



National
Resilience
Programme

Programme Evaluation of National Resilience Programme (NRP) Bangladesh

June 2022



Oxford Policy
Management



Sweden
Sverige



United Nations Entity for Gender Equality
and the Empowerment of Women



UNOPS



Project/outcome Information		
Project/outcome title	National Resilience Programme (NRP)	
Award ID	00085969	
Corporate outcome and output	<p>Outcome:</p> <p>Substantial increase in resilience to disaster and reduction in disaster risk, loss of lives and livelihoods of men, women, girls and boys; and protection of the health of persons, businesses and communities in Bangladesh.</p> <p>Outputs:</p> <p>Output 1: Improved capacities for gender-responsive risk-informed development planning;</p> <p>Output 2: Strengthened disability inclusive, gender-responsive national capacities to address recurrent and mega disasters;</p> <p>Output 3: Improved capacity of selected public institutions to achieve resilience outcomes through designing and constructing risk-informed and gender-responsive infrastructure system;</p> <p>Output 4: Enhanced women leadership capacities for gender-responsive disaster management decisions, investments, and policies at national and local levels;</p> <p>Output 5: Strengthened disability inclusive, gender responsive community preparedness, response, and recovery capacities for recurrent and mega disasters.</p>	
Country	Bangladesh	
Region	South Asia	
Date project document signed	21 August 2017	
Project dates	Start	Planned end
	01 May 2017	31 December 2022
Total committed budget	USD 13,919,331 (31 st December 2022)	
Project expenditure at the time of evaluation	USD 10,318,294 (till 31 st December 2021)	
Funding source	<p>Sources of funded budget:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ FCDO (Former DFID) GBP 4,000,000 ▪ Government of Sweden SEK 66,500,000 ▪ Government contribution in kind and cash (parallel) - <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Ministry of Disaster Management and Relief USD 461,219 ○ Ministry of Women and Children Affairs USD 324,900 ○ Programming Division, Planning Commission USD 158,076 	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Local Government Division, MoLGRD&C 	USD 383,174
Implementing party¹	I. Department of Disaster Management (DDM) of the Ministry of Disaster Management and Relief (MoDMR); II. Department of Women Affairs (DWA) of the Ministry of Women and Children Affairs (MoWCA); III. Programming Division of the Planning Commission, Ministry of Planning (MoP); IV. Local Government Engineering Division (LGED) of the Ministry of Local Government Rural Development and Cooperatives (MoLGRD&C).	

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¹ This is the entity that has overall responsibility for implementation of the project (award), effective use of resources and delivery of outputs in the signed project document and workplan.

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The Evaluation Team is grateful for the support provided by the NRP team in the course of this evaluation. The team has been honoured to be part of this evaluation and is thankful for the candid sharing of information in the course of the evaluation. We have had the pleasure of speaking to many individuals from Government of Bangladesh, UN Organisations, technical experts involved in the interventions from various organisations, beneficiaries of the interventions of the NRP, development partners, NGOs – too many to name individually lest we miss out on any of them. However, we would like specially to acknowledge the Project Directors of the 4 sub-projects of NRP, the PCMT team and the personnel from UNDP, UNOPS and UN Women. We have been enriched by their in-depth knowledge of the programme and these interactions have formed the basis of the findings.

We wish to congratulate the entire NRP team and the Government of Bangladesh for taking up this extremely challenging venture and we wish them the best for making the National Resilience Programme more robust and more impactful in future based on the findings of this evaluation.

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List of abbreviations

AMP	Asset Management Plan
AMS	Asset Management System
AWP	Annual Workplan Preparation
CAPI	Computer Assisted Personal Interviewing
CDMP	Comprehensive Disaster Management Programme
CPD	Country Programme Document
CPP	Cyclone & Flood Preparedness Programme
CSO	Civil Society Organisation
DAC	Development Assistance Committee
DDM	Department of Disaster Management
DFRM	Dynamic Flood Risk Model
DIA	Disaster Impact Assessment
DMC	Disaster Management Committee
DPOs	Disabled Persons Organizations
DPP	Development Project Proforma/Proposal
DRIP	Disaster and Climate Risk Information Platform
DRM	Disaster Risk Management
DRR	Disaster Risk Reduction
DWA	Department of Women Affairs
EGPP	Employment Generation Programme for the Poorest
EQ	Evaluation Questions
ESCAP	United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific
ESCB	Engineering Staff College of Bangladesh
EU	European Union
FCDO	Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office
FGD	Focus Group Discussions
GDPR	General Data Protection Regulation
GESI	Gender Equality and Social Inclusion
GiHA	Gender in Humanitarian Action
GoB	Government of Bangladesh
IDIs	In-depth Interviews
IE	Implementing Entity
JPIC	Joint Programme Implementation Committee
JPSC	Joint Project Steering Committee
KIIs	Key Informant Interviews
LDC	Least Developed Countries
LGED	Local Government Engineering Department
LGIs	Local Government Institutions
MoDMR	Ministry of Disaster Management and Relief
MoLGRD&C	Ministry of Local Government Rural Development and Cooperatives
MoP	Ministry of Planning
MoWCA	Ministry of Women and Children Affairs

NPDM	National Plan for Disaster Management
NRP	National Resilience Programme
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development's
OPM	Oxford Policy Management
PDIA	Problem Driven Iterative Approach
PSU	Primary Sampling Unit
QCO	Quality Control Officers
RDM	Road Deterioration Model
RSDMS	Roads and Structures Database Management System
SADDD	Sex, Age, and Disability Disaggregated Data
SFDRR	Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction
Sida	Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency
SOD	Standing Order on Disaster
TOC	Theory of Change
ToT	Training of Trainers
UN	United Nations
UNDAF	UN Development Assistance Framework
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNEG	United Nations Evaluation Group
UNOPS	United Nations Office for Project Services
VFM	Value for Money

Executive Summary

Background of NRP

The National Resilience Programme (NRP) is a partnership between Government of Bangladesh (GoB) and three UN agencies- United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS) and UN Women to strengthen Bangladesh Government's capacity to design and implement inclusive, gender responsive disaster management and development policies and practices with specific focus on increasing community participation and empowerment of women in responding to and planning for disaster mitigation.

Though the programme was originally planned for 56 months from May 2017 to July 2020, the programme duration has been revised thrice considering the delayed start of programme activities and the restrictions in implementation imposed by COVID-19. During this evaluation exercise between October 2021-April 2022 the third time extension of the programme has been confirmed and is now scheduled to be completed by December 2022.

The programme has been operated through 4 sub-projects implemented in partnership with four government departments and three UN agencies: i) The Department of Disaster Management (DDM) of the Ministry of Disaster Management and Relief (MoDMR), with technical support from UNDP; ii) Programming Division of the Planning Commission, Ministry of Planning (MoP), with technical support from UNDP; iii) Local Government Engineering Department (LGED) of the Local Government Division, Ministry of Local Government Rural Development and Cooperatives (MoLGRD&C), with technical support from UNOPS; and iv) Department of Women Affairs (DWA) of the Ministry of Women and Children Affairs (MoWCA), with technical support from UN Women.

The overall Goal of the NRP is *'To sustain the resilience of human and economic development in Bangladesh through inclusive, gender responsive disaster management and risk informed development'*. NRP was designed to provide strategic support to enhance government capacity for implementing local risk reduction activities at scale through its own structures and programmes rather than directly implementing local risk reduction activities by the programme itself. The expected outcome of the NRP was 'Substantial increase in resilience to disaster and reduction in disaster risk, loss of lives, livelihoods and health of men, women, girls and boys and protection of persons, business and communities in Bangladesh'. To achieve this outcome, the NRP focused on 5 specific outputs where gender equality is the crosscutting and critical parameter achieving the outputs.

About the Evaluation of NRP and Methodology

This evaluation assesses NRP at the conclusion regarding its functioning and effectiveness from an independent third-party outlook. Given the implementation structure and desired outputs of the NRP, the evaluation of the NRP looked into higher level planning and policy aspects at the national level, understanding of capacity and institutional strengthening that has happened through the NRP at the local government level as well as capacity development, understanding and participation in disaster planning and response at the community level. In all these levels, gender inclusiveness imparted through the NRP has been evaluated as evidenced through the inclusion of gender responsive action plans, development agendas or standard operating procedures developed through the NRP. Though the evaluation exercise is unable to represent the final outcome of the programme at the end of its scheduled timeline due to the delayed implementation caused by COVID and subsequent extension of the programme, it provides an analysis on whether the programme has been able to properly start the change pathways that it intended to follow to achieve the programme goal.

The evaluation has applied the OECD-DAC criteria which includes *relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact, and sustainability*. The VfM dimension has been added to the DAC criteria for a more comprehensive evaluation. The methodology was designed to gather quantitative and qualitative data and evidence for the programme evaluation. As a first step, the evaluation team undertook a desk review of all the documents, reports and other relevant literatures made available to the team. Further, Key Informant Interviews (KIIs) and in-depth interviews (IDIs) were conducted with NRP and other government departments, both at National and sub-national level, along with other relevant stakeholders in the programme/this sector. Focus group discussions were conducted with the beneficiaries of the NRP at the National and sub-national level as well as with the project operation teams from the three UN organisations and the PCMT. 4 case studies have been carried out covering the activities from the different project implementing entities. A household survey covering 720 households from the NRP implementation areas were conducted to ascertain whether there has been any perceptible change due to the programme at the ground level. The VfM analysis was done using UK's 'four Es' (economy, efficiency, *effectiveness and equity*).

FINDINGS

Relevance

The NRP is seen relevant in addressing the issues of resilience as identified in the policy documents of Bangladesh and the activities undertaken by the NRP is closely linked to the identified priorities of the GoB at national and sub-national levels. The programme has developed multiple innovative tools and approaches working in a participatory manner with government stakeholders to address disaster and resilience issues in each of the sub-projects undertaken by the three UN agencies. The specific priorities of each of the implementing agencies were identified through extensive consultation with the government counterparts and have mostly been demand-driven. Certain activities have also been undertaken which contributed to the continuation of activities undertaken by previous programmes or by the GoB itself.

The NRP has responded flexibly by tailoring priorities in line with the specific needs of Bangladesh and have demonstrated significant flexibility to the changing needs of the country in the context of COVID, cyclone Amphan and flood in 2020 where the NRP provided support in tailoring "build back better" strategies and gender assessment of disaster response in real time. Discussions with government ministries and other stakeholders have demonstrated a strong buy-in of NRP activities among government counterparts in different Ministries or other institutional entities.

The NRP has embarked on some very ambitious projects which have the potential to enhance the resilience of Bangladesh in the long run through policy changes and systemic changes.

Effectiveness

Overall, the NRP has achieved most of the targeted outputs that each of the sub-projects undertook. Certain activities are in their final stages of implementation or pending validation and/or approval from the GoB. Since the NRP has been provided with an extension till December 2022, based on the present status of the projects it is likely that all the outputs as demarcated in the annual work plans of the sub-projects will be achieved by the end of the programme.

The NRP has however had varied success in mainstreaming resilience and gender sensitisation in government decision making process. Some of the key interventions of the NRP those have already found acceptance with the GOB which includes: inclusion of gender consideration in Standing Order on Disasters 2019 and NPDM 2021-25; Inclusion of the DIA framework in the feasibility report template; Development of Dynamic Flood Risk Model for local level flood management; Implementation of the AMS in LGED from scratch – provides a holistic gender inclusive asset management system including

asset management plans for roads and bridges built and maintained by LGED; Piloting of SADDD collection on disasters by Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics.

The success of the NRP is mainly contributed to the strong technical teams supporting the project implementation and the government's ownership of the NRP. The NRP has benefitted from the enthusiasm of key GOB officials who were willing to achieve transformational changes. However, while the NRP has been successful in the technical aspects of resilience building, when it comes to innovative approaches of gender mainstreaming in planning and disaster management, the NRP had the potential to do better. The NRP needed a more integrated approach in project design and implementation regarding gender issues.

Efficiency

Over the programme period, NRP has contributed to developing institutional mechanisms, systems, and methodologies to enhance resilient, and in some case gender-inclusive, planning at national and sub-national levels. Collaborating with relevant government ministries under the existing systems/mechanisms through regular involvement of officials in consultations and building in the process their capacities has reinforced ownership and enhanced efficiency and effectiveness of NRP.

NRP has contributed in increased awareness at ministry and community level regarding the need of resilient planning and disproportional effect of disasters on women and vulnerable population. By engaging at the grass-roots levels with community members as well as with policy makers at the higher levels, NRP has tried to strike a balance between a top-down approach and a bottom-up approach through (i) developing innovative system enhancements and (ii) capacity building programmes or workshops.

Impact

Given the short timeframe of the NRP, it is too early to assess impact of the NRP programme. The impacts are expected to be significant once the recommendations from all the policy tools and system enhancements are fully integrated and adopted by the governments given that these have been developed in a consultative manner. The initiatives undertaken by the NRP have mostly been just finalised and are yet to be adopted completely by the government.

The evaluation findings suggest that NRP has made significant progress against its output targets in all the sub-projects and is highly likely to complete most of the on-going interventions till close of the programme in December 2022. This could be confirmed only at the individual sub-project level since the linkage between the NRP's logframe with the sub-project log-frames is not clear. The AMS (along with the AMPs), DIA (along with the DRIP and hazard maps), ToT activities and integration of training modules in established training institutes, gender mainstreaming in the SOD-2019 and the NPDM 2021-2025 are found strong likelihood to be highly impactful. These interventions are more focused activities designed with clear change pathways, largely strategic and closest to completion. While the LGED gender markers, SADDD collection in BBS, training of CSOs on women empowerment, supply chain resilience study, DFRM, DRR-EGPP are identified by the evaluation as the possibly impactful interventions of NRP, the media training on gender sensitisation, local community trainings, earthquake volunteer training and build-back better strategies for Municipalities are categorized under the uncertain impacts. Uncertain impacts are those interventions include projects that are stand-alone and without clear change pathways towards impact, on the other hand possibly impactful are those group of interventions are smaller activities with potential to up-scale, yet to be finished and adopted by the GoB.

Value for Money

The evaluation team concedes that since many of the policies and toolkits developed through NRP have significant potential to strengthen systems and processes but are yet to be fully rolled out or benefits of those which have been piloted or implemented are yet to accrue are difficult to monetize, the efficiency of the NRP with respect to VfM is difficult to measure at this stage. In terms of economy of VfM analysis, the approach of NRP to build on earlier donor funded projects is also a commendable approach and generate value for money on a broader scheme of development and resilience initiatives. Another commendable approach towards Value for Money adopted by the NRP is to make the GoB an equal partner through contribution in cash and kind in the project thereby ensuring ownership and continuity of the project. The structure and design of the NRP ensured that the programme has been demand-driven and have responded to the needs of the stakeholders at all times. Therefore, while it is about effectiveness of VfM, the NRP has seen high levels of demand for handholding support as well as cooperation from their government counterparts. However, the selection of activities of the NRP needs a narrower focus to be more effective. Some activities could be consolidated, and focus should be more on policy initiatives rather than one-off activities. The best practice would be to have a policy initiative supported by capacity building and piloting.

Sustainability

The high level of ownership and engagement of the government counterparts in all the ministries with the NRP provides enough confidence to conclude that the interventions supported by the NRP would continue even in the absence of the project. Having said that, it should be noted that most of the NRP interventions are yet to be fully integrated in the government systems. At the present moment, none of the interventions of the NRP is replicable without external assistance. The programme has not had the chance to mature enough to ensure sustenance without external aid. The design of the NRP with the government being an equal partner will be the biggest contributor to its sustainability beyond the project lifetime, once the project has had the opportunity and time to mature.

Lessons Learnt and Recommendations

Some of the lessons learnt from implementation of the NRP is as follows:

- A participatory approach in programme design and implementation ensures greater buy-in by government counterparts. NRP's flexible approach of responding to demand-driven initiatives was a key to success and increased both ownership and buy-in among national and sub-national counterparts.
- A sub-project approach is indeed a good approach to leverage existing relationships with government counterparts. However, to be successful in achieving greater value for money, this approach requires a strong coordination mechanism among the implementing entities.
- For a complex project like NRP it is necessary to have a narrower focus as it is not practicable to try to address all resilience issues through one technical assistance project.
- Technical and capacity building support services need to be institutionalised within existing institutions with similar mandates. One-off training activities do not contribute significantly towards transformational changes. Targeting training and capacity building to either a 'core group' or 'expert group' within nodal departments comprising people at operational levels will have a greater sustainability of policy actions.
- A siloed approach is not the correct way for gender mainstreaming since gender is a cross-cutting issue which need to be addressed by everybody. Gender mainstreaming and gender budgeting should be integrated in project designs right from the inception of the interventions

- Knowledge management of the NRP needs to be strengthened to establish the relevance of the project interventions in meeting with the NRP goals
- Internal monitoring of the NRP needs significant strengthening to capture the success as well as failures of the NRP and for identifying process inefficiencies.
- A technical assistance project should aim to work towards more strategic projects instead of smaller interventions. Smaller interventions should always be followed up either with policy directions, up-scaling or mechanisms for replication. Technical assistance programmes take longer time to be adopted and demonstrate impact.

1 Introduction

1.1 Objectives and Scope of Evaluation

According to the ToR, the present evaluation is required to assess the performance of the programme and identify key lessons on what worked well for the programme and what did not, and make recommendations for guiding future extensions of the NRP, if any. The evaluation has limited scope to recommend any changes in the ongoing plans or activities of the programme because of its imminent end and near full spend of the programme budget. *Thus, the main purpose of the evaluation is to define the lessons from the programme which would be useful for future interventions.*

The evaluation therefore focussed on the following five areas of the programme:

- a. Assess achievements and progress vis-à-vis (a) the theory of change, (ToC) and the strategy and approach of the programme; and (b) logframe indicators at output, outcome, and impact levels. *It is understood that given the short duration of the project and COVID-19 induced barriers, the NRP may not have advanced to the level of monitoring impacts and outcomes.*
- b. Evaluate to what extent the programme has positively contributed to gender responsive disaster management policies and plans, risk-informed development planning and gender responsiveness.
- c. Examine the programme's approach to and achievements of Value for Money (VfM) in terms of basic indicators (economy, efficiency, effectiveness, and equity). The VfM analysis will also focus on the process of selection of the interventions as to whether these were the best possible interventions given the information available at the time.
- d. Review 'value addition' of the NRP as compared to ongoing interventions by Bangladesh government or other donors in the country and assess whether the structure of the programme provides strong value for money as opposed to collective value of the individual sub-programmes.
- e. Identify key lessons learned to make recommendations for guiding future programmes.

