

Evaluation of the One Strategic Plan 2017-2021

Evaluation Report

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ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

APR	Annual Progress Report
AWP	Annual Work Plan
BAT/BEP	Best Available Techniques and Best Environmental Practices
CBF	Common Budgetary Framework
CEMA	Council for Ethnic Minority Affairs
CCA	Common Country Assessment
CCA	Climate Change Adaptation
CC&E	Climate Change & Environment
CF	Cooperation Framework
DaO	Delivering as One
DfD	Data for Development
DRMT	Disaster Response Management Team
DRR	Disaster Risk Reduction
DRR&R	Disaster Risk Reduction & Resilience
HCI	Human Capital Index
ILO	International Labour Organisation
IOM	International Organization for Migration
INGOs	International non-governmental organisations
JSC	Joint Steering Committee
JWP	Joint Work Plans
GCF	Green Climate Fund
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GEF	Global Environment Fund
GOUNH	Green One UN House
GOVN	Government of Viet Nam
MARD	Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development
MONRE	Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment
MOH	Ministry of Health
MOF	Ministry of Finance
MOFA	Ministry of Foreign Affairs
MOJ	Ministry of Justice
MOLISA	Ministry of Labour, Invalids and Social Affairs
MPI	Ministry of Planning and Investment
MPTFO	Multi-Partner Trust Fund Office
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MSME	Micro, Small and Medium sized Enterprise
MSRWG	Monitoring for Strategic Results working group
NTP	National Targeted Programme
ODA	Official development assistance

OOG	Office of the Government
OPF	One Plan Fund
OSP	One Strategic Plan
PAPI	Public Administration Performance Index
PMT	Programme Management Team
PPC	Provincial People’s Committee
PWDs	Persons with disabilities
RCO	Resident Coordinator Office
RGs	Results Groups
SEDP	Socio-Economic Development Plan
SEDEMA	Social Economic Development for the Ethnic Minority and Mountainous Areas
SEDS	Socio- Economic Development Strategy
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
SOEs	State-owned enterprises
SOPs	Standard Operating Procedures
ToC	Theory of Change
TF	Task Force
UN	United Nations
UNAIDS	Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS
UNCT	United Nations Country Team
UNDAF	United Nations Development Assistance Framework
UNDG	United Nations Development Group
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNEG	United Nations Evaluation Group
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UN-Habitat	United Nations Human Settlements Programme
UNICEF	United Nations Children’s Fund
UNIDO	United Nations Industrial Development Organization
UNODC	United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime
UNV	United Nations Volunteers
UN Women	United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women
USD	United States Dollar
VAAC	Viet Nam Administration of HIV/AIDS Control
VCCI	Viet Nam Chamber of Commerce and Industry
WHO	World Health Organization

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. Evaluation purpose, scope and methodology

The One Strategic Plan (OSP) was signed in July 2017 for the period 2017-2021. The OSP, signed by the GOVN and 18 UN agencies in Vietnam, represents the third generation of the programmatic and operational framework for delivering UN support to the Government of Viet Nam (GOVN) and Vietnamese people and establishes how the UN will Deliver as One in support for the implementation of the UN SDGs and national development priorities.

The OSP is built on the three principles of inclusion, equity and sustainability, and is well aligned with Viet Nam's Socio- Economic Development Strategy (SEDS) 2011-2020, its Socio- Economic Development Plan (SEDP) 2016-2020, the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), as well as Viet Nam's international human rights commitments. The OSP has four focus areas, shaped by the five central themes of Agenda 2030 (People, Planet, Prosperity, Peace, and Partnership), with nine related outcomes and direct contribution to the 17 SDGs, highlighting the UN role in policy advocacy and advice to Viet Nam. The OSP is supported by a Common Budgetary Framework (CBF) with an overall estimated budget of approximately USD 423 million.

This report presents results of an independent evaluation of the OSP that covers the period of the OSP implementation from January 2017 until December 2020. It also covers the OSP design phase to draw lessons for the design of the new Cooperation Framework as well as contributions to OSP from programmes, projects and activities conducted in Viet Nam by the resident and non-resident agencies. Due consideration was given to the activities of agencies without a formal country programme in Viet Nam, as well as activities implemented as part of global or regional programmes and projects. It also examines OSP cross-cutting issues and alignment to the global UN programming principles.

Through engagement with GOVN counterpart agencies, the OSP evaluation also assesses the contribution and accountabilities of the GOVN (as the co-owner of the OSP together with the UN) towards the OSP implementation against the responsibilities identified in the OSP document, specifically in the OSP design and approval, implementation, monitoring and reporting as well as in facilitating multi-stakeholder coordination and mechanism and mobilizing resources for smooth and efficient OSP implementation.

The evaluation focuses on implementation of the OSP in its entirety and does not examine implementation of the UN agency projects and programs. For this purpose, the OSP documents and reports were the primary source of information while available agency-level reports were used as complementary sources for verification and triangulation of evaluation findings. The OSP Results and Resource Framework was in the center of this assessment based on assumption that the OSP was relevant and able to contribute to necessary changes under the defined OSP Focus Areas. Analysis of the primary and secondary data served to identify challenges and obstacles that affected progress and contribution towards the achievement of the OSP Outcomes.

As a summative evaluation, the overall approach of the OSP evaluation is participatory and theory-based, using OSP Theory of Change (TOC). Although it was recommended by the review of the previous One Plan, a full and comprehensive TOC had not been prepared at the OSP formulation. Consequently, the evaluators were requested to reconstruct the OSP TOC and validate it through a workshop arranged with the UNCT.

2. Summary of Evaluation Findings and Conclusions

Relevance

The OSP was formulated through a consultative process that involved both UN and national stakeholders. The strategic prioritization, primarily based on the CCA, identified priorities with potential to generate major impacts in contributing to achievement of the nationally DGs.

The evaluation found the process of OSP formulation inclusive, ensuring that the needs of the country as well as the mandates of the UN agencies have been reflected and relevant developmental responses defined. Therefore, the OSP has been well aligned with key national strategy and planning documents and therefore very relevant to national needs and priorities.

The UN system was found highly relevant for Viet Nam as a source of global development knowledge and as an actor facilitating knowledge networking, acquisition and adaptation of innovative technologies, as well as promoting South-South exchange in bringing international good practices to Viet Nam including sharing Viet Nam's experience with other countries.

In addition to the planned OSP interventions, the UN has been responsive to emerging needs and challenges of the country through established planning and implementation mechanisms, including preparation of the Joint Work Plans (JWP). The JWP mechanism ensured flexibility to include additional activities and interventions in line with natural disasters and public health emergencies (such as COVID-19 outbreak).

Effectiveness

Assessing the OSP effectiveness was seriously hampered by incompleteness of the OSP results framework, availability of data, and insufficient monitoring and reporting of progress related to the results defined in the OSP framework. Majority of the available reports do not clearly show the way how the outcomes at the UN agencies' project or programme level link to the high level OSP Outcome Indicators that are essentially national level indicators reported by national authorities.

In the OSP formulation, emphasis was put on identification of strategic priorities and definition of high-level Outcomes but less attention was given to other obligatory parts of the RF, namely Outputs as the results directly attributable to the UN system and indicators of progress towards their achievement.

In order to inform about effectiveness of the OSP implementation, the evaluators sought for other data sources (outside the UN system) to inform the progress against the OSP outcomes. This effort was only partly successful, due to the insufficient definition of many OSP Outcome Indicators and their target values in the OSP results framework.

Overall, the UN was considered to make an important contribution to the achievement of national SDG goals through its support for strengthening national capacity in developing and implementing national key policies and strategic plans. However, there has been a concern as some UN agencies stated their respective mandates and intervention results have not been adequately included in the OSP Outcomes.

The interviewed GOVN partners highly recognised the strength of the UN agencies on technical advice and convening power as well as ability to mobilise global and international high-quality expertise. Building on the above strengths with more focus on high level policy advice and enhanced joint programming among the UN agencies will form the UN response to the current trend of reduction of traditional funding availability in order to reprioritise their support to Viet Nam.

Efficiency

The UNCT has made substantive arrangements to increase efficiency of OSP coordination and reduce transaction costs of the OSP implementation through adoption and utilization of a range of common services including procurement, finance, information and communications technology, logistics, human resources and facility services.

Funding of the OSP has been a challenge as major part of the estimated costs of the OSP were not available at the OSP outset. There was a sizeable funding gap at the OSP inception that signals insufficiency of core and other resources available to the UN entities. This represents a constraint on the performance of the OSP.

Despite the expected linkages of the OSP with domestic financing, and national budget processes, but the reality showed a sub-optimal level of national funds provided for the OSP implementation. Several UN agencies stressed complicated procedures for ODA approval by the GOVN that caused delays in start of individual projects as well as discontent about lack of the GOVN resource mobilization for implementation of the OSP.

Coherence

The ‘fit-for-purpose’ OSP coordination architecture was established in line with the UNDOCO guidelines. However, the functionality and performance has varied across individual elements of the architecture. There has been dissatisfaction with the involvement of the GOVN in the UN-GOVN Joint Steering Committee that serves as the highest coordination mechanism under the OSP. Lack of arrangements for active participation of the GOVN in formulation and coordination of the OSP has resulted in insufficient GOVN buy-in and ownership of the OSP.

The evaluation found dissatisfaction amongst representatives of the GOVN line ministries and UN agencies with the current format of the OSP Joint Steering Committee meetings as well as with the OSP coordination architecture that does not facilitate fully-fledged and productive cooperation and partnership between the UN and the GOVN.

Other parts of the OSP coordination architecture were established without participation of the GOVN. Given the shared responsibilities of the UN and the GOVN for achievement of the Outcomes, omission of the GOVN from the elements responsible for progress monitoring contributed to delays in implementation of some interventions to dissatisfaction of the responsible UN agencies and the donors.

There was good coordination in the development of the OSP that led the UNCT through the programming process towards the set of strategic result areas based on national priorities, the internationally agreed development goals, and the UN agencies’ capacities and comparative advantages.

Contribution of the OSP Results Groups to improved internal coordination and coherence of the UN system-wide approach was found weak with very limited connection to existing GOVN working structures and sector working groups. Consequently, the contribution of the UN coherence to working mechanisms outside the UN was found insufficient.

The OSP fostered extensive inter-agency collaboration but despite gradual increase this has transferred only in limited joint programming. Also, there has been only very little evidence about joint funds mobilization through the One SDG Fund.

Transformational change

The OSP contributed to strengthening of national capacities based on identification of national priorities through alignment of the OSP with the relevant national strategies and action plans, extensive engagement of the GOVN and other relevant stakeholders in planning and

implementation UN-led interventions, as well as coordination among various UN entities with overlapping mandates.

Cross cutting issues

Out of the five cross-cutting OSP themes, mainstreaming of gender and human rights as the cross-cutting issues into the OSP planning, implementation, monitoring and reporting was found satisfactory. Mainstreaming of the other three data for development, public participation and partnership/innovation was not done systematically as there is lack of information as to how much the three other cross-cutting themes have applied at the level of UN agency interventions under the OSP.

3. Recommendations

3.1 For improved formulation and governance of the new CF

Recommendation 1: The UNCT, in consultation with the GOVN partners and other relevant stakeholders, should develop the next UN – GOVN Cooperation Framework (CF) based on a well-reasoned and robust Theory of Change. It is strongly recommended to adhere to the UNSDG guidance to develop both Outcomes and Outputs during the Cooperation Framework design stage to ensure a clear logic in the ToC and the related results matrix.

Developing a more accurate and robust ToC in line with the requirements set out in the UNSDG guidance will enable UN agencies to be more selective about their respective areas of focus on and contribute thus to greater accountability and transparency of the UN system interventions. The next CF should be based on a realistic overall budget envelope with maximised core and secured resources.

Recommendation 2: The UNCT in consultation with the GOVN should take extra care for proper identification and definition of Outcome Indicators and their target values and strengthen the use of effective monitoring tools to ensure timely and effective monitoring of progress at both Outcome and Output levels.

The monitoring of the next CF will benefit from active involvement of the GOVN as the latter is holder of data and information needed to assess progress towards achieving target values of the CF results indicators. The number of Outcome Indicators should be kept realistic to enable tracking of progress. Active involvement of the GOVN agencies should optimally include use of national evaluation systems in the monitoring of progress that will further strengthen the national data and information systems as well as national monitoring and evaluation capacities.

In particular, the UNCT should develop and use indicators of progress that reflect medium-term results that are more closely linked with the UN interventions and can therefore better define and measure the UN contribution to progress towards the achievement of high-level Outcomes within the duration of a single programme cycle.

To the extent possible, the UN entities should undertake efforts towards synchronization of their individual systems of monitoring for development results with the monitoring and evaluation system of the next CF.

Recommendation 3: The UNCT in consultation with the GOVN should carefully revise the coordinating role of the Joint Steering Committee (JSC) in order to ensure a meaningful and active participation of the GOVN and its representatives.

A stronger role of the GOVN in the JSC will enhance the GOVN commitment in and responsibility for the next CF as well as accountability for the implementation. By the same

token it will increase the GOVN buy-in and ownership of the next CF and ensure that relevant national authorities will take resolute steps to ensure timely and effective implementation of CF interventions in line with the plans of the UN agencies and expectations of donors.

3.2 For improved coherence and coordination of the new Cooperation Framework

Recommendation 4: In line with the UNSDG guidance and based on the experience from implementation of the OSP, the UNCT should carefully revise and optimize the current coordination mechanism for the next CF, in particular to strengthen the strategic position of the Results Groups in the CF coordination architecture and open the Results Groups for participation of the GOVN.

The Results Groups should make alignment with relevant sector working groups, or at least incorporate representatives of relevant line ministries and eventually other national partners in the RGs. This arrangement will ensure a more coherent UN system-wide approach to CF strategic priorities and will be more inclusive through establishing linkages to the CF priority sectors. The extended RGs should meet at regular pre-established intervals in line with the UNSDG guidance.

Recommendation 5: The UNCT should undertake a more systematic approach towards joint programming as a foundation for a more coordinated approach to implementation of the next CF.

Under each Outcome, the UNCT should identify areas for collaborative work and develop a framework for collaborative efforts based on comparative advantages and complementarity of individual agencies. Such framework should provide substantive details of collaborative work of individual agencies, in accordance with their respective mandates, and building on their respective strengths. Existence of the framework will shorten time needed for preparation of Joint Programmes and facilitate thus timely and effective submission of the JPs for consideration of donors.

Recommendation 6: For formulation of the next CF, the UNCT should introduce indicators and target values that will enable systematic tracking of progress on mainstreaming of cross-cutting themes into the CF implementation.

Mainstreaming of cross-cutting topics in development cooperation is a process that requires changes in awareness, attitudes, plans and programme implementation. There are some examples of approaches, tools and practices for mainstreaming the most common cross-cutting themes as well as tracking the progress and achievements. The challenge is to use them systematically and consistently in the project or programme cycle to enable monitoring of progress in their mainstreaming into the OSP implementation.

Recommendation 7: The UNCT should conduct analysis of the various reporting levels of the UN agencies and harmonize the reporting format under the OSP with the reporting requirements of the UN agencies and main donors.

Despite the differences in reporting practices across UN agencies and donors, there is a commonality in the information requested. It would be advisable to adjust the format for reporting of the UN agencies to the RGs according to the common information/reporting requirements of the UN agencies and donors.

Recommendation 8: The UNCT needs to enhance the modality of coordination and support for non-resident agencies in collaboration with GOVN agencies.

There remains an issue of delay process and less effectiveness of the collaboration between UN non-resident agencies and GOVN due to obstacles in direct communication and

discussion. As a result, the formulated activities could be slow and even cancelled. The UNCT/RCO should take a more active role in support the discussion and approval process on behalf of non-resident agencies to increase the effectiveness of the cooperation via an effectively and timely implementation process and better communication.

3.3 For improve support for transformation change and cross-cutting issues

Recommendation 9: The UN in Vietnam should make assessment of sustainability of the Vietnam SDG Fund and its potential for prioritization and mobilization of donor financing for the next CF.

Although the SDG Fund for Vietnam has been established in 2018, there has been very little success in mobilization of funds through this financial mechanism due to concerns about monitoring and reporting for accountability of the UN to donors. The UNCT should make assessment of the SDG Fund situation in comparison with other options, in particular with funds mobilization through joint programming.

Recommendation 10: The UNCT should put emphasis on interventions related to the normative, capacity building and awareness raising mandates of the UN agencies that constitute major comparative advantages of the UN system.

In this regard, the next CF should extend support and technical assistance to the GOVN for better understanding of international norms and standards, their integration into formulation of national policies and legislation as well as for effective implementation of the policies, strategies and action plans in line with international norms, standards, and conventions. The increased emphasis on the normative agenda and capacity building will propagate mainstreaming of the cross-cutting topics of data for development as well as learning and innovation. For field engagements not directly linked to the normative agenda, UNCT should look for opportunities for partnerships with organizations in the field such as local government organizations or NGOs.

Recommendation 11: The GoVN agencies should be engaged in designing the joint programmes with the UN agencies to ensure full partnership, commitment, and co-financing in the implementation of the next CF.

The GOVN agencies have been positioned by the UNCT as partner rather than beneficiaries or implementers of activities. This best reflects the switch of the UNCT from donor to partner, from development assistance to partnership. Engagement of the GOVN agencies in designing the joint programmes will ensure commitments, ownership, and co-financing sources from the GOVN agencies for the implementation of the next CF. Given the uncertainty of global economic recovery, it is reasonable to anticipate a tightening financing prospect for the next CF and therefore, mobilizing counterpart contribution from the GOVN is also important in financial terms.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

The One Strategic Plan (OSP), the third generation Delivering as One (DaO) UN Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF), was signed in July 2017 for the period 2017-2021. The OSP represents the programmatic and operational framework for delivering UN support to the Government of Viet Nam (GOVN) and Vietnamese people and establishes how the UN will Deliver as One in support for the implementation of SDGs and national development priorities.

The OSP 2017-2021 is built on the three principles of inclusion, equity and sustainability, and is well aligned with Viet Nam's Socio- Economic Development Strategy (SEDS) 2011-2020, its Socio-Economic Development Plan (SEDP) 2016-2020, the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), as well as Viet Nam's international human rights commitments. The OSP has four focus areas, shaped by the five central themes of Agenda 2030 (People, Planet, Prosperity, Peace, and Partnership), with nine related outcomes and direct contributions to the 17 SDGs, and highlighting the UN role in policy advocacy and advice to Viet Nam. The OSP is supported by a Common Budgetary Framework (CBF) with an overall estimated budget of approximately USD 423 million.

The OSP was formulated and designed for implementation following the UNDG Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) for countries adopting the 'Delivering as One' approach. The purpose of the SOPs, approved in 2014, was to make the UN development system more transparent, common results-oriented, and accountable, and enable a more complete system-wide alignment of the UN contribution in the country with national development priorities and plans. In the context of the new SDG agenda, the OSP aims to ensure alignment with national development through provision of impartial, unbiased and evidence-based advice and support. The OSP is based on the following programmatic priorities:

- Offering objective and impartial development policy options drawing on collective global knowledge;
- Helping to develop clear and practical approaches in support of the realization of the SDGs;
- Meeting strong demands for a more robust UN normative voice on human rights, equity and citizen-centred reforms that leave no one behind; and
- Strengthening South-South cooperation to increase opportunities for Viet Nam to share experience in fulfilling its development commitments

This report presents results of an independent evaluation of the One Strategic Plan (OSP) signed by the GOVN and 18 UN agencies in Viet Nam that sets the programmatic and operational framework for the UN support to the GOVN in the period 2017-2021. The country context at the OSP formulation and the OSP 2017-2021 itself will be briefly described to contextualize this evaluation. The methodologies are summarized in Section 2. Key evaluation findings are presented in Section 3 of this report. Conclusions and recommendations are provided in the final part of this report.

1.2 Country context and national development priorities at the OSP inception

1.2.1 General context

At the time of the OSP formulation,¹ Viet Nam experienced around two decades of market-based reforms, gradual lifting of barriers and gradual integration in the global economy. Economic transformation exposed a closed economy to international markets and trade and initiated pro-business reforms. In parallel with the reforms, the country implemented a wide-ranging social agenda with a clear goal of “Leaving No One Behind”. In the aftermath of these policies, real per capita GDP tripled between 1990 and 2015, per-capita GDP increased 10-fold, and the national multi-dimensional poverty rate dropped from more than 60 percent in the 1980s to less than 7 percent in 2017.² In line with the economic growth, Viet Nam’s Millennium Development Goal (MDG) performance was exceptional, with the majority of targets met in full and ahead of time. There has been impressive progress towards achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) as the country ranks in the top quarter of SDG performance across emerging market economies for a majority of indicators.

Viet Nam’s Human Capital Index (HCI) was the highest among middle-income countries, but there were some disparities within the country, especially for ethnic minorities. Education was a national priority since “*Đổi Mới*” and a shift of the focus from education quantity to quality over time produced remarkable results. The literacy rate of children aged 15 or over was 95 percent in 2016, 92 percent of children at 3- to 5-years of age enrolled to kindergarten, and a primary school net enrolment rate reached 99 percent for the school year 2016-2017.

There have been continuous improvements in the healthcare. Some 73 percent of Viet Nam’s population had access to essential health services, and the health insurance coverage reached 86.4 percent in 2017. Health outcomes improved in tandem with rising living standards. The infant mortality rate per 1,000 live births decreased from 32.6 in 1993 to 14.4 in 2017, however the rate among infants in the Central Highlands was 23.7 in the same year (2017). Life expectancy increased from 70.5 years in 1990 to 73.4 years in 2016, one of the highest in the region for countries at a similar income level.

Viet Nam’s growth performance has also been underpinned by significant infrastructure development resulting in considerable increase of households’ access to infrastructure services. As of 2016, the proportion of households accessing clean water has risen to 93.4 percent and 99 percent of the population used electricity as their main source of lighting, up from just 14 percent in 1993, reaching nearly universal access to electricity in Vietnamese households. In the same year, internet use was reported for 54.2 percent or about 50 million people.

1.2.2 Challenges and priorities

Becoming a lower middle-income country, Viet Nam has been facing new challenges. As a result of the tight integration into the international markets, Viet Nam’s economy remains susceptible to slowdown and fluctuations in the global economy Viet Nam more vulnerable

¹ This section describes the context at the onset of the OSP formulation and implementation and hence data of 2016 or 2017 were used.

² During the period of the 2011-2016 One Plan, Viet Nam experienced rapid demographic and social change. Its population reached 93.64 million in 2016 (up from about 60 million in 1986) and is expected to expand to 120 million by 2050. About 70 percent of the population was under 35 years of age, with a life expectancy of 76 years, the highest among countries in the region at similar income levels.

to world economy fluctuations, including slowing economic growth, macroeconomic instability, new forms of poverty and vulnerabilities as well as increased inequality.

Viet Nam's rapid growth and industrialization have had detrimental impacts on the environment and natural assets. Over the past two decades, Viet Nam emerged as the fastest growing per-capita greenhouse gas emitters in the world – growing at about 5 percent annually. Carbon emission have risen from 0.26 metric tons in 1990 to 2.0 metric tons in 2016 with the future projection of increase up to 4 times in absolute total and making up 86 percent of total net-emissions in 2030³. Demand for water continued to increase, while water productivity was low, about 12 percent of global benchmarks. Unsustainable exploitation of natural assets such as sand, fisheries, and timber could negatively affected prospects for long-term growth. Compounding the problem was the reality that much of Viet Nam's population and economy is highly vulnerable to climate impacts.

Urbanization and strong economic and population growth have been causing rapidly increasing waste management and pollution challenges. Despite improvements in the protection and management of the environment and natural resources and an increase in forest cover to 41.5 percent in 2017, Viet Nam was among the most affected countries by air pollution and waste generation in the country is growing at a fast rate. Water pollution had significant costs on productivity of key sectors and human health. The structural transformation was not yet complete, with a still uneven playing field between the state-owned and the private sector. In addition, Viet Nam's economy was characterized by a high degree of economic dualism, with the FDI sector and multinational companies showing only limited integration with the local economy. Infrastructure was fragmented and of low quality, average energy consumption was still low compared to other emerging markets.

On the social aspects, there remained disparities in accessing health services and information, especially among ethnic minorities. In particular, many children, not only those from poor households (which was 21.2 percent of children), suffered from multiple deprivations, i.e. 14.3 percent deprived from nutritious food, 11.7 percent deprived from quality housing, 37.8 percent of 0-4 years old children deprived from healthcare, 23.5 percent deprived from hygiene latrine facility. Child mortality rates remain above the SDG UN target, and coverage of doctors and nurses remains low compared to advanced economies. Children with disabilities, ethnic minority children, and children of migrant families without residential rights to schools had lower completion rates and higher drop-out rates. There were 1.3 million children with disability, many without social benefits, and only about 1 in 10 attending secondary school. On gender equality, gender-based violence, including domestic violence against women, gender biased sex selection that results in sex ratio at birth imbalance. These are two of the most serious manifestation of gender inequality in Viet Nam.

Projections by the General Statistics Office 2010 (GSO, 2010) show that the elderly population (persons aged 60 and over) as a percentage of the total population will reach 10 percent in 2017, or the Vietnamese population will enter the so-called "aging phase" from 2017 onward. Similar to rapid population growth, rapid population aging creates various pressures on economic growth, as well as on the infrastructure and social protection services. In addition, research indicates that population aging has significant effects on family relationships, lifestyles, as well as on the social protection system, especially the national pension scheme. The types and causes of diseases of the elderly have changed substantially from communicable ones to non-communicable and chronic ones.

³ <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/EN.ATM.CO2E.PC?locations=VN>

Viet Nam is one of the most disaster-prone countries in the world. With its long coastline and a diverse and complex topography, Viet Nam suffers from many different types of natural hazards. These are both hydrometeorological (e.g. typhoon, floods, heavy rainfalls and droughts) and geophysical (e.g. landslides). It is estimated that approximately 70% of the population, who live in coastal areas and low-lying deltas in Viet Nam, are exposed to the risk of flooding. Natural disaster causes sizeable impacts on households and the economy as they destroy investment and lock people into a poverty trap and chronic poverty. Around 11.8 million people in coastal provinces are exposed to the threat of intense flooding and over 35 percent of settlements are located on eroding coastlines. Each year, an average of \$852 million—or 0.5 percent of national GDP is at risk from riverine and coastal flooding⁴.

⁴ WB, 2020, Resilient Shores: Viet Nam's Coastal Development Between Opportunity and Disaster Risk

2. EVALUATION PURPOSE, SCOPE AND METHODOLOGY

2.1 Purpose, objectives and scope

The overall purpose of the OSP evaluation is to support greater learning about what works, what doesn't and why in delivery of the OSP's outcomes as well as to support greater accountability of the UNCT and GOVN to OSP stakeholders.

The objectives of the OSP evaluation are:

- To assess the relevance, effectiveness, and efficiency of the OSP.
- To assess the coherence of the UN system support
- To assess the OSP's support to transformational changes
- To assess the conformity with the crosscutting principles
- To provide actionable recommendations for the way forward

The OSP Evaluation covers the period of the OSP from January 2017 until December 2020. It also covers the OSP design phase to draw lessons for the design of the new Cooperation Framework. The OSP evaluation covers contributions to OSP outcomes of all programmes, projects and activities conducted in Viet Nam by the UNCT and non-resident agencies. Due consideration was also given to the activities of agencies without a formal country programme, activities implemented as part of global or regional programmes and projects, and activities of non-resident agencies. It also examines OSP cross-cutting issues and the global UN programming principles. The OSP evaluation will consider emerging issues, such as, related to serious droughts, typhoons, and the COVID-19 pandemic in both the evaluation contents and operation.

Through engagement with GOVN counterpart agencies, the OSP evaluation also assesses the contribution and accountabilities of the GOVN (as the co-owner of the OSP together with the UNCT) towards the OSP implementation against the responsibilities identified in the OSP document, specifically in the OSP design and approval, implementation, monitoring and reporting as well as in facilitating multi-stakeholder coordination and mechanism and mobilizing resources for smooth and efficient OSP implementation.

Based on the guidelines from the UNDP Independent Evaluation Office (IEO)⁵, the evaluation was conducted through on-line platforms with optional physical presence of the national consultants in meetings with UN stakeholders in Hanoi. Meetings with the GOVN stakeholders were conducted with physical presence of the national consultants who also conducted a visit to selected project sites in the Quang Nam province for obtaining additional data for analysis of the OSP in the field.

Details on purposes, objectives, and scope of the OSP evaluation could be found in the ToR provided in Annex 1.

2.1 Evaluation approach and methodology

The OSP evaluation aims at assessing UNCT's contribution to national development outcomes contained in the OSP's Results and Resources Framework (RRF). Given that the OSP Outcomes are set at a very high level and are contributed by the work of many stakeholders (not only the UN),

⁵ Evaluations during COVID-19: Data collection, remote interviews and use of national consultants, UNDP IEO, June 2020

establishing the attribution of UN interventions to an observed result at OSP Outcome level is infeasible. Therefore, the OSP evaluation will use a non-experimental design in order to evaluate possible contribution (rather than attribution) of the UNCT to the achievement of the OSP Outcomes to identify and qualify key expected and unexpected results from the OSPs, applying the TOCs.

Analysis of the OSP RRF was in the center of this assessment based on assumption that the OSP was relevant and able to contribute to necessary changes under the OSP Focus Areas. Analysis of the primary and secondary data served to identify challenges and obstacles that affected progress and contribution towards the achievement of Outcomes.

The OSP evaluation is managed by the UN Resident Coordinator Office (RCO) and conducted by a team of selected external consultants in line with the UNEG Norms and Standards. It uses a variety of validation methods to ensure that the collected data and information as well as the conclusions made carry the necessary depth. By sharing findings, conclusions and recommendations with the evaluation stakeholders for review and comments, the evaluation aims at reaching consensus among stakeholders and follow the UN guidelines as close as possible.

Key questions of the evaluation are in the Evaluation Matrix presented as Annex 2 to this report.

2.2 Data collection methods

Data collection was conducted in an inclusive manner in order to promote national ownership through the meaningful engagement of relevant national partners throughout the evaluation process. The Evaluation uses several data collection methods as follows:

Document review

In general, the Evaluation uses 3 categories of documents. Policy documents include guidelines or conducting evaluations and background documents on the OSP planning and implementation. Programme documents consist of all documents related to the planning, implementation, as well as monitoring and evaluation. From these, the OSP evaluation extracts specific information on effectiveness of implementation and lessons learned. Technical documents include general articles and/or monographs on topical issues relevant for OSP focal areas in Viet Nam.

Specifically, the evaluation covered the documents used in the planning phase of the OSP, the annual OSP Results Reports, as well as various progress reviews, annual reports and past evaluation reports produced by the participating UN agencies (including country programme evaluations and related programme and project documents, reports on projects and small-scale initiatives), as well as national strategy and policy documents and action plans. A list of documents reviewed is provided as Annex 7 to this report.

Stakeholder interviews

Semi-structured interviews were used as a qualitative method of inquiry that combines a pre-determined set of open questions prompting further discussion with the opportunity to explore particular topics and/or responses in more details. The interviews help to collect information and obtain perceptions of the stakeholders important for understanding how different interventions under OSP work and how they could be improved. Interviewees had opportunity to raise issues for discussion that the Evaluation Team may not have considered.

Semi-structured interviews have been at the core of the data and information collection due to the emphasis to conduct the Evaluation in a consultative and participatory manner. The following five categories of stakeholders were interviewed, namely UNCT members, key government counterparts, donor community members, implementing partners and key civil society organisations representing beneficiaries of OSP.

In addition to these interviews, some focus group discussions were used in order to obtain insights, ideas, and observations on topics of concern to the evaluation collected from members of the OSP Results and Thematic Groups. Through provision of shared experiences, focus group discussions serve as a key tool for understanding a collective perspective of the groups and help to assess attitudes and perceptions about contribution to OSP results.

In total, the evaluation team have interviewed almost 100 individuals from UN agencies, GOVN agencies, non-GOVN organizations and development partners. A list of stakeholders interviewed is provided in Annex 4. Table 1 below shows the summary of consulted stakeholders by sex and type of organizations.

Table 1: Consulted stakeholders breakdown

	Organization						Total
	UN	GoVN	Non-GoVN	Private Sector	Development partners	Quang Nam province	
Male	18	11			3	10	42
Female	35	15	3	1	1	2	57
Total	53	26	3	1	4	12	99

Survey questionnaires

A survey questionnaire was administered to collect data on essential questions for the evaluation from all participating UN agencies in a standardized format that allows consistency and the ability to aggregate responses. It contained questions on the overall performance of OSP and the factors contributing to progress towards the outcomes, as well perspectives on how well OSP is working, its added value for coherence of the UN system support and its efficiency as a coordination mechanism. It was composed of a set of closed-ended questions with a set of answers (some including rating scales) to choose from. This tool yields uniform data that can be analysed quantitatively—that is, aggregated and converted to numbers and percentages. With the support from the UNDP Resident Coordinator Office (RCO), the set of questionnaires was sent to all involved UN agencies and 19 responses have been received by the team.

Shorter and more targeted survey questionnaire was prepared for the GOVN stakeholders as an additional source of data to triangulate the information collected through other means (e.g., interviews, document review). In addition, another short questionnaire was also sent to non-Government stakeholders (e.g. mass organizations, NGOs, private sector). Totally, the evaluation team has received 17 responses from the GOVN stakeholders and 7 responses from the non-government stakeholders.

Evaluation Management

The OSP evaluation is guided by the OSP Evaluation Steering Committee, who is in charge of the proper conduct of the OSP Cooperation Framework evaluation. The Evaluation Manager is the Data Management, Results Monitoring and Reporting Officer in the RCO. The Evaluation Manager is technically supported by the UN M&E Working Group (namely the Monitoring for Strategic Results Working Group – MSR) comprising M&E officers from UN agencies. The Evaluation Manager is also backed by the RCO Head and RCO staff in coordination-related tasks.

The Steering Committee invites GOVN counterparts and other key stakeholders of UN agencies to form a Consultative Group to represent various sectoral interests to provide inputs at key stages of evaluation, such as in the design and activity planning, the validation of findings and the forming of recommendations.

The OSP evaluation received support from the United Nations Evaluation Development Group for Asia and the Pacific (UNEDAP) in providing technical advice for the evaluation process and reviewing key products (including the evaluation TOR, inception report and draft evaluation report), and coordinating agency evaluations, to the extent possible, as inputs to the OSP evaluation. The evaluation also received guidance and support from the UNDCO to ensure independence and quality of the evaluation.

Further details on the evaluation management is in the TOR in Annex 1.

2.3 Limitations of the evaluation

This evaluation was subject to a number of limitations below.

As a summative evaluation, the overall approach of the OSP evaluation is participatory and theory-based, using OSP Theory of Change (TOC). Since the TOC had not been prepared at the OSP formulation, the evaluators were requested to reconstruct the OSP TOC. The Evaluation Team developed one overall TOC for the entire OSP and particular TOCs for each of the OSP 4 Focus areas that are in Annex 2. The TOCs were validated through a workshop of the Evaluation Team with the UNCT.

During the data collection phase, the Evaluation Team revealed several shortcomings that impacted the entire evaluation process and represented major limitation for assessing the progress in the OSP implementation and the contribution of the UN to the OSP Outcomes.

Firstly, for a robust Contribution Analysis, a stratification at the level of outcomes is required in terms of immediate outcomes, intermediate outcomes and final outcomes. The logic of causal contribution based on the stratification of outcomes has not been complete for the OSP as only final Outcomes had been agreed at a very high level while the outcome layers beneath had not been defined at all. Consequently, there is a wide gap between the OSP final Outcomes at the national level and the OSP Outputs at the UN level.

While the OSP Document does not contain Outputs, the annual OSP Results Reports cover joint as well as individual deliverables by the participating UN agencies, i.e. remain *de facto* at the level of Outputs for which there are no specific Output Indicators and their target values that would enable assessment of progress towards achievement of the Outputs and Outcomes. Consultation with the RCO M&E indicated that an OSP Outcome and Output Indicators measurement table had been constructed and put in place as part of the OSP monitoring and reporting by the RCO. However, the table contains OSP Output Indicators but does not contain related target values and indication of tracking progress. It was explained by the RCO that the participating UN agencies have rarely reported according to this table. In attempts to mitigate this limitation, the Evaluation Team searched for data from the GOVN sources and found current values for some of the OSP Outcome Indicators. However, as it will be discussed in subsection 3.2, almost 40% of the OSP Outcome Indicators and their target values were not provided in the original OSP RRF.

While the OSP Results and Resources Framework lists all contributing UN agencies under each OSP Outcome, the narratives in the annual One UN Result Reports provide summary overview of only key results from the main contributing agencies. Consequently, in some cases it is difficult to identify contributions from the non-resident UN agencies and obtain additional details about their contributions to individual OSP Outcomes which is essential to support the evaluation's findings.

Several indicators in the OSP Results and Resources Framework did not have defined baseline and target data and some did not have data sources identified. Moreover, many indicators rely on data sets from national surveys and reports that are not subject or linked to any UN interventions. This makes it difficult to assess the progresses toward planned OSP Outcomes. As the available reports and national surveys provide only aggregated data, it is difficult to establish to what extent their

achievement reflects specific interventions under the OSP and where the achievement is observed for different groups right holders (i.e. disaggregated by sex).

During the workshop conducted for validation of the OSP Theories of Change it was indicated by some workshop participants that high turnover of staff in UN agencies could pose a challenge to the evaluation. Allegedly, about half of the currently operational staff members of the resident UN agencies were not in their current positions at the time of preparation of the current OSP. Similar challenge occurs with representatives of the Government. Lack of institutional memory and insufficient understanding of the reasons for formulation of OSP Outcomes and agency-specific and/or joint interventions hamper reconstruction of a clear picture about the OSP design.

