**Parliament Support Project – (Phase 2)**

**Mid-Term Review**

**Terms of Reference**

1. **Background and context**

With the promulgation of the Constitution of Nepal in late 2015, the country moved to a federal political system from the unitary system of governance. The constitutional institutions were put in place progressively through a series of direct and indirect elections at all levels of government. The Constituent Assembly was transformed into a Legislative Parliament (LP) as a result of 2013 elections and was given the responsibility of developing and operationalizing the new Parliamentary structure. The Constitution also assigned the LP with the substantial task of making and revising more than 300 new laws for implementation of the Constitution. To support the LP in these tasks, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) rolled out the Parliament Support Project (PSP). The project started on 1 September 2015 and was originally designed to last four years, until December 2019.

The new Constitution mandated the provision of three tiers of government: federal, province and local level. The election of the bicameral Federal Parliament (FP) and unicameral Provincial Assemblies (PAs) for seven provinces, which took place in late 2017, gave mandate to form and operate the Federal Parliament and seven Provincial Assemblies from 2018. This was also the year when the United Nations and UNDP introduced new plans and support strategies for the next five years in the form of the UN Development Assistance Framework (2018-2022)[[1]](#footnote-1) and the UNDP’s Country Programme Document (2018-2022)[[2]](#footnote-2).

In 2018, in line with the changed political and administrative context, the scope to of the Parliament Support Project was expanded to cover the Federal Parliament and Provincial Assemblies. Project duration was extended accordingly, through December 2022.

In this current phase, the project continues to adapt its implementation approaches and respond to the needs of the national and subnational parliaments based on formal and informal feedback and a dedicated Needs Assessment. The project’s focus has been on enhancing the effectiveness of these parliamentary bodies, bringing about necessary institutional reform, and strengthening the capacity of members of parliament (MPs) in reviewing and formulating new policies and laws, performing various oversight functions and representing the interests of the people of Nepal.

The MPs at the Federal Parliament and Provincial Assemblies and the officials at their secretariats are the target group of the project while the public, Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) and journalists are the stakeholders of the project.

The Parliament Support Project seeks to contribute to achieving the Outcome 2 of the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) and UNDP Country Programme Document (CPD) that envisions: “*By 2022, inclusive, democratic, accountable and transparent institutions are further strengthened towards ensuring the rule of law, social justice and human rights for all particularly for vulnerable people*”. These envisaged project outputs and outcomes would finally contribute to one of the four core areas—Governance, Rule of Law and Human Rights-which is an integral part of the Fourteenth Development Plan of the Government of Nepal; 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and Goal 16 of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in the long run. To achieve its purpose, the project has outlined four major project outputs as mentioned below:

*Output 1*: Enhance the capacity of federal and provincial parliaments to be effective and participatory.

*Output 2*: Enhance the capacity of parliamentary secretariats to be capable and innovative in their support to MPs and committees.

*Output 3*: Enhance the capacity of the Federal Parliament and Provincial Assemblies to be open, interactive and accountable with citizens.

*Output 4*: Build the capacity of women MPs and MPs from disadvantaged groups to be effective and for parliaments at the federal & provincial levels to routinely engage with women, youth and other disadvantaged citizens.

The Project is being implemented by the UNDP under the Direct Implementation Modality (DIM) and in partnership with the Federal parliament and Provincial Assemblies. As noted above, Phase 1 of the PSP project ran from September 2015 to December 2019. Phase 2, that is the project extension in response to the changed political context, is currently ongoing and is expected to wind down in December 2022. The total estimated budget of the phase 2 is 5.9 million USD, out of which Norway funds 2.8 million, and UNDP funds 2 million. The balance of USD1.1 m remains unfunded.

The midterm review covers Phase 2, i.e. the project period from January 2018 to December 2019.