The evaluation applied the aid effectiveness criteria of the Development Assistance Committee (DAC) of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD).

The evaluation was completed over the period of 4 months from December 2021 to March 2022. The detailed work plan is provided in the Annex. There has been a slight delay in the evaluation due to unavailability of key informants as well as team members due to onset of COVID in December 2021 through February 2022.

The Evaluation Report is targeted at a range of stakeholders who will be interested in the findings. The list includes (but is not limited to) the following; FCDO, Government of Sweden, UNDP, UNOPS, UN Women, Government of Bangladesh, local government institutions, disaster management committees, and international organisations, civil society organisations, and other development partners who work on risk-informed development, gender-responsive climate change, disaster mitigation, resilience and gender issues. There are also several other parties who are not directly involved with the programme, but who may also be interested in the evaluation and its findings such as academics/technical experts. The stakeholders can be categorised into three groups aligned with their manner of interaction with the evaluation and its findings. The report will cater to all three types of stakeholders. UNDP could consider

disseminating the findings from the evaluation using a mix of formats (e.g. briefs, case studies) and channels.

Groups	Key Stakeholders	Dissemination activities
Act: Stakeholders who will change their practices as a result of the evaluation process and findings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Government Partners – MoDMR, MoP, MoWCA & LGED Implementing Partners – UNDP, UNOPS, UN Women Development Partners - FCDO, Government of Sweden 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Round tables and/or close group workshops
Understand: Stakeholders who wish to understand the programme on account of its link with their work	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Government officials at the national/sub-national level 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Presentation at the programme closure workshop
Aware: Stakeholders who would like to be aware of the evaluation and its findings, but do not require detailed information about the evaluation process	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Donor agencies undertaking complementary programmes NGOs/CSOs implementing similar programmes and/or working in the risk informed development and gender responsive disaster management, resilience, climate change sector Academicians/technical experts 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evaluation brief and three to four thematic case studies on UNDP and other development partners and donor websites

1.2 Description of the Programme

The National Resilience Programme (NRP) is a partnership between Government of Bangladesh (GoB) and United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS) and UN Women to strengthen Bangladesh Government's capacity to design and implement inclusive, gender responsive disaster management and development policies and practices with specific focus on increasing community participation and empowerment of women in responding to and planning for disaster mitigation. The NRP is a USD 12,589,677 programme funded jointly by the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO) (USD 5,129,466) and Government of Sweden (USD 6,279,336). The Government of Bangladesh has also contributed USD 1.18 Million in cash and kind. The programme was originally supposed to continue for 56 months from May 2017 to July 2020. However, initially due to the delayed start of programme activities and later due to COVID-19 imposed restrictions, the programme duration was revised twice. At the start of this evaluation exercise the programme was scheduled to be completed by 31 December 2021. However, it is understood that the programme has been extended again and is now scheduled to be completed by December 2022.

The Goal of the NRP was *'To sustain the resilience of human and economic development in Bangladesh through inclusive, gender responsive disaster management and risk informed development'*

The NRP has operated through 4 sub-projects implemented in partnership with:

1. The Department of Disaster Management (DDM) of the Ministry of Disaster Management and Relief (MoDMR), with technical support from UNDP;
2. Programming Division of the Planning Commission, Ministry of Planning (MoP), with technical support from UNDP;
3. Local Government Engineering Department (LGED) of the Local Government Division, Ministry of Local Government Rural Development and Cooperatives (MoLGRD&C), with technical support from UNOPS, and
4. Department of Women Affairs (DWA) of the Ministry of Women and Children Affairs (MoWCA), with technical support from UN Women.

The NRP was not intended to implement local risk reduction activities at scale but was designed to provide strategic support to enhance government capacity to do so through its own structures and programmes. In doing so, the NRP has also simultaneously worked towards development of capacity of women's machinery, women's rights organizations, self-help groups, organisations for persons with disability, humanitarian actors, and media which are essential support systems to government interventions. The implementation structure of NRP poses a complex operating environment, involving:

- a. changes in policy priorities;
- b. irregular changes in individuals (e.g. ministers etc.) via transfer of government officials to other positions or departments;
- c. changes in institutions' and structures, such as decentralisation;
- d. increasing extreme weather events within the region;
- e. socio-economic changes, including community participation and community leadership,
- f. lack of gender-responsive planning, funding, sensitisation and inclusiveness which worsened during COVID-19. The unprecedented *"COVID-19 pandemic has erased decades of progress towards gender equality"*² and unfortunately, the NRP had to operate during this global emergency which added a layer of complexity to the NRP

The expected outcome of the NRP was 'Substantial increase in resilience to disaster and reduction in disaster risk, loss of lives, livelihoods and health of men, women, girls and boys and protection of persons, business and communities in Bangladesh'. To achieve this outcome, the NRP focused on 5 specific outputs:

- a. Improved capacities for risk-informed and gender responsive development planning;
- b. Strengthened gender-responsive national capacities to address recurrent and mega disasters
- c. Improved capacity of GoB to achieve resilience through designing and constructing risk-informed and gender-responsive infrastructure system;
- d. Enhanced women leadership capacities for gender-responsive disaster management decisions, investments and policies at national and local levels;
- e. Strengthened disability inclusive, gender responsive community preparedness, response and recovery capacities for recurrent and mega disasters.

The NRP outputs, therefore, seek to strengthen gender-responsive risk informed development planning, strengthening of capacity for gender inclusive management, mitigation and planning for

² UNSG statement 3 March 2021, [Women's Lives Upended, Rights Eroded amid COVID-19, Secretary-General Says in Message for International Day, Warning Impact Will Outlast Pandemic | Meetings Coverage and Press Releases \(un.org\)](#)

disaster response at national level. Gender equality is crosscutting and critical parameter to achieve the 5 specific outputs of the National Resilience Programme. At the local level, NRP aimed to strengthen community participation, enhance women's leadership in disaster planning and policy development and strengthen selected public institutions to achieve resilience through risk informed and gender responsive infrastructure.

This evaluation was commissioned by the NRP as an independent third-party outlook at the conclusion of the NRP regarding its functioning and effectiveness. Given the implementation structure and desired outputs of the NRP, the evaluation of the NRP looked into **higher level planning and policy aspects at the national level, understanding of capacity and institutional strengthening that has happened through the NRP at the local government level as well as capacity development, understanding and participation in disaster planning and response at the community level.** In all these levels, gender responsiveness imparted through the NRP has been evaluated as evidenced through the inclusion of gender responsive action plans, development agendas or standard operating procedures developed through the NRP. Unfortunately, due to the delayed implementation of the NRP on account of COVID and subsequent extension of the programme, the evaluation exercise is unable to represent the final outcome of the programme at the end of its scheduled timeline but provides an analysis on whether the programme has been able to properly adhere to the change pathways that it intended to follow to achieve the programme goal: *Substantial increase in resilience to disaster and reduction in disaster risk, loss of lives and livelihoods of men, women, girls and boys; and protection of the health of the persons, businesses and communities in Bangladesh.*

1.3 Structure of the report

The report consists of 6 chapters and accompanying annexes.

- Chapter 1 provides an introduction to the evaluation exercise
- Chapter 2 provides the methodology followed in conducting the evaluation.
- The main findings from the evaluation exercise is reflected in chapter 3. Chapter 3 provides an assessment of the NRP based on the evaluation questionnaires (EQs) as described in chapter 2. Since multiple EQs seek similar or closely related information, in some cases response to multiple EQs have been clubbed together for better readability.
- Chapter 4 summarises the main lessons that could be drawn from the evaluation findings. A reader should read chapter 3 and chapter 4 in tandem since chapter 4 follows from chapter 3
- Chapter 5 which provides the recommendations for increasing the effectiveness of the NRP. The recommendations are provided for both the development partners as well as the implementers
- Chapter 6 concludes the report.

2 Evaluation Framework and Methodology

This section explains the framework and methodology to be followed in the evaluation of the NRP programme. The evaluation will be carried out applying OECD-DAC criteria including VfM.

2.1 Evaluation Framework

2.1.1 Evaluation approach

As suggested in the ToR, the evaluation has applied the OECD-DAC criteria which includes *relevance*, *effectiveness*, *efficiency*, *impact*, and *sustainability*. The VfM dimension has been added to the DAC criteria for a more comprehensive evaluation.

Evaluation Questions (EQs) were framed based on the understanding of the NRP programme as stated in the previous section and the evaluation objectives (see *Section 1.2*) under each OECD-DAC criterion including VfM.

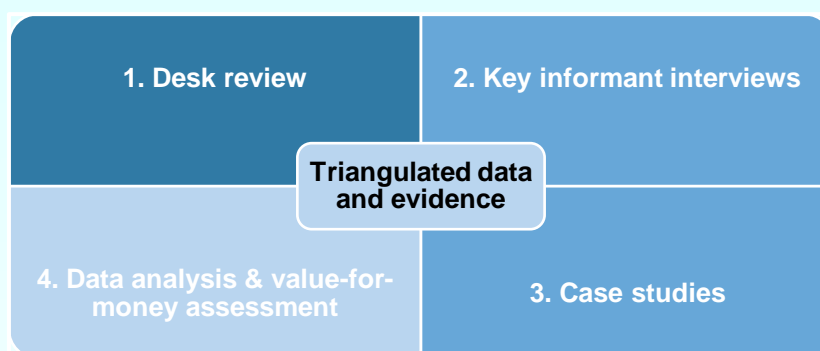
This evaluation has analysed the **contribution** of the NRP to changes in key indicators as identified in the Theory of Change (TOC) of the programme. In the light of multiple factors influencing a result, this approach seeks to understand if a particular intervention has made a noticeable contribution to an observed result and if so, in what way. The contribution of the NRP towards developing key policy, institutional or organisational changes has been evaluated in the report through documentary and/or anecdotal evidence from government counter parties as well as selected case studies. This has helped the evaluation team to determine with **reasonable degree of certainty**, the NRP's role in the outcomes achieved, thereby addressing the questions about its effectiveness and impact in shaping government policies in gender responsive disaster risk management (DRM), mainstreaming of gender responsive DRM in development plans at the national, sub-national and local community levels.

The evaluation focused on understanding the key principles of **Ownership (within the Government)**, **Strategic engagement (with multiple-ministries and communities)**, and **Complementarity and coordination (inter programme and with other programmes/ donors)** to determine the longevity and use of the tools/ guidelines/ policies/ training programmes developed through the NRP within its beneficiaries – government or community. The evaluation therefore sought to establish the **process of achieving change** rather than focussing on the change itself. This was established through the following questions -

- a. How was the intervention selected?
- b. What were the assumptions in planning and delivering the intervention?
- c. How was gender-responsiveness incorporated in the intervention?
- d. How was the intervention delivered?
- e. What marks the success (or failure) of the intervention and why?
- f. What were the key reasons for the success (or failure) of the interventions?
- g. How was value for money established – internal collaboration, external collaboration, resource sharing etc.?
- h. What is the sustainability planning for the intervention – government ownership, grounding of intervention, implementation and continued use of system enhancements, training of trainers, changes in training curriculums etc.?
- i. How does the intervention relate back to the goal of the NRP?

The methodology was designed to gather quantitative and qualitative data and evidence for the programme evaluation. In particular, the methodology included: (i) desk review of relevant literature; (ii) key informant interviews (KIIs) i.e. interviews with the key stakeholders; (iii) case studies; and (iv) primary and secondary data analysis and VfM assessment. An important aspect of any evaluation is the accuracy and credibility of data and information used in the study. This has been ensured through the triangulation of data and evidence gathered from different sources (e.g. progress reports, official records of the partner countries/states, the findings of the KIIs).

Figure 1 Evaluation Methodology



An evaluation matrix was developed presenting the EQs along with the OECD-DAC criteria including VfM.

2.1.2 Data sources

The primary starting point of the evaluation has been from the TOC and the results framework for the NRP. The evaluation acknowledges that for a technical assistance programme as complex and broad as the NRP, its contribution cannot be measured only by numbers of interventions supported or tools created, or people trained. Mere evaluation of numbers achieved in the result framework will not be reflective of the impacts of the programme as most of these impacts are will have been achieved through significant influencing and collaboration with government counterparts. Thus, the impacts of the NRP has been ascertained through KIIs with government officials and programme implementers at the National and sub-national level. The information obtained through the KIIs has been validated through documentary evidence, as provided by the programme implementers, to establish a causal chain. This included newsletters, result frameworks, case studies conducted by the programme implementers, government orders wherever applicable, policy frameworks adopted etc.

Table 1 Evaluation Matrix

OECD-DAC Criteria / Key evaluation questions	Tools	Stakeholders/ data source
Relevance		
EQ1. To what extent is the NRP programme relevant to and consistent with (i) partner country's needs and priorities at national/sub-national levels; (ii) global disaster & climate policies and actions; (iii) global gender legal treaties and frameworks; (iv) Implementing partners' priorities; (iv) relevant international frameworks (Sustainable Development Goals and targets, Sendai Framework for example)	KIIs Secondary Document Review	Representatives of MoDMR, Programming Division – MoP, MoWCA, LGED Representatives of DMCs, LGIs Representatives of NRP Representatives of UNDP, UNOPS, UN Women
EQ2. To what extent was the design and strategy of the NRP aligned with UNDP's Country Programme Document (CPD) (2017-2021) and The UN Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) (2017-2021)?	KIIs Secondary Document Review	Representatives of NRP Representatives of UNDP, UNOPS, UN Women
EQ3. How sound or logical is the decision to develop NRP as a combination of independent sub-programmes as opposed to an overarching umbrella programme covering multiple ministries?	KIIs FGD	Representatives of MoDMR, Programming Division – MoP, MoWCA, LGED Representatives of NRP Representatives of UNDP, UNOPS, UN Women
EQ4. Does the programme continue to be relevant to the partner country's latest disaster resilience and development policies?	KIIs FGD	Representatives of MoDMR, Programming Division – MoP, MoWCA, LGED Representatives of NRP Representatives of UNDP, UNOPS, UN Women
EQ5. Did the proposed theory of change of the NRP (and its sub-programme) lead to actual changes or should it be revised?	KIIs FGD Secondary Document Review	Representatives of MoDMR, Programming Division – MoP, MoWCA, LGED Representatives of NRP Representatives of UNDP, UNOPS, UN Women
Effectiveness		
EQ6. Has the programme achieved, or is it likely to achieve, the targeted results (outputs/outcomes)? What have been the key factors responsible for success or failure in achieving the targets?	KIIs FGD Secondary Document Review Household survey	Representatives of MoDMR, Programming Division – MoP, MoWCA, LGED Representatives of DMCs, LGIs Representatives of NRP Representatives of UNDP, UNOPS, UN Women Beneficiaries/ communities
EQ7. How innovative and effective have been the system enhancement support (policy options, tools, framework) in mainstreaming gender-responsive risk informed development and disaster planning,	KIIs FGD Household survey	Representatives of MoDMR, Programming Division – MoP, MoWCA, LGED Representatives of DMCs, LGIs

OECD-DAC Criteria / Key evaluation questions	Tools	Stakeholders/ data source
gender issues and women empowerment? Have some of those been tested/piloted on ground to demonstrate potential benefits of their uptake and/or scaling at national/sub-national levels? If yes, what have been the experience? If not, why?		Representatives of NRP Representatives of UNDP, UNOPS, UN Women Beneficiaries
EQ8. How effective and gender-balanced have been the trainings conducted under the programme to develop skills of the government functionaries at different levels and in building capacity of the relevant organisations (i.e. the organisations who are working on disaster management and development planning) in the partner countries/states been?	KIIs FGD	Representatives of MoDMR, Programming Division – MoP, MoWCA, LGED Representatives of DMCs, LGIs Representatives of UNDP, UNOPS, UN Women Beneficiaries/ Trainees
EQ9. Have gender equality, social inclusions and disability considerations been integrated across all the programme outputs and M&E activities as per developmental indicators of the logframe?	KIIs Secondary Document Review	Representatives of NRP Representatives of UNDP, UNOPS, UN Women
EQ10. To what extent has the NRP contributed to digitalisation or other systemic enhancements?	KIIs Secondary Document Review	Representatives of MoDMR, Programming Division – MoP, MoWCA, LGED Representatives of DMCs, LGIs Representatives of NRP Representatives of UNDP, UNOPS, UN Women
Efficiency		
EQ11. What has been the level of efficiency of UNDP/ UNOPS/ UN WOMEN in programme implementation? Could they manage well the government functionaries at national/sub-national levels, civil societies, and media in the partner countries/states?	KIIs FGDs	Representatives of NRP Representatives of UNDP, UNOPS, UN Women Communities and other beneficiaries
EQ12. To what extent have the funds been disbursed and utilised? How did the programme manage financial and operational risks in the wake of COVID-19?	KIIs Secondary Document Review	Representatives of NRP Representatives of UNDP, UNOPS, UN Women
EQ13. What has been the scale/quality of partnership and coordination (policy and technical planning) between the implementing agencies, and between other development partners (World Bank, ADB, USAID) who have supported similar or complementary programmes?	KIIs	Representatives of NRP Representatives of UNDP, UNOPS, UN Women
EQ14. Has the internal M&E system of the NRP managed to capture, analyse and generate learning from the project?	KIIs FGD Secondary Document Review	Representatives of NRP Representatives of UNDP, UNOPS, UN Women
Impact		

