

Mid-Term Evaluation Report



Livelihood Improvement in Tajik – Afghan Cross Border Areas (LITACA-II)

Report Information

<i>Report Title:</i>	Mid-Term Evaluation of Livelihood Improvement in Tajik-Afghan Cross-Border Areas; LITACA Phase II (2018 – 2020)
<i>Evaluation Team:</i>	Dilli Joshi, Independent Evaluation Specialist Ilhomjon Aliev, National Evaluation Specialist
<i>Field Mission:</i>	4–29 February, 2020

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Abbreviations

AFs	Afghan currency, Afghan afghani (US\$ 1 = 76 AFs)
ANPDF	Afghanistan National Peace and Development Framework
B2B	Business-to-business
CPD	Country Programme Document of the UNDP
DIM	Direct implementation modality
GoIRA	Government of Islamic Republic of Afghanistan
G2G	Government-to-government
FGD	Focus group discussion
KII	Key informant information
JICA	Japan International Cooperation Agency
M&E	Monitoring and evaluation
MEDT	Ministry of Economic Development and Trade of Tajikistan
MRRD	Ministry of Rural Rehabilitation and Development of Afghanistan
LITACA	Livelihoods Improvement in Tajik–Afghanistan Cross-Border Areas
NDS	National Development Strategy of UNDP
NIM	National Implementation Modality
NPP	National Priority Program of Afghanistan
OECD-DAC	Organisation of Economic Cooperation and Development's Development Assistance Committee (OECD-DAC)
OVOP	One Village One Product/ Our Village Our Pride (as used in Afghanistan)
SME	Small and medium enterprises
TJS	Tajik currency, Somoni (US\$ 1=TJS 9.6)
ToC	Theory of change
ToR	Terms of reference
USD	US dollar
UNDAF	United Nations Development Assistance Framework
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNEG	United Nations Evaluation Group

Glossary

Jamoat	Institutions of self-governance at the sub-district level in Tajikistan
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Prodoc

Project document

Executive summary

The MTE followed the evaluation criteria integrating United Nations Evaluation Group Guidelines and Organisation of Economic Cooperation and Development's Development Assistance Committee (OECD-DAC) criteria – relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact, and sustainability. A summary of the key findings of the evaluation, including lessons learnt, and recommendations, is below.

Relevance

The project is highly relevant to the targeted groups. The MTE noted that large numbers of women had been involved in traditional weaving and other activities but that, under the project, their work had diversified, they had developed market linkages, and begun to earn more. Thus, the project met the very urgent need of women to earn a livelihood.

LITACA works closely under the overall integrated approach of the Citizen Charter National Priority Program (CCNP) umbrella in Afghanistan and complements CCNP overall goals and objectives in particular provisions of basic service delivery and human security in rural areas in Afghanistan. Overall, the projects are highly relevant in relation to the UNDPs and the Afghanistan and Tajikistan governments' strategies for providing support to livelihoods via income generation at the household level and through cross-border trade.

It is highly relevant for achieving UNDP Afghanistan CPD Output 6.1: improved economic livelihoods, especially for vulnerable populations and women and UNDP Tajikistan CPD Output 2.1: national and sub-national systems and institutions enabled to achieve structural transformation of productive capacities that are sustainable and employment and livelihood intensive. The program activities also fit well with ANPDF 5.5.A, the Comprehensive Agriculture Development Program.

LITACA aligned with Tajikistan's NDS 2016-2030 (NDS), which focuses on economic diversification and competitiveness, sustainable jobs, improving energy supply and transport connectivity, ensuring food security, enhancing public administration and developing human resources.

The LITICA interventions are also aligned with the United National Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF)'s Outcome 2, which calls for achieving equitable and sustainable economic growth through better employment opportunities and livelihoods, access to knowledge and information for entrepreneurs and farmers, and a stable energy supply. The Project is also aligned with SDGs 2, 3, 4, 7, and 8 in Tajikistan.

Effectiveness

The MTE noted that project activities are underway and that most are on track to achieve their targets on time. Meetings and discussions with project staff and a review of the annual report revealed that annual targets were achieved every year in both countries and some activity under output 3 could not be achieved due to the visa issues and political issues.

The MTE also noted that the government agencies in both countries at the implementation levels highly appreciated the project activities. For example, creation of small chain of workers, drying and processing of medicinal herbs and oil, OVOP and capacity building activities are highly appreciated by the beneficiaries.

The MTE analysed achievements against targets by using the performance rating scale based on the indicators described in Project Document. The combined targets of Year 1 and Year 2 were used to assess achievements. The degree that targets and other parameters were achieved – highly satisfactory, moderately satisfactory, or satisfactory – was used to assess

project performance. Based on these parameters, project performance in both countries was found to be satisfactory. After considering field observations, documents reviewed, interviews with government line agencies, consultations with communities, interactions with the project implementation teams in two countries, analysis of quantitative and qualitative data, and the qualitative assessment, the MTE concludes that the project's overall performance in both countries was satisfactory. Most activities were fully achieved or even over-achieved despite the adverse security situation in Afghanistan. Most of the targets were achieved in Tajikistan, and most of the rest are on the way to being achieved. Considering both the achievement of targets and rate of expenditure, the evaluators rate the project's performance satisfactory.

Efficiency

The MTE believes that the project is largely on track to achieve its' results though it experienced some delays in the initial period mainly due to deteriorating security situation and slow recruitment of technical project staff by MRRD in Afghanistan.

The annual progress and semi-annual progress reports produced by the project are difficult to follow. They seem as if they refer to two different programs or projects. In addition, the targets mentioned in the annual report are not consistent with the targets described in the project document. The MTE observed that many of the good initiatives taken by the projects in both countries were not reflected nicely in the reports. The major challenges mentioned to the MTE were visa and political issues regarding cross-border trade. The MTE, however, is unable to identify any concrete steps taken to mitigate these risks.

MTE noted that fund delivery in Afghanistan is a little lower than planned. In Afghanistan in 2019, for example, fund delivery for outputs 2 and 3 was only 75% and 64% of the planned amounts respectively. In Tajikistan fund delivery for output 1 is about 75%, for the remaining 2 outputs is exceeded.

Impact/ Outcome

The evaluation noted some positive outcomes which are likely to contribute to the achievement of the overall project objectives. One substantial economic outcome of the project is that beneficiaries are benefited in terms of productivity and employment creation, but also in terms of income and overall living conditions. Indeed, many OVOP associations improved sales and incomes in project-targeted communities, thereby significantly improving living conditions in those communities. The MTE also concluded that in Tajikistan, the project contributed positively to their socio-cultural development and provide the employment near to their residents and contributed to the outmigration to the Russia.

The MTE also concluded that infrastructures and socio-economic projects in Afghanistan have created jobs contributing significantly to reduction in unemployment. Similarly, public outreach (gathering, meetings, etc.) activities are conducted regularly in targeted provinces and are briefed on the OVOP approach to encourage local craftsmanship. The OVOP selling centres have participated in several exhibitions within and outside the country and have increased sales volumes and market outreach.

Sustainability

The MTE observed the likelihood of LITACA results be sustainable is very high and noted that some beneficiaries who had been trained and had started up businesses expressed confidently that they would procure equipment using their own savings. The project supports start-up initiatives not only in terms of equipment but also in terms of marketing, labelling, and design as well as support in exporting products. Most of the beneficiaries with whom the MTE interacted have plans to expand their businesses and even export not only cross border

markets but to other countries as well. One of the most important dimensions in the sustainability of the project was that it trained government representatives in the planning and monitoring of development work. The fact that officials have these skills will help maintain project sustainability at the community level.

Conclusions

1. Vocational training, especially in beekeeping and spinning, had positive outcomes in terms of enhancing livelihoods and generating income at the household level. Similarly, creation of a value chain in dry nuts, medicinal herbs and oil production was highly appreciated by beneficiaries. However, the MTE did not explicitly notice that business plans had been prepared for individual farmers or farmers in groups or associations. Making business plans and linkages with markets is very important.
2. Tajikistan needs to promote the sustainability of its projects and increase cooperation with other OVOPs. These measures are expected to help people move away from donor dependence.
3. The MTE also concluded that delays in the procurement process prevented the achievement of some targeted activities. The UNDP and the MRRD in Afghanistan both must find a way to solve this problem.
4. In the annual progress reports, reporting is done country-wise, not as output or result give an impression of two separate projects. The MTE concludes that monitoring needs improvement, as does the quality of annual reports.

Recommendations

1. MTE recommends that the good initiatives taken by the projects in both Afghanistan and Tajikistan are not reflected nicely in the reports, better to collect best practices and success stories and upload in MRRD, UNDP and donor websites.
2. The project should speed up the implementation of activities under Output 1 and intensive follow up in year 3 for the better fund delivery in Tajikistan and for output 3 in Afghanistan.
3. Opinion survey should be conducted as targeted in the final year of the project before project come to the ends and should be shared with wider stakeholders.
4. The implementing agencies should propose JICA for extension of the project phase and include other neighbouring countries such as Uzbekistan, which borders with both Afghanistan and Tajikistan into the project for the cross-border trade.

1. Introduction

Livelihoods Improvement in Tajik-Afghanistan Cross-Border Areas (LITACA) is a three-year joint project of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) offices in Afghanistan and Tajikistan. The Government of Japan, through Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA), funds LITACA. The project is implemented through the Ministry of Rural Rehabilitation and Development (MRRD) of the Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan (GoIRA) using a national implementation modality (NIM) and through the UNDP in consultation with the Ministry of Economic Development and Trade of Republic of Tajikistan using a direct implementation modality (DIM). This phase of the project, LITACA-II, started in January 2018 and was built on the achievements of LITACA-I (April 2014 – December 2017). Its objectives are to improve living standards and promote stability and security in the bordering six districts¹ four provinces (Badakhshan, Takhar, Kunduz, and Balkh) of Afghanistan and eight districts² of Khatlon Oblast of Tajikistan.

1.1 LITACA-II Goals, outcomes and outputs

LITACA has country-specific goals, but its outputs are same for Afghanistan and Tajikistan (see below). The project outcomes are aligned with the UNDP country programme documents (CPDs) of the respective countries.

Table 1: LITACA-II goals, outcomes, and outputs³

Goal (Afghanistan): Economic growth is accelerated to reduce vulnerabilities and poverty, strengthen the resilience of the licit economy and reduce the illicit economy in its multiple dimensions	UNDP Afghanistan CPD Outcome 3: Economic growth is accelerated to reduce vulnerabilities and poverty, strengthen the resilience of the licit economy and reduce the illicit economy in its multiple dimensions UNDP Afghanistan CPD Output 6.1: Improved economic livelihoods, especially for vulnerable populations and women
Goal (Tajikistan): Strengthened living standards of selected rural communities in the bordering areas of Tajikistan and Afghanistan	UNDP Tajikistan CDP Outcome 2: People in Tajikistan benefit from equitable and sustainable economic growth through decent and productive employment, stable energy supply, improved access to specialized knowledge and innovation and more favourable business environment especially for entrepreneurs and farmers. UNDP Tajikistan CPD Output 2.1: National and sub-national systems and institutions enabled to achieve structural transformation of productive capacities that are sustainable and employment and livelihood intensive.

¹ Shahri Buzurg district in Badakhshan; Yangi Qala, Dashti Qala, and Chahaab in Takhar; Imam Saheb in Kunduz, and Khulm district in Balkh province

² Shaartuz, Qubodiyon, Jayhun, Dusti, Panj, Shamsiddin Shohin, Hamadoni, Farkhor

³ UNDP, *Livelihood Improvement in Tajik-Afghan Cross-Border Areas, Phase II, 1 January 2018 – 31 December 2020*

Table 2: LITACA-II outputs and results

Output	Results
Output 1: Border communities' access to rural infrastructure and public services improved	<p><i>Result 1:</i> Capacity of local governance representatives at the district level to effectively, accountably and transparently plan, implement, monitor, operate and maintain local development initiatives inclusive of marginalised groups and women.</p> <p><i>Result 2:</i> Number of local infrastructures which are built, rehabilitated, and/or strengthened.</p> <p><i>Result 3:</i> Number of households benefitting from infrastructure which is built, rehabilitated, and/or strengthened</p>
Output 2: Employment opportunities for women and men in bordering provinces of Tajikistan and Afghanistan increased	<p><i>Result 2.1:</i> Number of paid labour days created by infrastructure projects</p> <p><i>Result 2.2:</i> Degree of satisfaction/utilization by men and women in targeted communities regarding access to rural infrastructure and public services</p> <p><i>Result 2.3:</i> Number of LITACA-II training programme graduates, that are locally employed / earn additional income within twelve months</p> <p><i>Result 2.4:</i> Number of male and females employed in new local jobs or earning additional income in opportunities created by LITACA-II supported agro- and non-agro-based SMEs, large employers, entrepreneurs, producer groups, lead farmers and one-village-one-pride groups (OVOPs)</p> <p><i>Result 2.5:</i> Number of proposals approved for CBOs/associations self-identifying strategic inputs and their existing capacity gaps</p> <p><i>Result 2.6:</i> Amount of OVOP sales, income/profit generated per year</p>
Output 3: Access to cross-border trade, dialogue and partnerships amongst targeted communities, including vulnerable and marginalized rural women improved	<p><i>Result 3.1:</i> Number of small and medium trade businesses owned by men and women operating in the cross-border markets</p> <p><i>Result 3.2:</i> Number of households (including those that are conflict-affected) covered by public awareness campaigns on cross-border markets and events</p> <p><i>Result 3.3:</i> Number of female-led businesses and women community groups with enhanced business and production capacity</p> <p><i>Result 3.4:</i> Number of sales contracts resulting from cross-border business events</p>

1.2 Project Theory of Change

LITACA-II, a three-year initiative, is continuation of LITACA I to improve living standards and promote stability and security in the bordering provinces of Tajikistan and Afghanistan (Impact). The project expects to achieve this impact by reducing poverty and supporting economic development and cross-border collaboration among the communities along the Tajik-Afghan border (Outcomes).

The project's causal pathway assumes that reducing poverty and supporting development and cross-border collaboration will improve living standards and promote stability and security in the bordering provinces of Tajikistan and Afghanistan (linkage between Outcomes and Impact). There is also an assumption that support to the direct beneficiary group (130,000 beneficiaries) will have a multiplier effect in the economy, and create a larger benefit (185,000 beneficiaries).

The project has an indirect influence over Outcomes as Outcomes depend on how beneficiaries use project Outputs as well as on external factors, in this case the degree to which the overall environment enables poverty reduction and cross-border collaboration to take place. In contrast, the project has direct influence over the quality and relevance of Activities and Outputs. The primary Outputs LITACA-II delivered leading to these benefits are as follows:

- Providing capacity-development opportunities for local governments and civil society and private sector organisations to sustainably manage local socio-economic development.
- Offering investments in the rehabilitation of priority infrastructure and business development
- Mainstreaming gender equality

These outputs are the result of design assumptions about the context. The Project Document does not cite a source for its assumptions.

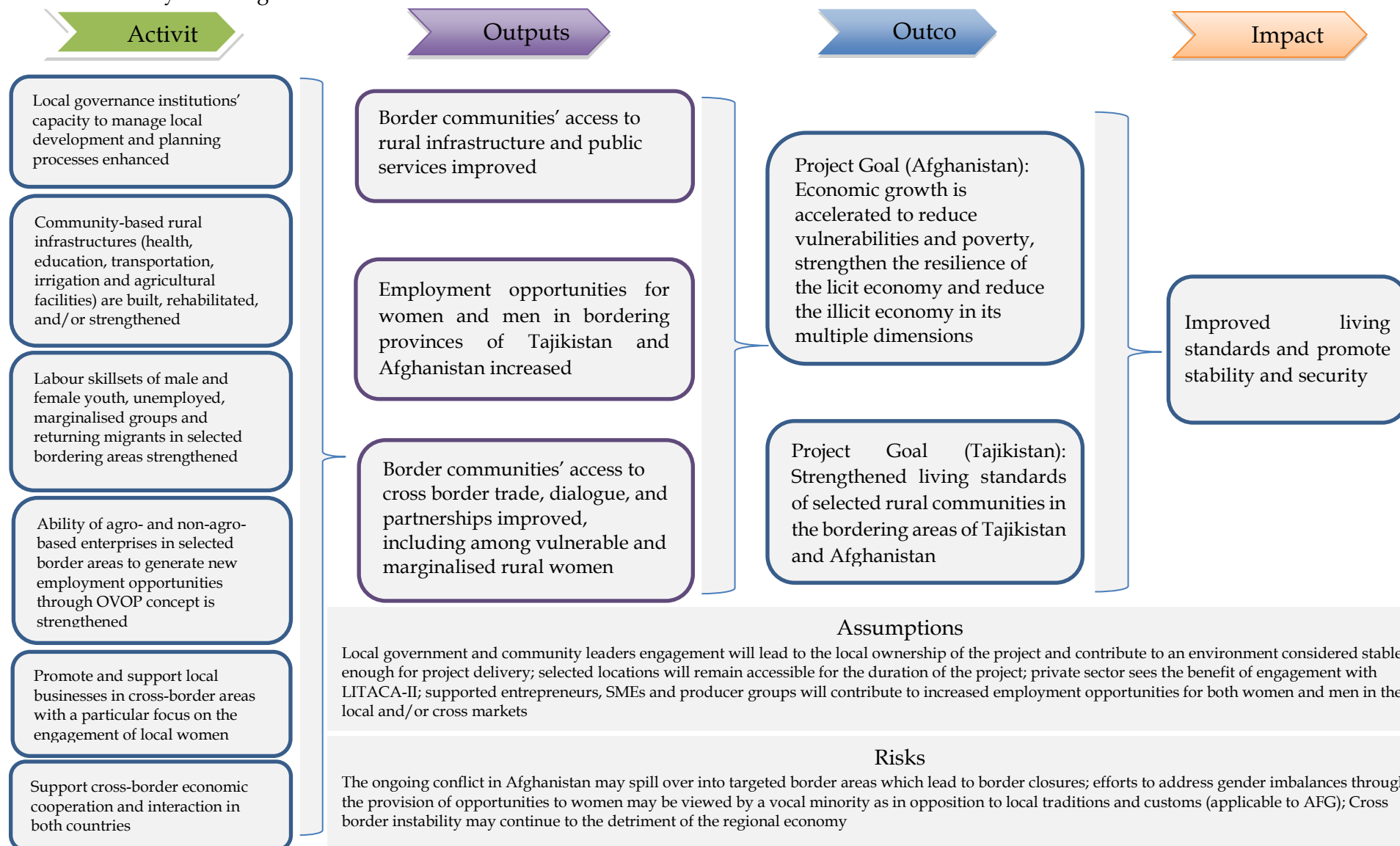
Analytical assumptions in the Project Document supporting the project's design:

- | |
|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Promotion of regional economic development has the potential to enable cross-country cooperation and thus to contribute to regional stability and poverty reduction.▪ There is an enabling policy environment as the Tajik and Afghan governments have border arrangements that explicitly support the development of cross-border economic ties.▪ The opportunities for cross-border trade with Afghanistan are not well used by Tajikistan. There is room for to increase trade, a step which will generate benefits in both countries.▪ Factors constraining such an increase in trade and benefits include the narcotics trade and related violence and large-scale poverty-related out-migration.▪ Empowering border communities to build better economic conditions can provide economic alternatives that help prevent local populations from getting involved in drug trafficking and slow large-scale out-migration from border areas. |
|---|

On the basis of those assumptions, a needs-and-capacity assessment supported the development of Activities that would deliver the desired Outputs. In the results framework, these Outputs are described as follows:

1. Border communities' access to rural infrastructure and public services improved.
2. Employment opportunities for women and men in the bordering provinces of Tajikistan and Afghanistan increased.
3. Border communities' access to cross-border trade, dialogue, and partnerships, improved including among vulnerable and marginalised rural women.