The project information is also summarized in below table.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| PROJECT INFORMATION | | |
| Project/outcome title | Parliament Support Project (PSP) | |
| Atlas ID | 00049635 | |
| Corporate outcome and output | UNDAF/CPD outcome 2: *By 2022, inclusive, democratic, accountable and transparent institutions are further strengthened towards ensuring the rule of law, social justice and human rights for all particularly for vulnerable people*  *CPD Output 2.1: National level executive and legislative branches of the Government and commissions have the capacities and tools to implement the constitution, including peaceful transition to federal structure.* | |
| Country | Nepal | |
| Region | Asia Pacific | |
| Date project document signed | 23 April 2018 | |
| Project dates | Start | Planned end |
| 1 January 2018 | 31 December 2022 |
| Project budget | US $ 5.9 million | |
| Project expenditure at the time of evaluation | US $ 2.5 million | |
| Funding source | UNDP and the Government of Norway | |
| Implementing party | UNDP Nepal | |

1. **Objectives and scope of the review**
   1. **Objectives of the MTR**

Since Nepal Country Office has been implementing, with extended scope, the PSP for more than 2.5 years, a project midterm review (MTR) will be carried out to assess the progress made by the project against its purpose, objectives, outputs and indicators. The PSP MTR offers the opportunity to assess the implementation approaches, progress made, and challenges encountered, identify and document the lessons learnt and make recommendations to improve the future course of action and the project intervention approaches.

The review should look into the relevance, effectiveness, efficiency and sustainability of the support provided by the PSP. The recommendations provided by the review will be useful in re-designing the implementation approaches for strengthening the capacity of members and staff of the Federal Parliament and Province Assemblies. The specific objectives of the MTR are the following:

* to assess the progress against its purpose, objectives, outputs and indicators;
* to assess the approaches and interventions adopted by the project towards achieving the outputs in line with Theory of Change;
* to identify and document main project achievements and results and their impact, and lessons learned in order to inform the future course of action;
* to ascertain the relevance, effectiveness, efficiency and sustainability of the project interventions, including synergies with other UNDP support efforts; and
* to recommend potential new areas of intervention and approaches in the current context of federalization and in light of the COVID-19 crisis and socio-economic response efforts in Nepal.
  1. **Scope of the MTR**

The MTR will consider the relevance of the project, quality of project design, effectiveness and efficiency of implementation to date and sustainability of the project. Particularly, the MTR should cover at least the following areas.

* Relevance of the project: review the progress against its purpose, objectives, outputs and indicators along with project documents such as: Theory of Change, Results and Resources Framework, M&E framework, ascertain whether assumptions and risks remain valid
* Effectiveness and efficiency of implementation to date: review project’s technical as well as operational approaches and deliverables, quality of results and their impact (knowledge products developed and utilised and expertise available and transferred, partnership and engagement, coherence with UNDP's core documents like UNDAF, CPD etc), alignment with national priorities and responding to the needs of the stakeholders[[3]](#footnote-3)) and thereby also deduce conclusions on the relevance and sustainability of the project; and
* Review the project’s approaches, in general and gender equality and social inclusion, with particular focus on women and marginalised groups;
* Review and assess the risks and opportunities (in terms of resource mobilization, synergy and areas of interventions) for PSP in future;
* Review external factors beyond the control of the project that have affected it negatively or positively to date;
* Review planning, management and the quality assurance mechanism for the delivery of the project interventions;
* Review coordination and communication process and mechanisms with the stakeholders;
* Review the management and governing structure of the project and distribution of responsibilities within the given structure

1. **Review Criteria and guiding questions**

The MTR will follow the revised OECD-DAC evaluation criteria - ***Relevance, Effectiveness, Coherence, Efficiency, Impact and Sustainability***. Human Rights, Gender equality and social inclusion and Anti-corruption and environment will be added as cross-cutting criteria. The guiding questions outlined below should be further refined by the review team and agreed with UNDP.