OECD-DAC Criteria / Key evaluation questions	Tools	Stakeholders/ data source
EQ15. What have been the impacts (actual or likely impacts) of the programme in terms of the logframe indicators? What is the scale achieved or likely to be achieved? Are there any unintended (positive/negative) impacts of the programme?	KIIs FGD Secondary Document Review Household survey	Representatives of MoDMR, Programming Division – MoP, MoWCA, LGED Representatives of DMCs, LGIs Representatives of NRP Representatives of UNDP, UNOPS, UN Women Beneficiaries
EQ16. To what extent have economic and social systems of the partner countries adapted their economic and social systems to gender responsive resilient development? What have been the co-impacts of the complementary programmes supported by other development partners?	KIIs Secondary Document Review Household survey	Representatives of MoDMR, Programming Division – MoP, MoWCA, LGED Representatives of DMCs, LGIs Representatives of NRP Representatives of UNDP, UNOPS, UN Women
EQ17. To what extent have the stakeholders' (parliamentarians, line ministries, private sector, civil societies, media, citizens etc.) responded to policy, tools, framework etc. developed under the programme (demand side impacts)?	KIIs FGD Household Survey	Representatives of MoDMR, Programming Division – MoP, MoWCA, LGED Representatives of DMCs, LGIs Representatives of NRP Representatives of UNDP, UNOPS, UN Women Beneficiaries/ civil societies/ media
EQ18. To what extent has the structure of the NRP contributed to force-multiplier effects? I.e. is the contribution of the NRP greater than the contribution of the sum of its sub-programmes?	KIIs FGD	Representatives of NRP Representatives of UNDP, UNOPS, UN Women
Value-for-money		
EQ19. Has the programme created value for money in terms of VfM indicators (economy, efficiency, effectiveness, equity)? How well VfM remained on track during the period of evaluation?	KIIs Secondary Document Review	Representatives of NRP Representatives of UNDP, UNOPS, UN Women
EQ20. Did the selection of the interventions and the mode of delivery consider the highest achievable impacts from the money allocated towards the interventions?	KIIs FGD Household survey	Representatives of MoDMR, Programming Division – MoP, MoWCA, LGED Representatives of DMCs, LGIs Representatives of NRP Representatives of UNDP, UNOPS, UN Women Beneficiaries
EQ21. Did the selection of the interventions lead to the creation of further demand from the partners?	KIIs FGD	Representatives of MoDMR, Programming Division – MoP, MoWCA, LGED Representatives of DMCs, LGIs Representatives of NRP

OECD-DAC Criteria / Key evaluation questions	Tools	Stakeholders/ data source
		Representatives of UNDP, UNOPS, UN Women Beneficiaries
Sustainability		
EQ22. What is the likelihood that the programme achievements and progress will continue after the technical assistance comes to an end? What initiatives (policies/ institutional and/or regulatory frameworks/ organisational changes) have been taken or planned to ensure sustainability?	KIIs FGD	Representatives of MoDMR, Programming Division – MoP, MoWCA, LGED Representatives of DMCs, LGIs Representatives of NRP Representatives of UNDP, UNOPS, UN Women
EQ23. Are the interventions replicable in the absence of external assistance? What are the risks/ barriers/ gaps towards sustainability of the interventions?	KIIs FGD	Representatives of MoDMR, Programming Division – MoP, MoWCA, LGED Representatives of DMCs, LGIs Representatives of NRP Representatives of UNDP, UNOPS, UN Women
EQ24. How were risks evaluated and mitigated during the implementation of the programme?	KIIs FGD	Representatives of NRP Representatives of UNDP, UNOPS, UN Women

2.2 Detailed Methodology

2.2.1 Desk review

As a first step, the evaluation team undertook a desk review of all the documents made available to the team and reports, including business cases, log frame, work plans, annual report, baseline report, evaluation reports, newsletters, knowledge products, etc.), and other relevant literature. A selected bibliography of the available documents and literature is provided in Bibliography chapter.

The desk review of these documents elicited an initial set of questions related to the value addition of these interventions which are provided in the annex. These were further expanded during the KIIs

2.2.2 Samples, sampling frame and data collection tools and procedures

Key informant interviews

We conducted Key Informant Interviews (KIIs) and in-depth interviews (IDIs) with NRP and other government departments, both at National and sub-national level, along with other relevant stakeholders in this sector. All KIIs/IDIs were conducted online due to travel restrictions imposed by COVID. These interviews were conducted through MS-Teams or Zoom meetings. 28 KIIs were conducted with NRP's operational team and government counterparts at the national and sub-national level. The list of stakeholders interviewed has been provided in the Annexure K. All KIIs were not used

for sourcing primary project information. While some of these were used for generating information, others served to provide validation of the primary information.

The KIs were conducted using a semi-structured checklist of questions. The evaluation team took utmost care to comply with the standard protocol of primary data collection, such as: explaining clearly the purpose of the evaluation study to the stakeholders; ensuring consent and voluntary participation in the interviews; and maintaining confidentiality of the participant's details, if so desired.

Focus Group Discussions (FGDs)

Focus group discussions were conducted with the beneficiaries of the NRP at the National and sub-national level as well as with the project operation teams from the three UN organisations and the PCMT. The list of FGDs conducted is provided in the Annexure L. The FGDs were conducted based on structured as well as semi-structured questionnaires depending on the level of the participants in the FGDs. The structured questionnaires were customised to the beneficiary being interviewed. These questionnaires are provided in the Annexure B, C, E & F.

Case studies

4 case studies have been carried out covering the activities from the different project implementing entities and covered different types of beneficiaries and policy level impact and modelling/piloting interventions. The four case studies were:

- a. Implementation of Asset Management System in Local Government Engineering Department (UNOPS)
- b. Integration of gender and social inclusion in environment, climate change and disaster related statistics (UN Women)
- c. Piloting of DRR-EGPP in Kurigram (UNDP)
- d. Development and integration of Disaster Impact Assessment Tool (UNDP)

The findings of the selected case studies have been summarised in a standard format for public dissemination after the completion of the present evaluation. The case studies investigated the following –

- a. Genesis and brief description
- b. Implementation process
- c. Challenges faced and action taken
- d. Expected/ Demonstrated impacts
- e. Linkages with other initiatives – internal, external, scale-up, replication probability, sustainability
- f. Lessons learned

The detailed case studies are provided in the Annexure N.

Household survey (quantitative)

A household survey covering 720 households from the NRP implementation areas were conducted to ascertain whether there has been any perceptible change due to the programme at the ground level. A repeated cross section sampling method was followed where the data was collected from the same unions / wards as of the baseline survey. The sample distribution for the household survey is provided

in the Annexure. The primary sampling units (PSUs) (villages in rural areas and ward segments in urban areas) was randomly selected. Following the mapping exercise, the wards were divided into segments and sample size was equally distributed across segments (10 and 30 for rural and urban areas respectively from each PSU). The households were randomly selected from each PSUs using left-hand side or right-hand side selection rule starting from a random starting point within the PSU.

To have equal representation, the data was collected equally from male and female respondents (senior-most or the one most knowledgeable female in the family). At the PSU level, in every second sampled household, the preference was given to the female respondent.

A structured questionnaire (attached in Annexure D) covers the same topics of BL as outlined in the ToR in order to estimate the relevant BL indicators for comparison purpose. Data was collected using Computer Assisted Personal Interviewing (CAPI). Additionally, the questionnaire also covers issue of the target population's knowledge and awareness, and their experience regarding gender responsive risk-informed disaster management, along with the gender role in disaster preparedness, management and coping mechanisms. The questionnaire also focussed on the leadership role among females at the household and community level.

The data collection was carried out deploying five interviewing teams over a period of 22 days. Each team consisted of two interviewers and one supervisor. In addition, 2 Quality Control Officers were also deployed for overseeing and quality control of the data collection.

2.2.3 Stakeholder participation

The evaluation team in collaboration with the UN organisations ensured that the KIIs conducted were represented by the most suitable stakeholders with adequate knowledge on the implementation of the specific interventions under their control. As explained in the sampling section above stakeholder participation was encouraged at all level of governance structure – from National to sub-national to community level. At the FGD levels, wherever possible an equal representation of men and women were ensured, and women were encouraged to participate enthusiastically. At the household survey level equal participation of men and women were ensured. In all cases, the stakeholders were put at ease before proceeding with the questions and dues permissions were taken before proceeding to record any of the responses. In some case, anonymity requested by the stakeholder were duly acknowledged and adhered to.

2.2.4 Performance Standards

Data quality control

One researcher / field Officer and two quality control officers (QCO) was deployed for quality control checking of the survey data. Quality control checking was designed to physically verify about 5% of households whether the interviewer completed the questionnaires by interviewing the right respondents in the right households by asking the right questions. During the field visit the QCOs directly observed the interviewers' work while interviewing a respondent and conducted the re-interviews of the selected households/respondents in absence of interviewer. QCO compared the re-interviewed data with the corresponding interviewed data completed by the interviewers. No discrepancy was found for the baseline survey ensuring high quality of data collection. The data collected was further reviewed for completeness before uploading and processing of the data. Data analysis and VfM assessment

Data analysis and data triangulation

This process entails the following steps:

Compilation and analysis of secondary data: Here the focus has been on compilation and analysis of secondary data and information generated through desk review of the available documents and literature. The main purpose of secondary data analysis was to shape the findings against the evaluation questions. The evaluation also aimed at assessing the achievements and progress against the log frame indicators and the corresponding targets based on data and information ascertained from various progress reports submitted by the implementing partners and FCDO's annual reviews of the programme.

Primary data compilation and analysis: The KII responses from the stakeholders facilitated *qualitative analysis* using the standard methods of 'content analysis'. The analysis of KII responses and the findings thereof are the key tool for triangulation of data and evidence based on secondary data analysis. The KIIs were also conducted to cover the implementers as well as the government counterparts at different hierarchy levels to cross-validate the information received from the different KIIs.

Household surveys and Beneficiary FGDs: A descriptive analysis was undertaken first to understand the overall status of outcome indicators (using percentages and means), and then to assess the difference across socio-demographic and economic conditions (e.g. for male and female respondents, by locations, economic groups (low, middle, high income groups). For this Principal Component Analysis was applied using the details of asset ownership (questions adopted from the standard Demographic Health Surveys).

To understand the gender-inclusive aspect, the analysis focuses on the responses to the knowledge and awareness questions, access to early warning systems, as stated by the male vs the female respondents. Additionally, the role of females in the decision-making process, their roles in disaster management, female's access to social safety net programmes, status of gender-based violence and female participation in community leadership was also assessed through the questionnaires and subsequent analysis.

To understand how inclusive the program is for the Persons with Disabilities, the analysis focussed on the strategies for prioritized information dissemination and evacuation of Persons with Disabilities, their experiences during disasters, their roles (including in decision making process) at different levels of disaster management mechanisms.

All information collected either through the household surveys, FGDs or KIIs are validated and cross-checked through multiple interviews. Due to the need of maintaining anonymity no information has been attributed to any specific person. Also, in the right spirit of the evaluation, care has been taken in not mentioning particular UN agencies during the evaluation findings. This in some cases have the potential to give the impression that a particular UN organisation has been scrutinise more. The evaluation team would like to assure that this is not the case. Also, since the evaluation is across three separate UN agencies, findings ensuing from the activity of one UN agency may not be applicable to others. However, all findings are based on interviews and information received from the project implementers and should be taken as reflective of the entire NRP instead of individual UN organisations.

Ethical considerations

The methodology was founded firmly on ethical approaches to research with women and vulnerable people, including provisions and mechanisms to ensure that safeguarding is an absolute priority from start to finish. Informed consent and assent for participation was ensured and confidentiality assured.

OPM, as a signatory of the EU Directive on data collection the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), safeguarding respondents and team members; data collection, processing, storage and use in keeping with best practice in research with human subjects following the confidentiality, anonymity and data security. The research team adhered to ethical standards throughout as set out in the United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG) Ethical Guidelines and Norms in the UN System and UNICEF's Policy on Conduct Promoting the Protection and Safeguarding of Children.

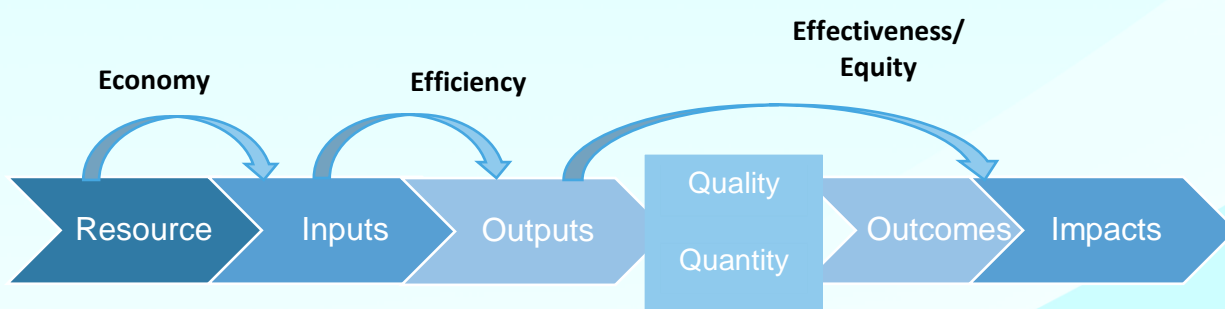
We draw from existing literature on the governance of social research (e.g. Economic and Social Research Council (2010) Framework for Research Ethics) in adopting the following principles:

- **Informed consent / assent:** means that respondents are given enough information about the research and researchers ensure that there is no explicit or implicit coercion so that respondents can make an informed and free decision on their possible involvement in the fieldwork. Respondents were also be informed that their **participation is fully voluntary** and they can withdraw from the interviews at any time. Informed consent / assent were operationalized through the provision of a written form, signed off by research participants to indicate consent / assent. It was ensured that participants understood what was happening, and that all consent forms and instruments were translated into Bangla. Specific consent was sought from all participants before recording focus group discussions or key informant interviews.
- Researchers introduced themselves to all participants and explained, in a way that was easily understood by all, including female respondents, the purposes of the research and what would be done with the information provided by participants as a way to moderate expectations regarding what participants 'gain' from joining the research. No financial compensation was provided to individual participants, but refreshments were offered during all sessions.
- **Anonymity:** given that research respondents shared considerable amounts of personal information with us, it was our responsibility to ensure that their confidentiality is maintained, and personal information is protected in accordance with the GDPR. This was operationalized by ensuring that all datasets are anonymised, in the sense that all names of people were removed before the data.
- **Ensuring the safety of participants:** this means that the environment in which research is conducted is safe and familiar to the respondent. All fieldworker training included training on security protocols to ensure the safety of fieldworkers and participants.
- All fieldworker training covered **principles of research ethics** and **respecting cultural sensitivities**. Our team respected any differences in regard to culture, local behaviours and norms, religious beliefs and practices, sexual orientation, gender roles, disability, age, ethnicity, and other social differences, such as class, when undertaking data collection and communicating findings.

2.3 VfM analysis

The VfM analysis was done using UK's 'four Es' (Figure 2). The indicative evaluation questions are mentioned in the evaluation matrix (see Table 1). Based on the data provided by the implementing partners as well as through KIs conducted with a cross-section of stakeholders, the VfM analysis has taken into account the foremost question of whether the money was allocated to the most effective interventions, (i.e. the process of selecting an intervention among other options) and whether the selected intervention was most suitable in terms of a technical assistance programme vis-à-vis an implementation oriented programme. The VfM analysis also considered the question of whether the resources could have been utilised more effectively with a different approach in the programme design.

Figure 2 Mapping of VfM Analysis



The programme had a slow start and was then further impeded due to COVID-19 imposed restrictions. Of the total USD 12,589,677 approved value of the project has been able to utilise USD 10,318,294 till 31st December 2021 which gives an utilisation rate of 81.9% (90.94% if money disbursed is considered). It is understood that the NRP has been provided a further fund of USD 1,469,572.52 for the period of January to December 2022 for continuation of present activities and for preparing for a next phase of NRP. The fund utilisation over the years by the different implementing entities are provided below.

Table 2 Fund Utilisation of NRP

		2017-2018	2019	2020	2021	Total
UNDP	Budget	2,40,559	21,15,790	28,70,073	16,97,136	69,23,558
	Disbursed	2,40,559	21,15,789	16,90,740	10,18,673	50,65,761
	Utilised	1,07,160	13,45,442	16,45,838	13,44,706	44,43,146
	Unspent	1,33,399	7,70,347	44,902	-3,26,033	6,22,615
	% Unspent	55.45%	36.41%	2.66%	-32.01%	12.29%
UN Women	Budget	5,86,445	11,07,620	18,38,106	9,57,109	44,89,280
	Disbursed	5,86,445	6,08,997	13,99,722	7,56,040	33,51,204

	Utilised	3,71,518	7,25,959	12,15,982	9,38,201	32,51,660
	Unspent	2,14,927	-1,16,962	1,83,740	-1,82,161	99,544
	% Unspent	36.65%	-19.21%	13.13%	-24.09%	2.97%
UNOPS	Budget	6,47,757	12,78,578	10,59,425	5,56,988	35,42,748
	Disbursed	6,47,758	12,09,620	5,27,953	5,43,713	29,29,044
	Utilised	5,64,217	7,81,318	8,21,516	4,56,437	26,23,488
	Unspent	83,541	4,28,302	-2,93,563	87,276	3,05,556
	% Unspent	12.90%	35.41%	-55.60%	16.05%	10.43%
Total	Available	14,74,762	39,34,406	36,18,415	23,18,426	113,46,009
	Utilised	10,42,895	28,52,719	36,83,336	27,39,344	103,18,294
	Unspent	29.28%	27.49%	-1.79%	-18.16%	9.06%

As per data available till 31st December 2021 and based on expenditures incurred from 2017-21, it is observed that while UN Women has been able to utilise 97.03% of the disbursed funds, UNOPS and UNDP are both under a reasonable unspent spending of 10%. This has led to 9.06% unutilised funds for the NRP as a whole. Also, as the figures demonstrate, a significant amount of funds were utilised in the midst of COVID with significant amount of unspent funding in the initial years.