Table.. : Theory of Change



1.3 Objectives of the LITACA-II Mid-Term Evaluation

The MTE achieved three specific objectives using standard *United Nations Evaluation Group* criteria to assess the UNDP's technical support and oversight mechanisms. Twenty-nine questions set out in the terms of reference supported this assessment.

Table 3: Objectives of the LITACA-II Mid-Term Evaluation

Evaluation Objective	
Assess the relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, impact and sustainability of the project, including its design, start-up, management, and implementation from 1 January, 2018, to 31 December, 2019	
Specific Evaluation Objectives	
Objective 1: Assist the recipient government, beneficiaries, UNDP and, as appropriate, the concerned partners and stakeholders, to improve the efficiency, effectiveness, relevance, sustainability, impact and replicating the existing model of the project	Objective 2: Provide feedback to all parties to improve the policy, planning, appraisal, implementation and monitoring phases
Objective 3: Ensure accountability for results to the project's financial backers, stakeholders and beneficiaries	
Evaluation Questions	
The 29 evaluation questions provided in the ToR	

1.4 Purpose of the Mid-Term Evaluation

The purpose of the MTE was to assess progress towards the achievement of the project objectives and outcomes mentioned above and as specified in the LITACA-II Project Document and to identify early signs of project success or failure with the goal of identifying the necessary changes to be made to set the project back on track to help it achieve its intended results.

The MTE also reviews the project's approach and methodology, its risks to results impact and sustainability and makes recommendations to improve the project over the remainder of its lifetime.

1.5 Scope of the Mid-Term Evaluation

The Mid-term Evaluation assessed progress towards the achievement of the project objectives and outcomes mentioned above and as specified in the LITACA-II Project Document and assessed early signs of project success or failure with the goal of identifying the necessary changes to be made to set the project on-track to help achieve its intended results. The MTE also reviewed the project's approach and methodology, its risks to results impact and sustainability and made recommendations to improve the project over the next one year (remaining period of its lifetime).

1.6 Organisation of the Mid-Term Evaluation

The Mid-term Evaluation was commissioned and managed by Livelihood and Resilience Unit of UNDP Afghanistan Country Office with support from project office at MRRD, Afghanistan and UNDP Tajikistan. An international consultant and a national consultant (for Tajikistan) were hired to carry out the evaluation. After initial briefing in Afghanistan and desk research,

the evaluator drafted an inception report (Annex - VI) prior to stakeholder interviews. The inception report outlined the evaluation questions, methodology, tools and detailed workplan for delivering the evaluation according to the Terms of Reference (ToR). The project teams in MRRD Afghanistan and UNDP Tajikistan made arrangements for the meetings, interviews, field visits and availed the evaluators with required documents.

2. Evaluation Approach and Methodology

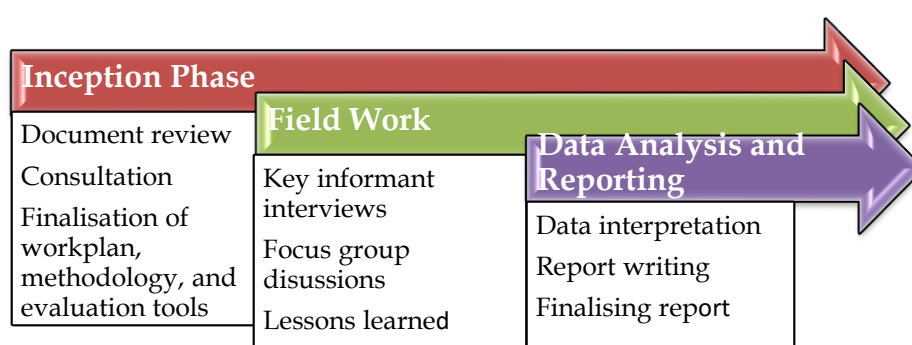
2.1 Approach to the Evaluation

The MTE followed the evaluation criteria integrating United Nations Evaluation Group Guidelines and Organisation of Economic Cooperation and Development's Development Assistance Committee (OECD-DAC) criteria – relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact, and sustainability.

The evaluation was conducted in a collaborative and participatory manner that ensured the active engagement of all stakeholders in data collection and analysis. Separate key informant interviews (KIIs) and focus group discussions (FGDs) were conducted with beneficiaries in both countries. Interviews in Afghanistan were conducted over the telephone calls. The MTE team collaborated with the LITACA team throughout the evaluation. The evaluation questions specified in the ToR (see Annex II) formed the basis of this evaluation.

The evaluation was conducted in the three phases mentioned above and shown in Figure 1 below.

Figure 1: Evaluation phases



Inception or preparatory phase: Briefing meetings were held with the LITACA team both in Kabul and Dushanbe as well as in the Area Offices in Khulob and Bokhtar of Khatlon Obast. The MTE reviewed relevant documents – the Project Document, annual work plans, annual and semi-annual progress reports, a baseline survey report, a capacity-building report, and accounts of financial expenditures. The documents provided by the LITACA team were used to formulate evaluation questions based on OECD-DAC criteria as well as the broad questions given in the ToR.

To assess the programme's performance, the MTE developed qualitative tools such as FGD and KII guides to questions to ask. Meetings with relevant stakeholders, including UNDP, MRRD, MEDT, officials of Khatlon Oblast, and JICA officials were conducted.

Field observation phase: Field observations in Khatlon Oblast of Tajikistan were conducted from 24 to 28 February 2020. The MTE conducted a total of 11 interactions with stakeholders, including UNDP, JICA, MRRD, MEDT, and Khatlon Oblast representatives, 14 beneficiary groups in Tajikistan in addition to 12 beneficiaries and six stakeholders in Afghanistan as well as the project teams in Kabul and Dushanbe and the area offices in Takhar in Afghanistan (by phone) and Khulob and Bokhtar in Tajikistan.

Data analysis and reporting phase: Project documents and reports were systematically analysed using the evaluation criteria. Data and information obtained through interviews, FGDs and consultations were analysed using narrative analysis and interpreted.

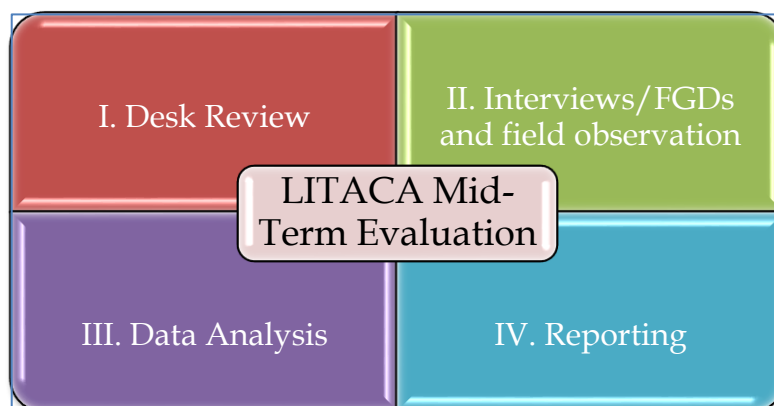
2.2 Methodology

The MTE employed four stages (see Figure 2), beginning with a desk review, followed by discussions with beneficiaries and stakeholders, data analysis, and report writing. The process was participatory and inclusive and sensitive to beneficiaries.

Collecting information included reviewing documents, conducting KIIs with relevant stakeholders and FGDs with beneficiary; field observations; and discussions with the project team both at the central and regional/area levels.

A review matrix (see Annex I) based on the criteria and evaluation questions set out in the ToR and detailed questions prepared based on those questions were used for discussions. The evaluation criteria included relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact, and sustainability.

Figure 2: Review methodology



The LITACA team identified observation sites and set up meetings with government officials and beneficiary groups.

2.3 Limitations

Because of the fragility of the security situation in the Afghanistan, the evaluator was unable to observe field activities or interact with beneficiaries. Interviews with beneficiaries were conducted by phone in Afghanistan.

3. Evaluation findings

3.1 Relevance

3.1.1 Appropriateness to core problems of the target groups

The project is highly relevant to the targeted groups. The MTE noted that large numbers of women had been involved in traditional weaving and other activities but that, under the project, their work had diversified and they had developed market linkages and begun to earn more. Thus, the project met the very urgent need of women to earn a livelihood. For example, in Afghanistan, some women earned up to 2,000 Afs a month and, through this contribution, earned recognition in their households and were even invited to join in household-decision making.

During interviews in Afghanistan and Tajikistan, women respondents said that LITACA training had provided an important opportunity to learn new skills, do things other than daily household work, and focus on the possibility of starting a business. Male respondents also considered the possibility of starting an enterprise a key take-away. In addition, both women and men said that the training helped relieve the stress and worry they feel on a daily basis because of the negative economic and food security situation. Women in Tajikistan said spinning wool using machines has supported them on their immediate and urgent needs to generate income. The MTE noted that training in machine spinning was highly relevant and predicts it will have a positive impact on women's daily earnings in the future.

During interviews, district-level government representatives in Tajikistan shared that the LITACA programme had contributed to job creation, improved the lives of people, and contributed to cross-border trade. The Deputy Chairman of Panj in Khatlon Oblast emphasised that one major benefit of LITACA was job creation, a priority of the Khatlon region, and claimed that the programme had directly contributed to the development of the region. He added that the project's three outputs – improvement of the capacity of local governments, strengthening of the skill sets of labourers and increasing of employment opportunities, and promotion of cross-border trade – are meeting the needs of communities. The equipment and trainings LITACA has provided have helped to employ local populations and create permanent and seasonal jobs. In particular, the project employs women and returnee migrants from Russia. For example, the beekeeping project in Panj District provides job opportunities to 30 people (and their families) with disabilities. The beekeepers have earned additional income and are now ready to engage in cross-border trade.

The Minister of Rural Rehabilitation and Development of Afghanistan HE Mujib Rahan Karimi expressed that LITACA project was contributing to poverty reduction and is very important for the rural people and has direct impact on the economy of the local people and their livelihoods. He appreciated the project for creating various associations which he believes will grow and sustain the business cycle.

The interview with the beneficiaries in Kunduz province revealed that the construction of a training centre was highly relevant and addressed their needs. They said that women used to produce products at the household level using their own knowledge, but now that they have started coming to the training centre they have learned to use different colours and make other changes to make products that meet the market demand.

3.1.2 Appropriateness and relevance to the objectives of the UNDP

Overall, the project is highly relevant in relation to the strategies of the UNDP and the Afghanistan and Tajikistan governments for providing support to livelihoods via income generation at the household level and through cross-border trade.

The project is appropriate in that it aims to achieve UNDP's CDP 2016-2020 Outcome 3 of Afghanistan—*Economic growth is accelerated to reduce vulnerabilities and poverty, strengthen the resilience of the licit economy and reduce the illicit economy in its multiple dimensions*—and Outcome 2 of Tajikistan—*people in Tajikistan benefit from equitable and sustainable economic growth through decent and productive employment, stable energy supply, improved access to specialized knowledge, innovation, and a more favourable business environment, especially for entrepreneurs and farmers*. It is highly relevant for achieving UNDP Afghanistan CPD's Output 6.1—*improved economic livelihoods, especially for vulnerable populations and women*—and UNDP Tajikistan CPD's Output 2.1—*national and sub-national systems and institutions enabled to achieve structural transformation of productive capacities that are sustainable and employment and livelihood intensive*.

The LITACA project addresses the United National Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) and is aligned with the national development strategies of Afghanistan, provincial development priorities, and SDG goals, particularly those related to industrialisation and improving the livelihoods of the population (SDGs 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 13, and 17.)

The LITICA interventions are also aligned with the UNDAF's Outcome 2, which calls for *achieving equitable and sustainable economic growth through better employment opportunities and livelihoods, access to knowledge and information for entrepreneurs and farmers, and a stable energy supply*⁴. The Project is also aligned with SDGs 2, 3, 4, 7, and 8 in Tajikistan.

3.1.3 Country-level priorities, especially for MRRD/GoIRA

The project fits well with the GoIRA's comprehensive agriculture development programme. National Priority Program (NPP) Output 1 Component 2 (Sub-Component 2), Environmental Conservative and Management (EC&M), and NPP Output 4 Component 3, to improve the capacity of community development councils (CDCs) to facilitate development at all levels and to increase district-level productive assets are particular areas that the project complements.

LITACA works closely under the overall integrated approach of the Citizen Charter National Priority Program (CCNP) umbrella and complements the CCNP's overall goals and objectives, in particular, its provisions for the delivery of basic services and human security in rural areas.

The programme's activities also fit well with ANPDF 5.5.A, Afghanistan's Comprehensive Agriculture Development Programme. The Afghanistan NDS outlines a long-term strategic vision for agriculture and rural development to ensure the social, economic and political wellbeing of rural communities, especially poor and vulnerable people, while stimulating the integration of rural communities within the national economy. Meeting this goal will require

⁴ UNDP 2015 CPD for Tajikistan 2016- 2020

transforming agricultural production to make it more productive and more commercially oriented and expanding off-farm employment opportunities as the basis for raising incomes among the rural population. The MTE's interview with HE Minister of MRRD also substantiated the above-mentioned points. The minister mentioned that the MRRD's goals are reducing poverty, improving livelihoods, and increasing income and that the ministry operated on the belief that creating job opportunities directly alleviated poverty.

In short, the LITACA project helps the MRRD achieve its goals and is very effective in diversifying livelihood options through value chain and market linkages.

3.1.4 Country-level priorities, Ministry of Economic Development and Trade of Tajikistan

The MTE also noted that LITACA aligned with Tajikistan's National Development Strategy (NDS) 2016-2030⁵ which is based on three basic principles for future development: (1) prevention (reducing vulnerability of future development), (2) industrial (effective use of national resources) and (3) innovativeness (the development on the basis of innovations in all spheres of socio-economic life of the country). The NDS focuses on economic diversification and competitiveness, sustainable jobs, improving energy supply and transport connectivity, ensuring food security, enhancing public administration and developing human resources.

The ultimate goal of the long-term development of Tajikistan is to increase the living standards of the population on the basis of sustainable economic development. This was further elaborated in interview with the Deputy Chairman Economic Development of Khatlon Oblast. The whole of Khatlon region being an agrarian economy, any support to farmers will contribute on the sustainable development of the Oblast.

The NDS and the Medium-term Development Programme for 2016-2020 aim at achieving the Sustainable Development Goals. The implementation of these new strategic documents for Tajikistan suggest the use of experience from the previous phase of co-operation with the wide involvement of all stakeholders, including development partners, the private sector and civil society.

3.2 Effectiveness

3.2.1 Quality of overall project execution (targets vs. achievements)

The MTE noted that project activities are underway and that most are on track to achieve their targets on time. Meetings and discussions with project staff and a review of the annual reports revealed that annual targets had been achieved every year in both countries. The section below discusses the findings of each output in detail.

Output 1: Governance capacity and access to rural infrastructure and public services amongst targeted communities improved.

⁵National Development Strategy of the Republic of Tajikistan for the Period upto 2030
https://nafaka.tj/images/zakoni/new/strategiya_2030_en.pdf

The project intends to improve the capacity of local governance representatives at the district level; build, rehabilitate and/or strengthen local infrastructure and thereby create jobs and employment; facilitate small and medium trade business operating in cross-border markets; enhance the business and production capacity of women; and increase sales from cross-border trade.