**Relevance**

* To what extent were lessons learned from other relevant projects considered in the project’s design?
* To what extent the project was/is able to address the needs of the target group in the changed context?
* To what extent are the objectives of the project design (inputs, activities, outputs and their indicators) and its theory of change logical and coherent? Does the project contribute to the outcome and output of the CPD? Does the design need to be modified?
* How appropriate are the indicators described in the project documents in assessing the project progress? If necessary, how should they be modified to be more useful and achievable?
* To what extent did/does the projects contribute to meeting the needs of the Federal Parliament and the Provincial Assemblies after their institutional set up?
* To what extent did the project adapt to the changing contexts of the country’s federalization process and the needs of parliamentarians? Is there further need of substantive change in PSP’s scope of work?
* To what extent has the project been able to adapt to the needs of the different target groups (including tackling the gender and social inclusion aspects) in terms of capacity building and participation?
* To what extent does the project contribute to bridge the capacity gap between the federal and provincial parliaments?

**Effectiveness**

* To what extent did the project contribute to the CPD outcome and outputs, the SDGs, the UNDP Strategic Plan and national development priorities?
* To what extent were the project outputs achieved or are likely to be achieved? What factors have contributed to achieving or not achieving the intended outputs?
* How effective has the project been in enhancing the capacity of the federal and provincial parliamentarians and thematic committees?
* To what extent are the project approaches appropriate to achieve the intended midterm and long-term results as outlined in the project document? Is there a need of changing the approaches in line with the Theory of Change?
* To what extent has the project partnership strategy been appropriate and effective? What, if any, alternative strategies would have been more effective in achieving the project’s objectives?
* To what extent have stakeholders been involved in project planning and implementation?
* To what extent does the federalization context – including policies and process – affect the project’s overall outcomes, if any? If so, what could be alternative course to adopt in such case?
* How well does the project adapt to changing conditions at the target group level- at FP and PAs? What adaptation measures and approaches were adopted and how useful were they?

**Coherence**

* How well the intervention fit in changed context?
* To what extent the intervention is coherence with Government’s policies?
* To what extent the intervention addressed the synergies and interlinkages with other interventions carried out by UNDP or Government of Nepal? (internal coherence)
* To what extent the intervention was consistence with other actor’s interventions in the same context or adding value to avoid duplication of the efforts? (External coherence)

**Efficiency**

* To what extent is the existing project management structure appropriate and efficient in generating the expected results?
* To what extent have the project implementation strategy and execution been efficient and cost-effective?
* Have resources (funds, human resources, time, expertise, etc) been allocated strategically to achieve outcomes?
* To what extent have project funds and activities been delivered in a timely manner?
* How has the project adopted cost effectiveness measures such as cost sharing, leveraging synergies and packaging/integration of activities?

**Impact**

* To what extent the project outputs were achieved and contributed or expecting to contribute in achieving outcome level results?

**Sustainability**

* To what extent do the project interventions contribute towards sustaining the knowledge, practices and approaches in parliamentary system?
* To what extent do the implementing partners[[4]](#footnote-4) own the project’s interventions and respond to its implementation?
* What could be potential new areas of work and innovative measures for sustaining the results?
* To what extent are lessons learned being documented by the project team on a continual basis to inform the project for needful change?
* What could be done to strengthen exit strategies and sustainability of the project?

**Human rights**

* To what extent have Dalit, ethnic, physically challenged, women and other disadvantaged and marginalized groups benefitted from the work of the project and with what impact?

**Gender equality and Social Inclusion**

* To what extent have gender equality and the empowerment of women MPs and MPs from marginalised groups been addressed in the design, implementation and monitoring of the project?
* Is the gender marker data assigned to this project representative of reality?
* To what extent has the project promoted positive changes of women and marginalised group? Were there any unintended effects?

**Anti -Corruption and Environment**

* To what extent has the project contributed to strengthen the oversight function of the parliamentary committees on anti-corruption and good governance issues?
* To what extent has the project contributed to achieve SDGs particularly on environment protection and climate change actions?

1. **Methodology**

The review methods provided here are indicative only. The review team should review the methodology and propose the final methods and data collection tools as part of the inception report. The method and tools should adequately address the issues of gender and marginalized/vulnerable groups. The MTR should build upon the available project documents, field visits (if possible), interviews and discussions (virtual in case of travel restriction), which would provide an opportunity for more in-depth analysis and understanding of PSP project. The review team is expected to frame the review using the criteria of relevance, effectiveness, efficiency and sustainability.

