
22. These has been recorded in the project related documentation. Also, media reports provided detailed account of these events, for example <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-afghanistan-blast/taliban-attack-near-afghan-parliament-kills-more-than-30-idUSKBN14U1DL> [↑](#footnote-ref-22)
23. In this context of developing transparent and accountable functioning of the NAA, engagement and partnership with the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) has been important support with catalytic effects. However, since the attack on the Afghan Parliament in June 2015, the IPU has not been able to identify and deploy qualified experts. The IPU support remains important and required for successful implementation of the planned reforms and the ICSPA project has explored different options to re-establish communication and cooperation with the IPU. However, this remained an issue: the IPU experts were not coming to Kabul but the project ensured participation of the NAA in some of the IPU events. [↑](#footnote-ref-23)
24. Ref to ROM Report for the ICSPA project; ICSPA project reports [↑](#footnote-ref-24)
25. KII notes NAA\_01 [↑](#footnote-ref-25)
26. The identification process and formulation mission took place during 2013, with the experts’ mission and UNDP staff participating. [↑](#footnote-ref-26)
27. These priorities have been identified by the Afghan Parliament through its Self-Assessment Report (2015) and its Project Reform Plan (2016); the process was guided by the principles of co-equality and cooperation with other institutions of government [↑](#footnote-ref-27)
28. Reference to the ICSPA project document and the KII with the management of the NAA [↑](#footnote-ref-28)
29. Project document- results and resources framework. Also, the reference could be UNDP planning and programming resources books that clearly delineate between the elements of the intervention logic. [↑](#footnote-ref-29)
30. United Nations Development Group: Results-Based Management Handbook, 2010 [↑](#footnote-ref-30)
31. The key recommendation ‘for improvement and reform’ of the Parliament set out in the Self-Assessment Report comprised: i) A process to legally and institutionally implement gradual reform of Parliament’s administration is recommended to increase parliamentary control, ensure oversight of management and improve the implementation of functions; ii) The NAA and its Administration leadership propose that reform towards an independently structured parliamentary service is legally grounded through the passage of a Parliamentary Service Act; iii) The Administration of the WJ and MJ should undertake the development of a Parliamentary Service Act through an extensive consultative process, which will consider government’s legal and structural ramifications; iv) It is essential that the proposed parliamentary service should have internal safeguards as a buffer against political influence and abuse of parliamentary administration. The Parliamentary service’s management mechanisms should be independent from the Executive branch and influence of politicians.” [↑](#footnote-ref-31)
32. Some of the main challenges from this period have been protection of staff from abusive MPs, political interference in increasing procedural transparency, and the creation of a parliament service independent of government. More details are available in the project reports and documentation. [↑](#footnote-ref-32)
33. <http://www.ipu.org/PDF/publications/self-e.pdf> and <https://agora-parl.org/sites/default/files/benchmarking-web-final.original.pdf> [↑](#footnote-ref-33)
34. <http://www.ipu.org/PDF/publications/democracy_en.pdf)> . [↑](#footnote-ref-34)
35. However, the IPU self-assessment framework strives to evaluate the political functions of parliament primarily driven by MPs and Senators. [↑](#footnote-ref-35)
36. ICSPA Annual Report 2015 [↑](#footnote-ref-36)
37. KII notes NAA\_01 [↑](#footnote-ref-37)
38. *Afghan Parliament secretariat staff are members of the civil service subject to management by the Government. The Executive must confirm appointments of all heads of parliamentary departments. The lack of autonomy of parliament staff from the government undermines their ability to support Members in effectively fulfilling their oversight duties.)* [↑](#footnote-ref-38)