The MTE noted that the project conducted capacity needs assessments among local government representatives, local council representatives (shuras) and marginalised groups in Afghanistan prior to providing capacity-building trainings to local officials in targeted districts with the aim of improving effectiveness, transparency and accountability in local development. A total of 869 government representatives at the provincial, district and community levels participated in the LITACA's training on accountability and transparency. The trainees implemented their plans and began to monitor, operate, and maintain local development initiatives. The number trained already exceeds that targeted for 2018 and 2019. Meetings with government representatives revealed that they already use an updated monitoring and evaluation (M&E) form and that local planning processes are built into it.

During the capacity needs assessment, most of the newly elected CDC members requested help in enhancing their capacity on the project lifecycle. Now that LITACA has provided trainings, CDC members can now monitor project activities. They are confident, too, as they believe their skills and capacity throughout the project lifecycle of the project, including sustainability and maintenance, increased. Targets in Afghanistan are also on their way to being met. Without an outcome survey, it is difficult to claim with certainty that capacity has increased, but project reports suggest that it has.

Regarding infrastructure design, survey and implementation, the project is on track. In 2018 and 2019, all surveys, designs, and plans were completed and implementation was begun. The review of annual reports shows that all the infrastructures constructed with project support helped reduce community vulnerability and increase agricultural production. During interviews, beneficiaries shared that agriculture crop production had increased and that they had found jobs in their communities. These infrastructure projects, created jobs for both skilled and semi-skilled labourers and many households benefited. By reviewing the project's progress reports and available data and conducting interviews, the MTE concluded that the project's targets are on the way to achievement.

The MTE found that in 2018 in Tajikistan, LITICA focused on building the capacity of local development partners in the design and M&E of district development programmes. Local authorities and community members were trained. In these capacity-building activities, substantial proportion of women also participated. The figures below show the proportions of male and female participants in trainings and public hearings.

The review of the annual reports revealed that LITACA had conducted public hearings in all eight districts of Tajikistan and that a wide range of stakeholders, including government authorities, staff of INGOs, district activists, and local leaders had participated. The meeting with the head of the administration of Shohin District shared that the public hearings are well appreciated by all stakeholders in the district. In a meeting with the government authority of Khatlon Oblast government officials also observed the public hearings contributing positively to strengthening local capacity.

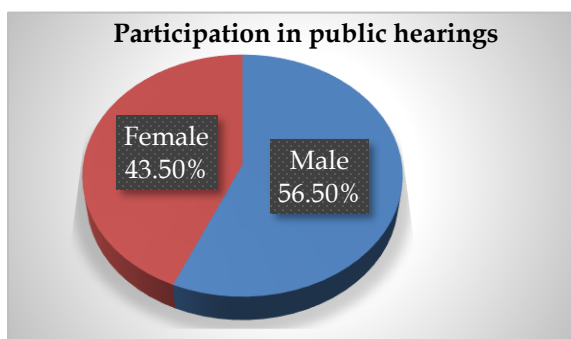


Figure 3: Proportions of male and female participating in public hearings in Tajikistan

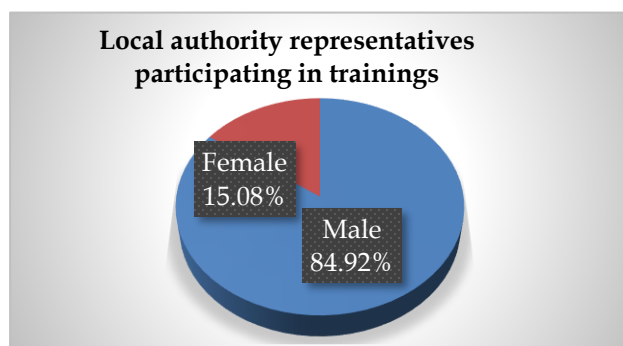


Figure 4: Proportions of male and female participating in trainings in Tajikistan

The MTE also noted that investment guidelines have been developed for all targets, including investment potentials and opportunities in the project's target districts.

Regarding infrastructure strengthening and rehabilitation, a total of 394 sub-projects were implemented and 566.8 million Somoni spent. The sub-projects fall in different categories, such as small-scale enterprises for agriculture product processing, educational facilities, medical facilities, and drinking water and electricity supply.

Output 2: Employment opportunities for women and men in bordering provinces of Tajikistan and Afghanistan increased

The MTE noted that to achieve the targets mentioned in the Project Document under Output 2, LITICA has implemented several infrastructure projects, small agriculture and non-agriculture processing initiatives, capacity building trainings, and job creation. Regarding the creation of jobs in both countries, it seems the project has made very good progress. In Afghanistan the targets are well under way to being achieved. The only delay involved submitting a proposal for a grant for community based organisations (CBOs).

The MTE also noted that LITACA created many short- and long-terms job for beneficiaries. Beneficiaries in Dashti Qala of Takhar province revealed that the project helped enhance their livelihoods providing jobs. One female member of a training centre in Kunduz province noted that after the OVOP centre was constructed to process sesame oil, many people got jobs there.

The annual report 2019 shows that the 20 infrastructure projects implemented by LITACA created 53,241 skilled and semi-skilled jobs in Afghanistan. The ratio is shown in Figure 5 below. Similarly, MTE also noted that through the OVOP created 4,570 long-term jobs. Women in Takhar province shared in an interview that they got jobs as trainer for tailoring classes after they themselves completed LITACA's tailoring training. One trainee, who got a job, pointed out that she was not the only one to get a job; many women had. The proportions of males and females who receive long-term jobs are shown in Figure 6 below.

<p>Paid labor days</p> <table><tr><th>Category</th><th>Percentage</th></tr><tr><td>Semi-skilled</td><td>74.95%</td></tr><tr><td>Skilled</td><td>25.05%</td></tr></table>	Category	Percentage	Semi-skilled	74.95%	Skilled	25.05%	<p>Gender-wise long-term jobs created</p> <table><tr><th>Gender</th><th>Percentage</th></tr><tr><td>Female</td><td>54.42%</td></tr><tr><td>Male</td><td>45.58%</td></tr></table>	Gender	Percentage	Female	54.42%	Male	45.58%			
Category	Percentage															
Semi-skilled	74.95%															
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Gender	Percentage															
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<p><i>Figure 5: Paid labour days created by LITACA in Afghanistan</i></p>	<p><i>Figure 6: Jobs created for men and women by LITACA in Afghanistan</i></p>															
<p>Full-time jobs created</p> <table><tr><th>Gender</th><th>Percentage</th></tr><tr><td>Female</td><td>68.04%</td></tr><tr><td>Male</td><td>31.96%</td></tr></table>	Gender	Percentage	Female	68.04%	Male	31.96%	<p>OVOP sales volume</p> <table><tr><th>Country</th><th>Target in USD</th><th>Actual achievement in USD</th></tr><tr><td>Tajikistan</td><td>28000</td><td>30000</td></tr><tr><td>Afghanistan</td><td>30000</td><td>72000</td></tr></table>	Country	Target in USD	Actual achievement in USD	Tajikistan	28000	30000	Afghanistan	30000	72000
Gender	Percentage															
Female	68.04%															
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Country	Target in USD	Actual achievement in USD														
Tajikistan	28000	30000														
Afghanistan	30000	72000														
<p><i>Figure 7: Number of full-time jobs created by LITICA in Tajikistan</i></p>	<p><i>Figure 8: OVOP sales volumes in Tajikistan and Afghanistan</i></p>															

The annual report mentions of 97 full-time jobs, 66 for women and 31 for men, were created (see Figure 7). The data also indicated that 3,215 seasonal jobs, half of which went to women, were created. This data suggests that the project is well on its way to achieving its targets, especially if Tajikistan achieves its annual targets.

In terms of increasing OVOP sales volumes, both countries achieved their total project besides annual targets. The Kabul OVOP sales centre had earned USD 72,000 by 31 December 2019. The details are presented in Figure 8.

Creation of a chain of skilled workers in Tajikistan

To create employment and enhance income, the project implemented several activities which directly contributed toward increasing household-level incomes. One approach LITACA practiced was OVOP, which focuses on promoting one product from each village. The MTE noted that the creation of a chain of workers was very effective in creating jobs at the local level and was appreciated by beneficiaries. FGDs with project beneficiaries of the Public Organization Bonuvoni Navovar and skilled workers in Yol Village, Shohin District of Tajikistan also substantiated this finding. Women stated that about 25 women had been trained, and that they now not only sew for themselves but also had taught a minimum of one additional student, thus spreading the training to others in the area. The training covered all the technical aspects of sewing, as well as safety. If a trainee's sewing machine breaks, she can repair it herself, except if major electrical parts are damaged. Women say that the demand for trainings to work with wool is very high. Women were paid based on the volume of work they completed. For example, if a woman received 5 kg of wool, she got paid for 5 kg, and if she got another 1 kg, she got paid for that additional one 1 kg, too.

The MTE also noted another very positive example that beneficiaries in Tajikistan appreciated: the effective drying and processing of medicinal herbs and oils. This project, too, contributed to the creation of jobs. Five people were employed on the location, and about 15 additional women were employed on a seasonal basis to collect herbs. The collectors were paid according to the amount of material they collected. The MTE learnt that the women who worked in the workshop received training and that they thought it was very useful for them. One very important element of this project is that the products are taken to the Tajik-Afghan market located in Darvaz and Khorog, a fact which greatly contributed to the goal of promoting cross-border trade between the two countries. The project beneficiaries plan to buy additional equipment in order to start producing other types of products from the herbs they collect. They will make that investment using the income they earn in the future.

Respondents mentioned that the spinning machines had increased their productivity a lot, more than five-fold, some said. The beneficiaries only recently started working, but they plan to improve their productivity and start selling their products in markets in Afghanistan. All the women who participated in the FDGs were very happy with the project. They said that the income they have earned through the project is helping them to be more independent and is, therefore, empowering.

FGDs with women gardeners in Shurobod Village, Shohin District revealed that intensive gardening is very effective. The activity suits and is effective for both male and female beneficiaries and is very effective. The beneficiaries claimed that intensive gardening yielded apple harvests three times greater than those associated with traditional practices. Women were particularly happy as they have more income than they used to. The project is relevant for local communities as all people engage in agriculture. The population was keen to export their agricultural products to Afghanistan once their harvests had increased still more.

The interview with the Head of Administration of Shohin District substantiated the women's claim that intensive gardening truly contributed to the wellbeing of local people by increasing their incomes. The vocational training the project provided to beneficiaries was also highly appreciated by various communities.

Drying facility and a small fruit-processing and packaging workshop

The project has employed six people and at least three *jamoats* (third-level administrative divisions in Tajikistan) are involved in a project that dries and processes fruits. Five additional people will be employed on a seasonal basis. Beneficiaries say that the current equipment has greatly helped them in packaging. In the past, they used to package by hand; now that they have equipment, their productivity has increased. They say that the project-run three-days training helped them dry apricots properly and that, accordingly, the quality of their products had increased.

Interviews and discussions with women revealed that, by working, they have become more productive. With a job, they have their own income and do not have to rely on their family members. The beneficiaries noted that once the volume of their production increases, they want to send their products to Afghanistan. Just recently, they were contacted by the regional administration asking them to get ready for business-to-business (B2B meetings) with Afghan entrepreneurs.

Beneficiaries in Tajikistan said that the three-month training in brick-making that LITACA had provided was very effective. FGDs with people who had been deported from Russia and were now employed in brick factories revealed that workers could now repair equipment by themselves.

Project records show that, in Afghanistan, a total of 1,104 people were trained in five different areas. Figure 9 below shows the proportions of men and women who participated in each training.

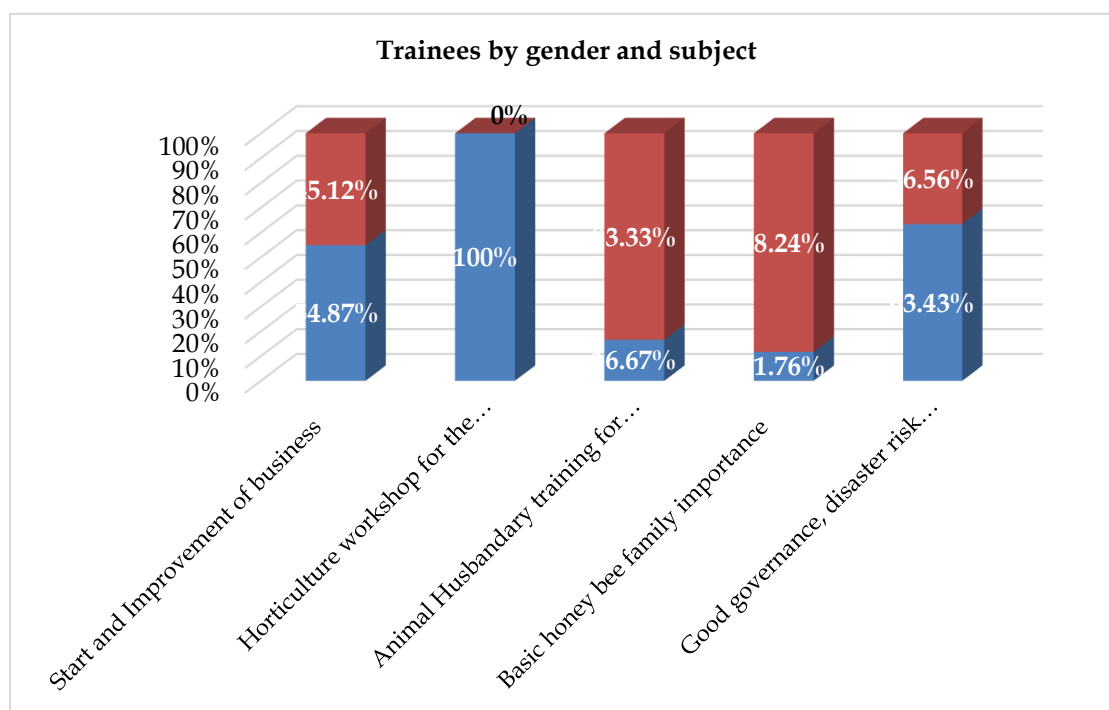


Figure 9: Training participants

During the evaluation, trainees were asked how effective the training had been in changing their behaviour and whether or not they had applied the training in real life. Some women from Badakhshan province said that they had participated in training and that it was effective. They said that the training had covered a range of topics, including animal husbandry and better honeybee management as well as disaster awareness and good governance. In their view, the training was very useful.

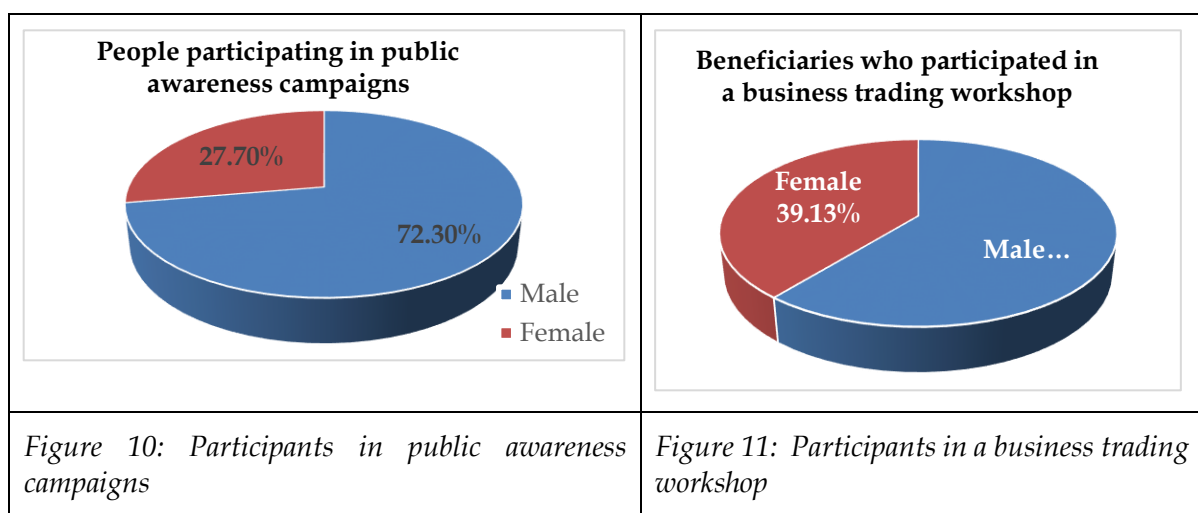
The interview with beneficiaries in Badakhshan also indicated that men and women both got support to start-up businesses and that those who got support were busy running their businesses. Fahima from Shahri Buzurg district of Badakhshan said: "I got the information from the survey group that visited our community. Currently, I have my own apiculture enterprise. The project helped us to initiate many other start-ups, too, and women and men are busy in their enterprises and earning incomes that help sustain their livelihoods. More than 43 families are working now, and we are very happy with the project's progress. We participated in training and it was effective."

Sohila from Sohaila of Dashti Qala village in Afghanistan shared the following in her interview: "I found out about this project by people who came to my community to administer a survey. I have been a teacher for nine months. There have been many trainings and people are willing to join the sessions. The project's processes and work is going brilliantly. Many women have jobs now. We are happy about the job creation that this project has engaged in so far, especially for women."

Respondents stated that their technical knowledge had increased as a result of the training they had received. Beneficiaries with previous experience or with an agronomic background who had received small grants to start businesses growing and selling vegetables and dry fruits found the vocational training very relevant. They had learned more advanced and productive agricultural techniques. Comparing the ways they did things before the project trainings with how they do them now, respondents said, "We believed that we knew everything, but during the training we realised we knew little."

