



MID-TERM EVALUATION OF THE PEACE SUPPORT FACILITY

UNDP YEMEN

FINAL REPORT

Evaluation Team:

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Introduction

The purpose of the Peace Support Facility (Facility) is to support the peace process by accelerating the implementation of agreements reached by the parties to the conflict during negotiations led by the UN Secretary General's Special Envoy to Yemen. The Facility was established to support the implementation of the 2018 Stockholm Agreement with an initial end date of December 31, 2020, and a budget of US\$20M. The Facility is funded by the Netherlands, Germany, Sweden (SIDA), the United Kingdom, Norway, France, the European Union, Canada, Denmark, Italy and UNDP, in collaboration with the office of the Special Envoy for Yemen (OESGY) and the Resident Coordinator for Yemen's office (RCO). Currently at mid-point, it has been extended to December 2022 with an increased budget of US\$30M to give it more flexibility in identifying and implementing activities.

The Mid-Term Evaluation (MTE) aims to serve as an important learning and accountability tool, providing UNDP, donors, national stakeholders, and partners with an impartial assessment of the results generated to date. The evaluation covers the period of 18 April 2019 to December 2020. This report brings together the findings, conclusions, and recommendations from the various processes of the evaluation. The identification of lessons learned, and recommendations will inform the Facility's work from 2021 to the end of 2022.

Evaluation Framework and Methodology

Based on the evaluation questions and criteria provided in the ToR, the ET developed an evaluation matrix mapping the EQ and judgement criteria (JC) based on various UNDP commitments made in the Country Programme Framework (CPF), UNDP/UNEG evaluation guidelines, as well as an understanding of the context in the country. Scoping during the inception phase showed that evaluable data might be thin. This was confirmed during the evaluation. The primary challenges in collecting data were:

- Lack of access to monitoring data for the period under evaluation.
- Near absence of progress reports.
- Inability to engage with individuals and communities in the field in any way due to movement restrictions, e.g., because of Covid-19 or insecurity.

At the programming level, the project aims to deliver complex outputs and outcomes towards which progress has been less than anticipated and for which measurable data is not available. Because of the travel restrictions, all interviews were conducted remotely. It was recognised at the planning stage that there might be limitations on what could be achieved from a distance because of stakeholder availability and internet connection issues. Whereas this proved indeed to be the case, the impact was mitigated by spreading the effort widely and engaging as many participants as possible.

At the outset of the evaluation, it was anticipated that some progress reports or other project reviews would be available, but these proved to be very limited. Secondary data on outputs and outcomes was essentially non-existent. In short, the sources of data were less than optimal. Despite the data challenges, the evaluation team believe that their approach has led to as coherent an understanding as possible of the status of the project and its attainment (or not) of outputs and outcomes.

Findings of the Evaluation

Effectiveness

Finding 1. Despite the clear objectives outlined in the Project Document and the revised approach to project selection and implementation, the evaluation finds that the Facility has yet to achieve its core output goals.

Finding 2. Although major investments have been, and are being, made to rehabilitate the Port of Hodeidah it is hard to see how this will materially influence the political situation on the ground. The conflict revolves around control of the port.

Finding 3. As for the progress against the overall PSF outcome, it cannot be argued that the project has contributed to the peace process given the significant volatility and insecurity that Yemen continues to experience.

Finding 4. The question of whether the purpose of the Facility is widely understood highlights the disconnect between the ambitious project outputs and the reality on the ground. In essence, the objectives and outcomes as presented are not measurable.

Finding 5. The Facility has demonstrated flexibility, responsiveness and efficiency in trying to support the work of the Special Envoy albeit, arguably, against almost insurmountable odds.

Relevance

Finding 6. The Facility fits seamlessly into Programme Priority 1 of UNDP's Strategic Plan for Yemen - Peace Operations Support - as well as with the Country Programme Framework's objective of building a foundation for inclusive peace.

Finding 7. On the basis of being the funding mechanism that supports such activities, the Facility is highly relevant to the peace process.

Finding 8. Without the financial support the Facility provides, the Special Envoy's efforts to reach a sustainable peace agreement in Yemen would not make headway.

Finding 9. The Facility has also demonstrated its ability to provide fast and flexible funding to a project that stemmed from priorities discussed by the parties in Stockholm. At the practical level, the Facility is much faster than normal funding instruments and more flexible than UNDP would normally be.

Finding 10. The projects being implemented under Window 2 are in keeping with the country programme's objectives and the UNDP Strategic Plan as well as the attainment of SDG16. At this time, however, not enough progress has been made in implementing them to arrive at any definitive conclusion as to their impact.

Finding 11. The Facility is relevant conceptually, but it has, to date, focused too narrowly on supporting the outcome of higher-level political interaction. It embodies, in effect, a top-down process.

Finding 12. The Facility is too dependent on future political stability and falls short in addressing gender equality. Although it contributes ostensibly to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals, it is not evident that these are objectives the project pursues deliberately.

Efficiency

Finding 13. Although there was a coordination group with OSESGY aimed at consulting on everything down to the agendas of the SCM and donor briefing, several interviewees have flagged their concerns over the lack of collaboration and coordination with the OSESGY, as well as limited information sharing from the OSESGY to the Facility.

Finding 14. At the operational level, the management of the Facility is widely regarded as being professional, accessible and efficient.

Finding 15. Implementation delays and cost overruns are not necessarily the "fault" of the Facility. Rather, they reflect the complex situation on the ground.

Finding 16. Although the Facility hasn't always been able to achieve what was expected of it, in general, it has proven to be valuable, flexible, adaptable, quick and efficient.

Sustainability

Finding 17. A simple analysis in terms of outputs delivered versus the funds available to continue building on them indicates that there would be significant challenges in terms of assuring their long-term viability without continuing financial support from the donors. Yet, the lack of clear-cut exit strategies for all projects would appear to imply that the Facility's programming will continue on the assumption that it always will. This is a dangerous misperception.

Finding 18. Donors have provided generous support to the Facility. However, in interviews, most were non-committal about whether they would continue their funding when the present project end date expires.

Finding 20. A comprehensive vision and strategy for the next phase of the Peace Support Facility has yet to emerge. The extension to December 2022 appears to be a stop-gap measure designed to maintain its presence but without any underlying strategic plan.

Finding 21. The evaluation concludes that the strategic priorities and areas of focus identified in the Peace Support Facility Project Document are a good fit with national needs and UNDP's position as a trusted partner in Yemen. Although there has been a disappointing level of performance in key output areas this should not be attributed in any major way to any fault of the Facility.

Cross Cutting

Finding 19. The absence of a dedicated gender specialist has left the Facility without a strategy to address gender issues systematically.

Finding 22. Essentially, the evaluation has occurred too soon. It would have been more apropos had it taken place, say, six months from now.

Recommendations

R1: In order to add value to its role, the relationship of the Facility to the OSESGY needs to be more collaborative and allow the Facility more flexibility to focus more on local confidence building and conflict prevention opportunities.

R2: The Project Document should be revisited to enable opportunities for the Facility to engage in developing initiatives in support of peacebuilding in keeping with the objectives of the UNDP Country Programme Framework. This would complement the work of the OSESGY, not supplant it.

R3: The Facility should build on UNDP's vast experience at the interface of peacebuilding and development by proactively seeking opportunities to reinforce efforts by CSOs/NGOs to engage with communities on the peace process.

R4: There needs to be a concerted effort to enhance dialogue and consultation between the OSESGY, the PSF and UNDP in identifying and developing peacebuilding initiatives.

R5: Senior UNDP and OSESGY management should adopt a joint approach to pressure the authorities (IRG, AA and STC) to unblock measures that delay project implementation (including the SAFER Tanker situation)

R6: The Facility should support an awareness raising campaign to help the attainment of SDG targets as part of a broader conflict prevention and peacebuilding strategy.

R7: The Facility should support an international effort to learn from the experiences of other countries in developing gender-specific programming strategies, through virtual workshops or other kinds of information exchanges.

R8: At the local level, the PSF should seek opportunities to support social networks and movements aimed at advancing women's rights and gender inclusivity.

Section 1: Introducing the evaluation

1.1 Evaluation purpose, scope, and objectives

1. The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) in Yemen commissioned an independent Mid-Term Evaluation (MTE) of the Peace Support Facility (PSF/Facility) for the period of 18 April 2019 to December 2020. The evaluation was undertaken by a team of two consultants - one international Team Leader and one national consultant - between March-April 2021. The Facility was established to support the implementation of the 2018 Stockholm Agreement with an initial end date of December 31, 2020, and a budget of \$20M. Currently at mid-point, it has been extended to December 2022 with an increased budget of \$30M to give it more flexibility in identifying and implementing activities. The purpose of the Facility is to support the peace process by accelerating the implementation of agreements reached by the parties to the conflict during negotiations led by the UN Secretary General’s Special Envoy to Yemen.

2. The Stockholm Agreement provides the framework for demonstrating concrete alternatives to conflict, creating local demand for peace and to incentivize parties to deepen their engagement in the Special Envoy’s peace process. The Facility’s work is designed to support these objectives, as summarised in Box 1.

<p>Box 1: Key Actions Supported by the Facility</p> <p><i>The peace process in Yemen is supported with fast, flexible initiatives, agreed by the parties, that deliver tangible, rapid improvements in the daily lives of people, and reinforce and build public support for the political process.</i></p> <p>Component 1: Initiatives to build confidence between the parties, in the peace process and to support the implementation of the Stockholm agreement or any other future agreement.</p> <p>Component 2: Discreet activities emerging out of existing Track II initiatives are implemented with the goal of catalyzing the political process.</p> <p>Component 3: Transitional governance arrangements are supported as and when a more comprehensive peace agreement is reached by the parties.</p>

3. The MTE aims to serve as an important learning and accountability tool, providing UNDP, donors, national stakeholders, and partners with an impartial assessment of the results generated to date. In reviewing progress towards the achievement of the Facility’s results and outcomes, the MTE sought to identify signs of success and areas for improvement that will guide its future direction; in particular, regarding the potential role of the next phase of the Facility in support of future peace initiatives. In addition, the MTE was charged with assessing the Facility’s contribution to the attainment of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), especially SDG 16 “Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions.” SDG 16 puts emphasis on development policies and programmes as the core of efforts

to address the underlying causes of fragility, thereby tying SDG 16 to the international agenda to promote peacebuilding and state building as well as aid effectiveness. SDG 16 also flags the key role strengthening the rule of law, good governance and promoting human rights plays in promoting peaceful, just, and inclusive societies and as an accelerator for the 2030 Agenda. The attainment of SDG 16 is therefore highly relevant to the Yemeni context.

4. As described in the Terms of Reference (ToR), (see Annex A), the overall purpose of this evaluation is to:

1. Determine the relevance and strategic positioning of the Facility and whether the initial assumptions are still relevant.
2. Assess a) the progress made towards Facility results and whether there were any unintended results and b) what can be captured in terms of lessons learned for ongoing PSF initiatives.
3. Assess whether the Facility management arrangements, approaches and strategies are well-conceived and efficient in delivering the Facility's output and components.
4. Assess the overall contribution of the PSF to the peace process and whether there are indications of sustaining the results generated by the Facility.
5. Analyse the extent to which the Facility enhanced application of a rights-based approach, gender equality and women's empowerment, social and environmental standards and participation of other socially vulnerable groups such as children and the disabled.

5. The MTE weighed the Facility's relevance, effectiveness, efficiency and sustainability in terms of the above elements and included the cross-cutting issues of human rights and gender equality. These criteria were broken down into 25 specific evaluation questions (EQ) in the ToR as presented in Box 2.

6. This report brings together the findings, conclusions, and recommendations from the various processes of the evaluation. The identification of lessons learned, and recommendations will inform the Facility's work from 2021 to the end of 2022.

Box 2: Evaluation criteria and detailed questions

Relevance

1. To what extent is the Facility in line with the national priorities, the country programme's objectives, the UNDP Strategic Plan and the SDGs?
2. To what extent does the Facility contribute to address emerging issues of relevance within the peace process?
3. To what extent were lessons learned from other relevant initiatives considered in the Facility's design?
4. To what extent does the Facility contribute to gender equality, the empowerment of women and the human rights-based approach?

