

Mid-term Review of Parliament Support Project (PSP) Phase-2

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Disclaimer

The views expressed in this publication are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the views of PSP, UNDP or its partners.

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Project and Evaluation Information Details

Project/outcome Information		
Project/outcome title	Parliament Support Project	
Atlas ID	0049635	
Corporate outcome and output	<p>CPD outcome 2: By 2022, inclusive, democratic, accountable and transparent institutions are further strengthened towards ensuring the rule of law, social justice and human rights for all particularly for vulnerable people</p> <p>CPD Output 2.1: National level executive and legislative branches of the Government and commissions have the capacities and tools to implement the constitution, including peaceful transition to federal structure.</p>	
Country	Nepal	
Region	Asia and the Pacific	
Date project document signed	23 April 2018	
Project dates	Start	Planned end
	January 2018	December 2022
Project budget	US\$ 5,900,000	
Project expenditure at the time of evaluation	USD 2,642,640	
Funding source	Royal Norwegian Embassy in Nepal and UNDP TRAC	
Implementing party	UNDP Nepal	
Evaluation information		
Evaluation type (project/outcome/thematic/country programme, etc.)	Project	
Final/midterm review/other	Midterm Review	
Period under evaluation	Start	End
	2018	2020 (June)
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Evaluation dates	Start	Completion
	20 August 2020	19 October 2020

Acronyms and Abbreviations

A2J	Enhancing Access to Justice through Institutional Reform Project
CPD	Country Programme Document
DIM	Direct Implementation Modality
ESP	Electoral Support Project
FP	Federal Parliament
GESI	Gender Equity and Social Inclusion
LP	Legislature-Parliament
MMP	Mixed Member Proportional Representation
MTR	Mid-term Review
NHRC	National Human Rights Committee
NORAD	Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation
PA	Provincial Assemblies
PAC	Public Accounts Committees
PLGSP	Province and Local Government Support Programme
PFM	public financial management
PSP	Parliamentary Support Project
RRF	Results and Resources Framework
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
ToC	Theory of Change
TRAC	Target for Resource Assignment from Core
UNDAF	United Nations Development Assistance Framework
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
IDPGWG	International Development Partner GESI working Group

Executive Summary

In 2015, Nepal adopted a new Constitution that lay the foundation for a federal parliamentary system of government. The Constituent Assembly was transformed into a Legislature-Parliament (LP) of 601 members that was to be responsible for developing and operationalizing the new parliamentary structure until fresh parliamentary elections could be held. The constitution also assigned the LP with the substantial task of making and revising more than 300 new laws for implementation of the Constitution. To support the LP in exercising its new functions and duties, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) designed and launched the Parliament Support Project (PSP). The project commenced on 1 September 2015 and was originally designed to operate until December 2019.

The election of the bicameral Federal Parliament (FP) and unicameral Provincial Assemblies (PAs) for seven provinces, which took place in late 2017, gave mandate to form and operate the Federal Parliament and seven Provincial Assemblies from 2018. This was also the year when the United Nations and UNDP introduced new plans and support strategies for the next five years in the form of the UN Development Assistance Framework (2018-2022)¹ and the UNDP's Country Programme Document (2018-2022)². In line with the changed political and administrative context, the scope of the Parliament Support Project was expanded so that it could provide ongoing support to the new legislative bodies. Project duration was extended accordingly, through December 2022.

In its current extension phase (2018-2022), the project seeks to strengthen the new parliamentary institutions as well as the individual capacities of the newly elected Members of Parliament (MPs) to discharge their duties as parliamentarians (i.e., to formulate and review new policies and laws, to perform oversight of government, and to represent the diverse population of Nepal).

The MPs at the Federal Parliament and Provincial Assemblies and the officials at their secretariats are the target group of the project while the public, Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) and journalists are the stakeholders of the project. The Project is being implemented by the UNDP under the Direct Implementation Modality (DIM) and in partnership with the Federal parliament and Provincial Assemblies.

This report presents findings from the Midterm Review (MTR), which UNDP commissioned in August 2020 to assess progress made by the project up to its midpoint (January 2018 – June 2020). The review provides the opportunity to assess the implementation approaches, progress made, and challenges encountered, identify and document lessons learnt and make recommendations to improve the future course of action and the project intervention approaches. The findings of the review will assist UNDP and stakeholders to monitor progress and identify areas for improvement. The Midterm Review was conducted in accordance with UNDP's Evaluation Guidelines 2019 and followed OECD/DAC standard revised evaluation criteria. The primary audience of this report is UNDP Country Office, Federal Parliament and Provincial Assemblies, Parliament Secretariats, Donor, CSOs and other relevant stakeholders.

¹ <https://www.np.undp.org/content/dam/nepal/docs/legalframework/UNDAF%202018-2022.pdf>

² https://www.np.undp.org/content/nepal/en/home/library/legal_framework/cpd-nepal-2018-to-2022.html

The evaluation provides an overall assessment of project performance and offers suggestions and recommendations to improve interventions during the remainder of the Project. The primary audience of this report is UNDP Country Office, Federal Parliament and Provincial Assemblies and their Secretariats, Donor, CSOs and other relevant stakeholders. It is expected that relevant stakeholders in general and UNDP in particular will duly consider, prepare a detailed management response for the incorporation of the recommendations and lessons from this review to further improve the performance of project interventions in the remaining period of the project.

The review was conducted over several weeks between August and October 2020. Given the qualitative nature of the intervention's goals, the evaluation used a descriptive approach in assessing progress against indicators and an interpretive approach in assessing impact. The MTR team used Project documents and extensive interviews with Project beneficiaries and stakeholders to triangulate information. (See Annex 1 for respondent details and Annex 2 for a full list of documents reviewed). Each member of the MTR team conducted separate inquiries and interviews, and the team jointly analysed the data and information collected. GESI specialist Kopila Rijal guided the team in collecting and analysing GESI-related performance data. The MTR team grounded the evaluation in UNDP Quality Standards for Programming, and adopted the UNDP-recommended rating scale to assess performance against each of the key performance criteria.

Overall, the MTR team found PSP to be a timely initiative that provided critical support to Nepal's new Federal Parliament (and later) to its provincial assemblies. Project deliverables were based on a thorough needs assessment of the federal parliament and provincial assemblies that identified a vision for outcome-level change that was subsequently articulated in the project's Theory of Change (ToC), namely that parliament would become a "capable institution responding to the needs and concerns of the public including women, youth and marginalized groups by assuming its role as a law/policy making and oversight body and in fostering constitutional implementation."

The PSP has made important contributions to the institutional development of Nepal's new Federal Parliament and Provincial Assemblies. The Project has supported the thematic work of Parliamentary Committees and strengthened the operational capacities of the parliamentary secretariats. PSP has also equipped many women MPs and MPs from marginalized groups with the skills they need to perform their representative, legislative and oversight functions. Project beneficiaries and stakeholders were overwhelmingly positive in their feedback about PSP, recognizing the Project as a timely intervention by a trusted inter-governmental body. As the Federal Parliament has strengthened, the project has redirected resources to Provincial Assemblies where UNDP is strongly and uniquely placed to assist the new legislative bodies. PSP has also demonstrated agility and effectiveness in its COVID response, providing much needed technical and logistical support to parliamentary bodies to ensure they are able to conduct their work remotely. This has included public consultations and hearings, as well as centre-provincial coordination on legislative matters, policy review and investigations.

The evaluators found the design and implementation of PSP to be strategically aligned to the SDGs and to Nepal's development needs. The Project is demand-driven, sensitive to gender equality and social inclusion as well as human-rights based approaches to programming. The Project is on track to meet many, but not all of the targets specified in

the Results and Resources Framework (RRF). Changes to programme activities have been made in response to evolving needs identified by the Federal Parliament and Provincial Assemblies and in response to the COVID pandemic. The changes have demonstrated admirable agility but have also stretched the Project's resources. For the remainder of the phase, it is recommended that the Project team revisit the Theory of Change and RRF to reflect on ways in which limited resources can be used most strategically to achieve Project goals. Given the significant changes to the political, social and economic development context, a SWOT analysis would be a useful exercise to undertake as part of the reflection.

Recommendations

Recommendation 1: The project would benefit from increased communication and coordination with other development partners. Regular meetings (even if informal) would help to prevent duplication of activities and minimize opportunities for rivalry and donor shopping. UNDP might consider taking the lead in remapping current and proposed parliamentary support activities by other development partners.

Recommendation 2: RRF indicators and targets should be revisited (notably indicators under Outputs 1.3, 2.4, 3.4, 4.1 and 4.6) so that the Project is not set up to fail. Contributions are clearly being made toward all five outputs, but in evaluating progress against many targets as they are presently articulated, the Project will either (a) not be able to achieve the target, or (b) not be able to demonstrate that the target has been met.

Recommendation 3: Along with Federal Parliament, the Project should continue to expand its support to provincial assemblies where support is greatly needed and being requested.

Recommendation 4: Future support to provincial assemblies will require a strategy since PA needs are many and varied and the Project funding is already stretched. In supporting PAs, it would be prudent to seek more synergies with local democratic governance programmes such as PLGSP.

Recommendation 5: The project should be more realistic in determining output indicators, including targets for women MPs and MPs from marginalized groups. The Project should revisit the Theory of Change and identify progress markers and milestones that can be used to design future support activities. For the remainder of the Phase it is recommended that the Project team revisit the Theory of Change and RRF to reflect on ways in which limited resources can be used most strategically to achieve Project goals. Given the significant changes to the political, social and economic development context, a SWOT analysis would be a useful exercise to undertake as part of the reflection. The M&E plan (and RRF) should focus on outcome-level reporting and on identifying behavioural change. The current focus is largely on activities and outputs. Annual and semi-annual progress reports should also report on outcomes and not only activities completed/numbers in attendance. Project reporting should consistently include GESI disaggregated data.

Recommendation 6: With guidance from the Country Office, the Project should invest more resources in documenting lessons learned for the benefit of the remainder of the Phase as well as for similar projects in Nepal and other jurisdictions in the future. The M&E plan should be improved to capture information about knowledge transfer and

application. The Project might consider engaging a specialist in knowledge transfer and knowledge management to assist with this process.

Recommendation 7: In the remainder of this phase, the Project needs to develop its exit strategy to ensure the legacy of its investments. This should include steps for management of knowledge and transfer of training materials, as well as maintenance of ICT infrastructure. The exit strategy might also consider strengthened partnerships with CSOs to promote and support effective coordination and communication between community and parliamentarians on issues related to gender equity and social inclusion. The existing exit strategy consists of a few dot points about the administration of Project closure. The exit strategy should also consider making the Secretariat staffs more responsible and technically sound to help them transfer the knowledge.

Recommendation 8: The Project should continue to seek opportunities for cost-sharing as a step toward exit, and as a means of partially addressing the current funding shortfall. The Government of Nepal has a budget allocation for the Federal Parliament secretariat. It would be in keeping with PSP goals and principles to seek and examine opportunities for cost-sharing of upcoming capacity development activities particularly in the areas of Information Technology.

The evaluators' rating of the project in accordance with the key evaluation criteria is provided in the table below:

Evaluation Criteria	Rating/Score	Description of performance
Relevance	1	Project activities are aligned with Nepal's development priorities, SDGs and UNDAF.
Coherence	2	The Theory of Change is sound and project activities follow the logic of the Theory of Change. Adjustments to Project activities have shown responsiveness, but sometimes risk spreading the Project too thinly.
Effectiveness	1	The Project has had a demonstrable impact, most notably on the individual capacities of MPs, including women and MPs from marginalised groups.
Efficiency	2	The Project has been efficient in its allocation of resources, but more effort is needed to secure cost-sharing
Impact	1	PSP has contributed to significant improvements in the operating capabilities of new parliamentary institutions at the federal and provincial levels, and in the individual capabilities of MPs, including women MPs and MPs from marginalised groups.
Sustainability	3	The Sustainability Strategy is well considered, but the exit strategy needs to show how investments will be maintained beyond Project closure.
Human rights	1	The Project has successfully promoted a human rights agenda in its support for legislation and in its collaboration with other projects.
Gender and Social Inclusion	2	The Project receives top marks for mainstreaming GESI considerations across support activities and for identifying GESI targets in a dedicated output, but more needs to be done to secure results.
Overall	1/2	PSP overall performance is satisfactory to highly satisfactory.

Scale: 1: Highly satisfactory, 2: Satisfactory, 3: Moderately satisfactory, 4: Somehow satisfactory, 5: Not satisfactory

The PSP's overall performance is satisfactory to highly satisfactory.

1. Introduction

This report is the Midterm Review of Parliament Support Project (PSP). The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) is implementing PSP with expanded scope from 1 January 2018, through December 2022. The Project is being implemented under the Direct Implementation Modality (DIM) and in partnership with the Federal parliament and Provincial Assemblies.

UNDP commissioned the Midterm Review at the 2.5-year mark of the five-year project to assess the progress made by the project against its purpose, objectives, outputs and indicators. The review provides the opportunity to assess the implementation approaches, progress made, and challenges encountered, identify and document the lessons learnt and make recommendations to improve the future course of action and the project intervention approaches. The evaluation applies the standard evaluation criteria of Relevance, Effectiveness, Coherence, Efficiency, Impact and Sustainability as well as other cross-cutting criteria, including Gender Equality and Social Inclusion.

The evaluation provides an overall assessment of project performance and offers suggestions and recommendations to improve interventions during the remainder of the Project. The primary audience of this report is UNDP Country Office, Federal Parliament and Provincial Assemblies and their Secretariats, Donor, CSOs and other relevant stakeholders. It is expected that relevant stakeholders in general and UNDP in particular will duly consider, prepare a detailed management response for the incorporation of the recommendations and lessons from this review to further improve the performance of project interventions in the remaining period of the project.

The report is structured according to the UNDP standard guidelines for project evaluation and the main sections include; Introduction, Description of the intervention, Evaluation scope and objectives, Evaluation approach and methods, Data analysis, Findings, Conclusions, Recommendations and Lessons learned. The Findings sections analyses and discuss in detail the overall Relevance, Effectiveness, Coherence, Efficiency, Impact and Sustainability as the main evaluation criteria, and Gender Equality and Social Inclusion, Human Rights; and Anti-corruption and the Environment as cross-cutting criteria. The report also analyses the results achieved against the project outputs and indicators.

2. Description of the Intervention

In 2015, Nepal adopted a new Constitution that lay the foundation for a federal parliamentary system of government. The Constituent Assembly was transformed into a temporary Legislature-Parliament (LP) of 601 members that was to be responsible for developing and operationalizing the new parliamentary structure until fresh parliamentary elections could be held. The new Federal Parliament would be constituted as a bicameral assembly, consisting of a lower house of 275 members and an upper house (National Assembly) of 59 members. According to the new Constitution, lower house members would be elected via a system of Mixed Member Proportional Representation (MMP) in which 165 members are directly elected in a first-past-the-post method and 110 members are elected via a closed party-list proportional method. The seven provincial assemblies select eight representatives each to sit in the National Assembly, with an additional three members appointed by the President.

To support the LP in exercising its new functions and duties, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) designed and launched the Parliament Support Project (PSP). The project commenced on 1 September 2015 and was originally designed to operate until December 2019. Following elections in 2017 in which parliamentarians were elected to serve in the new Federal Parliament and Provincial Assemblies from 2018, the PSP was extended so that it could provide ongoing support to the new legislative bodies.