Output 3: Border communities' access to cross-border trade, dialogue and partnerships improved, including among vulnerable and marginalised rural women

To achieve this output, the project focused on cross-border markets and cross-border economic relations between Kunduz, Badkhashan, Takhar, and Balk provinces of Afghanistan and Khatlon Oblast of Tajikistan. The MTE noted that in 2018 a total of 2,040 people participated in a public awareness campaign on cross-border markets and events. Of them, 27.7 % were women (Figure 10). In 2019, that proportion had increased to 39.1% of the total as 900 women and 1,400 men benefitted from a similar campaign.



On the success side of cross-border trade, the Deputy Chairman of Khatlon Oblast shared that they had sent 3,500 tons of onions to Afghanistan. Cross-border markets are a big contributor to trade, and the bridge in Farhor helps promote this trade.

In terms of cross-border activities, the project has organised B2Bs linkages and trade. However, by and large, the cross-border dimension of the project has worked only in a very limited way due to security constraints. The MTE team was told that obtaining Tajik visa is a key issue that needs to be dealt with to achieve the project's targets. The MTE found that the project was able to promote cross-border trade in a simple way. The evaluation noted that some of the activities envisioned under Output 3 had been delayed but nonetheless were on track.

LITACA project performance

The MTE analysed achievements against targets by using the performance rating scale based on the indicators described in Project Document. The combined targets of Year 1 and Year 2 were used to assess achievements. The tables 4 and 5 below summarise targets vs. achievements for Year 1 and Year 2 of each country.

Table 4: Targets vs. achievements for Afghanistan					
S No	Output indicators	Targets of Yr 1 & 2	Achievement (%)	Description	Performance rating
1	Border communities' access to rural infrastructure and public services improved				
1.1	Capacity-building of local government representatives	210	361 (171%)	Capacity assessment was done in Year 1 and no trainings were delivered in Year 2.	Highly Satisfactory in terms of target achievement (HS)
1.2	Local infrastructures were built, rehabilitated or strengthened	20	20 (100%)	Infrastructure projects were identified, surveyed and designed in Year 1 and implementation started and was completed in Year 2. At the end of 2019, 19 projects were completed and the remaining one project, 70% completed	

1.3	HHs benefiting from infrastructures built, rehabilitated or strengthened	26,156	28,000 (108%)	A total of 21,000 benefited from irrigation canal rehabilitation and 7,300 from bridge construction	
2	Employment opportunities for women and men in the bordering provinces of Tajikistan and Afghanistan increased				
2.1	Paid labour days created	29,230 labour days	53,241 (182%)	Exceeding its target, the project created 13,336 skilled and 39,905 semi-skilled jobs in the project's target districts	Moderately satisfactory (MS)
2.2	Satisfaction/utilisation of infrastructures - opinion survey	0	0	Infrastructure projects completed but the survey is planned only for Year 3.	
2.3	Training programme graduates	300	308 (102%)	The project exceeded the target. Training focused on literacy, numeracy, health, handicrafts, etc. Kits were distributed to graduates.	
2.4	Number of employees in new local jobs created	4,570 (914 per district)	300 (not achieved)	Training centres were established, and training started. A total of 300 women received goats and honeybees.	
2.5	Grant proposals approved	20	Not achieved but in the process	56 proposals were collected and Reviewed and committees were established to evaluate and select proposals. The process was delayed	
2.6	Amount of OVOP sales and income and profit share per year	60,000	Achieved (120%)	Kabul OVOP sales centre sold USD 72,000 worth of goods	
3	Access to cross- border trade, dialogue and partnerships improved amongst targeted communities, including vulnerable and marginalised rural women				
3.1	Trade business conducted	30	40 (133%) Target exceeded	In total 40 small and medium trade business owners participated in cross-border trade.	Satisfactory (S)
3.2	No. of HHs covered by public awareness campaigns on cross-border markets	4,500	4,000 (88%), not completely achieved	A total of 1,300 women and 2,700 men participated in awareness-raising about cross-border trade. LITACA developed communication and awareness-raising materials.	
3.3	Women-led businesses enhanced	15	35 (233%) , Target highly exceeded	35 female-led small scale businesses were enhanced. In 2018 surveys and consultations were carried out and in 2019 actual implementation was achieved	

3.4	Sales contracts from business events	10	38 (380%), highly exceeded the target	38 B2B contracts worth USD 624, 300 were signed by Afghanistan and Tajikistan entrepreneurs	
4	Communication and logistic engagement			The MTE noted that the project has made logistic arrangements on time and maintained good relations with the government agencies	Satisfactory (S)
5	Coordination with different agencies and synergy-building			The project successfully maintained synergy with the Citizen Charter Programme implemented by the MRRD	Satisfactory (S)
6	Fund delivery			Still low for outputs 2 and 3	Moderately Satisfactory (MS)

Table 5: Targets Vs achievement for Tajikistan

Table 3: Targets vs achievement for Tajikistan					
S No	Output Indicators	Targets of year 1 and Year 2	Achievement (%)	Description	Performance rating
1	Border communities' access to rural infrastructure and public services improved				
1.1	Capacity-building of local government representatives	160	179 (111.87%)	Capacity assessment was carried out in Year 1 and trainings were delivered in 2019. Government representatives appreciated the trainings.	Highly Satisfactory in term of target achievement (HS)
1.2	Local infrastructures were built, rehabilitated or strengthened	7	9 (128.57%)	These infrastructure projects were targeted to improve access to education, health, clean drinking water and sanitation, transportation and SMEs. 394 sub-projects were implemented and completed. All were highly appreciated by governments and beneficiaries	
1.3	HHs benefiting from infrastructures built, rehabilitated or strengthened	2,142	2962 (138.28%)	2962 households benefited from irrigation canal rehabilitation	
2	Employment opportunities for women and men in the bordering provinces of Tajikistan and Afghanistan increased				
2.1	Paid labour days created	6,750	5,450 (80%)	On the way to being achieved	

2.2	Satisfaction/utilisation of infrastructures – opinion survey	0	0	Infrastructure projects were completed but the survey is planned only for Year 3	Moderately satisfactory (MS)
2.3	Training programme graduates	400	Not achieved	A training module was developed. Training is planned 2020 only	
2.4	Number of employees in new local jobs created	6,000 (750 per district, 375 male and 375 female)	3,312 jobs created (55% achieved)	Agro and non -agro products base jobs created and also seasonal and full time job creation and it is under way to achieve	
2.5	Grant proposals approved	30	16 grants awarded (53.33%), partially achieved	26 proposals were collected, reviewed and 16 grants awarded. The rest are being processed.	
2.6	Amount of OVOP sales and income and profit share per year	60,000 USD	54742.27 (91.23%) achieved	OVOP sales centre sold USD 54,742 worth of goods	
3	Access to cross- border trade, dialogue and partnerships improved amongst targeted communities, including vulnerable and marginalised rural women				
3.1	Trade business conducted	30	40 (125%)	In total 40 small and medium trade business owners participated in cross-border trade.	Satisfactory (S)
3.2	No. of HHs covered by public awareness campaigns on cross-border markets	2400	1500 (62.5%), partially achieved	LITACA has developed communication and awareness raising materials and 1500 HHs participated in this event	
3.3	Women-led businesses enhanced	15	9 (60%), partially achieved	9 women-led organisations running small-scale businesses enhanced. In 2018 surveys and consultations were conducted and in 2019 actual implementation was achieved or is on the way to being achieved	
3.4	No of sales contract from business events	10	10 (100%)	38 B2B contracts worth USD 624,300 signed by Afghanistan and Tajikistan entrepreneurs	
4	Communication and logistic engagement			The MTE noted that project has made logistic arrangements on time and maintained good relations with government agencies	Satisfactory (S)

5	Coordination with different agencies and synergy building	Project successfully maintained synergy with the priorities of the district and provincial governments	Satisfactory (S)
6	Fund delivery	Still low for Output 1	Moderately satisfactory (MS)

The degree that targets and other parameters were achieved – highly satisfactory, moderately satisfactory, or satisfactory--was used to assess project performance. Considering field observations, documents reviewed, interviews with government line agencies, consultations with communities, interactions with the project implementation teams in two countries, analysis of quantitative and qualitative data, and the qualitative assessment presented in Table 4 and 5, the MTE concluded that the project’s overall performance in both countries was satisfactory. Most activities were fully achieved or even over-achieved despite the adverse security situation in Afghanistan. Most of the targets were achieved in Tajikistan, and most of the rest are on the way to being achieved. Considering both the achievement of targets and rate of expenditure, the evaluators rate the project’s performance satisfactory.

3.2.2 Quality of project planning matrix

The project was developed with the needs of communities in mind. It was based on learning from the implementation of LITICA-I. In the first year of the implementation, the project conducted a feasibility study of local and cross-border trade as well as a value chain analysis and a baseline survey in four provinces of Afghanistan. These studies were used to identify beneficiaries. The OVOP feasibility study which the project conducted, identified 37 competitive and staple products, notably dry fruit, wool, and cotton for handicrafts that could generate considerable sales revenue and thereby improve the standard of living for the residents of OVOP villages. Participants in discussions pointed out that the construction of an OVOP centre in Tajikistan has long been pending. It is believed that the establishment of this centre will lend sustainability to economic initiatives and support improvements in cross-border trade.

The project teams revealed that they had spent substantial time on the planning process in both countries. The project developed quarterly and yearly as well as liquidity and monitoring plans in an appropriate fashion. .

3.3 Efficiency

3.3.1. Project start-up activities completed on schedule

The MTE noted that the project is largely on track to achieve its’ results though it experienced some delays in the initial period mainly due to deteriorating security situation in Afghanistan. The project premises, MRRD, suffered two attacks when the project was just gearing up besides sporadic fighting reported in some of the project areas (Takhar and Kunduz). This was well assumed while forming the project logical framework. One other reason shared with the MTE for delay in achieving the targets was slow recruitment of technical project staff by MRRD.

In interviews, project staff admitted since the project got delayed initially, the planned activities were not completed on time. The project team feels this delayed the completion of activities in 2018 and 2019.

3.3.2 Budget expenditure

Interviews with project staff and review of the yearly budget expenditure led the MTE to conclude that budget expenditures are on track as specified in the Project Document's budget breakdown. However, the MTE noted that budget delivery in Afghanistan is a little lower than planned. In Afghanistan in 2019, for example, budget delivery for outputs 2 and 3 was only 75% and 64% of the planned amounts respectively. The MTE was told that the main reason the project had not been able to spend the planned budget was that, in Afghanistan, its capacity-building activities were completed at less cost than had been estimated.

Discussion with the project team in Afghanistan revealed that the process the project uses for budget expenditures, UNDP's well scrutinised payment modality, meant that the project faced delays in payments. The interview with the project team also revealed that socio-economic activities are delivered in a package to beneficiaries. This integrated approach helped the project carry out activities at lower than budgeted amounts.

Fund delivery in Tajikistan was better in 2019 than 2018 and in some outputs exceeded the planned amounts. Fund delivery under Output 1, however, was still a little lower than planned, even in 2019. The reasons behind the shortfall is that some targeted activities were not achieved till the end of December and that integrated approaches help the project to complete activities, especially training and capacity-building activities, at less cost than planned. The table below shows budget expenditures in 2018 and 2019.

Table 6: Budget expenditure

Output	2019 (in USD)			2018 (in USD)		
	Estimated	Expenses	Delivery	Estimated	Expenses	Delivery
Fund delivery in Afghanistan						
Output 1	2,215,188	2,053,247	93%	529,731	490,898	93%
Output 2	825,066	620,664	75%	263,043	159,126	60%
Output 3	255,893	164,889	64%	116,912	77,813	67%
Total	3,296,147	2,838,800		909,686	727,837	
Fund delivery in Tajikistan						
Output 1	844,236	629,524	75%	547,236	491,770	91%
Output 2	314,776	320,378	102%	382,320	334,832	88%
Output 3	119,935	130,809	109%	114,438	115,816	80%
Total	1,278,947	1,080,711		1,043,994	942,418	

From the budgetary perspective, the MTE noted that outputs 2 and 3 have to accelerate expenditure during the remaining project period and that this need should get attention in the annual work plan for Afghanistan. In Tajikistan, some targets have not been achieved and fund delivery related to Output 1 needs attention in Year 3.

3.3.3. Mechanism for monitoring project progress

Project monitoring includes internal monitoring mechanisms like reporting, internal reviews, and project management. An interview with the project implementation team in Afghanistan revealed that the log-frame, especially activities under Output 3, was revised in the beginning of 2018. In addition, both country teams jointly revised activities in consultation with JICA. The project teams in both countries believe that no further revisions to the log-frame will be necessary during the remaining project period.

3.3.4. Quality of internal project M&E system

The MTE noted that the project had adopted different monitoring practices: Afghanistan practices monthly field monitoring and in Tajikistan, the UNDP monitors regularly besides occasional joint monitoring with government officials and other stakeholders. A baseline survey, a needs assessment study, and a feasibility study were conducted. The MTE found that the annual progress and semi-annual progress reports produced by the project are difficult to follow and seem as if they refer to two different programmes or projects. In addition, the targets mentioned in the annual report are not consistent with the targets described in the Project Document. The tables in the reports for each output should be summarised in an annex. The inclusion of an output-wise table for every output for each country seems redundant and such tables are difficult to understand.

The MTE also discovered that lessons learned were not well captured and success stories were not included in the reports. Both semi and annual reports could be improved by including the future scenarios for each output for each country in one table instead of, as is this case, presenting them in separate tables.

The MTE observed that many of the good initiatives taken by the projects in both countries were not well reflected in the reports. For instance, the executive summary of Annual Report 2019 only discusses achievements in Afghanistan. However, the project also completed many activities, especially activities dealing with small-scale businesses and income generation, in Tajikistan. All of these latter activities are missing. It will be difficult for the donor and stakeholders to understand the ground reality and positive contributions made by the project if the reports are not 100% accurate. Some reports also claimed that the project had strong impacts even before an outcome or opinion survey is conducted. In fact, the MTE did not find any evidence that any such opinion survey had been conducted. It would be good, however, to conduct an outcome survey and share the report with the Afghanistan and Tajikistan governments and donor.

The lead implementing agency should be responsible for designing and implementing a system, which consists of a set of planning, data-gathering, analysis and reporting processes. The results of these processes should be used as a basis for results-focused project management by measuring project progress towards stated outcomes. The M&E mechanism should also provide a means of measuring project impacts.

3.3.5. Potential challenges/risks that may prevent the project from producing the intended results

Efficiency measures qualitative and quantitative outputs in relation to inputs. Efficiency is an economic term which signifies that the aid uses the least cost resources possible in order to

achieve the desired results. Determining efficiency generally requires comparing alternative approaches to achieving the same outputs to see whether the most efficient process has been adopted.

The project updated the risk log every year and reported on the changes in the annual report. The major challenges mentioned to the MTE were visa for Afghanis and political issues regarding cross-border trade. The MTE, however, is unable to identify any concrete steps taken to mitigate these risks. Steering committee meetings, trade fairs and conferences are planned at least three months in advance with the agreement of local and national governments, but such advance planning did not help in some cases due to external factors.

3.4 Impact

No impact analysis is considered at this stage in the programme's implementation, as it is too early to determine impact. However, it is possible to draw some preliminary conclusions concerning potential impact.

Though it is a little early to state with confidence the impact the LITICA will have, based on responses received from project beneficiaries, implementing partners and government agencies in the Tajikistan and Afghanistan, the MTE is able to classify likely impacts as either economic or socio-cultural, as described below.

Project results pertaining to employment consisted in the creation of beekeeping and livestock-breeding opportunities, small and medium enterprises (SMEs), and cross-border trade, which LITACA-II enabled in several targeted districts and villages. The overall results of all this work include an increase in the level of revenue within both households and communities as well as the promotion of coexistence and peace among the communities living across the border regions of Afghanistan and Tajikistan. The project data shows that 23 SMEs owned by both men and women operate in cross-border markets. Together they earned a profit of USD 9,000 from cross-border trade (they purchased goods worth 51,000 USD and sold them for 60,000 USD). Participants in FGDs shared that being able to expand their businesses meant a lot to them.

Beneficiaries during discussions shared that the project had changed their lives. Most of the beneficiaries happily informed the MTE that they now have either additional or primary income. For example, returnee migrants who work in brick workshops in Jamoat Galaba, Hamadoni District, Tajikistan shared that they get paid according to the number of the bricks they produce, which is, on average, 600-700 bricks a day. They said that they earn 1,300 *Somoni* a month and that they would never go back to Russia for work. Women in the wool-processing workshop in the village of Yol note that the project had helped empower them and make them independent. The beekeeping project has changed the lives of the people with disabilities who benefited from it. Now they are very interested in producing and exporting honey.

The analysis of achievement of results, the MTE conducted, revealed that a great number of grantees witnessed a very great impact, not only in terms of productivity and employment creation, but also in terms of income and overall living conditions. In addition, many OVOP associations improved sales and incomes in project-targeted communities, thereby significantly improving living conditions in those communities.

To measure the impact of a capacity-building component is difficult. Indicators simply quantify the number of people who attend trainings. Measuring true capacity building would require

measuring knowledge retention, the ability to adapt training to workplace activities, and staff retention by the government counterpart. The project had a positive impact in terms of increasing the self-confidence and capacity of beneficiaries via trainings and the provision of technical skills. Beneficiaries have increased their knowledge of business practices, acquired new vocational skills, and received specialised training, some of which they have been able to put into practice. The MTE also noted that this project helped to empower people with disabilities. For example, during a FDG in Tajikistan, one disabled beneficiary revealed that he had ordered books and training materials from Russia in order to learn more about beekeeping and honey. Now, he is fully engaged in apiculture and shares his knowledge with others.