Effectiveness/Impact

5. To what extent has the Facility contributed to the country programme outcomes and outputs, the SDGs, the UNDP Strategic Plan and national peacebuilding priorities?

6. To what extent were the Facility's output and components achieved?
7. What factors have contributed to achieving or not achieving intended country programme outputs and outcomes?
8. To what extent has the Facility contributed to building confidence of the overall peace process and to the Humanitarian Development and Peace Nexus
9. To what extent has the Facility been appropriately responsive to the needs of the national constituents and changing stakeholder priorities?
10. To what extent has the Facility contributed to gender equality, the empowerment of women and the realization of human rights?

Efficiency

11. To what extent was the Facility management structure as outlined in the project document efficient in generating the expected results?
12. To what extent have the UNDP project implementation strategy and execution been efficient and cost-effective?
13. To what extent has there been an economical use of financial and human resources? Have resources (financial, human resources, time etc.) been allocated strategically to achieve outcomes?
14. To what extent do the M&E systems utilized by UNDP ensure effective and efficient project management?

Sustainability

15. Are there any financial risks that may jeopardize the sustainability of project outputs?
16. To what extent will financial and economic resources be available to sustain the benefits achieved by the Facility?
17. Are there any social or political risks that may jeopardize sustainability of Facility's results and the Facility's contributions to country programme outputs and outcomes?
18. To what extent are lessons learned being documented by the Facility team on a continual basis and shared with appropriate parties who could learn from the Facility?
19. To what extent do UNDP interventions have well-designed and well-planned exit strategies?

Human rights

20. To what extent have poor, indigenous and physically challenged, women and other disadvantaged and marginalized groups included in helping design and prioritize the work of the Facility in the spirit of broad societal inclusion. To what extent have they benefited from the work of PSF?
21. To what extent are the planned project interventions relevant to the overall strategy of inclusivity and empowerment?

Gender equality

22. Did the project clearly define the problems to be addressed and considered the institutional, socio-political, economic, and environmental contexts and their gender dimension?
23. To what extent have gender equality and the empowerment of women been addressed in the design, implementation and monitoring of the Facility?
24. Is the gender marker data assigned to this Facility representative of the reality?
25. To what extent has the Facility promoted positive changes in gender equality and the empowerment of women? Were there any unintended effects? What is women's role in helping shape and prioritize the work of the Facility?

Further evaluation questions were developed and explored by the evaluation team as the interview process proceeded.

Evaluation Framework and Methodology

1.2 Approach and Method

7. Based on the evaluation questions and criteria provided in the ToR, the ET developed an evaluation matrix mapping the EQ and judgement criteria (JC) based on various UNDP commitments made in the Country Programme Framework (CPF), UNDP/UNEG evaluation guidelines, as well as an understanding of the context in the country. It is to be noted that in its initial attempt to develop sub-questions against each EQ, it was soon found that given 25 EQs, the process would be unwieldy and would generate some 50 sub-questions which would be unrealistic to address in an evaluation of this nature. However, some additional questions, focused on the roles and activities of specific stakeholders, were developed as the interviews progressed. Further, it was noted that since the individual EQs were specific enough, most of these rendered themselves to be broken down into specific JCs (See Annex C)

8. The process of development of JCs showed that there were overlaps between some EQs: sometimes the same question has been articulated differently with little substantive difference. For example, EQs 12 & 13 are closely linked to EQ 11; EQ 23 is closely linked to EQ 22 and EQ 25 is closely linked to EQs 22-23. (See Box 2). The evaluation team therefore combined the overlapping EQs in its interviews. An evaluability assessment (EA) based on the evaluation matrix was undertaken at the inception stage in order to understand the feasibility of addressing the EQs and the challenges and shortcomings that might be faced during the evaluation. Of particular concern was the availability and quality of relevant secondary data and the ET's ability to obtain primary data from various stakeholders because the team leader was operating remotely from his home-base in Canada and the national consultant was not able to visit project sites.

The EA involved the following steps:

- A rapid scan of documents provided by UNDP, as well as those available in the public domain, was undertaken to assess the availability and quality of evaluable data to contribute to addressing the EQs.
- A rapid assessment of each JC for the type of data that will be required and the likely feasibility of the ET being able to gather credible data in the limited time it had.

9. The ET's judgement was that all EQs, conceptually, were evaluable, assuming that data points as identified in the evaluation matrix were available. It was recognised that there would likely be some

variability in data availability (and/or feasibility of generating these) for some aspects of the project. The implications for the evaluation and proposed mitigating measures are outlined below.

10. Scoping during the inception phase showed that evaluable data might be thin. This was confirmed during the evaluation. However, the evaluation team made substantive efforts to identify key informants in order to obtain necessary secondary data where possible. The primary challenges in collecting data were:

- Lack of access to monitoring data for the period under evaluation.
- Near absence of progress reports.
- Inability to engage with individuals and communities in the field in any way due to movement restrictions, e.g., because of Covid-19 or insecurity.

11. At the programming level, the ET examined the Theory of Change (TOC) underpinning the Project Document and the underlying assumptions. As this shows, **the project aims to deliver complex outputs and outcomes towards which progress has been less than anticipated and for which measurable data - quantitative and qualitative - is not available.**

12. A mixed-methods approach was used for the evaluation combining key informant interviews from multiple sources and desk review of key documents. Because of the travel restrictions mentioned above, all interviews were conducted remotely. It was recognised at the planning stage that there might be limitations on what could be achieved from a distance because of stakeholder availability and internet connection issues. Whereas this proved indeed to be the case, the impact was mitigated by spreading the effort widely and engaging as many participants as possible.

13. The team reviewed all documents provided by UNDP related to the project including Project Documents, the Country Programme Framework, the 2020 Results-Oriented Outcome Report (ROAR) and implementing partners' proposals. In addition, the team undertook a literature review of background material pertaining to the conflict and the situation in Yemen. In-depth consultations were held with numerous stakeholders¹ using the evaluation questions as a basis for discussion. As the evaluation progressed, the interviews became increasingly important to further explore specific aspects of the assignment and to follow up on issues that had emerged in previous discussions.

14. To promote an open exchange of views, all interviewees were assured that their comments and observations would be treated confidentially and anonymously. Following each interview, the team compared notes and checked for consistencies and patterns with other interviews to arrive at

¹ See Annex B.

reliable conclusions. In total, 31 structured individual interviews were conducted by the evaluation team including 17 with UNDP and other UN agencies, a representative sample of 8 development partners/contributors to the PSF and 6 with IPs and others. Unfortunately, despite efforts by the evaluation manager, it was not possible to interview any officials from the parties involved in the conflict.

15. Throughout the evaluation, data collected from both primary and secondary sources were recorded systematically for evidence assessment based on the judgment criteria against each EQ defined in the evaluation matrix. The ET carried out an analysis of patterns in the data, clustering the data around emerging themes and sub-themes. A rigorous analysis of data was then undertaken, and findings on each EQ were compared for their congruence. Data triangulation was done to the extent possible given that site visits and field interviews, including with the parties to the conflict, were missing links in the process. Accordingly, comparing information gathered through multiple interviews and documentary research were the only means to validate the findings. Where discrepancies occurred that could not be resolved, the ET did not use such data for drawing findings or conclusions. Given the data challenges, the evaluation team believe that their approach has led to as coherent an understanding as possible of the status of the project and its attainment (or not) of outputs and outcomes.

1.3 Evaluation ethics and data protection

16. The evaluators followed UN Evaluation Group (UNEG) ethical guidelines throughout the evaluation process.² Protecting personal data is essential in any evaluation in order to respect dignity and ensure the security of all stakeholders involved. The ET have ensured full confidentiality of data provided, accessed and produced during the course of their work, unless information was obtained from sources that are in the public domain. Any personal data collected has been minimal and anonymised in the report. Although the names and titles of individual interviewees were collected and appear in Annex B, their names or any other details that could be traced back to them are not presented in the report. The information knowledge and data gathered in the evaluation process will also be solely used for the evaluation and not for other uses without the express authorization of UNDP and partners.

17. The ET members are contractually obliged not to publish or otherwise communicate to third parties, through any medium whatsoever, any information obtained during this evaluation, except

² UN Evaluation Group (2008). UNEG Ethical Guidelines for Evaluation.

those presented in the report. In its communications with stakeholders, the ET explained these commitments and procedures in a transparent way in order for participants to understand the data protection protocol.

1.4 Limitations of the evaluation

18. The challenges arising from the need to conduct interviews remotely, including poor internet connections in some cases, has been outlined above. These shortcomings were mitigated as much as possible by extensive interviews with donors, PSF staff (current and former), with staff of the OSESGY and other UN agencies and Implementing Partners. **At the outset of the evaluation, it was anticipated that some progress reports or other project reviews would be available, but these proved to be very limited. Secondary data on outputs and outcomes was essentially non-existent.** Nor, as has been discussed, was it possible for the national consultant to meet with the authorities, any Ministries, or people involved in frontline delivery in the implementing agencies. **In short, the sources of data were less than optimal.** Therefore, the team were highly dependent on sound interviews complemented by the comprehensive analysis of the available documents. Notwithstanding the challenges, the broad range of interviews and the available documentation provided adequate opportunities to compare information and ensure data gathered during the evaluation could be corroborated.

Section 2: The country context

2.1 Development challenges and opportunities:

19. The UN considers Yemen's war the worst humanitarian crisis in the world.³ Prior to the conflict, Yemen was already the poorest country in the Arab region suffering from weak human development outcomes compounded with a high population growth, repeated local unrest, chronic food insecurity and fragile political transition. An estimated 80 per cent of the population, 24 million people, requires some form of humanitarian or protection assistance, including 14.3 million who are in acute need. More than 20 million Yemenis are food insecure including 10 million who are one step away from famine. Of the 333 districts in the country, 230 are facing pre-famine conditions. At least 238,000 people in 45 districts are currently in catastrophic condition and more will fall into this category unless access is expanded, including through peace consultations. An estimated 3.3 million people remain displaced. As such the conflict, and the acute level of hunger and violence, has hit

³ Information in this section is taken from the Project Document and ToR for the evaluation.

women and girls in Yemen the hardest. Yemen ranks last of 149 countries analysed in the World Economic Forum's gender gap index and last of 160 countries in UNDP's gender equality index.

20. Since the start of conflict in 2014, economic indicators have plummeted; Gross Domestic Product (GDP) has declined by nearly 50 percent over the last three years - equivalent to a loss of US\$50 billion, and more than 600,000 people have lost their jobs. Intensive airstrikes, armed clashes, and shelling - which continue across the country - resulted in damage or destruction of civilian facilities, including irrigation systems, agricultural sites, schools, hospitals, water points and sanitation plants. Landmines and other explosive remnants of war pose long-term risks for the civilian population and humanitarian actors. In addition, the public budget deficit since late 2016 has disrupted basic social services and payment of public sector salaries.

21. Whereas Yemen is undoubtedly in dire straits and, as described above, will require enormous investments in stabilisation and recovery programming if it is to return to any semblance of "normality", it is worth noting that the conflict has only been going on for about six years and large areas of the country are free from conflict. As difficult as it may seem today, when compared to other countries in much longer intractable conflict situations, for example Syria, the situation should not be considered completely hopeless. What is required to turn it around, however, is a comprehensive and sustainable peace and that is where the work of the Facility, in support of the Special Envoy, comes into play.

2.2 PSF Restructuring and Programming initiatives:

22. On 13 September 2019, the Peace Support Facility Steering Committee held its inaugural meeting in Berlin, Germany, and expressed strong support for the re-structuring of the Facility to establish three distinct Windows in close coordination with the UNRCO and the Special Envoy's office⁴:

- **Window 1:** Implementation of the Hodeidah agreement and new initiatives requested by the parties with a clear link to the Stockholm Agreement or any other future agreement between Yemeni parties under UN auspices.
- **Window 2:** Delivery of discreet activities emerging out of existing Track 2 initiatives with the goal of catalyzing the political process.
- **Window 3:** Support to transitional governance arrangements as and when the parties agree and post-peace agreement planning.