In its current extension phase (2018-2022) of PSP seeks to strengthen the new parliamentary institutions as well as the individual capacities of the newly elected Members of Parliament (MPs) to discharge their duties as parliamentarians (i.e., to formulate and review new policies and laws, to perform oversight of government, and to represent the diverse population of Nepal). The project's goals are aligned with the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF)/UNDP CPD Outcome, which aims that:

by 2022, inclusive, democratic, accountable and transparent institutions are further strengthened towards ensuring the rule of law, social justice and human rights for all particularly for vulnerable people.

Project design is further informed by the Fourteenth Development Plan of the Government of Nepal (Governance, Rule of Law and Human Rights); the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and Goal 16 of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Project goals have been organized into four key outputs:

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

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

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

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

In 2020 a fifth output was added to underscore the importance of adapting to the COVID pandemic:

Output 5: Enhance the capacity of parliaments at the federal & provincial levels to respond to the COVID 19 pandemic by the maximum use of ICT in the committee meetings and plenary sessions.

The five outputs are derived from a Theory of Change, which assumes that immediate changes will contribute to (i) enhance capacities for effective functioning and institutional reforms in line with the Constitution, (ii) increased capacity of Parliament to substantively scrutinise and pass legislation and monitor the Government’s activities and expenditures, (iii) establish routine interaction between the Parliament and citizens of Nepal, including women, youth and marginalised groups. The Theory of Change identifies longer-term changes that serve as signposts on the path to achieving the UNDAF goal stated above. In each of its output areas, the intervention addresses the cross-cutting issues of gender equality and social inclusion (GESI), human rights, and anti-corruption. Concern for gender equality and social inclusion was underlined by the addition of a dedicated output.

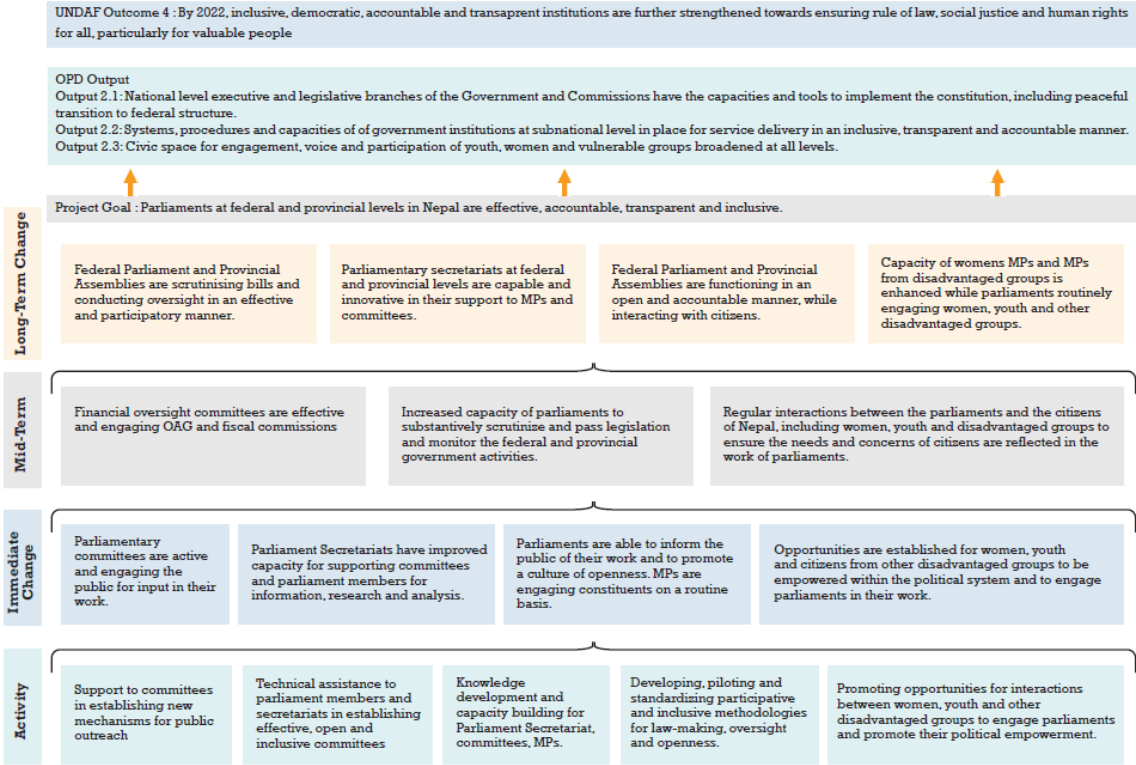


Table 1: Parliament Support Project Theory of Change

The Theory of Change provides a sound basis for Project design. Outputs were further informed by a Needs Assessment that identified a wide variety of capacity building groups to needs

at the institutional, organizational and individual levels for Nepal's newly established Federal Parliament. The creation of provincial assemblies under the new Constitution created demand for additional parliamentary support at the provincial level.

PSP is implemented directly by UNDP (under Direct Implementation Modality, DIM) in partnership with the Federal Parliament and Provincial Assemblies, notably the parliament secretariats. The role of the partners' is to coordinate the support activities and to identify needs for capacity support interventions. The Federal Parliament secretariat is also jointly responsible for Project steering and oversight, with the General Secretary of the Federal Parliament Secretariat sitting on the Project Board. The total estimated budget for Phase 2 (the current phase and phase being reviewed at its midpoint) is US\$5.9 million, out of which the Government of Norway is contributing \$2.8 million, and UNDP is contributing \$2 million from internal TRAC funds. The balance of \$1.1 million remains unfunded. The unfunded component remains an implementation constraint. The COVID pandemic created another implementation constraint in 2020, requiring significant modifications to activities and expenditure application and use of ICT to be increased.

Key project partners are the Federal Parliament and Provincial Assemblies, as well as media and civil society organizations. These partnerships are vital to the success of the project, especially in the context of a new Government that has expressed less interest in internationally supported governance initiatives.

3. Evaluation Scope and Objectives

Evaluation scope: The Midterm Review covers the period from 2018 until June 2020, the midway point of PSP's second phase. The evaluation assessed all five outputs, and examined Project impacts across all beneficiary groups, including women MPs and MPs from marginalised groups. The evaluation covers PSP activity at the Federal as well as at the Provincial level.

Evaluation objectives: The Midterm Review (MTR) assesses progress at the midpoint of Phase 2, i.e., the project period from January 2018 to June 2020. Using a qualitative approach tailored for governance programs, the MTR examined project implementation approaches, progress made, and challenges encountered, as well as documenting lessons learned. It is anticipated that findings from the MTR will inform and promote dialogue among the PSP partners and stakeholders on progress made and areas for improvement. Recommendations will address ways in which the project can be more effective during the remainder of Phase 2. Specific objectives of the MTR are as follows:

- Assess progress against PSP's purpose, objectives, outputs and indicators;
- Assess the approaches and interventions adopted by the project towards achieving the outputs in line with Theory of Change;
- Identify and document main project achievements, results, impacts, and lessons learned in order to inform the future course of action;
- Ascertain the relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, coherence, and sustainability of the project interventions, including synergies with other UNDP support efforts; and
- Recommend potential new areas of intervention and approaches in the current context of federalization and COVID-19 crisis in Nepal.

Evaluation criteria: The MTR has followed the six OECD-DAC evaluation criteria - **Relevance, Effectiveness, Efficiency, Coherence, Impact and Sustainability**. Gender equality and social inclusion (GESI) is a mainstream agenda of PSP and is another core criterion for evaluating the project with particular focus on women and marginalized groups (Output 4). The evaluation team has assessed GESI mainstreaming in four key areas of the PSP, namely, Policy Processes, Institutional Arrangements, Planning and Programme Cycles, and Monitoring Evaluation Learning and Reporting. A section in the report examines PSP contributions to gender equality and social inclusion using the Common Framework for Gender Equality and Social Inclusion spearheaded by the International Development Partner's Group GESI Working Group.³

Human rights, anti-corruption, and the environment were other key evaluation criteria. The MTR team reviewed and assessed the risks and opportunities for resource mobilization, synergy and areas of interventions for PSP's future. The MTR team also reviewed external factors beyond the control of the project that have affected project performance.

Evaluation questions: Key evaluation questions are listed below.

³<https://www.np.undp.org/content/nepal/en/home/library/gender-equality-and-social-inclusion/common-framework-for-GESI.html>

- To what extent is the project able to address the identified needs of the target group in the changed context?
- To what extent did the project contribute to the CPD outcome and outputs, the SDGs, the UNDP Strategic Plan and national development priorities?
- To what extent have the project implementation strategy and execution been efficient and cost- effective?
- How well does the project fit into the current development context?
- How will project investments contribute to lasting change?
- What are the key GESI policies, strategies, and institutional arrangements adopted by the PSP?

4. Evaluation Approach and Methods

The MTR team used a descriptive and interpretive approach for the evaluation, drawing on primary and secondary sources of data from multiple sources including Project documents and interviews with Project beneficiaries and stakeholders. The key methods adopted by the review to collect the data are document review and semi-structured interviews with Project beneficiaries, stakeholders and development partners.:

Document review: The study team began by gathering, reviewing, and analysing available documents and reports, including the ToC and results framework, project reports, annual work plans, project board meeting minutes, monitoring reports, publications, strategic documents, policies and other relevant documents available within UNDP and PSP unit (See Annex 2 for a full list of documents consulted). The desk review informed the development of questions for semi-structured interviews among project stakeholders.

Semi-structured Interview: Interview questions were designed to extract information about the nature and quality of change to which the Project has contributed in accordance with the Project's Theory of Change and Result and Resource Framework (RRF). A total of 68 interviews were conducted. One group of respondents were pre-determined, and another group was randomly selected from a long list compiled by the MTR team with inputs from PSP and other development partners. The MTR team separately identified other respondents representing different groups at the federal and provincial levels. Please see Annex 1 for a full list of beneficiaries, stakeholders and partners interviewed.

In-person interviews were conducted with Federal Parliament Committee Chairs and with some MPs. Most of the interviews with Federal Parliament were conducted through face-to-face conversations. Some interviews were conducted via telephone. Most interviews were conducted in Nepali to ensure smoother communication, which proved particularly useful in communications with respondents in the provinces. The MTR team included a representative mix of stakeholders and beneficiaries in the list of respondents. The MTR team ensured that women and marginalised groups were adequately represented and that such respondents were given an opportunity to speak and to be heard. In focus group discussions with men, for example, men typically dominate the conversation and women often choose not to speak. To address this problem members of the MTR team spoke with women alone or with groups of women. Respondents were selected from a list of beneficiaries provided by the Project as well as from among other recommendations provided by development partners. Interview protocols ensured confidentiality. The MTR team anonymised the direct reportage in some instances in order to protect the rights and confidentiality of informants in accordance with UNEG 'Ethical Guidelines for Evaluators'.⁴ The evaluation team consisted of two men (Prakash Bhattarai and Ben Hillman) who are experts in governance and evaluation and one woman (Kopila Rijal) who is an expert in evaluation and gender equity and social inclusion. Ben Hillman is an international consultant. Prakash Bhattarai and Kopila Rijal are Nepalese experts in their respective fields.

⁴ UNEG, 'Ethical Guidelines for Evaluation', June 2008. Available at <http://www.uneval.org/search/index.jsp?q=ethical+guidelines>.

The MTR team grounded the evaluation in UNDP Quality Standards for Programming.⁵ The MTR team paid close attention to the way in which beneficiary needs were identified and addressed in Project design and implementation. The team used a UNDP-recommended rating scale to assess performance against each of the key performance criteria.

Limitations: MTR team found face-to-face conversation to be the most effective way to gather relevant information. Virtual interviews conducted through Zoom or Skype were also effective among those used to such means of communication. Telephone contact was necessary in some cases although it was not always possible to reach identified respondents within the given time frame. In some cases, people were busy in the field or traveling, and the MTR team had only a small window of opportunity to ask questions. This issue was resolved by asking some very focused questions which were most important for review purposes.

Only a small number of individuals both from the pre-determined as well as randomly selected category were not available or accessible for interviews. In such case, MTR team had to rely on the information provided by those who were available and accessible during the data collection period. MTR team also had to come with a contingency plan to interview a few additional individuals who were initially in the list but later on not available. This was particularly the case of a few government officials who were just transferred to the new office.

The MTR team was unable to observe all physical infrastructure provided by the project such as video conferencing facilities in the three provincial assemblies. The effectiveness of IT infrastructure was verified by triangulating information from multiple sources. The MTR team was unable to access records or data relating to project activities from the Federal Parliament and Provincial Assembly secretariats.

⁵https://popp.undp.org/_layouts/15/WopiFrame.aspx?sourcedoc=/UNDP_POPP_DOCUMENT_LIBRAR/Y/Public/PPM_Programming%20Standards_Quality%20Standards%20for%20Programming.docx&action=default

5. Data analysis

Interviews were the key source of information for yielding insights into Project contributions to change, particular regarding organisational and individual capacity development. The team undertook data validation and triangulation by checking respondents' claims with other respondents and by confirming data in reports in interviews with Project beneficiaries. Findings were triangulated through interactions with a diverse range of stakeholders and target groups.

Members of the MTR team conducted interviews separately in order to maximise the number of interviews within the evaluation period and, through regular meetings, validated findings from each member's respective interviews and observations. Findings were also validated through debriefings with the Project, UNDP Country Office and major donor the Royal Norwegian Embassy in Nepal.

Limitation: The MTR team encountered no major limitations in data analysis. However, the MTR team was limited by the availability of hard data and had to rely heavily on verbal reportage. For example, there was no GESI disaggregated data available about the use of the SDG corner. The SDGG Chair of the National Assembly as well as MPs and parliament secretariat staff reported to the MTR team that the SDG corner was used by many MPs and we consider their state as a proof in the absence of concrete data.

6. Findings

6.1 Relevance

Development needs and alignment: The MTR team found the PSP to be highly relevant to Nepal's development needs and to UNDP's democratic governance portfolio. The new Constitution of Nepal (2015) created a federal system and made new parliaments at the federal and provincial levels responsible for lawmaking, representation and oversight. Given the identified need for capacity support, local resource limitations, and UNDP's expertise and comparative advantages as a trusted partner, the decision to design and implement a project such as PSP was appropriate and welcomed by project partners and beneficiaries. And despite the difficulties involved in supporting parliaments, which are political bodies, the project has made significant contributions to parliamentary strengthening and the building of a new federal political system at a crucial time. UNDP's contributions are widely recognized by project stakeholders and beneficiaries.

PSP is aligned with UNDAF goal (Outcome 6) that "national and provincial legislatures, executives and other state bodies have necessary capacities to fulfil their accountability to marginalized groups." Since PSP is contributing to the implementation of the new constitution as well as strengthening legislative bodies, the MTR team found the project's contributions to be highly relevant to Nepal's democratic governance needs as expressed in the UNDAF. PSP made a further contribution to UNDAF Outcome 6 by adding a fourth Output (and related activities) targeting the specific needs of marginalized groups, namely the capacities of MPs representing such groups as well as lawmakers' responsiveness and accountability to marginalized populations.