Infrastructures and socio-economic projects in Afghanistan also created jobs, contributing significantly to a reduction in unemployment. Similarly, public outreach (gathering, meetings, etc.) activities are conducted regularly in targeted provinces. Participants are briefed on the OVOP approach in order to encourage local craftsmanship. The OVOP selling centres have participated in several exhibitions within and outside the country and have increased sales volumes and market outreach.

3.5 Sustainability

After just two years of implementation, the program is still in the early stages of the complex and lengthy process of producing sustainable change at the community level. However, during interviews, some beneficiaries who had been trained and had started up businesses declared confidently that they would procure equipment using their own savings. The most important aspect of the project is the start-up and continuation of businesses by beneficiaries. All business groups were trained in business and vocational skills. It is expected that they will continue to employ those skills without fear of financial collapse.

Another important dimension in the sustainability of the project was that it trained government representatives in the planning and monitoring of development work. The fact that officials have these skills will help maintain project sustainability at the community level.

The likelihood that LITACA results will be sustainable is very high. The project supports start-up initiatives not only in terms of equipment but also in terms of marketing, labelling, and design as well as support in exporting products. Most of the beneficiaries with whom the MTE interacted have plans to expand their businesses and to export, not only to cross-border markets but to other countries as well.

In inquiring about the extent to which there is constructive cooperation among the project partners and the levels of satisfaction of government counterparts, donors and beneficiaries; the MTE found that government counterparts are highly satisfied with the project and its activities. They expressed happiness that the project is supporting the economy, bringing jobs, and contributing to cross-border trade. They are very interested in having another phase of the project and include other neighbouring countries, such as Uzbekistan, in the project in order to increase cross-border trade. The Minister of MRRD in Afghanistan and officials at MEDT in Tajikistan are happy with the implementation modality. The donor is also satisfied with the project but is concerned about monitoring and JICA's visibility on project sites. Beneficiaries are highly

satisfied with the project; as it has brought them jobs, income, and opportunities. All this satisfaction speaks to the likelihood that the activities implemented by LITACA will be sustained.

4. Conclusions and Recommendations

4.1 Conclusions

The project and sub-projects have thus far been highly relevant to the beneficiaries living in the project's target areas. The project has provided important opportunities for people to learn new skills and new ways of doing things and to diversify their livelihood options. The project has been highly relevant to the beneficiaries of both countries. At the individual level, the provision of grants had a positive impact. Some of the small businesses supported with grants are quite successful and are planning to expand. Support that the project provided in the form of machines and drying equipment was highly relevant for enhancing productivity in Tajikistan.

The major conclusions of the evaluation are summarised below:

1. Vocational training, especially in beekeeping and spinning, had positive outcomes in terms of enhancing livelihoods and generating income at the household level. Similarly, the creation of value chains in dry nuts, medicinal herbs and oil production was highly appreciated by beneficiaries. However, no explicit business plans were prepared for individual farmers or farmers in groups or associations; though making business plans and developing linkages with markets is very important.
2. OVOP activities were not targeted to Tajikistan during the project design period. This oversight limited the possibility that people would unite based on the production of the same product.
3. Tajikistan needs to promote the sustainability of its projects and increase cooperation with other OVOP centres in to enhance cross-border trade.
4. Delays in the procurement process prevented the achievement of some targeted activities. The UNDP and the MRRD both must find a way to solve this problem.
5. Interviews and a review of the Project Document revealed that Output 3 must get more attention if all the activities under it are to be completed in a timely manner.
6. The annual progress reports report done country-wise rather than output-result-wise, thereby giving the impression that there are two separate projects. To address this issue, the MTE concludes that monitoring needs improvement, as does the quality of annual reports.

4.2 Recommendations

4.1.1 *Recommendations for Afghanistan*

1. The project should help groups (small enterprises producing agro and non-agro products) develop business plans and link those plans with other income-generating activities in order to strengthen their businesses and make them sustainable.
2. The project should speed up the implementation of activities under Output 3 and carry out intensive follow-up on visa issues. UNDP of both countries could facilitate for to high-level coordination for this.
3. From the budgetary perspective, the MTE recommends that outputs 2 and 3 accelerate expenditure during the remaining project period. This need receive get attention in the annual work plan for 2020.
4. An opinion survey should be conducted, as targeted, in the final year of the project, before the project comes to an end. It should be shared widely with stakeholders. Besides, an outcome assessment of the delivered training is recommended for use in sustaining and retaining the human capacity developed by the project.
5. Since the good initiatives taken by the projects were not captured well in the reports, the project should collect best practices and success stories and upload them on the UNDP, MRRD and donor websites.
6. The annual and semi-annual progress reports produced by the project are difficult to follow and seem as if they refer to two different programmes or projects. Their quality needs improvement.
7. UNDP should approach JICA for the extension of the project phase and include other neighbouring countries such as Uzbekistan, which borders with both Afghanistan and Tajikistan into the project for the cross-border trade.

4.1.2 Recommendations for Tajikistan

1. Similar types of project in the future should include a greater variety of enterprises. If the project formed a plant for wool- and leather processing, it could create more new jobs.
2. Establishing dairy workshops in all the districts of the region is another possibility as there is always a high demand for dairy products. Sewing workshops for the women in the cross-border areas would be a great asset. The three free economic zones in Khatlon region should be put to use.
3. The project should help groups develop business plans and link their plans with other income-generating activities implemented by local governments in all eight districts in Tajikistan.
4. The project should speed up the implementation of activities under Output 1 and carry out an intensive follow-up in Year 3 in order to improve fund delivery.
5. An opinion survey should be conducted, as targeted, in the final year of the project before the project comes to an end. It should be shared widely with stakeholders.

6. Best practices and success stories focusing on male and female beneficiaries should be collected and published to increase the visibility of the great work done by the project.

Annexes

Annex – I: Evaluation Matrix

Evaluation criteria	Guiding questions	Primary data source
1. Relevance	Is the project design appropriate to address the substantive problem that the project is intended to address? How useful are the project outputs to the needs of the target beneficiaries?	UNDP CO senior management, MRRD/MEDT, JICA
	What is the value of intervention in relation to the national and international partners' policies and priorities (including SDG, One- UN and UNDP Country Programme Document, Corporate Strategic Plan; ANPDF/NPPs, etc)?	UNDP CO senior management, MRRD/MEDT, JICA
	Are the project objectives consistent with substantive needs, and realistic in consideration of technical capacity, resources and time available for a good model to be replicated and scale up?	UNDP CO senior management, MRRD/MEDT, JICA LRU/CP,
2. Effectiveness	Are the project's objectives and outcomes clearly articulated, feasible, realistic?	LRU/CP, Project team
	Are the underlying assumptions on which the project intervention has been based valid? Is there a clear and relevant Theory of Change?	LRU/CP, Project team, ProDoc
	If there were delays in project start-up, what were the causes of delay, and what was the effectiveness of corrective measures undertaken? Do start-up problems persist?	LRU/CP, Project team
	To what extent has the project implemented activities as envisaged? To what extent have those activities contributed to achieving the project objectives?	MRRD/MEDT, LRU/CP, project team, annual and semi-annual reports
	What factors have contributed to achieving/not achieving the intended results?	Project team, local authorities/CDCs, beneficiaries
	To what extent have the project implementation modalities been appropriate to achieve the overall objectives?	MRRD/MEDT, LRU/CP, project team, local authorities/CDCs
	To what extent has the project managed to implement activities across the target project locations?	MRRD, LRU/CP, project team
	To what extent do external factors, such as logistical or security constraints, have impact on project implementation?	UNDP CO senior management, MRRD, LRU/CP, project team, local authorities/CDCs
	To what extent is the project logic, concept and approach appropriate and relevant to achieving the objectives?	UNDP CO senior management, MRRD/MEDT, LRU/CP, project team

3. Efficiency	To what extent were project start-up activities completed on schedule?	Project team, annual and semi-annual reports
	How well is the project managed, and how could it be managed better?	MRRD/MEDT, LRU/CP, local authorities/CDCs
	Is there an appropriate mechanism for monitoring the progress of the project? If yes, is there adequate usage of results/data for programming and decision making?	MRRD/MEDT, LRU/CP, project team
	What is the project status with respect to target outputs in terms of quality and timeliness?	LRU/CP, project team, local authorities/CDCs
	What is the potential that the project will successfully achieve the desired target and initiatives could be replicated?	MRRD/MEDT, LRU/CP, project team
	What are the potential challenges/risks that may prevent the project from producing the intended results?	MRRD/MEDT, LRU/CP, project team, local authorities/CDCs
4. Impact	What is the wider perception of the project, its image, applicability and performance? Are project communications effective in positively promoting the project to a wider audience?	LRU/CP, project team, local authorities/CDCs
	What are the results (or preliminary results) of the intervention in terms changes in the lives of beneficiaries against set indicators?	MRRD, Govt of Khatlon, local authorities/CDCs, beneficiaries
5. Sustainability	What are the Implementing Partner's resources, motivation and ability to continue project activities in the future?	UNDP CO senior management, MRRD/MEDT, LRU/CP, Govt of Khatlon
	Is there adequate all-party commitment to the project objectives and chosen approach?	UNDP senior management, JICA, MRRD/MEDT, LRU/CP, Govt of Khatlon
	To what extent is there constructive cooperation among the project partners? What are the levels of satisfaction of government counterparts, donors and beneficiaries?	UNDP CO senior management, MRRD/MEDT, LRU/CP, JICA, Govt of Khatlon, local authorities/CDCs, beneficiaries
	What has been the quality of execution of the implementing partner, and if applicable where are there specific areas for improvement?	MRRD, LRU/CP, project team
	What is the likelihood that the project results will be sustainable in terms of systems, institutions, financing and anticipated impact?	MRRD/MEDT, LRU/CP, Govt of Khatlon, Local authorities/ CDCs, beneficiaries
	What is needed for the project intervention to be adapted/replicated further?	UNDP CO senior management, MRRD/MEDT, LRU/CP, Govt of Khatlon,

		local authorities/CDCs, beneficiaries
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Annex – II: Terms of Reference



INDIVIDUAL CONSULTANT PROCUREMENT NOTICE/TERMS OF REFERENCE	
Title of Individual Consultant: International Consultant for Mid Term Evaluation of the Livelihood Improvement in Tajik-Afghan Cross-border Areas II (LITACA II)	
Project title:	Livelihood Improvement in Tajik-Afghan Cross-border Areas II (LITACA II)
Duration of assignment:	Two and Half months (with Maximum 40 working) Homebased and Kabul (One mission to Kabul and one mission to Dushanbe for 10 working days each)
Expected Start Date:	1 Feb 2020
Duty station:	Kabul, AFGHANISTAN and Dushanbe, Tajikistan
Recruitment method:	Individual contract (IC)
BACKGROUND	
UNDP Global Mission Statement:	
UNDP is the UN's global development network, an organization advocating for change and connecting countries to knowledge, experience and resources to help people build a better life. We are on the ground in 166 countries, working with national counterparts on their own solutions to global and national development challenges.	
UNDP Afghanistan Mission Statement:	
UNDP supports stabilization, state-building, governance and development priorities in Afghanistan. UNDP support, in partnership with the Government, the United Nations system, the donor community and other development stakeholders, has contributed to institutional development efforts leading to positive impact on the lives of Afghan citizens. Over the years UNDP support has spanned such milestone efforts as the adoption of the Constitution; Presidential, Parliamentary and Provincial Council elections; institutional development through capacity-building to the legislative, the judicial and executive arms of the state, and key ministries, Government agencies and commissions at the national and subnational levels. UNDP has played a key role in the management of the Law and Order Trust Fund, which supports the Government in developing and maintaining the national police force and in efforts to stabilize the internal security environment. Major demobilization, disarmament and rehabilitation and area-based livelihoods and reconstruction programmes have taken place nationwide. UNDP Programmes in Afghanistan have benefited from the very active support of donors. UNDP Afghanistan is committed to the highest standards of transparency and accountability and works in close coordination with the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan and the UN system as a whole to maximize the impact of its development efforts on the ground	
Livelihood Improvement in Tajik-Afghan Cross-border Areas II (LITACA II)	

LITACA II is a 3 years initiative to improve living standards and promote stability and security in the bordering provinces of Tajikistan and Afghanistan. This will be achieved by reducing poverty, supporting economic development and cross-border collaboration among the communities along the Tajik-Afghan border. More than **130,072(cumulative figure from both countries)** people will directly benefit from LITACA project while the livelihoods of more than **1,823,828(cumulative figure from both countries)** people living in target bordering communities will be strengthened. The project will offer capacity development opportunities for the local governments, civil society and private sector organizations to sustainably manage local socio-economic development. As well, the project will offer investments for rehabilitating priority infrastructure initiatives and business development as a means of improving livelihoods of the target population, and thereby promoting stability and security in the region.

The programme focuses on the following areas:

Output 1: Governance capacity, access to rural infrastructure and public services amongst targeted communities improved

Output 2: Employment opportunities for women and men in bordering provinces of Tajikistan and Afghanistan increased

Output 3: Access for cross-border trade, dialogue and partnerships amongst targeted communities, including vulnerable and marginalized rural women improved

Against this background, UNDP is seeking an International Consultant to perform the tasks as described in the section of this ToR **Scope of Work and Deliverables** below.

Evaluation Scope and Objectives

The Mid-term Evaluation (MTE) will assess progress towards the achievement of the project objectives and outcomes mentioned above and as specified in the LITACA II Project Document and assess early signs of project success or failure with the goal of identifying the necessary changes to be made to set the project on-track to help achieve its intended results. The MTE will also review the project's approach and methodology, its risks to results impact and sustainability and make recommendations to improve the project over the remainder of its lifetime.

The objectives of the Mid-Term Evaluation (MTE) are to:

- 1) Assist the recipient Government, beneficiaries, UNDP and, as appropriate, the concerned partners and stakeholders, to improve the efficiency, effectiveness, relevance, sustainability, impact and replicating the existing model of the project;
- 2) Provide feedback to all parties to improve the policy, planning, appraisal, implementation and monitoring phases; and
- 3) Ensure accountability for results to the project's financial backers, stakeholders and beneficiaries.

The questions regarding aspects of relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, impact and sustainability of the project will cover the design, start-up, project management, and project implementation phases from 1st January 2018 to 31st December 2020.

MTE Approach and methodology

The MTE must provide evidence-based information that is credible, reliable and useful. The consultant will review all relevant sources of information including documents (reference the 'Documents to be consulted' section below). The consultant will also interview all relevant stakeholders including all parties

who have been contracted by the project or participate in meetings and discussions with the project. The consultant is expected to follow a collaborative and participatory approach ensuring close engagement of all stakeholders (See section below: 'Evaluation Target Groups and sources of information').

The consultant will produce an Evaluation Inception Report based on a review of all relevant documents and initial consultations and present it to the UNDP Livelihoods and Resilience Unit, the Programme Strategy and Results Unit (PSR), UNDP Senior Management and other stakeholders to explain the objectives and methods adopted for the mid-term evaluation.

In addition to the Evaluation inception report, the consultant will produce:

- a) an Initial findings presentation on the final day of the in-country mission to Afghanistan and Tajikistan,
- b) a Draft evaluation report, and
- c) a Final evaluation report based on below evaluation criteria and feedback received and including all tools and questionnaires that were used.

Evaluation Questions:

Relevance:

- 1) Is the project design appropriate to address the substantive problem that the project is intended to address? How useful are the project outputs to the needs of the target beneficiaries?
- 2) What is the value of intervention in relation to the national and international partners' policies and priorities (including SDG, One- UN and UNDP Country Programme Document, Corporate Strategic Plan; ANPDF/NPPs, etc)?
- 3) Are the project objectives consistent with substantive needs, and realistic in consideration of technical capacity, resources and time available for a good model to be replicated and scale up?

Efficiency:

- 4) To what extent were project start-up activities completed on schedule?
- 5) How well is the project managed, and how could it be managed better?
- 6) Is there an appropriate mechanism for monitoring the progress of the project? If yes, is there adequate usage of results/data for programming and decision making?
- 7) What is the project status with respect to target outputs in terms of quality and timeliness?
- 8) What is the potential that the project will successfully achieve the desired target and initiatives could be replicated?
- 9) What are the potential challenges/risks that may prevent the project from producing the intended results?

Effectiveness:

- 10) Are the project's objectives and outcomes clearly articulated, feasible, realistic?

- 11) Are the underlying assumptions on which the project intervention has been based valid? Is there a clear and relevant Theory of Change?
- 12) If there were delays in project start-up, what were the causes of delay, and what was the effectiveness of corrective measures undertaken? Do start-up problems persist?
- 13) To what extent has the project implemented activities as envisaged? To what extent have those activities contributed to achieving the project objectives?
- 14) What factors have contributed to achieving/not achieving the intended results?
- 15) To what extent have the project implementation modalities been appropriate to achieve the overall objectives?
- 16) To what extent has the project managed to implement activities across the target project locations?
- 17) To what extent do external factors, such as logistical or security constraints, have impact on project implementation?
- 18) To what extent is the project logic, concept and approach appropriate and relevant to achieving the objectives?

Impact:

- 19) What is the wider perception of the project, its image, applicability and performance? Are project communications effective in positively promoting the project to a wider audience?
- 20) What are the results (or preliminary results) of the intervention in terms changes in the lives of beneficiaries against set indicators?