*While this can happen due to several reasons including the nature of the activities planned and implemented by different agencies, **this certainly indicates to an operational necessity of better budgeting of activities during planning stages, clearer understanding of the risks associated in implementing the planned activities and stricter monitoring and coordination of the implementation of the activities.** Better programme level planning would also have led to **allocation of funds for project entities who have been more effective in mobilisation of resources** and could have therefore avoided stagnation of funds as well as hurried/ forced implementation in latter stages of the programme. Further, approximately 55% and 36% funds lying unutilised for UNDP and UN Women in during the first years (when there was no external exigencies) indicate that the **programme design did not suitably consider the challenges in identifying suitable entry points in the initial stages of the programme and / or overestimated the reach of the implementing entities and would have probably benefitted from a longer inception period setting up the programme as well as more staggered fund distribution towards the latter parts of the programme when the relationships with the governments counterparts were more firmly established.***

2.4 Limitations of the methodology

The evaluation questionnaires sought to respond to the implementation of the entire programme vis-à-vis individual interventions and hence takes a bird's eye view of the entire NRP. Therefore, intervention specific detailed information is not represented through the methodology. However, since the primary purpose of the evaluation was to inform on the overall implementation of the NRP, this is not considered as a major drawback of the methodology. The evaluation draws all the necessary lessons as relevant

from the interventions as well and this is reflected in the report. NRP team should consider conducting intervention specific evaluations themselves if such details are deemed important for knowledge management purpose.

For the household data collection, specific focus was given on equal representation from male and female respondents. Additionally, the end-line questionnaire used in the evaluation was adopted from the baseline questionnaire and modified based on the implementation status at today's date, along with considering the COVID-19 situation. This restricted direct comparison of the baseline and this study findings for few of the indicators. Additionally, the uptake of the programme at the community level (primarily for the households) was limited given COVID and other circumstances. Hence the findings from the household survey need to be interpreted with carefully. It has also been observed that the UN organisations have conducted their own end-line surveys which were made available to the evaluation team. The evaluation team has made of such survey wherever available to ensure a proper comparison

2.5 Evaluation challenges and mitigation efforts

Due to COVID-19 imposed travel restrictions OPM conducted most of the KIIs/ IDIs online through Zoom or MS-Teams. In very specific cases of higher government functionaries, a hybrid online-offline interview was conducted. The assessment was also affected by multiple members of the evaluation team being affected by COVID-19 during the evaluation exercise. While this hampered the flow of the evaluation, the final timelines were marginally affected.

The evaluation is constrained by the longer timeline for impacts of technical assistance projects to materialise. Given the timeframe of the project, it was not possible to assess the impact across the interventions undertaken by the NRP. However, contribution of the project activities to systemic changes were qualitatively assessed to the extent possible through the KIIs and FGDs.

The Evaluation Team focused on interactions with people at operational levels to understand the nuances of the NRP. The team is grateful to the implementing partners for facilitating the interviews and enabling the Evaluation Team to get appointments with a critical mass of stakeholders across the NRP sub-projects. These interviews inform the core of the findings of this evaluation.

3 Evaluation Findings

The evaluation findings based on the OECD-DAC criteria for *relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact, value for money, and sustainability* are as described below. These also include findings on gender sensitization and mainstreaming, sensitization of persons with disabilities, digitalization and innovation and partnerships with other programmes under various sections.

3.1 Relevance

There were five EQs under Relevance as indicated in **Error! Reference source not found.** earlier. As there is an overlap between EQ1 and EQ4, the findings for both are presented together below.

EQ1. To what extent is the NRP programme relevant to and consistent with (i) partner country's needs and priorities at national/sub-national levels; (ii) global disaster & climate policies and actions; (iii) global gender legal treaties and frameworks, (iv) Implementing partners' priorities; (iv) relevant international frameworks (Sustainable Development Goals and targets, Sendai Framework for example)
EQ2. To what extent was the design and strategy of the NRP aligned with UNDP's Country Programme Document (CPD) (2017-2021) and The UN Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) (2017-2021)?
EQ3. How sound or logical is the decision to develop NRP as a combination of independent sub-programmes as opposed to an overarching umbrella programme covering multiple ministries?
EQ4. Does the programme continue to be relevant to the partner country's latest disaster resilience and development policies?
EQ5. Did the proposed theory of change of the NRP (and its sub-programme) lead to actual changes or should it be revised?

3.1.1 Alignment to EQ1 & EQ4

EQ1. To what extent is the NRP programme relevant to and consistent with (i) partner country's needs and priorities at national/sub-national levels; (ii) global disaster & climate policies and actions; (iii) global gender legal treaties and frameworks, (iv) Implementing partners' priorities; (iv) relevant international frameworks (Sustainable Development Goals and targets, Sendai Framework for example)

EQ4. Does the programme continue to be relevant to the partner country's latest disaster resilience and development policies?

Bangladesh is one of the most disaster-prone countries in the world. It is affected almost every year by extreme weather events such as cyclones and floods. It is also situated at the junction of three tectonic plates which makes it vulnerable to earthquakes. Bangladesh is also one of the fastest growing economies in Asia and is quickly moving towards transitioning from Least Developed Countries (LDC) to developing country

status by 2026. It has made significant progress in the socio-economic sector to increase the per capita income of the country as compared to its closest neighbours³. However, the country is under constant risk of growing loss and damage due to disaster events and climate stresses. World Risk Index 2021⁴ ranks Bangladesh as the 13th most at-risk country out of 181 countries assessed. Furthermore, the report also identifies Bangladesh's lack of coping capacity and lack of adaptive capacity to be particularly high. Similar to all at-risk countries women, vulnerable and marginalized communities have been found to be at even greater risk in Bangladesh. Climate change is exacerbating what are already significant development challenges, adding another layer of risk and uncertainty to efforts to achieve sustainable development in Bangladesh. Risk index of different disasters in Bangladesh⁵ suggest that out of a score of 10, Bangladesh has a probability index of 10 for floods, 9.2 for earthquakes, 8.2 for Tsunamis, 7.6 for epidemics, 6.9 for tropical cyclones and 4.7 for droughts. United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) estimates that Bangladesh lost approximately USD 11.3 billion⁶ in 2020 due to natural disasters which is almost 3.5% of Bangladesh's GDP⁷ for 2020.

The Government of Bangladesh (GoB) recognizes these risks as significant detriment to the growth prospects of the country and have taken several measures over the decades to address disaster risk management and disaster risk reduction through various donor funded as well as government funded programmes. Existing institutional structure and policy frameworks are in place to guide the national efforts to achieve key disaster management priorities. The GoB has come out with Disaster Management Act 2012, Disaster Management Policy 2015, National Plan for Disaster Management 2016-2020, Bangladesh Delta Plan 2021 for more holistic and resilient development. The NPDM 2016-2020 brought in a shift from reactive disaster response to proactive disaster risk reduction. It had identified 34 targets for sectoral ministries and have made significant progress in areas such as early warning, reduced human cost of disasters and provision of safety nets. However, the NPDM 2016-20 did not manage to mainstream gender and social inclusion across all the indicators. The Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) of Bangladesh also emphasizes on disaster risk mitigation and resilience building as key goals to achieve sustainable development:

- under SDG target 1.5 – *“By 2030, build the resilience of the poor and those in vulnerable situations and reduce their exposure and vulnerability to climate-related extreme events and other economic, social and environmental shocks and disasters”*
- under SDG target 11.5 – 11.5 By 2030, significantly reduce the number of deaths

³ At USD 1968, Bangladesh per capita GDP is higher than India (USD 1900) for 2020;
<https://www.statista.com/statistics/438223/gross-domestic-product-gdp-per-capita-in-bangladesh/>

⁴ WorldRiskReport 2021; Ruhr Universitat Bochum

⁵ <https://www.statista.com/statistics/921027/bangladesh-risk-index-for-natural-disasters/>

⁶ <https://www.tbsnews.net/bangladesh/environment/climate-change/bangladesh-lost-113b-due-natural-disasters-last-year-un-321319>

⁷ Bangladesh GDP is USD 323 billion for 2020;
<https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/NY.GDP.MKTP.CD?locations=BD>

and the number of people affected and substantially decrease the direct economic losses relative to global gross domestic product caused by disasters, including water-related disasters, with a focus on protecting the poor and people in vulnerable situations

The NRP is relevant in addressing the issues of resilience as identified in the policy documents of Bangladesh and the activities undertaken by the NRP is closely linked to the identified priorities of the GoB at national and sub-national levels. Therefore, activities undertaken under the NRP answers to the need of the GoB to develop capacities in disaster risk planning, disaster response, community awareness and leadership in disaster planning and response, gender sensitized disaster planning, development of women leadership in disaster management, building resilient and gender considered assets, developing tools for disaster informed development planning and multi-stakeholder partnerships in resilience building.

The programme has developed multiple innovative tools and approaches working in a participatory manner with government stakeholders to address disaster and resilience issues in each of the sub-projects undertaken by the three UN agencies. The specific priorities of each of the implementing agencies were identified through extensive consultation with the government counterparts and have mostly been demand-driven. Certain activities have also been undertaken which contributed to the continuation of activities undertaken by previous programmes or by the GoB itself. Examples of such activities included the logistical support provided for finalizing and strengthening the SOD-2019 which predated the NRP but was provided support through the NRP by incorporating forecast based financing task force, gender responsive guidelines in the SOD, alignment with other National and International drivers (for example; Bangladesh Delta Plan, Sendai Framework) and its publication and dissemination. Similar example include the Gender Equality in Humanitarian Action (**GiHA**) Working Group which predated the NRP but was supported through the NRP in generating gender analysis reports of floods in 2020 as well as other activities, Asset Management System (AMS), the need of which was felt for implementing Resilient Infrastructure Framework developed during the previous Comprehensive Disaster Management Programme (CDMP) – Phase II and was taken up under the NRP. Another example is of the Dynamic Flood Risk Model, the genesis of which lies with the Delta project of World Bank and strengthens the pre-existing Flood Forecasting Warning centre.

The selection of the activities therefore establishes that the NRP has sought to strengthen existing systems wherever possible and have ensured that activities undertaken by previous projects were also considered for reaching their logical conclusion

The NRP has therefore responded flexibly by tailoring priorities in line with the specific needs Bangladesh and have demonstrated significant flexibility to the changing needs of the country in the context of COVID, cyclone Amphan and flood in 2020 where the NRP provided support in tailoring “build back better” strategies and gender assessment of disaster response in real time.

The NRP has embarked on some very ambitious projects which have the potential to enhance the resilience of Bangladesh in the long run through policy changes and systemic changes. Chief among these is the AMS implementation which will require at least another 2-3 years of support to be completely integrated in the Government decision making. The dynamic flood risk model which has been implemented in a very small number of districts right now have the potential to be linked with delta programmes and implemented in other districts and the delta regions. The activity on sex and age disaggregated data on disasters with Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics as well as development of Gender Markers for Local Government Engineering Department (LGED) are key projects which need to continue to fulfil Bangladesh's ambition of gender inclusive disaster data generation and gender inclusive resilient infrastructure development. Both these activities are presently in their final stages and will require continued support for some more time to be integrated properly. As the examples provide suggest, the **programme still continues to be relevant to the partner country's latest resilience and development policies**. Discussions with government ministries and other stakeholders have demonstrated a strong buy-in of NRP activities among government counterparts in different Ministries or other institutional entities. There has been strong engagement with key stakeholders during the identification and design of interventions, and even during the implementation of the interventions. Such level of government participation underline government ownership at national and sub-national levels. This has been highlighted during several KIs with government counterparts and there has been persistent demand to continue the support provided by the NRP in the near future. It is also the considered opinion of the evaluation team that the present phase of the NRP has laid some strong foundations and since the effects of a technical assistance programmes require more than 3 years of support to demonstrate results, the NRP support continues to be relevant for Bangladesh.

The NRP also caters to the requirement of the Sendai Framework and its activities are relevant to meet the targets of the Sendai Framework. Through its intervention the NRP has significant potential to contribute to reduced number of disaster induced mortality and disaster affected population. It will build the adaptive capacities of the population of Bangladesh to plan, respond and cope with disasters. The UNOPS and UNDP components of NRP are specifically targeted towards reducing economic loss and damage to critical infrastructure due to disasters through development of tools and capacity building for risk management. UN Women have carried out trainings, *inter alia*, for women cyclone preparedness programme volunteers and women disaster management committee members. Certain NRP activities are also targeted towards development of early warning systems, tool development for disaster response and planning and risk informed development planning which cater specifically to Sendai framework requirements. The NRP is thus aligned with the objectives of the Sendai framework.

The NRP has been implemented in accordance with the principles of **Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness**, in particular, Ownership, Alignment and Harmonisation. The programme is aligned with country level policies in the Bangladesh through providing technical assistance to build capacities of the government institutions to enable them refine and institutionalise their policies and build their systems and processes to cope

and build their resilience to disaster risks. Ownership is established as the GoB has been playing an effective role in the development and implementation of the programme. Harmonization is addressed within the NRP at the donor level through the institutionalisation of donor approaches, coordination, sharing of information to avoid duplication between FCDO and Government of Sweden.

3.1.2 Alignment to EQ2

EQ2. To what extent was the design and strategy of the NRP aligned with UNDP's Country Programme Document (CPD) (2017-2021) and The UN Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) (2017-2021)?

The United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) addresses three key outcome areas⁸:

People: All people have equal rights, access and opportunities

Planet: Sustainable and resilient environment

Prosperity: Inclusive and shared economic growth

Outcome statements require state institutions to work with their partners to implement improved social policies and programmes that focus on good governance and reducing inequalities and aiding advancement of vulnerable people and groups, improved sustainability and increased resilience of vulnerable population, and increase opportunities for women and disadvantaged groups to contribute and benefit from economic progress.

The NRP addresses all these outcome areas as highlighted in the UNDAF and also in spirit of the UNDAF adopts a partnership approach with the government Ministries and other government stakeholders. The goal of NRP is to increase resilience, improve sustainability and enable gender mainstreaming and leadership in disaster response. **Hence, the NRP is aligned with the principles of UNDAF.**

Since the UNDP country programme for Bangladesh⁹ is based on the UNDAF and addresses the three key outcome areas as highlighted in the UNDAF, it is obvious that the **NRP is also aligned with UNDP's country programme for Bangladesh**. UNDP country programme commitments such as *"UNDP will promote resilience as an integral dimension of sustainable development", "support the ministries of disaster management and relief, environment, women and children's affairs, and other line ministries in designing community-led climate adaptation and development projects that address vulnerabilities of women and girls", "Risk-context mapping for climate-induced and other natural hazards, as well as retrospective resilience analysis tools and methodologies, will inform government programming"* have the same goals as of the NRP.

⁸ United Nations Development Assistance Framework; UNDAF 2017-2020

⁹ UNDP Country programme document for Bangladesh (2017-2020)

The only area of the UNDP country programme where the NRP has not focused significantly during this phase is to develop financing solutions to some of the development problems such as adoption of life cycle analysis for infrastructure, additional capex involved in risk informed planning, sustenance of initiatives undertaken by the NRP through government financing schemes after the end of the programme.

Even then, some of the initiatives undertaken by the NRP has led to the government rethinking some of the guidelines for financing of infrastructure projects. Examples of this may be found in the Disaster Impact Assessment Framework which is now integrated in the feasibility report template for projects over BDT 50 crores or changes in the Asset Creation Standard 2021 (change in bitumen type and grade in event of erratic rainfall, change in Reinforced Cement Concrete (RCC) for resilient infrastructure) due to LCA approach introduced through AMS.

*This underlines GoB's willingness to introduce changes in financing of schemes. **This is hence one of the areas that the NRP should look more into in future and thrive to involve the Ministry of Finance as one of the most important stakeholders.***

3.1.3 Alignment to EQ3

EQ3. How sound or logical is the decision to develop NRP as a combination of independent sub-programmes as opposed to an overarching umbrella programme covering multiple ministries?

The design of the NRP as 4 sub-projects implemented by separate UN entities sought to capitalise on the existing relationships of the implementing entities (IE) with the respective Ministries and also to play to the strengths of the individual implementing entities regarding specific goals of the NRP. It was assumed that the 3 UN agencies would combine together, and their joint contribution will be more than the sum of their parts.

For a complex programme like NRP, an overarching umbrella programme that would include multiple ministries could be expected to suffer from different limitations -

- a. Participation of DPs and non-government actors would have been limited and they would lack commitment;
- b. Co-ordinating activities among multiple ministries would have been extremely difficult if not impossible. As the line ministries would have to follow their own rules as per the Rules of Business and Allocations of Business (of the GoB), there would be conflict about jurisdictions;
- c. Developing a common purpose, understanding, resource sharing and ensuring commitment to an agreed upon goal would have been difficult.
- d. Dividing responsibility and ensuring accountability would be difficult.

The sub-programme approach adopted by the NRP solves most of these problems. By adopting the sub-program approach and by dividing responsibilities among different

partners, NRP opted for establishing a horizontal network instead of working through hierarchy.

While this is in itself an innovative approach and did pay off dividends by securing early entry points and ensuring government participation from the onset of the NRP, this approach has also led to its own set of issues. Chief among them has been coordination, or the lack-of, between the three UN agencies. In the absence of a central decision making body to decide the course of the NRP as a whole, each individual IE took up piece meal projects which did not move in the same direction to ensure that the final goal of the NRP is reached. Therefore, while the individual sub-projects have performed adequately by themselves, and in some case have also led to some amount of cross-learning/ influencing¹⁰, the joint benefit of the NRP did not fructify to the extent that it could.

Further, due to division of responsibilities between the 3 IEs compounded with the lack of coordination, at least in the initial stages of the programme, led to activities by separate IEs which could be easily clubbed together for better value for money. This is evidenced, for example, by separate training modules developed by UNDP and UN Women on DRR and women leadership in DRM both of which contained similar set of modules on differentiated risks for women and could have benefitted from a coordinated approach and a joint training programme.