Due to COVID-19 restrictions, the OSP evaluation had to be conducted as a virtual evaluation with use of on-line meeting platforms. Due to work commitments and/or absence from office of some project stakeholders, the scheduling of virtual interviews required a longer than normal time window for accommodating all interviews with the UN and the GOVN agencies. The remote modality of the interviews also did not enable the evaluators to make direct observations of matters and issues related to efficiency (e.g. direct observations of arrangements of the One UN House).

3. EVALUATION FINDINGS

This section presents the findings of the Evaluation Team based on the evidence compiled by the evaluation data collection and analysis methods described in the previous section. The findings are structured around the 6 evaluation criteria of i) relevance, ii) effectiveness, iii) efficiency, iv) coherence of the UN system support, v) UN support to the national transformational change, and vi) conformity with the OSP cross-cutting principles.

3.1 Relevance

Finding 1: The process of OSP formulation was found inclusive, ensuring that the country's needs as well as UN agencies' mandates have been reflected and relevant development responses defined. Therefore, the OSP has been highly relevant to national needs and priorities. It remains fully relevant throughout the period of the OSP implementation.

In order to identify the national needs and priorities at the end of the 2012-2016 One Plan, the UNCT conducted a series of actions that culminated with preparation of the Common Country Assessment (CCA) as a situational analysis of the available official knowledge on Viet Nam's development progress as well as the remaining challenges, embracing the conceptual framework of the UN SDGs adopted in September 2015. The CCA methodology comprised of a desk review of official documents and data, a two-day consultation workshop with participation of more than 50 UN experts, and several follow-up consultations with key experts from the participating UN agencies on specific themes.⁶

The analysis included a thorough review of the GOVN principal national strategic and planning documents, namely the 2010-2020 Socio-Economic Development Strategy (SEDS), a ten-year plan that lays down a general and broad direction for the Vietnamese nation as well as the 2016-2020 Socio-Economic Development Plan (SEDP) containing actions needed to translate the 10-year SEDS into reality and providing a framework and directions for different ministries and sectors to develop their own detailed plans of actions.

The CCA had been drafted in parallel with adoption of the SEDP 2016-2020. While independent from the GOVN processes, the CCA exercise recognised the direction and content of the national policies and identified the GOVN as the primary external stakeholder for UN programming. The 2016-2020 SEDP sets 10 primary objectives to be achieved in the given period. As a result of the SEDP analysis and prioritization consultations, the UNCT made developed the new OSP structured into 4 Focus Areas and 9 Outcomes related to the SEDP. Table 1 below summarizes the SEDP primary objectives and their relation to the OSP.

⁶ The findings from CCA had been further validated through an inclusive and participatory consultation with the representatives of the UN agencies, the GOVN and its agencies, development partners as well as other stakeholders (e.g. civil society and academia). A Strategic Prioritization Retreat was organized in order to analyse the national development priorities in the light of respective mandates of the UN system and specifically of the resident as well as non-resident UN Agencies in Viet Nam.

Table 2: Relation of the 2016-2020 SEDP primary objectives to the 2017-2021 OSP Outcomes.

SEDP primary objectives	Relation to OSP
1. Develop a market-based socialism-oriented economy, stabilize the macroeconomy, create the environment and drive for socio-economic development	Outcomes 3.1, 3.2
2. Continue pushing economic restructure with new growth model; improve productivity, efficiency and competitiveness of the economy	Outcomes 3.1, 3.2
3. Continue to push for the strategic breakthrough of building the infrastructure system in sync with modern buildings	none
4. Improve the quality of human resource and scientific and technological capability	1.3
5. Sustainably develop culture, society, health care base on close and harmonious connection between economic development and cultural development, strive for social advancement and equality, and improve people's living standards	1.1, 1.2
6. Actively cope with climate change, prevent and cope with natural disasters, enhance the management of natural resources and environment protection	2.1, 2.2
7. Focus on anti-corruption, practice saving and anti-wastefulness	4.1
8. Enhance the effectiveness of public administration and ensure the freedom and democracy of the people in socio-economic development	4.1, 4.2
9. Enhance national defence and security; ensure the independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity, maintain socio-political stability and peace for the development of our nation	none
10. Improve the effectiveness of foreign relation activities, proactively integrate into the globe, and create a peaceful environment and favourable conditions for national development	Cross-cutting

In addition to the analysis of the national development priorities, the OSP formulation was also informed by the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development was adopted at the UN Sustainable Development Summit September 25–27, 2015, in New York UN. The document, further referred to as the Agenda 2030, sets a new framework of 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and 169 targets. Conscious of the need to capture the broad scope of the Agenda 2030, the SDGs have been described as encompassing five overlapping themes: People, Prosperity, Peace, Planet and Partnerships.

As a result, of the above analyses, the UNCT in cooperation with the GOVN decided to organize the proposed OSP under the 4 Focus Areas mirroring the 5 themes of the Agenda 2030. For the UN system, a majority of Agenda 2030 goals fall within the mandates and thematic scope of work of multiple UN agencies. Results from the questionnaire surveys to the UN agencies indicated that 90% of the UN agencies confirmed the relevance of OSP to the national priorities and international commitments of Viet Nam and 80% of the agencies confirmed that OSP has correctly identified vulnerable groups as well as addressed the factors leading to their vulnerabilities. The survey to the GoVN agencies reported a fair level of participation in the OSP formulation. According to the GoVN agencies, the average score for “being consulted during the OSP drafting” was 2.9 (out of five, being totally agree).

In parallel with the OSP formulation, following the lessons learned during implementation of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), Viet Nam has developed the National Action Plan for the Implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG NAP) as a tool for integration of the

SDGs into the SEDP at national, provincial and sector levels⁷. By this token, Viet Nam has nationalized the global 2030 Agenda into the SDG NAP with 17 SDGs and 115 specific targets which fit national conditions and development priorities. For implementation of the SDG NAP, the GOVN prepared a separate document the Implementation Roadmap for Viet Nam's Sustainable Development Goals (SDG IR).⁸

Recent roundtable discussion between the UN and GOVN, the Joint Steering Committee (JSC) meeting in June 2020, as well as discussion between the RC and MPI in December 2020 proved that the GOVN in principle maintains high relevance of the four broad OSP Outcomes, namely (i) inclusive social development, (ii) climate change, disaster resilience and environmental sustainability, (iii) shared prosperity through economic transformation, and (iv) governance and access to justice, for the UN-GOVN collaboration in the next period.

Finding 2: The UN agencies were found relevant for their facilitation role in the consensus building among multiple stakeholders and in brokering issues-based partnerships and coalitions, particularly to support civil society and the private sector to more effectively participate in national decision-making processes. Specialized UN agencies were found relevant for their comparative advantage in highly specialized areas of capacity development and technology transfer because, unlike the private sector, they do not have any particular economic interests. However, there has been a concern as some UN agencies stated their respective mandates and intervention results have not been adequately included in the OSP Outcomes⁹.

Primarily, the relevance of the UN system is founded on its operation as a multilateral body with one voice in the country that makes it a neutral and impartial actor. Furthermore, the UN system is highly relevant for Viet Nam as a source of global development knowledge and as an actor facilitating knowledge networking, acquisition and adaptation of innovative technologies, as well as promoting South-South exchange in bringing international good practices to Viet Nam as well as sharing Viet Nam's experience with other countries (e.g. multidimensional poverty approach, Viet Nam's Doi Moi experience, etc.).

This facilitation role of the UN was appreciated by the Government agencies and other stakeholders consulted in this evaluation process. Representatives from the Government's Aid Coordination Agencies (GACA) confirmed the convening power of the UN on the major development issues of Viet Nam. The surveys to the GOVN and non-GOVN stakeholders indicated that convening power was among the major strength of the UN (with average score of 4.5 out of 5 being "totally agree"). Concrete examples of the UN agencies relevance of being a facilitator include establishment of groups and forums co-chaired by the UN agencies and other development partners, partnership on decent work programme with MOLISA, the Viet Nam Chamber of Commerce and Industry, and the Viet Nam General Confederation of Labour, support extended to the GOVN in accessing global funds (such as SDGF, GCF, GEF), as well as the UN support to the GOVN in global fora (UN summits, Paris 21, SDGs, Peace Keeping, Security Council).

In addition to the facilitation role, the interviewed UN respondents highlighted the UN system's normative and advocacy roles and emphasized the UN comparative advantage in granting access to international norms and standards for OSP stakeholders. Availability of the global development knowledge, ability to identify comparative experiences on normative frameworks from other countries and facilitation of the acquisition and transfer of innovative techniques and technologies

⁷ The National Action Plan to implement the 2030 Agenda for SDGs was adopted at Decision 622/QD-TTg of the Prime Minister dated 10 May 2017.

⁸ The Implementation Roadmap for Viet Nam's Sustainable Development Goals was adopted at Decision 681/QD-TTg of the Prime Minister dated 4 June 2019.

⁹ This finding is based on interviews with the UNCT and GOVN agencies as well as on review of the respective mandates of the participating UN agencies.

were the other mentioned strengths of the UN. This was confirmed by responses from the GOVN agencies to the questionnaire surveys. Accordingly, the GOVN agencies and non-GOVN stakeholders consulted also appreciated access/links to international knowledge and best practices and emphasized that the UN offers a diversity of knowledge and expertise on different development areas of Viet Nam. This strength of the UN was highlighted by the GOVN agencies and non-GOVN stakeholders in their responses to the questionnaire surveys with an average score of 4.5 out of five as maximum.

Finding 3: To a great extent, the OSP has been flexible and responsive to the emerging and emergency needs and challenges of the country as it was the cases of natural disasters and COVID-19 outbreak¹⁰.

In addition to the planned OSP interventions, the UN has been responsive to emerging needs and challenges of the country through established planning and implementation mechanisms, including preparation of the Joint Work Plans (JWP). The JWP mechanism ensured flexibility to include additional activities and interventions in line with natural disaster and public health emergencies. Responses to the COVID-19 pandemic and the typhoon were two examples of the OSP relevance in addressing emerging needs and challenges – see below. The flexibility of the OSP was confirmed by the UN agencies in the questionnaire survey.

An important example was the UN response to the GOVN request for mobilizing international assistance to respond to the impacts of a devastating typhoon that affected the central coastal provinces, caused more than 120 fatalities and heavily impacted the agricultural and aquacultural sectors, livelihoods, as well as a wider economic sector and infrastructure. The inter-agency UN Disaster Response Management Team (DRMT), comprised of technical experts from several UN agencies, worked in strong partnership with the GOVN and humanitarian partners, including the Viet Nam Red Cross (VNRC). Based on a joint multi-stakeholder needs assessment, this partnership resulted preparation of the 2017/2018 Flooding Response Plan with an estimated cost of US\$ 54 million to support more than one million of the most vulnerable people. The partnership was also instrumental in mobilizing funding for life-saving support from the UN Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF).

This work continued in the following years when the Disaster Management Group (DMG), a multi-stakeholder strategic decision-making body on disaster management led by the UN Resident Coordinator with a Co-Chair from the NGO community, conducted assessment of the DMG's preparedness and response capacity, functionality and the interaction with the Government's emergency response architecture. The UN also actively built knowledge of disaster management and disaster risk reduction among relevant UN staff and disaster response partners and helped thus to reduce the response time. On behalf of the DMG, the UN coordinated release of the 2020 Viet Nam Floods Response Plan seeking US\$ 40 million for assistance to the most vulnerable flood-affected people in the central provinces of Viet Nam. The Plan covers six months and addresses both immediate humanitarian needs and some early recovery activities.

In response to the COVID-19 outbreak, the UN has been working hand-in-hand with the GOVN and other development partners to provide a coordinated One UN reaction to COVID-19 in support of the GOVN national health and socio-economic response. The UN support consisted of an initial Policy Brief on the Economic Impact of COVID-19 in Viet Nam and a more structured COVID-19 Socio-Economic Response Plan for Viet Nam, based on rapid assessments and analyses of economic and social impacts by several UN agencies clustered into two Working Groups. The role of the UN in facilitation of this COVID19 response was highly appreciated by the development partners

¹⁰ This finding is based on review of documents on the UNCT response to national disasters and the COVID-19 pandemic and interviews with the representatives of the UN and GOVN agencies.

consulted in this evaluation process (such as the World Bank and EU). The UN approach to COVID-19 socio-economic response and recovery set out in this plan broadly focuses on three elements, i) tackling the immediate emergency, ii) addressing the social impact and economic response of COVID-19 in the emerging ‘new normal’, and iii) progressively orient towards and focus on ‘recovering better’ supporting Viet Nam on the national socio-economic development strategy (SEDS) and its implementation plan (SEDP).¹¹

The case of Quang Nam province – being a case study for this evaluation – present an example of OSP being flexible and responsive to emerging needs on the ground. Since the start of OSP implementation, there has been a number of 19 engagements by the UN agencies in the province. Out of this number, seven engagements were either for disaster emergency support or Covid19 response. These emergencies were mobilized and deployed in a timely manner to respond to the occurrence of these events in 2020. These emergency engagements were highly appreciated by the local authorities. It was said by the stakeholders that the support has been utilized according to original plans and purposes, meaning a level of effectiveness in terms of disbursing the resources according to the plans (see Annex 6 for details).

3.2 Effectiveness

Under this section, the Evaluation Team was requested to answer the evaluation questions on effectiveness of the OSP in terms of the UNCT and GOVN contribution to the OSP’s planned results. At the outset of this discussion, it has to be noted that assessment of effectiveness was affected by insufficiencies in the OSP Theory of Change (TOC). Although the review of the previous One Plan recommended to:

“...develop a theory of change and identify medium term indicators that allow the assessment of progress towards outcomes, with insights as to the quality of results, underlying factors and likelihood of sustainability¹²,”

this recommendation was not fully implemented. Only a simplified TOC was developed at the formulation stage of the OSP, based on a simplified results chain that contained only agency-specific and joint results (Outputs) and high-level OSP Outcomes. The OSP TOC did not define Immediate Outcomes (i.e. results of combined actions of the UN and the GOVN) as short-term outcomes, typically changes in capacity, such as an increase in knowledge, awareness, skills or abilities, to be experienced by OSP stakeholders and immediate beneficiaries during the intervention.

Intermediary Outcomes were yet another missing layer in the OSP results chain, changes in behaviour, practice or performance of the immediate beneficiaries, to be achieved by the end of a project/program. Obviously, no indicators were defined for tracking progress.

At the very outset, this Evaluation Team was requested to reconstruct the TOC (provided as Annex 3). However, due to the lack of definition of Immediate and Intermediate Outcomes, this exercise could only reproduce the original TOC with the OSP Outputs from the UN projects and high-level (final) Outcomes defined as changes and improvements of lives of the OSP ultimate beneficiaries.

¹¹ In addition, a number of guidelines were also developed by the GOVN with technical support from the UN. Guidelines for prevention, control and assessment of COVID-19 infection risk for employees in the workplace and dormitory, known as Decision 2194/QĐ-BCĐQG, was issued in May 2020 with technical support from the WHO and the ILO in Viet Nam and key national constituents and partners. To mitigate the Covid-19 impact, UN support for VCCI to develop and disseminate the national guidelines for sustainable enterprises by developing and operating the Business Continuity Plan at enterprises, especially MSME one.

¹² Independent Review of the One Plan (2012-2016), Recommendation 1, p. 82.

To address these questions, the focus of the effectiveness assessment was to examine progress towards the OSP Outcomes to date. However, this assessment was severely constrained by lack of data. As highlighted in Section 2.5 on limitations of this evaluation, the OSP document contains a set of 65 Outcome Indicators. A set of 173 Output Indicators was proposed afterwards by Results Groups through the M&E Working Group and approved by the UNCT. These Output Indicators exemplify key interventions and their deliverables, in particular those for which information could be verified by triangulation of information from other sources, e.g. independent reports and/or media articles. The RCO further inserted these indicators into an Outcome and Output Indicator Measurement Table – which was expected to serve as a reporting tool for the UN agencies. Unfortunately, despite initial attempts, a majority of the indicators did not have reported values as the UN agencies rarely reported according to the table. This data constraint seriously hampered the ability to evaluate effectiveness of OSP by assessing achievements toward the expected outcomes.

In this context, the assessment of effectiveness in the current report relies on (i) assessing the current values of the Outcome indicators that could be informed using existing data sources from the GOVN agencies or other relevant sources and (ii) perceptions of the UN agencies on contribution to the OSP Outcomes – which were expressed during the interviews and through the questionnaire survey. Key deliverables of the UN agencies according to the nine Outcomes (which were also well presented in the OSP Annual Results Reports) and a status of the existing Outcome indicators are provided in Annex 5.

Finding 4: Based on the data available and perceptions of the UN agencies, the UN has contributed towards the OSP Outcomes. However, the extent of this contribution could not be fully quantified due to insufficiencies in the OSP results framework¹³.

The evaluation, based on assessment progress toward outcome indicators (see Annex 5), found that some important Outcomes are on track. For example, under Focus Area 1, 5 out of 16 measurable indicators have been achieved and other 3 are likely to be achieved at the assessment time. Notably, the expected Outcomes on poverty reduction and poverty headcount have been achieved. Attainment of some key Outcomes in equity in health were also likely to be achieved by the end of the OSP period (i.e. prevalence of stunting among children under 5 years of age, maternal mortality ratio, proportion of births attended by skilled health personnel. Based on this assessment, it could be concluded that out of 39 Outcome Indicators where data was available to inform the status at the time of this evaluation, about half of the indicators were either already achieved by the end of 2020 or on track to be achieved by the end of the OSP time period. It was also noted that 40% of these 65 outcome indicators were not defined due to lack of data, and therefore only a partial capture of effectiveness was possible in this evaluation.

In the survey questionnaire for the UN agencies, the respondents expressed a high confidence about progress of their respective interventions towards the targets set in the OSP Results Framework. With regard to the OSP Outcomes in general, with 68% of the UN agencies either agreed or strongly agreed with the statement “Your agency has made progress towards attainment of the established outcomes and targets as set in the OSP results matrix”, it suggests a moderately high level of self-perceived effectiveness by the UN agencies. With regard to particular focus areas, a similar rate of 68% of the UN agencies either agreed or strongly agreed with the statement “the OSP targets in areas of your agency’s contribution are on track to be achieved by the end of the OSP period”. It is noted that this assessment was made by the end of the year 2020, when the OSP implementation was interrupted by COVID-19 social distancing measures, especially those on

¹³ This finding is based on interviews with representatives of the UN agencies and responses to the questionnaire survey.

travelling and public gathering. It means that this moderately high level of effectiveness largely resulted from activities conducted in the period 2017-2019 and the initial part of 2020.

Notably, the responses also indicated some reservations in regard to the adequacy of the OSP Outcomes' formulation. These concerns were confirmed in the individual interviews where representatives of some UN agencies stated their respective mandates and intervention outcomes have not been adequately included in the OSP Outcomes. Through additional responses to the open-ended question on effectiveness in the questionnaire survey to the UN agencies as well in individual interviews, some agencies stated that the OSP indicators had not been suitable for tracking progress due to the fact that their interventions have been quite specific to particular development issues or challenges and therefore could not fully contribute to the high-level OSP Outcomes. Again, this statement is linked to the gap between high-level national Outcomes specified in the OSP document and UN-level Outputs discussed under the Finding 5.

Furthermore, some agencies indicated that in their areas of programming it takes time to see the real effect of their interventions and therefore found it difficult to assess the contribution to the achievement of the OSP Outcomes within the relatively short OSP timeframe. These concerns together with the survey responses confirmed some agencies perceived lack of causal links in the OSP results chain to bridge the gap between the Output level of individual agency results and the high-level OSP Outcomes.

Finding 5: Assessing the effectiveness is seriously hampered by incompleteness of the OSP results table, availability of data, and low compliance with reporting responsibilities.

The OSP Document contains description of the 9 OSP Outcomes and a generic description of strategic interventions under each Outcome and a set of high-level Outcome Indicators with the number of indicators varies substantially between the OSP Outcomes. Sets of OSP Outputs were established at a later stage as deliverables from the joint working programmes of UN agencies. No intermediary results were formulated and therefore there is a wide gap between the high-level Outcomes and the UN agencies' level Outputs.

The OSP Document contains Outcomes described at the national high-level as expected results of interventions of multiple actors. Taking one example of the outcome 1.1.1 "Proportion of population below the international poverty line" under Outcome 1.1: Poverty and Vulnerability Reduction. Clearly, this poverty headcount is the result of the GOVN plethora of policies and programmes (such as the National Target Programs), development initiatives of the development partners (including the UN), private sector investments, and those of communities themselves. Contributions of development partners are modest compared to those of the GOVN and private sector.¹⁴ In this regard, anchoring the OSP implementation to high-level Outcomes where the UN could make only a modest contribution seems to be a poor strategy for measuring the OSP achievements. Unfortunately, this issue was observed for almost all the Outcome Indicators specified in the OSP Document. Assessing contribution of the UN to these high-level Outcomes in quantitative terms is therefore nearly impossible.

During the OSP implementation, sets of Output Indicators were identified by the Results Groups in connection with individual UN agencies' programme/project monitoring systems. Based on these output indicators and the prior-defined OSP Outcome indicators, an OSP Outcome and Output Measurement Table by RCO was formulated. Furthermore, responsibilities to collect the data and annually update specific indicators were assigned to the UN agencies (depending on whether the agencies might have contribution to these indicators). Although the immediate results

¹⁴ Following attainments of (lower) middle-income status, grant assistance has decreased from 0.5% of GDP in 2010 to 0.1% in 2015; concessional loans have fallen from 4.6% GDP in 2010 to 2.7% of GDP in 2015 (ADB, 2016).

of the UN interventions (Outputs) are aligned to the Outcomes, incomplete definition of the Outcome Indicators and their target values as well as absence of the target values for the Output Indicators hinder establishment of evidence-based approach to monitoring of progress in the OSP implementation.

Availability of Output Indicators in the above-mentioned reporting table over time should have made it feasible to assess the UN contribution to the high-level OSP outcomes. Unfortunately, as already mentioned above, these Outputs were not thoroughly monitored during the implementation. In the most updated OSP Outcome and Output Measurement Table provided by RCO to the evaluation team, only 14 out of 173 Output Indicators were inserted (i.e. only 8 percent). Consultation with the RCO M&E indicated that the UN agencies rarely reported to this table. On the other hand, responses from many UN agencies revealed their reluctance to report to different OSP M&E requirements and platforms (rather than the M&E requirements of their specific programs and projects). Due to the gap between the UN-level OSP Outputs and the high-level OSP Outcomes, the evaluation found it challenging to measure the collective contribution of the UN to the Outcomes. This is because of the Outcome definition as high-level development issues, and insufficient OSP reporting provide an incomplete view of what has been achieved with respect to the targets set in the OSP result framework.

One possibility to assess the effectiveness under such lack of data availability is to review the existing reports of UN as well as those of individual agencies. At the output level, the UN has completed a number of interventions and made notable contributions to certain outcomes at the project or programme level (see Annex 4 for a full capture of the key deliverables under OSP). However, available OSP results reports do not clearly show the way how such outcomes at the project or programme level could be linked to the OSP Outcome Indicators that are essentially national level indicators reported by national authorities. The Outcome Indicators were also not updated in the OSP Annual Result Reports.

Another possibility to inform effectiveness of the OSP implementation is to look for other data sources (outside the UN system) for assessing progresses against the OSP outcomes. The Evaluation Team searched for data from the sources made available by the GOVN official statistics and national surveys. Results of this effort are reported in Annex 5. Unfortunately, this effort was only partly successful, due to the insufficient definition of many Outcome Indicators.¹⁵ Using the results available from this attempt, a complete capture of the OSP effectiveness is not possible either (see further discussion below).

Finding 6: As a result of insufficiencies in formulation of the main result elements of the OSP Results Framework, related indicators and their target values, the OSP document has not been effectively used in operational monitoring of results.¹⁶

Being a strategic document, it was expected that OSP was referred to by the UN agencies in formulation of joint and individual programs as a background document. However, the questionnaire survey indicated that only 58% of the UN agencies (11 out of 19 agencies that participated in the survey) perceived that the OSP results framework is specific enough to guide their agencies' programming.

Consultation with key development partners such as the World Bank and EU also indicated a certain level of their awareness of the UN's OSP and this strategic document was sometimes

¹⁵ Out of 65 outcome indicators in the OSP document, 13 indicators were not defined at the baseline and left "to be confirmed". For those indicators, the sources of data to verify the indicators were also left "to be confirmed"

¹⁶ This finding is based on interviews with representatives of the UN agencies and responses to the questionnaire survey.

referred for consultations and cooperation between UN and some key development partners. Within the GoVN system, interviews with the GoVN agencies indicated that they were active in designing and planning for specific projects with the UN agencies but awareness of OSP in this regard was limited. The survey results reported the average score for the statement of “awareness of OSP” was 2.9 out of the maximum 5 (“totally agree”), meaning a fair awareness level of the GoVN agencies with regard to the OSP. Outside the UN and GOVN systems, there has been cooperation with private sector and civil society organization. Unfortunately, the rate of response of these stakeholders to the questionnaire survey was low. Only seven agencies returned the questionnaires and out of these agencies, two were awareness of the OSP documents.

Going beyond the programming level, it appears to the evaluation team that the OSP document has not been used in operational planning (i.e. prioritization of activities once the programs were formulated) and monitoring activities. The M&E WG made efforts to identify the linkages between the agencies’ results and the intended Outcomes through grouping and aggregation of the results. However, the Evaluation Team found that there has been no systematic effort on monitoring and reporting on the status of Outcome Indicators in the OSP annual reporting. Although the 2017 OSP Results Report provided an update on the status of the Outcome Indicators, this practice was discontinued for the subsequent ARRs for the years 2018 and 2019.¹⁷ In this regard, while there might be actual progresses achieved in various outcome indicators of OSP, these progresses were not captured in the existing reports or database of UN regarding the OSP implementation.¹⁸ This indicates a serious insufficiency of the monitoring arrangements in place to measure the progress to OSP Outcomes and represents another blocking factor for a thorough assessment of effectiveness in this evaluation.

3.3 Efficiency

Under the evaluation criterion of Efficiency, the OSP evaluation examines a rational use of financial resources and expertise for implementation of the OSP and makes assessment of the fit for purpose’ UN coordination structure.

Finding 7: The UNCT has made substantive arrangements to increase efficiency of OSP coordination and reduce transaction costs of the OSP implementation through adoption and utilization of a range of common services including procurement, finance, information and communications technology, logistics, human resources and facility services¹⁹.

In order to strengthen the internal coherence and support implementation of the OSP, the UNCT prepared and activated its Business Operations Strategy (BOS) for 2018-2021. The BOS concept was introduced by the UNDG as a backbone of the ‘Operating as One’ pillar and a results-oriented framework for strategic planning, management, monitoring and reporting of UNCT operations. The 2018-2021 BOS is composed of six outcomes including common procurement, common human resources, common finance, common ICT, common logistics, and common premises.

The BOS combines the efforts of UN agencies in Viet Nam aiming at increase of quality, efficiency and effectiveness while reducing the costs of the common UNCT operations at the country level. It has been implemented under the lead of the Operations Management Team (OMT) that was

¹⁷ Reviewing the annual OSP Results Reports indicated that all the reports were mainly descriptive and focused on a full capture of key deliverables. Attempts to discuss the achievements of the OSP outcomes were not seen in these reports; updates on the outcome indicators (and output) were not seen neither.

¹⁸ It was noted that some UN agencies have commissioned independent evaluation of the country programs for instance UNDP, UN Women, UNODC, UNESCO, UNFPA (and draft of evaluations reports were made available by the agencies to the evaluation team).

¹⁹ This finding is based on review of available reports, data provided by the UN RCO and interviews with the UN stakeholders.

established in parallel with the OSP formulation to assist the UNCT in making the operations cost-efficient through implementation of the BOS. The common service areas covered by the BOS are procurement, finance, information and communications technology, logistics, human resources and facility services.

For common procurement, the UN pursued establishment of long-term agreements (LTAs) on the repeated purchase of particular goods or services for all UN Agencies' common usage. Two LTAs each were concluded for travel, event organizing services and translation and interpretation, respectively. Reportedly, the use of the newly contracted LTAs led to an estimated 80 per cent time saving in travel, an estimated cost saving of US\$ 11,547 for organizing 58 various events and estimated savings of US\$ 38,761 in 247 translation/interpretation cases.

Regarding common premises, the signing of the Memorandum of Understanding on the occupation of the Green One UN House (GOUNH) and use of common services in May 2017 marked a significant milestone in movement towards greater efficiency of operations of the UNCT that transfers also into implementation of the OSP. From the initial 12 UN agencies in the first year of the OSP implementation, the settlement of the GOUNH has increased to almost full occupancy with staff of 15 out of the 16 resident UN agencies co-located in the same premises at the time of the final evaluation. The distribution of the UN agencies' staff in the GOUNH follows the current OSP coordination architecture based on the staff programme or operations functions instead of the agency affiliation.

In order to promote harmonized business operations, the principle of function clustering has been instituted by the UNCT, meaning that staff sit according to their functions instead of agencies i.e Finance/Budget, Procurement, HR, etc.) Programme staff are clustered per the Joint Results Groups and other inter-agency groups (e.g. Communications Team, M&E working group) responsible for the implementation of the OSP. GOUNH is a manifestation of a tight integration in certain common service areas that include harmonized IT, facility management, protocol and premises security services to all GOUNH-based UN agencies. The co-location of almost all resident UN agencies in the GOUNH reportedly led to reduced transaction costs for the UN agencies through reduced travel between previous UN offices across Ha Noi, reduced energy and water consumption, improved management of office waste and better inter-agency coordination, although quantification of the savings derived through the more integrated business operations is not known. Notably, results from the questionnaire survey indicated that 68.4% of the UN agencies agreed that "partnerships with other UN agencies helped to improve efficiency of OSP implementation".

For more efficient operation of the GOUNH, UNCT established the GOUNH Management Board (MB) with support from its Executive Committee, the Operations Management Team, and the Common Services Unit (CSU). The GOUNH MB pursued several energy efficiency measures for maintenance and validation of the ISO 14001 Environmental Management System. The achievements included generation of 88,093 KWh electricity through a solar panel energy system, replacement of lighting tubes and re-grouping of lighting in certain GOUNH areas as well as installation of higher quality air filters in the building ventilation system. Grey water output from the wastewater treatment plant used for irrigation of the GOUNH garden resulted in savings of about 650 m³ of clean water. Other measures included termination of provision of plastic water bottles and straws in the GOUNH cafeteria and introduction of biodegradable waste bags by the GOUNH cleaning service providers.

Integration of the common services is led by an International Common Services Manager under the overall oversight of the GOUNH MB. Through a one-stop-shop for all service requests, this arrangement does not follow the traditional agency lead model, but instead reports to a Management Board (GMB) that acts as a UNCT-level management committee. In terms of common finance, a Standard Chartered Bank (SCB) Transactions Office was opened inside the GOUNH based

on a negotiated approval from the State Bank of Viet Nam. Staff welfare and wellbeing was subject topic of several common human resources health-related promotion sessions and first AID training courses were organized for all UN personnel.

Despite the realised cost savings resulting from the harmonised operations, there is no quantitative evidence about efficiency gains in project/programme execution. Some UNCT staff expressed their perception of time savings and improved coordination. Also, there is no information available on cost savings on the side of the GOVN, although there is a general perception that the OSP could have induced some efficiency gains for the GOVN.

Finding 8: Funding of the OSP has been a challenge as major part of estimated costs of the OSP were not available at the OSP outset. There was a sizeable funding gap at the OSP inception that signals insufficiency of core and other resources available to the UN entities. This represents a constraint on the performance of the OSP.

The OSP Document established a Common Budgetary Framework (CBF) as an estimation of the resources required by all participating UN system agencies for achievement of the OSP planned results. The CBF captures 5-year as well as annual budget estimates and expenditures of all UN agencies (including non-resident ones) in Viet Nam. In 2017 and 2018, the CBF collected the budget information by available/secured core and non-cored funds and additional mobilized funds at the OSP Outcome level.

At the outset, it has to be noted that, in comparison with the previous OPs, the OSP was designed with the main focus on policy advocacy, especially in providing new rights-based recommendations and facilitating access to the most updated data and research evidence to the GOVN partners. This included efforts for drafting, development and revision of national laws as well as related policies, programmes and action plans. Informal meetings at a very high level, various mediation and lobbying efforts, are low-cost interventions with potential high impact for policy influence at the national level.

In 2019, the UNINFO platform was introduced with the requirement of providing budget estimates and spending at activity level. The intention was to enable the UN to capture the annual budget by available, to-be-mobilized and expended resources that could be further broken down by source (core, non-core, donors), output and outcome, results group, SDG etc. and make a more targeted analysis of different angles of the UN financial contributions. However, the current CBF may not capture 100% of UN financial contribution to the country as not all agencies report all of their annual budget to the UNINFO (including programmatic and operational budgets). Also, several agencies don't provide full reporting on all required indicators/fields (SDGs, funding sources, geographic areas, etc.) to the UNINFO, thus significantly hinder more detailed analysis of the OSP financing.

The overall estimated budget for the OSP programmatic results at OSP inception amounts to US\$ 423,348,650. At that time, the participating UN agencies had available only about 39% of total required funding at the OSP inception, including US\$ 96,254,080 in regular resources, either core or assessed, and US\$ 68,135,684 of other secured resources. The remaining 61% was expected to be mobilized in the course of the OSP implementation. The UN RCO makes regular assessment of progress in resource mobilization and funding gaps. However, this effort is based on actual expenditures and an assumption about linear funds mobilization, i.e. that it is done at an equal rate of 20% of the total funding gap each year. There is no information available to what extent the initially identified funding gap was reduced. Through efforts on funds mobilization (mostly at the level of the participating UN agencies), the UN managed to substantially reduce the initial funding gap. However, it appears that the OSP total funding will stay short of the amounts planned at the OSP inception.

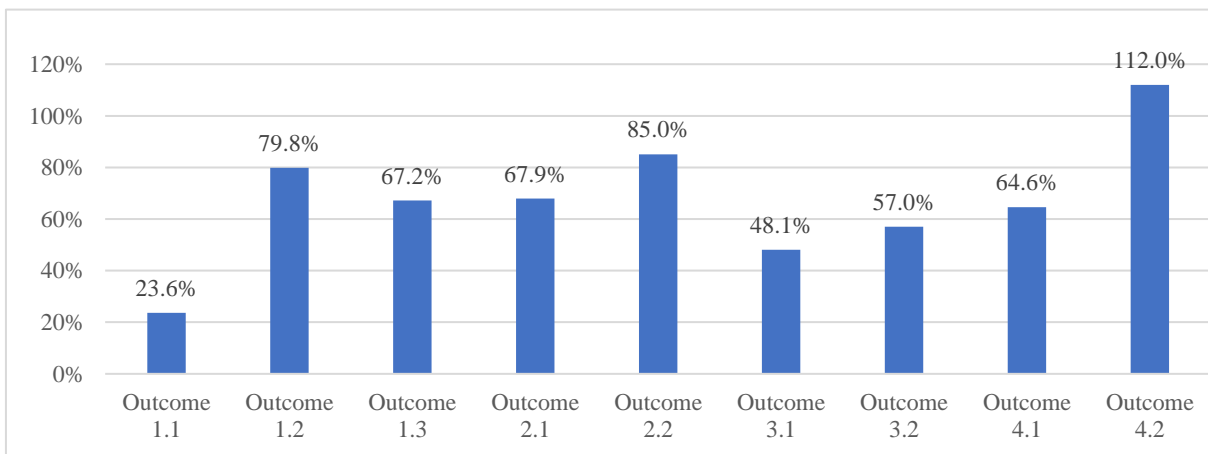
Finding 9: The rate of delivery of planned resources for the OSP for the period 2017-2020 is 66% that is under the prorated division of resources for 4 out of the 5 years of the OSP duration. The individual budgets and resource mobilization efforts of the participating UN entities are not fully aligned with the OSP Common Budgetary Framework.

Target for having the full 5-year total planned budget of USD 423 million appears to be a challenge for the OSP. The total expenditures for 2017-2020 reached about 280 million US\$ - that is approximately 66% of the planned amount for the 5-year OSP period. In order to reach the OSP total planned expenditures for the 5-year OSP period, expenditures in the remaining year 2021 would need to reach about 143 million US\$. The available budget of 83 million US\$ for 2021 suggests that the original 5-year target could be reached only assuming that additional 60 million US\$ is mobilized during 2021. Results from the questionnaire survey indicated that only 63% of the UN agencies expected to be able to mobilize sufficient resources as planned at the OSP inception.

It was further noted that the delivery rate (i.e. % of the planned funding was actually mobilized) varies greatly across the OSP Focus Areas and Outcomes. Using the figures on actual expenditures in 2017-2020, it was reported that while under the FA4 the participating UN agencies have expended about 105% of the planned funds, the delivery rate in the same period under the FA3 was only 51% (and corresponding figures for FA1 and FA2 were 56% and 75%, respectively). Similarly, a great variability was found for the rates of delivery by individual OSP Outcomes, as shown in Display 1 below. Accordingly, the delivery rates varied between the lowest of 23.6% for Outcome 1.1 (Poverty and vulnerability reduction) to the highest of 112.0% for Outcome 4.2 (Human Rights Protection, Rule of Law and Strengthened Access to Justice).