39. *The Departments of Public Information and Relations do not systematically share press releases or parliamentary documentation with the public or journalists due to limited means of electronic communication; committee proceedings are not captured or shared with the public in either House; the Meshrano Jirga has no means of providing journalists and media outlets with digital feeds of plenary proceedings* [↑](#footnote-ref-39)
40. *The Reform Action Plan prepared by the heads of department and their staff in both Houses during the 1st quarter of 2016 details action points which cannot be implemented without the political will of the parliamentary leadership* [↑](#footnote-ref-40)
41. *UNDP led coordination meetings for the Parliament from 2005-2007. In June 2015 the ICSPA project supported the Secretaries General co-chair the first Development Partners Coordination meeting led by the parliament itself* [↑](#footnote-ref-41)
42. KII notes NAA\_01 and other representatives of the NAA [↑](#footnote-ref-42)
43. KII notes NAA\_01 and NAA\_04 [↑](#footnote-ref-43)
44. KII notes NAA-01 and NAA\_02. [↑](#footnote-ref-44)
45. KII notes NAA\_01, NAA\_02 and NAA\_04 [↑](#footnote-ref-45)
46. KII notes UNDP\_03 and other project documentation [↑](#footnote-ref-46)
47. Ref to the self-assessment, presented in other parts of this report [↑](#footnote-ref-47)
48. The ICSPA project was revised in 2016, with the intention to fully align with the needs and priorities from the Reform Action Plan of the NAA. [↑](#footnote-ref-48)
49. KII notes with the representatives of the NAA [↑](#footnote-ref-49)
50. The authorities from the NAA stated that there is a need to revise and simplify questions and introduce web-based and more sophisticated data-collection methods [↑](#footnote-ref-50)
51. *ICSPA Project Document, 2016,* p.16 [↑](#footnote-ref-51)
52. As indicated in the previous paragraphs, the main support has been through the Women Resource Center, as information collection and search facility, also assisting with report writing [↑](#footnote-ref-52)
53. KII notes NAA\_07 and also recorded in the project available documentation. [↑](#footnote-ref-53)
54. The Assistance to Legislative Bodies of Afghanistan (ALBA) Project implemented from April 2013 until April 2017, supported Parliamentary committees as the driving engine of the parliament. In addition to institutionalizing parliamentary procedures and development, ALBA activities aimed to improve parliament’s constituency outreach efforts, communications and coordination at the sub-national level. [↑](#footnote-ref-54)
55. UN Women has been active in supporting women Members of Parliament. This support has included the establishment of a small resource centre within the Parliament building. Additionally, training on negotiation techniques and gender responsive budgeting has been made available to all MPs and Provincial Counsellors. [↑](#footnote-ref-55)
56. UNFPA supports the National Youth Parliament in Afghanistan, to bring about sustainable change through equipping youth with the skills needed to peacefully navigate through life. [↑](#footnote-ref-56)
57. The meeting was organized on 09 May 2018, led by Secretary General Nasrat of the Wolesi Jirga. Participants were representatives of parliament’s implementing partners: UNDP, UNFPA, and UN Women [↑](#footnote-ref-57)
58. Meeting minutes from the Donor Coordination Meeting, 09 May 2018 [↑](#footnote-ref-58)
59. KII notes NAA\_14 [↑](#footnote-ref-59)
60. National Implementation Modality is a framework under which responsibility for projects rests with the government, as reflected in the Standard Basic Assistance Agreement signed by UNDP with the government, and with the implementing partner, as agreed in the country programme action plan or United Nations development assistance framework action plan and respective annual work plan. In this case, the implementing partner assumes full responsibility for the effective use of UNDP resources and the delivery of outputs in the signed project document (UNDP Programme and Project Operations Policies and Procedures) [↑](#footnote-ref-60)
61. KII notes UNDP\_03 [↑](#footnote-ref-61)
62. For example, there were complaints from the NAA on the final project report and also on the staff survey final report. [↑](#footnote-ref-62)
63. KII notes UNDP\_07 [↑](#footnote-ref-63)
64. However, the NAA was not reporting on the progress in implementation of the RAP. [↑](#footnote-ref-64)
65. The process started in November 2014 and was completed in June 2015, while the Secretaries General and their heads of department adopted the final documents in October 2015 [↑](#footnote-ref-65)