One possibly unintended consequence of the sub-programme approach has also been on gender mainstreaming. KIIs revealed multiple times that incorporation of gender concerns in various projects were seen as the job of UN Women only and in most cases no necessity was felt to consider gender issues in projects where the UN Women was not specifically involved. Thus, no gender focal person was appointed in any of the other sub-projects and gender concerns were not suitably addressed unless there was a pre-existing strong gender forum present with the concerned ministry as in the LGED. It is also understood that although gender action plans were developed for each of the sub-projects, adherence to these were disjointed among the IEs. Since gender is a cross-cutting issue and should be considered right from the conception stages of any intervention, the sub-programme approach may be considered as an impediment to gender mainstreaming.

Another consequence of weak coordination approach is evidenced from the programme level lack of monitoring and control on interventions. The structure of the Project Coordination and Monitoring team (PCMT) was not there in the programme governance structure and was formed later. However the PCMT did not have the necessary authority or monetary resources to approve budgets, monitor sub-projects and fund allocations, mandate data from the sub-projects and maintain a central repository of monitoring and

¹⁰ Case in point could be incorporation of gender responsive budgeting guidelines in development programme/project proposals or local level CSOs participating as watchdogs in integrating gender issues in local level disaster planning and management

evaluation results which would give at-a-glance view of the NRP without going into each of individual sub-projects.

*The sub-programme approach has its benefit in leveraging relationships and complimentary expertise of different IEs. However **it needs a strong co-ordination and central decision making body among the IEs** to ensure the direction of the interventions are aligned towards the common goal of the NRP and **leads to strategic policy level changes instead of overly focusing on smaller outputs**. It is also necessary to suitably **authorise and strengthen the PCMT as the focal decision making body** with respect to selection and approval of interventions, budgetary allocations, monitoring and evaluation of projects and periodic audits of project expenses to ensure more efficient functioning of the project.*

3.1.4 Alignment to EQ5

EQ5. Did the proposed theory of change of the NRP (and its sub-programme) lead to actual changes or should it be revised?

The hypothesis in the ToC is that NRP will lead to 'Substantial increase in resilience to disaster and reduction in disaster risk, loss of lives, livelihoods and health of men, women, girls and boys and protection of persons, business and communities in Bangladesh' by improving capacities for risk-informed and gender responsive development planning, strengthening gender-responsive national capacities to address recurrent and mega disasters, improving capacity of GoB to achieve resilience through designing and constructing risk-informed and gender-responsive infrastructure system, enhancing women leadership capacities for gender-responsive disaster management decisions, investments and policies at national and local levels, and strengthening disability inclusive, gender responsive community preparedness, response and recovery capacities for recurrent and mega disasters.

The ToC also assumes that the Government will be committed and open to transformational changes, the Ministries will be engaged with the NRP, the NRP investment will leverage further investment for expanding disasters and climate resilience and social norms will not hinder women and gender equality while engaging in DRM.

While the design of the NRP interventions are suited to the selected outputs, the TOC does not provide a 'change pathway' as to how the successful implementation of a particular intervention leads to an output to an intermediate outcome and subsequently to an outcome. It cannot be assumed that, for example, providing a training would automatically lead to higher participation/ awareness among the participants of such training or developing a policy brief would automatically ensure uptake of the policy. Intermediate steps are required to be a part of the theory of change to provide streamlined guidance to the implementers regarding the path to be taken to ensure that change happens. This has left a gap in the TOC which does not answer a very important question for any of the interventions, which is 'what next?' Thus, there has been an over-

emphasis on the implementation and monitoring of deliverables rather than on outputs¹¹ and not enough emphasis on the intermediate outcomes which are a crucial step for converting an output to an outcome. As a result, operational milestones such as signing of MOU with a selected firm has also been monitored as an output. No systematic monitoring of intermediate outcomes have been undertaken which only exists as anecdotal evidences.

One of the assumptions of the NRP was that the NRP investment would leverage further finance. No activity of the NRP could be evidenced which has worked towards the realisation of this particular assumption. The final assumption that social norms do not hinder participation of women is a void assumption as there is enough evidence that social norms do prevent women from participation as well as leadership positions. Hence, this should have been considered as a risk to the project and suitable mitigative approaches should have been considered in the change pathways to counter the societal norms.

Finally, the design of the NRP interventions is spread across a wide array of subjects thereby reducing the focus on more strategic engagements which could have led to systemic and policy changes. The implementation of the AMS in LGED is an example of what could be achieved with a focussed approach as the AMS is practically the only intervention that has been taken up by the LGED. All the other interventions of the LGED are support activities required to implement the AMS in the long run. Similarly, the UNDP planning division activities on integration of DIA in feasibility studies with the DRIP being a tool to enable such change and UN Women's activities towards LGED gender marker toolkit and sex, age, disability disaggregated data collection guidelines are other examples of focussed approach towards strategic changes. However, other activities of UNDP in disaster management were observed to be more amorphous without clear indication of the desired impacts from such activities. Certain isolated training activities or isolated studies conducted by the sub-projects are too small to impact structural changes.

*It is therefore the considered opinion of the evaluation team that the theory of change of the NRP **needs to have narrower focus** while attempting to increase the resilience of Bangladesh. This is purely from the point of view that enhancing the resilience of a country is too broad, complex and vague a goal to undertake in any project activity with a short duration of only 3 years as in the NRP. **Spreading the available resources too thin by indulging in activities without clear change pathways may not be the right hypothesis** to be adopted in the theory of change. The ToC also needs **to be revised in terms of some of the assumptions as these should be part of change pathways instead of assumptions.***

¹¹ An output is the change that we would like to achieve from an intervention, not the intervention itself. One output will have several deliverables under it to lead to an output. The IE has total control over the output in terms of delivery and adoption. Intermediate outcome is something that the IE has partial control and influence. The IE can only influence an outcome and has no control over it. For impact, the IE has neither influence nor control.

3.2 Effectiveness

Five evaluation questions have been asked under this criterion. EQ6, EQ7 and EQ8 assesses the implementation aspects of the NRP and have been answered together due to the overlap between the issues, EQ9 responds to integration of gender and disability considerations and EQ10 responds to digitalisation and other system enhancements.

EQ6. Has the programme achieved, or is it likely to achieve, the targeted results (outputs/outcomes)? What have been the key factors responsible for success or failure in achieving the targets?
EQ7. How innovative and effective have been the system enhancement support (policy options, tools, framework) in mainstreaming gender-responsive risk informed development and disaster planning, gender issues and women empowerment? Have some of those been tested/piloted on ground to demonstrate potential benefits of their uptake and/or scaling at national/sub-national levels? If yes, what have been the experience? If not, why?
EQ8. How effective and gender-balanced have been the trainings conducted under the programme to develop skills of the government functionaries at different levels and in building capacity of the relevant organisations (i.e. the organisations who are working on disaster management and development planning) in the partner countries/states been?
EQ9. Have gender equality, social inclusions and disability considerations been integrated across all the programme outputs and M&E activities as per developmental indicators of the logframe?
EQ10. To what extent has the NRP contributed to digitalisation or other systemic enhancements?

3.2.1 Alignment to EQ6, EQ7 and EQ8

EQ6. Has the programme achieved, or is it likely to achieve, the targeted results (outputs/outcomes)? What have been the key factors responsible for success or failure in achieving the targets?

EQ7. How innovative and effective have been the system enhancement support (policy options, tools, framework) in mainstreaming gender-responsive risk informed development and disaster planning, gender issues and women empowerment? Have some of those been tested/piloted on ground to demonstrate potential benefits of their uptake and/or scaling at national/sub-national levels? If yes, what have been the experience? If not, why?

EQ8. How effective and gender-balanced have been the trainings conducted under the programme to develop skills of the government functionaries at different levels and in building capacity of the relevant organisations (i.e. the organisations who are working on disaster management and development planning) in the partner countries/states been?

Overall, the NRP has achieved most of the targeted outputs that each of the sub-projects were undertaking. Certain activities are in their final stages of implementation or pending validation and/or approval from the GoB. Since the NRP has been provided with an extension till December 2022, based on the present status of the projects it is likely that all the outputs as demarcated in the annual work plans of the sub-projects will be achieved by the end of the programme.

The NRP has however had varied success in mainstreaming resilience and gender sensitisation in government decision making process. Some of the key interventions of the NRP those have already found acceptance with the GOB are:

- Inclusion of gender consideration and task force for forecast based financing in Standing Order on Disasters 2019 and gender and disability inclusion in NPDM 2021-25 – these provide guidelines on integrating gender issues in DRM and DRR as well as set the platform for setting up linkages with proactive disaster financing
- Inclusion of the DIA framework in the feasibility report template – provides a simple template consisting of only 6 steps for including disaster information and mitigation measures including measurement of resilience, cost of DRR and residual risk for any projects above BDT 50 crores. The tool has been purposefully kept simple so as to not overburden the government employees with too complicated requirements and encourage better submission of required information.
- Development of Dynamic Flood Risk Model for local level flood management – provides flood hazard maps for specific wards of Kurigram and Jamalpur based on present land use patterns and translation of water levels to impacts on the local community based on the flooding pattern and the socio-economic structure of the affected population. This is a first flood warning system which provides a flood risk scale of 1-5 combining flood maps, gender and disability and socio-economic distribution.
- Implementation of the AMS in LGED from scratch – provides a holistic gender inclusive asset management system including asset management plans for roads and bridges built and maintained by LGED
- Piloting of SADDD collection on disasters by Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics for 26 departments at the Zilla level – provides for collection of 26 out of 52 critical post-disaster parameters required for reporting against Sendai framework for 5 districts of Bangladesh. This is a completely new paradigm as SADDD was not being collected by BBS previously
- Inclusion of supply chain resilience training modules by Bangladesh Civil Service Institute, National Academy of Planning and Bangladesh Institution for Administration and Management¹²

Certain other projects such as development of hazard maps beyond district level, Disaster Risk Information Platform, adoption of LGED gender markers, policy brief on sustainable and resilient business practices for garment sector, Asset Management Plans (AMP) for Roads (almost final stages) and Bridges (still in draft stage) will be completed in the following months.

¹² These trainings are presently planned as separate 5 day training courses with the possibility of inclusion in foundation courses of the Institutes

The NRP has shown extraordinary flexibility in adopting to the severe disruption brought about by COVID-19 and have responded well to government needs during cyclone Amphan and 2020 floods.

While it has been highlighted in the previous section that the ToC of the NRP need more focus on the change pathways, nevertheless the programme has been particularly strong in **enabling disaster resilient planning aspects** in governments' policies and strategies by developing various technical products, innovative decision-making tools, and providing training to a large number of stakeholders. NRP's intervention in developing the SADDD guidelines and piloting the implementation of the guidelines has set the platform for integration of disaggregated data collection during disasters. Wherever NRP has taken a focussed approach it has been effective in **strengthening institutional mechanisms, capacities, and government systems, and in enhancing skills and building capacity of government officials.**

The programme has attained mixed results in integrating and mainstreaming gender issues in resilience and disaster planning. This is explained in detail in response to EQ9 below.

Pilot projects are an effective means to demonstrate and scale up project interventions. Under this programme some pilot actions (DMC level training programmes, Disability Inclusive Disaster Risk Reduction, Disaster Risk Reduction enabled Employment Generation Programme for the Poorest (DRR-EGPP), Media sensitisation on gender and disasters, preparation of earthquake contingency plans in selected wards) have been supported which has led to knowledge and awareness generation regarding DRM. However, this are at a very operational level and presently there is no roadmap under the NRP to scale-up and lead to strategic and systemic changes. However, the pilots have laid a strong foundation on which the NRP may consider building future activities which could lead to strategic interventions.

The success of the NRP is mainly contributed to the strong technical teams supporting the project implementation and the government's ownership of the NRP. The NRP has benefitted from the enthusiasm of key GOB officials who were willing to achieve transformational changes. The participatory approach adopted by the NRP has not only led to demand-driven approach but has also allowed to correct the course of the interventions if required. The flexible approach of the NRP is one of the main reasons for the achievements of the programme in a very short duration.

The NRP has undertaken activities which introduce completely new concepts to the GOB in disaster and resilience planning. Concepts of holistic asset management, life cycle cost analysis for project designing, introduction of disaster impact assessment in feasibility studies, media sensitisation on gender and disaster issues, development of asset management plans, changes in Material of Constructions by considering climate change effects, long term road deterioration model for better planning or gender marker tools for infrastructure projects are all innovative concepts with respect to Bangladesh and would even be considered innovative with respect to most countries globally. It may be safely concluded that the NRP has led to significant innovations in building resilience. However, while the NRP has been successful in the technical aspects of resilience building, when it comes to innovative approaches of gender mainstreaming in planning

and disaster management, the NRP had the potential to do better. The NRP needed a more integrated approach in project design and implementation regarding gender issues. This is discussed in detail in response to EQ9 below.

Effectiveness of trainings: The NRP has achieved some extraordinary numbers with respect to people trained through the programme. Just to cite some examples:

- a. 11 batches of people from different departments including public works, education, drinking water and LGED have been trained on AMS. Approximately 20 people were trained in each batch. Approximately 40 of the trainees were women. The AMS also trained 19 people as Master Trainers of whom 4 are women.
- b. 1440 flood preparedness volunteers have been trained in collaboration with CARE to use the Dynamic Flood Risk Model and understand the importance of the numbers provided by the model. Of these almost 50% are women
- c. 200 extreme poor households have been provided training on disaster resilient EGPP schemes. 20 local level government personnel have also been trained.
- d. 1920 urban community volunteers have been trained on earthquake response of which 40% are women. These include training sessions for technical and non-technical people. Nearly 100 technical people were trained on earthquake awareness, contingency planning, and implementation of contingency plans.
- e. 245 people were provided training on SADDD for disasters in the headquarters of Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics of which 40% were women. 3 sets of people were trained for 3-days each. 15 people were also trained as master trainers among which 5 were women
- f. Approximately 300 people have been trained on use of DIA tools 133 first responders provided training on search and rescue
- g. 30 government officials from 18 departments provided training on Sendai Framework reporting
- h. 2700 vulnerable women received disaster preparedness, women's leadership and livelihood training along with livelihood inputs
- i. 331 Cyclone Preparedness Programme Volunteer, 239 Flood Preparedness Programme Volunteer, 1288 Disaster Committee Members were further capacitated on gender responsive resilience building with an aim to institutionalizing gender as well as strengthen local government's capacity on and actions for gender responsive disaster risk reduction. 155 female DMC members from 5 districts received special training on women leadership so that they can effectively engage and play leadership role in local level DRR planning and discussions.
- j. 107 humanitarian cluster members received training on Gender and Age Marker, and on Gender Analysis who are engaged in conducting need assessments, preparing humanitarian response plans.
- k. 76 journalists (11 female, 65 male) received training on "Media Sensitization on Gender Responsive Resilience"
- l. More than 5500 women from 3 cyclone prone districts namely Cox's Bazar, Satkhira and Khulna reached with cyclone audio visual content developed in local dialect by NRP DWA part through 101 community screening shows followed by discussions.

While the NRP has achieved significant number in people trained, the effectiveness of the trainings provided and the impacts of the trainings are not apparent in all cases. Trainings and capacity building under NRP may be broadly classified in two groups – one for community members involving flood response volunteers, Cyclone Preparedness Volunteers (CPP), earthquake response volunteers, DMC members, women and persons with disabilities and another for government stakeholders on planning and implementation of resilient and gender sensitised policies/plans. The effectiveness of the trainings provided depend on the group of trainees. While there is hardly any doubt on the necessity of the subjects of trainings provided through the NRP, whether isolated training programmes are the right way to achieving lasting changes in resilience planning and gender sensitised DRM is debatable.

The NRP had a system of collecting training feedbacks for government trainees but no such feedback mechanism has been applied for community trainings. It has been observed that when the training is linked to implementation of a particular strategy, policy or technical tool; the impact of the trainings have been quite apparent as such trainings are a necessity for actual implementation of the proposed systemic enhancements. However, in the absence of any feedback mechanism for community training, it is not apparent whether the trainings had any impact on the functioning of the trainees¹³. The mechanism of collating training related data was also found to be weak for the NRP due to absence of training feedback collection mechanism, training attendance sheets, training reports and gender segregated trainee numbers as apparent from the incomplete information on female trainee numbers. Other than UN Women, who had specific mandate for women-centric trainings, the other UN agencies also planned for specific participation of women in the trainings. It was also observed by one of the project directors that women volunteers were found to be more enthusiastic.

It is suggested by the evaluation team that the trainings provided by the NRP is suitably linked to desired policy/ system changes or operational changes to make these trainings more effective. A mechanism to collect training related information be implemented at the earliest and also introduce a mechanism to assess the sustainability and application of the training received among the trainees after a reasonable time period has lapsed post conducting the trainings.

Some of the training modules developed under the NRP have been for training-of-trainers, specifically under AMS, disability sensitised flood management and SADDD for disasters. This is the right approach to conducting training programmes since it ensures sustainability of the training in future and in the absence of the programme. To ensure the continuity of capacity building initiatives on Asset Management, LGED has signed a contract with the Engineering Staff College of Bangladesh (ESCB) to train the staff of LGED and other public institutions within the country. Training modules developed on supply chain resilience for the garment sector has been institutionalised in training institute of Chittagong Chamber of Commerce. Training on DIA and DRIP have been

¹³ One notable exception is the training provided by UN WOMEN to CSOs where in the CSOs were found to be taking active roles in women livelihood projects and gender sensitised disaster management

institutionalised with National Academy for Planning and Administration, Bangladesh Civil Service Institution and Bangladesh Institution for administration and Management ensuring sustainability and continuance of the training modules even in the absence of the NRP. However, this approach has not been followed for all the training programmes.