Each Window represents a distinct opportunity to deliver against a strategic objective in a different manner and for different outcomes.⁵ Window 1 implements initiatives selected by the RC or Special Envoy. All proposals submitted for consideration under Window 2 will undergo full vetting in terms of

⁴ The re-structuring had no bearing on the management structure of the Facility.

⁵ Peace Support Facility for Yemen – Adapted Window Structure, p. 1

their feasibility, a risk assessment and “value for money” before being discussed by the Steering Committee. A summary of the status of projects under the three distinct windows is as follows⁶:

Window 1: Projects related to supporting the implementation of the Stockholm Agreement and any other future agreement between the Yemeni parties, stem directly from interactions with the parties by the Special Envoy to the Secretary-General and the Resident & Humanitarian Coordinator. The two PSF initiatives pertaining to this Window are the emergency support interventions in the Ports of Hodeidah, Salif and Ras Issa; and the assessment of the Marib power station.

Window 2: Projects currently in the early stages of implementation under this window result from collaboration between the OSESGY and the PSF and include a series of three community safety initiatives emerging from Track 2 dialogues. The project will build on the capacity and well-established expertise of national and international NGOs working on community safety in Yemen as implementing partners, notably: PILPG, Safer Yemen and CIVIC. The approach emphasises complementarities between the component parts⁷ and with other projects in the same thematic area, thus presenting opportunities for dialogue and inclusion in the peace process. The three IPs bring extensive experience to their tasks and are trusted actors able to gain the support of all parties to the conflict.

A preliminary assessment of a second initiative under Window 2, involving the rehabilitation of water infrastructure in Dahmar City and Maghreb Ans with the Berghof Foundation, has been completed and is in the process of being implemented. Finally, a garbage collection campaign in Taiz, designed as a confidence building measure, has been approved but has been unable to proceed because of insecurity.

All of the above hold the potential of being important initiatives that would have direct impacts at the community level and could help encourage and broaden women’s engagement in the peace process. However, their “potential” is yet to be demonstrated; implementation of the initiatives has not advanced to a degree sufficient for an assessment of their impact to be made.

Window 3: Advances in this area related to transitional governance are contingent on a peace agreement being reached. At which point, core government functions could be supported, including, for example, the Presidency and Central Bank.

23. In sum, each window will give preference to different types of interventions⁸: Window 1 will deal with large infrastructure projects; Window 2 will address local level reconciliation and

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ “Enhancing Local Security in Yemen” - Public International Law and Policy Group (PILPG) – Activities include: implementing consultations between community members and local security forces focusing on exchanging information between communities and security actors; providing small-grant funding to support community safety; supporting advocacy and awareness initiatives; capacity building for the security sector.

“Enhancing Community Protection and Safety in Yemen” - Center for Civilians in Conflict (CIVIC) – Activities include: Supporting consultations between community groups and local security forces to address priorities, needs, lessons learned and the impacts of local security activities; supporting advocacy and awareness initiatives; capacity building for the security sector

“Safer Schools Project” - Safer Yemen – Activities include: conducting a 6-month pilot project aimed at creating Safer Schools through the finalization of safety and emergency plans and procedures; capacity building for the Ministry of Education and launch of the Safer Schools Campaign.

⁸ Window 1 covers Hodeida, Salif and Ras al-Issa; Window 2 will be implemented in eight governorates: Abyan, Aden, Amanat Al-Asimah, Hadramout, Mareb, Sa’adah, Shabwah and Taiz. There are no activities under Window 3.

peacebuilding (making sure to avoid duplication with exiting interventions being pursued by the OSESGY's Peace Support Project); and Window 3 will focus on post-conflict stabilisation initiatives. Of the three, Window 2 offers the broadest possibility for promoting a bottom-up approach to the peace process as well as complementing the other two windows in supporting agreements between the parties and transitional governance arrangements.

24. Key elements in determining whether a project is an appropriate fit under the Window 2 umbrella include:

- Whether it stemmed from dialogue, i.e., the idea for it must have come from stakeholder engagement in Track 2 dialogues.
- If the initiative is sponsored by a donor, e.g. community safety by the EU; water infrastructure by Germany.
- It must be evident that its implementation will lead to local peace dividends and/or build confidence in the peace process.
- It should have the potential to generate a multiplier effect on peace.

25. **The “Windows revision” to restructure the Facility around immediate projects in support of the peace process, initiatives emerging from Track 2 dialogue and eventual support to transitional governance arrangements, was a credible effort to place the Facility in a position to respond quickly to emerging issues and events supportive of peace.** However, implementation of initiatives supported by the Facility has met with several challenges, mainly related to the difficulty of moving the political process forward. It has proven difficult to identify initiatives that would be agreed upon by both parties (Internationally Recognised Government of Yemen and Ansar Allah) and to have the necessary security situation in place to implement activities. In actuality, the project has only partially delivered on the goals of the Stockholm Agreement⁹ under the framework of Window 1; and Window 2 projects have only advanced slowly. The hope for support to transitional governance under Windows 3 remains a distant ambition, albeit that it is considered an “important placeholder” for when prospects for a peace agreement materialise.¹⁰

Section 3: Findings of the Evaluation

The design of the Facility was aimed at achieving the following output:

The peace process in Yemen is supported with fast, flexible initiatives, agreed by the parties, that deliver tangible, rapid improvements in the daily lives of people, and reinforce and build public support for the political process.

In addition, the Facility should ostensibly support UNDP CPF Outcome 1:

⁹ At Stockholm, the parties reached an agreement on the following: 1. An agreement on the city of Hodeidah and the ports of Hodeidah, Salif and Ras Issa. 2. An executive mechanism on activating the prisoner exchange agreement. 3. A statement of understanding on Taiz.

¹⁰ Peace Support Facility for Yemen, Annual Report, 2019.

“Yemenis contribute to and benefit from inclusive, accountable and gender responsive governance at local and central levels” and, UNDP CPF Outcome 3: *“Yemenis contribute to and benefit from peacebuilding processes.”*

26. Despite the clear objectives outlined in the Project Document and the revised approach to project selection and implementation, the evaluation finds that the Facility has yet to achieve its core output goals.

27. However, under Window 1, it is important to recognize that the initial results achieved around the port of Hodeidah have contributed to a key objective of the Stockholm Agreement, i.e., to strengthen the UN presence in the ports, help ensure their continued functionality and the related passage of humanitarian aid. Nevertheless, although it may be the case that this has built “public support for the peace process by achieving concrete and rapid improvement in people’s lives,”¹¹ the ET have found no documentary evidence to substantiate this. Nor, as has been discussed, was it possible to go into the field to get first-hand information from communities about their awareness of the work of the PSF and the impact it has had on them.¹²

28. **Although major investments have been, and are being, made to rehabilitate the Port of Hodeidah¹³ - and without belittling the importance of these to the efficient running of the port - it is hard to see how this will materially influence the political situation on the ground. The conflict revolves around control of the port.** At the time of the December 2018 ceasefire the port was at the heart of the conflict and remains under the control of the Houthis.¹⁴

29. As for the progress against the overall PSF outcome, it cannot be argued that the project has contributed to the peace process given the significant volatility and insecurity that Yemen continues to experience. There have been continual violations of the Stockholm Agreement and, despite the best efforts of the Special Envoy, no nation-wide peace deal has been reached. The country remains fragmented. In terms of enhancing public support for the peace process, it would have been useful for the ET to be able to ask whether the population around the port - let alone further afield in the country

¹¹ UNDP Yemen, Peace Support Facility.

¹² Furthermore, we have not found evidence that “by demonstrating alternatives to conflict,” local demand for peace has built confidence and motivated parties to “fully engage in the Special Envoy’s peace process.”

¹³ Measures being implemented by the PSF, or at the approval stage, include:

- Rehabilitation of the Port of Hodeidah’s training centre in support of capacity building for the Yemen Red Sea Port Corporation.
- Rehabilitation of the Port’s workshop and generator shelter.
- Electrical assessment mission to the ports of Hodeidah, Salif and Ras Issa.
- Assessment of the damaged gantry cranes.
- Procurement of spare parts for generator sets and rolling equipment for the Port of Hodeidah.
- Procurement of Pilot boats.
- Procurement of Mobile Harbour Cranes.

¹⁴ “Houthis” and “Ansar Allah” are both referred to as the “de facto authority” in this report.

- even understand that PSF-supported rehabilitation work represents a “peace dividend.” In fact, whether they do or not is not particularly important at the end of the day; the primary objective is to accelerate the implementation of agreements reached by the parties and this, we could argue, has been done to some extent. **However, the question of whether the purpose of the Facility is widely understood does highlight the disconnect between the ambitious project outputs and the reality on the ground. In essence, the objectives and outcomes as presented are not measurable.**

30. Nevertheless, the Facility has demonstrated flexibility, responsiveness and efficiency in trying to support the work of the Special Envoy albeit, arguably, against almost insurmountable odds. The ET therefore feel comfortable in assessing its performance in terms of the evaluation criteria established at the outset of the evaluation (see Box 2).

31. The MTE weighed the Facility’s relevance, effectiveness, efficiency and sustainability in terms of the above elements and included the cross-cutting issues of human rights and gender equality.

Section 4: Assessment against evaluation criteria

4.1 Relevance: The extent to which the intervention objectives and design respond to the Facility’s policies and priorities

32. **The PSF fits seamlessly into Programme Priority 1 of UNDP’s Strategic Plan for Yemen - Peace Operations Support¹⁵ - as well as with the Country Programme Framework’s objective of building a foundation for inclusive peace.** In partnership with OSESGY, UNMHA and the RCO, “UNDP will implement projects designed to provide visible results in areas critical to the advancement of the overall peace agenda.”¹⁶ **On the basis of being the funding mechanism that supports such activities, the Facility is highly relevant to the peace process. Without the financial support it provides, the Special Envoy’s efforts to reach a sustainable peace agreement in Yemen would not make headway.** To determine the practical relevance and strategic positioning of the Facility, the ET compared the goals of the key outputs¹⁷ with the implementation record for the 3 Components/Windows.

33. By implementing important measures to rehabilitate the Port of Hodeidah, the Facility has clearly provided tangible support to efforts to improve the daily lives of people. In delivering this high

¹⁵ Priority 2: Governance and the Rule of Law; Priority 3: Economic Recovery and Development. The three priorities align with the UNDP Strategic Plan 2018-2021 Outcome 3: “Strengthening Resilience to Shocks and Crisis.”

¹⁶ UNDP Country Programme Document for the Republic of Yemen – July 2019 to June 2021. Yemen.

¹⁷ Output 1: The implementation of the Stockholm agreement or any other future agreement are supported through initiatives agreed by the parties

Output 2: Discreet activities emerging out of Track II initiatives are implemented with the goal of catalyzing the political process.

Output 3: Transitional governance and post-peace agreement.

impact initiative, **the Facility has also demonstrated its ability to provide fast and flexible funding to a project that stemmed from priorities discussed by the parties in Stockholm.** Moreover, this Window 1 activity has supported the political work of the Special Envoy which, in effect, is key to the raison d'être of the PSF.

34. Evidently, in the case of Hodeidah, the intervention design and objectives reflect the Facility's policies and priorities. Nevertheless, based on the ongoing conflict situation, and general uncertainty expressed by many interviewees that the Stockholm Agreement may have run its course, **it is not apparent that the Hodeidah intervention has created local demand for peace or incentivised the parties "to deepen their engagement with the Special Envoy."**¹⁸

35. In considering the projects being implemented under Window 2, aimed at delivering discreet activities emerging out of existing Track 2 initiatives and catalyzing the political process, i.e., the community safety initiatives and the water management project, these have been initiated in response to community dialogues and should contribute to a bottom-up approach to building peace. As such, they are in keeping with the country programme's objectives and the UNDP Strategic Plan as well as the attainment of SDG16. At this time, however, not enough progress has been made in implementing the projects to arrive at any definitive conclusion as to their impact.¹⁹ Still, in marrying peacebuilding and reconciliation to a broader community-driven conflict prevention agenda, they represent innovative approaches that will help engage the grassroots level in the peace process. As such, they should eventually help to reinforce and build public support for the political process and contribute to peace.