Sustainability:

- 21) What are the Implementing Partner's resources, motivation and ability to continue project activities in the future?
- 22) Is there adequate all-party commitment to the project objectives and chosen approach?
- 23) To what extent is there constructive cooperation among the project partners? What are the levels of satisfaction of government counterparts, donors and beneficiaries?
- 24) What has been the quality of execution of the implementing partner, and if applicable where are there specific areas for improvement?
- 25) What is the likelihood that the project results will be sustainable in terms of systems, institutions, financing and anticipated impact?
- 26) What is needed for the project intervention to be adapted/replicated further?

Conclusions and Recommendations:

- 27) The MTE will include a section of the report setting out the MTE's evidence-based conclusions, in light of the findings.
- 28) What corrective actions are recommended for the design, start-up phase, managerial arrangements and project implementation, including sustainability, of the project? An actionable recommendation table should be put in the report's executive summary.

- 29) What actions are recommended to follow up or reinforce initial benefits from the project?
- 30) What are the main lessons that can be drawn from the project experience that may have generic application?

Evaluation Target Groups and sources of information:

The consultant should strive to reach as many people as possible, ensuring diversity of various stakeholder groups, as well as to review existing reports and data for an enriched evaluation.

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

- 1) Government of Afghanistan: MRRD, and its various departments including relevant Directorates, DRRD.
- 2) Government of Tajikistan:
- 3) Beneficiaries: MRRD and its various departments including relevant Directorates, DRRD, targeted rural communities/CDCs
- 4) International Organizations: JICA in Tajikistan and Afghanistan
- 5) Donor: JICA
- 6) UNDP Country Office
- 7) LITACA II Project Staff in Afghanistan and Tajikistan

Expected Outputs, Deliverables and Timelines:

The following key deliverables are expected from this assignment:

- 1) **Evaluation inception report**—An inception report should be prepared by the evaluators before going into the fully-fledged data collection exercise. It should detail the evaluators' understanding of what is being evaluated and why, showing how each evaluation question will be answered by way of: proposed methods, proposed sources of data and data collection procedures. The inception report should include a proposed schedule of tasks, activities and deliverables for each task or product. The inception report provides UNDP and the consultant evaluator with an opportunity to verify that they share the same understanding about the evaluation and clarify any misunderstanding at the outset. The Evaluation inception report should outline a clear overview of the mid-term review approach, including:
 - a. The purpose, objective, and scope of the review
 - b. The approach should include a summary of the data collection method, and the criteria on which the methodologies were adopted
 - c. A proposed work plan including a schedule of tasks, activities, and deliverables
 - d. A mid-term review matrix, specifying the main review criteria and the indicators or benchmarks against which the criteria will be assessed
 - e. Any limitations for the mid-term review
- 2) **Initial findings presentation** — An initial findings presentation and report, presented on the last day of the MTE mission.

- 3) **Draft evaluation report**—Full draft report and annexes should be submitted, UNDP and key stakeholders in the evaluation will review the draft evaluation report to ensure that the evaluation meets the required quality criteria. See section below ‘Suggested Template for the Mid-Term Evaluation Report’.
- 4) **Final evaluation report** - Revised report with audit trail detailing how all received comments have (and have not) been addressed in the final MTE report.

Deliverables/Outputs	Inputs	Payments
Deliverable 1: Submission and Acceptance of MTE Inception Report: MTE team clarifies objectives and methods of Midterm Review;	Inception Report due 1 week after signature of contract	40%
Deliverable 2: Submission and Acceptance of Initial Findings Presentation and report: Initial Findings presented on the last day of the MTE mission;	Initial Findings Presentation and report to be presented on final day of mission to Afghanistan (10 working days in Kabul) and (10 working days in Tajikistan)	
Deliverable 3: Submission and Acceptance of Draft Final Report: Full report with annexes;	Due 1 week (5 days home based) after submission of initial findings presentation and report	30%
Deliverable 4: Submission and Acceptance of Final Report: Revised report with audit trail detailing how all received comments have (and have not) been addressed in the final MTE report; Expected to be completed within 1 week of receiving UNDP comments on draft.	Due 3 weeks (15 days home based) after the submission of the Draft Final Report.	30%
Total		100%

Working Arrangements:

The Consultant will work under the overall substantive guidance of the Head of the Livelihood and Resilience Unit, with the PRSU Unit, Afghanistan and UNDP Tajikistan country office (for evaluation process and methodology) and overall logistical coordination with LITACA II Project Managers and or designated Programme Officer.

Duration of the Work

The whole assignment is foreseen for a period of two months with maximum of 40 working days. The tentative assignment for both tasks is as follows:

INDICATIVE TIMEFRAME	ACTIVITY
4 working days after signing the Contract	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Document review and preparing MTE Inception Report within 7 days of start of assignment Telephone and in person interviews with key project stakeholders, Project Manager, and UNDP Country Office

10 working days (Afghanistan) 10 working days (Tajikistan)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mission to Afghanistan to conduct meetings and interviews with Project stakeholders including governmental and project personnel and UNDP Country Office. • Mission to Afghanistan to conduct meetings and interviews with Project stakeholders including governmental and project personnel and UNDP Country Office. • Initial findings report and presentation to be presented to stakeholders on final day of mission.
4 working days	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Analyze the data and submit Draft MTE Report to UNDP Afghanistan Livelihoods and Resilience Unit, UNDP Tajikistan office and Project Managers
5 working days	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Detailed comments to the draft MTE report sent to the consultant by UNDP focal point. • Conference Call on the Draft MTE with the consultant and UNDP
10 working days	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Incorporate audit trail from feedback on Draft Report • Finalization of Final MTE report following all revised comments

Duty Station

The LITACA II project works in Tajikistan and Afghanistan cross border areas. The consultant will be guided by the reporting requirements of this assignment. Options for site visits should be provided in the Inception Report, following discussions with UNDP Afghanistan/Tajikistan and the Project Managers.

The consultant is expected to be in Afghanistan for a period of 10 working days in Afghanistan in a single visit and 10 working days in Tajikistan and remainder of the time will be home based for desk review, report writing and editing.

Evaluation Competencies and Ethics:

The Evaluation will follow UNDP and UN Evaluation Group (UNEG) guidelines on the ethical participation of beneficiaries and children. In addition, all participants in the study will be fully informed about the nature and purpose of the evaluation and their requested involvement. Only participants who have given their written or verbal consent (documented) will be included in the evaluation. Specific mechanisms for feeding back results of the evaluation to stakeholders will be included in the elaborated methodology. All the documents, including data collection, entry and analysis tools, and all the data developed or collected for this consultancy are the intellectual property of UNDP-Afghanistan/Tajikistan and project IP, Ministry of Rural Rehabilitation and Development (MRRD) and METD Tajikistan. The Evaluation team members may not publish or disseminate the Evaluation Report, data collection tools, collected data or any other documents produced from this consultancy without the express permission of and acknowledgement of UNDP and MRRD.

Documents to be consulted:

LITACA II Project Document including annexes and Annual Workplans and project budget revisions, project reports including Annual Project Reports (APR), Semi-annual Project Report, ad-hoc project activity progress reports, report or other documents produced by Implementing Partner, Meeting minutes including: Project Board and Technical working group meeting minutes, Terms Of Reference, including for the Technical Working Group, procurement for Job Creation, TORs for project personnel including UNDP staff and NTA modality, correspondence with the donor, any other materials that the consultant considers useful for this evidence-based review.

Sample Evaluation Matrix:

The evaluation matrix is a tool that the consultant evaluator will create as a map and reference in planning and conducting an evaluation. It also serves as a useful tool for summarizing and visually presenting the evaluation design and methodology for discussions with stakeholders. This will complement the Project's M&E plan for each indicator. A sample Evaluation Matrix is provided below:

Relevant evaluation criteria	Key Questions	Specific Sub-Questions	Data Sources	Data collection Methods/Tools	Indicators/ Success Standard	Methods for Data Analysis

Management of the Evaluation:

The consultant is responsible for ensuring that the evaluation function is fully operational, and that evaluation work is conducted according to the highest professional standards.

Suggested Template for the Mid-Term Evaluation Report:

1. **Executive summary**
 - Should include Recommendation Summary Table
2. **Purpose of the evaluation**
 - Restate the purpose of the UNDP mid-term project evaluation
 - How this evaluation fits into project cycle and project planning/review activities
3. **Evaluation methodology**
 - Methods used
 - Workplan
4. **Background**
 - Country context (policy, institutional environment with relevance to LITACA II) project intervention)
 - Project rationale
 - Project status (implementation, financial)

5. Evaluation:

Evaluation Questions should be answered under the headings as outlined in the TOR

- Relevance
- Efficiency
- Effectiveness
- Impact
- Sustainability
- Any other pertinent issues that need addressing or which may or should influence future project direction and UNDP engagement in the country.

Conclusions and Recommendations:

- The MTE will include a section of the report setting out the MTE's evidence-based conclusions, in light of the findings.
- What corrective actions are recommended for the design, start-up phase, managerial arrangements and project implementation, including sustainability, of the project? A recommendation table should be put in the report's executive summary.
- What actions are recommended to follow up or reinforce initial benefits from the project?
- What are the main lessons that can be drawn from the project experience that may have generic application?

6. Annexes

To include, at minimum:

- Evaluation Follow-up Matrix (sample template provided)
- TOR
- List of people interviewed/focus group discussions, etc
- Tools/questionnaires used
- References

PRICE PROPOSAL AND SCHEDULE OF PAYMENTS

The contractor shall submit a price proposal as below:

- **Daily Fee** – The Consultant shall propose a daily fee which should be inclusive of his/her professional fee, local communication cost, insurance (inclusive of medical health and medical evacuation etc.), equipment, and other costs required for performance of the contract but excluding travel, visa and DSA. The number of working days for which the daily fee shall be payable under the contract is **40 working days** over a contract duration of **2 months**.
- **DSA** – The Consultant shall be separately paid the DSA as per applicable UNDP rate for stay in Kabul/Dushanbe and travel to other locations as per actual number of nights spent in Kabul/dushanbe or other locations. Deductions from DSA shall be made as per applicable UNDP policy when accommodation and other facilities are provided by UNDP. An estimated provision in this regard shall be included in the contract. The consultant need not quote for DSA in Financial Proposal.
- **Accommodation in Kabul** - The Consultants are NOT allowed to stay in a place of their choice other than the UNDSS approved places in Kabul, Afghanistan. UNDP will provide accommodation

to the Consultant for the duration of the stay in Afghanistan in UNDSS approved places. Deductions in this regard shall be made from DSA payment as per applicable UNDP Policy.

- **Travel** – The Consultant shall include lumpsum cost of travel per trip for Home-Kabul-Home , Home-Dushanbe-Home (estimated 2 trip) in the Financial Proposal. Any other travel for work, originating from Kabul/Dushanbe shall be payable by UNDP separately as per applicable Policy.
- **Visa** – UNDP shall facilitate visa requirements and reimburse the visa cost, if any.
- **Payment schedule** - Payments towards remuneration/fee shall be linked to deliverables and shall be made on certification of completion of deliverables and submission of certified timesheet. Payment towards travel shall be made on an instance of actual travel and shall be cost-reimbursable limited to the amount quoted in Financial Proposal. Payments towards DSA, Visa, etc. shall be cost-reimbursable, as specified above.

REQUIREMENTS FOR EXPERIENCE AND QUALIFICATIONS:

Academic Qualifications:

- Master’s Degree in political science, sociology, international development, international relations, international economics, law, public administration, social science, evaluation, or other closely related field from an accredited university.

Experience:

- At least 10 years of working experience in evaluation and social research, with at least 5 years working experience with developing countries and a demonstrated understanding of the challenges and opportunities faced by post conflict countries;
- Proven experience in evaluating projects/programmes of UN or development agencies (preferably UNDP).
- Strong analytical and research skills with sufficient understanding of quantitative/qualitative methods and data analysis;
- Familiarity with UNEG evaluation norms, guidelines and processes required.
- Experience in evaluating rural energy development projects is an advantage.
- Work experience related to rural energy services and power mini-grids is an advantage.
- Experience working in Afghanistan is an advantage.

Language:

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

Competencies:

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

Special skills requirements

- Shows ability to communicate and to exercise advocacy skills in front of a diverse set of audience

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

Proposal Evaluation Method and Criteria:

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

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

Technical Criteria weight 70%;

Financial Criteria weight 30%.

Only candidates obtaining a minimum of 49 points (70% of the total technical points) would be considered for the Financial Evaluation.

Technical Criteria (70 points)

Technical Proposal (30 marks)

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

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

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

Documents to be included when submitting the proposals:

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

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

Technical Proposal:

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

This TOR is approved by:

Signature

Name and Designation

Date of Signing

Annex – III: List of people interviewed

S No	Name	Position	Organization
Afghanistan			
1	Ms Nilofer Malik	Programme Analyst	LRU, UNDP
2	Roshan Safi	Programme Manager	LITACA – II
3	Mohammad Yousuf Walizsada	Finance Officer	LITACA – II Project, MRRD
4	Abdul Rouf Qazizada	Technical Specialist (Reporting, Communication, and M&E)	
5	Mohammad Zia	Regional Office Manager in Takhar- Infrastructure component	
6	Baseer Ehsas	Senior Technical Specialist - Infrastructure component	
7	Mohammad Sultan	Provincial Manager for Kunduz and Balkh provinces	
8	Hamid Arif	Senior Economic Specialist	
9	Sharif Shivan	Value Chain Specialist	
10	Arif Mujaddini	Finance Officer	
11	Habib Akhtarzai	Internal Control Officer	
12	Sher Ahmad Wardak	Administration Officer	
13	Asad Ahmadzad	Design Officer	
14	Ms Roya Noorzai	Programme Associate	
15	Sarban	Capacity Building Specialist	
16	Sulaiman Mangal	Contact Management Officer	
17	HE Mujib Rahman Karimi	Minister	MRRD
18		Deputy Minister	
19	Napoleon Navarro	Resident Representative of North Korea (Previous DRR, UNDP Afghanistan)	UNDP
20	Mr Tsuneo Oishi	Project Formulation Advisor	JICA
	Mr Haroon Khawar	Programme Manager	
21	Ms Laura Rio	Unit Chief	LRUUNDP
22	Ms Christine Roth	Deputy Resident Representative	UNDP
23	Mr Abdul Munir	Technical Consultant	MAIL
24	Ms Sohaila Ahad	Beneficiary	
25	Ms Fahima Qadeer		
26	Abdul Samad Qayumi		
27	Ms Shugofa Atwaar		
28	Mula Abdul Qayum		
29	Ms Sharifa Mohammad		
30	Ms Nabila Ahmad		
31	Abdul Manaf		
32	Mehrabudin Khaliq		
33	Abdullah		

34	Ms Sakina Salam		
35	Najibullah Omerkhail		
36	Mohammad Zarif	Regional Manager, Regional office, Takhar	AKDN
37	Ms Jamila Zaiuddin	Program Manager, Regional office, Takhar	GFA/GIZ
38	Mohamamd Essa	Livelihood Officer	LITACA Field Office - Takhar
39	Ms Ataullah Haya	Gender Officer	
40	Zahid Faiz	Admin Officer	
Tajikistan			
41	Ms. Zebo Jalilova	Team Leader on Sustainable and Inclusive Economic Development and SDGs	UNDP/SEC Cluster
42	Firuz Saidkhadzhaev	Senior Economic Development Officer	
43	Ms Zarina Juraeva	M&E Officer	
44	Ms Takhmina Rozikova	Communications and Partnership Officer	
45	Farkhod Shodiev	LITACA Project Specialist	
46	Ms Pratibha Mehta	Resident Representative	UNDP
47	Christopher Politis	Deputy Resident Representative	
48	Mubin Rustamov	Head of Programme Unit / Assistant to Resident Representative	
49	Ms Naoko Kuwahara	Project Formulation Advisor	JICA
50	Shokirjon Mahmadvov	Senior Program Officer	
51	Dzhovid Khuseinov	Chief Specialist	MEDT
52	Abdugani Ibrohimov	Area Manager, Kulob Field Programme Office	UNDP
53	Hoshim Haimatov	Admin Finance, Kulob Field Programme Office	
54	Mirzohonzoda Askar	Head, Administration of Shohin District	Khatlon Oblast
55	Rajabali Rajabov	Deputy of Chairman of	Khatlon Oblast
56	Mirzoev Davlatkhuja	Chief of Economic and Trade Department of	Khatlon Oblast
57	Valizoda Kurbon	Head, Department of International Relations	Khatlon Oblast
58	Mamurzoda Nosirjon	Head, Communication Department	Khatlon Oblast
59	Davlatzoda	Specialist, Agrarian Department	Khatlon Oblast
60	Bakhtiyor Khalimov	Director	PO- Support for Producers’ Development
61	Saidzoda Nurmuhammad Khol	Chairman	Dusti District
62	Sattorzoda Nurridin	Deputy Chairman	Dusti District