The reviewers must provide evidence-based information that is credible, reliable and useful. The evaluator is expected to follow a participatory and consultative approach ensuring close engagement with government counterparts, project team, UNDP Country Office and key stakeholders. Therefore, the evaluator will work closely with UNDP Country team to undertake the review adopting following approaches.

* 1. **Document review**

The MTR team is expected to review the project related documents such as the project document, theory of change and result framework, annual and quarterly progress reports, annual workplans, project board meeting minutes, monitoring reports, publications, strategic documents, policies, and other documents that the team considers useful for the MTR.

* 1. **Semi-structured interviews**

The review team should develop semi-structure interview questionnaire and conduct in-depth interviews (could be virtual depending upon the COVID-19 situation) with selected MPs of the Federal Parliament and PA members from at least two provinces. Also, the team should interview (could be cirtual) key officials from Parliament and its secretariat, donor community (Norway) and representatives of CSOs.

* 1. **Field visit**

The reviewers should visit at least two provinces and conduct discussions with MPs, Secretariat staff and communities if the COVID-19 situation becomes normal. If the crisis remains unchanged, the team should conduct discussion virtually. The team should conduct at least one separate discussion with women MPs and MPs from marginalised groups to ascertain the gender equality and social inclusion-related results and approaches.

* 1. **Others**

Briefing and debriefing sessions with UNDP and Project team as well as with other partners will be organised. The review team should ensure triangulation of the various data sources to maximize the validity and reliability of data.

The final methodological approach including interview schedule, consultations, evaluation matrix and data to be used in the review should be clearly outlined in the inception report and fully discussed and agreed with UNDP. The review team should select the respondents using an appropriate sampling technique. While selecting the respondents, the review team should ensure the gender balance.

1. **Expected Results/Deliverables**

The review team should submit the following deliverables:

* Inception report detailing the reviewer’s understanding of what is being reviewed, why it is being reviewed, and how (methodology) it will be reviewed. The inception report should also include a proposed schedule of tasks, evaluation tools, activities and deliverables.
* Evaluation matrix that includes key criteria, indicators and questions to capture assess them.
* Evaluation debriefing- immediately after completion of data collection, the review team should provide preliminary debriefing and findings.
* Draft review report.
* Review report audit trail – The comments on the draft report and changes by the reviewer in response to them should be retained by the consultant team to show how they have addressed comments.
* Final report within stipulated timeline with sufficient detail and quality by incorporating feedbacks from the concerned parties.
* An exit presentation on findings and recommendations.

1. **Team composition and required competencies**

The reviewers’ team will consist of three consultants- one being international as a team leader, one national consultant and one GESI expert as team members. The team composition will be gender balance to the extent possible. The team members involved in any way in the design, management or implementation or advising any aspect of the intervention that is the subject of the review will not be qualified. The review team will be selected by UNDP CO.

**6.1 International consultant (team leader)**

Working days: 15 (including 5 days home based)

Major roles and responsibilities:

S/he will be responsible to take charge of the whole MTR of the project and take care of overall quality and timely submission of the report. Specifically, the international consultant (Team leader) will have following roles and responsibilities:

* Overall lead and manage the MTR mission
* Review of relevant documents and finalize the review methods, scope and data collection and analysis instruments
* Guide the national team member in designing the data collection tools and data gathering process
* Consult with key persons of national partners and relevant international development partners including donors
* Contribute to and ensure overall quality of the outputs and final report ensuring the triangulation of the findings, obtain strong evidence for the analysis of information from multiple sources
* Provide strategic guidance and inputs to the national consultant in drafting the report
* Share the key findings of the review to the concerned stakeholders
* Incorporate the comments and feedback of the stakeholders in the draft report to finalize it and submit the final report to UNDP within stipulated timeline.