36. As has been discussed, activities under the third line of support (Window 3), in the area of transitional governance, will be contingent on support by the parties to an overall peace deal. The kinds of activities envisaged dealing, for example, with core government functions and the transitional mechanisms in support of a peace agreement, will be highly pertinent if peace does break out.

37. **On the basis of the above, we would argue that the PSF is indeed relevant conceptually, but it has, to date, focused too narrowly on supporting the outcome of higher-level political interaction, as manifested by the investments in the Port of Hodeidah.** It embodies, in effect, a

¹⁸ ProDoc.

¹⁹ PILPG reports, for example, that "No noticeable impacts on Gender were observed during this reporting period. The majority of planned activities will be implemented in the next reporting period, and it is expected that Gender-related impact will become more apparent by then." Enhancing Local Security in Yemen, Progress Report, March 2021.

top-down process. It is also too dependent on future political stability and falls short in addressing gender equality.²⁰ **Although it contributes ostensibly to sustainable development goals 5, 10 and 16,²¹ it is not evident that these are objectives the project pursues deliberately.**

38. In reality, being established as a financial tool to be used in support of initiatives identified by the Special Envoy, the Facility does not have the mandate to initiate peacebuilding projects independently and cannot risk touching subjects that might interfere with the political agenda of the Special Envoy. In order to add value to its role, the relationship of the Facility to the OSESGY needs fine-tuning to allow it to focus more on local confidence building and conflict prevention opportunities, as it has begun to do under Window 2. The Facility would therefore build on UNDP's vast experience at the interface of peacebuilding and development and help to build peace from the ground up by engaging with communities in the peace process. Doing so will open the door to advances in the SDG agenda and provide greater opportunities for women's voices to be heard.

4.2 Efficiency: The extent to which the intervention delivers, or is likely to deliver, results in an economic and timely way.

39. As a quick response and flexible funding mechanism, the Facility has the advantage of benefiting from UNDP's extensive experience in delivering support quickly in challenging conflict-affected environments. The overall management structure is appropriate in that it links the PSF and UNDP with the RC and a Steering Committee (chaired by the RC) provides guidance and approvals for its activities. The OSESGY is represented at various project management meetings and the Special Envoy attends the Steering Committee meetings. On the surface, this would seem to be an efficient and cooperative way of doing things with a built-in positive impact on the peace process. However, **several interviewees have flagged their concerns over the lack of collaboration and coordination with the OSESGY, as well as limited information sharing from the OSESGY to the PSF.** In essence, every programming decision is dependent on what the OSESGY decides to do; yet, the Facility seems to be kept in the dark about what decisions have been made. At times, it seems that the right arm doesn't know what the left arm is doing.

40. **At the operational level, the management of the Facility is widely regarded as being professional, accessible and efficient.** The Facility's structure is designed to promote speed and

²⁰ The ET recognises the particular challenge of addressing gender equality issues in traditional societies. See Section 4.4 below.

²¹ SDG 5: Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls; SDG 10: Reduce inequality within and among countries; SDG 16: Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels.

efficiency in project delivery through a dedicated Project Management Unit (PMU). However, apart from timeliness, efficiency is a function of economy and cost-effectiveness. “Cost” includes financial, human resources and expertise invested. Of note in this regard is the make-up of the Facility’s team, which includes 4 international positions from the P3 level to the P5 level. This was questioned by some interviewees as representing a high cost compared to the value of the project when national staff could be hired more cheaply. That might be a more economical approach but it doesn’t account for the level of expertise required and whether that could be found locally. Moreover, there is no indication that project outcomes have been negatively impacted in terms of efficiency by the greater expense associated with international recruitment.

41. Conversely, there have been bureaucratic and political obstacles which have delayed the implementation of projects and the timely disbursement of funds. For example, some new IPs have faced rigorous scrutiny and evaluation before formal agreements could be signed. This is understandable and donors are undoubtedly reassured by the due diligence being practiced.²² However, it draws attention to the need to factor such reviews into planned timelines for project delivery and this has not been the case. The result being that no-cost extensions can be required in order to deliver on commitments.

42. Some INGOs interviewed reported that their start dates were delayed, or they have been prevented from starting work, by the imposition of new registration requirements by agencies such as the Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation (MoPIC) or the Houthis Supreme Council for Management and Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs and International Cooperation (SCMCHA).²³ For example, budgets have been questioned and conditions imposed on what kind of facilities they can operate from. There have also been severe delays in procuring equipment and essential parts for the Port of Hodeidah rehabilitation as well as delivering them because of the blockade and dependence on the permission of the authorities. In addition, there are challenges in getting technical experts in place to work on the ports project, again, largely because of conditions imposed by the de facto authority. Senior UNDP management has taken these issues up with the authorities in an attempt to move things along, has has happened on at least one occasion in the South.²⁴

²² This is standard procedure across the UN system.

²³ In its March 2021, Safer Schools Progress Report, Safer Yemen states: “The project is going through a registration process with SCMCHA – the process is slightly slow but going steady in the right direction.” The Responsible Party Agreement between Safer Yemen and UNDP was signed at the beginning of October, 2020.

²⁴ According to the Project Manager, “CIVIC has been struggling to get the authorization to operate in the south. I will discuss the issue this week with MSU to agree on a way forward since we might not be in position to implement. Despite UNDP’s intervention, the authorization is yet to be granted.”

43. As another layer of difficulty, the impact of COVID-19 on travel in the country, as well as issues with getting some Facility staff into Yemen because of visa problems, illustrates the fact that **implementation delays and cost overruns are not necessarily the “fault” of the PSF. Rather, they reflect the complex situation on the ground** and show that “politics” and unforeseen events can often stall much needed progress in Yemen. Nor is the situation helped by the division of project personnel between Amman and Sana’a.

44. **Notwithstanding the above, at the practical level, the Facility is much faster than normal funding instruments and more flexible than UNDP would normally be.** The SAFER FSO tanker issue is a good case study of how the Facility has shown that its funds can be made available quickly and in response to emerging issues.²⁵ In this case, the urgent requirement is to field an assessment mission to determine the safety of the vessel and what is required to stabilise it. In a worst-case scenario, a major spill from the tanker would lead to the closure of the Port of Hodeidah and the collapse of humanitarian aid deliveries to most of the population of Yemen. Donors have all been supportive of the effort to mitigate a potential disaster, and the UN Security Council is briefed by OCHA on the situation every month.²⁶

45. The UN has been trying to deploy experts to assess the state of the vessel since 2019 but its efforts have been blocked by the de facto authorities, the Houthis. In November 2020, the Houthis agreed to let the UN mission proceed and the Facility became an important vehicle to channel funds to address the situation.²⁷ The Facility responded quickly to serve as the vehicle to support the assessment mission and new funding contributions were secured within a very short period of time. This demonstrated that the Facility is amenable to new ideas and capable of responding in a timely fashion to a situation of international concern. Although the SAFER tanker issue does not naturally fit with the mandate of the Facility, it shows its flexibility in meeting an innovative request for funds.²⁸

46. At the time of writing, the assessment mission has yet to take place. The Houthis have provided a written security guarantee for the deployment of the assessment team but in a form unacceptable to the UN. It is possible that this was a reaction to the Trump administration’s decision to brand the

²⁵ The Safer oil tanker is a floating storage and offloading (FSO) terminal that was used as an offshore platform for ships loading crude oil from the Marib-Ras Isa pipeline. It has been moored in the Red Sea off the coast near Hodeidah for more than five years and is regarded as an environmental disaster waiting to happen. It contains an estimated 1.1 million barrels of crude oil. Safer is owned by the Yemeni national oil company but came under the control of the Houthis in 2015 and no maintenance work has been conducted on it since then.

²⁶ On 15 July 2020, Mark Lowcock, Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs, and Inger Andersen, Executive Director of the *United Nations Environment Programme*, gave a briefing to the *Security Council* on the increasing environmental and humanitarian risks posed by the *Safer oil tanker*, S/2020/808.

²⁷ UNDP is working in coordination with the International Maritime Organisation (IMO) PERSA and UNEP on the national contingency planning and will deploy an expert to assist the concerned ministries and authorities to finalize the plan and estimate its implementation cost.

²⁸ The Safer situation does not reflect a clear link to the Stockholm Agreement or any other future agreement between Yemeni parties although it could be argued that the end result of PSF support would be to help build confidence and contribute to peace.

Houthi as an international terrorist organisation at the end of its term.²⁹ Be that as it may, this shows, once again, how a credible timely intervention by the Facility can fall victim to the underlying political machinations surrounding the conflict in Yemen.³⁰ **In sum, although the PSF hasn't always been able to achieve what was expected of it, in general, it has proven to be valuable, flexible, adaptable, quick and efficient.**

4.3 Effectiveness/Impact: The extent to which the interventions achieved, or is expected to achieve, its objectives and its results.

47. The effectiveness of the Facility is fundamentally tied to supporting the Special Envoy in his efforts to bring the parties to a peace agreement. In that sense, the Facility has achieved its primary objective by providing the funds to enable the initiatives identified by the Special Envoy to be implemented. The obvious example, of course, being the rehabilitation of the Port of Hodeidah. However, at this point in time, **it is difficult to conclude that the actual contribution the Facility has made has supported attainment of the country programme outcomes and outputs, or the UNDP strategic plan.**³¹ Its financial support for the high-level political activities of the Special Envoy has clearly been crucial but it is not apparent that this has built confidence in the overall peace process. Nor has its work contributed directly to the Humanitarian Development and Peace Nexus.³² **Although the Track 2 projects being implemented hold the promise of enhancing the empowerment of women, promoting gender equality and the realisation of human rights,**³³ **there is no evidence that the rehabilitation of the port has had a tangible impact in any of these areas.**³⁴

48. However, the important activities the Facility has supported in the framework of the port rehabilitation effort, notably, the renovation of the training centre to support capacity-building for the Red Sea Port Corporation (YRSPC), and the deployment of a damage assessment mission to advise on the repair requirements for the port's cranes, have addressed a key objective arising out of the Stockholm Agreement - to strengthen the UN's presence in the city of Hodeidah, its port, and the ports of Salif and Ras Issa. These initiatives, together with extensive procurements of spare parts and other equipment, have helped build the capacity of the port and established the conditions necessary to increase the flow of humanitarian assistance into the country. This has undoubtedly made a significant difference to the well-being of the people. However, there isn't confirmation that ordinary people

²⁹ A policy since revoked by the Biden administration.

³⁰ Although the assessment mission would face some serious technical challenges, the main issue is that it will be dependent on political support.

³¹ CPF Outcome 3: Yemenis contribute to and benefit from peacebuilding processes; Strategic Plan Outcome: Building resilience to shocks and crisis.

³² The concept of a "humanitarian-development-peace nexus" aligns with Agenda 2030 and focuses on the work needed to coherently address people's vulnerability before, during and after crises through greater coordination between project-based development and humanitarian interventions.

³³ The Community Security projects under PILPG and CIVIC have human rights and gender equality elements

³⁴ The rehabilitation initiative in the Port of Hodeidah did not employ any women in either its design or application.

recognise that the Facility has played a peacebuilding role.³⁵ In fact, **given the ongoing conflict and insecurity, and the absence of any formal peace agreement even at a local level, it would be a stretch to say that the prospects for peace have been advanced by the Facility.**

49. In terms of the Window 2 initiatives stemming from Track 2 dialogues, activities like the community safety and water infrastructure projects referred to in section 2.2 (above) represent a bottom-up approach to peacebuilding centred on confidence-building and giving voice to local leadership - including women. The project “Addressing community conflict surrounding water infrastructure in Dhamar”³⁶ is explicitly aimed at building social cohesion and societal resilience to conflicts over water and thereby reduces the risk of any national level peace agreement unravelling as a result of local conflicts. Notably, the consultative committee in Dhamar includes 5 women in its 21-person membership.³⁷

50. Similarly, the CIVIC implemented project on community security specifically aims to enhance the understanding of local officials and institutions engaged with civilian and community safety on human rights, as well as expanding gender-inclusive Community Protection Groups at local levels. The PILPG project also includes capacity building on human rights for civilians and security actors, as well as on gender issues. All of these projects work at local community levels. Should they be successful, the opportunities will be there to further promote gender equality and human rights and, as such, they will contribute to the Special Envoy’s efforts to achieve a comprehensive peace agreement. However, because these are new projects with only limited progress reports submitted, the evaluation is unable to comment on if/how the support of the Facility for them has contributed to the peace process.