PSP contributes to Sustainable Development (SDG) Goal 16 which seeks to "Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels." It is evident from the Project Document and Results and Resources Framework that PSP is closely aligned with targets within SDG Goal 16, namely (6) "Develop effective, accountable and transparent institutions at all levels" and (7) "Ensure responsive, inclusive, participatory and representative decision-making at all levels." PSP is also highly relevant for other specific targets within SDG Goal 16, including "Promote and enforce non-discriminatory laws and policies for sustainable development," and "Promote the rule of law at the national and international levels and ensure equal access to justice for all."⁶

PSP helped to establish a well-equipped SDG Resource Centre at the offices of the Sustainable Development and Good Governance Committee (SDGCC) of the National Assembly. The resource centre now serves as a one-stop knowledge hub for parliamentarians on SDG goals, targets, and Nepal's progress against SDG indicators. The project also helped to establish an informal network of MPs (Parliamentarians' SDGs Champions' Group) comprising five members each from the Provincial Assemblies and 14 members of the National Assembly in 2019, through which they are working towards effective localization of SDGs.⁷ According to secretariat staff, the SDG resource centre

⁶ <https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/peace-justice/>

⁷ Annual Progress Report, UNDP/PSP, 2018 & 2019. The Progress Report does not provide GESI disaggregated data on participation in the network.

has been used by almost all MPs including women MPs and MPs from marginalized groups who reported to the MTR team that the centre had helped them to gain new knowledge about SDG goals, targets, and Nepal's progress against SDG indicators. However, as far as the MTR team was able to ascertain, the SDGCC did not maintain GESI disaggregated records on MP visits to the SDG resource centre.

Gender Equality and Social Inclusion: A noteworthy feature of PSP design has been the adoption of GESI as a priority, which is reflected in a dedicated Output and accompanying indicators and in a dedicated GESI Strategy that ensures a GESI lens is adopted in the design and implementation of activities. PSP also seeks to mainstream GESI across its activities and engagements with federal and provincial parliaments. This work has successfully contributed to the creation of an enabling environment for women MPs and MPs from marginalized backgrounds to have their voices heard in and by the parliament.

Theory of Change: The Project's Theory of Change has been well constructed and Project activities have been appropriately designed to contribute to the change desired. Project activities have also been sensitively designed in accordance with beneficiaries' needs as identified by a comprehensive Needs Assessment conducted in 2018 and repeated in 2019. The Project management structure appears to be appropriate and has adapted to the expansion of activities at the Provincial level. The M&E Strategy is robust, although it does not appear to be consistently implemented. Gender disaggregated data is available for some, but not all activities. Lessons could also be more routinely documented. An external M&E expert might be engaged every six months to provide guidance on M&E implementation and in shifting the focus from outputs to outcomes. Project reporting remains output-focused.

Beneficiary Acknowledgment: Respondents were uniform in expressing appreciation for the project at a crucial time in the birth and development of the new legislative bodies, providing further evidence of project relevance. And there was wide appreciation expressed for the consultative approach the project used in developing its support program and activities—an approach they respondents agreed had led to the provision of support where it was most needed. The project showed that it was able to adapt to the changing context and to respond to emerging needs, such as communication skills training, including ICT training (e.g. Zoom) for virtual meetings that became a primary means of communicating with constituents during the COVID pandemic. The Project's support for parliamentary outreach and oversight functions was admirably based on needs identified by MPs, even though responsiveness to demands this sometimes risked the project becoming spread too thin.

Further acknowledgement of the relevance of PSP's contributions can be seen in media coverage. In the early stages of the project media coverage of international parliamentary support programs such as PSP was not always favourable, and UNDP was singled out for criticism in some media reportage. The negative coverage contributed to a general climate of mistrust and suspicion that greatly challenged the project especially during 2018, the first year of the current phase. However, as our respondents pointed out to us, the negative media coverage stopped once it became clear that PSP was helping the parliament and beneficiaries became more vocal in their support for the initiative.

Beneficiaries noted the relevance of PSP support for implementing the new constitution through effective law making both at the Federal and Provincial level as well as material and technical support to the Parliament Secretariats, which was seen as crucial to the operational effectiveness of Federal Parliament and provincial assemblies. Parliamentary Committee Chairs, MPs, and Parliament Secretariat staff were consistent in their praise for PSP support for outreach activities, parliamentary oversight and for expert consultation/technical support in the law-making process, further highlighting the relevance of PSP outputs.

PSP has been especially welcomed by beneficiaries such as federal and provincial parliamentary committees and secretariats for helping to fill resource gaps. Respondents note that current budget allocations have been barely enough to cover administrative expenses, let alone programme costs. There were no budget allocations for capacity development of MPs and parliament secretariat staffs, parliament outreach programs, public consultations on bill making processes, hiring of experts, and the purchase of much-needed equipment. PSP has been able to meet many of these urgent needs. The relevance of this support became even more apparent in 2020 following the COVID-19 outbreak, which was the major operational challenge facing the Project, and a risk that could not have been identified in Project design.

COVID Response: The COVID-19 pandemic created pressures on Government of Nepal revenues and budgets. PSP responded effectively to the changed context, providing much-needed equipment and training for virtual meetings and consultations that could no longer be conducted in person. According to a member of the Federal Parliament Secretariat staff, “when government was not able to provide adequate support, it was UNDP through PSP who was there to help us.” A member of a provincial assembly secretariat staff similarly noted to the MTR team, “UNDP/PSP supported areas that the provincial assembly could not support itself due to resource constraints, lack of expertise, and other administrative and political factors.”

6.2 Effectiveness

6.2.1 Overall Effectiveness

PSP has been effective in delivering much needed support to federal parliament and provincial assemblies during a critical early phase of institution building and during the COVID-19 pandemic. PSP has built a program of activities that are demand-driven, and are already demonstrating results at the midpoint of the Project. The decision to invest in the organisational capabilities of parliament and assembly secretariats was wise and will contribute to sustainability of results as MPs exit parliament in future electoral cycles.

PSP’s important contributions to parliamentary strengthening notwithstanding, project activities have not been in consistent alignment with RRF targets (see Output-Level Findings above). The Project would be well served by a review of RRF indicators that ensure linkage between project activities and the outcome-level changes anticipated in the Theory of Change. As long as indicators remain unrealistic and beyond the control of the Project, project staff are likely to ignore them, undermining M&E efforts and the Project’s ability to advocate effectively for its contributions to democratic governance in Nepal and to wider UN goals articulated in UNDAF and SDGs.

The remainder of this section addresses progress against Project Outputs in the Results and Resources Framework. A traffic light assessment is provided against each output, representing the MTR team's assessment of whether each output is on track (green), in need of attention (amber), unlikely to succeed on present trajectory (red). The assessment should be read in conjunction with the MTR team's recommendation that outputs are not in all cases realistic. The MTR team would also like to emphasise that this is an output-based assessment. Outcomes are assessed in other sections, including under 6.5 Impact.

6.2.2 Achievements by Outputs

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

Satisfactory progress has been made under Output One. The Project trained 724 MPs from the Federal Parliament (FP) and the Provincial Assemblies (PAs) in 2018, including 221 women MPs from the Federal Parliament (42% of Federal Parliamentarians trained), and 503 women MPs from Provincial Assemblies (36% of total Provincial Assembly members trained). Training beneficiaries reported increased knowledge and skills relevant to their roles as MPs.⁸ A total of 52 capacity development activities were conducted between January-June 2020, reaching 208 MPs including 100 women MPs (48%).

PSP has further contributed to strengthening the ability of FP, National Assembly (NA) and PAs to fulfil their mandates and safeguard the principles as mandated in the Constitution and other laws. For example, in 2019, the Project worked directly with 602 MPs, including 270 (45%) women, providing technical expertise for reviewing the 27 bills (9 in Federal Parliament and 18 in Provincial Assemblies), engaging the public, and holding public hearings. The Project has also supported the Parliamentary Committees to access expertise relevant to important new laws, including the Citizenship (Amendment) Act, Social Security Act, Children (Amendment) Act, and Safe Motherhood and Reproductive Health Act. The Social Security Act, Children (Amendment) Act, and Safe Motherhood and Reproductive Health Act have been passed and are now being implemented.⁹

In 2020, PSP provided technical and logistic support to Parliamentary Committees at the provincial level to review nine separate bills related to governance, health, education and the environment. These reviews engaged 88 MPs (33 women), assisting them to identify the gaps and contradictions in relation to the constitution, federal laws, and international legal instruments and also suggested them the areas of amendment with clear set of rationale including the issues of GESI to be incorporated in the bills.¹⁰

Parliamentary oversight was another important area of PSP investment. A total of 32 parliamentary oversight missions were conducted by 2019, some of which led to immediate changes. Support was focused on oversight in policy and governance areas

⁸ Annual Progress Report, UNDP/PSP, 2018.

⁹ Annual Progress Report, UNDP/PSP, 2018 & 2019.

¹⁰ Half yearly Project Progress Report, PSP, 2020.

such as human rights, SDGs and public financial management.¹¹ Support for strengthening the parliamentary oversight function at both the FP and PA levels was continued during the COVID-19, with PSP successfully providing assistance with virtual oversight activities between January and June 2020. As an example, PSP support for virtual oversight of quarantine and isolation centres in Sarlahi and Rautahat districts carried out by Province 2's Women, Children and Social Justice Committee of Province 2, informed the Committee about the situation, problems and poor management of quarantine and isolation wards, leading the committee to issue directives to the provincial government to improve management.¹²

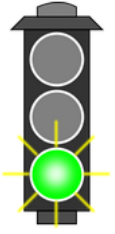
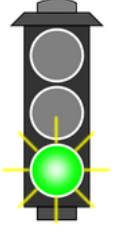
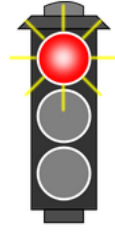
Although PSP contributions to Output One have been significant, it should be noted that Output Indicator 1.1 sets targets for Public Accounts Committees (PACs) and public financial management (PFM) at both Federal Parliament and Provincial assemblies. PSP has engaged with PACs in seven provinces to promote transparency and accountability in COVID-related procurement as well as for conducting oversight of government programmes, but overall PSP engagement with PACs and PFM has been limited.¹³ If other UNDP projects and development partners are better placed to lead in this area, then PSP should consider revising its output indicator, and concentrating its efforts where it can have more impact. If it continues to prioritise engagement with the PAC, then the strategy for engaging the committee should be revisited. Collaboration with World Bank and other relevant donors could be fruitful.

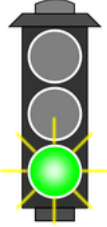
A further challenge for the project under Output One is Indicator 1.3, which sets targets for supporting Federal Parliamentary review of up to 46 draft laws and 37 oversight inquiries by 2022. Since 2018 it has become increasingly difficult for PSP to operate in this space as the Government of Nepal has made clear that the involvement of international and inter-governmental agencies in such processes is less needed than during the earlier transitional stage of reform. It is therefore highly unlikely that PSP will meet targets set under 1.3.

¹¹ Annual Progress Report, UNDP/PSP, 2019.

¹² Half yearly Project Progress Report, PSP, 2020.

¹³ Half yearly Project Progress Report, PSP, 2020.

OUTPUT 1	OUTPUT INDICATORS	TARGETS						Assessment
		2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	FINAL	
Enhance the capacity of federal and provincial parliaments to be effective and participatory	<p>1.1 Public Accounts Committees (PACs) in federal and provincial parliaments are effective in fulfilling their role in Public Finance Management, including cooperation with the Office of the Auditor-General (OAG) and fiscal commissions</p> <p>0=Federal Parliament PAC is producing periodic reports related to PFM but with limited cooperation with OAG</p> <p>1=Federal Parliament PAC & 1 PA PAC routinely engage the OAG as part of timely reporting on PFM</p> <p>2=4 PACs routinely engage the OAG as part of timely reporting on PFM</p> <p>3=6 PACs routinely engage the OAG as part of timely reporting on PFM</p> <p>4=8 PACs routinely engage the OAG as part of timely reporting on PFM</p>	0	1	2	3	4	4	
	<p>1.2 PA Committees are scrutinising draft laws and monitoring provincial government activities in an effective and participative manner</p> <p>0=3 draft laws reviewed¹; 0 = 0 oversight inquiries² in an effective and participative manner</p> <p>1=7 draft laws reviewed; 1 = 4 oversight inquiries in an effective and participative manner</p> <p>2=12 draft laws reviewed; 2 = 11 oversight inquiries in an effective and participative manner</p> <p>3=20 draft laws reviewed; 3 = 19 oversight inquiries in an effective and participative manner</p> <p>4=25 draft laws reviewed; 4 = 31 oversight inquiries in an effective and participative manner</p>	0	1	2	3	4	4	
	<p>1.3 Federal Parliament Thematic Committees are scrutinising draft laws and monitoring federal government activities in an effective and participative manner</p> <p>0=23 draft laws reviewed; 0 = 14 oversight inquiries</p> <p>1=28 draft laws reviewed; 1 = 19 oversight inquiries</p> <p>2=34 draft laws reviewed; 2 = 25 oversight inquiries</p> <p>3=40 draft laws reviewed; 3 = 31 oversight inquiries</p> <p>4=46 draft laws reviewed; 4 = 37 oversight inquiries</p>	23 Draft Laws; 14 Oversight Inquiries	1	2	3	4	4	

<p>1.4 Federal Parliament & PA committees are monitoring the implementation of SDGs</p> <p>0= 0 Committee SDG Monitoring Reports 1= 2 Committee SDG Monitoring Reports 2= 4 Committee SDG Monitoring Reports 3= 6 Committee SDG Monitoring Reports 4= 10 Committee SDG Monitoring Reports</p>	0	1	2	3	4	4	
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Output 2: Enhance the capacity of parliamentary secretariats to be capable and innovative in their support to MPs and committees.

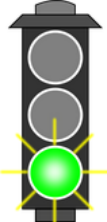
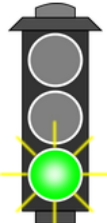
PSP is on track to meet some, but not all of its targets under this Output Two. The Project has invested heavily in enhancing human resources and physical infrastructure within the federal and provincial parliamentary secretariats. Over 2018-2019, 325 provincial secretariat staff received training in how to support parliamentary assembly and thematic committee business. At the federal level, 420 staff received similar training over the same period. The number is multiple-times participation of staffs in different capacity building activities. Due to COVID lockdown the Project has not been able to continue training in 2020 but is instead investing in knowledge products. Training beneficiaries have hailed the benefits of the training activities, particularly at the provincial level where such support has been more urgently needed due to the relative inexperience of secretariat staff working with the newly created Provincial Assemblies.


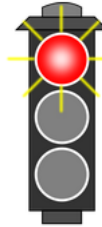
Introducing vital technology to parliaments was an important project contribution to federal and provincial parliaments’ effectiveness. PSP has supported YouTube broadcast technology in the Sudurpaschim Provincial Assembly and a Video Conferencing Facility in Gandaki, Karnali and Sudurpaschim Assemblies, connecting the PAs with their districts. PSP further provided support for web portal development to the Public Account Committee and SDGGC (see, for example, the SDGGC web portal on SDGs (digobikas.gov.np), although questions remain about future of the portal in the absence of nationally supported technical maintenance.

Support for the FP secretariat has focused on investment in ICT equipment and skills as the project learned that the federal secretariat did not need the kind of capacity building support that had been identified in project design and articulated in the RRF. Indicator 2.2 has thus become less relevant for the project and should be revised to identify more specific and measurable capacities in need of development.

A similar monitoring and evaluation challenge can be found under Indicator 2.3, which is unspecific about the nature of ICT capacity to be developed. The project has invested in video-conferencing facilities and Zoom licensing, which has been particularly useful during COVID-19 restrictions on movement, but other investments, such as plans for the digitization of parliamentary work should be captured in the RRF to guide project and activity managers. The promotion of ICT should be enhanced at parliament secretariat level.