Given this variability in the actual funding mobilization, a correlation could be expected between the delivery rate and the achieved progress under the Outcomes. But this does not seem to be the case as can be seen on Display 1 below in comparison with the data in Annex 5.

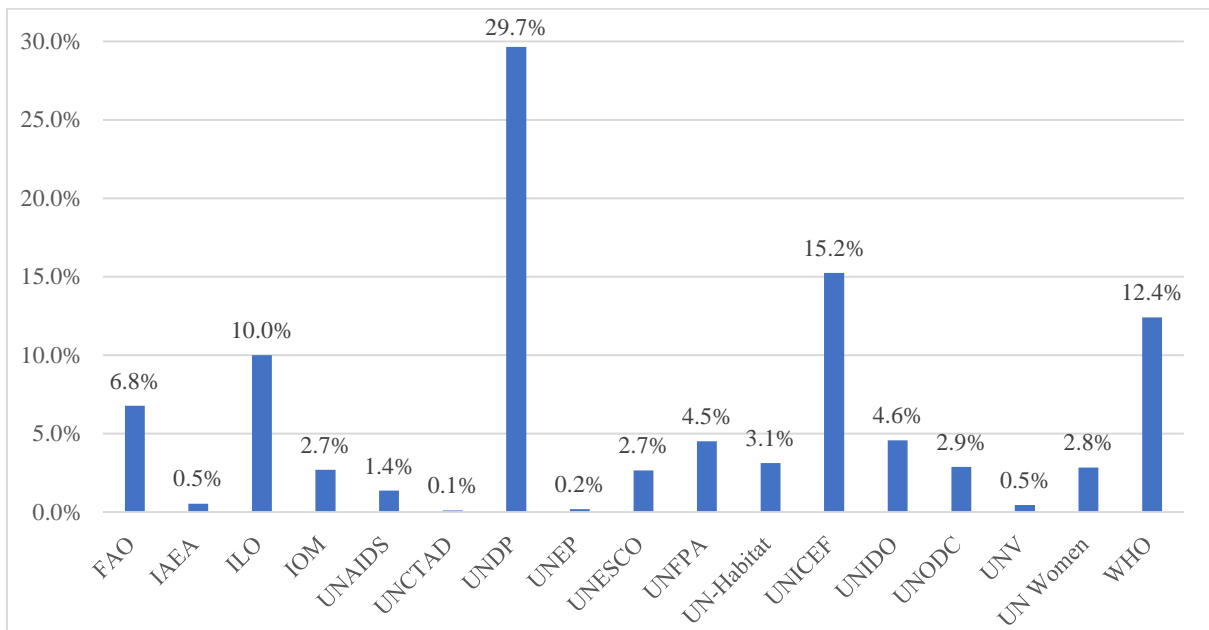
Display 1: Expenditures under OSP Outcomes in 2017-2020 as percentage of the planned funding at OSP inception



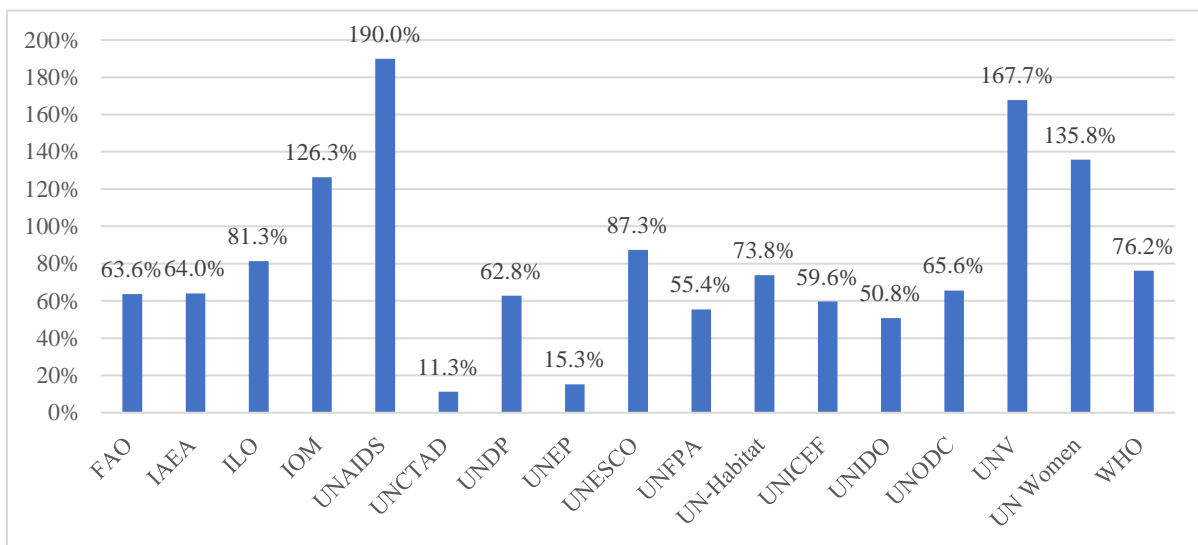
For instance, while the actual expenditure in 2017 – 2020 under Outcome 1.1 was only less than a quarter of the planned budget, Annex 5 shows that many targets related to poverty (for which the Evaluation Team has been able to locate the data to inform these indicators) have been either achieved or even exceeded. Further assessment of the delivery rates does not show any correlation between the delivery rates and level of progress towards achievement of the Outcomes. This further confirms the finding 4 on the gap between the high-level OSP Outcomes and the UN-level Outputs.

Displays 2 and 3 show the funding commitment by UN agencies at the OSP inception and delivery by UN agencies during 4 years of the OSP (2017-2020).

Display 2: Funding commitments of UN agencies as percentage of the total OSP budget



Display 3: Expenditures by the UN agencies in 2017-2020 as percentage of the planned funding at OSP inception



It follows from Displays 2 and 3 that the rates of delivery differ to great extent across the UN agencies. Out of the three agencies with the highest OSP funding commitments, WHO (accounting for 12.4% of the total OSP expenditures in 2017-2020, has reached more than 76 % of the planned amount while the respective expenditures of UNDP (accounting for 29.7% of the total OSP expenditures) and UNICEF (15.2% of the total OSP expenditures) have reached 62.8% and 59.62%, respectively, of their planned OSP funding. Four agencies, namely UNAIDS, UNV, UN-Women and IOM, which collectively accounted for 7.3% of the total OSP funding commitment, have already exceeded the planned funding for the entire 5-year OSP period.

Finding 10: There are linkages of the OSP with domestic financing, and national budget processes, but the reality showed a sub-optimal level of national funds provided for the OSP implementation. Moreover, several agencies stressed complicated procedures for ODA approval by the GOVN that caused delays in start of individual projects. Last but not least, the UN agencies

expressed their discontent about lack of the GOVN resource mobilization for implementation of the OSP²⁰.

The transition of Viet Nam to a lower middle-income country (LMIC) has resulted in gradual decrease of international development financing as several bilateral donors have reduced their funding allocations for Viet Nam. This, together with sizeable reduction of core resources reported by several UN agencies, is “drying up” of the traditional sources of multilateral funding for programmes will prompt the UN to take a concerted shift towards diversification of the funding base for the next CF.

Counterpart funding from the GOVN is one potential source of funding of the OSP interventions but the OSP document does not envisage any specific terms of this counterpart contribution and the Common Budgetary Framework does not include any items for this resource either. It only states that “the Government, through the implementing partners, will ensure that counterpart contributions necessary for the implementation of the One Strategic Plan 2017-2021 will be made available in a timely and adequate manner” (p. 57). Without a specific figure or percentage, it is not clear what was the relative importance of the GOVN counterpart funding in the overall resource mobilization for the OSP implementation. In practice, the mobilization of GOVN cost-sharing experienced cuts and delays that were reported by several UN agencies. On the side of the GoVN agencies, the interviews indicated that counterpart funding to specific engagements were arranged according to agreement with the UN agencies at the design. Counterpart funding was both in kind contribution (e.g. office space, equipment) and cash (e.g. to pay for staff salaries and other operational costs). It was estimated by some GoVN agencies that the counterpart funding usually accounts for around 10 to 15 per cent of the total funding.

Increase in the GOVN cost-sharing and mobilization of resources from private sector organizations located in Viet Nam are possibilities to enhance the ability of the UN to respond to the country needs in a shrinking funding environment. Efforts to mobilize funding from the private sector was in initial stage with some on-going discussion with VietJet leading to the company providing USD 600,000 to implement the Joint Programme on “Mobilizing Cultural Dynamics and Youth Participation for Ha Noi Creative Capital” promote Vietnamese culture. Apart from this ongoing discussion, involvement of private sector in the OSP implementation was found limited.

3.4 Coherence of the UN system support

Under the theme Coherence of the UN system support, the evaluation considered a number of evaluation questions detailed in the TOR (Annex 1).

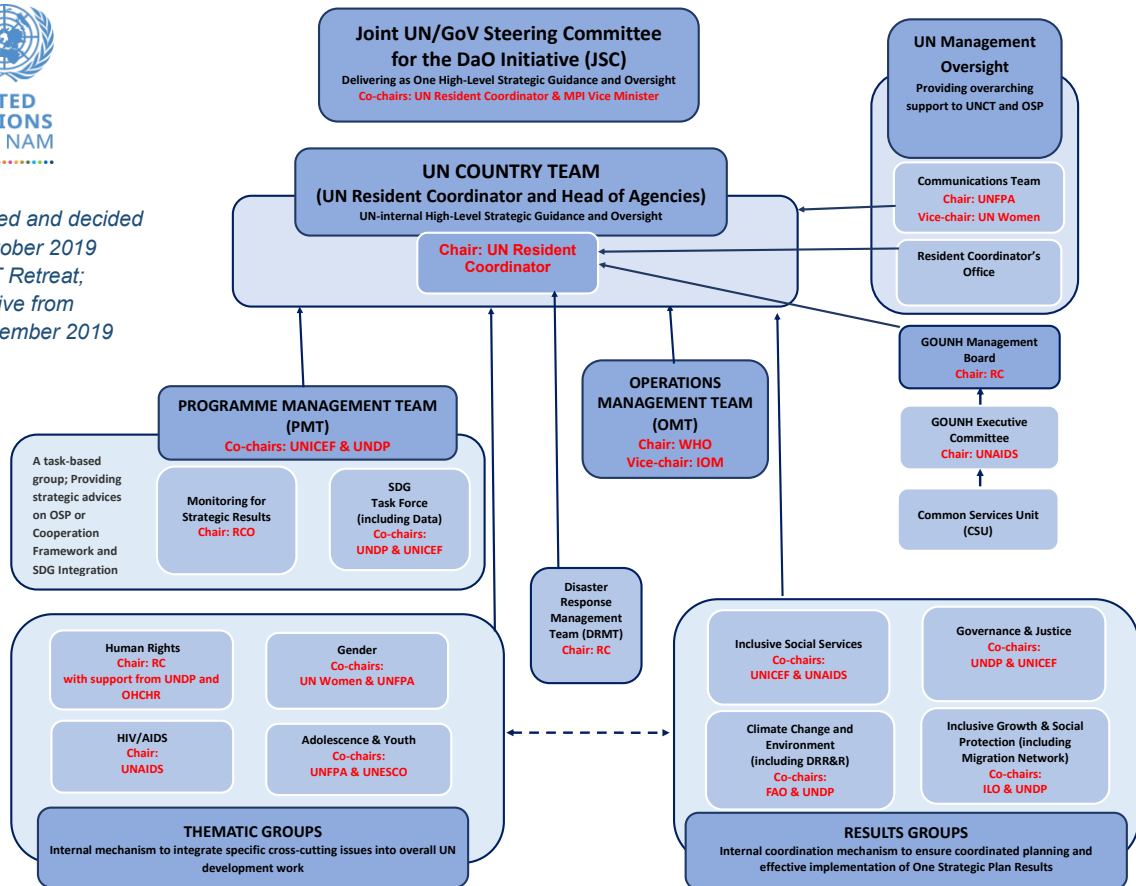
At its annual retreat in February 2017, the UNCT decided to establish a “fit-for-purpose” coordination architecture for implementing the OSP in line with the global DaO SOPs. The architecture includes a Joint Government-UN Steering Committee (JSC) as the highest-level coordination structure between the GOVN and the United Nations. The coordination architecture included a Programme Management Team, five Joint Results Groups, five cross-cutting Thematic Groups, as well as other inter-agency working groups for OSP implementation. Following the launching of the UN Development System (UNDS) reform at the beginning of 2019, the original coordination architecture was revised at the annual UNCT in October 2019. The revised OSP coordination architecture is on Display 15.

Display 4: Revised OSP coordination architecture (as of October 2019)

²⁰ This finding is based on review of available reports and interviews with the UN agencies and analysis of responses to the survey questionnaire.



Revised and decided
at October 2019
UNCT Retreat;
Effective from
1 November 2019



Coherence of the UN system support is largely determined by how the OSP coordination architecture has been operationalized in practice. The functionality of the key components of the OSP coordination architecture are discussed below.

Finding 11: The current format of the JSC meetings were largely held as platforms for information sharing between the UN and the GOVN but without systematic and detailed discussion of concrete OSP workplans and results. In addition, the evaluation found dissatisfaction amongst representatives of the GOVN line ministries and UN agencies with the current format of the JSC meetings as well as with the OSP coordination architecture that does not facilitate fully-fledged and productive cooperation and partnership between the UN and the GOVN²¹.

Joint Steering Committee

The Joint Steering Committee (JSC) has been established as the highest-level coordination structure between the GOVN and the United Nations. The JSC Terms of Reference, jointly prepared and approved by the GOVN and the UNCT, include definitions of JSC membership, roles and responsibilities of the members, as well as a mechanism for approval of decisions and for resolution of disputes. It was agreed that the JSC would be established on a basis of equal participation with a core membership of the GOVN (MPI) and the UN RC co-chairs and 3 representatives from both the GOVN and the UNCT.²² The ToR further granted an observer status to relevant GOVN ministries,

²¹ This finding is based on review of available reports and interviews with the UN agencies and the GOVN stakeholders.

²² The core representation from the GOVN was fixed for the entire OSP period and included OOG, MOFA and MOF while the UNCT core representation was determined on an annual rotational basis.

UNCT members outside of the core membership, and development partners, depending on the topics discussed by the JSC.

The evaluation finds that the JSC was created in line with the global DaO SOPs as the highest-level bipartite structure aiming at overseeing coordination between the GOVN and the UNCT. The JSC has been backstopped by the Joint Secretariat provided jointly by the UN RCO and MPI that has been instrumental in provision of background documentation and sharing of information between the JSC members and participating agencies. However, it was noted that the JSC was not established right at the inception of the OSP implementation and held its first meeting on 18 February 2018, about 14 months after the start of the OSP implementation. Two further JSC meetings were held on 2 April 2019 and on 26 June 2020.²³

On the basis of the available JSC Meeting minutes, the evaluation concludes that the JSC meetings were conducted in a highly structured and formal manner with the agenda typically composed of presentations by the UN on review of progress in OSP implementation, update on UNDS reform and OSP financial overview, as well as presentations/updates by the GOVN on SDGs implementation and progress on development of major national planning frameworks (SEDP and SEDS). The meetings also fostered a general discussion on the presented information. All three JSC meetings under the OSP were largely held as platforms for information sharing between the UN and the GOVN but without systematic and detailed discussion of concrete OSP workplans, results, indicators and targets. Apart from the presentation of annual financial updates, there was no detailed discussion or analysis of resource mobilization for the OSP, which has been a major challenge for the OSP implementation. Based on the available documentation it can be concluded that apart from a general oversight the OSP the JSC did not make sufficient focus on review of the OSP strategic direction and funding mobilization.

Notably, there was only limited substantive participation from the GOVN side in the JSC meetings. Although usually about 10 observers of the GOVN registered in the JSC meetings, only about half of them represented the line ministries with interest in the substantive OSP outcomes as the other half came from the main GOVN OSP focal point (MPI). This ensured active engagement of only a small number (usually 5 or less) of the same line ministries in the annual JSC meetings.

According to the interviewed representatives of the GOVN, the annual JSC meetings represent the only platform for coordination between the UN and the GOVN. For these meetings, the GOVN representatives (as well as several representatives of the UN agencies) suggested that the JSC meetings were mainly “one side” in the sense that UN actively prepared the meetings inputs without consultation with the GOVN. Therefore, representatives from GACAs suggested that the current JSC setting was not sufficient for an effective collaboration between the UN and the GOVN the OSP implementation.

Programme Management Team

The Programme Management Team (PMT) was convened as a critical coordination mechanism in the OSP to provide advisory support to the UNCT in implementation, monitoring and reporting and ensure programmatic coherence within the UN system. In the context of the UNDS reform, the PMT was also conceived as a platform for substantive and strategic discussions on joint activities and joint programmes.

²³ The participation in the JSC meetings include, apart from the JSC core members, about 5-7 other UN agencies and 3-5 ministries relevant for OSP Focus Areas usually participated. The Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development (MARD) and Ministry of Justice (MOJ) were represented at all 3 JSC meetings held, while the Ministry of Health (MOH), and MONRE participated in 2 meetings and Ministry of Labour, Invalids and Social Affairs (MOLISA) and General Statistics Office (GSO) attended 1 meeting

Originally there were three technical subgroups created under the PMT, namely the SDG Technical Working Group (SDGTWG), the Data for Development working group (DfDWG), and the Monitoring for Strategic Results working group (MSRWG). At the 2019 UNCT Retreat, the new UN coordination architecture was endorsed that included a restructured PMT and the SDGTWG and the DfDWG merged into a single group named the SDG Task Force (SDGTF).

The membership of the restructured PMT comprises of deputies (or equivalent) from the participating agencies appointed by their Head of Agency based on seniority and programmatic responsibility. In addition, the membership also includes the Chair of the Monitoring for Strategic Results (MSR) group, the Co-chairs of SDG Technical Working Group, Secretariat of the Data for Development (DfD), the Head of the UNRCO, and the UN Results and Partnerships Specialist in the UNRCO.

The MSRWG is based on the former Results Based Management Working Group from the previous stages of the DaO in Viet Nam and is mandated to focus on monitoring and reporting on UN strategic results/contributions to Viet Nam's general development as well as achievement of the 2030 Agenda.

The SDGTF objective is to provide advisory support to the PMT for facilitating coherence of the UN's support and focus on crosscutting topics of SDG integration into national plans, budgets, monitoring and reporting, such as governance, integrated planning and budgeting, integrated monitoring and reporting and their related SDG data collection and usage. Representation in the SDGTF is mandatory for all resident and non-resident UN agencies with voluntary participation in specific tasks depending on the agencies' relevant working areas and programmatic interests. Secretariats of the Results Groups (RGs) also participate to ensure links are established between the RGs and PMT.

Finding 12: Contribution of the OSP Results Groups to improved internal coordination and coherence of the UN system-wide approach is weak. The Results Groups serve mainly for the purpose on collection of results of individual or joint activities of UN agencies with very limited connection to existing GOVN working structures and sector working groups. Consequently, the contribution of the UN coherence to working mechanisms outside the UN has been minimal²⁴.

Results Groups (RGs) are amongst the core elements of the global DaO SOPs, aiming to ensure the necessary inter-agency cooperation in the DaO implementation. The SOPs define the RGs as compulsory coordination mechanisms organized to contribute to specific DaO outcomes through coordinated and collaborative planning, implementation, monitoring and reporting. For the Viet Nam OSP, the RGs were defined at the OSP planning stage to be aligned with the OSP Focus Areas.²⁵ The RGs are chaired and co-chaired by agencies with a strong mandate in the RG subject areas. The work of the RGs is guided by TORs developed according to the generic TOR in the global DaO SOPs. The main tasks stipulated in the TORs are as follows:

- Prepare multi-year Joint Work Plans with measurable outputs;
- Track progress and report on results within the respective Joint Work Plans and contribute to the preparation of the annual OSP Results Report (RR);
- Assist with formulation of Joint Programmes ensuring their alignment the OSP priorities.

²⁴ This finding is based on review of the TORs and available reports of the RGs as well as on focus group discussions with the 4 RGs.

²⁵ With the exception of the FA2 that had two distinctive RGs, on Climate Change & Environment (CC&E) and Disaster Risk Reduction & Resilience (DRR&R). Initial establishment of the separate RG on DRR&R probably indicated importance of disaster prevention and management as a national priority for Viet Nam. At the 2019 UNCT Retreat, a decision was taken to merge the two above mentioned RGs and achieve thus closer alignment of the RGs with the OSP FAs

- Undertake analysis of the policy environment, key development issues and emerging trends;
- Contribute to the development of common UNCT advocacy messages and communication products, and support policy dialogue with government counterparts, civil society and other development partners with substantive inputs.
- Share information on proposed and ongoing initiatives of national and international partners in relation to the OSP for improved synergy and identification of gaps in programming;
- Produce sector needs assessments and identify capacity requirements of partners, including those needed for the implementation of the OSP 2017-2021 Monitoring and Evaluation Plan.

The global DaO SOPs define the purpose of the RGs to be both strategic and operational, namely focus on strategic policy and programme content established and its alignment with national coordination mechanisms, as well as conduct active joint planning, monitoring and reporting. However, the group discussions with the four OSP RGs confirmed that the major focus of the RGs is on operational issues.

The strategic purpose of the RGs requires substantive input into the high-level policy dialogue and therefore a certain level of knowledge of the country/sectors and expertise of the RG members. Interviews with some agencies indicated that this has not been always possible due to the fact that apart from the RG co-chairs, other agencies are in several cases represented by junior staff members. The joint planning and reporting have resulted in some coordination of plans and reports of individual agencies. Some interviews suggested that the planning and reporting has been done mostly at activity/output. Reportedly, there has been assistance of the RGs provided to the establishment of Joint Programmes under the OSP.

The TORs stipulate that the RGs 'should meet on a quarterly bases or whenever deemed necessary'. In reality, the frequency of the meetings was in some cases only semi-annual with the main focus on planning and reporting. It was also confirmed from the discussion with RGs that monitoring by the RGs is conducted only at the level of tracking of the output-level results spelled out in the annual JWPs. Monitoring of contributions to the OSP outcomes is not performed due to the definition of outcome indicators that does not enable easy acquisition of required information. This reaffirms the finding 4 on assessment of effectiveness.

Notably, there has been no involvement of the GOVN or any other organizations outside the UN in the RGs. Reportedly, the GOVN organizes different sectoral technical working groups as part of a national coordination architecture for development assistance. The only link between the OSP RGs and the national sectoral groups occurs through regular participation of the members of the OSP RGs in meetings of the GOVN sectoral groups where they provide technical support based on the respective mandates of their UN agencies. This makes the OSP coordination architecture solely one sided without institutionalized link to the national coordination mechanism for development assistance.

The group interviews also confirmed there has been very limited focus of the RGs on strategic policy and programme issues. Although there has been some alignment with the national coordination mechanisms for development assistance, this association has been achieved through participation of representatives of UN agencies in the sectoral working groups that is a result of informal bilateral relations of the UN entities with sectoral line ministries without any systematic links to the OSP RGs. The strength of this informal alignment varies across the RGs.

The above discussion shows that the RGs as the key part of the OSP coordination architecture are mostly inward looking and one sided. The actual focus of RGs was largely on operational issues. To fulfil the strategic part of the RGs purpose would require more outward looking including institutionalized links to the national sectoral coordination arrangements. Therefore, questions remain to the extent of synergies produced by the RGs and their added value.

Finding 13: Thematic groups are a voluntary part of the OSP overall coordination architecture. TGs have been functioning well as a sound internal coordination mechanism to foster better collaboration across the UN agencies with links and collaboration with the GOVN line ministries and other development partners on the issues and events of mutual concerns²⁶.

The Thematic Groups are conceived as a voluntary part of the OSP coordination architecture to support a UN coherent approach to selected cross-cutting themes by close coordination and sharing of information about each agency specific activities, discuss and build consensus on the cross-cutting themes in OSP programming and implementation, facilitate information sharing for potential joint fund-raising opportunities and provide policy and technical advice to the UNCT.

At the OSP inception, five TGs were established but only two of them reflected the OSP cross-cutting themes, namely human rights and gender. The remaining three TGs were established on the respective themes of migration, HIV/AIDs and adolescence/youth. At the 2019 UNCT Retreat, a decision was taken to reduce the number of TGs to four when the TG on migration and integration was discontinued and the migration issues were integrated into the RG on Inclusive Growth & Social Protection.

It appears that the selection of topics for the TGs was driven by the perceived importance of the cross-cutting themes so only two out of the total five themes cutting horizontally across all four OSP Focus Areas deserved their own respective TGs. The theme of HIV/AIDS is to address an unfinished MDG for the GOVN and the need for a multisector approach to effectively respond to HIV/AIDS, hence it was selected as a separate TG under the current OSP. The establishment of the latter two TGs was advocated by relevant UN agencies, in particular UNFPA and UNAIDS, respectively. The cross-cutting theme of data for development was incorporated as a sub-group of the PMT while the remaining cross-cutting topics, namely partnerships and innovation as well as public participation, do not have a specific position in the OSP coordination architecture.

Based on the focus group interviews, the TGs have been functioning well as a sound internal coordination mechanism to foster better collaboration across the UN agencies. Despite being established as an internal coordination mechanism for the UNCT, some TGs have made efforts to establish links and collaboration with the GOVN line ministries and other development partners on the issues and events of mutual concerns. The HIV TG is one good practice where it has for several years developed UN joint programmes on HIV which articulate the collective UN contributions in support of the national HIV response and which have been always shared with and reported on to the relevant Government authority in addition to planning and reporting as part of the UN OSP. However, similar to WGs, these TGs are on-sided for the UN agencies with no participation of the GOVN line ministries concerned.

The group discussions with the TGs also reflected a fact that there is still a formality in the TG formulation and functioning as the meetings faced difficulties in maintaining regularity and having participation of all group members. In addition, having both TGs and RGs in the overall OSP coordination architecture could potentially cause certain confusion due to overlaps of domains of the RGs and TGs. For instance, Human Rights TG could also be addressed under Governance and Justice RG.

²⁶ This finding is based on review of the TORs and available reports of the RGs as well as on focus group discussions with the TGs.

Finding 14: Multiple level of reporting constitutes a challenge for the UN entities that limits effectiveness and efficiency of reporting²⁷.

The annual OSP Results Reports were drafted based on contributions from the RGs, the OMT and the Communication Team and consolidated by RCO. The RRs are broken down according to the OSP Focus Areas and Outcomes. The body of the annual OSP RR is composed of a narrative description of key deliverables of the UN agencies and their relation to national SDGs, a compilation of lessons learned for way forward, as well as few highlighted stories to showcase main deliverables under each OSP Outcome. The 2017 OSP RR, contains some information on recent values of OSP outcome indicators (not for all Outcomes) suggesting that at that time limited tracking of progress towards OSP Outcomes was performed. The two consecutive RRs for 2018 and 2019 do not include the outcome indicator values.

Although the reporting guidelines and templates give instructions to the RGs to update Outcome and Output information to the OSP Outcome and Output Indicator Measurement Table, in reality they do not. Consequently, the RCO as the collector of information has to make such updates instead of the agencies represented on the RGs that have first-hand information. In practice, the RCO also did not collect sufficient information to inform the OSP Outcomes and Outputs over times. In fact, the OSP Outcome and Output Indicator Measurement Table shared to the evaluation team was lack of updated figures for most of the indicators.

Furthermore, the group meetings with the RGs also confirmed that the contributions to the annual RR are more or less mere aggregates of individual agencies' contributions with very little synergies from the collective work achieved. Lack of joint monitoring of progress towards the OSP Outcomes indicates that the RGs do not conduct monitoring of the UN contribution to the development progress through the use of the OSP common evaluation framework for results and indicators at the level of Outcomes, in other words, the work of the RGs does not provide information for collective accountability of the UN towards for progress towards the OSP Outcomes.

In the interviews, representatives of the UN entities pointed at a burden of excessive reporting requirements. In addition to reporting through the OSP RGs, the UN agencies in Viet Nam have to submit reports to their respective headquarters as well as to donors financing their interventions. Consequently, the UN agencies have triple reporting responsibilities to submit reports that use significantly differing templates and formats. This applies to both financial and programmatic reports. Excessive and multi-layer reporting requirements were a major concern of the UN agencies regarding the overall OSP coordination architecture.

Although the Viet Nam RCO and MSRWG made efforts for simplification and harmonization of the reporting requirements, this issue can't be resolved without contribution from the HG level of the UN agencies. Reportedly, many RCOs have raised these issues to the UN DCO and required a harmonized approach at HQ level but without success. Some agencies (e.g. UNDP and UNFPA) have similar monitoring and reporting systems and platforms like the DCO system, but many agencies do not have that. The UNCT conducted a review of different agencies' M&E systems with the aim to adjust and harmonize guidance on planning and M&E systems. Also, a CBF Taskforce was created to study individual agencies' financial systems. However, the issue remains unresolved.

²⁷ This finding is based on interviews with the UN agencies, the focus group discussions with the RGs and TGs and on responses of the UN agencies in the survey questionnaire.

Finding 15: The OSP fostered extensive inter-agency collaboration but despite gradual increase this has transferred only in limited joint programming. There has been only very little evidence about joint funds mobilization through the One SDG Fund²⁸.

Joint programming

The information about key deliverables presented in the annual RRs does not give a clear picture of joint delivery of results. Several achievements are presented in the RRs as results of interventions of two or more agencies but from the narrative it is not possible to distinguish whether the achievement resulted from parallel or joint work of the UN entities. Since the OSP inception, the UNCT stepped up efforts on joint resource mobilization for the OSP implementation. This approach was in line with the UN RC's strategic direction to move towards joint programmes in order to build on complementarities of UN agencies and bring together their added values in addressing complex development challenges.

In response to the Joint SDG Fund's 2019 call for proposals, four UN agencies (ILO, UNDP, UNICEF, UNFPA), in cooperation with MOLISA, submitted a Joint Programme proposal on "Accelerating Viet Nam's transition toward inclusive and integrated social protection." that received a grant of USD 2 million for two years (2020-2021). Other joint resource mobilization efforts include UNESCO and UNICEF's support to the GOVN in securing a grant of US\$ 467,000 from the Global Partnership for Education (GPE) for 2019-2021 to develop a national education development plan. UNDP and WHO received US\$ 636,000 from a multi-partner consortium (including HR Wallingford, UNDP, WHO, the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine, the Met Office and Oxford Policy Management in the UK, and the GOVN) to implement the Joint Program "Dengue Model forecasting Satellite-based System" (D-MOSS). UN Women, FAO, and UNICEF jointly mobilized US\$ 534,000 from ECHO to implement phase two of the Joint Programme on scaling up the Forecast based Financing/Early Warning Early Action (FbF/EWEA) and the Shock Responsive Social Protection (SRSP).

As of December 2020, there were 17 joint programmes implemented under the OSP worth of about 70 million US\$. Compared to the total OSP expenditure for 2017-2019, the funding from the joint programmes account for 33 per cent. Compared to the total OSP projected budget, this is about 16.7%. Pass-through fund management is currently the most commonly used as 12 out of the 17 joint programmes are funded through this modality, while the remainder uses either parallel (4 programmes) or pooled fund management (1 programme).

The fact that the One Fund has not been operational is not conducive to joint programming as the funds mobilization for JPs has to be conducted by the agencies involved responding to calls for proposals. Moreover, agencies involved in preparation of submissions for JPs reported that donors have some reservations as to determination of accountability for results of the JPs. Consultation with some development partners that have provided funding for the OSP implementation indicated a certain level of confusion and hesitation when receiving competing funding proposals from different UN agencies and suggested a coordination from RCO for submitting funding proposal should be strengthened. It was also suggested that finance from global funds should be actively sought.

On the ground, the case study from Quang Nam suggested a lack of effective coordination. Within a relatively short period of time, 19 separate engagements by six UN agencies were seen in this province. This requires a strong coordination. Consultation with the relevant stakeholders in the field indicated some efforts in taking an effective coordination mechanism among UN agencies for their support in the local level, but no strong evidence on the results was showed. Upon the approval of Provincial People's Committee (PPC), each UN agency has directly reached out different

²⁸ This finding is based on review of available reports on the One SDG Fund, information provided by the RCO and responses to the survey/questionnaire.

sectors and relevant stakeholders at the local level and they rarely linked one another. There is no joint monitoring and regular review meeting between all UN agencies and PPC on the current projects and supports (see Annex 6 for details).

The UN Viet Nam SDG Fund

The UN Viet Nam SDG Fund (SDGF) was established at the end of 2018, based on the rebranding of the One Plan Fund (OPF) and the UN in Viet Nam's consultation with the GOVN and the Multi-Partner Trust Fund Office (MPTFO). The SDGF aims at providing a local pooled funding in line with the template of the global Joint SDG Fund to better support progress towards the Viet Nam national SDGs through the OSP implementation.

Until the end of 2019, the Viet Nam SDGF has been funded only through the carry-over from the One Plan fund from the previous DaO cycle. Majority of funds mobilization for the OSP has been done by the UN agencies on a bilateral basis with a small portion obtained through joint programming from global funds such as the Joint SDG Fund and, recently, from the Multi-Partner Trust Fund. There seem to be no incentives for the agencies to do joint funds mobilization and also there is lack of donors' interest to use the Viet Nam SDGF.

Finding 16: the UN Resident Coordinator and RCO are positioned a central role in the coherence of the UN system both internally (within the UN system) and externally (with GOVN and development partners). The UN in Viet Nam has made progress towards communicating as one and "speak with one voice" on a range of critical development and policy issues. Moderating competition across the UN agencies for resources and communication arrangements between the RCO, GOVN, and other development partners are among areas for improvements²⁹.

One leader

The OSP in Viet Nam has been implemented under the leadership of the UN Resident Coordinator who leads the UNCT, plays a central role in coordinating the UN operational activities for development at the country level and acts as the primary interlocutor between the UNCT, the Government, and other development partners. The main achievements of the RCO since the OSP inception included streamlining the OSP coordination architecture, organization of a series of briefing sessions to UN staff, the GOVN, and development partners, as well as the enhancement of joint programming.

Moreover, the UNRC coordinated development of joint recommendations on the GOVN's ODA legal framework and provision of substantive UN input into preparation of a new decree on ODA management that was issued in June 2020. In addition, the RCO has also played a central role in coordinating the response to COVID-19 as well as the typhoon in 2020. These were examples of good collaboration among UN agencies in few interventions on COVID-19 response and recovery in Viet Nam that could serve as an example for future efforts to delineate clear roles and responsibilities for agencies in a synergetic and complementary manner in order to ward off the competition among agencies.

In addition to the leadership role in the OSP implementation, the UN RC has implemented the mandatory steps related to the UNDS reform. Notably, delinking the RC from UNDP equipped the RC with a neutral, impartial and strategic view of the UNCT. In relation to the GOVN and development partners, the RC got accreditation and legal status for both the Resident Coordinator and his office (RCO) from GOVN.

²⁹ This finding is based on interviews with the UN agencies, the RCO and the GOVN agencies as well as responses to the UN questionnaire survey.

Some interviewed representatives of the GOVN hinted at unclarity about the role of the RCO in relation to connectivity with non-resident UN agencies that do not have a resident focal point in Viet Nam. In such cases, the GOVN agencies/ministries have to directly communicate with regional and/or headquarters offices of the non-resident agencies with time zones substantively different from Viet Nam. In addition, unclarity on the side of some GOVN agencies was also observed in terms of how to communicate with the UN, either through RCO or the UN agencies that they directly cooperate with. Results from the questionnaire survey reported that just 58% of the UN agencies agreed that there was clear division of roles among the UN agencies. Similarly, 58% of them agreed that the OSP overall coordination has effectively facilitated implementation of OSP. For some development partners, while the role of RCO in representing the UN was appreciated, it was not clear in terms of that was the role of RCO in (joint)programming and in implementation of major initiatives of the UN. The difficult communication presents serious challenges for resolution of urgent issues that require short-time decisions and bear a risk of sub-optimal participation of the GOVN in events outside Viet Nam organized by non-resident UN agencies.

Worldwide there has been competition rather than collaboration between UN Agencies due to overlaps in their mandates. Viet Nam is no exception to this and the UNDS reform did not bring about notable changes so far. Some competition was reported in traditional thematic areas such as environment protection and multi-dimensional poverty eradication due to large and comprehensive mandates of some bigger agencies and interdependencies between several SDGs. Apart from competition between big and small agencies there were also cases of competition between resident and non-resident agencies. Consultation with some key development partners suggested that this could be particularly an issue when some UN agencies prepare competing proposals for donor funding. In this context, the RCO should be in a position to moderate this competition. This is suggested to be a priority of the RCO setting in the coming years.

Communicating as One

The One UN Communication Group (UNCG) was reorganized at the OSP onset through endorsement of the strategic framework for the Group. Under the chairmanship of the UNESCO Representative, the UNCG supported production of advocacy statements and organization of several events in various thematic/SDG areas. Several communications channels were used to convey key messages on OSP priority areas including a photo exhibition, screening of a documentary film “Desire for Peace”, and media interviews and talk shows with the participation of the UN Resident Coordinator on national broadcasting networks and social media. Some of the highlights are listed below:

The UNCG worked closely with MOFA on organization of a high-level meeting to commemorate the 40th anniversary of Viet Nam becoming UN member state. The meeting on 17 October 1977 was attended by senior officials of the GOVN, ambassadors of about 40 UN member states, UN senior officials, as well as representatives of development partners, NGOs and INGOs, and media organizations. The joint event reconfirmed the partnership with the UN as the top foreign policy priority of the Government.