4.4 Sustainability: The extent to which the net benefits of the intervention continue, or are likely to continue, beyond the life of a project/programme.

51. Sustainability is part of a commitment to ensure that project implementation at all levels is carried out in a productive, transparent and accountable way. In the case of the PSF, the key issue is whether the resources will be available to maintain progress in the future. **A simple analysis in terms of outputs delivered versus the funds available to continue building on them indicates that there would be significant challenges in terms of assuring their long-term viability without continuing**

³⁵ According to an Audit Trail comment, this is related to the fact that the PSF do not have outreach activities. A low-profile approach has been deliberately preferred by the UN authorities to avoid any publicity that could impede the peace negotiations.

³⁶ Implemented by Public Works Project

³⁷ An interesting question would be to ask what the role of these women is, and if their voices are heard, or if they simply fulfill a gender “quota” requirement.

financial support from the donors. However, the port rehabilitation does have the potential to create local capacity that bodes well for its long-term future - if it can be sustained. In particular, the renovation of the training centre will support capacity-building for the Red Sea Port Corporation (YRSPC) and strengthen port management skills. However, the construct of sustainability has to be considered in relation to the state of the country's development, the resources available to it and the capacity of its institutions. All of these elements are weak in the case of Yemen. In addition, **the continued instability and erosion of security, potential donor fatigue, weak institutional capacity and the uncertainty of continued funding make sustainability a major challenge to the Facility's programming in Yemen.**

52. Without a unified government and without a strong economy, and with the ongoing conflict and the added burden of the tremendous humanitarian crisis it faces, Yemen simply does not have the capacity to sustain what has been achieved so far. There was once a glimmer of hope that an agreement between the parties on the management of port revenues would have raised the prospect of funds being available to pay basic salaries. However, despite the best efforts of the OSESGY and UNMHA, supported by the Facility, the parties have failed to agree on this simple financial issue. The question then is: where will the funds to pay the wages of the port staff come from and who will pay for replacement parts for port machinery once things break down or wear out? **It is highly improbable that whichever authority is in charge will be in a position to continue to sustain most of these things without continued external assistance. Yet, the lack of clear-cut exit strategies for all projects would appear to imply that the Facility's programming will continue on the assumption that it always will. This is a dangerous misperception.**

53. From the outset of the Facility, donors have provided generous support to it (see Table 1 below). However, in interviews, most were non-committal about whether they would continue their funding when the present project end date expires. Although the sample is small, on balance, there were more who wavered than were those who remained committed. The reasons given for a reluctance to continue ranged from:

- A desire to see the Facility engaged in more creative ways to help persuade the parties to cooperate.
- The Facility needs to be more "strategic" - it seems to be implementing without a clear plan.
- The lack of "tangible" outcomes.
- The peace process is not moving forward, and the conflict is dragging on despite the work of the Facility.
- The focus is on political issues instead of concrete peacebuilding initiatives.
- There are a lot of other good projects that could be supported in Yemen.

The following chart shows that the utilization of donor contributions, at 49.3%, has improved markedly over the last year, which showed an average of only 11%³⁸:

Table 1
PSF Financial Status as of 22 March 2021³⁹

Donors	Disbursement	Total Expenditure	Contribution	Balance	% utilization
Denmark	592,887	592,887	2,104,947	1,512,060	28%
EU	427,277	427,277	1,118,900	691,623	38%
France	478,518	774,507	1,394,889	620,382	56%
UNDP	390,374	390,374	390,374	-	100%
Germany	1,985,550	4,188,296	7,319,614	3,131,318	57%
Norway	196,234	1,540,582	2,416,992	876,410	64%
UK	807,531	807,531	2,094,241	1,286,710	39%
SIDA	236,922	2,886,529	3,727,309	840,780	77%
SDC	336,072	336,072	1,016,260	680,188	33%
Netherlands	11,858	11,858	2,246,966	2,235,108	1%
Canada	688,394	688,394	1,524,390	835,996	45%
Italy	432	432	290,522	290,090	0.15%
Grand Total	6,152,048	12,644,305	25,645,404	13,000,666	49.30%

54. Nevertheless, there appears to be a risk of a steadily diminishing response by some donors to the crisis in Yemen because of a perception that the situation seems unlikely to ever improve and the efforts of the Facility to support the peace process seem somewhat futile. It may be too direct to call this donor fatigue but, given that some donors are cutting back on their assistance programmes globally, it could presage a re-evaluation by some of them of their support for the Facility.⁴⁰

4.5 Cross-cutting issues: Human Rights and Gender Equality

Gender is addressed as follows in the Project Document:

“The Peace Support Facility will seek to advance women’s empowerment recognizing that women and girls experience acute vulnerabilities during conflict, stabilization, recovery and rebuilding. Depending on scale, the Facility may recruit a dedicated Gender Specialist or draw on Country Office’s gender capacities. The project will develop a Gender Strategy and invest in strengthening capacities to improve gender programming during all stages of programme design, implementation, monitoring and reporting. The Facility will work to genuinely engage women in planning processes, decision making and during implementation as field engineers and field monitors.”⁴¹

³⁸ PSF Annual Report, 2019

³⁹ Source: PSF Project Manager

⁴⁰ Some non-donor interviewees also reported that they had heard various donors express their concern about the PSF not spending the money it has on hand. As shown in Table 1, if this was an issue, the latest utilization figures suggest that funds are moving.

⁴¹ ProDoc

55. **These aims have not been addressed by the Facility in any meaningful way.** However, it would not be reasonable to assign blame for this on any inaction by the Facility. Rather, it illustrates again how politics can block well-intentioned activities. Gender has always been a challenging issue in the North and Ansar Allah is not open to discussion of the topic (nor on human rights and peacebuilding). This is a major problem in terms of trying to advance the gender agenda given the control they hold over large swathes of the country and there is no easy solution to it. Nowhere is this more apparent than in the inability of the PSF to recruit a “gender specialist” because of the refusal of the Houthis to accept a position with that title. Instead, after several months of trying, the PSF is about to bring a “social inclusion” specialist on board. In the South, gender is open for discussion and there are gender advisors at the project level.

56. The **absence of a dedicated gender specialist has left the Facility without a strategy to address gender issues systematically.** Hopefully that will change when the new person is in place and the individual will move quickly to provide “gender expertise into PSF planning and programming, developing gender-specific activities and ensure gender-sensitive interventions” as proposed in the Project Document. Ideally, additional activities will be identified under Window 2 to enhance capacity building for women’s organisations and projects developed to empower women.

57. Even with a dedicated gender specialist in place, there is no question that implementing gender-focused initiatives will remain a major challenge for the foreseeable future. There is a lack of general awareness of the importance of gender equality and social restrictions limit discussion of it; let alone any consideration of the role of women in conflict resolution. There would certainly be benefit in continuing to share experiences on gender with countries like Afghanistan which face many similar problems.⁴²

58. **More importantly, there needs to be greater coordination between the PSF, UNDP and other UN agencies on how to tackle gender inequalities, as well as a concerted advocacy effort with the parties.** The ET understands that efforts by the Facility to work with UN Women on gender issues have thus far come to nought. Nor has there been an attempt to broaden the debate and link the work of the Facility with the Women Peace and Security agenda, for example through capacity building for relevant ministries, and thereby engage more closely at the official policy level on the issues.

59. As discussed above under section 4.3, the existing projects with PILPG, CIVIC and Safer Yemen have elements of gender equality (and human rights) in their design, albeit that they only treat gender

⁴² The ET understands that there has been information sharing with Afghanistan.

tangentially. For now, these are the only means by which the Facility can be seen to be supporting the issue. However, the activities of these projects on gender represent an important step in the right direction: local debates on community security, involving women, provide the best opportunity to link grassroots gender priorities with the higher political level.

Section 5: Conclusions and Recommendations

5.1 Conclusions

Overall conclusion

60. A comprehensive vision and strategy for the Peace Support Facility has yet to emerge. The extension to December 2022 appears to be a stop-gap measure designed to maintain the presence of the Facility but without any underlying strategic plan. It is not evident that any thought has been given as to how the Facility could be used to further the peace process beyond its work in support of the OSESGY. For example, how could its resources and expertise be used to support programmatic links between humanitarian, development, and peacebuilding activities?

61. However, the evaluation concludes that the strategic priorities and areas of focus identified in the Peace Support Facility Project Document are a good fit with national needs and UNDP's position as a trusted partner in Yemen. Although there has been a disappointing level of performance in key output areas this should not be attributed in any major way to any fault of the PSF.

62. Under Window 1, the rehabilitation of the Port of Hodeidah has supported Output 1: *"The implementation of the Stockholm agreement or any other future agreement are supported through initiatives agreed by the parties"* and has shown significant progress towards Output 1.2: *"# of infrastructure rehabilitated."* Although this has important implications for improving the well-being of the general population of Yemen, it is less obvious that this has led to any meaningful change in support for the peace process.

63. The Window 2 interventions hold the promise of making important contributions to community security, human rights and gender equality and support Output 2: *"Discreet activities emerging out of Track II initiatives are implemented with the goal of catalyzing the political process."* Unfortunately, these projects had not advanced enough at the time of the evaluation for the ET to confirm this assessment.

Window 3, dealing with *"transitional governance and post-peace agreement,"* remains a distant prospect at this time.

64. The two most critical factors that contribute to the success of the Facility are: a well-managed professional team with strong capacity in technical and programming matters, and its proven ability to quickly deliver funding to support the work of the Special Envoy. The major factors limiting the success of the project and contributing to delays in implementation are: political uncertainty, insecurity and the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic. In addition, the division of the team between Sana'a and Amman, together with visa problems limiting the free movement of staff into Yemen, are additional challenges.

Relevance of the PSF Project

65. The DIM modality ensures strong convergence with the country programme and Strategic Plan of UNDP. Moreover, the core objectives of the PSF provide a good framework for supporting the peace process and are relevant. However, the projects being implemented under Windows 1 and 2 do not clearly articulate the linkages to peacebuilding and do not reflect insecurity as a risk in the context of programming in Yemen. It almost seems that the projects were designed with the assumption that there would be continued improvements in the security situation whereas the reverse has happened, and the country could rightly be described as being in protracted conflict.

66. That, of itself, presents specific challenges for programming in a situation where there are three primary factions competing for power, and myriad local actors pursuing their own narrow interests. The complexity is such that the Facility should be able to demonstrate high level strategic thinking and analytical capacity if it is to be most effective in delivering projects. However, its role is limited to providing funds to support projects in which it has played little part in developing and it has virtually no policy influence. While interviewees commented favourably on the level of communication between UNDP management and the PSF, several described the information-sharing relationship between the PSF and the OSESGY as less than constructive with programming decisions often being sprung on the PSF without discussion.

Staffing

67. During the period under review, the PSF had to face significant staffing challenges because of the Covid-19 pandemic and the need for staff to isolate. As a result, the team was/is scattered far and wide, resulting in long working hours and individual stress as members juggled with different time zones and frequent internet connectivity problems in order to meet "virtually". In addition, the division of functions between Sana'a and Amman and visa problems impacting the ability to deploy staff, have compounded the challenges. Nevertheless, for the time being at least, the staff seem to have adapted

quickly and there has been no discernible impact on efficiency and delivery. Whether this will remain the case remains to be seen.

Gender

68. Efforts to enhance women's socio-economic and political rights have not progressed at the project level and gender equality has not been prioritised. In part this stems from the deep-rooted cultural challenges to the issue in Yemen, but more importantly, the inability of the Facility to recruit a gender specialist – because of strong resistance from the de facto authority - has prevented any meaningful attempt to develop a gender-inclusive programming strategy. Collaboration on gender with critical partners has been non-existent and the projects which do have something of a gender component are gender-responsive, rather than gender-transformative. They contribute little to addressing the root causes of gender inequalities. This is unlikely to change until a full-time gender specialist is appointed.