Indicator 2.4 highlights an additional limitation. PSP is not leading on donor coordination or knowledge sharing in parliamentary support. A single donor coordination meeting was held in 2019, but there was no follow-up meeting in 2020 at the time of this review. The MTR team learned that other development partners were working with the same beneficiaries and engaging in overlapping work – e.g., support for the Federal Parliament’s Women and Social Development Committee. Although leaders in the Federal Parliament have not advocated for coordination among development partners working with the parliament, PSP should engage in more regular communication with other development partners to avoid duplication and unproductive competition, even if such communication is best undertaken informally.

OUTPUT 2	OUTPUT INDICATORS	TARGETS						Assessment
		2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	FINAL	
<i>Enhance the capacity of parliamentary secretariats to be capable and innovative in their support to MPs and committees</i>	2.1 PA staff have capacity to support assemblies and their committees in functioning effectively and in an open and participative manner. 0= 5% of PA staff have capacity 1= 15% of staff have capacity 2= 30% of staff have capacity 3= 45% of staff have capacity 4= 60% of staff have capacity	0	1	2	3	4	4	
	2.2 Federal Parliament staff have capacity to support assemblies and their committees in functioning effectively and in an open and participative manner. 0= 15% of staff have capacity 1= 30% of staff have capacity 2= 45% of staff have capacity 3= 60% of staff have capacity 4= 70% of staff have capacity	0	1	2	3	4	4	

	<p>2.3 Federal Parliament and PA secretariats have resources and capacity to implement innovative use of ICT for knowledge management and to support effective, inclusive and participative committees</p> <p>0= Federal Parliament has some aging technology and resources & limited capacity to implement innovative use of ICT</p> <p>1= Federal Parliament and 1 PA have limited current technology and resources & capacity to implement innovative use of ICT</p> <p>2= FP + 2 PAs have current technology and resources & capacity to implement innovative use of ICT</p> <p>3= FP + 3 PAs have current technology and resources & capacity to implement innovative use of ICT</p> <p>4= FP + 5 PAs have current technology and resources & capacity to implement innovative use of ICT</p>	0	1	2	3	4	4	
	<p>2.4 Federal Parliament Secretariat ensures coordination and sharing of information amongst project partners</p> <p>0= No coordination conducted</p> <p>1= Coordination meetings conducted but not routine</p> <p>2= Coordination meetings are routine</p> <p>3= Coordination mechanisms are formalized</p> <p>4= Coordination mechanisms are implemented</p>	0	1	2	3	4	4	

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

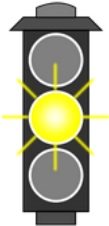
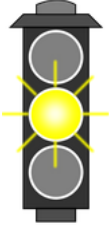
PSP is largely on track to meet its targets under Output Three, although, indicators could be more clearly defined to assist the Project team and stakeholders to identify success and monitor progress. What, for example, might be useful indicators for signposting improvements in “systems, policies, procedures and mechanisms promoting openness and information sharing?”

Nevertheless, there have been significant investments in parliamentary outreach and engagement, and PSP investments in this area have been well received by stakeholders and beneficiaries, particularly at the provincial level. In 2018, PSP facilitated MP interaction with at 1,805 members of the public through public hearings and consultations. In 2019 the Project supported MP engagement with 1,899 members of the public (25% women and 38% participation of the marginalized community).

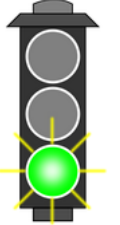
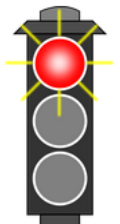
The Project engaged with parliamentary beat reporters from Kathmandu and the provinces, providing training on how to cover parliamentary affairs and communicate parliamentary information to the public. In 2019 the Project engaged with 257 journalists (25% women) from both federal and provincial levels.

PSP support for the “Meet the Speaker” initiative in Karnali and Sudurpaschim provinces was widely praised and has the potential to serve as a model for citizen engagement in other provinces. PSP facilitation of parliamentary outreach through community radio programs in all 77 districts is also noteworthy, although the sustainability of this activity is unclear.¹⁴

The biggest challenge for PSP under this Output is the commitment under 3.4 to support the development and implementation of an Open Parliament Action Plan for Federal Parliament. This does not appear to be a priority for the current Government of Nepal, and, as such, it might be more appropriate for the Project to invest in a pilot at the provincial level. If the provincial pilot can be shown to be effective in advancing parliamentary effectiveness and citizen satisfaction with the representative body, federal MPs might be willing to consider a similar proposal for the federal parliament.

OUTPUT 3	OUTPUT INDICATORS	TARGETS						Assessment
		2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	FINAL	
Enhance the capacity of the Federal Parliament and Provincial Assemblies to be open, interactive and accountable with citizens.	3.1 PAs establish systems and implement policies, procedures and mechanisms that promote openness and information sharing with citizens 0=0 PAs have systems, policies, procedures and mechanisms promoting openness and information sharing 1=1 PA has systems, policies, procedures and mechanisms promoting openness and information sharing 2=3 PAs have systems, policies, procedures and mechanisms promoting openness and information sharing 3=5 PAs have systems, policies, procedures and mechanisms promoting openness and information sharing 4=6 PAs have systems, policies, procedures and mechanisms promoting openness and information sharing	0	1	2	3	4	4	
	3.2 Federal Parliament establishes and implements mechanisms for routine outreach to citizens and to share information and knowledge with regard to the work of the Parliament 0= No Outreach Mechanisms 1=Outreach Mechanisms established 2=Outreach is routine and based on standard practices and information sharing systems established 3=Outreach is routine and based on standard practices and information sharing practices are partially achieved 4=Outreach and information sharing is routine and based on standard practices	0	1	2	3	4	4	

¹⁴ Annual Progress Report, UNDP/PSP, 2018 & 2019.

	<p>3.3 Individual MPs at provincial & federal levels are engaged in a dialogue with citizens on a routine basis</p> <p>0=800 citizens engaged in public consultations;</p> <p>1=1600 citizens engaged in public consultations; 50% of which are women and 30% of which are from disadvantaged groups</p> <p>2=3000 citizens engaged in public consultations; 50% of which are women and 30% of which are from disadvantaged groups</p> <p>3=4600 citizens engaged in public consultations; 50% of which are women and 30% of which are from disadvantaged groups</p> <p>4=6600 citizens engaged in public consultations; 50% of which are women and 30% of which are from disadvantaged groups</p>	0	1	2	3	4	4	
	<p>3.4 Federal Parliament operates in an open and accountable manner and in accordance with Open Parliament principles</p> <p>0=Federal Parliament has not adopted Open Parliament principles</p> <p>1=Federal Parliament has adopted Open Parliament principles</p> <p>2=Federal Parliament has developed Open Parliament Action Plan</p> <p>3=Federal Parliament has implemented 20% of OP Action Plan</p> <p>4=Federal Parliament has implemented 50% of OP Action Plan</p>	0	1	2	3	4	4	

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

Adopted from the UNDAF and UNDP CPD, this is arguably the most challenging Output for the Project because cultural and structural barriers greatly impede or slow progress. Indicator 4.1, which seeks an increase in the “proportion of decision-making positions held by women in public institutions” is too ambitious and not an appropriate indicator because change sits outside the project control. Such indicators might be used as signposts for medium and longer-term change (e.g. within the Project’s Theory of Change) to which the project can make contributions, but more realistic indicators that are within Project control should replace those currently under 4.1.

Progress is being made under 4.2 (“provincial and federal parliament committees are consulting and engaging women in their work on a routine basis”). PSP has supported dialogue on women’s issue through its direct support to the Women and Social Development Committee at the Federal Parliament and by equipping women MPs with the skills they need to debate bills. The MTR team received very positive feedback from

women who had undertaken PSP-sponsored training, with many claiming they had found new confidence to speak up in parliament.

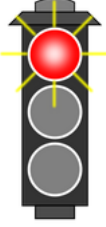
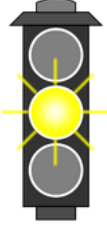
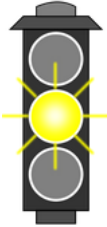
Women's participation in parliamentary committees and in full parliamentary debates varies across parliaments and committees. Parliamentary secretariat staff report that committee hearings are still dominated by men. Even though women chair nine out of 16 committees in the Federal Parliament, women chairs are not necessarily vocal or actively engaged in committee discussions. Provincial and federal level parliaments committees are increasingly engaging with women in their work. However, there is no system or policy in place for ensuring women's participation and advancing women's perspectives in parliamentary deliberation mandatory and the formulation implementing procedures document is ongoing, and it is unlikely that the Project will succeed in supporting the development of such practices and procedures (as targeted under 4.2) during the time remaining.¹⁵



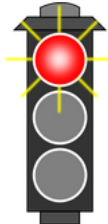
Understanding how best to contribute to this Output remains a challenge for PSP. It would help to revise indicators to articulate more specific and realistic targets. Under Indicator 4.2, for example, it is unclear which "women" should be consulted and engaged in parliamentary committee work. The Project has interpreted "women" in this instance to mean "women MPs", but since women sit on all the committees, women can already be said to be routinely engaged in committee work. The Project would benefit from more guidance on how to promote meaningful participation and awareness of women's perspectives on issues before the parliament committees. Expertise and scholarly work in this field is available and should be consulted.

Indicator 4.3 ("Committees at provincial and federal levels are consulting and engaging in a dialogue with disadvantaged groups on a routine basis") could similarly benefit from further refinement in order to guide Project investment and priorities during the remaining two years. It could be that PAs are a better place to trial practices and procedures for consulting and engaging disadvantaged groups.

Indicator 4.4. ("capacity of women MPs at federal and provincial levels is enhanced to allow for meaningful contributions to parliamentary debates) appropriately targets "meaningful" contributions from women, but the specified targets are a narrow, and perhaps unhelpful, translation of the goal into outputs. The indicators refer to the number of bills "introduced" for debate by women MPs, which emphasizes quantity over quality, and while this number can be tracked it is pointless to do so since private bills are extremely rare. And public deliberation of bills is limited so it is difficult to know who has contributed. The indicator thus provides little insight into improvements in women's contributions to parliamentary debate. The same problem can be found in 4.5 which targets contributions from MPs representing disadvantaged groups. These indicators should be revised in order to guide Project and activity managers in their work.

¹⁵ Annual Progress Report, UNDP/PSP, 2018 & 2019.

OUTPUT 4	OUTPUT INDICATORS	TARGETS						Assessment
		2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	FINAL	
Build the capacity of women MPs and MPs from disadvantaged groups to be effective and for and parliaments at the federal & provincial levels to routinely engage with women, youth and other disadvantaged citizens.	<p>4.1 Proportion of decision-making positions held by women in public institutions</p> <p>0 = 0.15 1 = 0.175 2 = 0.2 3 = 0.225 4 = 0.243</p>	0	1	2	3	4	4	
	<p>4.2 Provincial and federal parliament committees are consulting and engaging women in their work on a routine basis.</p> <p>0= 0% of committees have standard practice and procedures for consulting and engaging women 1= 25% of committees have standard practice and procedures for consulting and engaging women 2= 40% of committees have standard practice and procedures for consulting and engaging women and 25% of committees are routinely implementing them 3= 60% of committees have standard practice and procedures for consulting and engaging women and 40% of committees are routinely implementing them 4= 80% of committees have standard practice and procedures for consulting and engaging women and 50% of committees are routinely implementing them</p>	0	1	2	3	4	4	
	<p>4.3 Committees at provincial & federal levels are consulting and engaging in a dialogue with disadvantaged groups on a routine basis</p> <p>0= 0% of committees have standard practice and procedures for consulting and engaging disadvantaged groups 1= 25% of committees have standard practice and procedures for consulting and engaging disadvantaged groups 2= 40% of committees have standard practice and procedures for consulting and engaging disadvantaged groups and 25% of committees are routinely implementing them 3= 60% of committees have standard practice and procedures for engaging disadvantaged groups and 40% of committees are routinely implementing them 4= 80% of committees have standard practice and procedures for engaging disadvantaged groups and 50% of committees are routinely implementing them</p>	0	1	2	3	4	4	

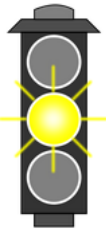
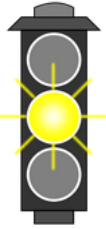
	<p>4.4 Capacity of women MPs at federal and provincial levels is enhanced to allow for meaningful contributions to parliamentary debates</p> <p>0= 0 bills, motions or amendments introduced by women MPs for debate 1= 10 bills, motions or amendments introduced by women MPs for debate 2= 20 bills, motions or amendments introduced by women MPs for debate 3= 30 bills, motions or amendments introduced by women MPs for debate 4= 40 bills, motions or amendments introduced women MPs for debate</p>	0	1	2	3	4	4	
	<p>4.5 Capacity of MPs from disadvantaged groups at federal and provincial levels is enhanced to allow for meaningful contributions to parliamentary debates</p> <p>0= 0 bills, motions or amendments introduced by MPs from disadvantaged groups for debate 1= 10 bills, motions or amendments introduced by MPs from disadvantaged groups for debate 2= 20 bills, motions or amendments introduced by MPs from disadvantaged groups for debate 3= 30 bills, motions or amendments introduced by MPs from disadvantaged groups for debate 4= 40 bills, motions or amendments introduced by MPs from disadvantaged groups for debate</p>	0	1	2	3	4	4	
	<p>4.6 Federal Parliament and PAs establish dialogue forums⁸ (e.g. – youth parliaments; civic forums) that provide substantive and timely opportunities for youth inputs parallel to parliament debates 0 = 0 parliaments establish dialogue forum 1 = 1 parliament establishes dialogue forum 2 = 2 parliaments establish dialogue forum 3 = 4 parliaments establish dialogue forum 4 = 6 parliaments establish dialogue forum</p>	0	1	2	3	4	4	

Project Output 5: Enhance the capacity of parliaments at the federal and provincial levels to respond to the COVID 19 pandemic.

Output 5 was newly added to PSP in recognition of the special investment required to support parliament through the COVID-19 pandemic. The Project has placed under this Output activities from other Outputs that have been adapted as part of COVID response. One example is the virtual training on COVID-19 arranged for MPs.

The Project has responded well to the pandemic, making adjustments in accordance with evolving beneficiary needs. For example, PSP provided parliamentary committees with support for virtual engagement on COVID, and helped Provincial Finance Committees to communicate about the budget challenges generated by the crisis.

Although it is important to acknowledge PSP contributions to federal and provincial parliaments during the COVID crisis, Output 5 indicators are expressed in a way that makes them difficult for the Project to achieve. Under 5.1 (“Thematic committees are monitoring the government’s responses to the COVID-19 in an effective manner”), for example, the quantitative targets about numbers of MPs participating in monitoring are not within Project control. Targets under 5.2 (“MPs from PAs register amendments over the bills to respond to the pandemic”) are similarly outside Project control and difficult to measure.