63	Shohiyon Zarifbek	Chairman	Panj District
65	Sangmadov Alihon	Beneficiary	Intensive Garden, Shurobod Village, Shohin District
	Sangov Nuriddin		
	Rahimov Garibsho		
	Davlatova Salima		
	Rahimova Mohru		
	Salimova Fotima		
	Mirzoev Asror		
	Nazarov Emom		
	Davlatov Faizi		
66	Olimov Tagoimurod	Beneficiary	Collection, drying and processing of medicinal herbs, Shohin District
	Azizova Gulbonu		
	Sharifova Zulfiya		
	Halimova Manizha		
	Hojamurodov Olim		
67	Satorova Gulnora	Beneficiary	Creation of the chain of skilled workers, Yol Village, Shohin District
	Rasulova Nazira		
	Rahimova Mohira		
	Begmadov Aziz		
	Edgorbin Nazirmamad		
	Iskandarova Oisha		
68	Nazarov Nurdin	Beneficiary	PWDs, Honey-bee farmers
	Mahmaduloev Bakhriddin		
	Samiev Zokir		
	Murodov Hairullo		
	Rafieva Huri		
	Amirshoeva Hosat		
	Holova Gulchehra		
	Kurbanov Mumin		
	Kurbanov Tagai		
	Rahimov Rahmatullo		
	Kurbanov Umarhon		
	Murodov Zainullo		
	Davlatov Safar		
	Davlatov Odina		
	Niyozov Jumahon		
69	Saidov Tojiddin	Beneficiary	Brick production facility, Jamoat Galaba, Hamadoni District
	Malikov Dilshod		
	Nazarov Bekhruz		
	Mirzoev Nozim		
	Davlatov Mahmadullo		
70	Nazarova Zulfiya	Beneficiary	Confectionary, Hamadoni District
	Mirzomatova Mavludahon		
	Munisai Mustafo		
	Manizhai Mustafo		
	Umedai Nusratullo		
	Saidova Tamanno		
71	Fattohova Mastura	Beneficiary	Fruit processing and packaging
	Sharipova Farzona		

	Sharipova Omina		workshop, Jamoat Galaba, Farkhor District
	Husainova Firuza		
	Sharipov Rajabali		
	Rashidov Ilhom		
72	Khaidov Rahimjon	Head of Dehkan Farm	Rice processing and packing workshop, Obshoron Jamoat, Shaartuz District
	Kamolliddin Yunus Jurakulova	Mechanic operator	
	Normumin Juraev	Worker	
	Kosimov Ziyod	Worker	
	Davlatbekov Orif	Farmer/Client	
	Saifullo Kosimov	Farmer/Client	
73	Yusupova Khatira	Head of PO Elyor	Handicrafts workshop, Shaartuz District
	Saidov E.	Communication specialist	
	Saidov Firuza	Designer	
	Ochilov Z.	Woodcarving master	
	Safarov Ramazon	Worker	
	Djuraeva Obod	Carpenter	
	Mingturganova Saida- Seamer	Trader	
	Murtazova Farogat	Trader	
	Zoirova Sabagul	Worker	
	Boboyorova Shahri	Worker	
	Safarova Sayohat	Worker	
74	Eshmatova Zaynura	Head, PO Rohnamo	Production of canning and frozen products, T. Sadriddinov Jamoat, Shaartuz District
	Hazratkulova Barno	Entrepreneur	
	Toshmatova Nazira	Worker	
	Norboeva Nigor		
	Ishmatova Firuza		
	Khamroeva Lola		
	Boboeva Gulnora		
	Ishmirzoeva Zulfiya		
	Juraboeva Mukhiba		
	Yormatova Dilafruz		
	Alimuratova Halima		
	Ishmatova Salima		
75	Shomansurova Nargiza	HEAD, PO Shifo	Confectionary workshop, Qubodiyon District
	Mastura Akhmedova	Worker	
	Ochildieva Malohat		
	Muvoselova Hadija		
	Nazirova Dilbar		
	Jumareva Marjona		
76	Naimov Sahido	Head, PO	Greenhouse, Jayhun District
	Nazrizoda Mahmadyusuf	Farmer	
	Naimov Olimjon		
	Nozimov Jumabek		
	Rahimov Zafar		
77	Muzafarov Safarbek	Owner, Dairy	Processing and production of dairy products, Panj District
	Muzafarov Abdukarim	Technician	
	Safarov Abdumanon	Worker	
	Saidaliev Anvar		
	Jaborrov Abdullo		

	Shodizoda Nekruz		
	Kholboeva Nigina		
	Gadoeva Shukrona		

Annex -IV: Interview questions for KII

A. Questions for Project Management, UNDP

1. General

- 1.1 Have you been able to regularly visit project areas in the districts to monitor progress of the project? Please share any constraints that you have faced in this regard.

2. Project Design

- 2.1 In relation to the problem addressed by the project, what is the relevance of the project strategy?
- 2.2 Were lessons from LITACA – I and other relevant national and international projects properly incorporated into the project design?
- 2.3 How does the project address country priorities on livelihoods and cross border trade? Was the project concept in line with the national sector development priorities and plans of the country to address the gap on alternative energy sectors?
- 2.4 The local perspectives of those who would be affected by project decisions, those who could/ would affect the outcomes, and those who could contribute information or other resources to the process, taken into consideration in the design process? Kindly share the experiences/ example.
- 2.5 Were relevantly are gender issues raised in the project design?
- 2.6 Does the project budget include funding for gender-relevant outcomes, outputs and activities?
- 2.7 Are the project's results framework targets set up to guarantee a sufficient level of gender balance in activities (e.g. quota for male and female participation)?
- 2.8 Were there any critical gaps in the design of the project, which were not addressed?
- 2.9 Have significant changes of interest happened in the country/local/global context since the design of the project? Do they support or undermine the objective of the project?
- 2.10 If there are major areas of concern, please recommend those for improvement.
- 2.11 How has LITACA contributed to improvement of livelihoods enhancement in the project implemented districts?

3. Results Framework/Log frame

- 3.1 Are the project objectives, outcomes, and components clear and practical? Can they be achieved within the stipulated timeframe?
- 3.2 Did the project logframe capture intended or desired results adequately? If not, what needed to be changed?

- 3.3 Are the project's results framework indicators disaggregated by sex and wherever possible by age and by socio-economic group (or any other socially significant category in society)?
- 3.4 Have there been any changes to the logframe? If yes, what has been changed?
- 3.5 How has the logframe been used to monitor results of the project and bring about course corrections?

4. Progress Towards Results

- 4.1 How do you view the adequacy and quality of training from LITICA and response? Are these trainings helping communities and business people?
- 4.2 How was the quality of trainings the project to the beneficiaries?
- 4.3 Did the project conducted any feasibility study and assessments for implementing project activities, especially infrastructure?
- 4.4 What is the delivery rate of the project?
- 4.5 How well are the centres functioning?
- 4.6 To what extent has the project succeeded in achieving its outcomes?
- 4.7 How effective is the monitoring and reporting system?
- 4.8 What major issues has project faced during the implementation?
- 4.9 What could be the major intended impact and un-intended impact of the project?
- 4.10 Is cropping pattern diversified irrigation infrastructure? What was produced earlier and what is it now, has the quantity increased?
- 4.11 Identify, if possible, legal, cultural, or religious constraints on women's participation in the project.
- 4.12 Do you see any issues in achieving all the results of the project end?

5. Management Arrangements

- 5.1 Are the management arrangements in the project document adequate, clear, and effective? Would you like to propose any changes based on the project experience so far?
- 5.2 Are infrastructure projects done in transparently, who else are consulted for decision making?
- 5.3 What do you think about the quality of project execution by MRRD/UNDP and participation by other collaborators such as MAIL, MEDT?
- 5.4 Do the Executing Agency/Implementing Partner have the capacity to deliver project outputs?
- 5.5 What is the gender balance of project staff? What steps have been to ensure gender balance in project staff?
- 5.6 How well is the project supported by JICA? Are there any areas for improvement?

6. Work Planning

- 6.1 Has project faced any delays in start-up? What have been the causes? What has done to resolve the issues?
- 6.2 Have there been any issues in the preparation of annual work plans? Are the plans sufficiently disaggregated by province and districts? Are plans linked with logframe outcomes? What shows that the plan includes lessons from previous years?

7. Finance

- 7.1 What are the financial controls in place to reduce error and fraud, ensure timeliness, and ensure quality of information? What is the level of compliance with the financial controls?

8. Project-level Monitoring and Evaluation Systems

- 8.1 What information system is used to collect and process monitoring and progress data? Is this system consistent with requirements of implementing agencies (MRRD and UNDP)?
- 8.2 What are the participation and information sharing mechanisms in relation to monitoring and evaluation activities?
- 8.3 What is the follow-up process on monitoring and evaluation findings?
- 8.4 Is M&E constrained by financial resources? Any suggestions?

9. Stakeholder Engagement

- 9.1 What kinds of partnerships have been established for LITACA? How these partnerships have been leveraged to meet the objectives of the project?
- 9.2 What is level of acceptance of the LITACA project objectives among Government partners? What is the level of participation of the Government partners for efficient and effective implementation of the project?
- 9.3 What has been the contribution of the project in building public awareness on rural renewal energy?

10. Reporting

- 10.1 Has the reporting been adequate to meet the reporting requirements of the Project Board?
- 10.2 What has been done by the project to share lessons learned and ensure internalization of those lessons?
- 10.3 What sort of mechanism has been adopted to share the lessons learnt by the project with the other concerned line ministries.

11. Communications

- 11.1 How does LITACA maintain communication with its stakeholders? Is someone left out? What is the feedback mechanism?
- 11.2 Has the project developed communication strategy and communication plan?

- 11.3 Does communication contribute to better implementation of the project and achievement of results?
- 11.4 What are the means of public awareness used by the project? What is being communicated through these means and to whom?

12. Sustainability

12.1 Financial sustainability

- 12.1.1 At this point, what is the likelihood of availability of financial and economic resources after the project funding ends? Are there any possibilities of other funding?
- 12.1.2 Will the communities be able to maintain infrastructure works after the project support ends? What has been done and what needs to be done to this end?

12.2 Socio-economic risks to sustainability

- 12.2.1 Are there any social or political risks that may jeopardize sustainability of project outcomes?
- 12.2.2 What is the risk that the level of stakeholder ownership (including ownership by governments and other key stakeholders) will be insufficient to allow for the project outcomes/benefits to be sustained?
- 12.2.3 Do various key stakeholders see that it is in their interest that the project benefits continue to flow? Is there sufficient public / stakeholder awareness in support of the long term objectives of the project?
- 12.2.4 Are lessons learned being documented by the project team on a continual basis and shared/ transferred to appropriate parties who could learn from the project and potentially replicate and/or scale it in the future?

B. Interview questions for beneficiaries

1. General

- 1.1 Have you heard about the LITACA project? What do you know about the project and how did you come to know about it?
- 1.2 When did the LITACA project staff come to your community for project activities?
- 1.3 What has been done under LITACA in your community? Please list activities.
- 1.4 Have you received any trainings and materials from LITACA? How did you find the training(s)? How have you used them?
- 1.5 How many people in your community have received training from LITACA?
- 1.6 Do project activities respond to the needs of women?

2. Progress Towards Outcomes Analysis

- 2.1 How do you view the impact of the project in terms of economic improvement? Are poor women benefiting from these activities?

- 2.2 Please provide examples of the improvements/likely improvements in the lives of the people from these activities.
- 2.3 Is there any potential negative impact on gender equality and women's empowerment? What can the project do to mitigate the issue, if it exists?
- 2.4 What are the major positive impacts you have observed after being part of the project beneficiary?

3. Management Arrangements

- 3.1 What was the process for beneficiary selection?
- 3.2 What is the degree of women's participation in the project activity?
- 3.3 Did your community contribute on the project activities, do you know the share (percentage) of community contribution?
- 3.4 Do the villagers have sufficient technical know-how to maintain the infrastructures constructed by the project?

Annex – V: Checklist for FGDs

1 Beneficiaries

- 1.1 Have you heard about the LITACA project? What do you know about the project and how did you come to know about it?
- 1.2 When did the project staff come to your community for LITACA activities?
- 1.3 What has been done under LITACA in your community? Please list activities and works.
- 1.4 Have you received any training(s) to raise awareness on your products or business?
- 1.5 Do project activities respond to the needs of the communities and in particularly women?

2 Progress Towards Outcomes Analysis

- 2.1 Has anyone in your community received training from LITACA? How differently are they implementing their activities?
- 2.2 How do you view the impact of the project in terms of livelihoods or economic upliftment? Are poor women benefitting from trainings provided by the project?
- 2.3 Please provide examples of the improvements/likely improvements in the lives of the people from LITACA activities.
- 2.4 What changes has the project brought to women's lives?
- 2.5 Is there any potential negative impact on gender equality and women's empowerment? If any, what can the project do to mitigate this?
- 2.6 What are the major positive impacts that you have observed after LITACA's support?

3 Management Arrangements

- 3.1 What is the process for selection of beneficiaries?
- 3.2 What is the degree of women's participation in the project activity?
- 3.3 Did you receive any subsidy to produce goods?
- 3.4 Does your community have sufficient technical know-how to maintain infrastructures constructed by the project?

Annex – VI: Inception Report

Inception Report

Livelihood Improvement in Tajik – Afghan Cross Border Areas (LITACA-II)

1. BACKGROUND

Livelihood Improvement in Tajik- Afghan Cross - Border Areas (LITACA-II) is a three years initiative to improve living standards and promote stability and security in the bordering provinces of Tajikistan and Afghanistan. This will be achieved by reducing poverty, supporting economic development and cross-border collaboration among the communities along the Tajik-Afghan border. More than 130,072 (cumulative figure from both countries) people will directly benefit from LITACA project while the livelihoods of more than 1,823,828 (cumulative figure from both countries) people living in target bordering communities will be strengthened.

The project offers capacity development opportunities for the local governments, civil society and private sector organizations to sustainably manage local socio-economic development. As well, the project offers investments for rehabilitating priority infrastructure initiatives and business development as a means of improving livelihoods of the target population, and thereby promoting stability and security in the region.

The programme focuses on the following areas:

Output 1: Governance capacity, access to rural infrastructure and public services amongst targeted communities improved.

Output 2: Employment opportunities for women and men in bordering provinces of Tajikistan and Afghanistan increased.

Output 3: Access for cross-border trade, dialogue and partnerships amongst targeted communities, including vulnerable and marginalized rural women improved.

2. EVALUATION APPROACH, SCOPE, AND OBJECTIVES

2.1 Scope

The Mid-term Evaluation (MTE) will assess progress towards the achievement of the project objectives and outcomes mentioned above and as specified in the LITACA II Project Document and assess early signs of project success or failure with the goal of identifying the necessary changes to be made to set the project on-track to help achieve its intended results. The MTE will also review the project's approach and methodology, its risks to results impact and sustainability and make recommendations to improve the project over the remainder of its lifetime.

2.2 Objectives

The objectives of the MTE are to:

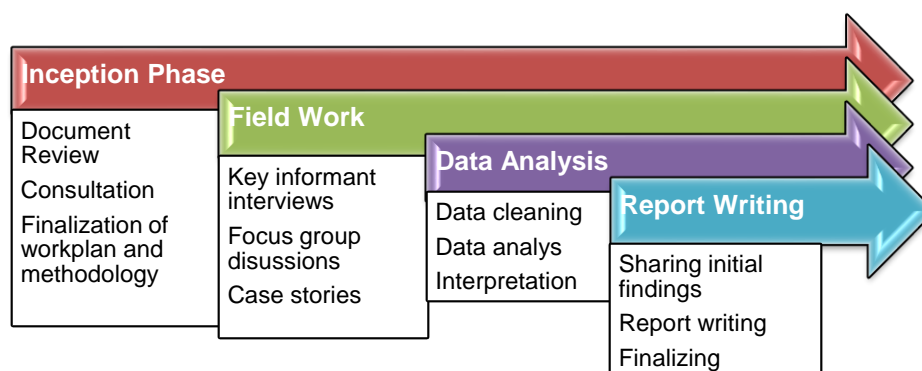
- Assist the recipient Government, beneficiaries, UNDP and, as appropriate, the concerned partners and stakeholders, to improve the efficiency, effectiveness, relevance, sustainability, impact and replicating the existing model of the project;
- Provide feedback to all parties to improve the policy, planning, appraisal, implementation and monitoring phases; and
- Ensure accountability for results to the project's financial backers, stakeholders and beneficiaries.

2.3 Approach

The MTE will provide evidence-based information that is credible, reliable and useful. The consultant reviewed all relevant sources of information including documents shared by the project. The consultant will interview all relevant stakeholders including all parties who have been contracted by the project or participate in meetings and discussions with the project. The consultant will follow a collaborative and participatory approach ensuring close engagement of all stakeholders.

3. EVALUATION PROCESS, METHODOLOGY, AND REPORTING

The MTE will be divided into following four phases.



3.1 The Process

The consultant will provide evidence-based information that is credible, reliable and useful. The consultant will review all relevant sources of information including documents provided. Evaluation participants, tools, and methodology will be finalized through joint meetings with the ASRED project team prior to data collection. The evaluation methodology shall focus on drawing out learnings that can be applied for future programming.

The consultant will give due consideration on assuring data quality while conducting the evaluation. Besides, the consultant will also observe capacity of programme concerned staff building on data recording and data quality performance indicator monitoring, i.e. accuracy, timeliness and completeness of records. The objectives and scope of work suggested by the ToR will guide the approach adopted by this evaluation.

3.2 Methodology

The methodology applied for this evaluation will focus on collection of relevant information both from primary and secondary sources. The consultant will use both quantitative and qualitative paradigms integrating United Nations Evaluation Group Guidelines and OECD-DAC evaluation criteria including; relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact, and sustainability.

The consultant notes that this combined approach gives more credibility to the study and makes it rigor substantially enriching the quality of the evaluation report. Besides, the scope to discuss and

interact with key stakeholders (beneficiaries and stakeholders) will further guarantee, both quality and usage of the evaluation.

The following methods/approaches will be used to enrich the overall quality of the work.

Desk Review: The consultant has reviewed relevant sources of information and documents as given in the table 1 below.