On 24 October 2019, the UN in Viet Nam launched a new website adopting the SDG-focused branding and features highlighting One UN impacts and results. The website was developed in English and Vietnamese to serve diverse audiences including general public, development partners, donors and UN staff. The site integrates the UN INFO database, a planning and reporting hub for UN entities, capturing the scope of work and progress of ongoing UN projects and programmes in the country.

The specific achievements include extensive coverage of the UNCG support for the joint celebration of international memorable days (e.g. International Youth Day, Human Rights Day, World AIDS Day,

International Volunteers Day, Zero Discrimination Day, International Women’s Day) by two dozen of national media agencies and reach out to several hundred-thousands of people on social media.

A coordinated UN interagency Emergency Communications Team (ECT) was established to support efforts of all humanitarian stakeholders and help to reach out to interested partners and potential donors. The ECT is chaired by the Head of the UNCT’s One UN Communications Group and is composed of communications and advocacy-related staff of UN agencies involved in disaster response planning. The role of the ECT is to ensure consistency in messaging from the UN at the onset of a disaster, to increase awareness of overall humanitarian needs and response activities, as well as to support mobilization of resources.

3.5 UN support to the national transformational change

Under the evaluation theme of ‘Support to transformational change’, the evaluation makes assessment of the OSP impact on building national capacities for shaping socio-economic development and promotion of inclusive and sustainable socio-economic growth and elaboration of relevant policies.

As analyzed above, the achievement of expected impacts of OSP is a complex process for which the country keeps main responsibility and the UN plays an important role by helping to develop the required national capacities. Many issues related to transformational change are analyzed in different parts of the report. Therefore, this section does not repeat the individual deliverables and contributions of UN by sectors/sub-sectors but focuses on the OSP contribution to building national and local capacities at three levels: institutionalization, organizational capacity building, and community resilient and individual competence development.

Finding 17: The UN support was effective in strengthening national capacities based on identification of national priorities through alignment of the OSP with the relevant national strategies and action plans, extensive engagement of the GOVN and other relevant stakeholders in planning and implementation UN-led interventions, as well as coordination among various UN entities with overlapping mandates³⁰.

The practical approach to capacity development applied throughout the OSP implementation was effective to improve performance across the four OSP Focus Areas as it is documented in the OSP RRs as well as in agency-specific progress and evaluation reports. National Implementing Modality (NIM) was used in most of the UN-supported initiatives with the GoVN agencies. This direct involvement of the GoVN agencies in implementation was found as an important factor for capacity development through a learning by doing process. All of these roles - not only the operational functions - are important for the UN system support to capacity development.

High-quality analysis of data and development of new national standards, policy advocacy and provision of access to relevant cutting-edge knowledge as well as opening dialogue and brokerage of partnerships for achievement of national priorities and internationally agreed development goals were important contributions of the UN system to national capacity development. It can be concluded that collection of data and use of statistics for more effective policymaking, capacity building for improved accountability and transparency of the governments of all levels, as well as improved ability of multiple stakeholders to apply international standards were the most prominent results of the UN system capacity development efforts.

³⁰ This finding is based on review of national strategic documents and agency-specific reports as well as on perceptions expressed during interviews with the GOVN stakeholders and the UN agencies.

Institutionalization

With UN support, GOVN has adopted a number of important laws, including the revised Labour Code, the revised Law on Education, the revised Public Investment Law, and the new Law on Harmful Use of Alcohol. Viet Nam, with the help of the UN, also discussed and prepared revisions of the Gender Affirmation Law, the Law on Natural Disaster Prevention and Control, the Law on HIV/AIDS Prevention and Control, the Enterprise Law, the Law on Social Health Insurance, the Youth Law, and the Law on the Handling of Administrative Violations.

The UN also helped the GOVN with data collection and reporting on multidimensional poverty, multidimensional child poverty, governance, justice, environment and climate change, supported GSO in analysis and dissemination of the 2019 Population Census results, supported the government in data generation on the well-being of children and women, especially those farthest behind including ethnic minority groups, children with disabilities through the National Survey on SDG indicators on Children and Women (SDGCW).

Several UN agencies focussed on justice reform and efforts to strengthen the rule of law. The UN demonstrated a strong commitment to capacity building for key government, law enforcement and judicial authorities in supporting the GOVN in their push for the reform of the justice sector. Examples of concrete interventions was the work with the Supreme People's Court (SPC), the Viet Nam Bar Federation, MOJ and the Central Committee of Internal Affairs to develop a Code of Ethics and Conduct for judges and lawyers and training of judges enhance integrity in the judiciary system. The UN facilitated the establishment of the Youth Advisory Group and built the Group's capacities for meaningful participation in the process of the Youth Law revision. This work opened a dialogue with the drafting team of the Youth Law revision and consultation opportunities with members of the National Assembly and resulted in the incorporation of specific policies on vulnerable young people in the draft revised Youth Law submitted to the National Assembly.

The UN support was extended for development of a set of technical guidance for environmental protection schemes and for enhancing national institutional capacity on waste management through identification of Best Available Techniques and Best Environmental Practices (BAT/BEP), standardization of analytical procedures, data collection, monitoring and reporting. Capacities of multiple national stakeholders were also built for management, treatment, and eventual elimination of persistent organic pollutants (POPs) and other hazardous waste from the country.

In order to further strengthen the national system for disaster recovery and long-term rehabilitation, the UN assisted VDMA with institutional capacity assessment, development of Standard Operating Procedures for disaster recovery, and adapting a Post-Disaster Needs Assessment (PDNA) methodology, including related training courses.

In the area of management of natural resources, the UN support has been directed at increasing capacity of MONRE on ocean governance and marine spatial planning in alignment with the implementation of the National Strategy for the Sustainable Development of Viet Nam's Marine Economy. The UN also assisted with integration of the circular economy concept into the revision of the Law on Environmental Protection and advocated for incorporation of energy efficiency measures in the draft Law on Construction.

Contribution of the UN to these institutionalizations were highly appreciated by the GoVN agencies interviewed by the evaluation team. This appreciation was also confirmed by the questionnaire survey. Accordingly, all the GoVN agencies affirmed that they have observed development in policies and institutions in their fields and the average score to the statement "cooperation with the UN agencies has been instrumental to these changes" was 3.7 (out of five – being "totally agree").

Organizational capacity development

The UN helped the GOVN with data collection and reporting on multidimensional poverty, multidimensional child poverty, governance, justice, environment and climate change, and supported GSO in analysis and dissemination of the 2019 Population Census results. The UN supported the GOVN in data generation on the well-being of children and women, especially those farthest behind including ethnic minority groups, children with disabilities through the National Survey on SDG indicators on Children and Women (SDGCW) and strengthened the capacity of MOET and of the provincial Departments of Education and Training (DOETs) for SDG4 indicators' monitoring and reporting. Further examples of support for better data collection can be found in the collective effort the UN system entities for the preparation of the National SDG Report, where several UN agencies build national capacities for data collection and analysis, such as technical support provided to the Viet Nam Administration for HIV/AIDS Control (VAAC) for generation of annual estimated HIV data as an input to the HIV-related VSDG indicators, assistance for development of the industrial performance index and eco-industrial park indicators, technical support to GSO for the calculation of gender indicators for the annual report on gender statistics, development of a database of health impacts from air pollution, as well as assistance with preparation of a handbook on metadata of SDG child-focused indicators.

In the area of health, the UN entities continued their support to the building national capacities for implementation of International Health Regulations (IHR) and strengthening health emergency preparedness. These efforts resulted in the development of the IHR Master Plan by MOH. In the area of education, learning and training, the UN provided support for enhancing knowledge and skills of MOET for monitoring and reporting SDG indicators and assisted in reviewing the SDG4 indicators proposed by the GSO. This was extended to strengthen to the staff of the Departments of Education and Training (DOETs) in the provinces.

Under the FA2, the UN provided capacity building support to businesses and authorities for enhancing low-carbon and energy-efficient production, including promotion of transformation of industrial zones into eco-industrial parks (EIPs). Capacities were also developed for acquisition of new technologies and best operation practices in industry, namely for the use of energy efficiency boilers and non-fired brick production technologies, as well as for introduction of energy efficiency solutions in existing and new buildings. The UN support resulted in sizeable savings of financial resources and energy and in reduction of CO2 emissions, wastewater and solid waste.

There are numerous examples of capacity development of the national stakeholders for delivery of services targeting the area of poverty and vulnerability reduction. Capacity building support was provided to civil society and the Disabled Person's Organizations (DPOs) on implementing, monitoring and reporting to the Convention on Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) and giving relevant stakeholders in Viet Nam opportunity to work with international experts. The UN supported national NGOs, community-based organizations and youth groups working on gender equality and the rights of ethnic minority people and built their capacities for understanding of gender-responsive budgeting (GRB) through the "Making budget account for women" initiative. Further support was extended to develop capacities of the Gender-based Violence Prevention Network to improve prevention and the response to gender-based violence. Civil society organizations and business representative bodies also benefited from capacity building and technical assistance for preparation of recommendations on the updated draft of the Labour Code. At both the national and sub-national level, the UN supported integration of child-related Climate Change Adaptation (CCA) and DRR indicators into annual SEDP and sectoral plans.

Under the FA3, the support from the UN contributed to development of capacities of national institutions responsible for the production of statistical data. Through application of international labour standards on informal employment, the Government was enabled to make a better-informed estimate of the size and structure of informal economy in the country, based on the surveys annually

conducted by the GSO. The UN organized a series of advocacy events for raising the public awareness and strengthening the capacity of multiple stakeholders from the GOVN, the Viet Nam General Confederation of Labour, the Viet Nam Chamber of Commerce and Industry, and the Viet Nam Cooperative Alliance. It also organized a series of advocacy events on Chapter 13 of the European Union Viet Nam Free Trade Agreement (EVFTA) including assessing the compatibility and alignment of national labour laws and policies with international labour standards. The development of the first ever Viet Nam Industry White Paper 2019 focussing on four competitive manufacturing sub-sectors showcases successful capacity building to MOIT and representatives of several other ministries who were trained by the UN on formulating quality industrial policies.

In the area of justice and inclusive governance, the UN entities focused their efforts on the development of essential codes of conduct and guides to promote the accountability of institutions and businesses and combat corruption. This was achieved through connecting international expertise to the relevant national anti-corruption agencies and conducting baseline assessments of the context in Viet Nam. Examples of successful UN support include the development of the 'Guide on Inspecting for Procurement Corruption and Fraud in MARD' as a critical tool for detection and tackling risks and instances of corruption.

The UN also extended technical and capacity building support to several public institutions through trainings, awareness raising activities and provision of critical data and evidence with the aim to improve their ability to deliver essential public services and enhance responsiveness to the general public with special emphasis on vulnerable groups. Concrete examples include support to the Viet Nam Mine Action Centre (VNMAC) on self-capacity assessment and responsiveness on mine and unexploded ordnance (UXO) clearance, as well as assistance to the VNMAC and MOLISA in capacity building for provision of Explosive Ordnance Risk Education and development of a digital database of Persons with Disabilities (PWDs), including UXO victims.

Contribution of the UN to organizational capacity development was found from the questionnaire survey. All the GOVN agencies confirmed that they have experienced improvements in organizational capacity over the past few years and the cooperation with the UN has contributed to that development. The statement "whether the cooperation with the UN agencies have contributed to these changes" has recorded an average score of 3.8 out of five (being "totally agree"). Similar appreciation of the UN contribution to organizational capacity development was also reported by Non-GOVN stakeholders. Out of seven stakeholders returned the questionnaire, four confirmed that the cooperation with the UN has been important for their organizational capacity development.

In the Quang Nam case study, capacity development for local authorities on governance and institution was considered as one of the crossing intentions of the supports. Although there have not been specific and direct activities which were designed for this purpose of capacity building, many officials reflected a competence improvement via their participation in the planned interventions supported by the UN system (see Annex 6 for more details).

Community resilience and individual competence development

Examples worth mentioning include collection of data and evidence related to existing vulnerabilities in disaster-prone regions, developing disaster-related data collection tools and models to better inform national and sectoral planning as well as strengthening community resilience capacity based on joint UN/GOVN findings and policy recommendations.

The UN contributed to capacity building of the networks of the People Living with HIV (PLHIV) and wider populations for the engagement of local communities in law and policy development as well as their active participation in human rights reporting.

Several UN entities collectively assisted MOET in development of guidelines for incorporation of the Comprehensive Sexuality Education (CSE) into the newly approved school curriculum, starting

from pre-school to secondary education levels. Responding to the critical need to improve vocational education and training, the UN supported MOLISA to develop a set of documents on the Career Orientation and Vocational Counselling Guidance. The purpose of the documents is to facilitate school-to-work transition and support efforts to prevent and reduce child labour through education, vocational and skills training of children and social protection and livelihood assistance to children's families.

In the same area, the UN improved gender sensitive community resilience and risk-informed assessment, as well as national planning and budgeting for the Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) by working with partners from the Viet Nam Disaster Management Authority (VDMA) on updating the DRR and Climate Change Adaptation (CCA) training materials and drafting gender integrated e-training courses.

Building national capacities has had notable results in all four areas of OSP including improved capacities of the GOVN agencies for a more effective delivery of services targeting vulnerable population. However, the extent of the transformational changes is difficult to assess, and it is especially difficult to make a cause-effect relation between a capacity development effort and a change in policy in a given area due to several non-capacity (mainly political) factors usually considered in the process leading towards the changes in policies.

3.6 Conformity with the OSP cross-cutting principles

Cross-cutting issues like human rights and gender equality are relevant to all aspects of development. Mainstreaming a cross-cutting issues in development is understood as a strategy to make that issue an integral dimension of the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of development policies and programmes. The five cross-cutting themes have been selected for different reasons and also have featured differently in the OSP implementation architecture. While human rights and gender equality are both stand-alone goals as well as parts of a broader solution due to their critical importance to sustainable development, the other three cross-cutting themes are seen more or less as tools and instruments for achievement of development objectives.

This fundamental difference was also reflected in different positioning of the five cross-cutting themes in the OSP coordination architecture. For human rights and gender, respectively, the UNCT decided to establish separate Thematic Groups as a part of voluntary internal mechanism for integration of specific issues into the OSP and coordinate the UN work on these two issues. Since the OSP inception, the theme of data for development was subject to a specific Data for Development Working Group (DDWG) under the inter-agency PMT. However, at the 2019 UNCT retreat a decision was taken to merge the DDWG with the SDG Technical Working Group into the SDG Task Force (SDGTF) tasked to provide technical support on mainstreaming of SDGs into the GOVN plans and processes. There were no specific arrangements in the OSP coordination architecture for the themes of public participation and partnerships/innovation.

Finding 18: Mainstreaming of the gender and human rights as cross-cutting issues into the OSP planning, implementation, monitoring and reporting has been satisfactory³¹.

Gender

Introduction of gender as a cross-cutting theme means that the OSP has put emphasis on the aim to ensure the programmes and projects are gender sensitive. However, the recognition of the cross-sectional nature of gender equality does not imply equal gender sensitivity in all OSP Focus Areas and Outcomes. Women and girls are not direct programme beneficiaries in all areas, e.g.

³¹ This finding is based on review of available reports, perceptions of the UN agencies expressed during interviews and analysis of responses to survey questionnaire.

many interventions on economic growth or rule of law are gender neutral and are unlikely to produce a specific direct impact on women. Results from the questionnaire survey reported that the 84% of the UN agencies participated in the surveys agreed that gender has been incorporated as a cross-cutting issue in the cooperation with the UN.

In April 2017, the UNCT adopted a Gender Mainstreaming Action Plan for 2017-2021 following implementation of the UNCT-SWAP Gender Scorecard.³² The Action Plan aims to ensure adequate systems and capacities in the UNCT for effective mainstreaming of the gender principle into implementation of the OSP and promote gender-responsive operations and management of the UN in Viet Nam. Gender markers and human right markers are developed and integrated in the JWP template in the UN Info for monitoring and reporting. As part of the UN support to the GOVN on COVID-19 response, the UN has conducted a communication campaign to raise public awareness of possible negative impact of COVID-19 on the progress already made on gender equality and women's rights in Viet Nam and recommended ways to strengthen the role of women in resilience and recovery operations.

In September 2020, the UNCT organized Gender Equality Marker (GEM) training with the aim to strengthen the capacity of the gender focal points of the RGs, members of the GTG and project managers/coordinators for the COVID-19 response as well as reassess the classification that had already been done of the UN COVID-19 response interventions using GEM. The training has paved way to application of more elaborate gender-specific targets and gender disaggregated indicators in the UNCT interventions.

Human rights

Through adoption of human rights as the cross-cutting theme, the UN has bound itself towards strengthening the capacity of duty-bearers and rights holders to promote human rights. Using the questionnaire survey results, it was reported that 84% of the UN agencies agreed that human rights have been incorporated as a cross-cutting issue in the OSP implementation.

The area of human rights in Viet Nam has been marked with numerous persistent challenges. Under the 2nd cycle of the Universal Periodic Review (UPR) mechanism for the Human Rights Council in 2014, total 227 recommendations were made out of which Viet Nam accepted 182 and noted 45 of the recommendations. During the 3rd cycle of the UPR conducted in 2019, Viet Nam received total 291 recommendations out of which 220 were accepted and 71 noted. The above statistics show that while the number of recommendations has increased from 227 to 291, the rate of acceptance decreased from 80.2 to 75.6%. This indicates that despite the continued support by the UN, a number of recommendations are yet to be implemented and numerous HR challenges to be addressed.

As part of its global mandate, the UN places a strong emphasis on human rights. Apart from the gender and youth areas, support to the ethnic minorities has been an important part of the human rights agenda in Viet Nam since the first DaO cycle 2006-2010. Under the OSP, the UN provided technical assistance to the GOVN for development of the National Targeted Programme on Social Economic Development for the Ethnic Minority and Mountainous Areas in the period 2021 – 2030 (NTPSEDEMA) that was approved by the NA in June 2020. The UN support has been channelled to the Committee for Ethnic Minority Affairs (CEMA) that has been working through the so-called

³² The UNCT piloted the new UNCT SWAP Gender Scorecard at the end of the 2012-2016 One Plan cycle and during the finalization of the OSP. UNCT ownership of gender equality as a guiding principle and critical focus area provided a solid foundation for coordinated programming for Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment over the next One Plan cycle. This was evidenced throughout the SWAP-Scorecard assessment conducted by the UNDG. The assessment revealed that the UNCT Viet Nam met or even exceeded minimum standards for two thirds of the performance indicators under the new Scorecard.

Programme 135 developed to implement policies targeting the most vulnerable communes. The UN has further been supporting CEMA and relevant line ministries for development of an investment proposal and a recommendation for an investment capital funding mechanism for the NTP-SEDEMA.

The UN developed the OSP based on the Human Rights Based Approach (HBRA) that include numerous interventions for development of the capacity of HR duty-bearers to meet their obligations. This included advocacy of the UN for protection of the rights of vulnerable groups through legislative and policy reform processes, such as updating the NA members on various human rights issues, provision of guidance for development of relevant laws and policies as well as collecting experiences and responsible business practices for protection of human rights.

The UN support to rights-holders included assistance to various associations and NGOs to hold consultations with relevant GOVN agencies and awareness raising of rights holders in different areas of development in order to combat stereotypes, prejudices and harmful practices relating disadvantaged and marginalized groups as well as to promote greater social awareness towards persons with disabilities.

Finding 19: Mainstreaming of data for development, public participation and partnership/innovation as cross-cutting themes has not been done systematically. There is lack of information as to how much the three cross-cutting themes have applied at the level of UN agency interventions under the OSP. In particular, they have not been mainstreamed into the reporting work of the OSP Results Groups³³.

While the UN in general has developed mechanisms and approaches for mainstreaming and monitoring gender equality and human rights, there is less clear guidance for application of data for development, public participation and partnership/innovation as cross-cutting principles in the UN interventions. The latter three cross-cutting themes are only marginally reflected in the OSP document and have attracted less attention in prioritisation and reporting either. All that resulted in lack of their systematic application and mainstreaming into the OSP implementation.

The OSP monitoring and reporting tools do not systematically track the level of conformity of the OSP implementation with all five cross-cutting topics. Due to the existence of the respective Thematic Groups on gender and human rights, these two cross-cutting topics have been covered in the OSP Results Reports. However, there has been visibly less explicit reporting with regard to the other three cross-cutting themes. One reason is that monitoring at the level of OSP interventions does not systematically cover these three cross-cutting issues and not all individual projects and programmes sufficiently highlight these themes in their reports.

Although the Data for Development Working Group (DfDWG) had been established within the PMT from the OSP outset, it appears that this arrangement did not result in robust and systematic support for development of national capacities to generate, manage and apply disaggregated data through improved information management systems as a basis for informed decision-making at all levels. Since late 2019, the DfDWG has been merged with the original SDG Technical Working Group into a new SDG Task Force (SDGTF) tasked with support for collection and management of disaggregated data necessary specifically to monitor progress towards the national SDGs. The real effect of the merger remains to be seen. The survey questionnaire indicated that 74% of the UN agencies agreed that they have incorporated this data for development in programming.

On the public participation topic, the UN supported policy dialogues with representatives of central and provincial government based on direct citizen feedback obtained through continuation of the

³³ This finding is based on review of available reports, interviews with the OSP RGs and analysis of survey questionnaire.

Provincial Governance and Public Administration Performance Index (PAPI). Under the latter initiative, the UN assisted key GOVN agencies in their efforts to embark on participatory and transparent decision-making practices and thus contributed to promotion of good governance and participatory decision-making. Regarding public participation, 63% of the UN agencies reported that this cross-cutting theme was incorporated in programming and implementation.

The UN fostered establishment of partnerships with the MPI, a number of sectoral ministries and their sub-national agencies, National Assembly and the Committee for Ethnic Minority Affairs (CEMA). These partnerships also attracted and brought together other relevant stakeholders such academics, state-owned enterprises (SOEs), and private businesses. Establishment of partnerships coupled with promotion of innovative solution featured particularly in interventions under the FA2 funded by global funds such as the GCF and the GEF that by default require linking improved policies with engagement of direct beneficiaries and end-user communities.

Innovations were also central in the UN efforts on improved mechanisms and tools for reach out to audiences and maintaining an open dialogue with the public, including use of online tools and social media-based platforms and surveys under the FA1. Establishment of public-private partnerships was also key for preparation and implementation of economic and administrative reforms based on the Prime Minister's directive on opportunities arising from the Industrial Revolution 4.0. The UN support was oriented towards innovation, start-ups, and wider business development under the FA3. Actual realization of partnership and innovation appears to be a challenge. Just 58% of the UN agencies reported through the questionnaire survey that this theme has been incorporated in programming and OSP implementation.

4. CONCLUSIONS

The conclusions and lessons learned that follow are based on the findings in the previous chapter and highlight the key overall insights, successes and shortcomings of the OSP.

Design

The OSP has been and remains relevant as it addresses main national priorities and also has shown flexibility in responding to emerging and emergency needs of the country and its citizens. It is aligned with the national strategic vision documents, the mid-term national development plan, the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) as well as Viet Nam's international commitments.

The OSP has given the UNCT opportunities for upstream work with the GOVN while building on the respective mandates and experience of the participating UN agencies. It also enabled to mainstream the cross-cutting themes of gender and human rights into the OSP implementation and resulted in a more coherent support and advocacy by the UN system on national priorities and the SDGs.

The OSP has provided an added value through several elements such as provision of access to global knowledge, diversity of mandates of the participating UN agencies, joint interventions based on multi-sectoral approach, and impartiality of the UN and convening power of the UN agencies.

Because of its neutral character, the UN system is considered relevant for having competitive edge in complex areas that require collective action, such as compilation and use of development data and statistical systems, building analytical and political negotiation capacities of governments, and lobbying capacities of trade unions and civil society organizations as well as enhancing preparedness and response to natural disasters. The finding from interviews with the GOVN partners confirm that the above aspects are highly appreciated and that the UN agencies should strengthen these facets to repositioning their contribution/support to Viet Nam.

The relevance of the OSP has been slightly diminished by the fact that the OSP coordination architecture has invited only limited role for participation of the GOVN and other relevant national actors. This has effectively caused the OSP implementation process to be essentially one-sided and driven by the UN agencies rather than jointly powered jointly by the UNCT, the GOVN, and other relevant partners.

The OSP was formulated through a consultative process that involved both UN and national stakeholders. The strategic prioritization, primarily based on the CCA, identified priorities with potential to generate major impacts in contributing to achievement of the nationally DGs.

The 2015 One Plan Review recommended that for subsequent DaO cycle (i.e. the current OSP) a Theory of Change (ToC) is developed as a tool to describe how the interventions to be undertaken will lead to the desired changes. The ToC was expected to inform the UNCT to understand the ways in which the components of the OSP results framework relate to one another and explain the causal relationship between different types and levels of results.

It appears that this recommendation had not been fully implemented in the OSP formulation process. Finalization of the OSP Document was based on an implicit ToC that was not sufficiently robust to guide the UNCT through the OSP formulation process. While the OSP Outcomes are compliant with almost all requirements set in the UNDOCO guidance, they do not meet the requirement to 'be realistically achievable, and measurable, ensuring accountability and monitoring'. The nine OSP Outcomes were formulated as very high-level results, almost as impact

statements, and as such are not attainable within duration of a single 5-year cycle. In addition, the OSP was compiled with an overall budget envelope over-reliant on the resources to be mobilized (i.e. 61% of the estimated budget of the OSP was to be mobilized). On the other hand, broad Outcomes allow to accommodate a variety of interventions including those reacting to emerging and emergency needs without necessity to modify the existing Results Framework.

In the OSP formulation, emphasis was put on identification of strategic priorities and definition of high-level Outcomes but less attention was given to other obligatory parts of the RF, namely Outputs as the results directly attributable to the UN system and indicators of progress towards their achievement. While Outputs were not strictly required for the OSF preparation, the UNDOCO guidance left their development at discretion of the UN system to become part of the Outcome ToC. Notably, the GOVN agencies are holders of a vast majority of the information required for assessment of the status of the OSP Outcome Indicators but there has been no arrangement to include the GOVN side in the OSP monitoring and evaluation function. Therefore, lack of involvement of the GOVN partners in the OSP formulation limited the ability of the UN to conduct thorough monitoring of contribution of the UN towards the high-level OSP Outcomes.

There are no outputs in the OSP Document. A map of OSP ToC was prepared for the UNCT staff retreat in early 2017 but there is no reference in the retreat minutes to any discussion on this topic. The ToC contained only generic outputs without further description. Sets of concrete outputs for each OSP Outcome were developed for the biennial Joint Work Plans, however, without definition of Output Indicators and their target values that would serve the purpose of progress monitoring. As no immediate and intermediate Outcomes were formulated, there is a gap between the UN-level Outputs and the high-level Outcomes with only weak causal links in the OSP results chain that represent the desired change from the baseline status to the desired results. Due to lack of output indicators the OSP Results Groups could not fulfil their mandate to collectively monitor and report on progress towards joint outputs and provide corresponding input to the OSP ARRs.

The OSP results framework contains total 65 Outcome Indicators that is a needlessly high number for the 9 Outcomes. The formulation of the OSP Outcome Indicators was synchronized with the development of national SDG indicators as all OSP OIs are referenced to the national or international SDGs. This level of synchronisation was apparently not maintained for definition of target values for OIs. The fact that 25 out of the total 65 OI have no target values and some of them have even incorrect baseline information suggests that the OSP Results Framework OSP had not been carefully developed and periodically revised.

A majority of the OIs that have the target values still constitute a challenge for tracking progress towards their achievement. Due to the impact-type formulation of the Outcomes, the related OIs are not specific enough to reflect and measure UN contribution. The data needed to measure of GOVN involvement in the OSP further aggravates the monitoring challenge.

The interviewed GOVN partners highly recognised the strength of the UN agencies on technical advice and convening power as well as ability to mobilise global and international high-quality expertise. Building on the above strengths with more focus on high level policy advice and enhanced joint programming among the UN agencies will form the UN response to the current trend of reduction of traditional funding availability in order to reprioritise their support to Viet Nam.

Implementation

The 'fit-for-purpose' OSP coordination architecture was established in line with the UNDOCO guidelines. However, the functionality and performance has varied across individual elements of the architecture. There has been dissatisfaction with the involvement of the GOVN in the UN-GOVN Joint Steering Committee that serves as the highest coordination mechanism under the OSP. Lack

of arrangements for active participation of the GOVN in formulation and coordination of the OSP has resulted in insufficient GOVN buy-in and ownership of the OSP.

Other parts of the OSP coordination architecture were established without participation of the GOVN. Given the shared responsibilities of the UN and the GOVN for achievement of the Outcomes, omission of the GOVN from the elements responsible for progress monitoring contributed to delays in implementation of some interventions to dissatisfaction of the responsible UN agencies and the donors.

In general, it is indisputable that the OSP has contributed to improvements of socioeconomic and governance situation of Viet Nam and to progress of the country towards achievement of the SDGs. However, lack of suitable indicators and weak monitoring does not allow for analysis of the UN's contribution to the results. In some areas, the contribution was more obvious showed that the UN has improved the GOVN capacity to respond to natural disasters and made significant contributions towards establishment and implementation of effective and integrated systems for disaster risk management.

The level of funding gap, i.e. the difference between the funds already secured at the OSP inception, shows significant resource constraints for the UN system. There seems to be lack of clear methodology for uniform estimation of core resources across the UN entities.

The Viet Nam SDG Fund was established in the 2nd year of the OSP implementation but did not attract new funding from donors and contained only carryover from the One Plan Fund of the 2012-2016 period. Apart from financing the RCO office, the SDGF did not make a sizeable contribution to coherence in the OSP implementation that was achieved through joint programming. Majority of funds for the OSP was mobilized on a bilateral basis between individual UN agencies and their donors.

Coordination

The evaluators found that the 5 pillars defined in the SOPs for the DaO approach had been established. There was good coordination in the development of the OSP that led the UNCT through the programming process towards the set of strategic result areas based on national priorities, the internationally agreed development goals, and the UN agencies' capacities and comparative advantages.

The coordination for operations has been based on established requisite teams and groups such as the Programme Management Team (PMT) the Operations Management Team (OMT), as well as the Results and Thematic Groups. These elements also have shown varying degrees of performance effectiveness. Some UNCT informants highlighted perceived lack of synergies between the PMT and OMT.

The RGs had been established to lead joint planning, implementation, monitoring and reporting under the respective OSP Focus Areas. In reality, the joint planning and reporting has been a mere compilation of individual UN agencies' AWP and APRs collated by the RGs for submission to the UNRCO. Nevertheless, the RGs enabled the UN agencies involved in the respective OSP Focus Areas to learn what each agency was planning to do and share information about the results in the same FA. However, the level of interactions among RGs remains limited to biannual basis.

Since the OSP inception, joint programming has been limited, due to several reasons, such as limited availability of funding, challenges to satisfy the accountability requirements for JPs set by donors, as well as challenges encountered in *ad-hoc* preparation of joint programmes in response to calls for JP proposals instead of a more systematic longer-term building of joint programmes.

The evaluators found the OSP Common Budgetary Framework well established and disaggregated by the OSP Focus Areas and Outcomes. Despite establishment of the SDG Fund there were no funds

mobilised for the OSP through this financing mechanism. Lack of joint resource mobilisation resulted in few cases of competition for financial resources by submitting proposals to the same donors for similar projects.

5. RECOMMENDATIONS

This section contains recommendations for consideration by the UNCT as the initiator of this evaluation. The recommendations are grouped into several clusters according to the thematic focus.

5.1 Recommendations to improve formulation and governance of the new CF

Recommendation 1: The UNCT, in consultation with the GOVN, social partners and other relevant stakeholders, should develop the next UN – GOVN Cooperation Framework (CF) based on a well-reasoned and robust Theory of Change. It is strongly recommended to adhere to the UNSDG guidance to formulate structured multi-layer outcomes and outputs during the Cooperation Framework design stage to ensure a clear logic in the TOC and the related results matrix.

Developing a more accurate and robust TOC in line with the requirements set out in the UNSDG guidance will enable UN agencies to be more selective about their respective areas of focus on and contribute thus to greater accountability and transparency of the UN system interventions. Particular attention should be paid to formulation of immediate and intermediate outcomes in order to enable monitoring of progress and evaluation of the UN contribution to high level outcomes. The next CF should be based on a realistic overall budget envelope with maximised core and secured resources.

Recommendation 2: The UNCT in consultation with the GOVN should take extra care for proper identification and definition of Outcome Indicators and their target values and strengthen the use of effective monitoring tools to ensure timely and effective monitoring of progress at both Output and Outcome levels.

The monitoring of the next CF will benefit from active involvement of the GOVN as the latter is holder of data and information needed to assess progress towards achieving target values of the CF results indicators. The number of Outcome Indicators should be kept realistic to enable tracking of progress. Active involvement of the GOVN agencies should optimally include use of national evaluation systems in the monitoring of progress that will further strengthen the national data and information systems as well as national monitoring and evaluation capacities.

In particular, the UNCT should develop and use indicators of progress that reflect immediate and intermediate results that are more closely linked with the UN interventions and can therefore better define and measure the UN contribution to progress towards the achievement of high-level Outcomes within the duration of a single programme cycle.

To the extent possible, the UN entities should undertake efforts towards synchronization of their individual systems of monitoring for development results with the monitoring and evaluation system of the next CF.

Recommendation 3: The UNCT in consultation with the GOVN should carefully revise the coordinating role of the Joint Steering Committee (JSC) in order to ensure a meaningful and active participation of the GOVN and its representatives.

A stronger role of the GOVN and key social partners identified for joint contributions to national priorities in the JSC will enhance the national commitment and responsibility for the next CF as well as accountability for its implementation. By the same token, it will increase the GOVN and key social partners' buy-in and ownership of the next CF and ensure that relevant national authorities

will take resolute steps to ensure timely and effective implementation of CF interventions in line with the plans of the UN agencies and expectations of donors.

5.2 Recommendations to improve coherence and coordination of the new Cooperation Framework

Recommendation 4: In line with the UNSDG guidance and based on the experience from implementation of the OSP, the UNCT should carefully revise and optimize the current coordination mechanism for the next CF, in particular to strengthen the strategic position of the Results Groups in the CF coordination architecture and ensure alignment of the Results Groups with existing equivalent GOVN-led working structures.

The Results Groups should be aligned with relevant GOVN-led sector structures (such as working groups, clusters) to ensure contribution of the UN RGs to such external mechanisms. Where equivalent GOVN-led structures do not exist, the RGs should incorporate representatives of relevant line ministries and key national partners. This arrangement will ensure a more coherent UN system-wide approach to CF strategic priorities and will be more inclusive through establishing linkages to the CF priority sectors. The extended RGs should meet at regular pre-established intervals in line with the UNSDG guidance.

Recommendation 5: The UNCT should undertake a more systematic approach towards joint programming as a foundation for a more coordinated approach to implementation of the next CF.

Under each CF Outcome, the UNCT should identify areas for collaborative work and develop a framework for collaborative efforts based on comparative advantages and complementarity of individual agencies. Such framework should provide substantive details of collaborative work of individual agencies, in accordance with their respective mandates, and building on their respective strengths. Existence of the framework will shorten time needed for preparation of Joint Programmes and facilitate thus timely and effective submission of the JPs for consideration of donors. The UNCT should also ensure collection of good practices and lessons learned for future joint programming,

Recommendation 6: For formulation of the next CF, the UNCT should introduce indicators and target values that will enable systematic tracking of progress on mainstreaming of cross-cutting themes into the CF implementation.

Mainstreaming of cross-cutting topics in development cooperation is a process that requires changes in awareness, attitudes, plans and programme implementation. There are some examples of approaches, tools and practices for mainstreaming the most common cross-cutting themes as well as tracking the progress and achievements. The challenge is to use them systematically and consistently in the project or programme cycle to enable monitoring of progress in their mainstreaming into the OSP implementation.

Recommendation 7: The UNCT should conduct analysis of the various reporting levels of the UN agencies and harmonize the reporting format under the OSP with the reporting requirements of the UN agencies and main donors.

Despite the differences in reporting practices across UN agencies and donors, there is a commonality in the information requested. It would be advisable to adjust the format for reporting of the UN agencies to the RGs according to the common information/reporting requirements of the UN agencies and donors.

Recommendation 8: The UNCT needs to enhance the modality of coordination and support for non-resident agencies in collaboration with GOVN agencies.

There remains an issue of delay process and less effectiveness of the collaboration between UN non-resident agencies and GOVN due to obstacles in direct communication and discussion. As a result, the formulated activities could be slow and even cancelled. The UNCT/RCO should take a more active role in support the discussion and approval process on behalf of non-resident agencies to increase the effectiveness of the cooperation via an effectively and timely implementation process and better communication.

5.3 Recommendations to improve support for transformation change and cross-cutting issues

Recommendation 9: The UN in Viet Nam should make assessment of sustainability of the Viet Nam SDG Fund and its potential for prioritization and mobilization of donor financing for the next CF.

Although the SDG Fund for Viet Nam has been established in 2018, there has been very little success in mobilization of funds through this financial mechanism due to concerns about monitoring and reporting for accountability of the UN to donors. The UNCT should make assessment of the SDG Fund situation in comparison with other options, in particular with funds mobilization through joint programming.

Recommendation 10: The UNCT should put emphasis on interventions related to the normative, capacity building and awareness raising mandates of the UN agencies that constitute major comparative advantages of the UN system.

In this regard, the next CF should extend support and technical assistance to the GOVN for better understanding of international norms and standards, their integration into formulation of national policies and legislation as well as for effective implementation of the policies, strategies and action plans in line with international norms, standards, and conventions. The increased emphasis on the normative agenda and capacity building will propagate mainstreaming of the cross-cutting topics of data for development as well as learning and innovation. For field engagements not directly linked to the normative agenda, UNCT should look for opportunities for partnerships with organizations in the field such as local government organizations or NGOs.