OUTPUT 5	OUTPUT INDICATORS	TARGETS						Assessment
		2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	FINAL	
Enhance the capacity of parliaments at the federal & provincial levels to routinely respond pandemic in the post COVID 19.	5.1 Thematic committees are monitoring government's responses to the COVID 19 in an effective manner 2=10% of MPs participate in monitoring government's responses to the post COVID 19 3=20% of MPs participate in monitoring government's responses to the post COVID 19 4=30% of MPs participate in monitoring government's responses to the post COVID 19	0	1	2	3	4	4	
	5.2 MPs from PAs register amendments over the bills to respond the pandemic. 2=20% of women MPs and 10% DAGs play key role in addressing human rights issues 3=30% of women MPs and 20% DAGs play key role in addressing human rights issues 4=40% of women MPs and 30% DAGs play key role in addressing human rights issues	0	1	2	3	4	4	

6.3 Efficiency

PSP funds and activities appear to have been delivered in a timely manner. The MTR team observed that much had been accomplished with the available funding envelope. Expenditure closely tracked income in 2018 and 2019 but expenditure fell away in 2020 as the COVID pandemic caused many activities to be cancelled. Re-programming of activities under Output Five has taken time and will likely result in an underspend of Project funds in 2020.

Table 1: PSP annual budget and expenditure

<i>Year</i>	<i>Budget</i>	<i>Expenditure</i>	<i>Expenditure as % Income</i>
2018	USD 595,927	USD 614,082	103
2019	USD 1,959,626	USD 1,822,889	93
2020 (June)	USD 847,925	USD 321,590	37

Source: UNDP/PSP Project 2020

Funding appears to have been used strategically, with resources being appropriately redeployed in response to COVID and in response to strategic opportunities and challenges in the changing political context. Output One has received the largest share of expenditure until June 2020 due, in part, to the high cost of supporting travel to events. Outputs Two, Three and Four have each received approximately half of the funds invested in Output One (see table below).

Table 2: Project expenditure by output

<i>Output</i>	<i>Total Budget (2018-2020)</i>	<i>Total Expenditure (2018-2020 June)</i>	<i>Expenditure as % Income</i>
Output 1: Enhance the capacity of federal and provincial parliaments to be effective and participatory	USD 1,095,839	USD 964,776	88
Output 2: Enhance the capacity of parliamentary secretariats to be capable and innovative in their support to MPs and committees	USD 599,526	USD 485,268	81
Output 3: Enhance the capacity of the Federal Parliament and Provincial Assemblies to be open, interactive and accountable with citizens	USD 619,082	USD 523,917	85
Output 4: Build the capacity of women MPs and MPs from disadvantaged groups to be effective and parliaments at the federal & provincial levels to routinely engage with women, youth and other disadvantaged citizens.	USD 726,028	USD 645,129	89
Output 5: Enhance the capacity of parliaments at the federal & provincial levels to routinely response pandemic in the post COVID 19.	USD 179,275	USD 23,550	13

Source: UNDP/PSP Project 2020

Existing project management structures appear to be appropriate for generating the expected results. Although the virtual nature of the MTR prevented deeper probing of project management-related questions, no concerns about project management were raised during interviews with UNDP Country Office and Project stakeholders. The Project Board appears to be functioning effectively and providing the necessary guidance to the Project team. The Project Board meeting minutes are comprehensive and show a high degree of Board-level engagement with the project and support for changes that were made in response to the COVID pandemic.

The Project is making some progress in cost sharing support activities with Parliament, but more efforts will need to be made in this area to ensure sustainability of results. And, given the unfunded component of the project, more could be done to leverage synergies with other initiatives, particularly with regard to GESI investments under Output Four and work with the provincial assemblies and secretariats where there appears to be greater need and opportunity for PSP support.

6.4 Coherence

Development context: PSP is a good fit with the current development context. Its support is greatly needed and appreciated by beneficiaries. PSP complements similar interventions by development partners, particularly in focusing its support on the parliamentary secretariats and, increasingly, on provincial assemblies. The MTR identified a risk of duplication of activities with development partners, notably in support activities for parliamentary committees, creating an environment of competition rather than cooperation among parliamentary support programs. For example, the head of one international project that was working with the same thematic committees in the Federal Parliament was unaware of PSP activities. The MTR found this to be a problem that could be easily rectified by more regular communication among different actors, even if conditions are not conducive for formal coordination. The Project could learn from the Electoral Support Project (ESP), which has maintained effective working relationships and channels of communication with other electoral support initiatives.

Strategic coherence: The Project is a strategically important part of UNDP's portfolio, supporting the implementation of a constitutional democracy and the establishment of a federal parliamentary system in Nepal, and complementing other projects such as the ESP, the Enhancing Access to Justice through Institutional Reform Project (A2J) and the Province and Local Government Support Programme (PLGSP). The MTR team learned of some inter-project collaboration at the activity level but found there were likely to be more opportunities for collaboration and synergy than were currently being taken up. One area with potential for increased collaboration is support for public and parliamentary debate on policy issues relevant to other projects, such as PSP's collaboration in 2018 with A2J and the NHRC Action Plan Support Project on the formulation of the Disability Act. Another promising area for collaboration is PSP's support for provincial assemblies and their secretariats. There are likely to be common goals and linkages with PLGSP that are waiting to be explored. The Human rights-based approach could also serve as a common framework and language for greater coordination and knowledge sharing across the portfolio.

One of the biggest challenges for PSP is the great need of parliaments for capacity support, particularly among provincial assemblies. PSP has been admirably responsive, but responsiveness has also caused the Project to attempt to do too many things in too many places. The large number of activities being managed makes it difficult to retain a strategic and outcome-oriented focus. In light of resource constraints the Project needs to consider how to invest strategically during the remainder of the phase. Consideration should include the scope and nature of capacity support provided to provincial assemblies where needs are vast.

6.5 Impact

Organisational capabilities: PSP has made significant contributions to Nepal's national development priorities by strengthening the operating capabilities of new parliamentary institutions at the federal and provincial levels. Beneficiaries report improved capabilities in the operations of parliamentary committees and parliamentary secretariat support to the committees. PSP has also contributed significantly to ICT infrastructure which has allowed committees to continue their work during COVID lockdowns. The project's impact has been greatest at the provincial level where parliamentary work was less institutionalized and where professional development baselines were lower. According to a staff member from one provincial assembly secretariat, "the Provincial Assembly has come a long way over the past three years and this has been made possible due to the support it received from PSP. Despite the presence of PA secretariat staff coming from various backgrounds, quality and professionalism demonstrated by PA Secretariat is almost equal to Federal Parliament Secretariat."

Individual capabilities: Through training programs, the project has contributed to the capacity development of MPs, particularly women MPs and MPs from marginalized communities. Beneficiaries reported increased understanding of the role of parliament and their duties as MPs, increased confidence and skills in navigating parliamentary procedure, debating bills, and engaging with constituents. According to a woman MP in a provincial assembly, "PSP's capacity building support was as if "we found a god while looking for a stone" (*dhungo khojda deuta milejastai*). Women MPs who were completely unaware of the parliamentary system, are now able to speak inside the parliament; MPs who even were not previously capable of using a mobile phone are now able to use laptop because of IT training." A woman Federal MP reported "[m]y political party contributed to secure my place in the parliament, but never oriented me regarding the things to be done and procedures to be followed in the parliament. It was PSP who greatly helped me to enhance my capacity on parliamentary procedure, bill making, and thematic orientation on various topics. PSP also found us a mentor who are supportive to provide us technical advice on the issues of our concerns." PSP capacity building for women MPs and MPs from marginalized groups has strengthened the voice of these groups in parliament, particularly at the provincial level. Although no hard data was available to the MTR team, a staff member of the Karnali Province Provincial Secretariat told us that the number of women speaking in parliament has increased. The MTR team heard similar reports from women MPs in Province 2 and Sudurpaschim Province.

COVID response: The project adapted well in 2020 to the challenges of COVID-19 and the changed development context. Video conferencing facilities established at the Provincial Assembly secretariat Karnali, Sudurpaschim, and Gandaki provinces, for example, facilitated the continuation of communication between provincial MPs, local government officials, and public across all districts within the respective provinces. During the COVID crisis when in-person meetings became either difficult or impossible, the ICT facility was critical in enabling the collection of public input on draft bills, and furthered understanding of development priorities in each district. In Karnali, Sudurpaschim and Gandaki Provinces, the MTR team learned from MPs and Provincial Assembly secretariat staff that video conferencing facilities had enabled greater interaction among MPs, local government officials and concerned citizens during the COVID crisis.

As a Sudurpaschim Provincial Assembly Secretariat staff member told us, "the Majority of MPs were not IT friendly. This project has significantly contributed to enhance [MPs] IT knowledge and skills. [PSP] has also facilitated interactions between Federal and Provincial MPs as well as local government representatives and Provincial level MPs through video conferencing system placed in the Provincial Assembly secretariat and in all districts of the Province." And according to an MP from the Karnali Provincial Assembly, "Video conferencing facilities established at the Provincial Assembly secretariat in Karnali province connecting all nine districts of the province remained the most significant and impactful contribution from the Project, facilitating interactions between provincial MPs, local government officials, and public through virtual means in the time of COVID-19 crisis. This facility has made it possible to collect public feedback on the draft bills, collect feedback on the development priority of each district, and to get updates on other public concerns when MPs are unable to travel to the districts."

The live broadcast of Sudurpaschim Provincial Assembly Sessions via a dedicated YouTube channel was another COVID-19 response and a PSP innovation that enabled public access to real-time information about budget and draft bill discussions inside parliament. Stakeholders report that the Youtube channel has promoted transparency and accountability in provincial assembly affairs. This initiative could serve as a useful model for other jurisdictions.

6.6 Sustainability

Ensuring sustainability should be a focus for Project managers during the remainder of the phase. Capacity building at institutional and individual levels is a long-term project that must be continued during current and future parliamentary terms. Turnover of MPs in a new electoral system is likely to be high. However, increased capacity and knowledge among the parliament secretariat staff will be an ongoing asset for parliament.

Organizational capacity support such as video conferring facilities, IT support for the live streaming of parliament sessions, library support, and other equipment supports provided to the Federal parliament and Provincial Assemblies are functioning but will require routine maintenance and upgrades for their long-term use and effectiveness. Before the closure of project PSP should ensure that plans and resources are in place to secure the ongoing maintenance of equipment provided.

The Government of Nepal provides funds to the Parliamentary Secretariat. PSP should promote transparency in the use of this budget and negotiate with Secretariat leaders to ensure the budget provides for maintenance of ICT facilities. Support from the Country Office might be needed to advocate for greater cost-sharing during 2021-2022 to ensure the Project is contributing to lasting change in the institutions it is supporting.

In addition to routine M&E activities that document project achievements, a quarterly or six-monthly meeting with an external M&E expert could help to generate questions and feedback on Project progress that could be used to inform adjustments to project activities and approaches. Unlike third-party monitoring, the external expert is someone who can provide advice and stimulate ideas. Alternatively, the CO M&E team could conduct regular meetings to review M&E processes and to discuss and agree on means of strengthening M&E systems and reporting. The Country Office could do more to

encourage and support the Project in creating hard data points for monitoring and evaluation of Project activities. The Country Office could also work with the Project to foster a shared understanding of results-based management that shifts the focus from outputs to outcomes.

During discussions with several parliamentarians regarding the sustainability of the GESI component, it was suggested that (i) more synergy is needed among UN agencies, (ii) CSOs should be asked to contribute more, and (iii) a separate GESI-focused programme should be developed for the Provincial Assemblies. PSP should continue its coordination with other UN agencies in this regard, sharing its lessons learned with other relevant projects.

6.7 Gender equality and Social Inclusion

A noteworthy feature of PSP design has been the adoption of GESI as a priority, which is reflected in a dedicated Output and accompanying indicators and in a dedicated GESI Strategy that ensures a GESI lens is adopted in the design and implementation of activities. PSP also seeks to mainstream GESI across its activities and engagements with federal and provincial parliaments. This work has successfully contributed to the creation of an enabling environment for women MPs and MPs from marginalized backgrounds to have their voices heard in and by the parliament.

PSP has consistently employed GESI tools to ensure GESI lenses are applied in activity planning and implementation; to ensure a minimum 33% of women MPs and MPs from marginalized groups are represented in all activities; to collect gender disaggregated data as part of routine M&E; and use knowledge products that promote GESI lenses and considerations, including in training materials. Each year, the Project reviews activities from a GESI perspective and draws on this feedback to refine future activities. For example, need assessment visits conducted by the Project team in the beginning of 2018 informed the subsequent design of new and better targeted activities such as the mentoring program for women MPs, communication skills training, appreciative inquiry training, and media training. An internal review of progress from GESI perspectives led to greater engagement with the Women and Social Development Committee at the Federal Parliament and supported a number of Committee initiatives such as fact-finding visits. The Project also extended support to build capacity in the Committee to review bills from a GESI perspective.

The MTR team further observed that all Parliamentary Committees have adopted GESI considerations in their participation, although there is much more work to be done to ensure that women have a voice in the committees. The MTR heard that committee meetings are typically dominated by a small number of men MPs. The available evidence suggests that high-profile women are influential in political decision-making processes in Nepal, highlighting the need for greater support for women from diverse backgrounds. Women MPs and MPs from marginalized groups sitting on the Women and Children Committee in the Federal Parliament reported that, with PSP support, they have improved their negotiation and debate skills, and are more routinely addressing sensitive issues such as citizenship for members of LGTBTIQ communities and gender-based violence. MPs also reported a need for continued training on substantive detail of the policy and governance challenges around gender equality and social inclusion.

For further discussion of the Project's contribution to gender equality and social inclusion, please refer to Output-level Findings (Output Four).

6.8 Human rights

The Project has promoted a human rights agenda by adopting a human rights-based approach in its programming, which prioritizes the needs of disadvantaged groups. The Project has also promoted a human rights agenda through its support for strengthening parliament's oversight function and by regularly sharing information on international best practices with parliamentary committees.

PSP collaborated with A2J and the National Human Rights Committee (NHRC) NHRC Action Plan support project to support formulation of the Disability Act (2018) and facilitate public dialogue on the citizenship bill. The collaboration also involved International Human Rights Day celebrations in 2019, which featured a human rights dialogue among MPs in all seven provinces on the subject of the "role of Federal and Provincial level MPs to the implementation of fundamental human rights."

The NHRC Action Plan Support Project prepared a report highlighting the role of MPs in the implementation of fundamental rights, which has been distributed among MPs. PSP provided inputs into the document and supported its distribution.

The Project has strengthened MPs' capacity to review bills from a human rights perspective. For example, in 2018, PSP supported dialogue around the review of the Safe Motherhood and Reproductive Health Bill, the Social Security Bill, and the Citizenship (Amendment) Bill. 2019 bills that were reviewed from a human rights perspective with technical support from PSP include the Land Use Management Bill and the National Identity Bill (Federal Parliament), the Dalit Empowerment Bill in Province 2, and the Food Sovereignty Bill in Karnali Province. PSP support provided MPs with an opportunity to identify gaps and contradictions in the draft bills, ensure GESI consideration were taken into account, and to normalise the participation of women MPs and MPs from disadvantaged backgrounds in the review process. During the first half of 2020 PSP supported the review of nine bills at the provincial level, with participating 88 MPs, among whom were 33 women and representatives of marginalised groups.

PSP has adopted a human rights perspective in responding to COVID-19. It has facilitated dialogue between MPs and stakeholders on human rights violations against women, girls, children, Dalits, returnee migrant labourers and quarantine dwellers across the country during COVID, which has led to direct action by parliamentary committees. For example, MPs from the Federal Parliament and Provincial Assemblies have participated in a number of on-site visits to address problems associated with COVID-19 crisis. Such visits remain limited in frequency but are highly appreciated by participants and should be expanded by the project. The Project should continue to bring a human rights perspective to its COVID response by ensuring that disadvantaged groups are well represented in the virtual public consultations and hearings that the Project is supporting during COVID. PSP can also support women MPs and MPs from marginalized backgrounds to speak out about how the groups they represent are affected by COVID and what the Government can do to help.