Table 1: List of documents reviewed

S No	Document
1	Annual report – 2018
2	Semi-annual reports – 2018 and 2019
3	Signed ProDoc
4	Annual Work Plans – 2018 and 2019
5	Training report on Good Governance, Disaster Risk Reduction and Project Cycle Management
6	Socio-economic and infrastructure feasibility study and local labour market survey in Badakhshan, Takhar, Kunduz, and Balkh provinces
7	Baseline study in Shahr-e-Buzurg district of Badakhshan, Dashte Qala and Chah Aab districts of Takhar, Imam Sahib district of Kunduz , Khulm district of Balkh
8	LITACA Phase - I evaluation report
9	Various documentaries and videos

Consultative Meetings: Programme Analyst of Livelihood and Resilience Unit/UNDP and Project Manager briefed the consultant on the LITACA Project activities. Discussions were held with Unit Head of LRU prior to starting the field observations to note any further insights and particulars for this evaluation, especially to discuss in detail on the methodology and field activities.

Key informant interview and focus group discussions: The consultant will interview responsible persons from the following organizations and conduct FGDs with beneficiaries based on the questions (see Annex-1 for KII and Annex – 2 for FGD).

Table 2: List of organizations for meetings/key informant interviews

S No	Organization
Afghanistan	
1	UNDP DRR and Previous DRR
2	Head, Livelihood and Resilience Unit/UNDP
3	Programme Officer, LITACA/UNDP
4	PRSU /UNDP (monitoring of UNDP projects)
5	Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA)
6	MRRD Minister and Deputy Minister
7	Ministry of Agriculture, Irrigation and Livestock (MAIL)
8	Deputy Minister of Revenue (previously Deputy Minister of MRRD)
9	CDC members and beneficiaries
10	Project team
Tajikistan	
1	LITACA Project Management team

2	Head of Communities Programme,
3	JICA representative
3	UNDP Senior Management (DRR)
4	Project Manager and Area Office Managers
5	Ministry of Economic Development and Trade
6	Khatlon Regional Government and Local Authorities
7	Beneficiaries and field observations

Learning/Case Stories: Success stories will be collected from individuals or communities, if available at this stage. The stories will focus on the lives of individuals as told through their own story or third party. The approach will encompass the study of the experiences of a single individual embracing stories of the life and exploring the learned significance of those individual experiences. Data for these stories will be collected in form of field notes, interview transcripts, tracking issues, one's own and other's observations, storytelling, and pictures.

Field Visits: Stakeholder meetings/interviews and focus group discussions will be conducted during field visits to Tajikistan (see Table 5: proposed workplan).

Debriefing: After analysis of data, the consultant will share preliminary evaluation findings to UNDP Livelihoods and Resilience Unit, Programme Strategy and Results Unit, UNDP CO Senior Management, MRRD, and other stakeholders in Kabul and Tajikistan.

3.3 Evaluation Matrix

Table 3: Evaluation matrix

Evaluation criteria	Guiding questions	Primary data source
1. Relevance	Is the project design appropriate to address the substantive problem that the project is intended to address? How useful are the project outputs to the needs of the target beneficiaries?	UNDP CO senior management, MRRD/MEDT, JICA
	What is the value of intervention in relation to the national and international partners' policies and priorities (including SDG, One- UN and UNDP Country Programme Document, Corporate Strategic Plan; ANPDF/NPPs, etc)?	UNDP CO senior management, MRRD/MEDT, JICA
	Are the project objectives consistent with substantive needs, and realistic in consideration of technical capacity, resources and time available for a good model to be replicated and scale up?	UNDP CO senior management, MRRD/MEDT, JICA LRU/CP,
2. Effectiveness	Are the project's objectives and outcomes clearly articulated, feasible, realistic?	LRU/CP, Project team
	Are the underlying assumptions on which the project intervention has been based valid? Is there a clear and relevant Theory of Change?	LRU/CP, Project team, ProDoc
	If there were delays in project start-up, what were the causes of delay, and what was the effectiveness of corrective measures undertaken? Do start-up problems persist?	LRU/CP, Project team
	To what extent has the project implemented activities as envisaged? To what extent have those activities contributed to achieving the project objectives?	MRRD/MEDT, LRU/CP, project team, annual and semi-annual reports

	What factors have contributed to achieving/not achieving the intended results?	Project team, local authorities/CDCs, beneficiaries
	To what extent have the project implementation modalities been appropriate to achieve the overall objectives?	MRRD/MEDT, LRU/CP, project team, local authorities/CDCs
	To what extent has the project managed to implement activities across the target project locations?	MRRD, LRU/CP, project team
	To what extent do external factors, such as logistical or security constraints, have impact on project implementation?	UNDP CO senior management, MRRD, LRU/CP, project team, local authorities/CDCs
	To what extent is the project logic, concept and approach appropriate and relevant to achieving the objectives?	UNDP CO senior management, MRRD/MEDT, LRU/CP, project team
3. Efficiency	To what extent were project start-up activities completed on schedule?	Project team, annual and semi-annual reports
	How well is the project managed, and how could it be managed better?	MRRD/MEDT, LRU/CP, local authorities/CDCs
	Is there an appropriate mechanism for monitoring the progress of the project? If yes, is there adequate usage of results/data for programming and decision making?	MRRD/MEDT, LRU/CP, project team
	What is the project status with respect to target outputs in terms of quality and timeliness?	LRU/CP, project team, local authorities/CDCs
	What is the potential that the project will successfully achieve the desired target and initiatives could be replicated?	MRRD/MEDT, LRU/CP, project team
	What are the potential challenges/risks that may prevent the project from producing the intended results?	MRRD/MEDT, LRU/CP, project team, local authorities/CDCs
4. Impact	What is the wider perception of the project, its image, applicability and performance? Are project communications effective in positively promoting the project to a wider audience?	LRU/CP, project team, local authorities/CDCs
	What are the results (or preliminary results) of the intervention in terms changes in the lives of beneficiaries against set indicators?	MRRD, Govt of Khatlon, local authorities/CDCs, beneficiaries
5. Sustainability	What are the Implementing Partner's resources, motivation and ability to continue project activities in the future?	UNDP CO senior management, MRRD/MEDT, LRU/CP, Govt of Khatlon
	Is there adequate all-party commitment to the project objectives and chosen approach?	UNDP senior management, JICA, MRRD/MEDT, LRU/CP, Govt of Khatlon
	To what extent is there constructive cooperation among the project partners? What are the levels of satisfaction of government counterparts, donors and beneficiaries?	UNDP CO senior management, MRRD/MEDT, LRU/CP, JICA, Govt of Khatlon, local authorities/CDCs, beneficiaries
	What has been the quality of execution of the implementing partner, and if applicable where are there specific areas for improvement?	MRRD, LRU/CP, project team
	What is the likelihood that the project results will be sustainable in terms of systems, institutions, financing and anticipated impact?	MRRD/MEDT, LRU/CP, Govt of Khatlon, Local authorities/ CDCs, beneficiaries
	What is needed for the project intervention to be adapted/replicated further?	UNDP CO senior management, MRRD/MEDT, LRU/CP, Govt of Khatlon, local authorities/CDCs, beneficiaries

3.4 Limitations to the Evaluation Design/Methodology

Fragile security situation in the Afghanistan side project area does not permit the evaluator to observe the field activities and interaction with Community Development Council members and beneficiaries. Besides, UNDSS travel restrictions on movement with limited hours in Kabul is likely to hamper in catching with the scheduled meetings.

4. DELIVERABLES

Table 4: Deliverables

Inception report including evaluation plan, evaluation methodology, data collection tools with procedure, proposed schedule of tasks, activities and deliverables for each task, refined evaluation matrix, and limitation of the MTE
Presentation on the initial findings
Draft evaluation report outlining the findings and recommendations
Final evaluation report

5. WORK PLAN

Following evaluation schedule is proposed for this mid-term evaluation.

Table 5: Proposed work plan

Tentative Date	Activity
28 January 2020	Signed contract
2 February 2020	Document review
3 - 21 February 2020	Field mission to Kabul, Afghanistan
22 – 1 March 2020	Field mission to Dushanbe, Tajikistan
8 March 2020	Draft MTE Report submission
27 March 2020	Report finalization incorporating comments

6. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Table 6: Role and responsibilities

Consultant MTE Evaluator	Client LITACA/UNDP
1. Interaction with LITACA team	1. Provide project documents
2. Prepare inception report including evaluation methods, tools	2. Provide feedback on methodology and tools used for the study
3. Prepare checklists and questionnaires	3. Arrange meetings with MRRD and other stakeholders in Kabul and province
4. Conduct meetings and interviews	4. Identification of field sites
5. Field visit and conduct KIIs and FGDs	5. Field visit coordination
6. Data/information analysis	6. Comments on reports
7. Presentation on preliminary findings and recommendations	7. Timely release of payment
8. Report writing and submission of first draft	
9. Report submission after incorporating feedbacks	

Annex -1: Interview questions for KII

C. Questions for Project Management, UNDP

13.General

- 2.1 Have you been able to regularly visit project areas in the districts to monitor progress of the project? Please share any constraints that you have faced in this regard.

14.Project Design

- 14.1 In relation to the problem addressed by the project, what is the relevance of the project strategy?
- 14.2 Were lessons from LITACA – I and other relevant national and international projects properly incorporated into the project design?
- 14.3 How does the project address country priorities on livelihoods and cross border trade? Was the project concept in line with the national sector development priorities and plans of the country to address the gap on alternative energy sectors?
- 14.4 The local perspectives of those who would be affected by project decisions, those who could/ would affect the outcomes, and those who could contribute information or other resources to the process, taken into consideration in the design process? Kindly share the experiences/ example.
- 14.5 Were relevantly are gender issues raised in the project design?
- 14.6 Does the project budget include funding for gender-relevant outcomes, outputs and activities?
- 14.7 Are the project's results framework targets set up to guarantee a sufficient level of gender balance in activities (e.g. quota for male and female participation)?
- 14.8 Were there any critical gaps in the design of the project, which were not addressed?
- 14.9 Have significant changes of interest happened in the country/local/global context since the design of the project? Do they support or undermine the objective of the project?
- 14.10 If there are major areas of concern, please recommend those for improvement.
- 14.11 How has LITACA contributed to improvement of livelihoods enhancement in the project implemented districts?

15. Results Framework/Log frame

- 15.1 Are the project objectives, outcomes, and components clear and practical? Can they be achieved within the stipulated timeframe?
- 15.2 Did the project logframe capture intended or desired results adequately? If not, what needed to be changed?
- 15.3 Are the project's results framework indicators disaggregated by sex and wherever possible by age and by socio-economic group (or any other socially significant category in society)?
- 15.4 Have there been any changes to the logframe? If yes, what has been changed?
- 15.5 How has the logframe been used to monitor results of the project and bring about course corrections?

16. Progress Towards Results

- 16.1 How do you view the adequacy and quality of training from LITICA and response? Are these trainings helping communities and business people?
- 16.2 How was the quality of trainings the project to the beneficiaries?
- 16.3 Did the project conducted any feasibility study and assessments for implementing project activities, especially infrastructure?
- 16.4 What is the delivery rate of the project?
- 16.5 How well are the centres functioning?
- 16.6 To what extent has the project succeeded in achieving its outcomes?
- 16.7 How effective is the monitoring and reporting system?
- 16.8 What major issues has project faced during the implementation?
- 16.9 What could be the major intended impact and un-intended impact of the project?
- 16.10 Is cropping pattern diversified irrigation infrastructure? What was produced earlier and what is it now, has the quantity increased?
- 16.11 Identify, if possible, legal, cultural, or religious constraints on women's participation in the project.
- 16.12 Do you see any issues in achieving all the results of the project end?

17. Management Arrangements

- 17.1 Are the management arrangements in the project document adequate, clear, and effective? Would you like to propose any changes based on the project experience so far?
- 17.2 Are infrastructure projects done in transparently, who else are consulted for decision making?
- 17.3 What do you think about the quality of project execution by MRRD/UNDP and participation by other collaborators such as MAIL, MEDT?
- 17.4 Do the Executing Agency/Implementing Partner have the capacity to deliver project outputs?
- 17.5 What is the gender balance of project staff? What steps have been to ensure gender balance in project staff?
- 17.6 How well is the project supported by JICA? Are there any areas for improvement?

18. Work Planning

- 18.1 Has project faced any delays in start-up? What have been the causes? What has done to resolve the issues?
- 18.2 Have there been any issues in the preparation of annual work plans? Are the plans sufficiently disaggregated by province and districts? Are plans linked with logframe outcomes? What shows that the plan includes lessons from previous years?

19. Finance

- 19.1 What are the financial controls in place to reduce error and fraud, ensure timeliness, and ensure quality of information? What is the level of compliance with the financial controls?

20. Project-level Monitoring and Evaluation Systems

- 20.1 What information system is used to collect and process monitoring and progress data? Is this system consistent with requirements of implementing agencies (MRRD and UNDP)?
- 20.2 What are the participation and information sharing mechanisms in relation to monitoring and evaluation activities?
- 20.3 What is the follow-up process on monitoring and evaluation findings?
- 20.4 Is M&E constrained by financial resources? Any suggestions?

21. Stakeholder Engagement

- 21.1 What kinds of partnerships have been established for LITACA? How these partnerships have been leveraged to meet the objectives of the project?
- 21.2 What is level of acceptance of the LITACA project objectives among Government partners? What is the level of participation of the Government partners for efficient and effective implementation of the project?
- 21.3 What has been the contribution of the project in building public awareness on rural renewal energy?

22. Reporting

- 22.1 Has the reporting been adequate to meet the reporting requirements of the Project Board?
- 22.2 What has been done by the project to share lessons learned and ensure internalization of those lessons?
- 22.3 What sort of mechanism has been adopted to share the lessons learnt by the project with the other concerned line ministries.

23. Communications

- 23.1 How does LITACA maintain communication with its stakeholders? Is someone left out? What is the feedback mechanism?
- 23.2 Has the project developed communication strategy and communication plan?
- 23.3 Does communication contribute to better implementation of the project and achievement of results?
- 23.4 What are the means of public awareness used by the project? What is being communicated through these means and to whom?

24. Sustainability

24.1 Financial sustainability

- 24.1.1 At this point, what is the likelihood of availability of financial and economic resources after the project funding ends? Are there any possibilities of other funding?
- 24.1.2 Will the communities be able to maintain infrastructure works after the project support ends? What has been done and what needs to be done to this end?

24.2 Socio-economic risks to sustainability

- 24.2.1 Are there any social or political risks that may jeopardize sustainability of project outcomes?
- 24.2.2 What is the risk that the level of stakeholder ownership (including ownership by governments and other key stakeholders) will be insufficient to allow for the project outcomes/benefits to be sustained?
- 24.2.3 Do various key stakeholders see that it is in their interest that the project benefits continue to flow? Is there sufficient public / stakeholder awareness in support of the long term objectives of the project?
- 24.2.4 Are lessons learned being documented by the project team on a continual basis and shared/ transferred to appropriate parties who could learn from the project and potentially replicate and/or scale it in the future?

D. Interview questions for beneficiaries

4. General

- 4.1 Have you heard about the LITACA project? What do you know about the project and how did you come to know about it?
- 4.2 When did the LITACA project staff come to your community for project activities?
- 4.3 What has been done under LITACA in your community? Please list activities.
- 4.4 Have you received any trainings and materials from LITACA? How did you find the training(s)? How have you used them?
- 4.5 How many people in your community have received training from LITACA?
- 4.6 Do project activities respond to the needs of women?

5. Progress Towards Outcomes Analysis

- 5.1 How do you view the impact of the project in terms of economic improvement? Are poor women benefiting from these activities?
- 5.2 Please provide examples of the improvements/likely improvements in the lives of the people from these activities.
- 5.3 Is there any potential negative impact on gender equality and women's empowerment? What can the project do to mitigate the issue, if it exists?
- 5.4 What are the major positive impacts you have observed after being part of the project beneficiary?

6. Management Arrangements

- 6.1 What was the process for beneficiary selection?
- 6.2 What is the degree of women's participation in the project activity?
- 6.3 Did your community contribute on the project activities, do you know the share (percentage) of community contribution?

6.4 Do the villagers have sufficient technical know-how to maintain the infrastructures constructed by the project?

Annex - II: Checklist for FGDs

4 Beneficiaries

- 4.1 Have you heard about the LITACA project? What do you know about the project and how did you come to know about it?
- 4.2 When did the project staff come to your community for LITACA activities?
- 4.3 What has been done under LITACA in your community? Please list activities and works.
- 4.4 Have you received any training(s) to raise awareness on your products or business?
- 4.5 Do project activities respond to the needs of the communities and in particularly women?

5 Progress Towards Outcomes Analysis

- 5.1 Has anyone in your community received training from LITACA? How differently are they implementing their activities?
- 5.2 How do you view the impact of the project in terms of livelihoods or economic upliftment? Are poor women benefitting from trainings provided by the project?
- 5.3 Please provide examples of the improvements/likely improvements in the lives of the people from LITACA activities.
- 5.4 What changes has the project brought to women's lives?
- 5.5 Is there any potential negative impact on gender equality and women's empowerment? If any, what can the project do to mitigate this?
- 5.6 What are the major positive impacts that you have observed after LITACA's support?

6 Management Arrangements

- 6.1 What is the process for selection of beneficiaries?
- 6.2 What is the degree of women's participation in the project activity?
- 6.3 Did you receive any subsidy to produce goods?
- 6.4 Does your community have sufficient technical know-how to maintain infrastructures constructed by the project?