Recommendation 11: The GOVN agencies should be engaged in designing the joint programmes with the UN agencies to ensure full partnership, commitment, and co-financing in the implementation of the next CF.

The GOVN agencies have been positioned by the UNCT as partner rather than beneficiaries or implementers of activities. This best reflects the switch of the UNCT from donor to partner, from development assistance to partnership. Engagement of the GOVN agencies in designing the joint programmes will ensure commitments, ownership, and co-financing sources from the GOVN agencies for the implementation of the next CF. Given the uncertainty of global economic recovery, it is reasonable to anticipate a tightening financing prospect for the next CF and therefore, mobilizing counterpart contribution from the GOVN is also important in financial terms.

6. ANNEXES

Annex 1: ToR

Annex 2: Evaluation matrix

Annex 3: Theory of Change developed by the Evaluation Team

Annex 4: List of stakeholders consulted

Annex 5: Key deliverables and progresses toward the OSP outcome indicators

Annex 6: Quang Nam Case Study

Annex 7: List of References

Annex 1 - Terms of Reference

1. BACKGROUND

The One Strategic Plan (OSP), the third generation Delivering as One (DaO) UN Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF), was signed in July 2017 for the period 2017-2021. The OSP represents the programmatic and operational framework for delivering UN support to the Government of Viet Nam (GOVN) and Vietnamese people and establishes how the UN will Deliver as One in support for the implementation of SDGs and national development priorities.

With the participation of 15 resident agencies, including FAO, ILO, IOM, IFAD, UNAIDS, UNDP, UNESCO, UNFPA, UN- Habitat, UNICEF, UNIDO, UNODC, UNV, UN Women and WHO and 4 non-resident agencies, including ITC, IAEA, UNCTAD and UNEP, the OSP 2017-2021 is built on the three principles of inclusion, equity and sustainability, and is well aligned with Viet Nam's Socio-Economic Development Strategy (SEDS) 2011-2020, its Socio- Economic Development Plan (SEDP) 2016-2020, the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), as well as Viet Nam's international human rights commitments.

The OSP has four focus areas, shaped by the five central themes of Agenda 2030 (People, Planet, Prosperity, Peace, and Partnership), with nine related outcomes and direct contributions to the 17 SDGs, and highlighting the UN role in policy advocacy and advice to Viet Nam. The OSP is supported by a Common Budgetary Framework (CBF) with an overall estimated budget of approximately USD 423 million, also including a detailed common results matrix with measurable outcome indicators, targets and means of verification.

UN-supported programmes and projects within the OSP framework have been designed and are being implemented by national implementing partners and participating UN agencies in line with the GOVN's regulations on management and utilization of ODA and concessional loans. The GOVN and the UN continually work on joint efforts to identify and mobilize additional non-core funding sources for the implementation of the OSP.

The "fit-for-purpose" coordination architecture for delivering the DaO and OSP was set up in 2017 in line with the global DaO Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs). This includes a Joint Government-UN DaO Steering Committee (JSC) which is responsible for providing policy and programme oversight on strategic matters pertaining to both DaO and OSP implementation. Internally, the UN Country Team in Viet Nam (UNCT) established five Joint Results Groups, five cross-cutting Thematic Groups, a Programme Management Team (PMT), and other inter-agency working groups for OSP implementation. This architecture was trimmed down in late 2019 for a more efficient and coordinated operation following the 2018 UN Development System (UNDS) reform.

In 2018, the UN launched the UNDS Reform, which went into effect on 1 January 2019 and aims for a much more effective, coordinated, transparent and accountable UN development system dedicated to implementing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Accordingly, a series of innovations were implemented at the country level, including the reinvigorated Resident Coordinator (RC) system and the strengthening of joint implementation & support to the SDGs. Importantly, the General Assembly resolution 72/279 elevates the UNDAF (now renamed the United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework - UNSDCF or CF) as "the most important instrument for planning and implementation of the UN development activities at country level in support of the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (2030 Agenda)." The UNSDCF now guides the entire programme cycle, driving planning, implementation, monitoring, reporting and evaluation of collective UN support for achieving the 2030 Agenda. The UNSDCF reflects the UN development system's contributions in the country and shapes the configuration of UN assets required inside and outside the country. These innovations

created impact on the way the UN in Viet Nam operates as well as its progress in delivering OSP expected outcomes.

The outbreak of the novel coronavirus disease (COVID-19) in early 2020 has resulted in new priorities for the UN work in the first two quarters of 2020 with the focus on accessing and responding to the pandemic's impact. COVID-19 is also anticipated to cause delays in OSP implementation as well as possible changes to UN support in Viet Nam in the following years.

In line with the most updated UNSDCF evaluation guidance, in order to learn from past and current work and to inform the future UNSDCF design and implementation, the UNCT decides to launch the OSP Evaluation in May 2020 prior to the start of the subsequent UNSDCF design cycle (including the CCA development). The primary users of the evaluation are the decision-makers within the UNCT, including non-resident UN agencies, their respective executive boards, key government counterparts, and civil society. In addition, bilateral and multilateral donors, and the broader development partners are also seen as important audience of the evaluation.

2. OSP EVALUATION AND ITS CONTEXT

The OSP evaluation is a mandatory system-wide country evaluation that adheres to UNEG Norms and Standards and the programming principles of the UNDAF/CF. Its focus is both on the development results achieved, as well as the identification of internal gaps and overlaps. The OSP evaluation follows the most updated evaluation guidance³⁴ which addresses the previous UNDAF evaluation guidance's shortcomings and establishes a method and a system that would be fit for being the main accountability and learning instrument for the collective UN system support at the country level.

The OSP Evaluation is prepared and conducted with a number of advantages and challenges as follows:

Advantages:

- The OSP's resource and result framework (RRF) consisting of 9 outcomes with clear statement in line with the SDGs and national development priorities/goals and a selection of outcome indicators in line with SDG indicators to measure UN contribution;
- The close and trusted partnership between the UN and GOVN and other stakeholders in designing, managing, implementing and monitoring UN-supported programmes/projects
- Available evaluations/programme reviews having provided or having the potential to provide independent evidence of UN contributions in four OSP focus areas;
- UN annual reports with results and highlight stories of the UN work, showing evidences of UN contribution to OSP outcomes;
- A rich UN Info database capturing all UN work and support in Viet Nam;

Challenges:

- The information on the OSP theory of change is provided but needs to be more structured
- Some outcome indicators don't have baseline and updated data
- Limited awareness of implementing agencies (including GOVN agencies) about the OSP and the One UN process since they mostly focused on their own programmes/projects supported by specific UN agencies

³⁴ **UNCF Evaluation guideline revision 5 (July 2019):** During the transition period, the Cooperation Framework evaluations may still be examining contributions made under UNDAF rather than Cooperation Framework, given the reflective nature of evaluation. These guidelines equally apply to such cases.

- The COVID-19 pandemic and measures to prevent its spread-out may create difficulties and delays in information/data collection which requires the evaluation to apply innovative and adaptive methods

3. PURPOSE AND OBJECTIVES

Purpose

The overall **purposes** of the OP Evaluation are:

- To support greater learning about what works, what doesn't and why in delivery of the OSP's outcomes: The OSP evaluation will provide important information for strengthening programming and results at the country level, specifically informing the planning and decision-making for the future UNSDCF (2022-2026) and for improving UN coordination at the country level. Lessons learned and good practices documented from the evaluation will inform the GOVN (who the co-owner of the OSP) as well as donors, civil society and other key OSP stakeholders on further collaboration with the UN and facilitation of the current OSP implementation and future OSP development. These will also be shared with UN Regional Offices and HQ for potential benefit of other countries.
- To support greater accountability of the UNCT and GOVN to OSP stakeholders: By objectively verifying results achieved within the OSP framework and assessing the effectiveness of the strategies and interventions used, the OSP evaluation will enable the various stakeholders in the OSP process, including national counterparts and donors, to hold the UNCT accountable for fulfilling their roles and commitments.

Objectives

The **objectives** of the OSP evaluation are:

- To assess the relevance, effectiveness, and efficiency of the OSP.
- To assess the coherence of the UN system support
- To assess the OSP's support to transformational changes
- To assess the conformity with the crosscutting principles
- To provide actionable recommendations for the way forward

4. SCOPE

The OSP evaluation's period is from 2016 to June 2020 to also cover the OSP design phase to draw lessons for the design of the new Cooperation Framework.

The OSP evaluation will cover contributions to OSP outcomes of all programmes, projects and activities conducted in Viet Nam (at both national and sub-national levels) by the UNCT and non-resident agencies. It will also examine the OSP cross-cutting issues and the global UN programming principles (e.g. leaving no one behind LNOB, human rights, gender equality and women's empowerment, sustainability and resilience, and accountability). The OSP evaluation will take into account emerging issues, such as, related to serious droughts, typhoons, and the COVID-19 pandemic in both the evaluation contents (e.g. the UNCT's responsiveness, adaptation and reprioritization) and operation (e.g. methods for managing stakeholder participation and inclusiveness in the COVID context).

The OSP evaluation also assess the contribution and accountabilities of the GOVN (as the co-owner of the OSP together with the UNCT) toward the OSP implementation against the responsibilities identified in the OSP document, specifically in OSP design and approval, implementation, monitoring and reporting as well as in facilitating multi-stakeholder coordination and mechanism

and mobilizing resources for smooth and efficient OSP implementation. Findings and recommendations on the above will be extremely useful for the GOVN partners to strengthen and identify (together with the UN) relevant coordination and implementation modalities for the next UNSDCF.

Due consideration should be given to the activities of agencies without a formal country programme, activities implemented as part of global or regional programmes and projects, and the activities of non-resident agencies.

In principle, the OSP evaluation does not evaluate the individual programmes or activities of UN agencies, but build on the available programme and project evaluations conducted by each agency. Where a paucity of data necessitates a quick assessment of a contribution, this should be carried out (based on efficient use of human and financial resources available) using appropriate evaluation methodologies (see Section 6 on evaluation methodology) that identify contributions at the outcome level and ascertain the plausibility of causal relationships between activities and outcomes.

The evaluation will be conducted mainly in Hanoi with 2 field visits at maximum. These visits should be proposed by the Evaluation Team in the inception report in consideration of data availability and areas for in-depth analysis.

5. EVALUTION QUESTIONS

The OSP evaluation with its evaluation report aims to answer multiple questions primarily identified as follows:

1) Relevance, effectiveness, and efficiency of the OSP

Relevance

- To what extent the OSP strategic areas and outcomes are consistent with country needs, national priorities, the country's international and regional commitments, including on SDGs, leaving no one behind, human rights, sustainable development, environment, and gender equity?
- How resilient, responsive and strategic the UNCT was in addressing emerging and emergency needs? For example, in assessing the COVID-19 impacts and in reprioritizing/adapting its support to provide timely support to the country and to ensure the achievement of the OSP outcomes.
- To which extent the UN's comparative advantages and unique mandates (that other stakeholders would not/cannot have) are relevant with the OSP strategic areas (especially in addressing sensitive issues) and help strengthen the UN position, credibility and reliability of the UN as a partner for the GOVN and other actors in the efforts to achieve the SDGs in Viet Nam?

Effectiveness

- To which extent the UNCT contributed to, or is likely to contribute to, the outcomes defined in the OSP? The evaluation should also note how the unintended results, if any, have affected national development positively or negatively and to what extent have they been foreseen and managed.
- How effective was the GOVN's roles in contributing to OSP design and approval, implementation, monitoring and reporting as well as in facilitating multi-stakeholder coordination and mechanism and mobilizing resources for smooth and efficient OSP implementation?

Efficiency

- To which extent the OSP outcomes were achieved/contributed to with the appropriate amount of resources, maintenance of minimum transaction cost (funds, expertise, time, administrative costs, etc.), and within the planned time-framed?
- How efficient was the 'fit for purpose' UN coordination structure for Delivering as One (DaO) and OSP implementation in jointly supporting Viet Nam in SDG acceleration?

2) Coherence of the UN system support

- To which extent the UN system collectively prioritized activities based on the needs (demand side) rather than on the availability of resources (supply side), and reallocated resources according to the collective priorities if necessary?
- To which extent the OSP strengthened the position, credibility and reliability of the UN system as a partner for the GOVN and other actors, and used effectively as a partnership vehicle?
- To what extent the OSP strategic interventions by UNCT are compatible with each other and with those of other development partners as well as of the government to achieve the common goals/ outcomes and to deliver quality, integrated, SDG-focused policy support, particularly through joint programming, joint programmes and joint work?
- To what extent the OSP facilitated the identification of and access to new financing partners?
- To what extent the OSP reduced transaction costs for partners through greater UN coherence and discipline?
- Was the OSP supported by an integrated funding framework and by adequate funding instruments? What were the gaps?
- How has the UNDS reform implemented in Viet Nam and further strengthened the coherence of the UN system support in Viet Nam?

3) Supporting transformational changes

- To what extent the UN system support extended in such a way to build national and local capacities and ensure long-term gains?
- To what extent the UN system contributing to leveraging relevant sources of financing and investment for specific SDGs as part of the OSP beyond relying mostly on UN resources, to ensure the scale of impact necessary for attaining the 2030 Agenda?
- To what extent the UN system promoted and supported inclusive and sustainable socio-economic changes and growth that leaves no one behind and strengthen ecological foundation of the economy and the society?
- To what extent the UN system promoted or supported policies that are consistent among each other and across sectors, given the multi-sectoral nature of social and economic development?
- To what extent the UN system supported the country and the people in strengthening socio-economic and individual resilience and contributed to reducing vulnerability against shocks and crises?

4) Conformity with the crosscutting principles

- To what extent the OSP was designed and implemented to promote gender equality?
- To what extent the obligations of the duty bearers and rights of the right holders were reflected in the OSP and ensured during the implementation?
- To what extent the OSP was designed and delivered in due consideration to environmental implications.

The list of the questions will be finalized during the inception phase. The Evaluation Team should also elaborate on and translate them into methodological sub-questions in their inception report as well as provide relevant suggestions and solutions in the final evaluation report.

6. EVALUATION APPROACH AND METHODOLOGY

1) Approach

The OSP Evaluation is a summative evaluation of the OSP and its specified strategic intent and outcomes. It assesses UNCT's contribution to national development outcomes contained in the OSP's results framework. Given that the OSP outcomes are set at a very high level and are contributed by the work of many stakeholders (not only the UN), establishing the attribution of UN interventions to an observed result at OSP outcome level is infeasible. Therefore, the OSP evaluation will not apply an experimental or quasi-experimental design but use the non-experimental design in which the evaluators will evaluate possible contribution (rather than attribution) of the UNCT to the achievement of the OSP outcomes. The overall approach is participatory and theory-based (using OSP theories of change). The evaluation should integrate gender equality throughout the evaluation³⁵, which entails not only analyzing the evaluation questions through a gender lens, but also the process itself should be transparent, participatory, inclusive and ensure fair power relations.

2) Methodology

The OSP evaluation will be conducted in an inclusive manner and promote national ownership through the meaningful engagement of relevant national partners throughout the evaluation process. The OSP evaluation is independent and adhere to and implement UNEG Norms and Standards. Each Evaluation Team member will be provided with and sign off on the UNEG Code of Conduct for Evaluators, which provides ethical guidelines for the conduct of evaluations.

In general, the methodology of this evaluation includes triangulation and mixed method of quantitative and qualitative data analysis. Followings are standards and considerations for data analysis and data collection:

Data Analysis

- Provide credible answers to the evaluation questions;
- Ensure that the information collected is valid, reliable and sufficient to meet the evaluation purposes, scope and approach and that the analysis is logically coherent and complete (and not speculative or opinion-based);
- Use a mixed method, employing the most appropriate qualitative and quantitative approaches, data types and methods of data analysis;
- Ensure triangulation of the various data sources to ensure maximum validity, reliability of data and promote use;
- Apply participatory and utilization-focused approach to involve key stakeholders and boost ownership of the evaluation should be adopted;
- Ensure a Leave No One Behind lens, particularly gender equality and human rights;
- Ensure the linkage with the SDGs.

Data Collection: The OSP evaluation will draw on a variety of data collection methods including, but not limited to, the followings:

³⁵ In line with UNEG Guidance on Integrating Human Rights and Gender Equality in Evaluation: <http://www.uneval.org/document/detail/1616>; all UN system evaluations are assessed against the UN-SWAP Evaluation Performance Indicator: <http://www.uneval.org/document/detail/1452>

- Document review focusing on One Plan planning documents, progress reviews, annual reports and past evaluation reports (including UN country programme evaluations, those on projects and small-scale initiatives, and those issued by national counterparts), strategy papers, national plans and policies and related programme and project documents. These should include reports on the progress against national and international commitments.
- Semi-structured interviews with key stakeholders including key government counterparts, donor community members, representatives of key civil society organisations, UNCT members, and implementing partners.
- Surveys and questionnaires including right holders meant to benefit from development programmes, UNCT members, and / or surveys and questionnaires involving other stakeholders.
- Focus Group discussions involving groups and sub-groups of stakeholders, decision-makers.
- Other methods such as outcome mapping, observational visits, photo stories, etc.

An evaluation matrix will be prepared during the inception phase to present the links between data collection methods, evaluation questions, sources, etc. Additionally, a rapid evaluability assessment will be undertaken during the inception phase to determine the availability of documentation, the quality of the OSP framework and indicators, and gaps in information; this will inform the evaluation approach.

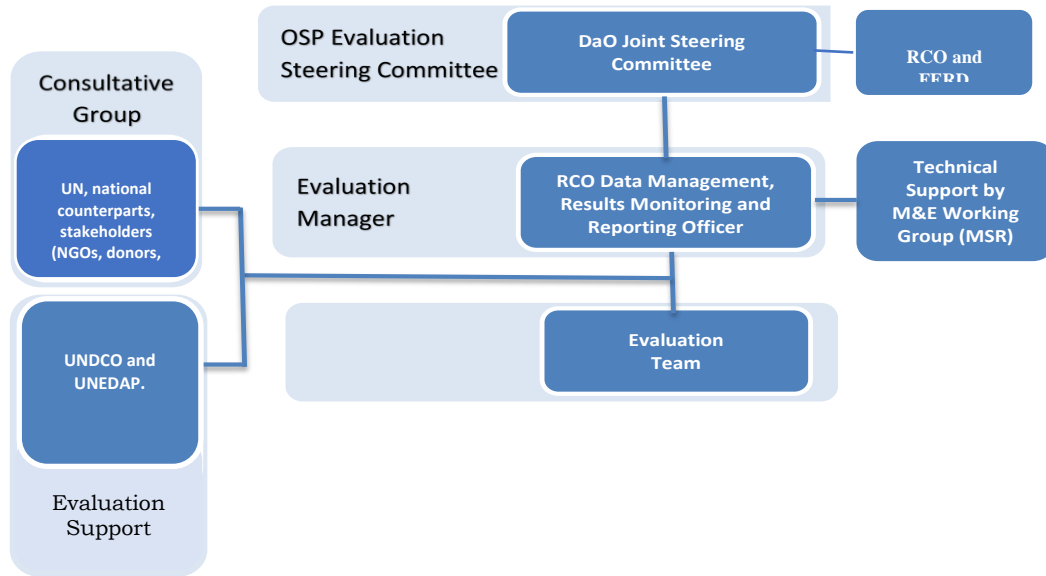
In addition, the precise data collection methods should be identified following:

- Analysis of availability of existing evaluative evidence and administrative data
- Logistical constraints (travel, costs, time, etc)
- Ethical considerations (especially when evaluating sensitive topics such as GBV or in sensitive settings such as post-conflict settings)

The OSP evaluation will use a variety of validation methods to ensure that the data and information used and conclusions made carry the necessary depth, including by sharing findings, conclusions and recommendations with the evaluation Consultative Group and Evaluation Support team (as defined in Section 7)

During the inception phase, the evaluation team will propose a detailed evaluation methodology. The methodology should propose innovative options for data collection methods (including remote data collection if necessary) considering the COVID-19 pandemic and related coping measures which may not allow a smooth data collection process.

7. MANAGEMENT ARRANGEMENT



The **OSP Evaluation Steering Committee** is responsible for the proper conduct of the OSP Cooperation Framework evaluation. The Delivering as One Joint Steering Committee (JSC), co-chaired by the UN Resident Coordinator (UNRC) and the MPI Vice Minister (VM), will assume this role. The Steering Committee is supported by the UN Resident Coordinator Office (RCO) and MPI Foreign Economic Relation Department (FERD) who are the DaO JSC Secretariats. The UNRC and MPI VM co-chairs can choose to delegate their roles to relevant RCO and FERD officials whenever and wherever necessary. UNCT members or government agency counterparts not on the Steering Committee may opt to join the Consultative Group (defined below).

The **Evaluation Manager** is the Data Management, Results Monitoring and Reporting in the Resident Coordinator Office (RCO). The Evaluation Manager is not involved in implementing programmes/projects and have a sound knowledge of the evaluation process and methodology and understands how to abide by UNEG Evaluation Norms and Standards. The OSP Evaluation Steering Committee ensures that the Evaluation Manager could operate within an environment and conditions conducive to an independent and unbiased evaluation management and is not subject to undue pressure from any interested party. The Evaluation Manager is technically supported by the UN M&E Working Group (namely the Monitoring for Strategic Results Working Group – MSR) comprising M&E officers from UN agencies. The Evaluation Manager is also backed by the RCO Head and RCO staff in coordination-related tasks.

The Steering Committee will invite government counterparts and other key stakeholders of UN agencies to form a **Consultative Group**. The Consultative Group should be sufficiently inclusive to represent various sectoral interests. Key stakeholders include civil society representatives, in particular those who could reflect interest of various social groups, including women and people who are “left behind”, as well as international development or financing partners. The Group can also include UNCT members not on the Steering Committee, or non-resident agency representatives. The Consultative Group will provide inputs at key stages of evaluation, such as in the design and activity planning, the validation of findings and the forming of recommendations.

The **Evaluation Team** comprises independent external evaluators. It has a team leader with extensive evaluation expertise and at least 2 members to allow triangulation of observations and

validation of findings within the team (see Section 10 on the *Composition and selection of the Evaluation Team*).

The OSP evaluation receives **Evaluation Support** from the UNEDAP in providing technical advice for the evaluation process and reviewing key products (including the evaluation TOR, inception report and draft evaluation report), and coordinating agency evaluations, to the extent possible, as inputs to the OSP evaluation. The evaluation will also receive guidance and support from the UNDCO to safeguard the independence and quality of the evaluation and to intervene in case of dispute.

Specific roles and responsibilities of each body above are presented in Section 8 on Process and Timeline.

8. PROCESSES AND TIMELINE

The OSP evaluation will be conducted in five main stages with key activities, deliverables, responsible entities, and timelines as follows:

Phase	Activities	Deliverables	Responsibility	Completion Time
1. Preparation (1.5 months)				
	1.1. Development of Evaluation Terms of Reference (TOR)	- Evaluation TOR (and TOR for hiring Evaluation Team based on the approved evaluation TOR)	- RCO (with MSR support) to draft the TOR - Evaluation Support to review, comment on the TOR - Steering Committee to endorse the TOR	Mid of August
	1.2. Establishment of Consultative Group	- Consultative Group established	- Evaluation Manager in coordination with FERD/MPI to form the list -	
	1.3. Preparatory desk work	- Mapping of UN agencies' evaluations and reviews - Collection of relevant documents and data (e.g. financial and OSP outcome indicator data)	- Evaluation Manager (with MSR and RCO support) -	
	1.4. Recruitment the Evaluation Team	- Evaluation Team selected	- Evaluation Manager (with MSR support) to organize the recruitment (including to form Recruitment Panels) - Steering Committee to endorse	
2. Inception (1 month)				
	2.1. Brief and support the Evaluation Team	- Briefings with RC, UNCT members, programmes managers, Results Groups, RCO, etc. conducted	- Evaluation Manager (with MSR and RCO support) to organized - Evaluation Team to participate	Mid of September
	2.2. Organize Theory-of-Change workshop(s)	- Theory-of-Change workshop(s) with UNCT members or PMT as designated by the UNCT - Agreement on Theories of Change	- Evaluation Manager (with MSR and RCO support) to organize - Evaluation Team to present on ToCs and facilitate the discussion - UNCT/PMT to participate and agree on ToCs	
	2.3. Development of Inception Report	- Inception Report	- Evaluation Team to prepare - Evaluation Support and Consultative Group to review - Evaluation Manager (with MSR support) and to review and	

			endorse	
3. <u>Data collection and analysis (1 month)</u>				
	3.1. Data collection and analysis		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Evaluation Team to implement - Steering Committee: to Ensure the Evaluation Team has access to information and stakeholders - Evaluation Manager (with MSR and RCO support) to facilitate evaluation activities, assist the Evaluation Team in gaining access to stakeholders and additional information, and arrange meetings and logistics - Consultative Group: to facilitate the evaluation process, helping the team to identify and gain access to government and other stakeholders 	Mid of September
4. <u>Reporting (1.5 months or 1 month?)</u>				
	4.1. Development of Draft Evaluation Report	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Draft Report - PPP Presentation on key preliminary findings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Evaluation Team to implement 	Mid of October
	4.2. Review and Validation of Draft Report	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Presentation on preliminary findings to Consultative Group - Revised Draft Report 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Evaluation Team: to present key preliminary findings to consultative group, address comments and revise draft report - Consultative Group and Evaluation Support: to comment on the draft report and participate in the meeting on presentation on preliminary findings - Evaluation Manager (with MSR support) to: conduct a pro forma quality check; manage the validation process by circulating the draft for comment to the Steering Committee, Consultative Group, Evaluation Support and any other key stakeholders, ensuring all comments and responses are properly recorded, using an audit trail; send comments to the Evaluation Team for draft revision; make sure all comments are addressed by the Evaluation Team; and organize a meeting on presentation on preliminary findings 	Mid of November
	4.3. Finalization of Evaluation Report	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Final Evaluation Report 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Evaluation Team to implement - Steering Committee: to approve the final report - Evaluation Manager: to facilitate the approval of the final report by the Steering Committee 	

5. Use the results				
	5.1. Preparation of and follow-up on Management Response	- Management Response	- Steering Committee: (with RCO and MPI support) to prepare the Management Response in consultation with all UNCT members and do the follow-up	End of November and onward
	5.2. Organization of Stakeholder Workshop	- Stakeholder Workshop	- Steering Committee: to organize a stakeholder workshop once the final report is ready - Evaluation Manager (with MSR and RCO support) and Consultative Group: to support Steering Committee in organizing the stakeholder workshop - Evaluation Team: to participate in the stakeholder workshop and make presentation as required	
	5.3. Dissemination of Evaluation Report	- Dissemination of the Evaluation Report global/regional platforms, UNCT website - Measures to disseminate the evaluation, and promote the use of evaluation and lesson learning	- Steering Committee to implement with support by RCO and UN Communication Team	

(Note: The timeline will be probably adjusted due to COVID-19 and when the Evaluation Team is recruited.)

9. KEY EXPECTED DELIVERABLES

9.1 Theory-of-change workshop

The theory of change is the key reference framework for evaluators. A theory-of-change workshop during the first week of the Evaluation Team's in-country work is a great opportunity for the Evaluation Team and the UNCT members to develop a common understanding of what ought to happen to achieve the goals, what the UN's activities are expected to achieve, what interaction will be required with other actors, including government, and so on. Having a common understanding of this kind at the start of the exercise is critical to avoiding dispute at a later date.

For the OSP evaluations, because of the multiplicity of outcomes involving multiple SDGs and sectors, a series of shorter workshops may be organized on multiple theories by OSP outcomes.

9.2 Inception Report, including proposed methodology and work plan:

The inception report is produced by the Evaluation Team to elaborate on how it will conduct the evaluation. It contains:

- an assessment of the evaluability of the OSP, including identification of data gaps and a proposal to address any limitation identified;
- an elaboration of the evaluation questions into methodological sub-questions (by programme or project, by data-collection method, etc.);
- sources and methods for collecting data for each methodological sub-question; and
- a concrete plan of evaluation activities and a timeline, possibly with a tentative list of interviews to be arranged or plans for travel to other locations (e.g. municipalities, project sites).

9.3 Draft and Final Evaluation Report with accompanied ppt presentations and relevant annexes

The evaluation report should be written in a clear and concise manner that allows readers to easily follow its logic. It should not be overly filled with factual descriptions, especially those available elsewhere. The focus of the report should be to present the findings, the conclusions and the recommendations in a logical and convincing manner. The detailed outline of the final report will be proposed by the Evaluation Team in the inception report. It should contain:

- what was evaluated and why (purpose and scope);
- how the evaluation was conducted (objectives and methodology);
- what was found and on what evidence (findings and evidences/analysis);
- what has been concluded from the findings and in response to the main evaluation questions (conclusions);
- what are the recommendations; and
- what are the key lessons learned.

Recommendations. Recommendations³⁶ should be developed for the purpose, to help the UNCT as well as the GOVN and other stakeholders improve their support towards the achievement of national goals and the SDGs. In particular, recommendations:

- must logically follow the findings based on evidences and the conclusions drawn from them, with their rationale clearly explained;
- must be relevant to the country context and to the improvement of the UN system support towards the achievement of national goals and the SDGs;

³⁶ UNEG Improved Quality of Evaluation Quality Checklist (2018), <http://www.unevaluation.org/document/detail/2124>

- should be developed with the involvement of relevant stakeholders to ensure the relevance and feasibility of the actions to follow; and
- must not be overly prescriptive so as to allow the UNCT to design concrete actions for implementation in the management response.

Management response

Once the report is finalized, the Steering Committee and the UNCT must coordinate to prepare the formal Management Response to the evaluation. It should contain general remarks from the Steering Committee and the UNCT on the content of the report, followed by a response to each recommendation (normally prepared in tabular format) and a follow-up mechanism.

The response to each recommendation should include:

- whether the recommendation is accepted, partially accepted or rejected;
- actions that will be taken, by whom and when, for those recommendations accepted; and
- an explanation of why certain recommendations were rejected and potential alternative actions to address the issues raised.

The management response will be presented at the stakeholder workshop for discussion and made publicly available with the evaluation report.

There should be a follow-up mechanism to the management response to ensure actions indicated in the response are adequately implemented. This should normally be an agenda item in the OSP Steering Committee, and the results of the follow up (i.e. updates on implementation) should be included in its minutes. It could also be discussed at UNCT meetings or OSP result-group meetings. The process and frequency of the follow-up should be indicated in the management response. UNDCO may set up a mechanism to monitor the implementation of the management response.

9.4 Stakeholder workshop

The stakeholder workshop provides an opportunity to generate buy-in of the evaluation findings, conclusions and recommendations, as well as the management response. Through open discussion, the workshop ensures the UNCT, national counterparts and development partners to be on the same page in terms of future strategic direction. The participation of the team leader in the workshop is advisable.

A broad range of partners should be invited to the workshop. These include government officials, representatives of funding partners and civil-society organizations, local-government officials from areas where there were programme activities and representatives of other stakeholder groups, as appropriate.

The evaluation report and the management response should be presented at the workshop and the way forward should be discussed.

10. COMPOSITION AND SELECTION OF THE EVALUATION TEAM

The composition and selection of the OSP Evaluation Team follow the good practices applied by UN Evaluation Group (UNEG). The Steering Committee opts to select one international consultant (as team leader) and three national consultants (as team member) to conduct the independent OSP Evaluation. The selected team should have past experience with carrying out similar evaluations and collective knowledge of the national context in various areas of UN work. The team should be built with due consideration to ethnic/tribal/language balance, gender balance, and coverage of different subject areas of work by UNCT member agencies.

The evaluation team leader will lead the entire evaluation process, working closely with all team members. He/she will conduct the evaluation process in a timely manner and communicate with the Evaluation Management Group on a regular basis and highlight progress made/challenges

encountered. The team leader will be responsible for producing the inception report and the draft and final evaluation reports.

The team members will contribute to the evaluation process substantively through data collection and analysis. They will share responsibilities for conducting desk review and interviews and conduct field visits to the project sites identified and collect data. They will provide substantive inputs to the inception report as well as to the draft and final reports.

Qualification of Evaluation Team

1) *International Team Leader (1 person)*

- Advanced University Degree (Masters or PhD) in political science, public administration, development studies, law, human rights or other relevant fields;
- Minimum fifteen years of relevant professional experience;
- A strong record in designing and leading evaluations;
- Extensive knowledge of, and experience in applying, qualitative and quantitative evaluation methods;
- Demonstrated managerial competence and experience in organizing, leading and coordinating evaluation teams at the international level;
- Technical competence in undertaking complex evaluations which involve use of mixed methods;
- Prior experience in working with multilateral agencies;
- Knowledge of UN role, UN reform process and UN programming at the country level, particularly UNDAF/UNCF;
- Strong experience and knowledge of the UN programming principles including leaving no one behind LNOB, human rights, gender equality and women's empowerment, sustainability and resilience, and accountability; and
- Fluency in English, excellent oral, written, communication and reporting skills.

2) *National Team Members (3 persons)*

- Advanced University Degree (Master or PhD) political science, public administration, development studies, law, human rights or other relevant field;
- Minimum of ten years of relevant professional experience;
- Technical competence in undertaking complex evaluations which involve use of mixed methods;
- Strong data collection and analysis skills;
- Prior experience in working with multilateral agencies;
- Knowledge of UN role, UN reform process and UN programming at the country level, particularly UNDAF;
- Strong experience and knowledge in the UN programming principles including leaving no one behind LNOB, human rights, gender equality and women's empowerment, sustainability and resilience, and accountability;
- In-depth knowledge and strong research record of Viet Nam socio-economic development;
- Process management skills such as facilitation skills and ability to negotiate with a wide range of stakeholders;
- Fluency in English and Vietnamese, excellent oral, written, communication and reporting skills;
- Experience in conducting evaluation of an UNDAF especially the one of the similar country contexts is considered a strong asset;
- Experience in translation and interpretation.

The selection process will follow the procurement rules and regulations of the contracting entity (the United Nations Development Programme under the service-level agreement). To ensure independence, value for money and transparency, the process will follow the principle of open and competitive recruitment. The sources of recruitment should include:

- advertisement in major national media where international job opportunities are normally found by local professionals;
- circulation to national evaluation associations, regional evaluation associations and international evaluation networks (UNEG can support this process, on request); and
- referrals from the UNEG member evaluation offices.

The Evaluation Manager will facilitate to form a Recruitment Panel with participation of UNCT/PMT members, MSR working group, and other relevant stakeholders.

The OSP Evaluation Team will work under the direct supervision of the Evaluation Manager. All key deliverables will be validated and approved by the OSP Evaluation Steering Committee. The evaluation team members must be committed to respecting deadlines of delivery outputs with the agreed timeframe and must be able to work with a multidisciplinary team and in a multicultural environment.

11. BUDGET

[Omitted in this Annex]

12. ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

The evaluation process should conform to the relevant ethical standards in line with UN Ethical Guidelines for Evaluation including but not limited to informed consent of participants, privacy, and confidentiality considerations. The relevant ethical standards will be identified and the mechanisms and measures to ensure that standards will be maintained during the OSP evaluation process should be provided in the inception report. UNEG ethical code of conduct for evaluation, at <http://www.unevaluation.org/document/detail/102>

13. EVALUATION NORMS AND STANDARDS

All Cooperation Framework evaluations should adhere to and implement UNEG Norms and Standards, as well as UNEG guidance on gender equality and human rights. Each Evaluation Team member should also be provided with and sign off on the UNEG Code of Conduct for Evaluators, which provides ethical guidelines for the conduct of evaluations.

14. REFERENCE MATERIALS

The evaluation manager with the MSR support will pool all selective documents to share with the Evaluation Team. The key documents will include basic documents to understand the subject of evaluation (programme and project documents, etc.), the source of secondary data (project reports, evaluation reports, results monitoring data, etc.) and the documents prepared for the Evaluation Team (stakeholder map, programme/project map, etc.).