In spite of the abovementioned training programmes, several government stakeholders have highlighted the need for further capacity building support in implementing the system enhancements initiated by the NRP. This is not an entirely unjust demand, but the training activities should be planned judiciously with the purpose of developing trainers from within the government departments/ institutes/ ministries who could then carry out the necessary trainings for other government personnel. This can be done in a phased manner as well, i.e. initially providing ToT, then arranging for supervised trainings to be provided by the master trainers and then conducting independent trainings by the master trainers.

3.2.2 Alignment to EQ9

EQ9. Have gender equality, social inclusions and disability considerations been integrated across all the programme outputs and M&E activities as per developmental indicators of the logframe?

Overall, gender mainstreaming and social inclusion has not been sufficiently considered in the programme as a whole despite UN Women playing a significant role in the NRP and contributing to the development of gender mainstreaming guidelines in areas of data disaggregation and gender sensitised planning of infrastructure projects. This is partially attributable to the siloed approach of the NRP where the UN Women was deemed to be the only entity responsible for gender mainstreaming through their activities. Some of the programme activities undertaken for gender sensitisation have been deemed to be too ‘projectised’ to contribute to strategic mainstreaming of gender issues in resilience and disaster planning.

However, even then, the NRP has made some significant contribution towards inclusion of gender issues in the SOD-2019, the NPDM 2021-2025 as well as the AMS policy. It is also understood that the UN Women has been successful in influencing the inclusion of DRR for 5 ministries in the revision of the National Women’s Development Policy 2011 and gender responsive budgeting in DPP guidelines. Disability inclusive DRR pilot project influenced ramp accessibility to clinics, evacuation boats and representations in UDMC and DMCs by persons with disabilities. The SADDD on disasters with the BBS, media sensitisation on women and disasters and LGED gender marker tools have the potential to become strong influencers to bring in more gender mainstreaming in resilience and disaster planning. The same can also be said about the Disability inclusive DRR piloting which is presently a very small initiative in itself. It remains to be seen how follow-up activities to this initial steps are designed in future, *i.e. what would be the proposed change pathways that lead from these activities to strategic inclusion of gender in policies and plans and up-scaling of these interventions*

Several other initiatives such as the DIA, the AMPs and Dynamic Flood Risk Modelling have identified gender issues as important parameters but provides no guidance on implementing gender sensitised planning processes. DIA has taken the first steps in the right direction to mainstream gender and social inclusion in disaster impact assessment, which previously focused on natural hazards and engineering. Currently, DIA considers the impacts and solutions for women and persons with disability for cyclones and related water logging and salinity. It elaborates on cyclone shelters, roads, and other accessible, safe, and secure communication for women, adolescent girls, and persons with disability. DIA should consider gender and disability responsive needs to explain the impacts and propose solutions in a multi-hazard approach. DIA could also include infrastructure that will help safeguard the livelihoods of the poorest populations, especially the women-headed households, persons with disability, the elderly, and other marginalized groups. One of the most innovative interventions of the NRP, the [Digital Risk Information Platform \(DRIP\)](#) does not have data on risk information critical for resilience of the most vulnerable groups such as food security, access to social protection, health facilities, school safety, climate change impacts, informal economy, urban poor and landless farmers et al. It also does not include data on vulnerable groups such as elderly, persons with disability, female-headed households, traditionally marginalized populations – marginalized castes, ethnicities, religions and SOGIEGC et al. Further there are no gender related or women related documents¹⁴ or gender-related glossary¹⁵. While the evaluation team acknowledges that these activities are very much a work-in-progress presently, the NRP is requested to consider these changes for the next phase of evolution of the programme.

Several stakeholders have highlighted that lack of coordination between the UN agencies have also played a significant role in exclusion of gender issues in NRP interventions from the very conception of the interventions. Gender consideration have been an after-thought in most cases¹⁶. Stakeholders have also highlighted the absence of gender focal points for the sub-programmes which impeded gender mainstreaming in the project interventions. Overall, the stakeholders accepted that there is a high level of understanding of gender issues but low level of implementation due to lack of capacity to identify gender concerns and incorporate gender concerns in project designs and resources. However, UN Women have contested that even the understanding of gender issues among the NRP sub-projects are debatable and there is a requirement to change the mind-set of the government officials as well as other UN agencies towards gender mainstreaming. In some cases, the technical resources highlighted the time limitation as a challenge towards more consultative approach to include gender and disability organizations. The Ministry of Women and Children's Affairs, Department of Women Affairs in Planning Commission, Ministry of Social Welfare, Gender in Humanitarian Action (GiHA) Working Group, Women's Rights Organizations, and Disabled Persons

¹⁴ <http://drip.plancomm.gov.bd/Documents>

¹⁵ <http://drip.plancomm.gov.bd/Glossaries/Glossary>

¹⁶ One notable exception to this may be found in the training of earthquake volunteers, where local authorities specifically requested for equitable participation of women

Organizations (DPOs) are quintessential entities those need to be consulted for GESI mainstreaming for all relevant activities.

Even in the PCMT, in spite of the presence of a gender mainstreaming analyst, no data on segregated gender budgeting, gender centric activities, impacts of gender mainstreaming were available.

It is therefore the considered opinion of the evaluation team that the NRP has not sufficiently addressed the concerns on gender mainstreaming due to a combination of factors as mentioned above. Other than activities conceived by UN Women, gender inclusion in other sub-programmes have not been uniform across interventions. While some of the individual interventions did consider gender issues, such considerations were not transformed into gender mainstreaming strategies. Considering the importance of gender mainstreaming to the context of the NRP, a separate section is added in the annex detailing the accomplishments, challenges, risks and recommendation for gender mainstreaming in the NRP.

3.2.3 Alignment to EQ10

EQ10. To what extent has the NRP contributed to digitalisation or other systemic enhancements?

As explained in section 3.2.1 above, the NRP has led to some significant systemic enhancements through implementation of the AMS, DIA, SADD collection, dynamic flood risk modelling.

Other than these, the NRP has also contributed to the strengthening of the existing Roads and Structures Database Management System (RSDMS) by introducing a Road Deterioration Model (RDM) which would be useful in preparing multi-year work plans for maintenance of rural road. A failure analysis framework is also being developed (in the draft stages) which would analysis 16 assessment points of failure to arrive at root cause of failure of critical infrastructure and take suitable mitigating actions in future projects. The gender marker toolkit for LGED projects which integrates 4 key gender oriented parameters in each of 4 project stages, once finalised and piloted, will be significant system enhancement useful in integrating gender concerns in LGED projects. The AMP roads and bridges will also add to the robustness of the AMS. The DRR-EGPP guidelines in its present form is an isolated project activity. With suitable follow-up activity and/or partnering with other donors, this has the potential to enhance resilient livelihood for a large section of Bangladesh's population.

The NRP through its activities have also indirectly influenced system enhancements through revision of MoCs and integration of climate change concerns in Asset Creation Standards (2021) as well as inclusion of gender responsive budgeting in DPP guidelines. It has also been successful in bringing a lot of stakeholders to the resilience platform which is an enhancement in itself. It has also planted the seeds of LCA based project capex allocations and consideration of O&M in project financing.

One contribution of the NRP has been in developing the Disaster and Climate Risk Information Platform (DRIP) which is a specialized software application that aims to strengthen the institutional capacity of the Government of Bangladesh for assessing, understanding and communicating disaster and climate related risks, with the goal of integrating disaster risk information into development planning & budgeting, policies and programs. The DRIP provides a common platform for sharing climate and disaster data, hazard maps, integrated hazard risks and vulnerability mapping which was hitherto available in fragmented and scattered form among several agencies. Providing a software solution to bring all data required for disaster sensitised decision making and project design in one platform is one of the key contributions of the NRP. It is understood the DRIP will be providing the necessary information required for DIA for policy makers through inclusion of the DIA in the feasibility report template and DPP guidelines.

NRP has provided technical training on the requirement of data to be reported to the SFDRR online monitoring platform and have built the capacity of government personnel to collect and report such data on the SFDRR online platform. The required data has been integrated in the D-form and is hence now part of the system. The efforts of NRP have resulted in Bangladesh becoming one of the leading countries in providing data to the SFDRR online platform.

3.3 Efficiency

Of the 4 evaluation questions asked here, EQ14 is cross-cutting and overlaps with EQ11 and EQ12. Hence alignment to EQ14 has been answered within EQ11 and EQ12

EQ11. What has been the level of efficiency of UNDP/ UNOPS/ UN Women in programme implementation? Could they manage well the government functionaries at national/sub-national levels, civil societies, and media in the partner countries/states?
EQ12. To what extent have the funds been disbursed and utilised? How did the programme manage financial and operational risks in the wake of COVID-19?
EQ13. What has been the scale/quality of partnership and coordination (policy and technical planning) between the implementing agencies, and between other development partners (World Bank, ADB, USAID) who have supported similar or complementary programmes?
EQ14. Has the internal M&E system of the NRP managed to capture, analyse and generate learning from the project?

3.3.1 Alignment to EQ11

EQ11. What has been the level of efficiency of UNDP/ UNOPS/UN Women in programme implementation? Could they manage well the government functionaries at national/sub-national levels, civil societies, and media in the partner countries/states?

Over the programme period, NRP has contributed to developing institutional mechanisms, systems, and methodologies to enhance resilience, and in some case gender-inclusive, planning at national and sub-national levels. Collaborating with

relevant government ministries under the existing systems/mechanisms through regular involvement of officials in consultations and building in the process their capacities has reinforced ownership and enhanced efficiency and effectiveness of NRP. From the initial stages of the NRP there were quarterly review meetings facilitated through the PCMT between the implementing partners and the Government counterparts through the Joint Programme Implementation Committee (JPIC) meetings. The JPIC meetings allowed the government counterparts to maintain oversight over the progress of the NRP intervention, both programmatic and financial. Hence, the NRP remained in close collaboration with the GoB throughout the programme.

NRP has contributed in increased awareness at ministry and community level regarding the need of resilient planning and disproportional effect of disasters on women and vulnerable population. By engaging at the grass-roots levels with community members as well as with policy makers at the higher levels, NRP has tried to strike a balance between a top-down approach and a bottom-up approach. This has been accomplished through (i) developing innovative system enhancements as mentioned earlier in section **Error! Reference source not found.** and section **Error! Reference source not found.**; and (ii) capacity building programmes or workshops as highlighted in section **Error! Reference source not found.**

NRP's overall approach was effective and enhanced efficiency as it provided technical assistance in areas where there was a clear demand, such as implementing the AMS or developing the DFRM or the DIA. Responding to demand-driven initiatives and engaging government stakeholders as well as community members and local level CSOs was a key to success and contributed to increased ownership of the NRP initiatives by governments as well as the CSOs in some cases (gender sensitised disaster management and livelihood protection). NRP's initiative to increase awareness among the media on the differentiated impacts of disasters on women is a very efficient way to influence more focus on the issue, provided it is followed up through further engagement.

Acknowledging the strengths of the NRP, it is also imperative to note the weaknesses of the programme as possible learning for future programmes. NRP has a unique project management structure which lacks any central decision making body on the direction of the NRP by itself. While the Joint Project Steering Committee (JPSC) that is supposed to provide guidance and direction to the programme, this set-up is too formal to influence project decisions or facilitate discussions and debate on project ideas. The JPIC headed by the National Programme Coordinator is also a formal set-up to discuss on the quarterly progress. However, at the implementing partners' level, the PCMT, project teams and UN Representatives did not have any formal or informal meetings to ensure better coordination among the IEs and maximising value for money of the NRP.

*It is understood that at the initial stages of the NRP, there was indeed such a mechanism which was later discontinued in favour of half-yearly reviews of implementation which did not ensure efficient project management and coordination among the IEs. **The NRP would likely have operated with more efficiency regarding selection of projects and how such projects contribute to the ultimate goal of NRP, if it had a better co-ordination mechanism among the IEs.** Stand-alone training programmes without clear*

change pathways and duplication of training modules (chapters as well as entire modules) are examples where efficiency of the programme could be increased. **Linkages of activities to policy needs to be established during planning stages through asking questions like ‘so what’ and ‘what next’.**

NRP’s monitoring structure is not adequately efficient to capture and report the progress of the project. The internal monitoring of the NRP is the responsibility of the PCMT. However, the PCMT has not been authorised enough to monitor, and course-correct if necessary, the sub-projects either on resource utilisation or on project progress. The PCMT is tasked with organising JPIC and JPSC meetings, annual workplan preparation (AWP) and MEL plans for sub-projects but in reality the AWP as well as the MEL plans are prepared by the individual IEs and the PCMT simply signs off on it. There is a lot of emphasis on monitoring the deliverables and not enough emphasis on monitoring the impacts and the outcomes. In fact, there is no central reporting for the NRP as a whole, instead there is separate progress reporting for each of the four sub-projects where the sub-projects separately reported their progress to the JPIC meetings facilitated by the PCMT. Even though there are many references of SDGs and the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction in all the NRP documents, there is no monitoring or recording of how the individual interventions in NRP have contributed to SDGs, Sendai Framework Priorities and targets and align with the CEDAW and its Recommendation 37 which is the legal treaty for gender-responsive risk informed development.

This makes it very difficult to assess whether the NRP has had any impact or has achieved any outcome through systematic monitoring. Anecdotal evidence are however available, both from the projects as well as the government, on the success of the NRP. NRP needs to strengthen its internal monitoring structure to capture the achievements of the project better. NRP also needs a properly indexed central repository of deliverables, training feedbacks, monitoring reports, government orders or other means of judging NRP’s contribution such as minutes of the meeting, e-mails acknowledging NRP’s contribution. The PCMT needs to play a bigger role in guiding the monitoring and evaluation aspects of the NRP and should be authorised enough to monitor project progress.

NRP also needs to have a more efficient knowledge management component. It is very difficult to ascertain why and how certain project activities have been undertaken by the NRP or what are its linkages to the ultimate goals of the NRP or the Sendai framework and other relevant documents as stated above. While there is a clear rationale in most cases for selection of interventions, most of this institutional memory is lying with the project personnel. The rationale for selection of projects and where it has led to is not immediately apparent to external stakeholders. **This issue is readily resolved if the NRP puts in forth a simple knowledge management component right at the planning stage of the project. Simple 1-2 page notes explaining the background, reason for selection, linkages to country priorities, possible linkages to other donor-funded or government projects, expected changes and possible next stages could be framed for each of the outputs delivered by the NRP.**

NRP does not seem to generate new knowledge within the arena of climate change and disaster management, rather it follows the existing practices based on government policies and plans. There were opportunities to feed back the government process with new knowledge such as threshold for resilience, climate modelling, sustainability indices; specific climate model based projections for inner, major, coastal and meandering rivers and such. While knowledge generation was not considered a part of the NRP, it is nevertheless a component with far-reaching implications in guiding resilience planning. It would be prudent for the NRP to consider generation of knowledge as a new intervention if the NRP is continued.

3.3.2 Alignment to EQ12

EQ12. To what extent have the funds been disbursed and utilised? How did the programme manage financial and operational risks in the wake of COVID-19?

The programme had a slow start and was supposedly further impeded due to COVID-19 imposed restrictions. Of the total USD 12,589,677 approved value of the project has been able to utilise USD 10,318,294 till 31st December 2021 which gives an utilisation rate of 81.9% (90.94% if money disbursed is considered). It is understood that the NRP has been provided a further fund of USD 1,469,572.52 for the period of January to December 2022 for continuation of present activities and for preparing for a next phase of NRP. As per data available till 31st December 2021 and based on expenditures incurred from 2017-21, it is observed that while UN Women has been able to utilise 97.03% of the disbursed funds, UNOPS and UNDP are both under a reasonable unspent spending of 10%. This has led to 9.06% unutilised funds for the NRP as a whole. Figures provided by the NRP team as demonstrated in Table 2 bears out the slow start of the programme in the initial 2 years but does not support the slowing down of the programme due to COVID. In fact the figures suggest, rather surprisingly, that the programme was most efficiently run during the COVID than before that. This calls into question the NRP's planning and intervention selections during the initial years of the programme and suggests, as stated earlier, that the programme could have possibly benefited from a longer inception period and more considerate evaluation of the risks and assumptions.

It is also understood that the NRP has a unique fund disbursement arrangement where UNOPS is the administrative agent to receive funds from the donors and disburse to the other IEs. It has the authority to collect financial data from the other IEs but has no authority to audit the usage of such funds and whether the funds have been utilised properly. The PCMT team also has no oversight over the resource utilisation. It is the responsibility of the IEs to present their budgets and funds are disbursed based on these budgets without adequate vetting of the budget proposals. While this does not reflect misallocation of funds it is still a case of conflict of interest where each IE would like to maximise the resources available to them. This could lead to unutilised funding lying with one IE whereas another IE with faster progress would be languishing for want of it as demonstrated by the fund utilisation above.

*It is the considered opinion of the evaluation team that, as mentioned above, the **NRP will benefit from a programme level planning that determines the funds to be disbursed to each IE.** These disbursements may be made in quarterly tranches depending on the utilisation of the previous funds to ensure tighter control on the project finances.*

*Considering that the management structure of the NRP has a strong government control on the finances of the programme and its sub-programmes, it may not be possible for the NRP to realign the financial commitments from one sub-programme to another as government systems may not allow for such changes. However, it is also understood that the JPIC does have the authority to suggest such realignment if required, though the process may not be easy. Under the circumstances, to maintain a degree of flexibility, it is suggested that a **Rapid Response Fund** be maintained within the NRP structure. This fund would be a flexible funding mechanism to provide need-based emergency funding to sub-projects outside the approved budget of the sub-programmes and can be subsequently adjusted while budget calculations in the next year.*

Although the financial figures give a contrarian suggestion, KIs have indicated that the NRP has been hampered severely during COVID and had to adjust to the changing realities very quickly. This led to the NRP repurposing its resources to provide strategic support to the GoB through build-back-better strategies in the wake of COVID. Resources allocated for offline training programmes were utilised for initiatives such as rapid flood assessment reports in the wake of cyclone Amphan and 2020 floods in the midst of COVID. All training programmes were shifted to online modes and NRP ensured that the programme kept running albeit with reduced efficiency during COVID. This is hardly unexpected as COVID is once-in-a-century event that caused massive disruption everywhere.