66. Comprising the following departments and directorates in each House corresponding to chapters in the Reform Action Plan: I. Plenary Session Management II. Support to Committees; III. Research; IV. Library and Archives; V. Public Relations and Information; VI. Human Resources; VII. Finance and Administration; VIII. ICT; IX. International Affairs and Relations; X. Gender Directorates; XI. Internal Audit; XII. Procurement [↑](#footnote-ref-66)
67. KII notes NAA\_02. Also, the documents from the [↑](#footnote-ref-67)
68. The self-assessment process included the following critical steps: i) outlining, reviewing and agreeing upon the targets and goals set in the self-assessment reports towards meeting international parliamentary standards; ii) defining actions required for the departments or directorates to meet targets; Identifying key challenges; iii) prioritizing actions and defining indicators (including benchmarks, e.g. baseline data and targets); iv) proposing a (realistic) timeframe for implementation of required actions; and v) identifying potential development partners that may be able or are already providing support to the department or directorate in the reform area [↑](#footnote-ref-68)
69. More details are available in the Self-Assessment Reports and other project reports. [↑](#footnote-ref-69)
70. The project in its progress reports recognized recognizing that addressing all of the many challenges facing NAA would require resources from the national budget and not only from the Project [↑](#footnote-ref-70)
71. KII notes NAA\_02 and NAA\_03, among other [↑](#footnote-ref-71)
72. KII notes NAA\_02, NAA\_03 and other project related documentation. [↑](#footnote-ref-72)
73. KII notes NAA\_02 [↑](#footnote-ref-73)
74. KII notes NAA\_01 and NAA\_02. This has been highlighted particularly in the context of newly elected MPs and also changes of the leaderships of the houses of the NAA [↑](#footnote-ref-74)
75. KII notes NAA\_04 and also UNDP\_02 [↑](#footnote-ref-75)
76. Staff perception surveys have been carried out and reports have been produced for 2016, 2017 and 2018. [↑](#footnote-ref-76)
77. KII notes NAA\_01, NAA\_02, NAA\_03 and other meeting minutes [↑](#footnote-ref-77)
78. KII notes with the NAA representatives [↑](#footnote-ref-78)
79. The project for example, took a strong lead in assisting the secretariats with an e-connectivity and management document system and the production of Procurement Guidelines. [↑](#footnote-ref-79)
80. Increasing number of participants in already rather inclusive Staff Perception Survey could indicate that the employees have recognized its importance and benefits from the follow up actions [↑](#footnote-ref-80)
81. KII notes NAA\_01, also important findings from the project reports and materials. [↑](#footnote-ref-81)
82. Based on the analysis of the questionnaires from the Staff Perception Surveys and the results from the three years [↑](#footnote-ref-82)
83. KII notes NAA\_02 and also minutes from the TWG [↑](#footnote-ref-83)
84. KII notes NAA\_07 and NAA\_08; also KII notes NAA\_11 and NAA\_12 [↑](#footnote-ref-84)
85. Currently this would work only for the Wolesi Jirga; for the Meshrano Jirga there is a need to revise the rules of procedure to permit publication of the attendance record. [↑](#footnote-ref-85)
86. During the filed mission, the FE met with the providers of softwared and the system is expected to be finalized shortly- end of July 2019. [↑](#footnote-ref-86)
87. This has been under the point 1.1 of the Reform Action Plan [↑](#footnote-ref-87)
88. KII notes NAA\_08 and NAA\_01. Also, project progress reports and other project documents [↑](#footnote-ref-88)
89. .These session-wide work plans included activities under all three parliamentary core functions (legislation, oversight, and representation). [↑](#footnote-ref-89)
90. This has enabled transcription of 20 minutes of debate within 60 minutes, closer to Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) standards. [↑](#footnote-ref-90)
91. However, further improvements are needed to meet the IPU standard of publication within 48 hours. [↑](#footnote-ref-91)
92. Kii notes NAA\_01 and Annual Project Reports for 2017 and 2018. [↑](#footnote-ref-92)
93. Notes from the TWG meetings [↑](#footnote-ref-93)
94. KIIs notes NAA\_01, NAA\_02, NAA\_07. [↑](#footnote-ref-94)
95. KII note NAA\_01 [↑](#footnote-ref-95)
96. Alternative arrangements are in place until the DC elections are held. [↑](#footnote-ref-96)