Annex 2: Evaluation matrix

Evaluation criteria	Evaluation questions	Indicators	Data Sources	Methods
1. Relevance	11. To what extent the OSP strategic areas and outcomes are consistent with country needs, national priorities, the country's international and regional commitments, including on SDGs, leaving no one behind, human rights, sustainable development, environment, and gender equity?	Degree of alignment of OSP and national/sub-national development policies	GoVN policies and strategies OSP programme documentation UN RGs, TGs and other inter-agencies groups GoVN representatives Implementing partners	Desk review Survey Focus group discussions Interviews
	1.2 How resilient, responsive and strategic the UNCT was in addressing emerging and emergency needs?	Number and degree of adjustments in agency-specific and joint projects to reflect - The UN's role and support in assessing the COVID-19 impacts and in reprioritizing/adapting its support to provide timely support to the country and to ensure the achievement of the OSP outcomes. - The UN's support in responding to GoVN's call for emergency relief and support severe and widespread flooding, landslides, storm surge and strong winds since October 2020.	OSP, UN agency documentation UN RGs, TGs and other inter-agencies groups GoVN representatives Implementing Partners	Desk review Focus group discussions Interviews

Evaluation criteria	Evaluation questions	Indicators	Data Sources	Methods
	1.3 To which extent the UN's comparative advantages and unique mandates (that other stakeholders would not/cannot have) are relevant with the OSP strategic areas (especially in addressing sensitive issues) and help strengthen the UN position, credibility and reliability of the UN as a partner for the GOVN and other actors in the efforts to achieve the SDGs in Viet Nam?	Perceptions of stakeholders on credibility and reliability of UN as partner to GoVN.	GoVN policies and strategies OSP programme documentation UN RGs, TGs and other inter-agencies groups GoVN representatives Implementing partners	Desk review Survey Focus group discussions Interviews
2. Effectiveness	2.1 To which extent the UNCT interventions and outputs contributed to, or is likely to contribute to, the outcomes, outputs defined in the OSP? The evaluation should also note how the unintended results (outcomes, outputs), if any, have affected national development positively or negatively and to what extent have they been foreseen and managed.	Extent of progress towards OSP outcomes, outputs	UN Info data base OSP annual results reports UN RGs, TGs and other inter-agencies groups UNRCO representatives GoVN representatives Implementing partners	Desk review Survey Focus group discussions Interviews
	2.2 How effective was the GOVN's roles in contributing to OSP design and approval, implementation, monitoring and reporting as well as in facilitating multi-stakeholder coordination and mechanism and mobilizing resources for smooth and efficient OSP implementation?	Evidence of GoVN roles and contribution. (Including amounts of resources mobilized)	GoVN representatives Implementing Partners UN RGs, TGs and other inter-agencies groups UNRCO representatives	Interviews Focus group discussions Survey
3. Efficiency	3.1 To which extent the OSP was implemented with appropriate amount of resources, maintenance of minimum transaction cost (funds, expertise, time, administrative costs, etc. planned time-framed?)	Perceptions of stakeholders and evidences on efficiency of resource allocation thought OSP planning, implementation, coordination, and monitoring and evaluation.	UN Info data base UN RGs, TGs and other inter-agencies groups OSP reporting	Desk review Focus group discussions Interviews

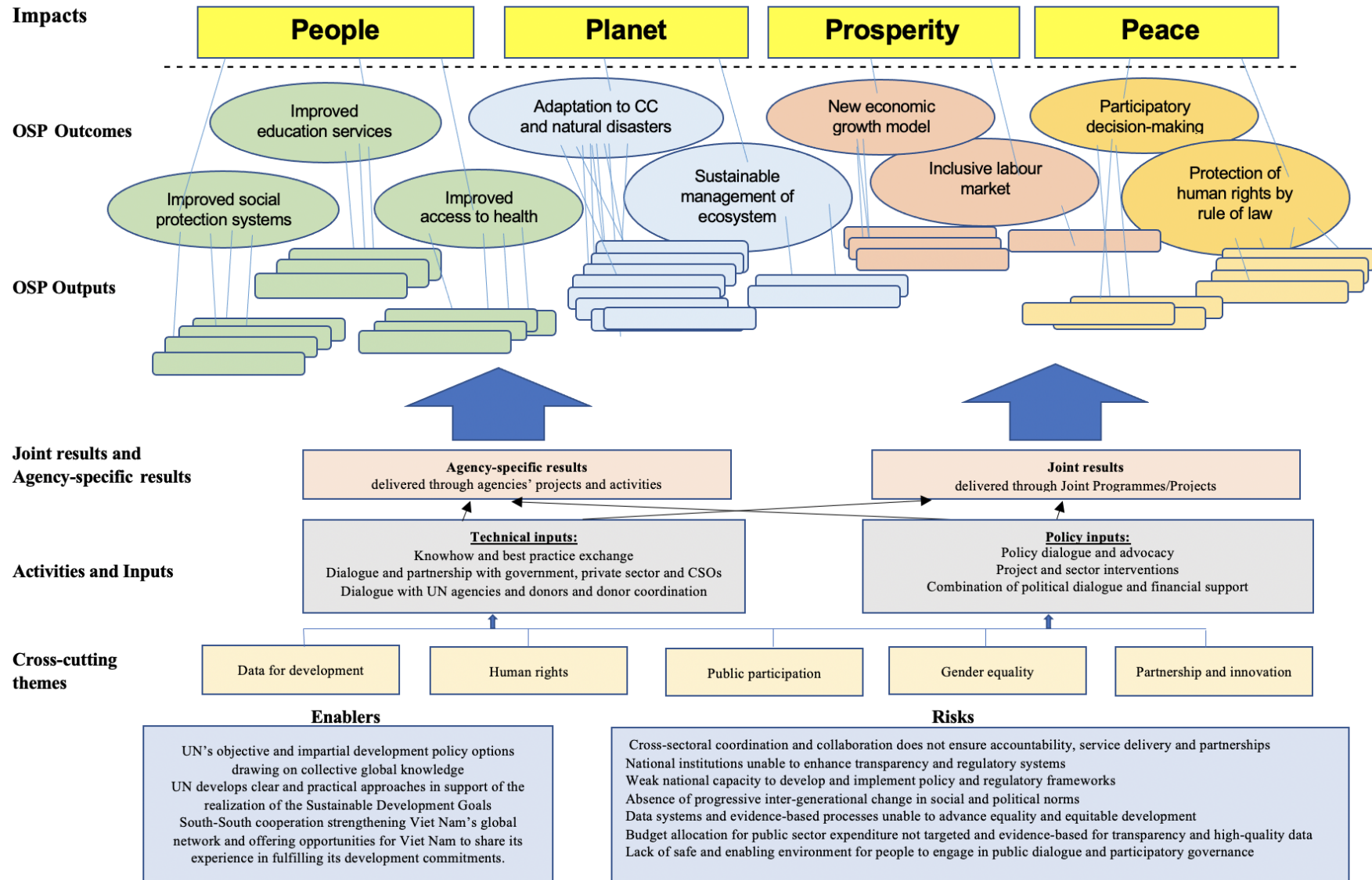
Evaluation criteria	Evaluation questions	Indicators	Data Sources	Methods
	3.2 To which extent has OSP common services achieved cost savings for the individual agencies participating in OSP?	Evidence and extent of cost reductions related to OSP programming and/or implementation	UN Info data base UN RGs, TGs and other inter-agencies groups UNRCO representatives Implementing partners	Survey Focus group discussions Interviews
4. Coherence of the UN system support	4.1 To which extent the UN system collectively prioritized activities based on the needs (demand side) rather than on the availability of resources (supply side), and reallocated resources according to the collective priorities if necessary?	Degree of alignment of OSP and national development policies and emergent needs (Added as the question of relevance)	UN RGs, TGs and other inter-agencies groups UNRCO representatives UN RGs, TGs and other inter-agencies groups Implementing partners OSP reporting	Document review Focus group discussions Interviews Survey
	4.2 To which extent the OSP strengthened the position, credibility and reliability of the UN system as a partner for the GOVN and other actors, and used effectively as a partnership vehicle?	Perception of stakeholders on OSP strengthening the position, credibility and reliability of the UN system	UN RGs, TGs and other inter-agencies groups UNRCO representatives GoVN representatives Implementing Partners	Focus group discussions Interviews Survey
	4.3 To what extent the OSP strategic interventions by UNCT are compatible with each other and with those of other development partners as well as of the government to achieve the common goals/outcomes and to deliver quality, integrated, SDG-focused policy support, particularly	Evidence and extent of OSP strategic interventions Evidence and number of measures taken by UNCT to improve coordination (substantive and operational) to reduce duplication and capitalize on respective areas of	UN Info data base UN RGs, TGs and other inter-agencies groups UNRCO representatives	Document review Focus group discussions Interviews Survey

Evaluation criteria	Evaluation questions	Indicators	Data Sources	Methods
	through joint programming, joint programmes and joint work?	expertise and resources to better support national priorities Number of joint programmes and joint work	GoVN representatives Implementing Partners OSP reporting	
	4.4 To what extent OSP facilitated the identification of and access to new financing partners? To what extent OSP resource mobilization used an integrated funding framework?	Evidence and extent of resource mobilization and of centralized resource mobilization	UN RGs, TGs and other inter-agencies groups UNRCO representatives OSP reporting	Interviews Focus group discussions Survey
	4.5 To what extent OSP reduced transaction costs for partners through greater UN coherence and discipline?	Evidence extent of common services and harmonization of business practices	UN RGs, TGs and other inter-agencies groups UNRCO representatives OSP reporting	Interviews Focus group discussions Survey
	4.6 How has the UNDS reform implemented in Viet Nam further strengthened the coherence of the UN system support in Viet Nam?	Evidence and extent of system-wide approach and of strengthened UNRC	UNRCO representatives UN RGs, TGs and other inter-agencies groups GoVN representatives OSP reporting	Interviews Focus group discussions Survey OSP reporting
5. Supporting transformational changes	5.1 To what extent the UN system supported building national and local capacities including of vulnerable and/or marginalized communities for sustainable gains as well as strengthening socio-economic and individual resilience and reducing vulnerability against shocks and crises?	Evidence and extent of UN support in building national and local capacities Perception of stakeholders on the overall added-value of OSP compared to the work of agencies alone	UN Info data base UN RGs, TGs and other inter-agencies groups UNRCO representatives OSP reporting GoVN representatives	Interviews Focus group discussions Survey OSP reporting Field visit observation

Evaluation criteria	Evaluation questions	Indicators	Data Sources	Methods
			NGOs, Private, Right holders	
	5.2 To what extent the UN system promoted and supported inclusive and sustainable socio-economic changes and growth and elaboration of policies consistent among each other and across sectors?	Evidence and number of interventions on coordination across sectors and agencies in supporting socio-economic changes and growth	OSP annual results reports UN RGs, TGs and other inter-agencies groups UNRCO representatives GoVN representatives	Interviews Focus group discussions Survey OSP reporting
6. Conformity with the crosscutting principles	6.1 To what extent the OSP was designed and implemented to promote gender equality, human rights, data for development, public participation and partnerships? consideration to environmental implications?	Evidence and extent of mainstreaming of the 5 crosscutting principles into OSP design, implementation and monitoring	OSP document OSP reporting UN RGs, TGs and other inter-agencies groups GoVN representatives NGOs, private sectors representatives Right holders	Document review Interviews Focus group discussions Survey
	6.2 To what extent the obligations of the duty bearers and rights of the right holders were reflected in OSP and ensured during the implementation?	Evidence of rights-based approach in OSP design and reporting	OSP reporting Agency reporting and evaluation documents	Document review Interviews Focus group discussions Survey

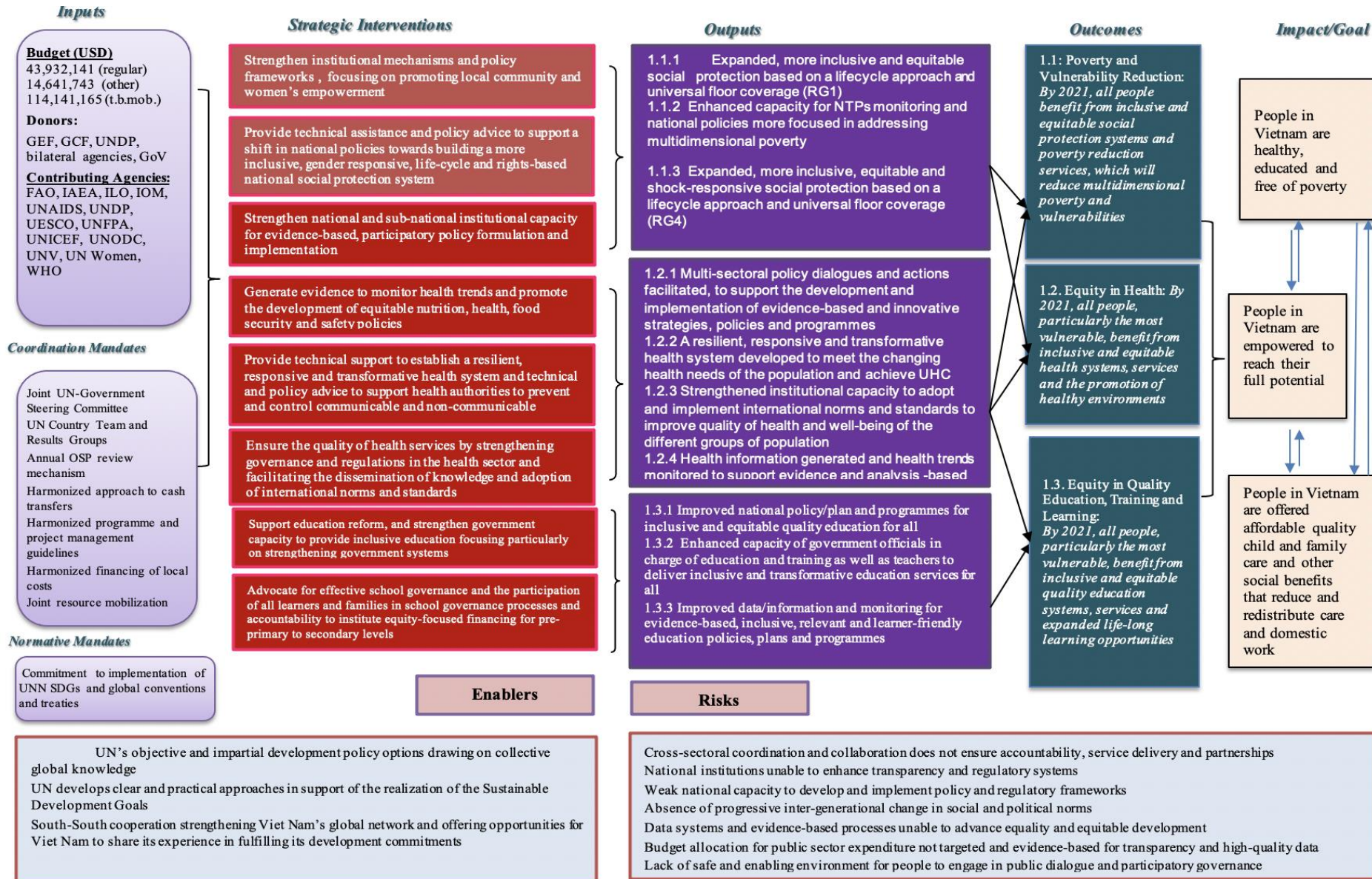
Annex 3. OSP Theory of Change

Overall TOC - Links to all 17 SDGs



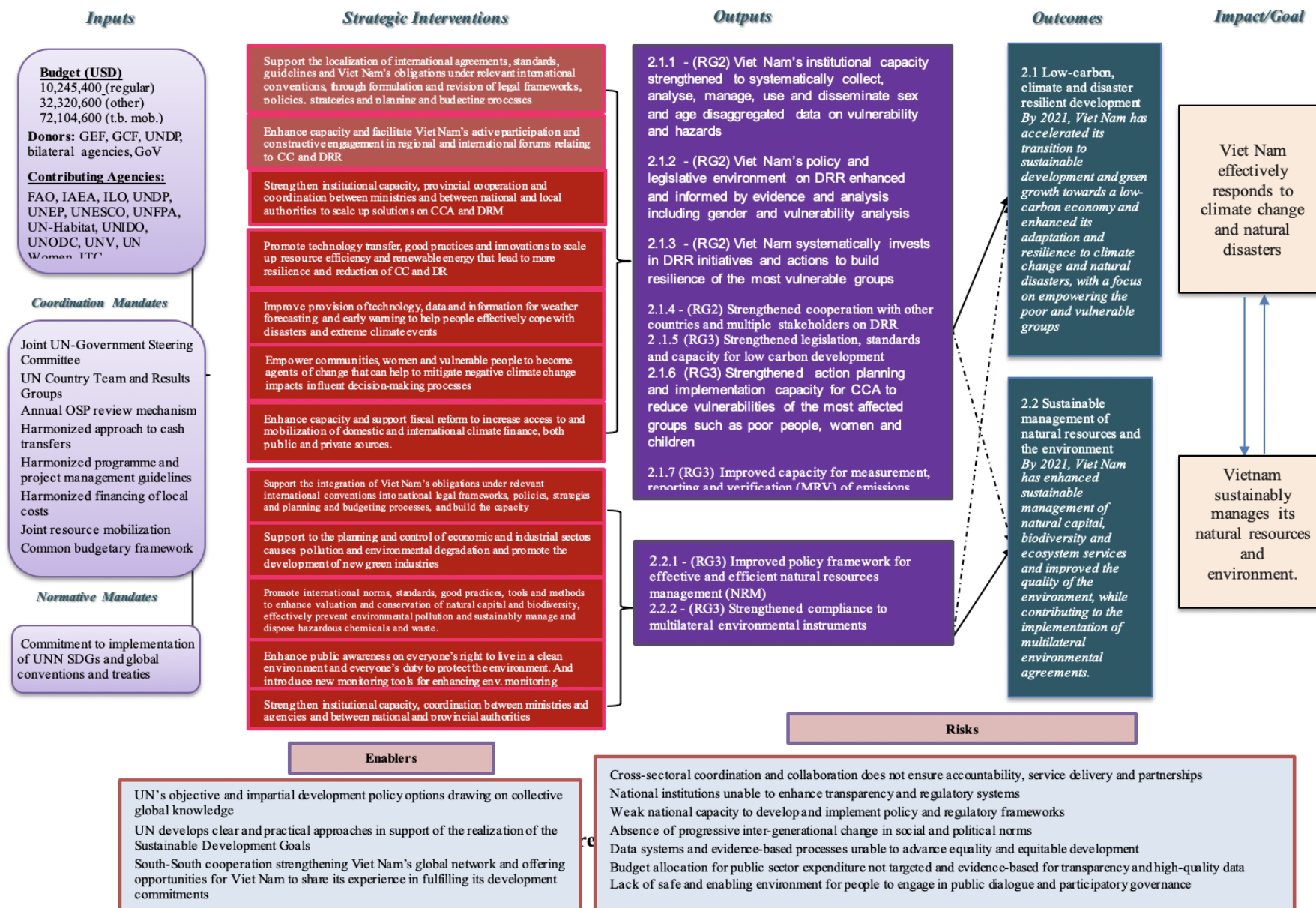
Theory of Change –Focus Area 1: INVESTING IN PEOPLE

SDGs: 1,2,3,4,5,6



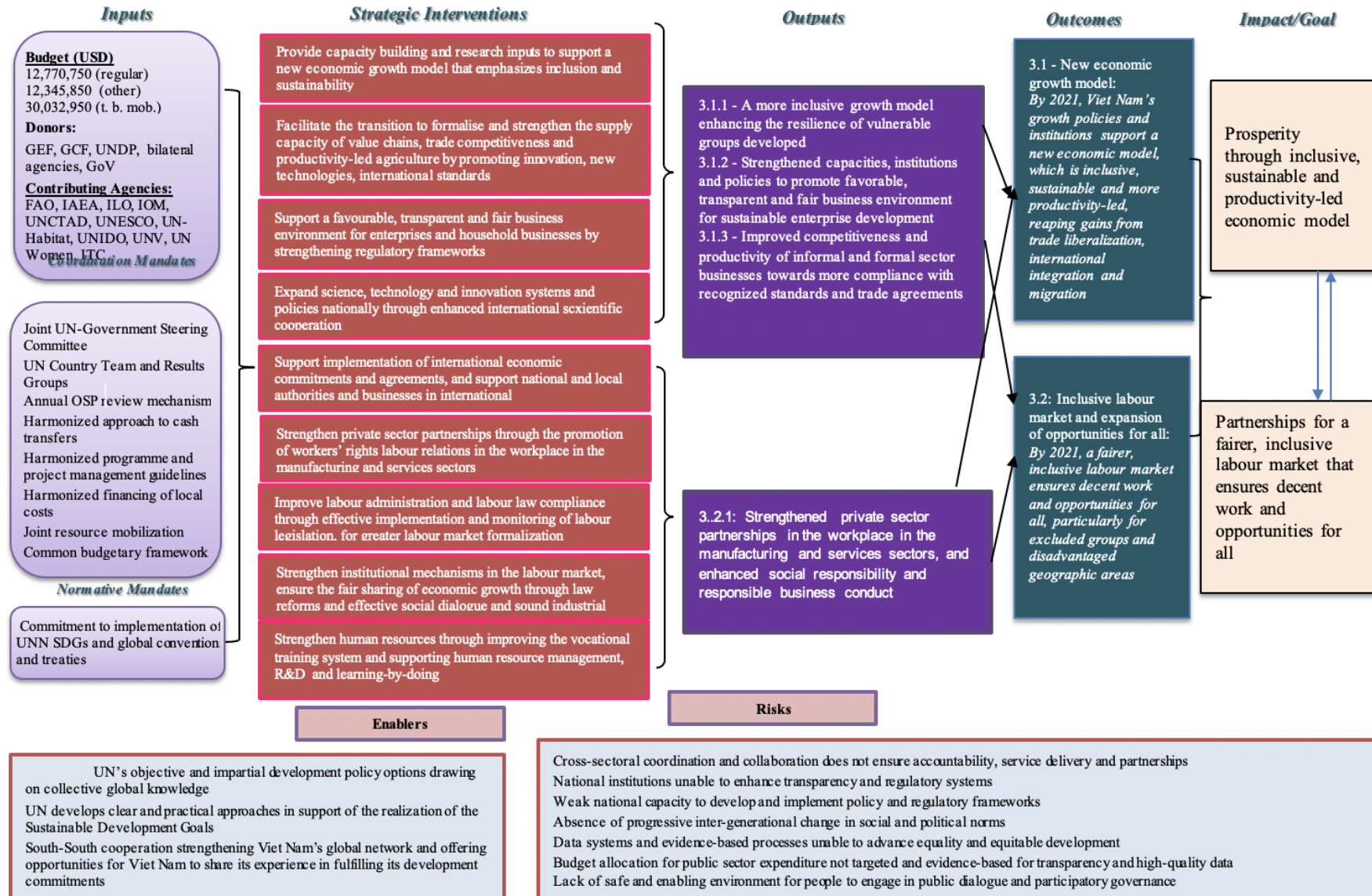
Theory of Change – Focus Area 2: ENSURING CLIMATE RESILIENCE AND ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

Links to SDGs: 2, 5, 6, 7, 9, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15



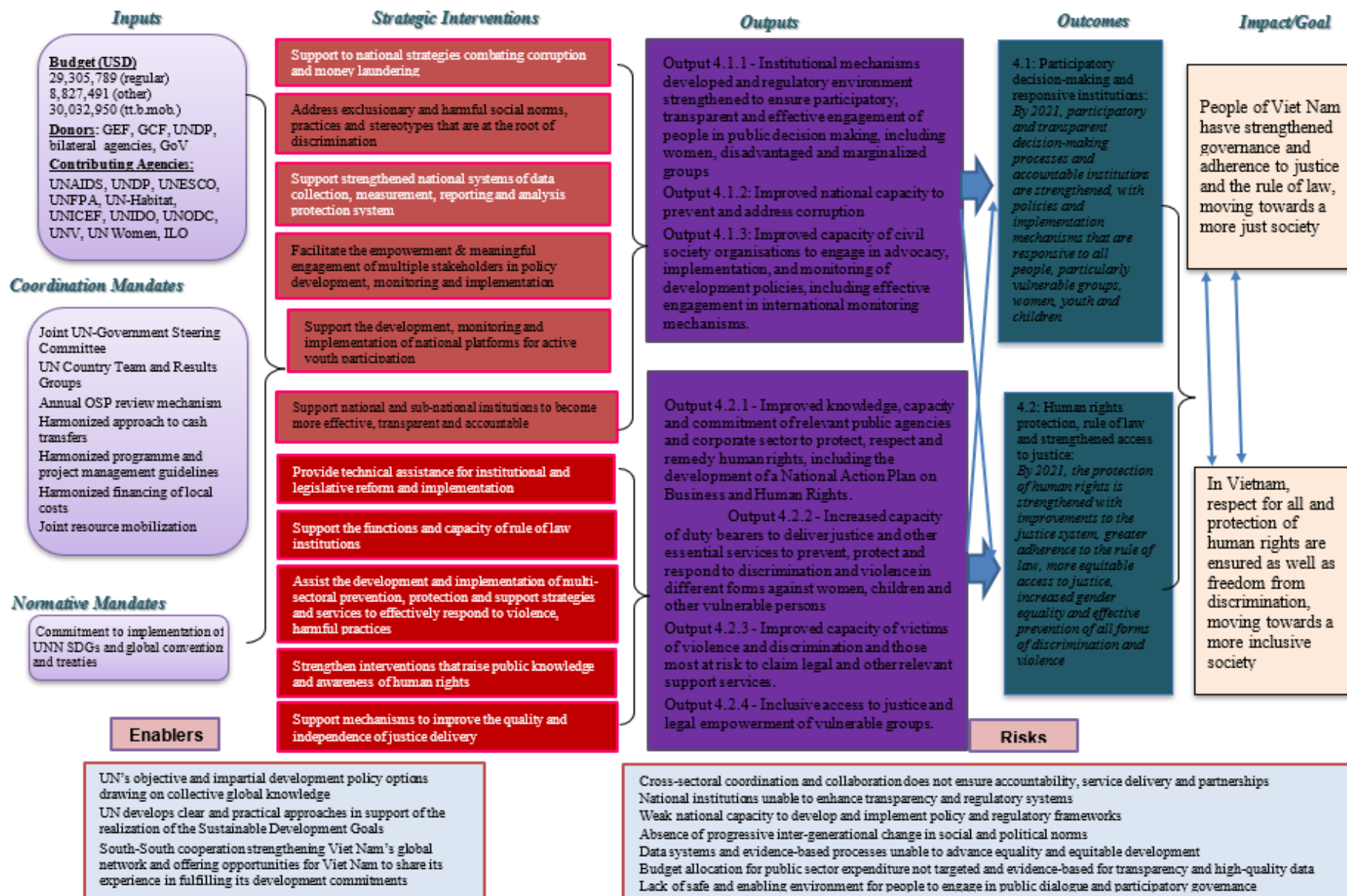
Theory of Change –Focus Area 3: FOSTERING PROSPERITY AND PARTNERSHIP

SDGs: 5, 8, 9, 10, 12,17



Theory of Change –Focus Area 4: PROMOTING JUSTICE, PEACE AND INCLUSIVE GOVERNANCE

Links to SDGs 5, 10, 16



Annex 4. List of Stakeholders Interviewed- OSP Viet Nam 2020

No.	Name (Last name, first name)	Position	Organization/ Institution	Contact details (Email/ Phone)
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0	Ms. Lesley Miller	Deputy Representative	UNICEF Vietnam	lmiller@unicef.org Tel: + 84 24 38500202
11	Mr. Chang-Hee Lee	Country Director	ILO	chlee@ilo.org Tel:+ 84 24 3580 6061
12	Ms. Elisa Fernandez Saenz	Country Representative.	UN Women Vietnam	elisa.fernandez@unwomen.org Tel: + 84 24 38500362
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20	Mr. Nguyen Song	OIC	FAO	songha.nguyen@fao.org
21	Mr. Hoang Van Tu	Programme Officer for Food Security, Nutrition & Food Safety	FAO	Tu.Hoang@fao.org
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23	Ms. Dechen Tsering,	Regional Director and Representative for Asia and the Pacific Office	UN Environment Asia and the Pacific Office, Bangkok	dechen.tsering@un.org
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	Thematic Groups and Result Groups			
	HIV/AIDS TG, and Adolescence & Youth TG			
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27	Ms. Maria Taruntaeva	Secretariat	Adolescence & Youth TG	taruntaeva@unfpa.org
28	Ms. Tran Thi Hong	Member	Adolescence & Youth TG	
29	Mr. Linh	Member	Adolescence & Youth TG	UNESCO
30	Ms. Thuy Anh	Member	Adolescence & Youth TG	UNDP
31	Ms. Simon	Member	Adolescence & Youth TG	UNICEF

No.	Name (Last name, first name)	Position	Organization/ Institution	Contact details (Email/ Phone)
	Results group on Inclusive Social Service			
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	Results Group on Governance and Justice +			
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48	Ms. Huong	Member	FAO	
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50	Ms. Thuy Anh	Member	UNWomen	
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52	Ms. Ha	Member	UNWomen	
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60	Ms. Nguyen Kim Chung	Official	International Cooperation Department Government's Committee for Ethnic Minority Affairs (CEMA)	
61	Ms. Tran Ngoc Lan Phuong	Official	International Cooperation Department Government's Committee for Ethnic Minority Affairs (CEMA)	
62	Ms. Nguyen Thi Nga	Deputy Head of 135 program office	Government's Committee for Ethnic Minority Affairs (CEMA)	
63	Ms. Ban Thu Trang	Official of Ethnic Policy Department	Government's Committee for Ethnic Minority Affairs (CEMA)	
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66	Ms. Yen	Official of Legal Department	MOLISA	
67	Mr. Thanh	Social protection department	MOLISA	

No.	Name (Last name, first name)	Position	Organization/ Institution	Contact details (Email/ Phone)
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71	Mr. Do Anh Kiem	Social and Environmental Statistics Department	GSO	
72	Mr. Son	Agriculture, Forestry and Fishery Statistics Department	GSO	
74	Hoang Thi Kim Chi	Foreign Statistics and International Cooperation Department	GSO	
75	Mr. Minh	Population and Labor Statistics Department	GSO	
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78	Ms. Huong	Official, Climate Change Department	MONRE	
79	Ms. Kim Thuy Ngoc	Head of International Division, ISPONRE	MONRE	kimthuyngoc@gmail.com
80	Mr. Hung	Vietnam Administration of Seas and Islands	MONRE	
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81	Ms. Trần Thi Lan Anh	Deputy Secretary General, Director General of Bureau for Employers' Activities	VCCI	024 35742022 - Ext: 214 lananh_siyb@yahoo.com
82	Ms. Nguyễn Phương Nga	President	VUFO + PACCOM	Tel: (84) 0804 3421 nguyenphuongnga@vufo.org.vn , phuongnga1963@yahoo.com
83	Ms. Nguyễn Hoài Linh	Director, ICD	VNWU	linhvwu@gmail.com
Private sector				
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85				
Development partners				
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87	Mr Koen Duchsteau	Head of Development Cooperation	EU Delegation	koen.duchateau@eeas.europa.eu
88	Mr. Dao Van Thanh	Health Specialist		

No.	Name (Last name, first name)	Position	Organization/ Institution	Contact details (Email/ Phone)
89	Ms. Thu	Program Specialist		
	Quang Nam province			
89	Mr. Tran Van Anh + representatives from Foreign Affairs Department, DARD, DONRE, DOH, DOET, DMA	Deputy Director of DPI (on behalf of PPC's leaders)	Quang Nam province	
90	Mr. Nguyen Van Tuan + representatives from DARD, Irrigation Department, DMA, Red Cross	Project Coordinator of Quang Na GCF prroject		
91 92	Dr. Nguyễn Văn Ca Dr. Quang	CDC Quang Nam	QN province	cadpqnam@gmail.com
93 94	Mr. Tam Mr. Minh	Head and staff of the office	QN Elderly association	
95- 99	Mr. Nguyen The Hung and his colleagues (Ms. Tran Hong Thuy, Mr. Thanh, Ms. Thuy, Mr. Huu)	Vice chairperson of Hoi An City	QN province	hungvphoian@gmail.com
100	Mr. Phung Huu	Representative of Hoi An Labour Association	QN province	Phunghuu81@gmail.com

Annex 5: Key deliverables and tables of indicators under each Focal Area

This section summarizes key deliverables under each OSP Outcome and the Evaluation Team’s assessment of the UN possible contribution to progress towards achievement of the target values of the OSP Outcome indicators. The progress towards achievement of the Outcomes is judged according to the most recent values of the Outcome Indicators (if available). It has to be noted that the evaluators make assessment of the OSP as whole and not individual UN agencies’ results.

1. Focus Area 1 – Investing in people

1.1 Outcome 1.1: Poverty and Vulnerability Reduction

1.1.1 Summary

<i>By 2021, all people benefit from inclusive and equitable social protection systems and poverty reduction services, which will reduce multidimensional poverty and vulnerabilities</i>
Output 1.1.1: Expanded, more inclusive and equitable social protection based on a lifecycle approach and universal floor coverage (for Results Group 1)
Output 1.1.2: Enhanced capacity for NTPs monitoring and national policies more focused in addressing multidimensional poverty (for Results Group 1)
Output 1.1.3: Expanded, more inclusive, equitable and shock-responsive social protection based on a lifecycle approach and universal floor coverage (for Results Group 4)
Output 1.1.4: Enhanced capacity for NTPs monitoring and national policies more focused in addressing multidimensional poverty (for Results Group 4)

1.1.1 Key deliverables

- The UN provided advocacy support to updating of Viet Nam’s multidimensional poverty (MDP) indicators and assisted key national institutions in formulation, assessment and revision of two respective National Targeted Programmes (NTP), on sustainable poverty reduction and on socio-economic development of ethnic minority groups and remote areas.
- UN has supported Viet Nam in developing and adoption of Resolution 28-NQ/TW which for the first time incorporates the concept of social protection universality. Subsequently, the Master Plan on Social Insurance Reform (MPSIR) and the Master Plan on Social Assistance Reform (MPSARD), and their corresponding Action Plans have paved the way for major reforms which include developing a multi-tier social insurance system, creating flexibility in minimum contribution requirements for pension entitlement, increasing the retirement age from 2021, narrowing the gender gap in retirement age, and expanding social insurance to the informal sector.
- Five UN agencies combined their efforts to support implementation of the National Targeted Programme for New Rural Development focusing on modernization of agro-production, enhancing rural livelihoods and social development, as well as capacity building in policy, strategy and public investment for creating new incentives in the rural development process. The GOVN also benefited from UN support to implementation of the Viet Nam National Action Plan on Zero Hunger Challenge as an institutional platform for design and execution of food security and nutrition policy measures impacting in a coordinated manner national food security, sustainable poverty reduction and new rural development.

- The UN also provided a coordinated input into development of the first National Action Plan on Prevention of Violence and Abuse of Children that was adopted in December 2019. The Plan sets the goal to improve child-care services in health centres at the commune and district levels and introduce children-friendly police investigation of child violence and abuse cases.
- The UN support to the 'Implementation of Resolution 80' project (2012 – 2017) helped the Vietnamese government to establish an innovative National Target Program for Sustainable Poverty Reduction (NTP-SPR) 2016 – 2020 that promoted investment in the poor and the near poor, among the inhabitants in areas with difficult living conditions. It adopted mechanisms such as block grants and medium-term budget allocation to create favorable conditions for the use of local planning based on need. The UN supported the development of the first-ever overview of multidimensional poverty in Viet Nam using national data and assisted with its monitoring. As a result of this continuous engagement, in Dec. 2020, the government revised the multidimensional poverty (MDP) line for 2021-2025, that (i) doubling income threshold and (ii) adding new indicators and thresholds for non-income deprivation in nutrition, employment and skills, expanding its social protection programs to additional 7.5 million people.
- Furthermore, UN-supported digital tools and updated procedures for identifying the multidimensional poor households, for the first time, allow (i) online platform for multidimensional poor household self/e-registration and e-verification (ii) creation of sex-disaggregated e-database of multidimensional Poor Households for more cost effective and more transparent management delivery and monitoring of MDP policy and program support.
- The UN also supported assessment of the 5-year implementation of National Assembly's Resolution on Accelerating Sustainable Poverty Reduction identified key shortcomings, lessons and recommended solutions for designing the new National Targeted Programmes (NTPs) 2021 – 2025. This together with UN policy advice and UN supported policy dialogues between National Assembly's (NA) members, experts and local level representatives contributed to issuance of the NA's resolutions committing a record-high budget and enabling the design of the NTPs on Socio Economic Development for Ethnic Minority Areas (SEDEMA) and Sustainable Poverty Reduction (SPR). The resolutions also provided strategic directions (more focus on MDP reduction in Ethnic Minority groups and remote communities, raising the MDP thresholds to allow more vulnerable people access to NTPs support, providing greater space for local innovation and strength) guiding the design of new NTPs with (i) management principles to ensure faster, effective and more transparent implementation & (ii) coordination mechanisms to limit the overlaps/enhance synergy among NTPs.
- Advocacy and technical support was extended to the GOVN and the NA for formulation of the Labour Code provisions on preventing child labour, prohibiting all forms of hazardous and exploitative child labour, and protecting minor workers, especially those in the informal economy.
- The UN also supported the GOVN for approval of the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration (GCM) and further assisted in developing the National Plan for GCM implementation in accordance with Vietnam's laws and conditions.
- Joint support from 6 UN agencies was instrumental for development of an ethnic minority database to collect and maintain disaggregated data based on ethnicity on more than 50 officially recognized ethnic communities.
- The thematic group on Adolescent and Youth under the UN umbrella provided intensive advocacy effort and policy advices on Youth development, the revised youth law approved in June 2020 that clearly confirms youth's rights for their comprehensive development and responsibilities regardless of their ethnicity, sex, social classes, beliefs, religions, educational levels or occupations, the National Strategy on Youth Development for 2030 emphasize the need to give greater attention to young vulnerable groups in order to achieve sustainable development.