69. UNDP has consistently supported efforts to address the specific challenges faced by women and girls in its programming. It has facilitated women's ability to exercise their political rights and participate in decision-making, it has helped women participate in electoral processes and promoted gender-sensitive development. It could build on this experience and draw on the Facility's support to give particular emphasis to gender equality in peacebuilding and statebuilding in Yemen. In particular, the PSF should work closely with the OSESGY to support women's rights in the context of an eventual national peace agreement being reached, and in terms of local peace agreements in the interim.

Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

70. There has been no direct support to the SDGs under any of the activities funded by the Facility and therefore no attempt to use the SDGs as an entry point to solidify the PSF strategic objectives. Because of the restrictions on travel in the country, and the lack of interaction with local partners, the evaluation was unable to determine whether there is general awareness and understanding of the SDGs and their links to peacebuilding. Raising awareness of the SDGs through focused campaigns will help the attainment of SDG targets and should be an inclusive and participatory process, e.g. through initiating dialogue with members of civil society, the private sector, government officials and marginalised groups, especially women. The Window 2 projects currently being implemented are a beginning but should be connected to a broader effort to plan for peace now by focusing on SDG attainment. The SDGs should not only be applied once conflict has ended, they have a potential role to play in conflict prevention as well as early recovery efforts.

71. It is clear that until 2030, the speed of implementation of the SDGs will have to increase significantly in many countries. UNDP Yemen needs to seek transformative, integrated and sustainable policy and programming options for SDG implementation that are localised and embedded in institutions. Conflict prevention requires collaboration and dialogue, as well as targeted, coordinated and adapted investments in areas such as mediation and building institutional capacity to prevent and contain violence. There would be a role for the Facility in supporting such efforts.

Bottom-up Planning and Implementation

72. The potential for applying bottom-up planning to conflict prevention and support of the peace process has not been explored in any detail. The participation of communities in the design and delivery of activities that address their security needs holds the promise of contributing to the peace process, but this needs to be linked to the broader stabilisation effort. However, this cannot take place until there is an effective peace agreement.

The timing of the evaluation

73. On a final note, it became clear early on in the evaluation that a major challenge would be the lack of progress in project implementation as reflected in the fact that there were no completed outputs and outcomes to measure progress against. The Port of Hodeidah is the most advanced of the interventions yet, of itself, is nowhere near complete. The procurement of essential items is still underway and the political situation surrounding port activities remains unresolved. The other initiatives, under Window 2, are at the embryonic stage. **Essentially, the evaluation has occurred too soon.** It would have been more apropos had it taken place, say, six months from now. That said, the ET feels confident in its assessment that the PSF has the potential to be a credible and valuable tool to support the peace process. Unfortunately, we can only say with conviction that that is still unproven.

Recommendations

R1: To add value to its role, the relationship of the Facility to the OSESGY needs fine-tuning to allow it to focus more on local confidence building and conflict prevention opportunities.

R2: The Project Document should be revisited to enable opportunities for the Facility to engage in developing initiatives in support of peacebuilding in keeping with the objectives of the UNDP Country Programme Framework. This would complement the work of the OSESGY, not supplant it.

R3: The Facility should build on UNDP's vast experience at the interface of peacebuilding and development by proactively seeking opportunities to reinforce efforts by CSOs/NGOs to engage with communities on the peace process.

R4: There needs to be a concerted effort to enhance dialogue and consultation between the OSESGY, the PSF and UNDP in identifying and developing peacebuilding initiatives.

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R5: Senior UNDP and OSESGY management should adopt a joint approach to pressure the authorities (IRG, AA and STC) to unblock measures that delay project implementation (including the SAFER Tanker situation)

R6: The Facility should support an awareness raising campaign to help the attainment of SDG targets as part of a broader conflict prevention and peacebuilding strategy.

R7: The Facility should support an international effort to learn from the experiences of other countries in developing gender-specific programming strategies, through virtual workshops or other kinds of information exchanges.

R8: At the local level, the PSF should seek opportunities to support social networks and movements aimed at advancing women's rights and gender inclusivity.

Annex A: ToRs

Project Title: Mid-Term Evaluation of the Peace Support Facility	
1. Background and Context	
<p>The impact of the conflict in Yemen has been devastating. Tens of thousands of civilians have been killed or injured and public infrastructure throughout the country has been severely damaged or destroyed. Half of the Yemeni population currently lives in areas directly affected by conflict. The conflict has disproportionately impacted women, girls and young people, the vulnerability of this segment of the society placed them under great risk and endangerment.</p> <p>Prior to the recent conflict, Yemen was already the poorest in the Arab region suffering from weak human development outcomes compounded with a high population growth, repeated local unrest, chronic food insecurity and fragile political transition.</p> <p>The UN considers Yemen’s war the worst humanitarian crisis in the world. An estimated 80 per cent of the population, 24 million people, requires some form of humanitarian or protection assistance, including 14.3 million who are in acute need. More than 20 million Yemenis are food insecure including 10 million who are one step away from famine. Of the 333 districts in the country, 230 are facing pre-famine conditions. At least 238,000 people in 45 districts are currently in catastrophic condition and more will fall into this category unless access is expanded, including through peace consultations. An estimated 3.3 million people remain displaced. As such the conflict, and the acute level of hunger and violence, has hit women and girls in Yemen the hardest.</p> <p>During peace consultations convened by the Secretary-General’s Special Envoy in Sweden in December 2018, the parties to the conflict agreed to redeploy forces in Hodeida, exchange prisoners and move forward with initiatives in Taiz. After endorsing the Stockholm Agreement, the UN Security Council established a new special political mission, the United Nations Mission to Support the Hodeida Agreement (UNMHA), to monitor the parties’ compliance with agreements reached in Stockholm. After more than five years of war, and over two years since the last peace talks, the Stockholm agreement represents a significant step towards a comprehensive peace agreement. Its successful implementation can play a key role in paving the way for further progress on the peace process led by the Special Envoy.</p> <p>The Facility has been established to support the implementation of the Stockholm agreement with an initial end date of 31 December 2020 and a budget of US\$20M. The PSF is funded by the Netherlands, Germany, Sweden (Sida), the United Kingdom, Norway, France, the European Union, Canada, Denmark, Italy and UNDP, in collaboration with the office of the Special Envoy for Yemen (OESGY) and the Resident Coordinator for Yemen’s office (RCO). The two-year Peace Support Facility with a budget of US\$20M was rolled out in April 2019 to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) Support the peace process by accelerating the implementation of agreements reached by the parties to the conflict during negotiations led by the UN Secretary General’s Special Envoy to Yemen. b) Build public support for the peace process by achieving tangible, rapid improvement in the daily lives of people in priority areas identified by the UN Special Envoy. c) Demonstrate concrete alternatives to conflict and create local demand for peace and incentivize parties to deepen their engagement in the Special Envoy’s peace process. <p>In line with recommendation from a steering committee meeting held on 29 September 2020, the Facility was extended the Facility until 31 December 2022 and increased the Facility budget to US\$30M to allow flexibility in the identification and implementation of the activities. The Facility covers the following geographical areas Hodeida, Salif and Ras al-Issa for window one, whereas window 2 will be implemented in eight governorates across Yemen: Abyan, Aden, Amanat Al-Asimah, Hadramout, Mareb, Sa’adah, Shabwah and Taiz.</p> <p>The PSF support the peace process, including the agreements reached, by implementing initiatives that deliver improvements in the lives of people affected by conflict. The PSF will also empower the Special Envoy to identify initiatives that support the political process by generating demand for peace, especially in neglected geographic areas and among underrepresented and marginalized groups, including women girls and youth. The initial focus is on the first set of priorities discussed by the parties during the December 2018 peace consultations in Stockholm and will expand to priorities identified in any future UN-led negotiations. Under the overarching output: “The peace process in Yemen is supported with fast, flexible initiatives that deliver tangible, rapid improvements in the daily lives of people, and reinforce and build public support for the political process”, the Facility supports implementation of three mutually reinforcing components:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Component 1: Initiatives to build confidence between the parties, in the peace process and to support the implementation of the Stockholm agreement or any other future agreement. • Component 2: Discreet activities emerging out of existing Track II initiatives are implemented with the goal of catalyzing the political process. • Component 3: Transitional governance arrangements are supported as and when a more comprehensive peace agreement is reached by the parties. <p>To deliver these components, the Facility works closely with the Office of the Special Envoy for Yemen (OESGY) and the Resident Coordinator for Yemen’s office (RCO), relevant government departments, other UN agencies, and civil society organizations to implement the Facility’s planned activities. The Facility contributes towards implementation of the Stockholm Agreement on the city of Hodeidah and the ports of Hodeidah, Salif and Ras Issa and achievement of UNDP Country Programme Framework outcome 3: Yemenis contribute to and benefit from peacebuilding processes. At the global level, the initiatives contribute towards Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 16; "Promote just, peaceful and inclusive societies" with a special focus on target 16.1 - "Significantly reduce all forms of violence and related death rates".</p>	
2. Purpose of the evaluation	

PSF Mid-term Evaluation

The Peace Support Facility, currently at midpoint ends in December 2022. This mid-term evaluation (MTE) is being conducted to assess the Facility's contribution towards a) supporting the peace process; b) building public support for the peace process and c) demonstrating concrete alternatives to conflict, create local demand for peace and incentivize parties to deepen their engagement in the Special Envoy's peace process.

UNDP commissions this mid-term evaluation (MTE) to serve as an important learning and accountability tool, providing UNDP, donors, national stakeholders and partners with an impartial assessment of the results generated to date, including on gender equality and women empowerment. The evaluation will assess the Facility's relevance, effectiveness, efficiency sustainability and responsiveness; identify and document lessons learned; and provide recommendations to inform the Facility from 2021 through to 2022. The findings and recommendations of the evaluation will guide the key stakeholders; relevant Yemeni ministries and institutions, Facility donors, UNDP, UN agencies, civil society organisations towards delivering effective, efficient and responsive interventions.

3. Objectives

Specific Facility Evaluation objectives are to:

1. Determine the relevance and strategic positioning of the Peace Support Facility and whether the initial assumptions are still relevant.
2. Assess a) the progress made towards Facility results and whether there were any unintended results and b) what can be captured in terms of lessons learned for ongoing PSF initiatives.
3. Assess whether the Facility management arrangements, approaches and strategies are well-conceived and efficient in delivering the Facility's output and components.
4. Assess the overall contribution of the PSF to the peace process and whether there are indications of sustaining the results generated by the Facility.
5. Analyse the extent to which the Facility enhanced application of a rights-based approaches, gender equality and women's empowerment, social and environmental standards and participation of other socially vulnerable groups such as children and the disabled.

4. Scope

The Facility evaluation will cover the period of 18 April 2019 to December 2020 in project implementation site(s) assessing programme conceptualisation, design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of results. The evaluators will engage all Facility stakeholders – benefitting communities/institutions, relevant national institutions, donors, UNDP, UN agencies and CSOs.

The evaluation will also focus on performance of indicators agreed with all funding partners. In addition to assessing the relevance, effectiveness and efficiency of the Facility, the evaluation will; a) explore the key factors that are contributing towards the achieving or not achieving of the intended results; b) determine the extent to which the Facility is contributing to the peace process and confidence-building between the parties to the conflict; c) assess potential sustainability of the Facility for continued realisation of results; and d) draw lessons learned and best practices and make recommendations for the second half of Facility implementation.

5. Evaluation Questions

The evaluation seeks to answer the following questions, focused around the evaluation criteria of relevance, effectiveness, efficiency and sustainability.

Relevance

1. To what extent is the Facility in line with the national priorities, the country programme's objectives, the UNDP Strategic Plan and the SDGs?
2. To what extent does the Facility contribute to address emerging issues of relevance within the peace process?
3. To what extent were lessons learned from other relevant initiatives considered in the Facility's design?
4. To what extent does the Facility contribute to gender equality, the empowerment of women and the human rights-based approach?