6.9 Anti-Corruption and Environment

6.9.1 Anti-corruption

PSP identified anti-corruption as a priority consideration in providing support to federal and provincial parliaments. PSP has provided direct support to PACs at the federal and provincial parliaments, promoting financial good governance and anti-corruption measures. PSP has also facilitated interactions between the Office of the Auditor General (OAG) and MPs, although it is difficult to measure the impacts of these engagements on government integrity. Support for the creation of a Management Information System (MIS) and web portal within the federal parliament's PAC has helped to maintain transparent access to meeting agendas, minutes, reports, and details of events. The MIS will enable citizens to seek information from PAC as well as submit complaints or questions to the Committee that will help in promoting financial good governance and transparency. Additionally, support for training and workshops for MPs on good governance and integrity has helped to raise awareness of the anti-corruption agenda.

In 2020 PSP supported a virtual meeting among PAC Chairpersons and Secretaries from all seven provinces which concluded with a 10-point declaration for addressing accountability and anti-corruption during the COVID-19 pandemic. Although limited to procurement and spending as part of the Government's COVID response, the initiative helped to highlight possibilities for cooperation and for forging common understanding and goals across provincial PACs on the ongoing fight against corruption.¹⁶

6.9.2 Environment

Environmental concerns have been at the heart of several Project activities. The Project has brought an environmental lens to its support for strengthening parliaments' oversight capacities. A total of 32 parliamentary oversight missions were conducted by 2019, several of which addressed environmental issues and SDGs.¹⁷

In partnership with UNDP's Environment, Climate Change and Disaster Risk Management Unit, PSP organized seminars on climate change and environmental issues for members of the Natural Resource Committee and Fiscal Committee in the Federal Parliament. The Project has also assisted committees during the preparation of environment-related bills, including the Forest Act and Environmental Act. The Project should continue this work and take opportunities to facilitate further dialogue on policy challenges relating to environment, resilience, and climate change among MPs from Federal Parliament and Provincial Assemblies.

PSP has supported provincial visits to facilitate discussions on SDG issues, and contributed to the creation of a well-resourced SDG corner at the National Assembly, which includes IT, mike, and furnishing support. The Project has also supported the

¹⁶ Half yearly Project Progress Report, PSP, 2020

¹⁷ Annual Progress Report, UNDP/PSP, 2019.

formation of national SDG network with 49 MPs participating¹⁸, although the sustainability of this network beyond the Project need further consideration. The Project could usefully expand its promotion of SDGs at the provincial level, where MPs are less familiar with the UN's development goals. The Project could assist MPs to link local goals with the SDGs and to develop skills in monitoring and evaluation, including the use of appropriate indicators. There is an opportunity here to collaborate with PLGSP.

¹⁸ The MTR team was not able to obtain gender disaggregated data for MPs participating in the SDG network. Project M&E might encourage the Parliament secretariat and committees to maintain GESI disaggregated records.

7. Conclusions

Overall, the MTR team found PSP to be a timely initiative that provided critical support to Nepal's new Federal Parliament (and later) to its provincial assemblies. Project deliverables were based on a thorough needs assessment of the federal parliament and provincial assemblies that identified a vision for outcome-level change that was subsequently articulated in the project's Theory of Change (ToC), namely that parliament would become a "capable institution responding to the needs and concerns of the public including women, youth and marginalized groups by assuming its role as a law/policy making and oversight body and in fostering constitutional implementation."

The Parliament Support Project (PSP) has made important contributions to the institutional development of Nepal's new Federal Parliament and Provincial Assemblies. The Project has supported the thematic work of Parliamentary Committees and strengthened the operational capacities of the parliamentary secretariats. PSP has also equipped many women MPs and MPs from marginalized groups with the skills they need to perform their representative, legislative and oversight functions. Project beneficiaries and stakeholders were overwhelming positive in their feedback about PSP, recognizing the Project as a timely intervention by a trusted inter-governmental body. As the Federal Parliament has strengthened, the project has redirected resources to Provincial Assemblies where UNDP is strongly and uniquely placed to assist the new legislative bodies. PSP has also demonstrated agility and effectiveness in its COVID response, providing much needed technical and logistical support to parliamentary bodies to ensure they are able to conduct their work remotely. This has included public consultations and hearings, as well as centre-provincial coordination on legislative matters, policy review and investigations.

The evaluators found the design and implementation of PSP to be strategically aligned to the SDGS and Nepal's development needs. The Project is demand-driven, sensitive to gender equality and social inclusion as well as human-rights based approaches to programming. The Project is on track to meet many, but not all of the targets specified in the Results and Resources Framework (RRF). Changes to programme activities have been made in response to evolving needs identified by the Federal Parliament and Provincial Assemblies and in response to the COVID pandemic. The changes have demonstrated admirable agility but have also stretched the Project's resources. For the remainder of the phase it is recommended that the Project team revisit the Theory of Change and RRF to reflect on ways in which limited resources can be used most strategically to achieve Project goals. Given the significant changes to the political, social and economic development context, a SWOT analysis would be a useful exercise to undertake as part of the reflection. Project outputs are well documented. During the remainder of the phase it is recommended that Project management, M&E and reporting focus more on outcomes and sustainability of results.

The Project also needs to address funding shortfalls before developing plans for 2021 and 2022. Given the importance of working with Parliament, UNDP might consider ways in which other UNDP projects can contribute for mutual benefit. If the Project is able to successfully showcase its results, other donors could be interested to contribute.

Funding proposals could be separately developed for specific activities or sets of activities.

The evaluators' rating of the project in accordance with the key evaluation criteria is provided below:

Evaluation Criteria	Rating/Score	Description of performance
Relevance	1	Project activities are aligned with Nepal's development priorities, SDGs and UNDAF.
Coherence	2	The Theory of Change is sound and project activities follow the logic of the Theory of Change. Adjustments to Project activities have shown responsiveness, but sometimes risk spreading the Project too thinly.
Effectiveness	1	The Project has had a demonstrable impact, most notably on the individual capacities of MPs, including women and MPs from marginalised groups.
Efficiency	2	The Project has been efficient in its allocation of resources, but more effort is needed to secure cost-sharing
Impact	1	PSP has contributed to significant improvements in the operating capabilities of new parliamentary institutions at the federal and provincial levels, and in the individual capabilities of MPs, including women MPs and MPs from marginalised groups.
Sustainability	3	The Sustainability Strategy is well considered, but the exit strategy needs to show how investments will be maintained beyond Project closure.
Human rights	1	The Project has successfully promoted a human rights agenda in its support for legislation and in its collaboration with other projects.
Gender and Social Inclusion	2	The Project receives top marks for mainstreaming GESI considerations across support activities and for identifying GESI targets in a dedicated output, but more needs to be done to secure results.
Overall	1/2	PSP overall performance is satisfactory to highly satisfactory.

Scale: 1: Highly satisfactory, 2: Satisfactory, 3: Moderately satisfactory, 4: Somehow satisfactory, 5: Not satisfactory

8. Lessons learned

Parliamentary support in new democracies is challenging because of the political nature of the operating environment. There is an emerging literature on approaches to parliamentary support that acknowledges and identifies gaps in knowledge.¹⁹ PSP has much to contribute to this literature and should be encouraged to develop short reports that document those lessons for the benefit of future such programs in Nepal and in other countries. Project funds could be used to hire experts to document some of the lessons that could be published as Project and/or UNDP knowledge products. Lessons learned that could be useful documented include topics such as (i) providing technical support to new federal systems / supporting federalization, (ii) promoting representation of women and marginalized groups in new democracies, and (iii) institutional capacity building for national and provincial parliaments. The PSP experience could usefully demonstrate the value of political economy analysis in programming.

Implementation of PSP demonstrates the importance of designing demand-driven interventions through proper consultations with MPs, secretariat staff, and other relevant stakeholders. For example, most of the capacity development programs, mentorships programs, bill review support to the MPs, as well as outreach and oversight initiatives were executed in accordance with a need assessment and consultations with relevant stakeholders. The needs-based approach should be continued to ensure the Project's relevance more compatible in the changing context, including in a post-COVID world.

Another important lesson is the need for clear focus. The MTR team was left with the impression that the Project was trying to do everything and everywhere. This practice should be modified to ensure quality, outcome-oriented, results. The delineation of support activities for Federal Parliament and Provincial Assemblies was unclear.

Support for Provincial Assemblies has been vital as their needs are great, and their success will shape the direction of the federal governance system in Nepal. At the same time PSP needs to clarify whether it intends to cover all seven Provincial Assemblies or use limited resources to do more with a smaller number of Provinces.

PSP has provided extensive support for capacity development, oversight and outreach, logistics, IT, as well as infrastructure development at the Federal Parliament, National Assembly, and the Provincial Assemblies. Given resource constraints and other political factors, planning processes need to reflect on areas that are most strategic for investment.

Lessons Learned in Implementing the GESI Strategy

- (i) Strong planning and coordination are needed to maintain a GESI focus in the design and implementation of support activities.
- (ii) Project M&E needs to be consistent in collecting and reporting gender-disaggregated data.

¹⁹ See for example, Alina Rocha Menocal and Tam O'Neil. 2012. "Mind the Gap: Mind the Gap: Lessons Learnt and Remaining Challenges in Parliamentary Development Assistance – A Sida Pre-Study." UTV Working Paper. Sida:https://www.sida.se/contentassets/828b20d196de45c7986707aaae353b98/20121-mind-the-gap-lessons-learnt-and-remaining-challenges-in-parliamentary-development-assistance---a-sida-pre-study_3403.pdf

- (iii) PSP has supported many laws making process, but the opportunity to support legislative review from a GESI perspective was not always taken up.
- (iv) Given emphasis on GESI, the Project could have done more to establish and maintain a Monitoring & Evaluation database for GESI disaggregated data, and to set baseline indicators for implementation of the GESI strategy.
- (v) Stronger partnerships with CSOs, including LGTBTIQ groups, have proved essential for promoting GESI goals because CSOs play a watchdog role and serve as a link between Parliament and the public on GESI concerns.
- (vi) PSP successfully combined a top-down strategy within a bottom-up approach to address social exclusion and the participation of marginalized women MPs. Planned activities were supported by strong top-down mechanisms and implementing partners employed a bottom-up approach, which included successful use of a community organization pyramid, allowing stakeholders to collaborate at the local level while remaining connected to Kathmandu.
- (vii) UN agencies' GESI theme groups could become more involved in capacity building for women MPs, providing policy-specific training in areas of priority concern for women and marginalised groups such as social protection and social security.
- (viii) Bringing women together from across political parties is beneficial for building GESI-focused coalitions.
- (ix) GESI training should include men MPs as a way to increase gender sensitivity and support for women's political leadership. Training needs to penetrate attitudes that on the surface may seem open-minded, but in practice are obstructive.
- (x) Important areas of training for women MPs and MPs from marginalized groups are Life skills, safe migration orientation, Gender and GBV policies, economic empowerment, participatory learning and participatory planning, monitoring and evaluation, savings and credit, entrepreneurship, GRB, sanitation, and local governance planning because these are avenues for women parliamentarians and marginalized parliamentarians to promote GESI-sensitive policies.
- (xi) Although, workshops have raised awareness and provided representatives of the LGBTI community with a platform to speak about the bigotry, injustices and challenges they face in everyday life, including in their dealings with authorities, there is still so much that needs to be done in order to mitigate the struggles and afflictions of the LGBTI community. In order to formulate and effectively implement the rights already guaranteed by the constitutions, bigger steps must be taken. More parliamentarians and legislative bodies should be included in relevant workshops. And there should be more media engagement so that the information and awareness is shared with a wider audience. According to reports from the CSO community, Government officials in Nepal remain largely unaware of LGBTI people and their concerns. Law makers should be directly approached, counseled and pleaded with. Until law makers recognize the importance of advocating for the LGBTI community, pro-LGBTI policy changes will be slow.

9. Recommendations

Recommendation 1: The project would benefit from increased communication and coordination with other development partners. Regular meetings (even if informal) would help to prevent duplication of activities and minimize opportunities for rivalry and donor shopping. UNDP might consider taking the lead in remapping current and proposed parliamentary support activities by other development partners.

Recommendation 2: RRF indicators and targets should be revisited (notably indicators under Outputs 1.3, 2.4, 3.4, 4.1 and 4.6) so that the Project is not set up to fail. Contributions are clearly being made toward all five outputs, but in evaluating progress against many targets as they are presently articulated, the Project will either (a) not be able to achieve the target, or (b) not be able to demonstrate that the target has been met.

Recommendation 3: Along with Federal Parliament, the Project should continue to expand its support to provincial assemblies where support is greatly needed and being requested.

Recommendation 4: Future support to provincial assemblies will require a strategy since PA needs are many and varied and the Project funding is already stretched. In supporting PAs, it would be prudent to seek more synergies with local democratic governance programmes such as PLGSP.

Recommendation 5: The project should be more realistic in determining output indicators, including targets for women MPs and MPs from marginalized groups. The Project should revisit the Theory of Change and identify progress markers and milestones that can be used to design future support activities. For the remainder of the Phase it is recommended that the Project team revisit the Theory of Change and RRF to reflect on ways in which limited resources can be used most strategically to achieve Project goals. Given the significant changes to the political, social and economic development context, a SWOT analysis would be a useful exercise to undertake as part of the reflection. The M&E plan (and RRF) should focus on outcome-level reporting and on identifying behavioural change. The current focus is largely on activities and outputs. Annual and semi-annual progress reports should also report on outcomes and not only activities completed/numbers in attendance. Project reporting should consistently include GESI disaggregated data.

Recommendation 6: With guidance from the Country Office, the Project should invest more resources in documenting lessons learned for the benefit of the remainder of the Phase as well as for similar projects in Nepal and other jurisdictions in the future. The M&E plan should be improved to capture information about knowledge transfer and application. The Project might consider engaging a specialist in knowledge transfer and knowledge management to assist with this process.

Recommendation 7: In the remainder of this phase, the Project needs to develop its exit strategy to ensure the legacy of its investments. This should include steps for management of knowledge and transfer of training materials, as well as maintenance of ICT infrastructure. The exit strategy might also consider strengthened partnerships with CSOs to promote and support effective coordination and communication between community and parliamentarians on issues related to gender equity and social inclusion.

The existing exit strategy consists of a few dot points about the administration of Project closure. The exit strategy should also consider making the Secretariat staffs more responsible and technically sound to help them transfer the knowledge.

Recommendation 8: The Project should continue to seek opportunities for cost-sharing as a step toward exit, and as a means of partially addressing the current funding shortfall. The Government of Nepal has a budget allocation for the Federal Parliament secretariat. It would be in keeping with PSP goals and principles to seek and examine opportunities for cost-sharing of upcoming capacity development activities particularly in the areas of Information Technology.