1.1.2 Progress toward the outcome indicators

Outcome Indicator Statement	Baseline (year)	Target (year)	Progress (year) 2019/2020	Status
1.1.1 Proportion of population below the international poverty line, by sex, age, employment status and geographical location (urban/rural) (SDG indicator 1.1.1)	3.23% using \$1.9 PPP as the international poverty line (2012)	Poverty reduction (using national poverty line, which is multidimensional) by 1-1.5% per year (2016-2020 SEDP)	Below 1% (2018), 0.6% 2020 (est.) ³⁷	Achieved
1.1.2. Proportion of population living below the national poverty line, by sex and age (SDG indicator 1.2.1)	9.88% poor households 5.22% near-poor households (2016, by national multidimensional poverty line)	Poverty reduction (using national poverty line, which is multidimensional) by 1-1.5% per year (2016-2020 SEDP)	5,7% poor households (2019) reduction of 1.53 % per year (2015-2019) ³⁸	Likely to be achieved
1.1.3. Proportion of men, women and children of all ages living in poverty in all its dimensions according to national definitions (SDG indicator 1.2.2)	21.3% (NHDR 2015 using VHLSS 2012)	Poverty reduction (using national poverty line, which is multidimensional) by 1-1.5% per year (2016-2020 SEDP)	Below 3% est. 2020 ³⁹	Achieved
1.1.4. Proportion of population covered by social protection floors/systems, by sex, distinguishing children, unemployed persons, older persons, persons with disabilities, pregnant women, newborns, work-injury victims and the poor and vulnerable (SDG indicator 1.3.1)	VSI: 21.1% of the labour force (2014); VHI: 73% of population (2015); Social pension (80+): 1.56 million (70% of the 80+ population) (2014); Disability benefit: 800,000 people with severe disability and 183,500 people with severe mental problems (2014, the total estimated population with disabilities is 7.2 million); Around 200,000 children and people with special circumstances (such as abandoned children, orphans, people living	Universal coverage of health insurance (2025) Note: other targets from draft Master Plan for Social Assistance Reform available, but the document is not yet approved	- Population: 90% (2019) ⁴⁰ - Labour force covered by social insurance: 31% (2019) - Labour force covered by unemployment social insurance: 25% (2019) - Social pension (80+): 1.75 million - Disability benefit: 1,098 - 217,000 children and	Partly achieved

³⁷ WB, UN

³⁸ VHLSS (Every two years); GSO, MOLISA

³⁹ VHLSS (Every two years)

⁴⁰ Viet Nam Social Insurance (VSI), Viet Nam Health Insurance (VHI), MOLISA (Social Protection Department – administrative data) (Annually)

	with HIV and single elderly) (2014); More than 5 million school children from poor and ethnic minority households received tuition waiver, education support, school meals and stipends for 9 schooling months a year (2014)		people with special circumstances	
1.1.5. Available systems that track and make public allocations for gender equality and women's empowerment (adapted from SDG indicator 5.c.1)	TBC	TBC	N/A	N/A
1.1.6. Proportion of time spent on unpaid domestic and care work, by sex, age and location (SDG indicator 5.4.1)	TBC	TBC	N/A	N/A
1.1.7. Out-of-pocket expenditure in health and education out of total expenditure (contributing to SDG target 3.8)	Health expenditure: 3.8% (out of total health expenditure of GDP at 6.6%) financed through health insurance payments and out-of-pocket spending. Education expenditure: 2.3% (out of total expenditure on education of GDP at 7.8%) (2012)	Household spending on health: 3%, Household spending on education 1.8% (2020)	N/A	N/A

1.2 Outcome 1.2: Equity in Health

1.2.1 Summary

By 2021, all people, particularly the most vulnerable, benefit from inclusive and equitable health systems, services and the promotion of healthy environments.

Output 1.1.1: Multi-sectoral policy dialogues and actions facilitated, to support the development and implementation of evidence-based and innovative strategies, policies and programmes

Output 1.2.2: A resilient, responsive and transformative health system developed to meet the changing health needs of the population and achieve UHC

Output 1.2.3: Strengthened institutional capacity to adopt and implement international norms and standards to improve quality of health and well-being of the different groups of population

Output 1.2.4: Health information generated and health trends monitored to support evidence and analysis -based policy

1.2.2 Key deliverables

- The UN supported efforts of the GOVN to deliver equitable health services and helped with adoption of effective health technologies, monitoring health trends and emerging health issues. Furthermore, the UN helped to build sustainable national capacities for surveillance, prevention and control of communicable as well as non-communicable diseases, and supported development of national health strategies, policies and plans. Assistance with adoption of international health norms and standards as well as facilitating the dissemination of knowledge aimed at strengthening the governance in the health sector.
- The UN, in partnership with the WB, assisted the GOVN for amendment of the Law on Health Insurance for expansion of breadth of coverage, particularly for the near-poor and informal sector beneficiaries. Also, assistance was provided on advancing the Viet Nam's capacity to implement International Health Regulations (IHR) and development of the IHR Master Plan
- Through a combination of capacity building, supportive supervision, and advocacy, the UN assisted with the development of the National Strategy to End the AIDS Epidemic by 2030 that institutionalises ambitious HIV testing and treatment targets in line with UN recommendation, mandates local governments' investment in the HIV response, and adopts solution towards the sustainability of HIV prevention through the mobilization of social and community organizations to provide HIV services including from the State budget. UN support was extended for the development of the National Plan for the Triple Elimination of Mother to Child Transmission of HIV, Hepatitis B and Syphilis by 2030.
- The UN provided technical assistance to the GOVN for vaccine supply and building capacity on equity planning for immunization and supervised conduct of vaccination campaigns and integrated immunization-nutrition-communication efforts in 17 districts with low immunization coverage.
- The UN also supported elaboration of the draft National Nutrition Strategy for 2021-2030 that focuses on three major priorities: promoting a healthy diet and lifestyle, raising public awareness on behavioural changes to protect health and prevent health-related risks; and providing constant and long-term primary healthcare services. The UN support was extended for development of priority actions to improve nutrition for pregnant women and children, particularly those in ethnic minority groups.

- The GOVN benefited from the UN assistance in development of implementation guidelines for the National Programme on Water Safety in rural areas, that included analysis of financing modalities for the WASH programme. The UN was also instrumental in support to the GOVN to prepare national commitments aligned with the multi-partner Sanitation and Water for All (SWA) Mutual Accountability Mechanism.
- In order to assist with improvement of the health care in Viet Nam, the UN supported Health Emergency Information and Risk Assessment and development of an online training platform for health workers.
- In responding to COVID-19, the UN’s policy advice and analysis of COVID impact on MSMEs and vulnerable contributed to Government of Viet Nam placing public investment as a key driver for economic recovery and pursuing integrated measures for sustainable economic recovery, including measures to support MSMEs, in 2020 and 2021-2025 SEDP. The UN’s experimentation in engaging EM women-led cooperatives in e-commerce, e-logistics, e-payment together with its policy advice contributed to design of NTP SEDEMA for 2021-2030. It is expected to make a breakthrough in accelerating EM MDP reduction, including by adopting UN-introduced experimentation (accelerator lab) approach to promote innovative solutions at national scale.
- The UN-supported business models based on IR 4.0 devices, e-commerce, e-payment helped 100 EM women-led cooperatives in Bac Kan and Dak Nong provinces effectively address the COVID-19 induced disruption of supply chains and lower demand, helped approximately 10,000 EM women and men recover their income to pre-COVID level, after a deep reduction by around 50% during March and April 2020. As a result, these successfully tested innovative solutions and UN-introduced experimentation (Accelerator Lab and Anticipatory, Adaptive and Agile (AAA) governance) approach were adopted by NTP SEDEMA as key to mobilize EM people’s and local government innovation and strength.
- The Government of Viet Nam’s \$2.6 billion social assistance (SA) “package” to support most vulnerable people mitigate COVID-19 impact was designed and implemented with UN advice and support. The UN’s call for cash transfer and technical advice has been instrumental in designing and refining the “package”. The UN supported digitalization of cash transfer management & delivery in 7 provinces contributed to effective implementation of “package”, which by end of 2020 reached 14 million vulnerable people. The UN is supporting transformation of national SA toward a more inclusive, shock-responsive, effective and transparent system.

1.2.3 Progress towards the Outcome indicators

Outcome Indicator Statement	Baseline (year)	Target (year)	Progress (year) 2019/2020	Status
1.2.1. Prevalence of stunting (height for age <-2 standard deviation from the median of the WHO Child Growth Standards) among children under 5 years of age (SDG indicator 2.2.1)	23.9% (estimated for 2016)	21.5% (2020)	19,9% (2019) ⁴¹	Likely to be achieved

⁴¹ National Nutrition Survey (Every five years) and surveillance (Annually)

1.2.2. Maternal mortality ratio (SDG indicator 3.1.1)	54 (2015) Note: based on UN estimates	52 (2020)	46 (2019) ⁴² Potentially achieve 45 by 2030	Achieved
1.2.3. Proportion of births attended by skilled health personnel (SDG indicator 3.1.2)	93.8% (2014)	98% (2020)	97% (2019) ⁴³ Disparities regions and ethnic groups. The proportion of births that are not supported by medical staff is mainly among women living in remote and ethnic minority areas.	Likely to be achieved with disparities regions and ethnic groups
1.2.4. Under-five mortality rate (SDG indicator 3.2.1)	21.6 per 1,000 (estimated for 2016)	20.4 per 1,000 (2020)	21 per 1,000 (2019) ⁴⁴	Unlikely achieved
1.2.5. Number of new HIV infections per 1,000 uninfected population, by sex, age and key populations (SDG indicator 3.3.1)	14,000 in all adult populations (estimated for 2015)	TBC Further discussions with VAAC and endorsement of the 5-year HIV plan by the Government needed	8.200 (2019), 7.800 (2020 est.) ⁴⁵	As no indicator for target year, impossible to assess
1.2.6. Hepatitis B incidence per 100,000 population (SDG indicator 3.3.4)	20% (2015)	30% reduction (equivalent to 1% HBV prevalence in children) (2020)	N/A	N/A
1.2.7. Mortality rate attributed to cardiovascular disease, cancer, diabetes or chronic respiratory disease (SDG indicator 3.4.1)	17% (probability of dying between ages 30-70 years from 4 main non-communicable diseases) (2014)	Reduce 10% compared to baseline (Year: TBC after discussion with GoVN)	N/A	N/A

⁴² Routine data (Health Management Information System - HMIS) from MOH and GSO (Annually)

⁴³ Reports on maternal and child health/ family planning of MOH (from HMIS) (Annually)

⁴⁴ Routine data (HMIS) from MOH and GSO (Annually)

⁴⁵ HIV modelling (HIV estimation and projection) based on size estimates of key populations, surveillance and programme data (Annually)

1.2.8. Death rate due to road traffic injuries (SDG indicator 3.6.1)	9.3/100,000 population (2015)	Reduce 5-10% annually compared to baseline (Year: TBC after discussion with GoVN)	Reduce 4.3% per year (2011-19) ⁴⁶	Achieved
1.2.9. Proportion of women of reproductive age (aged 15-49 years) who have their need for family planning satisfied with modern methods (SDG indicator 3.7.1)	70.7% (2013)	75% (2020)	68% (2019): (EM in North and Highland 65%) ⁴⁷	Unlikely to be achieved
1.2.10. Coverage of essential health services (defined as the average coverage of essential services based on tracer interventions that include reproductive, maternal, newborn and child health, infectious diseases, non-communicable diseases and service capacity and access, among the general and the most disadvantaged populations) (SDG indicator 3.8.1) Note: This is a new indicator. Baseline and methodology for collection to be discussed with Government	TBC Methodology for data collection to be discussed at global, regional and national level	TBC 72% (2015)	78% (2019) ⁴⁸	N/A
1.2.11. Age-standardized prevalence of current tobacco use among persons aged 15 years and older (SDG indicator 3.a.1)	47.4% males (2010) 1.4% females (2010)	39% males (2020) <1.4% females (2020)	N/A 2019/2020 22,5% (2015) vs. 23,8% (2010) ⁴⁹ Man: 45,3% (2015) Women: 1,1% (2015)	For man, N/A For Women, achieved since 2015, no data for 2019/2020
1.2.12. International Health Regulations (IHR) capacity and	Achievement reported based on self-assessment	IHR capacity and health emergency preparedness	N/A	N/A

⁴⁶ National Traffic Safety Committee report (Annually)

⁴⁷ Report(s) on unmet needs from the national surveys on family planning (Every 4 years)

⁴⁸ VSS

⁴⁹ MOH reports

health emergency preparedness (SDG indicator 3.d.1)	(qualitative, 2015)	further strengthened (2020)		
1.2.13. Proportion of population using safely-managed drinking water services (SDG indicator 6.1.1)	45% for rural areas (2015) (based on MOH water standards 02/MOH-VNQC)	Estimated 60% (2021)	N/A	N/A
1.2.14. Proportion of population using safely-managed sanitation services, including a hand-washing facility with soap and water (SDG indicator 6.2.1)	65% for rural areas (2016) (based on MOH hygienic latrine standards)	Estimated 75% (2021)	N/A	N/A
1.2.15. Adolescent birth rate (aged 10-14 years; aged 15-19 years) per 1,000 women in that age group (SDG indicator 3.7.2)	45 births per 1,000 women aged 15-19 (2014)	TBC (2019)	35 births per 1,000 women aged 15-19 (2019) ⁵⁰	No indicator for target year to compare

⁵⁰ Population census (Every 10 years)

1.3 Outcome 1.3: Equity in Quality Education, Training and Learning

1.3.1 Summary

By 2021, all people, particularly the most vulnerable, benefit from inclusive and equitable quality education systems, services and expanded life-long learning opportunities

Output 1.3.1: Improved national policy/plan and programmes for inclusive and equitable quality education for all

Output 1.3.2: Enhanced capacity of government officials in charge of education and training as well as teachers to deliver inclusive and transformative education services for all

Output 1.3.3: Improved data/information and monitoring for evidence-based, inclusive, relevant and learner-friendly education policies, plans and programmes

1.3.2 Key deliverables

- The UN provided assistance and advocacy for provision of inclusive education focussing on vulnerable groups and minorities and supported establishment of effective and participatory school governance and development of competency-based education curricula and sustainable environmental learning packages introducing green habits and climate-smart school standards.
- The UN have worked closely with national experts on an Education Sector Analysis report that presents a snapshot of the national education system and existing disparities in the country and provides sound evidence for the development of the 10-year Education Development Strategic Plan (EDSP) 2021-2030.
- The UN mobilized its long-standing technical expertise to support revision of the Law on Education that was approved in July 2019. The UN assistance was instrumental for strengthening Viet Nam’s monitoring framework for the education sector that included proposed list of relevant sustainable development statistical indicators.
- A broad range of assistance was provided on incorporation of the Comprehensive Sexuality Education (CSE) into the newly approved school curriculum, on piloting the “Connect with Respect Model” in secondary schools for advancement of gender equality and social cohesion, as well as on preparation of documents on career orientation and vocational counselling guidance.
- The UN supports the Government to enhance the relevance and quality of the education and training system by focusing on getting training better oriented to needs of employers and trainees, strengthening the institutional linkages between employers and training providers, improve quality of teachers, introduce skills standards for specific industry and improve access to training especially for those often excluded such as young people, migrant workers, ethnic minorities and persons with disabilities. To narrow the gap between traditional training and the rapid changes of technology in the context of I.R 4.0, a mobile phone application was developed based on the Career Guidance Package for Viet Nam -developed for young people (ages 14 to 19). The tool was developed using Garner’s Theory of Multiple Intelligences to help students discover their own interests, aptitude, and potentials.

1.3.3 Progress towards the Outcome Indicators

Outcome Indicator Statement	Baseline (year)	Target (year)	Progress (year) 2019/2020	Assessment
1.3.1. Proportion of children and young people completing a) primary; and (b) lower secondary by sex (adapted from SDG indicator 4.1.1) Note: <i>disaggregated data to be collected</i>	Primary: 92.21% Lower secondary: 83.22% (2013-2014 academic year)	TBC In discussion with MOET	Primary: 98%, lower secondary 89.2 (2019) ⁵¹	No indicators for target year to assess
1.3.2. Proportion of children from 36 to 59 months who are developmentally on track in health, learning and psychosocial well-being, by sex (adapted from SDG indicator 4.2.1) Note: <i>disaggregated data to be collected</i>	88.7% (2014)	TBC To be discussed with the Government	90% (MoET 2019) ⁵² Boy: 90%, girl: 89% (MoET 2019)	No indicators for target year to assess
1.3.3. Proportion of teachers in: (a) pre-primary; (b) primary; (c) lower secondary; and (d) upper secondary education who have met the standards (adapted from SDG indicator 4.c.1)	Pre-primary: (0-3 years): 94.7%; (3-5 years): 98.60% Primary: 99.77% Lower secondary: 99.49% Upper secondary: 99.49% (2015-2016 academic year)	Pre-primary: (0-3 years): 98%; (3-5 years): 99.6% Primary: 99.9% Lower secondary: 99.8% Upper secondary: 99.7% (2020)	100% (est. MoTE 2020) ⁵³	Achieved

Vietnam is on track to achieve some important targets on Outcome 1.3, such as the net enrolment rates at primary, lower secondary and upper secondary levels were 98.0, 89.2, and 68.3 per cent respectively, while the adult literacy rate was estimated to be 95.8 per cent. The proportion of out-of-school children was 8.3 per cent, equivalent to half of the 2009 proportion. According to the report of the MoET 2019, the proportion of children under 5 who are developmentally on track in health, learning and psychosocial well-being reached 90%. However, there remain significant gaps in all education outcomes among urban and rural areas, ethnic minority and Kinh groups, as well as between the regions in the country. One of the challenges facing the current education sector is that the school facilities in many

⁵¹ Education Statistics Year Book (Annually)

⁵² Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey (MICS) (Every 4-5 years)

⁵³ Education Statistics Yearbook (Annually)

regions of the country, especially in remote and isolated areas, are still lacking, affecting comprehensive education activities. The quality of education for ethnic minority children still needs to be improved.

2. Focus Area 2 - Ensuring climate resilience and environmental sustainability

2.1 Outcome 2.1: Low-carbon, climate and disaster resilient development

2.1.1 Summary

<i>By 2021, Viet Nam has accelerated its transition to sustainable development and green growth towards a low-carbon economy and enhanced its adaptation and resilience to climate change and natural disasters, with a focus on empowering the poor and vulnerable groups</i>
Output 2.1.1: Viet Nam's institutional capacity strengthened to systematically collect, analyse, manage, use and disseminate sex and age disaggregated data on vulnerability and hazards
Output 2.1.2: Viet Nam's policy and legislative environment on DRR enhanced and informed by evidence and analysis including gender and vulnerability analysis
Output 2.1.3: Viet Nam systematically invests in DRR initiatives and actions to build resilience of the most vulnerable groups
Output 2.1.4: Strengthened cooperation with other countries and multiple stakeholders on DRR
Output 2.1.5: Strengthened legislation, standards and capacity for low carbon development
Output 2.1.6: Strengthened action planning and implementation capacity for CCA to reduce vulnerabilities of the most affected groups such as poor people, women and children
Output 2.1.7: Improved capacity for measurement, reporting and verification (MRV) of emissions
Output 2.1.8: Strengthened institutional capacity for successful implementation of REDD+ at national and sub-national levels with focus on empowerment of forest dependent communities (women and vulnerable people)

2.1.2 Key deliverables

- The UN supported the GOVN with critical technical assistance to amendment of existing and development of new legislation and policies on disaster risk management and climate change adaptation, as well as with advocacy for promotion of energy efficiency and low-carbon economy.
- In the area of Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR), covers Outputs 2.1.1, 2.1.2, 2.1.3 and 2.1.4, the UN provided assistance (i) for amendment of the Law on Disaster Prevention and Control with the inclusion of risk-informed development, a stronger role for businesses and enterprises in DRR, and particularly stronger emphasis on disaster recovery and post-disaster rehabilitation in this revision; (ii) to the establishment of a DRR Partnership in Viet Nam with fostering the liking coordination between MARD, UN agencies, development partners, private sectors and other humanity frameworks; (iii) in supporting to develop guidelines and tools on a safe and clean community model in both rural and urban settings based on the MOET's Safe School Framework; (iv) in supporting development of the Draft National Action Plan on Disaster Risk Reduction and Prevention 2021-2025 and preparation of the National Behavior Change Communication Strategy for DRR as well as the establishment of the Emergency Medical Teams (EMT) Network at provincial level. Moreover, the institutional capacity assessment led by the UN assisted in strengthening of the institutional

system for disaster recovery and long-term rehabilitation and adaptation of the Post-Disaster Needs Assessment (PDNA) methodology to suit the Vietnamese context.

- A concrete result of the UN support is a Disaster Impact Visualization Tool for disaster response decision-making that enables to reduce the time needed for generation of assessment report following a natural disaster from the current 3 weeks to within 36 hours of a disaster. The tool was tested in the field from the 2019 storm season. In addition, UN has worked closely with VNDMA and General Statistic Office to promote for a gender responsive data in disaster management with list of priority indicators on gender and DRR has been identified and a guideline to collect and analysis data for these indicators being developed to integrate these indicators in government data systems.
- The UN has increased evidence and policy analysis on climate change and children to inform national climate commitments (NDC) and strategic planning frameworks and amendments, including to the Law on Natural Disaster Prevention and Control. The evidence and analysis were utilised in UN advocacy to ensure that Viet Nam's Nationally Determined Contributions recognize the impacts of climate change and natural disasters on child rights. Such efforts set the stage for UN's engagement in climate financing dialogues.
- Under the energy sector, covers Output 2.1.5, the UN facilitated effective collaboration between the GOVN and development partners through the Viet Nam Energy Partnership Group (VEPG) and its Technical Working Group on Energy Efficiency for the development of the National EE Action Plan (NEEAP) to implement the Viet Nam National Energy Efficiency Programme (VNEEP III) and technical inputs to the organization of the 3rd High-level Meeting and 1st Stakeholder Forum of the VEPG. The UN assistance with transfer of energy-efficient technologies resulted in enhancement of low-carbon and resource-efficient production through many practical initiatives such as promotion of the eco-industrial parks model, energy efficiency boilers and best operation practices in industry, the development and application of LED lighting technologies, non-fired brick production technologies, energy efficiency solutions in existing buildings and integration of EE elements in to new buildings from design to the construction and operation. These resulted in a significant reduction energy used and CO2 emission (i.e. 18 million kilowatts of energy and about 30,000 tons of CO2e per year under eco-industrial parks initiative and 180,955 tons of CO2 to the end of 2019 under non-fired brick initiative). Awareness raising and capacity building are inseparable components of any UN initiatives. Also, the UN advocated for inclusion of energy efficiency in the draft revision of the Building Code.
- Several UN agencies provided inputs and assisted with preparation of the updated GOVN report on the Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) to the UNFCCC and enabled thus submission of the NDC report in 2020. Also under the Climate Change theme, covers Outputs 2.1.6 and 2.1.7, many UN initiatives have been carried out to support Viet Nam in climate change responses. Some major initiatives can be listed as (i) contribution to support the integration of climate change adaptation in national and agricultural sector strategies for the 2021-2030 period and to provide for implementation of Viet Nam's National Determined Contribution (NDC); (ii) Climate Change Bottleneck Analysis on six areas including energy transition, industry transition, infrastructure cities, resilience and adaptation, nature-based solutions and climate finance and carbon financing; (iii) promoting and mainstreaming gender quality into NDC and continuing support for building more concrete gender actions in the NDC; (iv) initiating the Climate Business Index @ <http://cbi.undp.org.vn> in collaboration both with government and private sector to promote voluntary assessment by enterprises; (v) preparation of a paper on Sustainable Development, Climate Change, Green growth, and Natural Resources and the Environment to support the formulation of Viet Nam's 10 year Social Economic Development Strategy; (vi) supporting to build resilience of the coastal vulnerable communities through supporting construction of resilient houses, mangrove replantation, and CBRDM strengthening; (vii) and piloting innovative approaches for the Agriculture Sector Restructuring Programme and the National Target Programme for New Rural Development (NTP-NRD).

- Covers the Output 2.1.8, the joint programming, of total budget more than 26 million USD, UN-REDD Phase two with the cooperation of FAO, UNEP, UNDP has supported a more multi-sectoral approach to landscape and forest management, mostly articulated in the national strategy and action plan (a national vision up to 2030, including planning and investment). The UN-REDD focused on forest management to increase carbon sequestration in Viet Nam and initiate carbon payments (payment for Ecosystem Services) for community benefits. The UN-REDD Viet Nam Phase II Programme embedded gender mainstreaming in the development guidelines of the Provincial REDD+ Action Plan and Site-based REDD+ Action Plans (SiRAPs). Women make 40 percent of the 7,856 local people trained on REDD+, forest protection and livelihood development in the SiRAPs.

2.1.3 Progress towards the Outcome Indicators

Indicator	Baseline	OSP Target (year)	Progress (year) 2019/2020	Status
2.1.1. Number of deaths, missing people and persons affected by disasters (adapted from SDG indicator 1.5.1)	361.3 (1995-2014, average)	Below 300 (2020-2021)	316 ⁵⁴ (deaths, missing and injured persons) 340 deaths and missing persons) till Nov.6, 2020 ⁵⁵	Unlikely to be achieved
2.1.2. Proportion of crop production area (selected key products) under productive and sustainable agriculture following VietGAP standards (adapted from SDG indicator 2.4.1)	24,780 ha (2015)	TBC	38.600 ⁵⁶ ha in 2019	Achieved
2.1.3. Renewable energy share in the total final energy consumption (SDG indicator 7.2.1)	31.8% (2015)	36.5% (2020); 25.5% (2030)		Both baseline and target year indicators are contradicting with indicators set by GoV in Decision No.681/QD-TTg
2.1.4. Energy intensity measured in terms of GDP (adapted from SDG indicator 7.3.1)	583 kgOE/1000 USD (2013)	Reduced 1-1.5% annually in	515.8 kgOE/1000 USD ⁵⁷ (2019, GSO and nangluongvietnam.vn)	Achieved

⁵⁴ MARD statistical data <http://phongchongthientai.mard.gov.vn/FileUpload/2020-07/bFG9wLGe0Ueo0fQbTHIET%20HAI%20NAM%202019%20pdf.pdf>

⁵⁵ <http://phongchongthientai.mard.gov.vn/Pages/thiet-hai-do-thien-tai-tu-dau-nam-2020-va-trong-thang-10-2020-cap-nhat-6-11-2020-.aspx>

⁵⁶ Draft National Report on SDGs

⁵⁷ NangluongVietNam <http://nangluongvietnam.vn/news/vn/nhan-dinh-phan-bien-kien-nghi/su-dung-nang-luong-tiet-kiem-hieu-qua-cua-viet-nam-thuc-trang-va-van-de-dat-ra.html>

		the 2011-2020 period		
2.1.5. Direct disaster economic loss in relation to national GDP, including disaster damage to critical infrastructure and disruption of basic services (adapted from SDG indicator 11.5.2)	0.75 (2006-2015, average)	Below 0.60 (2012-2021, average)	1.14 ⁵⁸ (2019, MARD, GSO)	Unlikely to be achieved
2.1.6. The proportion of industrial companies publishing sustainability (cleaner production and energy efficiency) reports (adapted from SDG indicator 12.6.1)	24% (2015)	50% (2021)		N/A

2.2 Outcome 2.2: Sustainable management of natural resources and the environment

2.2.1 Summary

By 2021, Viet Nam has enhanced sustainable management of natural capital, biodiversity and ecosystem services and improved the quality of the environment, while contributing to the implementation of multilateral environmental agreements

Output 2.2.1: Improved policy framework for effective and efficient natural resources management

Output 2.2.2: Strengthened compliance to multilateral environmental instruments

2.2.2 Key deliverables

- The UN provided technical support for development of the 2019 GOVN resolution on implementation of the National Strategy for the Sustainable Development of Vietnam's Marine Economy by 2030, with a vision to 2045 and for implementation of the National Action Plan on Marine Plastics. In addition, the UN supported inclusion of the circular economy into the on-going revision of the Law on Environmental Protection.
- The UN also supported several interventions aimed at reducing environmental and health risks through reduction of Persistent Organic Pollutants (POPs) release, in particular disposal of 200 m3 soil contaminated by POPs and introduction of two provincial management plans on management of POPs waste.

⁵⁸ Equal to 6,862,775,000,000 (report from MARD on <http://phongchongthientai.mard.gov.vn/FileUpload/2020-07/bFG9wLGe0Ueo0fQbTHIET%20HAI%20NAM%202019%20pdf.pdf>) / 6,037,348,000,000,000 (data from GSO on <https://www.gso.gov.vn/px-web-2/?pxid=V0302&theme=T%C3%A0i%20kho%E1%BA%A3n%20qu%E1%BB%91c%20gia>)

- In the area of biodiversity and conservation of natural resources, the UN supported finalization and issuance of the Wetland Conservation Management Decree for establishment of wetland conservation areas in two provinces, guidelines and toolkits for Biosphere Reserves Management Framework for nine biosphere reserves across the country as well as a circular regulating the reporting of access to genetic resources and benefit sharing from the use of genetic resources.

2.2.3 Progress towards the Outcome indicators

Indicator	Baseline	OSP Target (year)	Progress (year) 2019/2020	Status
2.2.1. Number of international multilateral environmental agreements that Viet Nam joins and country reports submitted to all agreements as required (adapted from SDG indicator 12.4.1)	12 (2015)	14 (2021)		N/A
2.2.2. Forest area as a proportion of total land area (SDG indicator 15.1.1)	40.7% of total land area (2015)	42% (2020)	41,89% ⁵⁹	Likely to be achieved
2.2.3. Proportion of traded wildlife that was poached or illicitly trafficked (SDG indicator 15.7.1)	TBC (2017) Note: CITES is going to report to Prime Minister in March 2017	Decreased proportion of traded wildlife that was poached or illicitly trafficked (2021)		N/A

3. Focal Area 3 – Fostering prosperity and partnership

3.1 Outcome 3.1: New economic growth model

3.1.1 Summary

By 2021, Viet Nam's growth policies and institutions support a new economic model, which is inclusive, sustainable and more productivity-led, reaping gains from trade liberalization, international integration and migration

Output 3.1.1 - A more inclusive growth model enhancing the resilience of vulnerable groups developed

⁵⁹ MARD, Decision No.1432/QD-BNN-TCLN

<http://tongcuclamnghiep.gov.vn/content/uploads/files/Hie%CC%A3%CC%82n%20tra%CC%A3ng%20ru%CC%9B%CC%80ng%202019.pdf>

Output 3.1.2 - Strengthened capacities, institutions and policies to promote favorable, transparent and fair business environment for sustainable enterprise development

Output 3.1.3 - Improved competitiveness and productivity of informal and formal sector businesses towards more compliance with recognized standards and trade agreements

3.1.2 Key deliverables

- The UN supported the GOVN with a policy research and identification of opportunities for economic growth and foreign investment. Assistance was provided for development of a guidance on procedures for investment and business registration including assistance and input for establishment of the legal framework for the National Cooperative Registration System and its implementation. Furthermore, the UN offered a policy advice on ODA supported promotion of private sector development and efficiency of public spending and investment that resulted in revision of the country’s strategy for ODA mobilization and utilization for 2019 – 2025.
- Furthermore, the UN supported the GOVN for development of seven position papers for implementation of the National SDG Action Plan integrating the SDGs into the next national SEDS 2021- 2030 and SEDP 2021-2025. The UN support enabled the GOVN to capture updated data from recent censuses/surveys and prepare revision of Viet Nam’s GDP aiming at better macroeconomic evidence for the SEDS and SEDP development.
- Key interventions also included introduction of the inclusive Industry 4.0 concept and situation analysis on Industry 4.0 readiness of Viet Nam’s industrial firms and related proposed actions. The UN was instrumental for preparation of a first ever White Paper on Viet Nam manufacturing sector’s competitiveness, released in October 2019, with a series of policy recommendations for strengthening the role of the manufacturing sector. The UN was also engaged in the development of pro-poor agricultural value chains and the scaling-up of the Centres of Excellence (COE) approach in 3 provinces, contributing thus to implementation of the National Target Programme on New Rural Development (NTP-NRD) and the Agricultural Restructuring Plan (ARP) for food security and income generation.

3.1.2 Progress towards the Outcome Indicator

Indicator	2019	Baseline	OSP Target (year)	Progress (year)	Status
3.1.1. Viet Nam has implemented well-managed migration policies that are gender sensitive, promote the rights of women and men migrants and foster regional and international cooperation (adapted from SDG indicator 10.7.2)		9 key policy documents (excluding decrees) (2016)	12 (2021)	Law 69 promulgated (2020) 5 sub-ordinate laws ⁶⁰	Likely to be achieved
3.1.2. Annual growth rate of real GDP per employed person (SDG indicator 8.2.1)		6.83% average annual GDP	VND 105-106 million (2017)	5.7% average for 2016-2020)	Not likely to be achieved

⁶⁰ www.ilo.org

	per employed person/GDP per labor (2011-2015); VND 83.8 million	VND 118-119 million (2018) VND 133-135 million (2019) VND 149-152 million (2020) (Source: SEDP)	[5.7% (2017) 5.3% (2018) 7.5% (2019) 4.5% (2020)] ⁶¹	
3.1.3. Growth rates of income per capita among the bottom 40 percent of the population and the total population (adapted from SDG indicator 10.1.1)	6.9% among the bottom 40 percent of the population annually, CPI adjusted (2010-2012)	TBC	N.A.	N.A.
3.1.4 Average monthly earnings of wage workers by sex (adapted from SDG indicator 8.5.1)	Female earnings 4.43 million VND; Male earnings 4.92 million VND (2015)	i) Average monthly earnings of wage workers increase 8% (2021) (ii) Female/male earnings ratio increases 3% (2021)	6,78 million VND total (2019) 6% average annual increase both for female and male workers in 2016-2019 ⁶²	Not likely to be achieved
3.1.5 Manufacturing value added as a proportion of GDP and per capita (SDG indicator 9.2.1)	17.5% (2013) US\$ 308 (2014)	TBC	N.A.	N.A.
3.1.6 Viet Nam's share of global exports (adapted from SDG indicator 17.11.1)	0.998% (2015)	TBC	N.A.	N.A.

3.2 Outcome 3.2: Inclusive labour market and expansion of opportunities for all

3.2.1 Summary

By 2021, a fairer, inclusive labour market ensures decent work and opportunities for all, particularly for excluded groups and disadvantaged geographic areas

Output 3.2.1: Strengthened private sector partnerships in the workplace in the manufacturing and services sectors, and enhanced social responsibility and responsible business conduct

3.2.2 Key deliverables

- The UN interventions focused on strengthening private sector partnerships in the manufacturing and service sectors' workplace. This was achieved through the joint work on promoting Social

⁶¹ <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SL.GDP.PCAP.EM.KD?locations=VN>

⁶² <https://tradingeconomics.com/vietnam/wages>

Responsibility (SR) and Responsible Business Conduct (RBC) among national and international businesses and development of a Corporate Sustainability Index (CSI).

- Technical support from the UN to multiple national organizations for improvement of legal framework of employment relations, working conditions, and the representation of employers and workers resulted in adoption of the 5th edition of the Labour Code by NA in October 2019. Following the UN support, the NA ratified two international conventions, namely the ILO Convention 98 - the Right to Organise and Collective Bargaining Convention and Convention 88 on Employment Services.
- Assistance from the UN was instrumental for the GOVN to include 24 labour indicators representing a medium-term framework for the country’s promotion and monitoring of decent work into the list of Viet Nam’s SDG (VSDG) indicators. This work also prompted the GOVN to revise the Labour Force Survey as the main channel for collection of SDG-related data and establish a plan for implementation and monitoring of progress of the VSDG.
- The UN support for development of the multi-employer Trade Union Pilots and its implementation in 7 pilot provinces enabled establishment of trade union legal advisory services and development of a strategy for improving trade union activities in small and micro enterprises.
- The VGCL received further support from the UN in establishing Trade Union Legal Advisory Networks in seven provinces to connect trade union legal advisory centres that facilitated sharing of experiences and information in defending the rights and interests of workers.
- Through UN partnerships and advocacy work with businesses, child rights criteria were included into the Corporate Sustainability Index (CSI) by the Viet Nam Business Council for Sustainable Development and the Viet Nam Chamber of Commerce and Industry (VCCI). This included indicators on child labour prevention, young worker protection and family-friendly workplace policies. The UN partnered with the Human Rights Institute under the Ho Chi Minh National Political Academy to promote the implementation of child rights through a practical guide for Viet Nam on General Comment No. 16 of the Committee on the Rights of the Child on state obligations regarding the impact of business operations on children’s rights.

3.2.3 Progress towards the Outcome Indicators

Indicator	Baseline	OSP Target (year)	Progress (year)	Status
3.2.1. Proportion of informal employment by sex (adapted from SDG indicator 8.3.1)	Female workers: 49.3% (2015); Male workers: 28.8% (2015)	TBC	N.A.	N.A.
3.2.2. Labour market participation rate by sex (adapted from SDG indicator 8.5.2)	Female workers: 72.9% (2015); Male workers: 83% (2015)	Total 98.5% (2017), 99.3% (2016- 2020) (Source: SEDP, no sex disaggregated target available)	83.09% total 86.52% male 79.63% female (2019) ⁶³	Not likely to be achieved

⁶³ ILOSTAT database, data retrieved on January 29, 2021

<p>3.2.3. Proportion and number of children aged 5-17 years engaged in child labour, by sex and age group (adapted from SDG indicator 8.7.1)</p>	<p>1.75 million (1.050 million boys and 0.7 million girls) (2012). Age group 5-11: boys 3.14%, girls 2.45%; Age group 12-14: boys 12.8%, girls 9.8%; Age group 15-17: boys 25%, girls 18.6% (2012) (National Child Labour Survey). Percentage of children aged 5-17 years who are involved in child labour: 16.4%, 16.6% percent are boys and 16.2% are girls. 15.4% aged 5-11, 17% aged 12-14 and 18.5% aged 15-17 (2014) (MICS data counts house chores in its figure)</p>	<p>TBC</p>	<p>N.A.</p>	<p>N.A.</p>
<p>3.2.4. Proportion of youth (aged 15-24 years) not in education, employment or training, by sex (SDG indicator 8.6.1)</p>	<p>VHLSS 2014: Total: 9.21% Male: 8.02% Female: 10.46%</p>	<p>TBC</p>	<p>N.A.</p>	<p>N.A.</p>
<p>3.2.5. Increase in national compliance of labour rights (freedom of association and collective bargaining) based on ILO textual sources and national legislation, by sex and migrant status (SDG indicator 8.8.2)</p>	<p>ILO's convention 87 and 98 are being listed by Government of Viet Nam as priority for ratification (Ref. PM's Decision 2528/QD Ttg, 31 December 2015)</p>	<p>Legal framework improved and functional for freedom of association and collective bargaining 2018-2020</p>	<p>Convention 088 ratified</p>	
<p>3.2.6. Labour share of GDP, comprising wages and social protection transfers (SDG indicator 10.4.1)</p>	<p>TBC (2017)</p>	<p>TBC (2017)</p>	<p>N.A.</p>	

4. Focus Area 4 – Promoting justice, peace and inclusive governance

4.1 Outcome 4.1: Participatory decision-making and responsive institutions

4.1.1 Summary

By 2021, participatory and transparent decision-making processes and accountable institutions are strengthened, with policies and implementation mechanisms that are responsive to all people, particularly vulnerable groups, women, youth and children

Output 4.1.1 - Institutional mechanisms developed and regulatory environment strengthened to ensure participatory, transparent and effective engagement of people in public decision making, including women, disadvantaged and marginalized groups

Output 4.1.2: Improved national capacity to prevent and address corruption

Output 4.1.3: Improved capacity of civil society organizations to engage in advocacy, implementation, and monitoring of development policies, including effective engagement in international monitoring mechanisms.