The NRP is classified as a GEN2 programme since gender equality is a principle objective of the NRP¹⁷. This would entail the NRP separately collate and report on expenses towards gender focussed activities. However, if we discard the UN Women component of the programme, the entire budget of which is tuned towards gender focused activities, for the other IEs there has been no monitoring of the gender budgets or gender expenses. As has been explained elsewhere, in spite of the GEN2 classification, gender has not always found focus or even consideration among many of the interventions right from the initial stages. Several reasons were attributed to it ranging from lack of coordination, perception that UN Women is solely responsible for gender activities, low understanding of gender issues to absence of gender focal points.

Not focusing on gender sensitised planning and budgeting and monitoring of expenses is one of the limitations of the project. While it is too late to change the planning of the interventions for this phase of the NRP, the IEs along with the PCMT should take necessary steps to ensure that this gap in the monitoring is plugged in the remaining few

¹⁷ Gender Mainstreaming Made Easy: Handbook For Programme Staff; UNDP

months of the project and also ensure that future phases of NRP, if continued, have greater focus on gender across the board right from the planning stages.

3.3.3 Alignment to EQ13

EQ13. What has been the scale/quality of partnership and coordination (policy and technical planning) between the implementing agencies, and between other development partners (World Bank, ADB, USAID) who have supported similar or complementary programmes?

The NRP build on earlier works supported by other donors by expanding the scope of such activities or aiding those interventions to reach the next steps. Examples of this continuation/ upscaling/ replication approach include:

- i. The AMS developed under the NRP followed from the resilient infrastructure framework developed by CDMP-II project supported by the UNDP, erstwhile DFID and the European Commission
- ii. The NPDM 2021-25 was being supported by the CDMP-II. It received support for 2 phases of revision from CDMP-II and was finally concluded with support from the NRP in the final phase.
- iii. The AMP (Roads) uses climate projection data provided by World Bank for planning in baseline year as well as next 10 years for rural roads and 50 years for bridges
- iv. The DFRM project has its genesis with the Deltas, Vulnerability & Climate Change: Migration & Adaptation (DECCMA)¹⁸ project funded by Collaborative Adaptation Research Initiative in Africa and Asia (CARIAS), with financial support from the UK Government's Department For International Development (DFID) and the International Development Research Centre (IDRC), Canada. BUET team involved in the DECCMA project worked on the DFRM initiative as well. The same team is also involved in the implementation of the Bangladesh Delta Plan 2021 and hence there is a possibility of reverse influencing as well.
- v. The earthquake readiness intervention was a replication of an earlier work done in Mymensingh supported by WB funded Seismic Risk Mitigation through Retrofitting of Civil Infrastructure in Bangladesh (2014-2015) funded by World Bank's Higher Education Quality Enhancement Project¹⁹
- vi. Gender Equality in Humanitarian Action (**GiHA**) Working Group which predated the NRP but was supported through the NRP in generating gender analysis reports of floods in 2020 as well as other activities

While COVID related disruption and inadequate maturity of the NRP interventions prevented the NRP to enter into formal agreements with other donors, informal

¹⁸ <https://idl-bnc-idrc.dspacedirect.org/handle/10625/57543>
<https://www.researchgate.net/publication/329876951> Seismic Loss Estimation for Ward 14 of Mymensingh Bangladesh

arrangements and common government counterparts have ensured that the NRP benefit from other donor funded projects as well as partner with other donors to replicate and/or upscale the NRP interventions. Examples of such arrangements can be found in:

- i. The AMS development and the learnings therefrom has been informally shared with both ADB and World Bank for replication in other departments as well for enhancements of Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) through World bank support
- ii. ADB's Rural Connectivity Improvement Project (RCIP) will upgrade about 1,700 kilometres of rural roads to all-weather standards in 34 districts located in five divisions; improve the capacity of the rural infrastructure agency to address institutional constraints relating to rural road development; and (iii) finance enhancements to the national rural road master plan to enable the selection of priority rural roads for improvement using a geographic information system covering the entire country.²⁰. Data from the RCIP will be used by the LGED and will provide complimentary support to implementation of the AMS
- iii. Climate change concerns included in the RDM and strengthening of the RSDMS will be supported through the KfW funded Climate Resilient Local Infrastructure Centre (CReLIC)²¹. CReLIC will be a centre of excellence that will act as a knowledge and information hub which will collect, process and provide knowledge and exchange of information on climate resilient infrastructure to and from LGED Engineers, relevant research institutions and other agencies. CReLIC therefore provides complimentary support to NRP
- iv. Data generated through World Bank funded Rural Transport Improvement Project is being used for finalisation of the AMP (Bridges)
- v. The BUET team working on the DFRM has initiated discussions with Google for dissemination of the DFRM by linking it with Google Earth and generating better Digital Terrain Models (DTM) for improving the flood modelling.
- vi. Guidelines provided through the DRR-EGPP intervention has been informally adopted by World Bank funded Health and Gender Support Project for Cox's Bazar District

The main reason for this fruitful collaboration with other donor funded projects has been informal interactions between intersectional personnel either on the government side or on the NRP consultant's side. While a lot of importance is given to formal arrangements for sharing inter-project information and learning, it is often seen that informal set-ups contribute more towards cross-learning and cross-adoption. It is, however, an observation of the evaluation team that the information received on such partnerships have chiefly been from feedback received from the government stakeholders rather than the IEs. The evaluation team would request that such informal partnerships be noted and archived through the NRP's internal monitoring system.

²⁰ <https://www.adb.org/projects/47243-004/main>

²¹ https://crim-lged.org/crelc/crelc_profile/crelc.profile.php

3.4 Impact

Four evaluation questions were assessed to understand the impact of the NRP. In general, technical assistance projects are by nature longer term projects and impacts of the project manifest long after the end of the programme. Due to considerable overlap EQ15, EQ16 and EQ17 have been discussed together and EQ18 has been discussed separately.

EQ15. What have been the impacts (actual or likely impacts) of the programme in terms of the logframe indicators? What is the scale achieved or likely to be achieved? Are there any unintended (positive/negative) impacts of the programme?
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EQ16. To what extent have economic and social systems of the partner countries adapted their economic and social systems to gender responsive resilient development? What have been the co-impacts of the complementary programmes supported by other development partners?
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EQ17. To what extent have the stakeholders' (parliamentarians, line ministries, private sector, civil societies, media, citizens etc.) responded to policy, tools, framework etc. developed under the programme (demand side impacts)?

EQ18. To what extent has the structure of the NRP contributed to force-multiplier effects? i.e. Is the contribution of the NRP greater than the contribution of the sum of its sub-programmes?

3.4.1 Alignment to EQ15, EQ16, EQ17

EQ15. What have been the impacts (actual or likely impacts) of the programme in terms of the logframe indicators? What is the scale achieved or likely to be achieved? Are there any unintended (positive/negative) impacts of the programme?

EQ16. To what extent have economic and social systems of the partner countries adapted their economic and social systems to gender responsive resilient development? What have been the co-impacts of the complementary programmes supported by other development partners?

EQ17. To what extent have the stakeholders' (parliamentarians, line ministries, private sector, civil societies, media, citizens etc.) responded to policy, tools, framework etc. developed under the programme (demand side impacts)?

Given the short time-frame of the NRP, the evaluation team believes it is too early to assess impact of the NRP programme. The impacts are expected to be significant once the recommendations from all the policy tools and system enhancements are fully integrated and adopted by the governments given that these have been developed in a consultative manner. The initiatives undertaken by the NRP have mostly been just finalised and are yet to be adopted completely by the government. Certain interventions such as the AMS, DFRM, DIA will take much more handholding to be integrated in government systems and support needs to be provided to take these projects to their logical conclusion.

The evaluation findings²² suggest that NRP has made significant progress against its output targets in all the sub-projects and is highly likely to complete most of the on-going interventions till close of the programme in December 2022, which would contribute to impact in the long term. This could be confirmed only at the individual sub-project level since the linkage between the NRP's theory of change with the sub-project log-frames is not clear. The impacts from these outputs are yet to manifest with some notable exceptions as explained later. The NRP interventions may be classified into three groups based on the likelihood of impacts as highly impactful, possibly impactful and uncertain impacts. However, the NRP team is requested to note these classifications as guidance to increase the effectiveness and impacts of the interventions, It is also possible that since the evaluation was not conducted at the end of the programme, these classification will change before the conclusion of the NRP.

Highly impactful: This group of interventions are more focused activities designed with clear change pathways, largely strategic and closest to completion. These include the AMS (along with the AMPs), DIA (along with the DRIP and hazard maps), ToT activities and integration of training modules in established training institutes, gender mainstreaming in the SOD-2019 and the NPDM 2021-25

It should be noted that some of these interventions have already led to some impacts, namely in revision to guidelines on material of constructions to be used in roads and bridges dependent on hazard risk analysis, better understanding of LCA approach towards planning, greater focus on O&M of assets in LGED and making suitable financial provision for the same, proposal to set up a new unit for asset management, integration of DIA in the feasibility analysis template and mandatory use of DIA for projects above BDT 50 crores, generation of considerable interest in Planning Division to change capex allocation based on disaster resilience.

It should also be acknowledged that some interventions, although not designed with clear change pathways, have also led to significant impacts. These include the adoption of gender budgeting in DPP guidelines and inclusion of DRR for 5 ministries in the revision to the National Women's Development Policy

Possibly impactful: This group of interventions are smaller activities with potential to up-scale, yet to be finished and adopted by the GoB. These include LGED gender markers, SADDD collection in BBS, training of CSOs on women empowerment, supply chain resilience study, DFRM, DRR-EGPP, establishing Business Continuity Planning (BCP) with Bangladesh Economic Zone Authority (BEZA), disability inclusive DRR

These have been classified as possibly impactful due to the importance of these activities in generating very high impact which will only be possible if these are sufficiently up-scaled. For example, the DFRM is only a pilot applicable to a few wards in Jamalpur and Kurigram. However, if the learnings of the DFRM is extended after validation to a larger geographic area, the impact would be proportional to the scale of the NRP. The CSO training has generated a lot of enthusiasm among the ground level CSOs who have taken

²² The evaluation has taken into consideration all interventions till March 2022

it upon themselves to act as watchdogs for women empowerment in disaster planning and livelihood protection. However, it is still limited to a very limited number of CSOs. With adequate up-scaling and combining this project with possible financial solution development will increase the impact of this project many folds. The same arguments apply to the DRR-EGPP guidelines and the livelihood cash grants. These projects require up-scaling and coupling with development of financial solutions to be impactful. The supply chain resilience study needs to pave the path towards policy development to be impactful. It also needs to incorporate gender concerns in building resilience of the ready-made garment sector which employs a large number of women. The LGED gender markers and the SADDD collection in BBS are important project activities which are yet to be completed and/or accepted by the GoB. The BCP with BEZA is proposing a policy uptake for business continuity in selected economic zones in Bangladesh. The activity is still in progress and policy uptake is yet to happen. However, it is a ground breaking activity in itself as it is the first such approach in Bangladesh. For disability inclusive DRR, a policy brief has been prepared which is yet to be presented to the Parliamentary Standing Committee of MoDMR.

Uncertain impacts: This group of interventions include projects that are stand-alone and without clear change pathways towards impact. These include media training on gender sensitisation, local community trainings, earthquake volunteer training and build-back better strategies for Municipalities. It is difficult to understand how the impacts of these activities will manifest since there are no follow-up activities planned for these interventions though the particular training programmes have been well received by the participants. For example, among the women recipients of training, there is a marked difference among the recipients between those who are involved with some CSOs. These women are more out-spoken, more aware and more active and are eager to take on responsibilities. However, there is a need to link training programmes with financial empowerment schemes to enable women leaderships (not one-time grants, but systematic approach through Govt. schemes). CSOs should be encouraged to form more women SHGs to empower women. Training on women leadership should also involve male participants as it is not only the women who require training but also the men who require sensitisation. Training materials should be developed in collaboration with local people as perceptions in local areas are different than from Dhaka or from the consultants view. Participants in the media training highlighted that media sensitisation training would be more effective if trainings, collaboration and influencing activities are targeted at the senior management of media houses as it is those people who control the news, not the local journalists.

There has been no negative impacts of the project.

The greatest impact of the NRP however, should not be seen in terms of the activities of the sub-project but in the success of the NRP to bring together 4 disparate ministries to work together on the platform of resilience as well as the high amount of Government ownership generated by the project. The design of the programme is such that its results/achievements of outputs are dependent on the priorities of the national and sub-national governments. The progress of the programme

has varied across the IEs based on priorities of the individual ministries, interest of the officials engaged and the existing governance structure.

The programme has benefitted from individual champions within all 4 nodal ministries who have been associated with the programme since inception and have been able to chaperone the agenda of the NRP through the government systems. Due to strong ownership of the government and the enthusiasm of the Ministries in pursuing transformational changes, NRP has seen very high demands for its support during the tenure of the programme. Most government stakeholders have acknowledged and praised the support provided by the NRP and have also requested for the support to continue in order to integrate the recommendations/ system improvements/ tools developed by the NRP.

3.4.2 Alignment to EQ18

EQ18. To what extent has the structure of the NRP contributed to force-multiplier effects? I.e. is the contribution of the NRP greater than the contribution of the sum of its sub-programmes?

The NRP was designed as a combination of 4 sub-projects to leverage relationships of the individual IEs with the corresponding ministries and the specific expertise of the IEs. **As explained in multiple sections earlier, this structure of NRP has not yielded the desired dividend for the programme.** There has been hardly any cross-learning between the Ministries or the IEs and the silo approach have actually led to less gender mainstreaming in the NRP interventions as gender mainstreaming was considered to be solely under the purview of UN Women. Success or learning from the interventions of one IE failed to generate similar interest among other IEs. For example, the CSO training activity of UN Women could have been up-scaled through support from UNDP and UNDP could have worked on a complimentary financing solution development (not donor grant based, but government funded schemes). Similarly, it is understood that the Supply Chain Resilience Study did not take up gender concerns in spite of the involvement of large number of women in the RMG sector till it was pointed out by the donors.

In various earlier section it has been highlighted that the complexity of the NRP deserved a much more coordinated and focused approach for intervention selection and implementation to effectively maximize on its innovative horizontal structure across 4 ministries. This is not repeated here further.

3.5 Value for Money

The VfM of the programme has been measured through the standard lens of 4Es – economy, efficiency, effectiveness and equity. Evaluation of questions on value for money has been made throughout the previous sections and have been summarized here. All the questions have been answered together.

EQ19. Has the programme created value for money in terms of VfM indicators (economy, efficiency, effectiveness, equity)? How well VfM remained on track during the period of evaluation?
EQ20. Did the selection of the interventions and the mode of delivery consider the highest achievable impacts from the money allocated towards the interventions?
EQ21. Did the selection of the interventions lead to the creation of further demand from the partners?

Overall, the approach of project management for the NRP does not give the evaluation team enough confidence to conclude that the project achieved Value for Money across the board. The NRP's approach towards VfM has been inconsistent and cannot be considered suitable for a technical assistance project which aims to bring forth transformational change in government functioning. Some interventions of the NRP are more suited for implementation assistance. The NRP also tried to do too many things which spread its resources too thin. The NRP should have had a more focused approach and selected smaller number of inter-connected high impact projects. Lack of coordination among the IEs, at least at the initial stages of the programme led to duplication in deliverables which could have been easily clubbed together. At the same time, the project achieved more value for money spend whenever it has had a more focused approach towards achievement of impacts.

However, the evaluation team concedes that since many of the policies and toolkits developed through NRP have significant potential to strengthen systems and processes but are yet to be fully rolled out or benefits of those which have been piloted or implemented are yet to accrue are difficult to monetize, the efficiency of the NRP with respect to VfM is difficult to measure at this stage.

Economy:

The programme has utilized the 81.9% of the total approved TA costs (approximately 91% of the disbursed funds) till 31st December 2021 and have also been provided with a bridging fund to continue its activities from March 2022 till December 2022. Attempts have been made to leverage funding from other donors to compliment some of the activities of the NRP thereby achieving complementarity as well as value for money. The approach of NRP to build on earlier donor funded projects is also a commendable approach and generate value for money on a broader scheme of development and resilience initiatives. Another commendable approach towards Value for Money adopted by the NRP is to make the GoB an equal partner through contribution in cash and kind in the project thereby ensuring ownership and continuity of the project.

Efficiency:

In terms of delivery, the programme had a slow start and it only picked up in the later years. It has also been severely hampered by COVID. The programme has supported the national and sub-national governments and agencies/ institutions in policy reforms, capacity building, strengthening process, systems and institutions, developing tool-kits and models to enhance resilient planning. Observation and interviews during evaluation field reflects that many of these initiatives have contributed to improved awareness,

knowledge, functioning and efficiency of the national and sub-national government. However, it is difficult to measure and monetise the efficiency gains in the absence of proper benchmark and appropriate cost structures. Also, some of the interventions and toolkits are yet to be properly rolled out or to be adopted in day to day functioning or decision making by the government departments and agencies. At the same time, the contribution of the project to gender mainstreaming can at the most be considered as partial or agency/activity-specific rather than a comprehensive gender planning for the whole project. Not all the ministries and UN agencies adequately ensured gender mainstreaming across their activities in the sub-projects. Even though PCMT existed, there was a lack of an overarching system to analyse gender-responsive risk-informed development. There was a lack of gender-responsive planning and budgeting for the entire project. There was a lack of gender-responsive planning and budgeting for the entire project. For instance, the lack of coordination and efficient project implementation between the sub-projects was apparent in the field where it was noted that critical recommendations/ guidelines provided by Gender in Humanitarian Action Working Group (GIHA) for COVID-19, monsoon floods, and cyclone Amphan was not used to implement even the very basic gender considerations in flood shelters, imperilling the safety of women and girls. While there has been increased awareness on gender issues among all the concerned Ministries, it is difficult to conclude that this has been due to the contribution of the NRP. Rather it was observed that some Ministries already had a higher awareness on gender issues and was therefore keener towards gender mainstreaming while others, though aware of gender issues, did not have the wherewithal to include the same in their day-to-day functioning.