**Qualification and Competencies:** At leastMaster’s degree in law, political science, international relations or any other relevant subjects with working experience of more than 10 years in Parliamentary system and/or governance. S/he should have demonstrated experiences of leading similar kinds of evaluations of development projects and programmes in conflict and/or post-conflict contexts; knowledge and experience of gender sensitive evaluations; excellent analytical and report writing skills, knowledge of political context in regional and national context and excellent English language writing skills.

**6.2 National consultant (team member)**

Working days: 30

Major roles and responsibilities:

The national consultant will be responsible for reviewing documents, collecting data and information from different sources, analysing the progress, issues and challenges, providing inputs in drafting the report with guidance of the Team Leader. Specifically, the national consultant will have the following roles and responsibilities:

* Gathering and review of relevant documents
* Provide inputs to the team leader in designing the MTR including methodologies and data collection instruments
* Conduct field visits in selected provinces and conduct interview with the selected target group, partners and stakeholders
* Facilitate stakeholders’ discussion and focus groups to collect, collate and synthesize information (both in Kathmandu and provinces)
* Analyse the data and support the team leader in preparing a draft report as per division of work among the team
* Assist the team leader in finalizing the report and sharing it with stakeholders
* **Qualification and Competencies**: At least Master’s degrees in Law, Political Science or any other relevant subjects with working experience of more than five years in parliamentary system, governance; demonstrated experience of conducting similar evaluations of development projects and programmes; Adequate knowledge on gender and human rights issues; strong analytical and report writing skills; knowledge of political context of Nepal and having strong knowledge and skills in different data collection and analysis methods; as well as strong oral and written English skills.

**6.2 National consultant (GESI Expert)**

Working days: 20

Major roles and responsibilities:

The GESI Expert will be responsible for reviewing documents, collecting data and information from different sources, analysing them from GESI perspective. The consultant will be responsible for analyzing the degree to which program design and interventions have addressed the needs of women parliamentarians and MPs from traditionally excluded groups; ensure that gender and social inclusion dimensions are incorporated into all steps of the inquiry, analysis and evaluation reporting. Specifically, the GESI Expert will have the following roles and responsibilities:

* Reviewing documents, analyzing the progress, issues and challenges, draft selected chapters of the evaluation report as assigned by the Team Leader with GESI analysis
* Follow and ensure the detail scope and methodology for the report.
* Conduct an analysis for an impact of the program design and interventions regarding the needs of women and traditionally excluded groups
* Ensure that gender and social inclusion dimensions are incorporated into all steps of the inquiry, analysis and evaluation reporting.
* Identify the areas of GESI intrusion that has to be accelerated immediately at activities level interventions.
* Maintain the confidentiality of the information and data congregated during the evaluation process
* Provide inputs to the team leader in designing the MTR including methodologies and data collection instruments
* Conduct virtual interview with the selected target group, partners and stakeholders
* Facilitate stakeholders’ discussion and focus groups to collect, collate and synthesize information (both in Kathmandu and provinces)
* Analyse the data and support the team leader in preparing a draft report as per division of work among the team
* Assist the team leader in finalizing the report and sharing it with stakeholders
* **Qualification and Competencies**: At least Master’s degrees in Law, Political Science or any other relevant subjects with working experience of more than five years in parliamentary system, governance; demonstrated experience of conducting similar evaluations of development projects and programmes; Adequate knowledge on gender and human rights issues; strong analytical and report writing skills; knowledge of political context of Nepal and having strong knowledge and skills in different data collection and analysis methods; as well as strong oral and written English skills.

1. **Evaluation Ethics**

“This evaluation will be conducted in accordance with the principles outlined in the UNEG ‘Ethical Guidelines for Evaluation’. The consultants must safeguard the rights and confidentiality of information providers, interviewees and stakeholders through measures to ensure compliance with legal and other relevant codes governing collection of data and reporting on data. The consultant must also ensure security of collected information before and after the evaluation and protocols to ensure anonymity and confidentiality of sources of information where that is expected. The information knowledge and data gathered in the evaluation process must also be solely used for the evaluation and not for other uses without the express authorization of UNDP and partners.”

Consultants will be held to the highest ethical standards and are required to sign a Code of Conduct upon acceptance of the assignment.