4.1.2 Key deliverables

- The UN held over 15 policy dialogues with representatives of the GOVN to inform policy development, using the results of the Provincial Governance and Public Administration Performance Index (PAPI) obtained on a survey sample of 14,000 citizens. Specifically, the UN convened multi-stakeholder dialogues and consultations on key laws and policies, including: the upcoming National Action Plan on Responsible Business Practice, the implementation of the new provisions of the Law on Anti-Corruption, the follow-up on the recommendations made under the UPR process, the implementation of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, the government resolution on peacekeeping among others. UNDP leverage its convening role by bringing together stakeholders from government, business, civil society and vulnerable groups which is very unusual practice in Viet Nam.
- The UN's support was provided to the General Statistics Office (GSO) to conduct the 2019 Population and Housing Census as a major GSO statistical product that together with further technical support from the UN was used as input into preparation of the Viet Nam National Strategy on Population till 2030 (approved by the Prime Minister in November 2019). The population census data is not only used for the national strategy on population, but also for the new SEDS/SEDP and other important documents. More than 100 national SDG indicators are related to the population data. The Population and Housing Census 2019 which applied digital technology for the first time, substantially speeding up the process of data collection, analysis, and dissemination, and reducing human error. The UN also provided innovative advocacy and communication support promoting utilization of census results for decision making on population emerging issues (imbalance of sex ratio birth, fertility, migration and urbanization, population aging), and rights of vulnerable groups. The population census data including population projection is not only used for the national strategy on population, but also for the new SEDS/SEDP and other important documents, and SDG monitoring. More than 100 national SDG indicators are related to the population data.
- The UN also provided technical assistance for assessment of the 10-year implementation of the VCP Secretariat's Directive No.22 on Industrial Relations and the issuance of the new Directive No.37 on strengthening leadership and instruction in industrial relations in Viet Nam's new context.
- In order to promote gender equality, the UN provided advocacy support for gender issues in ethnic minority groups in the national review report on the 25-year implementation of Beijing Platform for

Action and worked with other development partners to support elaboration of the Master Plan on Social Economic Development for Ethnic Minorities and Mountainous Areas (2021-2030) to be more gender-responsive in relation to ethnic minority groups and remote areas. The UN was the first advocate for LGBTIQ rights in Viet Nam many years ago and have been consistently working to further promote LGBTIQ rights.

- In addition, the UN supported GoVN (i) to conduct the 2nd National Study on VAW, and Independent Review of ten-year implementation of Gender Equality Law; (ii) to develop the National Programme on Prevention and Response to GBV 2021-2025 using data of VAW study and Review Report. The Programme was approved by Decision No 2322 dated 28 Dec 2020; (iii) to establish and operate a Supporting Center (Anh Duong House) that provides integrated essential services (health, social, police and justice) for GBV survivors; (iv) to strengthen the capacity of managers and officials to address gender biased sex selection; and (v) to implement annual communication campaigns on changing social norms toward GBV and GBSS.
- Regarding ‘Improved capacity of civil society organizations to engage in advocacy, implementation, and monitoring of development policies, including effective engagement in international monitoring mechanisms’, significant progress was made in terms of capacity enhancement of and engagement with community networks and community-based organizations of people living with HIV and other HIV key populations for legislation and policy making as well as programme design, implementation and service monitoring. Please take reference of annual OSP result reports of the Governance & Access to Justice Result Group, HIV Thematic Group, and the evaluation report of the Joint UN Programme on HIV in Viet Nam.

4.1.3 Progress towards the Outcome Indicators

Outcome Indicator Statement	Baseline (year)	Target (year)	Progress (year)	Status
4.1.1 Proportion of seats held by women in the National Assembly and People’s Councils at local level (SDG indicator 5.5.1)	National Assembly: 26.8% Provincial level: 25.7% District level: 24.62% Commune level: 27.71% (2016)	35% (all) (2021)	N.A General Election will be held in 2021. Statistics will be available after the Election	N/A
4.1.2 Proportion of women in managerial positions (department head and above) in state agencies (SDG indicator 5.5.2)	Ministers: 9% (02/22); Vice Minister or similar: 9.4% (12/128); Heads of government agencies: 12.5% (1/8) (2014)	35% (all) (2021)	National Assembly: 27.3% Party committees: 20.8% (provincial) Ministries: 36.6% ministries having female leaders (minister, vice minister) ⁶⁴	Achieved for managerial positions in ministries but political position (NA and Party committee)

⁶⁴ Report 362 of GoVN (Aug 2020) on the 10-year implementation of the National Strategy for Gender Equality to the National Assembly.

Outcome Indicator Statement	Baseline (year)	Target (year)	Progress (year)	Status
4.1.3 Proportion of persons who had at least one contact with a public official and who paid a bribe to a public official, or were asked for a bribe by those public officials, during the previous 12 months (SDG indicator 16.5.1)	TBC	TBC	TBC	N/A
4.1.4 Total value of inward and outward illicit financial flows discovered and seized (in current United States dollars) (adapted from SDG indicator 16.4.1)	To be available in 2017	Increase of 20% (2021)	N.A	N/A
4.1.5 Proportion of the population satisfied with their last experience of public services (health, education, issuance of land use rights certificates) (SDG indicator 16.6.2)	TBC	TBC	TBC	N/A
4.1.6. Proportion of population who believe decision-making is inclusive and responsive, by sex, age, disability and ethnicity (SDG indicator 16.7.2)	TBC	TBC	TBC	N/A
4.1.7. Level of inclusion of young people's multi-sectoral needs in the national development plans (SEDP 2016-2020; 2021-2025) and poverty reduction strategies (new National Target Programme on Poverty Reduction 2016-2020) (adapted from SDG indicator 16.7.2)	Young people's multi-sectoral needs are only partially included in the national development plans (SEDP) and poverty reduction strategies (National Target Programme on Poverty Reduction) (2015)	Young people's multi-sectoral needs are fully included in the national development plans (SEDP) and poverty reduction strategies (National Target Programme on Poverty Reduction 2016-2020 and 2021- 2025) (2021)	SEDPs mentioned the youth as a special group; Poverty reduction strategies (e.g. NTP Sustainable Poverty Reduction or New Rural Development, 2016-2020; and the draft of these NTPs for 2021-2030) do not mention young people-specific needs	N/A
4.1.8. (a) Number of population and housing censuses in the last 10 years and percent of (b) birth and (c) death registration achieved	(a) 2009 population census conducted (b) 90% (2016) (c) TBC	(a) 2019 Census (b) 99% in given year (2024) (c) 80% (2024)	(a) Population census by GSO every 10 years; between the two, there is a rapid	(a) achieved (b) likely to be achieved (c) N/A

Outcome Indicator Statement	Baseline (year)	Target (year)	Progress (year)	Status
(adapted from SDG indicator 17.19.2)			survey (rotating module) (b): 98.2% (Census 2019) (c) NA	

4.2 Outcome 4.2: Human rights protection, rule of law and strengthened access to justice

4.2.1 Summary

By 2021, the protection of human rights is strengthened with improvements to the justice system, greater adherence to the rule of law, more equitable access to justice, increased gender equality and effective prevention of all forms of discrimination and violence

Output 4.2.1: Improved knowledge, capacity and commitment of relevant public agencies and corporate sector to protect, respect and remedy human rights, including the development of a National Action Plan on Business and Human Rights.

Output 4.2.2: Increased capacity of duty bearers to deliver justice and other essential services to prevent, protect and respond to discrimination and violence in different forms against women, children and other vulnerable persons.

Output 4.2.3: Improved capacity of victims of violence and discrimination and those most at risk to claim legal and other relevant support services.

Output 4.2.4: Inclusive access to justice and legal empowerment of vulnerable groups.

4.2.2 Key deliverables

- The key deliverable under this Outcome was the UN support to Viet Nam’s review report under the third cycle of the Universal Periodic Review (UPR), which took place in January 2019, under the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR). Another key intervention was advocacy for the protection of the rights of vulnerable groups through legislative and policy reforms. In addition, the UN provided technical assistance to multiple national stakeholders for preparation of codes of conduct and ethics for judges and lawyers based on capacity building and surveys.
- With the UN’s support, child-friendly and gender-sensitive adjudication procedures for cases of sexual violence against children have significantly improved, thanks to the enactment of the Judicial Resolution of the Supreme People’s Court (SPC) on child sexual violence. Inspired and influenced by international best practices introduced by the UN, the resolution provides detailed definitions of many forms of sexual abuse and ensures equal protection for girls and boys under the age of 18. The resolution introduces protection measures to make adjudication procedures more sensitive and responsive to the needs of child survivors of sexual abuse, thereby mitigating trauma. It is expected to result in improving the quality and accuracy of a child’s testimony, thereby not only increasing the chance of a fair and just outcome but also ensuring that perpetrators of crimes against children are brought to justice.
- Gender sensitive guidelines and capacity building for legal aid providers provided by the UN, with a direct impact on the access and quality of legal aid provided to women, in particular victims of domestic abuse. These interventions helped relevant govt. authorities at central and local level to understand the importance of legal aid for vulnerable groups, possible barriers for them in accessing

aid, certain sensitivities and other considerations to be observed in providing legal aid to vulnerable women, and practical guidance on how best to provide legal advice to ensure women can best protect their own rights through legal mechanisms. Similarly, for the grassroots mediation interventions, guidelines and trainings were provided on gender impacts of grassroots mediation and measures to strengthen protection for the right of women under grassroots mediation for key government authorities. The result of which is to improve the quality of mediation provided, broaden access to women, and effectiveness of mediation for vulnerable women. As mentioned above, the focus on central government agencies for both interventions worked best and represents good practice in advancing the rights of women.

- In addition, with the direct support from UN agencies under the partnership with the EU, significant improvements were made in child justice with the roll out of the Family and Juvenile Court pilot, from two cities in 2018 to 38 cities and provinces in 2020.
- In the area of access to justice, Viet Nam's key rule of law institutions have benefitted from strengthening of evidence-based policy making, institutional functions, and individual capacity. The assessment of legal awareness and legal needs of citizens, as well as the capacity of legal communicators in communicating with vulnerable groups, has served as the basis for preparation of a national strategy on legal education and of training materials for local communicators.
- The UN supported the government to build capacity for staff on protecting children and women from violence. Mental health and psychosocial support were rendered by the UN to children and adolescents in all 393 quarantine centres and selected social protection centres. The messages on mental health and psychosocial support reached 4 million people, including children.
- Support and technical assistance by UN agencies was instrumental for development and approval of several key documents, such as approval of the Law on Education, amendment of the Labour Code, preparation of the National Action Plan on Preventing Violence and Abuse of Children, review of the Law on Natural Disaster Prevention and Control, and amendments of the Law on Persons with Disabilities. In addition, the UN collaborated with VCCI to host a series of consultations with over 350 representatives from across sectors participating to explore strengthening protection for child rights in the context of business activity.
- Freedom of association is improving for industrial relations in Viet Nam. The amended Labour Code adopted by the National Assembly in November 2019 introduces a new type of organization, within the umbrella of 'workers' representative organisations (WROs) which may be established by workers at grassroots level to protect their lawful rights and legitimate interests in labour relations through collective bargaining or in other ways stipulated in law. The Viet Nam General Confederation of Labour (VGCL) remains entrusted with the representation of the interests of workers as the sole and unified trade union organization in Viet Nam.
- The UN regularly updated and strongly advocated to the National Assembly members on issues faced by people living with HIV and other HIV key populations, implementation of legislation and policies on HIV, drugs and sex work; advocated for inclusive Social Health Insurance, and amendment of HIV Law and Drug Law that align better with international standards.
- Gender-based violence is a field that many UN agencies have contributed to. Support was provided to building the capacity of key government and law enforcement agencies as well as direct support to victims and the organizations that support victims of GBV. The UN also supported strengthening of the capacity of justice officials in a rights-based, survivor-centered approach to handle cases of violence against women helped to build the capacity of law enforcement and criminal justice officials to meet the needs of survivors of gender-based violence, in particular for women and girls, through a series of training workshops.

- Under EU JULE project supported by the UN, a Policy Dialogue “Anti-Discrimination against Women and Prevention of Gender-Based Violence” was organized in 2019 and on that basis, a cross-sectoral platform focusing on GBV was created in Viet Nam, gathering more than 150 participants from all relevant GOVN agencies. This was also instrumental for the development and approval of Supreme People’s Court’s Judicial Resolution on sexual crimes and adjudication of sexual cases involving children under 18 years.
- With the UN support, the national normative framework on child rights was strengthened through the approval of the Law on Education, the amendment of the Labour Code related to the LGBTQI’s rights in workplace and also involved the LGBTQI with emphasis on awareness rising, and Law on Legal Aid that integrate contents on the rights of people with disabilities, a review of the Law on Natural Disaster Prevention and Control, and a review of the Master Plan on Persons with Disabilities, to kick-start the forthcoming amendment of the Law on Persons with Disabilities, to the development of Law on Gender Affirmation. In addition, a space for young entrepreneurs was established to link between their business ideas and SDG impacts.
- Within efforts to support anti-corruption, the UN contributed in building capacity of the Government Inspectorate (GI) to carry out required UNCAC reports and to develop a system that could help monitor corruption risks at the sub-national level. A database for preparation of the national assessment report on UNCAC implementation was developed for use in relevant ministries and departments. The UN also supported the Viet Nam Blind Association to advocate for Viet Nam’s participation in the Marakesh Treaty, which facilitates access to published works for persons who are blind, visually impaired or print disabled. In the process of revising the Law on Intellectual Property Rights, the association proposed changes to certain clauses in order to align with the Marakesh Treaty. These efforts contributed to the government’s confirmation of Viet Nam’s accession to the treaty.

4.2.3 Progress towards the Outcome

Outcome Indicator Statement	Baseline (year)	Target (year)	Progress (year)	Assessment
4.2.1. Proportion of legal frameworks in place to promote, enforce and monitor equality and non-discrimination on the basis of sex (adapted from SDG indicator 5.1.1)	TBC	TBC	TBC	N/A
4.2.2. Percentage of ever partnered women aged above 15 years experienced at least one type of physical, sexual or emotional abuse, not age disaggregated (adapted from SDG indicator 5.2.1)	The rate for any of the three types of violence (physical, sexual and emotional) for the past 12 months: 27% Physical: (6%) Sexual: (4%) Emotional abuse: (25%) (2010)	TBC	Three types of violence: 21.8% ⁶⁵ Physical: 4.6% Sexual: 5.7% Emotional: 19.3%	No target year data to compare

⁶⁵ DFAT, UNPFA, MOLISA, GSO (2020), National Study on Violence against Women 2019

Outcome Indicator Statement	Baseline (year)	Target (year)	Progress (year)	Assessment
4.2.2-1 - Indicator RG Gov Justice/4.2.2.a: Mechanisms in place to address HIV related S&D in health care (up-to date assessment, pre and in service trainings for health care workers, and mechanism in place to redress in case of S&D in health care), qualitative, Mechanisms in place to address HIV related S&D in health care	None		Implementation in HIV high burden provinces; Stigma Index 3rd round	No target year data to compare
4.2.3. Percentage of female aged 16 and above who experienced some sort of sexual harassment in public places (adapted from SDG indicator 5.2.2)	TBC	TBC	Any kind of sexual harassment: 11.4% ⁶⁶	No target year data to compare
4.2.4. (a)Percentage of women aged 15-49 years who were first married or in union before the age of 15; (b) Percentage of women aged 20-49 years who were first married or in union before the age of 18; (c)Percentage of young women aged 15-19 years married or in union (adapted from SDG indicator 5.3.1)	(a) 0.9 (b) 11.2 (c) 10.3 (2014)	TBC	0.4% of women aged 20-24 years who were first married or in union before the age of 15; 9.1% of women aged 20-24 years who were first married or in union before the age of 18; ⁶⁷	No target year data to compare
4.2.5. Proportion of the population reporting having personally felt discriminated against or harassed within the previous 12 months including on the basis of sex, ethnicity, HIV-status, sexual orientation and disability (SDG indicator 10.3.1)	TBC	TBC	TBC	N/A
4.2.6. Proportion of population that feel safe walking alone around the area they live, disaggregated by sex (SDG indicator 16.1.4)	TBC	TBC	TBC	N/A

⁶⁶ DFAT, UNPFA, MOLISA, GSO (2020), ibid

⁶⁷ Figures from the Population and Housing Census 2019

Outcome Indicator Statement	Baseline (year)	Target (year)	Progress (year)	Assessment
4.2.7. Percentage of children aged 1-14 years who experienced psychological aggression or physical punishment during the last month (adapted from SDG indicator 16.2.1)	68.4% (2014)	65% (2024)	GSO/UNICEF MICS 2020-2021 is not completed yet	N/A
4.2.8. Number of survivors of human trafficking rescued by sex, age and form of exploitation (adapted from SDG indicator 16.2.2)	1,000 survivors, 407 cases, 655 perpetrators (2015)	Increase of 20% (2021)	NA ⁶⁸	N/A
4.2.9. Unsentenced detainees (disaggregated by age and sex) as a proportion of incarcerated population (SDG indicator 16.3.2)	TBC	Decreased proportion of unsentenced detainees (2021)	NA	N/A
4.2.10. Proportion of children under 5 years of age whose births have been registered with a civil authority, by age (SDG indicator 16.9.1)	Total: 96.1% 0-11 months: 88.1% 12-23 months: 97.1% 24-35 months: 98.1% 36-47 months: 98.4% 48-59 months: 99.3% (2014)	98% (2024)	GSO/UNICEF MICS 2020-2021 is not completed yet 98.2% of children under 5 years were registered (Census 2019) – disaggregated further the age groups are not available	Achieved for children under 5 years old without age disaggregated
4.2.11. Proportion of young women aged 18- 29 years who experienced sexual violence by age 18 (adapted from SDG indicator 16.2.3)	18-24 years: 5.3% 25-29 years: 9.5% (2010)	TBC	% in last 12 months: 15-19 years: 5.9 20-24 years: 7.4 25-29 years: 7.1 (Source: DFAT, UNPFA, MOLISA, GSO (2020), National Study on Violence against Women 2019)	No target year data to compare

⁶⁸ There were some reports on the related issues disseminated by sources that are not recognized by the GoVN on human trafficking and these non-official sources should not be used in this table.

Annex 6. OSP Implementation – Quang Nam Case Study

The case study examined the UN's interventions to support socio-economic development and emergency needs in the Quang Nam province.

1. Quang Nam background information

Background

Quang Nam is a coastal province in the Central region with more than 125 km of coastline. Quang Nam's topography is relatively complicated, gradually lower from West to East, forming three ecological regions: high mountains, midlands, plain and coastal areas. Quang Nam's population is about 1.5 million people, with an average population density of 139 people/km². There are 4 ethnic minorities permanently residing: Co Tu, Co, Gié Trieng, Xo Dang and some newly immigrant ethnic groups with a total of over 10,000 ethnic people, accounting for 7.2% of the whole province. As high as 81.4% of the population are living in rural areas.

Quang Nam has recently endeavored through an impressive growth path. This recent development was fueled by growth in tourism sector and investment in Chu Lai Open Economic Zone. With regard to the tourism sector, Quang Nam has benefited from the two UNESCO World Heritage sites (i.e. Hội An Ancient Town and Mỹ Sơn Sacred Relics) and its 120 km-long cost line with sandy beaches. The provincial statistics indicated a two-digit growth of the total number of tourists over the past 5 years or so. In 2019, Quang Nam attracted 7.6 million tourists to Quang Nam in 2019 (of which 4.5 million was foreign).⁶⁹ With regard to industrial growth, Chu Lai Open Economic Zone has been a major investment destination of Quang Nam. Since the establishment, Quang Nam has attracted 177 investment projects to this Zone with a total investment of equivalent US\$5.6 billion; of which there was 48 foreign-invested projects with a total investment capital of nearly US\$700 million.⁷⁰ With these two driving forces, Quang Nam has climbed up from one of the poorest provinces to the 16th in the provincial GRDP in 2018 (using the latest GSO statistics on GRDP) over the past two decades.⁷¹ Since 2017, Quang Nam has been able to reach “sufficient financing” in the sense that the Province was no longer dependent on reallocation from the central budget. In parallel with the economic growth, investment climate has been improved. Quang Nam has been in the Top 10 PCI rankings over the past consecutive 4 years.⁷²

Being in the Central Coast of Vietnam, Quang Nam has been reported with increasing natural disasters over the past decade. The most prominent disaster risk is storms and the resultant flood, landslide and coastline erosion. According to statistics of Quang Nam PPC, over the past decade, Quang Nam suffered on average 13 storms and low pressures per year. Out of these, two were catastrophic to Quang Nam. Notably, heavy and lasting rains during and after storms and low pressures have caused serious floods. This was intensified by extensive hydropower development in the provinces in the past decade. Most recently, the flood and landslides in November 2020 caused a historic damage to the province of which, 4 landslides occurred in 2 communes Tra Van, Tra Leng (Nam Tra My district) and Phuoc Loc commune

⁶⁹ Quang Nam PPC (2020), Summary of Socio-Economic Development in 2019 and Plans for 2020. A report by the Quang Nam PPC.

⁷⁰ Quang Nam PPC (2020), *ibid.*

⁷¹ GSO statistics on GRDP available at www.gso.gov.vn

⁷² Data available from <https://pcivietnam.vn/>

(Phuoc Son district), causing 43 deaths and disappearances. Estimated economic loss in the province is nearly 11,000 billion VND.⁷³

In 2020, Quang Nam experienced a total number of 107 COVID-19 affected cases. Out of these 103 was recovered; 02 was fatal; and 02 are under treatment. COVID-19 have affected Quang Nam in different ways but most heavily to the tourism sector. Estimates by the Hoi An Tourism Association indicated that the number of tourists to Hoi An in 2020 was around 20% of the 2019 figures. Most of the hotels and restaurants in the Hoi An Ancient Town and Cua Dai Beach were temporarily closed.

Provincial priorities and strategic plans

Sustainable development is an overarching goal, a cross-cutting requirement in the socio-economic development of the Quang Nam province. It requires economic development in each sector to be closely and rationally harmonized with social development and environmental protection. The formulation and implementation of strategies, policies, plans, programs, and projects for socio-economic development are required to ensure sustainable development.

Quang Nam continues to focus on the two driving forces of its recent economic growth: tourism (clustered around Hoi An Ancient Town and My Son Sacred Relics) and industry (mainly through investments in the Chu Lai Economic Zone and other industrial zones in the provinces).

To improve the investment climate, Quang Nam has invested heavily on infrastructures through public investment projects. Total investment was around 31% of Quang Nam GRDP in 2019 and continues to be at the high level in the coming years. Public administration reform and e-government development were accelerated to improve public administration services and this has put Quang Nam to the Top 10 PCI rankings in the recent years.

In terms of natural risk management, Quang Nam has developed a Plan for Natural Disaster Preventions and Control by 2020 (under Decision 474/QĐ-UBND in Jan 2018) where detailed analysis of natural disaster risks and potential damages were made as a background for disaster preventions and controls. It is expected that this Plan will be reviewed and updated for the period after 2020.

Quang Nam has experienced significant progress in terms of LNOB. Over the past decade, Quang Nam has managed to reduce the poverty headcount by between 3-4 percentage point per year. By the end of 2019, the poverty rate in Quang Nam was only 6.06%⁷⁴ compared to a national average of 3.75%.⁷⁵ The mountainous districts of Quang Nam have experienced a higher poverty headcount of 20.8% in 2019 but these districts have experienced a faster poverty reduction pace of around 5-6 percentage points per year over the past 5 years.

Gaps and challenges

Although Quang Nam has strike impressively in its recent economic growth path, there are many challenges remains. The budget revenue and the source of income is unstable, depending on some important areas such as automobile, hydroelectricity... with unpredictable developments year by year. There is a development gap between the West and the East. The increase in industrial production activities and tourism activities are two strong areas of the province that also has resulted negative impacts on the environment. Urbanization increases pressure on municipal solid waste treatment. The indicators of administrative reform, the index of effectiveness of governance and the public

⁷³ Provincial statistics in the Document 6548/UBND-KTN dated Nov 06, 2020 to the General Dept for Disaster Prevention and Control indicated a number of around 13.000 houses that were destroyed more than 30%; 31.400 houses damaged less than 30%; and nearly 62.500 houses flooded.

⁷⁴ Quang Nam PPC (2020), ibid

⁷⁵ MoLISA statistics according to Decision 835/QĐ-LĐTBXH in Jul 2020 on poverty assessment for 2019.

administration at the provincial level, the satisfaction index of administrative service is still low compared to the requirements.

The most prominent (though could be short-term) challenge is Covid19 and its consequence on economic growth. Uncertainty of Covid19 situation makes it challenging for Quang Nam in navigating its strategies. In addition, Quang Nam remains vulnerable to natural disaster and this represent a medium and long-term challenge for its future growth. Notably, it seems quite clear that the mountainous districts of Quang Nam have disproportionately benefited from the province’s main driving forces of economic growth. This raises a challenge for Quang Nam in terms of how to make future growth more inclusive for these districts, especially the ethnic minorities (i.e. Cơ Tu, Xơ Đăng and Ca Dong).

2. Assessment of the UN support to Quang Nam

Summary of UN support under OSP 2017-21

The statistics from RCO has indicated that there has been a total of 19 engagements by 06 UN agencies to Quang Nam since the implementation of the current OSP in 2017. A list of these engagements is provided below. It is noted that all of these engagements were very small. Formal statistics on budgets were not fully available but consultation in the field suggested that the majority of these engagements were less US\$100 thousand and implemented within one or three years.

Agency	Name of Projects, Programmes
UNDP (3)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improving the resilience of vulnerable coastal communities to climate change-related impacts in Viet Nam (Green Climate Fund) • Empowering Local Community in Conservation and Sustainable Use of Nya Palm Ecosystem in Cam Thanh Commune, Hoi An City, Quang Nam Province • Damrey typhoon
UNICEF (4)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Child Protection in emergencies: support case management, mental health and psychosocial support, awareness raising on prevention of violence and abuse of children during disasters, and distribution of dignity kits to children • WASH for Flood Emergency Response • Nutrition Intervention program namely Screening for detection and treatment of children with severe acute malnutrition • Emergency supported Quang Nam with ECD kits (via MOET, non-CERF) for preschool age children.
UNFPA (3)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support Viet Nam organizations in COVID-19 Preparedness and Response for older persons • Support women at risk of violence in flood-affected areas in Central Provinces of Viet Nam • Support continuing SRH services in flood affected areas
ILO (1)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New Industrial Relation Framework /Japanese component (NIRF/Japan Project)
UNESCO (6)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sustainable and responsible tourism (Quang Nam province) • Project 1: Youth and Innovation for Ocean • Project 2: The Art of Recycle • Sustainable and responsible tourism, heritage guiding (Hoi An) • Sustainable and responsible tourism, community-based tourism

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sustainable and responsible tourism, heritage guiding (My Son)
UN-Habitat (2)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quang Nam Provincial Socio-Economic Development Orientation to 2020, with a vision to 2025 (2010-2013) • Tam Ky City Development Strategy (2015-2016)
TOTAL	18 engagements by 6 UN agencies since 2017

Relevance of the support

Out of the 19 engagements, a half was about to response to emergency caused by natural disasters, especially the recent floods. In this respect, the UN engagements were assessed to be relevant to the needs of the province in natural disaster management. Having that said, it was noted that only one out these nine engagements was about to improve the resilience (i.e. the one by UNDP), all the remaining was rather the support to response to natural disasters – which were short-term in nature. It is arguable that that the natural disaster risks, as outlined in Decision 474/QD-UBND – as above, required medium and long-term support to improve resilience and prevention rather than some ad hoc emergency support. Therefore, the relevance of this area could be enhanced by focusing more on capacity development for resilience. The recent responses to the flood observed in Quang Nam have indicated a level of huge domestic resources that could be mobilized for emergency support.⁷⁶ In this context, future emergency engagements by the UN agencies, albeit useful, should have been re-considered.

Another area of the UN support to Quang Nam province was sustainable tourism with seven engagements (06 by UNESCO and 02 by UNDP). Consultation in the field indicated that this support was highly relevant to the tourism sector – being one of the two driving forces of the recent economic growth. Representatives from Hoi An Tourism Association and other stakeholders in Hoi An city further suggested that the need for sustainable tourism has been well perceived by all the actors and stakeholders in the tourism sector and therefore, the support from the UN agencies was timely and relevant.

Effectiveness of the support

Detailed assessment of effectiveness of these number of short-term and small engagements is challenging. Based on the consultation in the field, it could be evident that the support to the tourism sector was highly effective in the sense that the support from the UN agencies has been instrument for Quang Nam to mobilize additional resources for promotion of sustainable tourisms. The UNESCO support to The Cham Island was a successful case. Starting with a technical assistance to raise awareness and campaign for a zero-waste The Cham Island, UNESCO has convened other partners and NGOs to consider further materialized support to a zero-waste The Cham Island. It was reported that after this technical assistance, the Cham Island has been supported by a consortium of seven NGOs, who agreed on a common plan for actions.

Emergency support by the UN agencies to the natural disasters were highly appreciated by the local authorities. It was said by the stakeholders that the support has been utilized according to original plans and purposes, meaning a level of effectiveness in terms of disbursing the resources according to the plans. How these emergency support materials have contributed to lives of the natural disaster affected people are subject to further evaluation in the coming months (as most of the emergency support was made available in 2020 and it takes time for materializing the impacts expected). Given the plethora of emergency support to Quang Nam in responses to the recent flood, it is recommended that the UN

⁷⁶ Informal discussion with one official of the PPC suggested that there have been around 3000 groups of charities that came to the flooded districts of Quang Nam in Nov and Dec 2020 for emergency support.

should evaluate its emergency support to learn that were the value adding of this type of support and whether the UN active engagement in this particular field continues to be justified.

Coherence of the UN at the level of Quang Nam province

The OSP is at high level and it might not be the best document to provide a useful guidance for UN agencies' support at the local level. There was no awareness of the OSP at the provincial level. The leaders of the local sectors considered OSP unnecessary at the implementation level and not a guiding document for their understanding and mobilizing fund for support.

There are some efforts in taking an effective coordination mechanism among UN agencies for their support in the local level, but no strong evidence on the results was showed. Upon the approval of Provincial People's Committee (PPC), each UN agency has directly reached out different sectors and relevant stakeholders at the local level and they rarely linked one another. There is no joint monitoring and regular review meeting between all UN agencies and PPC on the current projects and supports.

Department of Planning and Investment (DPI) has a mandate to manage of ODA in the province while the fund recipients are requested to report to Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA). In the meanwhile, the coordination mechanism among different local agencies and organizations was also unclear. For example, there was no link between Women' Union and Farmer's Union in providing support for female farmers under the support.

UN support for transformational change

The UN support in Quang Nam was considered by interviewed people as a "small input, big outcome" in some specific areas. In addition to direct support to change the lives of people affected by natural disasters, the UN helps to build replicable models, to change the lifestyle of people with long-term effects. For example, UNICEF provides capacity training for health workers to guide and educate people on nutrition; UNDP designs a model of flood-resistant houses to prevent floods and storms; UNESCO supports an ecotourism model in The Cham Island, UNFPA provides guidance and training for the elderly in preventing and responding COVID-19; and so forth.

Capacity building for local authorities on governance and institution was considered as one of the crossing intentions of the supports. Although there have not been specific and direct activities which were designed for this purpose of capacity building, many officials reflected a competence improvement via their participation in the planned interventions supported by the UN system. In particular, the logical framework in formulation and implementation of the designed support have been the most useful and practical learns among local staff who involved in the UN support. The capacity of the local authorities was clearly improved in preparedness and response to the emergency situations, including typhoon and COVID-19 epidemic. UN support was considered as part of contribution for this capacity development.

There are still large gaps in building ownership through aid receiving and delivery, including strategic-based need identification and emergency response, proactiveness on connectivity and call for investment, monitoring and evaluation of results, and coordination improvement.

Leave no one behind

The vulnerable groups were clearly identified and supported in the intervention plans, mainly in the emergency response. All the support from UN agencies as well as other coordinated partners have reached out the furthest behind groups through the agreed specific criteria for selection of beneficiaries such as the poor, women, children, and ethnic minority people who live in the most influenced areas in Quang Nam.

There have been different approaches and support to identified vulnerable groups. In the scope of UNICEF project, the pregnant women and children were protected from malnutrition by being provided with knowledge and skills on the nutrition, micronutrition and treatment of acute malnutrition. In UNDP

support, the most vulnerable people were identified as the poor, ethnic minority people who are living in the flood-prone areas. As many as 436 houses in 44 coastal communes of 5 districts have received support for building flood-resistant houses.

In response to COVID-19, UNDP is working with Ministry of Health and WHO in the communication campaign “Spreading the word – “Leave No One Behind” to reach out the ethnic minority people and people with disabilities. In Hoi An, UNDP worked with Vietnam Association for the Elderly and HelpAge International to provide training and communication to 24 intergenerational clubs of the old about COVID-19 prevention and response among the elderly people.

In coordination with the Provincial Farmer Union, UNFPA provided 1,543 dignity kits to women at risk of gender-based violence in floods-affected areas in Quang Nam. This support prioritized on a proportion of about 25% of the female farmers most in need. Women's Union and Farmer's Union, as representatives of the beneficiaries of the support, highly appreciated the UN's prompt and active support to their members.

3. Good practices and lessons learned

Good practices

A clear strategic plan as the effective guidance for support. A clear strategic plan developed by the local GoVN to be shared and dialogued with development partners is one of the most effective way to ensure the ownership of the GOVN and partnership with partners as well as accountability of all sides. The 5-year strategic development plan for The Cham Island is one of the good examples.

Local government commitment. Strong government commitment and active participation from local agencies and social organizations are vital conditions for the success of all assistance. In response to the emergency situations, the local GoVN of Quang Nam took an active leading role in coordinating the donors, including UN agencies.

Engaging stakeholders. Based on the harmful effects of natural disasters, the Red Cross prepared and sent a proposal to the DFA in order to consult the PPC in issuing a “call for support” letter addressing UN and other potential donors. Based on the letter, the donors organized a joint field mission and planed for their support, including UNDP. As quick as ten days after that, 80% of the proposed funding support was transferred to the local designated account for support. Regarding the support for The Cham Island, UNESCO took an initiative to organize a coordination meeting with different donors and Quang Ngai's authorities and line agencies to agree on zero-waste model at The Cham Island.

Lessons learnt

Targeting the furthest behind. Beside the insufficient amount of fund for building flood-resistant houses, basic supporting facilities such as kitchen and bathroom were not included by the project support. It was in fact a deliberate agreement between UNFPA and the Quang Nam authorities to maximizes the coverage of the support. However, this gave difficulty for the poorest beneficiaries with a pressure to borrow additional funds from the social policy banks, friends and neighbours. As a result, according to the interviews with local authorities, the proportion of about 30% proposed households have refused the support due to this obstacle.

It is noted that the mountainous districts of Quang Nam have exhibited a high prevalence of poverty. As discussed above, the poverty headcounts in these districts were 20.8% in 2019 while that of the province was only 6.06%. These districts are also the areas with high concentration of ethnic minorities. This presents a need for LNOB agenda. However, it does not seem that the recent engagements of the UN agencies were linked to these districts.

Better coordination, better results. The effectiveness of support requires a joint work in line with an effective coordination mechanism, through which all stakeholders contribute their efforts and expertise. The lessons learnt from Quang Nam is that not only UN agencies need to work well together internally, but they should be a facilitator for better coordination among GoV agencies also.

There is no focal point for ODA management, including UN support system, making it difficult for local People's Committees and local agencies to participate and implementing projects' activities. According to the local government stakeholders, this lack of coordination represents a shortcoming of the cooperation between the UN and the province.

Need-based planning. It was reflected that most of the support from UN had come from mobilized and available fund which was allocated to several selected provinces based on population sizes and level of impacts of the disasters. This resulted in limitations of the support in terms of unit budget estimate, number of beneficiaries, and coverage. Besides, lack of effective coordination with other donors and GOVN could make it more difficult to manage the support to meet the actual needs of the vulnerable people.

Introduction of feasible models. The introduction and application of appropriate models is essential that UN agencies are taking their effort at both central and local levels. Some effective models, however, are unlikely to be sustained due to their non-alignment with the financial regulations of the Government of Vietnam, for example payments to service providers, allowances for government officials and volunteers.

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