Effectiveness/Impact

5. To what extent has the Facility contributed to the country programme outcomes and outputs, the SDGs, the UNDP Strategic Plan and national peacebuilding priorities?
6. To what extent were the Facility's output and components achieved?
7. What factors have contributed to achieving or not achieving intended country programme outputs and outcomes?
8. To what extent has the Facility contributed to building confidence of the overall peace process and to the Humanitarian Development and Peace Nexus
9. To what extent has the Facility been appropriately responsive to the needs of the national constituents and changing stakeholder priorities?
10. To what extent has the Facility contributed to gender equality, the empowerment of women and the realization of human rights?

Efficiency

11. To what extent was the Facility management structure as outlined in the project document efficient in generating the expected results?
12. To what extent have the UNDP project implementation strategy and execution been efficient and cost-effective?
13. To what extent has there been an economical use of financial and human resources? Have resources (financial, human resources, time etc.) been allocated strategically to achieve outcomes?
14. To what extent do the M&E systems utilized by UNDP ensure effective and efficient project management?

Sustainability

15. Are there any financial risks that may jeopardize the sustainability of project outputs?
16. To what extent will financial and economic resources be available to sustain the benefits achieved by the Facility?

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17. Are there any social or political risks that may jeopardize sustainability of Facility's results and the Facility's contributions to country programme outputs and outcomes?
18. To what extent are lessons learned being documented by the Facility team on a continual basis and shared with appropriate parties who could learn from the Facility?
19. To what extent do UNDP interventions have well-designed and well-planned exit strategies?

Human rights

20. To what extent have poor, indigenous and physically challenged, women and other disadvantaged and marginalized groups included in helping design and prioritize the work of the Facility in the spirit of broad societal inclusion. To what extent have they benefited from the work of PSF?
21. To what extent are the planned project interventions relevant to the overall strategy of inclusivity and empowerment?

Gender equality

22. Did the project clearly define the problems to be addressed and considered the institutional, socio-political, economic and environmental contexts and their gender dimension?
23. To what extent have gender equality and the empowerment of women been addressed in the design, implementation and monitoring of the Facility?
24. Is the gender marker data assigned to this Facility representative of the reality?
25. To what extent has the Facility promoted positive changes in gender equality and the empowerment of women? Were there any unintended effects? What are women's role in helping shape and prioritize the work of the Facility.

Guiding evaluation questions will be further refined by the evaluation team and agreed with UNDP evaluation stakeholders.

6. Methodology

The evaluation will be carried out in accordance with UNDP evaluation guidelines and policies, United Nations Group Evaluation Norms and Ethical Standards; OECD/DAC evaluation principles and guidelines and DAC Evaluation Quality Standards. As of 11 March 2020, the World Health Organization (WHO) declared COVID-19 a global pandemic as the new coronavirus rapidly spread to all regions of the world. Travel to and in the country is constrained by a combination of COVID-19 and the ongoing conflict. If it is not possible to travel to or within the country for the evaluation then the evaluation team should develop a methodology that takes this into account the conduct of the evaluation virtually and remotely, including the use of remote interview methods and extended desk reviews, data analysis, surveys and evaluation questionnaires. This should be detailed in the Inception report and agreed with the Evaluation Manager.

If all or part of the evaluation is to be carried out virtually then consideration should be taken for stakeholder availability, ability or willingness to be interviewed remotely. In addition, their accessibility to the internet/ computer may be an issue as many governments and national counterparts may be working from home. These limitations must be reflected in the evaluation report. The evaluation will employ a combination of both qualitative and quantitative evaluation methods including:

1. Document review of all relevant documentation. This would include a review of inter alia; project document, contribution agreements; theory of change and results framework; programme and project quality assurance reports; annual workplans; progress reports; minutes of steering committee and project coordination meetings; and technical/financial monitoring reports.
2. Semi-structured interviews with key stakeholders including key government counterparts, donor community members, representatives of key civil society organizations, UNMHA, Special Envoy, the RC/HC, UNCT members and implementing partners:
 - Development of evaluation questions around relevance, effectiveness, efficiency and sustainability and designed for different stakeholders to be interviewed.
 - Key informant and focus group discussions with men and women, beneficiaries and stakeholders.
 - All interviews should be undertaken in full confidence and anonymity. The final evaluation report will not assign specific comments to individuals.
3. Field visits and on-site validation of key tangible outputs and interventions. The evaluation team is expected to follow a participatory and consultative approach that ensures close engagement with the evaluation managers, implementing partners and direct beneficiaries.
4. Other methods such as outcome mapping, observational visits, group discussions, etc.
5. Data review and analysis of monitoring and other data sources and methods.
6. All analysis must be based on observed facts, evidence, and data. Findings should be specific, concise and supported by quantitative and/or qualitative information that is reliable, valid and generalizable. The broad range of data provides strong opportunities for triangulation. This process is essential to ensure a comprehensive and coherent understanding of the data sets, which will be generated by the evaluation.

The final methodological approach including interview schedule, field visits and data to be used in the evaluation will be clearly outlined in the inception report and be fully discussed and agreed between UNDP, stakeholders and the evaluators.

7. Evaluation Ethics

This evaluation will be conducted in accordance with the principles outlined in the UNEG 'Ethical Guidelines for Evaluation'. The consultant 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 with the express authorization of UNDP and partners.

8. Evaluation Products/Deliverables

The evaluator will be expected to deliver the following:

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- a) Evaluation inception report (10-15 pages). The inception report should be developed following and based on preliminary discussions with UNDP and initial documentation reviews. It should be produced and approved before the evaluation starts (before any formal evaluation interviews, survey distribution or field visits) and prior to the country visit in the case of the international consultant.
- b) Evaluation debriefings. Immediately following an evaluation, UNDP will ask for a preliminary debriefing of findings.
- c) Draft evaluation report (max 40 pages). UNDP and stakeholders will review the draft evaluation report and provide an amalgamated set of comments to the evaluator within 10 days, addressing the content required (as agreed in the inception report) and quality criteria as outlined in the UNDP evaluation guidelines.
- d) Evaluation report audit trail. Comments and changes by the evaluator in response to the draft report should be retained by the evaluator to show how they have addressed comments.
- e) Final evaluation report.
- f) Presentations to stakeholders and the evaluation reference group.
- g) Evaluation brief and other knowledge products agreed in the inception report.

Standard templates that need to be followed are provided in the Annexes section. It is expected that the evaluator will follow the UNDP evaluation guidelines and UNEG quality check list and ensure all the quality criteria are met in the evaluation report

9. Responsibilities and Qualifications

The evaluation will be conducted by two independent consultants - an international consultant and national consultant). The international consultant (team leader) must have extensive experience in strategic programming in peacebuilding and democratic governance in post conflict settings. The consultant must also have proven evaluation experience and substantial knowledge of and experience with the monitoring and evaluation of similar initiatives in volatile environments.

Responsibilities of the consultants

- Lead the entire evaluation process, including communicating all required information with the Evaluation Manager.
- Lead drafting of the inception report and finalize the evaluation methodology.
- Leads data collection and analysis as per the approved inception report.
- Draft evaluation with inputs from the national consultant, present preliminary evaluation findings, incorporate inputs from evaluation stakeholders in the final evaluation report, draft audit trail, present final evaluation report and PowerPoint presentation.
- Undertake the evaluation team lead role which includes the supervise of the national consultant.

Key Qualifications of the international consultant

- Minimum Master's degree in Law, Public Policy and Management, Public Administration, Development studies, International Development, or any other relevant educational background.
- Minimum 10 years' experience in the fields of community security, conflict prevention, peace building and reconciliation, governance, inclusive participation, gender mainstreaming and human rights promotion.
- At least 7 years (and recent – latest should have been conducted within the past 2 years) of professional experience in conducting evaluations of similar peacebuilding initiatives.
- Excellent writing skills with a strong background in report drafting.
- Demonstrated ability and willingness to work with people of different cultural, ethnic and religious background, different gender, and diverse political views.

10. Implementation Arrangements

The UNDP Yemen Country Office will select the consultant through a competitive process in line with UNDP's rules and regulations. UNDP will be responsible for the management of the consultants and will in this regard designate an evaluation manager and focal point. Facility staff will assist in facilitating the process (e.g., providing relevant documentation, constituting the evaluation reference group, arranging visits/interviews with key informants, etc.).

The evaluation manager will convene an evaluation reference group comprising of technical experts from partners and UNDP to enhance the quality of the evaluation. This reference group will review the inception report and the draft evaluation report to provide detailed comments related to the quality of methodology, evidence collected, analysis and reporting. The reference group will also advise on the conformity of processes to the UNDP and UNEG standards.

The consultants will take responsibility, with assistance from the Facility team, for setting up meetings and conducting the evaluation, subject to advance approval of the methodology submitted in the inception report. Facility staff will not participate in meetings between consultants and evaluations participants.

The consultants will report directly to the designated evaluation manager and focal point and work closely with the Facility team. The consultants will work full time during the time of the consultancy and may be required to travel to the project sites as part of the evaluation. If it is not possible for the International Consultant to travel to Yemen, he/she should develop a methodology that takes this into account the conduct of evaluation virtually and remotely. This should be detailed in the Inception Report and agreed with the Evaluation Reference Group and the Evaluation Manager. Office space and limited administrative and logistical support will be provided. The consultants will use their own laptops and cell phones.

11. Evaluation team

The Evaluation Team will consist of experienced multi-disciplinary team of consultants (one international lead consultant and one national consultant) with experience in designing and conducting evaluation for Peace Support project/programme and humanitarian responses/actions in emergency contexts.

- The International Consultant will be the **Team Leader** and take a lead role during all phases of the evaluation and coordinate the work of all other team members. He/she will ensure the quality of the evaluation process, outputs, methodology and timely delivery of all

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products. The Team Leader, in close collaboration with the other evaluation team member, leads the conceptualization and design the evaluation and plays a lead role in shaping the findings, conclusions, and recommendations of the report.

- **The National Consultant** will be recruited to working closely with the international consultant (Team Leader), be responsible for the overall assistance to the Team Leader including collection and analysis of all relevant data from field and preparation of all consultations and meetings with selected different stakeholders. The National Consultants will contribute substantively to the work of the Team Leader, providing substantive advice and context in the drafting and finalizing the inception and final evaluation reports.