1. **Implementation arrangements**

The principal responsibility for managing this MTR resides with the UNDP CO in Nepal. The UNDP CO will contract the consultants and ensure the logistic arrangements within the country for the review team. RBM Analyst (Evaluation Manager) will assure smooth, quality and independent implementation of the MTR with needful guidance from UNDP’s Senior Management.

The Project team will be responsible for providing required information, furnishing documents for review to the consultant team in leadership of Portfolio Manager. They will also be responsible for the logistic arrangements of the MTR, for setting up stakeholder interviews, arranging virtual consultations, coordinating with the Government etc.

Key project documents will be sent to the review team after signing the contract. The team should review the relevant documents and share the draft inception report before the commencement of the field mission or data collection. The team should revise the methodology, data collection tools and review questions. The final methodology and instruments should be proposed in the inception report including the MTR schedule and evaluation matrix which guides the overall implementation of the MTR.

The review team will be briefed by UNDP upon arrival on the objectives, purpose and output of the MTR. An oral debriefing in-country by the review team on the proposed work plan and methodology will be done and approved prior to the commencement of the MTR process.

The MTR will remain fully independent. A mission wrap-up meeting during which comments from participants will be noted for incorporation in the final report.

The team leader will maintain all the communication through Evaluation Manager. The Evaluation Manager should clear each step of the evaluation. The final evaluation report will be signed off by DRR.

1. **Timeframe**

The duration of the MTR will be maximum 30 days in the period 20th August-31st October 2020. The tentative schedule will be the following:

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| --- | --- | --- |
| **Planned Activities** | **Tentative Timeline**  **20th August-31st October 2020** | **Remarks** |
| Desk review and preparation of design (home based) | 2 days |  |
| Briefing by Development Partner/UNDP | 1 day |  |
| Finalizing design, methods & inception report and sharing with reference group for feedback | 3 days | UNDP needs at least 3-5 days to review and provide feedback on the inception report |
| Stakeholder’s meetings and interviews in Kathmandu and outside Kathmandu | 12 days |  |
| Analysis, preparation of draft report, presentation of draft findings | 6 days | UNDP needs at least 10 days to review and provide feedback on the draft report |
| Stakeholder meeting to present draft findings | 1 days |  |
| Finalize and submit the final report | 5 days |  |
| Total | **30 days** |  |

1. **Use of MTR results**

The findings of this MTR will be used to analyze the lessons learned and way forward for future course of action of the project. Therefore, the MTR report should provide critical findings and specific recommendations for future interventions.

1. **Application submission process and criteria for selection**

It will be mentioned in Individual Consultant selection criteria.

1. **Annexes[[5]](#footnote-5)**
   1. Relevant Documents: Project Document (both first phase and second phase), Multi-year work plan, Annual Work Plan 2018 and 2019, Project Progress Reports of 2018 and 2019, Financial Reports, Technical Needs Assessment Report, Organizational Structure, Knowledge products of PSP etc.
   2. List of key agencies, stakeholders and partners for review

**UNDP**

* UNDP Senior Management (DRR), Governance Advisor and Portfolio Manager
* PSP Project Manager and other Project Managers as needed

**Stakeholders:**

* International development partners
* Project donor and other donors
* Parliamentarian Experts (6-7 experts)
* Parliament members and officials

**Implementing Partners**

* Federal Parliament and Provincial Assemblies representatives and government officials
* Civil society organizations and media
  1. Inception Report Contents Outline
  2. Review matrix
  3. Format of the review report
  4. Evaluation Audit Trial Form
  5. Cond of Conduct

1. <https://www.np.undp.org/content/dam/nepal/docs/legalframework/UNDAF%202018-2022.pdf> [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. <https://www.np.undp.org/content/nepal/en/home/library/legal_framework/cpd-nepal-2018-to-2022.html> [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. Stakeholders denotes the International Development Partners, CSOs, donor, experts etc. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. Partner denotes Implementing Partners i.e. Federal Parliament and Provincial Assemblies [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. These documents will be provided after signing of the contract. [↑](#footnote-ref-5)