10. Annexes

Annex 1: List of persons consulted

UNDP Country Office

Name and Designation
Ayshanie Medagangoda-Labe, Resident Representative
Bernardo Cocco, Deputy Resident Representative
Mr. Yam Nath Sharma, Assistant Resident Representative and Advisor Governance and Rule of Law
Dinesh Bista, Evaluation Manager
Bal Ram Paudel, Programme Management Analyst
Kalpana Sarkar, Portfolio Manager; Inclusive Economic Growth and PSP Focal Person
Binda Magar, GESI Advisor
Mr. Vijay Singh, Assistant Resident Representative and Advisor Resilience and Climate Change
Mr. Tek Tamata, Portfolio Manager

PSP

Name and Designation
Raj Bahadur Shrestha, National Project Manager
Dila Datt Pant, Team Leader, Outreach and Communication
Yam Bahadur Kisan, Team Leader, Parliamentary Affairs
Bibesika Bhurtel, M&E Officer
Bhawani Thapaliya, GESI Officer
Bitu Shreevastav, Parliament Affairs Officer, Province 2
Kyarina Shrestha, Parliament Affairs Officer, Karnali Province
Parbati Bhandari, Parliament Affairs Officer, Sudurpaschim Province

UNDP Projects

Name and Designation
Basanta Adhikari, National Project Manager, Access to Justice Project
Kundan Das Shrestha, Senior Electoral Advisor, Electoral Support Project

Arati Bista, Project Coordinator, NHRC Action Plan Support Project

Donor Community/International Organizations supporting Parliaments in Nepal

Name and Designation
Raj Kumar Dhungana, Royal Norwegian Embassy
Oda Misje Haug Senior Programme Manager in Governance, Delegation of the European Union to Nepal
Kati Bhoose, Head of Cooperation, Counsellor (Education, Human Rights), Embassy of Finland
Buddhi Karki, Senior Regional Advisor, Electoral Processes & Political Participation and Representation, International IDEA
Dinesh Wagle, Country Representative, Westminster Foundation
Prema Thapa, Program Manager, International Republication Institute
Deborah Healy, Senior Country Director, National Democratic Institute

Parliament Secretariats

Name and Designation
Mr. Manohar Bhattarai, Retired Secretary General, Federal Parliament
Dr. Bharat Raj Gautam, Secretary General, Federal Parliament (From May 2020)
Ranjeet Kumar Yadav, Secretary, Provincial Assembly, Province-2
Jeeba Raj Budhathoki, Secretary, Provincial Assembly, Karnali Province
Yubraj Jaisi, Officer, Provincial Assembly, Sudurpaschim Province
6 staffs (2 from each province and 1 male and 1 female) from Provincial Assembly Secretariat who received Induction training either in 2018 or 201
1. Arun Kumar Jha, Province 2
2. Rekha Yadav, Province 2
3. Sharmila BK, Karnali Province
4. Rajendra Paudel, Karnali Province
5. Rekha Joshi, Sudurpaschim Province
6. Rekha Upadhaya, Under Secretary, Federal Parliament
Government officials from Federal Parliament Secretariat who received induction training
1. Ek Ram Giri, Under Secretary, Federal Parliament Secretariat
2. Pramila Paudel Gautam, Section Officer, Federal Parliament Secretariat

3. Dasharath Dhamala, Under Secretary, Federal Parliament Secretariat
4. Roj Nath pandey, Secretary, Public Account Committee
5. Rekha Upadhaya (Khanal), Under Secretary, Federal Parliament Secretariat

Parliament Committees

Name and Designation
Chairs of 5 different Parliament Committees from Federal Parliament and National Assembly that UNDP directly and frequently worked with since 2018 till now
1. Chair of Women and Social Committee Hon. Niru Devi Pal
2. Chair of Public Account Committee Hon. Bharat Kumar Shah
3. Sustainable Development and Good Governance Hon. Tara Devi Bhatta
4. Law, Justice and Human Rights Committee Hon. Krishna Bhakta Pokhrel

MPs

Name and Designation
7 MPs from Federal Parliament who received capacity building and other supports from PSP
1. Hon. Rekha Kumari Jha (MP-FP)
2. Asha Kumari BK
3. Laxmi Pariyar (MP-FP)
4. Gauri Shankar Chaudhari
5. Ram Lakhan Harijan
6. Rangamati Shahi
7. Krishna Bahadur Rai
2 MPs (1 woman) from National Assembly who received capacity building support from PSP
1. Narapati Lohar
2. Thagendra Prasad Puri
3 MPs (1 woman) from Karnali Province who received capacity building and other support from the project
1. Raju Nepali
2. Speaker, Hon. Raj Bahadur Shahi
3. Kaushilawati Khatri
3 MPs (3 woman) from Province-2 who received capacity building and other support from the project
1. Sharada Thapa

2. Pramila Kumari Yadav
3. Chameli Devi Das
3 MPs (2 women) from Sudurpaschim Province who received capacity building and other support from the project
1. Chun Kumari Chaudhary
2. Durga BK
3. Mahesh Datta Joshi

Government Stakeholders

Name and Designation
Dr. Gopi Krishna Khanal, Joint Secretary/ National Project Director, Provincial and Local Government Support Programme (PLGSP)/MOFAGA
Chiranjibi Timsina, Under Secretary/National Project Manager, PLGSP/MOFAGA

NGOs & Media

Name and Designation
Indu Tuladhar, Chairperson, Himalaya Innovative Development and Research Pvt. Ltd; Kathmandu (Mentoring Women MPs in Federal Parliament)
Raghav Thakur/Ranju Jha, Executive Director, Videha Foundation, Lalitpur/Saptari (Mentoring Women MPs of Province 2)
Kala Swornakar Chairperson, Dalit Mahila Sangh (Mentoring Dalit MPs in Karnali Province)
Ganesh BK, Chairperson, Rastriya Dalit Network, Dhangadhi (Mentoring Dalit MPs in Sudurpaschim Province)
Jagadish Ayer, President, Association of Youth Organizations Nepal (AYON) (Engaging youths in parliamentary affairs and policy dialogues in the three provinces)
Sarita K.C, Mitini Nepal (Advocacy and lobby for inclusive laws that protects and ensures rights of gender and sexual minorities)
Narayan Bhattarai, Karnali Foundation, (Promoting Outreach and parliamentary oversight in Karnali province)
Krishna Sigdel, Innovative Vision (Enhancing capacity of the MPs representing women and disadvantaged groups via skill training on use of communication tools.)

Annex 2: List of documents reviewed

1. Result Resource Framework revised July 2020
2. Technical Needs Assessment Report 2018 & 2019
3. Annual Work Plan 2018
4. Annual Work Plan 2019
5. Annual Work Plan 2020
6. Annual Progress Reports of 2018, Narrative
7. Annual Progress Reports of 2019, Narrative
8. Half Year Progress Report of 2020
9. Financial Reports 2018, (APR against work Plan)
10. Financial Reports 2019, (APR against work plan)
11. Organizational Structure of Project
12. PEB Minutes 2018, 2019 & 2020
13. PSP GESI Strategy
14. PSP GESI indicators
15. PSP MEL strategy
16. UNDP GESI Common Understanding Framework

Annex 3 Midterm Review Terms of Reference

Parliament Support Project – (Phase 2)

Mid-Term Review

Terms of Reference

1. Background and context

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

The new Constitution mandated the provision of three tiers of government: federal, province and local level. The election of the bicameral Federal Parliament (FP) and unicameral Provincial Assemblies (PAs) for seven provinces, which took place in late 2017, gave mandate to form and operate the Federal Parliament and seven Provincial Assemblies from 2018. This was also the year when the United Nations and UNDP introduced new plans and support strategies for the next five years in the form of the UN Development Assistance Framework (2018-2022)²⁰ and the UNDP's Country Programme Document (2018-2022)²¹.

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

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

²⁰ <https://www.np.undp.org/content/dam/nepal/docs/legalframework/UNDAF%202018-2022.pdf>

²¹ https://www.np.undp.org/content/nepal/en/home/library/legal_framework/cpd-nepal-2018-to-2022.html

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

The project information is also summarized in below table.

PROJECT INFORMATION	
Project/outcome title	Parliament Support Project (PSP)
Atlas ID	00049635

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

2. Objectives and scope of the review

2.1. Objectives of the MTR

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

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

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

2.2. Scope of the MTR

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

- Relevance of the project: review the progress against its purpose, objectives, outputs and indicators along with project documents such as: Theory of Change, Results and Resources Framework, M&E framework, ascertain whether assumptions and risks remain valid
- Effectiveness and efficiency of implementation to date: review project's technical as well as operational approaches and deliverables, quality of results and their impact (knowledge products developed and utilised and expertise available and transferred, partnership and engagement, coherence with UNDP's core documents like UNDAF, CPD etc), alignment with national priorities and responding to the needs of the stakeholders²²) and thereby also deduce conclusions on the relevance and sustainability of the project; and
- Review the project's approaches, in general and gender equality and social inclusion, with particular focus on women and marginalised groups;
- Review and assess the risks and opportunities (in terms of resource mobilization, synergy and areas of interventions) for PSP in future;
- Review external factors beyond the control of the project that have affected it negatively or positively to date;
- Review planning, management and the quality assurance mechanism for the delivery of the project interventions;
- Review coordination and communication process and mechanisms with the stakeholders;
- Review the management and governing structure of the project and distribution of responsibilities within the given structure

3. Review Criteria and guiding questions

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

Relevance

- To what extent were lessons learned from other relevant projects considered in the project's design?
- To what extent the project was/is able to address the needs of the target group in the changed context?
- To what extent are the objectives of the project design (inputs, activities, outputs and their indicators) and its theory of change logical and coherent? Does the project contribute to the outcome and output of the CPD? Does the design need to be modified?
- How appropriate are the indicators described in the project documents in assessing the project progress? If necessary, how should they be modified to be more useful and achievable?

²² Stakeholders denotes the International Development Partners, CSOs, donor, experts etc.

- To what extent did/does the projects contribute to meeting the needs of the Federal Parliament and the Provincial Assemblies after their institutional set up?
- To what extent did the project adapt to the changing contexts of the country's federalization process and the needs of parliamentarians? Is there further need of substantive change in PSP's scope of work?
- To what extent has the project been able to adapt to the needs of the different target groups (including tackling the gender and social inclusion aspects) in terms of capacity building and participation?
- To what extent does the project contribute to bridge the capacity gap between the federal and provincial parliaments?

Effectiveness

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

Coherence

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

Efficiency

- To what extent is the existing project management structure appropriate and efficient in generating the expected results?
- To what extent have the project implementation strategy and execution been efficient and cost-effective?
- Have resources (funds, human resources, time, expertise, etc) been allocated strategically to achieve outcomes?
- To what extent have project funds and activities been delivered in a timely manner?

- How has the project adopted cost effectiveness measures such as cost sharing, leveraging synergies and packaging/integration of activities?

Impact

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

Sustainability

- To what extent do the project interventions contribute towards sustaining the knowledge, practices and approaches in parliamentary system?
- To what extent do the implementing partners²³ own the project's interventions and respond to its implementation?
- What could be potential new areas of work and innovative measures for sustaining the results?
- To what extent are lessons learned being documented by the project team on a continual basis to inform the project for needful change?
- What could be done to strengthen exit strategies and sustainability of the project?

Human rights

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

Gender equality and Social Inclusion

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

Anti -Corruption and Environment

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

4. Methodology

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

²³ Partner denotes Implementing Partners i.e. Federal Parliament and Provincial Assemblies

review team is expected to frame the review using the criteria of relevance, effectiveness, efficiency and sustainability.

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

4.1. Document review

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

4.2. Semi-structured interviews

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

4.3. Field visit

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

4.4. Others

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

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

5. Expected Results/Deliverables

The review team should submit the following deliverables:

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

6. Team composition and required competencies

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

6.1 International consultant (team leader)

Working days: 15 (home based)

Major roles and responsibilities:

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

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

- Incorporate the comments and feedback of the stakeholders in the draft report to finalize it and submit the final report to UNDP within stipulated timeline.

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

6.2 National consultant (team member)

Working days: 30 (mostly home based)

Major roles and responsibilities:

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

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

7. Evaluation Ethics

"This evaluation will be conducted in accordance with the principles outlined in the UNEG 'Ethical Guidelines for Evaluation'. The consultants must safeguard the rights and confidentiality of information providers, interviewees and stakeholders through measures to ensure compliance with legal and other relevant codes governing collection of data and reporting on data. The consultant must also ensure security of collected information before and after the evaluation and protocols to ensure anonymity and confidentiality of sources of information where that is expected. The information knowledge and data gathered in the

evaluation process must also be solely used for the evaluation and not for other uses without the express authorization of UNDP and partners.”

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

8. Implementation arrangements

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

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

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

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

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

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

9. Timeframe

The duration of the MTR will be maximum 30 days in the period 17 August – 15th October 2020. The tentative schedule will be the following:

Planned Activities	Tentative Days	Timeline
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		17 August – 15 th October 2020		
Desk review and preparation of design (home based)	2 days			
Briefing by Development Partner/UNDP	1 day			
Finalizing design, methods & inception report and sharing with reference group for feedback	3 days			
Stakeholders meetings and interviews in Kathmandu	4 days			
Field visit(s) outside Kathmandu	8 days			
Analysis, preparation of draft report, presentation of draft findings	6 days			
Stakeholder meeting to present draft findings	1 days			
Finalize and submit report (Home Based) and review brief	5 days			
Total	30 days			

10. Use of MTR results

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

11. Application submission process and criteria for selection

It will be mentioned in Individual Consultant selection criteria.

12. Annexes²⁴

(i) Relevant Documents: Project Document (both first phase and second phase), Multi-year work plan, Annual Work Plan 2018 and 2019, Project Progress Reports of 2018 and 2019, Financial Reports, Technical Needs Assessment Report, Organizational Structure, Knowledge products of PSP etc.

(ii) List of key agencies, stakeholders and partners for review

UNDP

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

Stakeholders:

- International development partners
- Project donor and other donors

²⁴ These documents will be provided after signing of the contract.