Annex B: List of interviewees

#	Name	Position	Agency	Type of relationship
1	Aiman Mackie	Senior Peacebuilding Officer	OSESGY	UN Agency
2	Alberto Natta	Former Strategic Planning Advisor	PSF	Project Staff
3	Anila Khan	Yemen Conflict, Stability and Security Fund (CSSF)	FCDO, UK	Bilateral Donor
4	Ashild Kjøk	Senior MENA Advisor	Norway	Bilateral Donor
5	Catherine Kabuthia	Ports Project Manager	PSF	Project Staff
6	David Gressly	RC/HC	UN	UN Agency
7	Djeyhoun Ostowar	First Secretary, Political Affairs	Netherlands Embassy	Bilateral Donor
8	Dora Catutti	Second Counsellor	French Embassy	Bilateral Donor
9	Ethar Shaibany	Chief of Party/Country Director	Public International Law and Policy Grou	IP
10	Georg Kalckreuth	Third Secretary	German embassy Amman	Bilateral Donor
11	Gul Joya Jafri and colleagues,	Senior Programme Officer	Global Affairs Canada	Bilateral Donor
12	Hannah Buechner	OIC Amman Liaison Office	UNDP	UN Agency
13	Heather Coyne	Team Leader SSR	OSESGY	UN Agency
14	Joshua Rogers	Project Manager	Berghof	IP
15	Lars Dobert/ Samy Saadi	Interim Desk Officer/ Head of MENA, Stabilization Division	German Foreign Office	Bilateral Donor
16	Marta Colburn/ and Peter Baumen	Former head of UNWOMEN	Consultant	Former UN Agency
17	Nabil Alsharafi	Managing Partner	Safer Yemen	IP
18	Naief Al-Mohamadi	Procurement Specialist	PWP	IP
19	Natasha Van Rijn,	Former Team Leader, Peace Support Operations	Res. Rep. Madagascar	UN Agency
20	Ndeye Maty Cisse	PSF Project Manager	PSF	Project Staff
21	Noeke Ruitter	First Secretary, Security, Peacebuilding, Justice and Humanitarian Affairs	Netherlands Embassy Amman	Bilateral Donor
22	Piergiorgio Graziotti	Programme Manager, Service for Foreign Policy Instruments (FPI)	European Commission	European Commission
23	Sahr MuhammedAllay	MENA & South Asia Director	CIVIC- Civilians in Conflict	IP
24	Sujitha Sekharan	Operation Manager	PSF	Project Staff
25	Tammy Smith	Senior M&E Advisor	PBSO	UN Agency
26	Tawfeek Saeed	UNDP/PSO Portfolio Focal point for the mid-term evaluation	UNDP	UN Agency
27	Auke Lootsma	Resident Representative	UNDP	UN Agency
28	Rehab Al-Sanabani,	Gender Analyst,	UNDP	UN Agency
29	Nahid Hussein	Deputy Resident Representative	UNDP	UN Agency
30	Laura Mitchell	Senior Gender Advisor	OSESGY	UN Agency
31	John Ratcliffe	Desk Officer, Yemen	OCHA	UN Agency

Annex C: Evaluation questions

Evaluation Criteria and Questions	Judgement Criteria	Data Sources	Data collection	Data analysis method
Relevance: The extent to which the intervention objectives and design respond to the Facility's policies and priorities				
1.To what extent is the Facility in line with the national priorities, the country programme's objectives, the UNDP Strategic Plan and the SDGs?	Relevant support at national and district levels to improve capacities to plan, implement and monitor the SDGs.	Prodocs, Ministry of Planning	Desk review; key informant interviews	Multi-source evidence assessment (MEA); ToC analysis
2.To what extent does the Facility contribute to address emerging issues of relevance within the peace process?	Relevant advocacy and awareness raising interventions undertaken on strengthening the peace process.	UNDP staff, donors, IP agencies	Desk review; KII	MEA
3. To what extent were lessons learned from other relevant initiatives considered in the Facility's design?	Prodoc revisions and comparisons with other interventions in conflict-affected states	UNDP staff, OSESGY	Desk review; KII	MEA
4. To what extent does the Facility contribute to gender equality, the empowerment of women and the human rights-based approach?	Prodocs demonstrate gendered analysis of poverty and vulnerability; progress reports disaggregate gender; Rigorous use of Gender marker.	Prodocs, Progress reports, Beneficiary data, IPs, Project staff,	Desk review, KII	Quantitative and qualitative analysis
Effectiveness/Impact: The extent to which the interventions achieved, or is expected to achieve, its objectives and its results.				
5. To what extent has the Facility contributed to the country programme outcomes and outputs, the SDGs, the UNDP Strategic Plan and national peacebuilding priorities?	Clear diagnostic of institutional capacity weaknesses. Activities follow a clear pathway to capacity development, with evidence of outcome monitoring.	UNDP staff, development partners, relevant ministries.	KII, desk review	MEA
6. To what extent were the Facility's output and components achieved?	Key indicators for all outputs; key drivers of change/outcomes	UNDP staff, IP staff & reports; communities/beneficiaries; Mid-term evaluations, Quarterly reports.	KII, Focus Group Discussions (FGD), site visits, desk review.	Contribution analysis; Quantitative & qualitative analysis
7. What factors have contributed to achieving or not achieving intended country programme outputs and outcomes?	Positive: stability; strong, engaged IPs; Negative: Insecurity; Infrequent or weak monitoring of the project; absence of risk management plan.	UNDP staff, IP staff & reports; interviews with communities; Mid-term evaluations, Quarterly reports.	KII, FGD, site visits, desk review.	MEA
8. To what extent has the Facility contributed to building confidence of the overall peace process and to the Humanitarian Development and Peace Nexus	Actions directed at promoting access to justice and legal aid services, focusing on women; citizen engagement with district administrations on the peace process.	Communities/beneficiaries targeted by livelihoods activities, mine clearances, legal aid; Frontline staff of IPs; Previous evaluation/review reports	KII; FGDs; site visits; Desk review	MEA
9. To what extent has the Facility been appropriately responsive to the needs of the national constituents and changing stakeholder priorities?	Clear diagnostic of institutional capacity weaknesses; activities follow a clear pathway to capacity development, with evidence of outcome monitoring.	IP staff, UNDP staff, other development partners, progress reports; ToC	KII, desk review	Contribution and ToC analysis

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10. To what extent has the Facility contributed to gender equality, the empowerment of women and the realization of human rights?	Prodocs demonstrate gendered analysis of poverty and vulnerability; progress reports disaggregate gender; Rigorous use of Gender marker.	Prodocs, Progress reports, Beneficiary data; Mid-term evaluations, IPs, Project staff.	Desk review, KII	Qualitative analysis.
Efficiency: The extent to which the intervention delivers, or is likely to deliver, results in an economic and timely way.				
11. To what extent was the Facility management structure as outlined in the project document efficient in generating the expected results?	All activities demonstrate Cost, Quality, Timeliness (CQT) factors taken into consideration throughout the implementation cycle.	Finance and operations data on funds disbursement, major cost drivers, contract management and major decision timelines; previous evaluations & Mid-term reviews; UNDP staff; IP staff	Desk review, KII	Progress & monitoring reports assessed against ToC and CPD outputs/outcomes
12. To what extent have the UNDP project implementation strategy and execution been efficient and cost-effective?	Linked to question 11.	Donors' reviews, UNDP staff, joint programme reports.	Desk review, KII	MEA
13. To what extent has there been an economical use of financial and human resources? Have resources (financial, human resources, time etc.) been allocated strategically to achieve outcomes?	Linked to question 11.	Finance and operations data on funds disbursement, major cost drivers, contract management and major decision timelines; previous evaluations & Mid-term reviews; UNDP staff; IP staff	Desk review, KII	MEA
14. To what extent do the M&E systems utilized by UNDP ensure effective and efficient project management?	Key elements of ToC are coherent; evidence of ToC parameters reflected in monitoring and reporting.	Monitoring reports; UNDP staff.	Desk review, KII	MEA
Sustainability: The extent to which the net benefits of the intervention continue, or are likely to continue, beyond the life of a project/programme.				
15. Are there any financial risks that may jeopardize the sustainability of project outputs?	Alternative resources (funds, policies, regulatory framework, budgetary support, partnerships) for continuation of relevant outputs and outcomes identified and agreed.	IPs, DPs, CSOs UNDP staff, Communities, beneficiaries; Multi-year resourcing plans of IPs.	KII, desk review	Analysis and assessment of drivers of sustainability.
16. To what extent will financial and economic resources be available to sustain the benefits achieved by the Facility?	Resilience and capacity at community level; local institutions at the frontline of delivery of services to communities have capacity to continue services.	Communities and local authorities who are currently involved in implementing UNDP-supported activities.	KII, FGD	Qualitative analysis
17. Are there any social or political risks that may jeopardize sustainability of Facility's results and the Facility's contributions to country programme outputs and outcomes?	Adaptability of UNDP to continue its programming, e.g. in the Covid scenario and/or in the event of major security challenges. Proactive support for relevant institutions to ensure that vital activities are delivered.	UNDP staff, Covid and/or security mitigation strategies/briefings.	KII	Descriptive data analysis.
18. To what extent are lessons learned being documented by the Facility team on a continual basis and shared with appropriate parties who could learn from the Facility?	Strong knowledge-sharing partnerships developed with donors, IPs, UN agencies, private sector and civil society.	Mid-term reviews, Donors, UNDP staff	Desk review KII	MEA

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19. To what extent do UNDP interventions have well-designed and well-planned exit strategies?	Prodocs demonstrate planned phase out of UNDP's role and support for relevant institutions to ensure that vital activities can continue under local ownership.	Prodocs, UNDP staff, IPs	KII; Desk review	MEA
Human rights: The extent to which the Facility addressed human rights issues.				
20. To what extent have poor, indigenous and physically challenged, women and other disadvantaged and marginalized groups included in helping design and prioritize the work of the Facility in the spirit of broad societal inclusion. To what extent have they benefited from the work of PSF?	Prodocs demonstrate analysis of poverty and vulnerability; progress reports disaggregate data on marginalised groups.	Prodocs, Progress reports, Beneficiary data Mid-term evaluations, IPs, Project staff.	Desk review, KII	Quantitative & qualitative analysis
21. To what extent are the planned project interventions relevant to the overall strategy of inclusivity and empowerment?	Linked to question 20. All activities which have any direct interface with communities must demonstrate directly addressing the needs of the most vulnerable.	Needs assessment reports; Beneficiary selection criteria; Cross-section of beneficiaries/target communities.	Desk research, KII, FGD.	Qualitative analysis.
Gender equality: The extent to which the Facility addressed gender equality issues.				
22. Did the project clearly define the problems to be addressed and considered the institutional, socio-political, economic and environmental contexts and their gender dimension?	Prodocs demonstrate gendered analysis of poverty and vulnerability; progress reports disaggregate gender; Rigorous use of Gender marker.	Prodocs, Progress reports, Beneficiary data Mid-term evaluations, IPs, Project staff.	Desk review, KII	Quantitative & qualitative analysis.
23. To what extent have gender equality and the empowerment of women been addressed in the design, implementation and monitoring of the Facility?	Linked to question 22.	Prodocs, Progress reports, Beneficiary data Mid-term evaluations, IPs, Project staff.	Desk review, KII	Quantitative & qualitative analysis.
24. Is the gender marker data assigned to this Facility representative of the reality?	Prodocs demonstrate gendered analysis of poverty and vulnerability; progress reports disaggregate gender; Rigorous use of Gender marker.	Prodocs, Progress reports, Beneficiary data Mid-term evaluations, IPs, Project staff.	Desk review; KII	Quantitative & qualitative analysis.
25. To what extent has the Facility promoted positive changes in gender equality and the empowerment of women? Were there any unintended effects? What are women's role in helping shape and prioritize the work of the Facility.	Linked to questions 22-23.	Prodocs, Progress reports, Beneficiary data Mid-term evaluations, IPs, Project staff.	Desk review; KII	Quantitative and qualitative analysis.

Annex D - Results Framework

EXPECTED OUTPUTS	OUTPUT INDICATORS	DATA SOURCE	BASELINE		TARGETS (by frequency of data collection)			DATA COLLECTION METHODS & RISKS
			Value	Year	End 2019	Mid-2020	End 2020	
Output 1 The implementation of the Stockholm agreement or any other future agreement are supported through initiatives agreed by the parties	1.1 # of initiatives agreed upon by the parties implemented	Reports from OSESGY/RCO	0	2019	1	2	2	<i>Monitoring missions by project team</i>
	1.2 # of infrastructure rehabilitated	PSF Progress Reports	0	2019	0	2	4	<i>Monitoring missions to Hodeidah by Quality Assurance engineer</i>
Output 2 Discreet activities emerging out of Track II initiatives are implemented with the goal of catalyzing the political process.	# of recommendations emerged from Track II dialogues implemented	PSF progress reports & Track II partner report	0	2019	0	1	3	<i>Monitoring missions by project team</i>
	# of locations targeted by PSF peace-related interventions	PSF progress reports & Track II partner report	0	2019	0	1	3	<i>Monitoring missions by project team</i>
	# of people benefiting from improved services and living conditions	PSF progress reports	0	2019	0	400	2000	<i>Monitoring missions by project team</i>
Output 3 Transitional governance and post-peace agreement arrangements are supported as and when the parties agree	# of transitional mechanisms supported by PSF	OSESGY reports and PSF progress reports	0	2019	0	1	1	<i>Monitoring missions by project team</i>
	# of core institutions assisted	OSESGY reports and PSF progress reports	0	2019	0	0	1	<i>Monitoring missions by project team</i>
Output 4 The Project Management Unit of the Peace Support Facility is set up and operational	# of PSF project staff recruited	UNDP human resource reports	0	2019	4	7	9	

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Annex E - Bibliography

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