- Parliamentarian Experts (6-7 experts)
- Parliament members and officials

Implementing Partners

- Federal Parliament and Provincial Assemblies representatives and government officials
- Civil society organizations and media

Annex 4: Evaluation Matrix

Relevant evaluation criteria	Key questions	Specific sub questions	Data source	Data collection methods/tools	Indicators/success standard	Methods for data analysis
Relevance	To what extent is the project able to address the identified needs of the target group in the changed context?	To what extent does the project meet the expressed priority needs of the Federal Parliament and the Provincial Assemblies?	Qualitative metrics RRF Feedback from perceptions of beneficiaries	Document analysis Interviews with beneficiaries	As per RRF / Project M&E Framework	Stories of change Most Significant Change
		To what extent has the project adapted to the changing contexts of the country's federalization process and the legislative capacity needs of parliamentarians?	Project documents and reports feedback from stakeholders Government strategy documents	Document analysis interviews with stakeholders	As per RRF Project Framework M&E	Text analysis Critique of ToC & underlying design
		To what extent has the project been able to adapt to the needs of the different target groups (including tackling the gender and social inclusion aspects) in terms of capacity building and participation?	Project documents and reports feedback from stakeholders	Document analysis interviews with stakeholders	As per RRF Project Framework M&E	Stories of change Most Significant Change Project Scorecard
		To what extent has the project contributed to capacity development in provincial parliaments?	Project documents and reports feedback from stakeholders	Document analysis interviews with stakeholders	As per RRF Project Framework M&E	Stories of change Most Significant Change
Effectiveness	To what extent did the project contribute to the CPD outcome and outputs, the SDGs, the UNDP Strategic Plan and national development priorities?	To what extent were the project outputs achieved or are likely to be achieved?	Project documents and reports feedback from stakeholders	Document analysis interviews with stakeholders	As per RRF Project Framework M&E	Stories of change Most Significant Change
		What factors have contributed to achieving or not achieving the intended outputs?	Feedback from stakeholders	Interviews with stakeholders	N/A	Situation analysis

		To what extent are the project approaches appropriate to achieve the intended midterm and long-term results as outlined in the project document?	Project documents and reports feedback from stakeholders	Document analysis interviews with stakeholders	As per RRF Project Framework M&E	Project Scorecard Progress Map
		To what extent has the project partnership been appropriate and effective? What, if any, alternative strategies would have been more effective in achieving the project's objectives?	Feedback from beneficiaries and partners, including other donors	Interviews with beneficiaries and partners	As per RRF Project Framework M&E	Synthesis of feedback
Efficiency	To what extent have the project implementation strategy and execution been efficient and cost-effective?	To what extent is the existing project management structure appropriate and efficient in generating the expected results?	Feedback from CO, perception of beneficiaries and partners, including other donors	Interviews	RRF Annual reports	Document analysis and distillation of feedback
		Have resources been allocated strategically to achieve outcomes?	Feedback from CO, perception of beneficiaries and partners, including other donors	Interviews	RRF Annual reports Financial reports	Document analysis and distillation of feedback
		To what extent have project funds and activities been delivered in a timely manner?	Feedback from CO, perception of beneficiaries and partners, including other donors	Interviews	RRF Annual reports Financial reports	Document analysis and distillation of feedback
		How has the project adopted cost effectiveness measures such as cost sharing, leveraging synergies and packaging/ integration of activities?	Feedback from CO, perception of beneficiaries and partners, including other donors	Interviews	RRF Annual reports	Document analysis and distillation of feedback
Coherence	How well does the project fit into the current development context?	Does the PSP support or undermine similar interventions that have taken place by the governmental, non-governmental, and the donor communities in Nepal? (External coherence)	Feedback from CO, other UNDP projects, other UN agencies beneficiaries and partners, other donors UNDAF	Interviews	In accordance with CO and partner agency expectations	Distillation of feedback

		Where does the PSP stand within UNDP in comparison to other institutional strengthening projects run by UNDP? Whether PSP has created any synergies and interlinkages between all UNDP supported institutional strengthening projects in Nepal? (Internal coherence)	Feedback from CO, beneficiaries and partners, including other donors UNDP CPD	Interviews Desk review	In accordance with CO and partner agency expectations	Distillation of feedback
		How has the PSP has complemented, harmonized, and coordinated with other governmental and non-governmental actors as well as other stakeholders for the purpose of adding values and avoiding duplication of efforts?	Feedback from CO, beneficiaries and partners, including other donors UNDAF	Interviews Desk review	In accordance with CO and partner agency expectations	Distillation of feedback
Sustainability	How will project investments contribute to lasting change?	To what extent do the project interventions contribute towards sustaining the knowledge, practices and approaches in parliamentary system?	Feedback from and perception of beneficiaries and partners	Interviews	In accordance with stakeholder expectations	Distillation of feedback
		To what extent do the implementing partners own the project's interventions and respond to its implementation?	Feedback from and perception of beneficiaries and partners	Interviews	In accordance with stakeholder expectations	Distillation of feedback
		To what extent are lessons learned being documented by the project team on a continual basis to inform project change or adjustments?	Reporting from PSP team Feedback from partners	M&E documents Annual reports Interviews	In accordance with CO expectations	Distillation of feedback Document analysis
		What could be done to strengthen exit strategies and sustainability of the project?	Feedback from beneficiaries and partners	Interviews	In accordance with CO expectations	Distillation of feedback Document analysis

GESI	What are the key GESI policies, strategies, and institutional arrangements adopted by the PSP?	How does the project ensure the implementation of GESI policies and strategies in the implementation and evaluation of the project including in the production of GESI-specific knowledge products?	Annual reports Feedback from beneficiaries and development partners	M&E documents, annual reports, Interviews, Formal and Informal Observation, Best Practices compilation, knowledge products produced by the project Interviews	In accordance with CO expectations	Distillation of feedback
		To what extent have gender equality and the empowerment of women MPs and MPs from marginalised groups been addressed in the design, implementation and monitoring of the project?	M&E documents, Annual reports, Feedback from and perception of beneficiaries and partners	Review of M&E documents, annual reports, Interviews, Formal and Informal Observation, Best Practices compilation Interviews	PSP identified targets	Distillation of feedback; synthesis of available data
		To what extent has PSP developed the capacity of women MPs and MPs from disadvantaged groups?	M&E documents, annual reports, Feedback from and perception of beneficiaries and partners	Review of M&E documents, annual reports, Interviews, Formal and Informal Observation, Best Practices compilation Interviews	PSP identified targets	Distillation of feedback; synthesis of available data
		To what extent has PSP developed the capacity of parliaments at the federal & provincial levels to routinely engage with women, youth and other disadvantaged citizens?	M&E documents, annual reports, Feedback from beneficiaries and partners	Review of M&E documents, annual reports, Interviews, Formal and Informal Observation, Best Practices compilation Interviews	PSP identified targets	Distillation of feedback; synthesis of available data
Human Rights	Benefits for disadvantaged and marginalized groups	To what extent have Dalit, ethnic, physically challenged, women and other disadvantaged and marginalized groups benefitted from the work of the project and with what impact?	Feedback from beneficiaries and partners Project reporting	Interviews, annual reports, and M&E documents	In accordance with stakeholder expectations, PSP identified targets	Distillation of feedback

Anti-corruption	Parliamentary oversight	To what extent has the project contributed to strengthen the oversight function of the parliamentary committees on anti-corruption and good governance issues?	Feedback from beneficiaries and partners	Interviews, annual reports, and M&E documents	In accordance with stakeholder expectations	Distillation of feedback
Environment	Contribution to relevant SDGs	To what extent has the project contributed to achieve SDGs particularly on environment protection and climate change actions?	Feedback from CO and stakeholders including UN partners	Interviews, annual reports, and M&E documents	In accordance with UN and stakeholder expectations	Distillation of feedback

Annex 5: Guiding questions used for interview

Questions for MPs

- In which PSP activity(ies) have you been involved? Can you identify the benefits of the activities for strengthening your work as an MP?
- In your opinion, how has the project contributed to the parliament being more effective?
- In your opinion, how has the project contributed to the parliament being more participatory?
- How has the project supported the parliament to be more open and interactive with citizens?
- How has the project supported the parliament to be more accountable to citizens?
- In what ways has the project strengthened the capacity of women MPs and MPs from disadvantaged groups?
- In what ways has the project strengthened parliament's capacity to engage with women, youth and disadvantaged citizens?
- What is your view of the project's main strengths and weaknesses?
- What do you think are the main challenges the project has confronted?
- How well do you think the project has responded to those challenges?
- This is the mid point of the project's current phase. What should be the project's focus over the next two years?
- Do you need more support from this project? If so, what kind of support do you need?
- What can the project do to ensure that its investments are sustainable beyond the duration of the project?

Questions for Parliament Secretariat Officials from Federal Parliament, National Assembly, and Provincial Assembly

- In which activity(ies) of the PSP have you been involved over the past two and half years? How has the project helped you to perform your duties?
- In your opinion, how has the project contributed to the parliament secretariat being more effective in its support to MPs and committees?

- Can you give examples of strengthened capabilities or innovations in the work of the parliament secretariat that PSP has supported?
- In what ways has the project strengthened the capacity of women MPs and MPs from disadvantaged groups?
- In what ways has the project strengthened parliament's capacity to engage with women, youth and disadvantaged citizens?
- What would you say are the project's main strengths?
- What would you say are the project's weaknesses?
- What do you think are the main challenges the project has confronted?
- How well do you think the project has responded to those challenges?
- Do you need more support from this project? If so, what kind of support do you need?
- How has COVID-19 changed the way you work? How has PSP helped you and the parliament with the necessary adaptation?

GESI targeted questions

- Do you think women and marginalised MPs are equipped with relevant governance, leadership and decision-making skills that they can apply in their everyday work as change maker? Please provide examples of PSP's contributions.
- Have projects supported by development agencies contributed to enhancing the capacity of Women and marginalised MPs for better service delivery? If no, what type of support should PSP provide?
- Have Women and Marginalised leaders been able to actively participate in parliamentary committee activities and/or influence decision making processes in local parliaments and governments? If yes, has this trend been increasing and why has it been so? If no, what is hindering this process?
- What needs to be done to give more space to youth, women and marginalized MPs to be more involved in and/or influence policy and legislation?
- In your opinion what are the key capacity development needs for Women MPs?
- How can a capacity development program targeting women, youth and marginalised MPs most usefully engage with National and Provincial Parliaments?
- In your opinion, how strongly have women MPs been able to uphold democratic values and principles (such as accountability, transparency and rule of law)? Is this going in the right direction? What needs to be done to further strengthen this?

Questions for Parliament Committee Chairs and Committee Members

- In which activity(ies) of the PSP have you been involved over the past two and half years? Can you identify the benefits of the activities for strengthening the committee's ability to do its work?
- In what ways has the project contributed to your committee's effectiveness?
- How has the project contributed to the ways in which your committee collects information and engages citizens and stakeholders in policy development and legislation?
- How has the project supported the parliament to be more open and interactive with citizens?
- In what ways has the project strengthened the capacity of women MPs and MPs from disadvantaged groups?
- In what ways has the project strengthened parliament's capacity to engage with women, youth and disadvantaged citizens?
- What would you say are the project's main strengths?
- What would you say are the project's weaknesses?
- What do you think are the main challenges the project has confronted?
- How well do you think the project has responded to those challenges?
- Do you need more support from this project? If so, what kind of support do you need?
- This is the mid point of the project's current phase. What should be the project's focus over the next two years?
- What can the project do to ensure that its investments are sustainable beyond the duration of the project?

GESI targeted questions

- Do you think women and marginalised MPs are equipped with relevant governance, leadership and decision-making skills that they can apply in their everyday work as change maker? Please provide examples of PSP's contributions.
- Have projects supported by development agencies contributed to enhancing the capacity of Women and marginalised MPs for better service delivery? If no, what type of support should PSP provide?
- Have Women and marginalised MPs been able to participate meaningfully in parliamentary committee activities and/or influence decision making processes in local parliaments and governments? If yes, has this trend been increasing and why has it been so? If no, what are the obstacles?
- What needs to be done to give more space to youth, women and marginalized MPs to be more involved in and/or influence policy and legislation?
- In your opinion what are the key capacity development needs for Women MPs?
- How can a capacity development program targeting women, youth and marginalised MPs most usefully engage with National and Provincial Parliaments?
- In your opinion, how strongly have women MPs been able to uphold democratic values and principles (such as accountability, transparency and rule of law)? Is this going in the right direction? What needs to be done to further strengthen this?

Questions for NGOs and Media

- What is your understanding of the goals of the PSP project?
- What do you believe are the major contributions of this project?
- Has your organization/agency had any direct involvement with PSP? Was it a positive experience? Please explain.
- What do you know about the kinds of support PSP has provided so far to the MPs, Parliament Secretariat, and Parliament Committees? What kinds of support are most needed and why?
- How has the project contributed to improving communication and interactions between the MPs and general public?
- How well do you think the project has been received by the public? Please provide evidence.
- In what ways has the project strengthened parliament's capacity to engage with women, youth and disadvantaged citizens?
- Do you think the project has adopted a human rights-based approach in its design and delivery? What is the evidence?

- Do you think the project has adequately implemented anti-corruption strategies?
- What are the key challenges confronting PSP? How can the project be strengthened in the future?
- Do you think the federal and provincial parliaments need more support? What kind of support do you think is most needed?

GESI targeted questions

- What was the main objective of the intervention you were involved in? Do you think the intervention will fulfil the GESI criteria? If yes/or no, please elaborate? (For example: Do you think the training modules/leadership development models were tailored to the capacity development/knowledge-based needs of Women and Marginalised groups MPs)
- How proactively are Women MPs engaged in decision-making processes at the community and local/central level? Are they given adequate space by the communities, local governments, in decision-making processes? Is this going on the right direction? If yes, why do you think so? If no, what needs to be done?
- In your opinion what are the key capacity development needs for Women MPs and MPs representing marginalized groups?
- In your opinion, how strongly have women and marginalised MPs been able to uphold democratic values and principles (such as accountability, transparency and rule of law)? Is this going in the right direction? What needs to be done to further strengthen this?

Questions for other UNDP projects / other development partners including UN agencies

- What is your understanding of the goals of the PSP project?
- How successful do you think the project has been in achieving its goals?
- How well do you think the project has been received by Government partners? Please give evidence.
- How well do you think the project has been received by the public, CSOs and the media? Please give evidence.
- How do you see PSP fitting into the UNDP portfolio and country strategy now and in the future?
- Has your project/agency had any direct involvement with PSP? Was it a positive experience? Please explain.
- Do you think the project has successfully adopted a human rights-based approach in its design and delivery?
- Do you think the project has adequately implemented anti-corruption strategies?

- What do you think are the key challenges confronting PSP? How can the project be strengthened in the future?
- Do you think the federal and provincial parliaments need more support? What kind of support do you think is most needed?
- What do you think UNDP should focus on its parliamentary support? What do you see to be the project's and agency's comparative advantage?

GESI targeted questions

- What was the project's implementation strategy for GESI? Which interventions worked well and why? Which interventions didn't work and why? Which interventions required major overhauling and why?
- What were the major GESI implementation challenges and how did you address them? Were the project resources adequate to meet objectives for Output4?
- How have changes in individual capacity enabled beneficiaries to influence decision-making and policy-making in central/local governance structures and their organizations and strengthen service delivery to their provinces? Is there any evidence to prove that the trainee women MPs have been able to actively influence local governance /federal processes?
- To what extent has the project contributed to collaborative relationships among different International Partners and other UN agencies to promote GESI goals? (e.g., multi-stakeholder initiatives for Women and marginalised groups from national and provincial levels covering SDG, GBV, Social Protections, Emergency response/DRR etc)
- How will project results continue to contribute to GESI objectives beyond the life of the project?
- What is the PSP exit strategy from a GESI perspective?

Annex 6: Code of Conduct signed by all three consultants

**United Nations Evaluation Group Code of
Conduct for Evaluation in the UN System**

Evaluation Consultants Agreement Form

To be signed by all consultants as individuals (not by or on behalf of a consultancy company) before a contract can be issued.

**Agreement to abide by the Code of Conduct for Evaluation in
the UN System**

Name of Consultant: **Kopila Rijal**

Name of Consultancy Organisation (where relevant): **GESI Specialist Mid Term
Review of PSP Project**

**I confirm that I have received and understood and will abide by the United
Nations Code of Conduct for Evaluation.**

Signed at (place) on (date) 08/07/2020

Signature: _



United Nations Evaluation Group Code of Conduct for Evaluation in the UN System

Evaluation Consultants Agreement Form

To be signed by all consultants as individuals (not by or on behalf of a consultancy company) before a contract can be issued.

Agreement to abide by the Code of Conduct for Evaluation in the UN System

Name of Consultant: Prakash Bhattarai

Name of Consultancy Organisation (where relevant): Independent Consultant of Mid-term review of PSP Project

I confirm that I have received and understood and will abide by the United Nations Code of Conduct for Evaluation.

Signed at (place) on (date) 16/08/2020

Signature: 

United Nations Evaluation Group Code of Conduct for Evaluation in the UN System

Evaluation Consultants Agreement Form

Agreement to abide by the Code of Conduct for Evaluation in the UN System

Name of Consultant: Ben Hillman

Name of Consultancy Organisation (where relevant): **Independent Consultant for Mid-term review of PSP Project**

I confirm that I have received and understood and will abide by the United Nations Code of Conduct for Evaluation.

Signed at (place) on (date) 24/08/2020

Signature: 