Effectiveness:

As explained in the impact section, the project has generated some impacts and are also likely to contribute to more till the end of the programme. This establishes that the project has been effective in its implementation. As pointed out earlier, the effectiveness of the interventions depended on how well the change pathways of the intervention has been designed. The value for money of the intervention is therefore dependent on how well the project was designed initially and brings into focus the need for having better control over intervention selection during the inception and planning phase.

The selection of activities of the NRP needs a narrower focus to be more effective. Some activities could be consolidated and focus should be more on policy initiatives rather than one-off activities. The best practice would be to have a policy initiative supported by capacity building and piloting (if necessary). Women empowerment and resilient livelihoods is unlikely to be attained without building economic resilience as well. The NRP should consider interventions that help leverage additional finance for this purpose. This is also one of the areas of divergence of the NRP from the UNDP country programme guidelines.

The structure and design of the NRP ensured that the programme has been demand-driven and have responded to the needs of the stakeholders at all times. The implementation of the NRP has led to the government accepting the need for resilient planning and gender mainstreaming and is also willing to change its way of functioning.

Therefore, the NRP has seen high levels of demand for handholding support as well as cooperation from their government counterparts.

3.6 Sustainability

EQ22. What is the likelihood that the programme achievements and progress will continue after the technical assistance comes to an end? What initiatives (policies/ institutional and/or regulatory frameworks/ organisational changes) have been taken or planned to ensure sustainability?

EQ23. Are the interventions replicable in the absence of external assistance? What are the risks/ barriers/ gaps towards sustainability of the interventions?
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EQ24. How were risks evaluated and mitigated during the implementation of the programme?

The high level of ownership and engagement of the government counterparts in all the ministries with the NRP provides the evaluation team with enough confidence to conclude that the interventions supported by the NRP would continue even in the absence of the project. Having said that, it should be noted that most of the NRP interventions are yet to be fully integrated in the government systems. Therefore, if the support from the NRP is withdrawn immediately, none of these interventions will have the opportunity to be anchored. This is not surprising since most of the interventions being implemented by the NRP would even under normal circumstances (without being impeded by COVID) have taken more than 3 years to be fully adopted by the Government.

At the present moment, none of the interventions of the NRP is replicable without external assistance. The programme has not had the chance to mature enough to ensure sustenance without external aid. However, some of the training activities which have been institutionalized with different training institutes and through training of trainers will continue even in the absence of the project.

The design of the NRP with the government being an equal partner will be the biggest contributor to its sustainability beyond the project lifetime, once the project has had the opportunity and time to mature. NRP interventions which have been targeted towards specific system enhancements will stand the test of time. These include:

- a. Changed guidelines incorporated in the SOD-2019 and NPDM 2021-25 is now part of GOB's policy framework and will hence continue
- b. The asset management system implemented in LGED along with the asset management plans. The failure analysis model and road deterioration model developed in the NRP are supporting tools to the AMP. But given that there is an ADB and a World Bank support programme operating in the same space, there is a possibility of these two mutating into some other tools and sustain in a different form
- c. SADDD with the BBS will continue and is likely to expand in future to the upazilla level and cover more critical parameters. Since this is connected directly to the Sendai framework reporting, this will continue

- d. DIA has already been integrated with the feasibility analysis template and is probably the only NRP initiative which would sustain even if NRP support is withdrawn immediately. However, further support will enable the DIA to be more firmly integrated
- e. As mentioned earlier several training modules and training programmes that have been integrated with training institute and through training of trainers will definitely sustain due to institutionalization
- f. DFRM is being integrated with the Flood Forecasting and Warning Centre. Once it is integrated it is likely to sustain and also expand in future.
- g. LGED gender marker toolkit and DRR-EGPP guidelines are likely to sustain after the NRP. But both of these activities require additional support to be up-scaled and integrated without which sustenance of both are questionable since these are not addressing specific areas of concern in the respective ministries. There is some interest in the Ministry of Finance to include non-wage allocation in livelihood support. If the learnings from the DRR-EGPP guidelines could be integrated with such revisions to livelihood programmes and other social safety net programmes, the DRR-EGPP guidelines have the possibility of being the most impactful of the NRP initiatives at the grass-root level.

3.7 Overall progress against indicators

The NRP had considered 30 output level indicators (14 for disaster management, 6 for programming divisions, 6 for department of women affairs and 4 for LGED). The progress against each of these are provided in the following table. The progress has been designated as complete, partial, incomplete and inconclusive based on the interactions with the stakeholders instead of focusing on numerical values of the outputs.

It is to be noted that even for ‘**complete**’ interventions, significant amount of work will still be required to integrate the tools/ system enhancements completely in the government systems or build on the progress at this stage and a ‘completed’ indication should be considered with caution. Holistically, all the completed interventions should also be considered to be partially completed only. In case of ‘**partial**’ interventions, either the intervention is yet to be accepted/ adopted by the government or the information is partially available.

Table 3 Progress against indicators

OUTPUT 1: Improved capacities for risk-informed and gender-responsive development planning		
<u>Indicators</u>	<u>Baseline values</u>	<u>Progress</u>
Indicator 1.1: Progress towards establishment of easily accessible platform of disaster risk information for development planning	No tools/resources were available by the year 2018 (Baseline value is 0) by which disaster risk information could readily be	Completed. DRIP established and functional.

purposes is established and institutionalized within the GoB system	accessed from ICT based platform.	
Indicator 1.2: Progress towards incorporation of disaster risk screening in ADP approval and appraisal system	No tools/resources were available (Baseline value is 0) by which disaster risk screening can be done during ADP approval and appraisal system.	Completed. DIA integrated in feasibility report template and made mandatory for projects above BDT 50 crores.
Indicator 1.3 Percentage of NRP-trained planning professionals self-reporting a change in their knowledge of risk and gender equality dimensions of their work utilizing gender responsive risk-informed approach in their project formulation or appraisal work with reference to specific, named project.	NRP was started in 2019 therefore the baseline value 0.	Partial. The NRP has not conducted any systemic monitoring and evaluation of the training effectiveness to assess this. Some of the trainees have confirmed that risk informed approach is being utilised in their work. The same cannot be said for gender responsive approach, which was found to be absent for most stakeholders barring those involved directly with women-centric activities.
Indicator 1.4: Progress towards institutionalization of DRR mainstreaming capacity in MoDMR and other government agencies	Baseline in this regard is 0.	Partial. NRP has contributed towards bringing in more focus towards DRR in planning and development. However, considering the width of the subject itself, this progress would always be partial. NRP would most likely require a better numerical indicator to assess progress against this, for example, number of people trained in DRR mainstreaming.
Indicator 1.5: No. of multi-hazard national, sub-national disaster and climate risk assessments that inform development planning and programming, taking into account differentiated impacts	Baseline value in this regard is 0.	Completed. NRP has published >10 studies that inform disaster resilient, gender sensitised development planning
Indicator 1.6: level of progress towards developing disaster resilience indicators for the 8th Five Year Plan,	Baseline value in this regard is 0.	Partial. Indicators for disaster management activities in 8 th Five Years Plan developed and as background paper for this five years plan the NRP

grassroots resilience voices, and risk informed business practices		conducted study on Community Resilience in Six Hotspots as suggested by General Economic Division (GED) who is responsible for preparing five years plan. Considered partial as this will be required for every 5 year plan till the GoB is equipped to develop the indicators themselves.
Indicator 1.7: Progress towards establishment of monitoring mechanism for Sendai framework implementation	No progress in regards to monitoring mechanism is made. GoB is a signatory party.	Completed. D-form has been revised, SADDD piloting is being done with BBS. 30 GOB officials from 18 departments have been imparted training and a technical committee is working in MoDMR.
OUTPUT 2: Strengthened disability inclusive, gender-responsive national capacities to address recurrent and mega disasters		
Indicator 2.1: Gaps, strengths and constraints for mega-disaster preparedness in current allocation of mandates in Standing Orders on Disaster (SOD) are known to key stakeholders	Key stakeholders are not adequately aware about SoD.	Inconclusive. It was observed that most of the stakeholders, either at national, sub-national or community level were aware of the provisions of the SOD. However, in the absence of specific indicators that directly link between NRP's activities and awareness about SOD, it cannot be concluded whether this is due to NRP's contribution or such awareness existed earlier as well.
Indicator 2.2: Sex, age and disability disaggregation is institutionalized in GoB post-disaster data collection tools and protocols.	No tools available that captured gender-disaggregated disaster impacts data. No data protocols including related methodological guidelines.	Partial. SADDD collection has been piloted by BBS in 5 Jillas. The activity was also supposed to be completed at 10 Upazilla level, which could not be completed
Indicator 2.3: Percentage of NRP-trained Government officials self-reporting utilization of gender-responsive recovery planning in their work, with	Baseline value is 0 since NRP launched in 2019.	Partial. The NRP has not conducted any evaluation of the training effectiveness to assess this. Some of the trainees have confirmed that risk informed approach is

reference to named programmes/project.		being utilised in their work. The same cannot be said for gender responsive approach, which was found to be absent for most stakeholders barring those involved directly with women-centric activities.
Indicator 2.4: Progress towards formulation and dissemination to key organizations of gender sensitive curriculum and training capacity on light search and rescue	Baseline value in this regard is 0.	Partial. A module has been developed on gender responsive search and rescue for urban community volunteers which is being used by the Fire Service and Civil Defence personnel..
OUTPUT 3: Improved capacity of selected public institutions to achieve resilience outcomes through designing and constructing risk-informed, disability inclusive and gender-responsive infrastructure		
Indicator 3.1: Strengthened LGED capacity to capture baseline information on rural infrastructure	Present practice of LGED on Asset Management is limited to database of roads, and bridges/culverts; No organizational policy, objective and strategy on Asset Management; No structured Asset Management Plan; No Asset Information Strategy.	Completed. AMS policy, plan and strategy developed and adopted
Indicator 3.2: Consistent planning, design, compliance and construction processes for new assets and infrastructure systems in support of proactive gender-responsive resilience building in place	Current road design standards do not incorporate the resilience elements; LGED does not have a systematic methodology to conduct Failure Analysis; LGED does not have a common tool to address gender issues in development projects.	Completed. Failure Analysis Tool developed, Road Deterioration Model developed. LGED gender marker tools developed but yet to be adopted.
Indicator 3.3: Strengthened capacity for other institutions by adopting risk informed and gender responsive resilient	Level of awareness of resilient infrastructure varies across different institutions; No arrangement on Asset Management course	Completed. To ensure the continuity of capacity building initiatives on Asset Management, LGED has signed a contract with the Engineering Staff College of

infrastructure design and implementation	between LGED and Engineering Staff College Bangladesh (ESCB).	Bangladesh (ESCB) to train the staff of LGED and other public institutions within the country.
Indicator 3.4: Strengthen LGED leadership, policy and compliance capacity around risk-informed, gender responsive planning and design	No Professional Development Program on Asset Management at LGED.	Partial. LGED personnel have been provided certified training on AMS including development of in-house trainers. Leadership and capacity development regarding gender integration is still a work-in-progress
OUTPUT 4: Enhanced women's leadership capacities for, gender-responsive disaster management decisions, investments and policies at national and local levels		
Indicator 4.1: Number of policy instruments addressing gender equality aspects of disaster risk reduction	NPDM (2016-2020) indicates about gender equality aspects to some extent.	Completed. NPDM 2021-25 and SOD-2019 have included gender aspects in DRR. National Women's Development Policy has included DRR for 5 ministries. All UN Women deliverables have considered gender aspects in DRR
Indicator 4.2: Percentage of women's organizations in the project area are directly engaged in Disaster risk reduction, Climate Change adaptation and Humanitarian Actions	7% (Baseline Survey, DWA Part 2018).	Inconclusive. UN Women end line survey says 100% of women's organisation supported by NRP DWA are engaged in DRR, CC adaptation and humanitarian actions but the indicator refers to women's organisation in the project area. It is not surprising that the organisations supported will stay involved.
Indicator 4.3: Percentage of women from the project communities self-reporting receipt of early warning message s (at the wake of disaster)	73.4% (Baseline Survey, DWA Part 2018).	Completed. 100% women from the project are confirmed receipt of early warning.
Indicator 4.4: No of awareness programs (talk show, interviews) on gender-responsive resilience (GRR) aired	Baseline value 0 by the year 2018. The baseline study results suggest that more than 80% respondents indicated that they do not listen to talk shows in Radio	Completed. 8 awareness programmes including talk shows, international conferences and webinars were arranged. Media sensitisation training has also resulted in 70 reports

	or TV that discuss DRR, CCA issues.	aired/published on print and electronic media on gender-responsive DRM topics ranging from women in disasters and their role in preparedness, the role of Women's Organizations/ community-based organizations in disaster management, women and climate action, violence against women and protection during disasters
OUTPUT 5: Strengthened disability inclusive, gender responsive community preparedness, response and recovery capacities for recurrent and mega disasters		
Indicator 5.1: Development of DRR inclusive social safety net guideline and piloting	Baseline value 0. In Bangladesh about 200 Social Safety Net Programs (SSNP) are being implemented by a number of agencies that aim to primarily reduce the socio-economic vulnerabilities. In that consideration these SSNPs got DRR elements, though not fully aligned with DRR objectives.	Completed. DRR inclusive EGPP guidelines have been developed and piloted. 200 extreme poor households have been provided training on disaster resilient EGPP schemes. 20 local level government personnel have also been trained
Indicator 5.2: No. of policy briefs on disaster risk reduction activities with people with disabilities disseminated to policymakers	Baseline value is 0. It is imperative to mention that few NGOs are working in limited scale/scope on disability issues relating to DRR.	Partial. The NRP has developed at least one training programme that provided for disability sensitive flood response. A policy brief has also been prepared which is yet to be submitted to the Parliamentary Standing Committee of MoDMR. SOD-2019 and NPDM 2021-25 both have elements of disability sensitised responses mentioned, the contribution of NRP to such inclusion is inconclusive.
Indicator 5.3: Progress towards institutionalization Flood Protection Programme (FPP) utilizing gender-sensitive messaging with volunteers.	Baseline value is 0. Activities related to FPP were introduced as pilot in some flood protected areas implemented by few NGOs but full FPP framework and operational procedures	Partial. Gender sensitised flood and cyclone preparedness training programmes have been conducted both at community level as well as DMC members' level. FPP

	were not developed before 2018. Gender sensitive messaging with volunteers did not happen since no effective/complete FPP framework was established.	institutional framework has been drafted.
Indicator 5.4: No. of people (disaggregated by gender, age and disability) from increased access to early warning information from FPP expansion	Baseline value is 0 since FPP as a framework did not exist before 2018.	Incomplete. The NRP has not been allowed significant time to attain these numbers. Further, FPP expansion has not been completed. Against a target of 50% trained FPP volunteers disseminating warning, NRP resulted in only about 30% disseminating warning.
Indicator 5.5: No. of social safety net programmes revised to meet disaster specific needs of women from the most vulnerable areas	SSNPs of Bangladesh generally focus on poverty reduction of vulnerable communities that also include women. But no programs are revised to meet disaster specific needs of women from most vulnerable areas meaning the baseline value is 0.	Completed. DRR inclusive EGPP guidelines have been developed and piloted. 200 extreme poor households have been provided training on disaster resilient EGPP schemes. Women have been given specific focus in developing these guidelines
Indicator 5.6: No of women in the project area pursuing non-traditional livelihood options contributing to their resilience building	Baseline value is 0 (Baseline Survey, DWA Part 2018).	Incomplete. 45% of targeted women (1215 out of 2700) women are pursuing non-traditional livelihood options. Target could not be achieved due to COVID induced economic barriers.
Indicator 5.7: Percentage of women involved in the project that self-report decreases assets loss (in case of disaster) compared to previous disasters	Baseline value 14% (Baseline Survey, DWA Part 2018).	Inconclusive. 75% women involved in the project has reported decreased asset loss as compared to a target of 50%. However, the contribution of NRP in affecting this decrease in asset loss is uncertain.
Indicator 5.8: Progress towards inclusion for Forecast-Based Financing within DDM operations.	Forecast based financing initiatives non-existent performed by Department of Disaster Management (DDM).	Completed. Forecast based financing taskforce activated and the forecast based financing included in the SOD-2019

Indicator 5.9: Progress towards development of location specific dynamic flood risk model for up-scaling.	Non-existent of location specific (local level) dynamic flood risk model.	Completed. Ward level dynamic flood forecasting model developed and piloted. The model is up-scalable.
Indicator 5.10: Progress towards earthquake preparedness through the formulation of an Implementation package for Ward-Level Minimum Preparedness model	Non-existent at NRP implementation areas (Rangpur City Corporation and municipalities of Tangail, Rangamati, Sunamgonj).	Partial. A significant number of volunteers have been trained for earthquake response. 2 Contingency plans prepared.
Indicator 5.11: Proportion of at-risk population covered by community level contingency plans for earthquakes	Baseline value 0 because no community level contingency plan for earthquake exists (Rangpur City Corporation and municipalities of Tangail, Rangamati, Sunamgonj).	Completed. 20.63% population at risk covered against target of 20%.

3.8 Risk Analysis

The NRP during its conception had considered several risks and had formulated mitigation measures to counter those risks. It would be prudent to look into how accurate were those risk predictions and whether the planned mitigation strategies worked in the project scenario. This is important to understand for taking corrective actions, should there be a next phase of NRP.

Table 4 Risks and mitigation measures

Risk and significance of risk	Project mitigation measures	Analysis
Strategic risk		
Lack of understanding of all-of-society approach among key stakeholders hinders transformational effect of programme on	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Considering that a full transformation to all-of-society approach will require considerable change to mandates, business and resource allocations, it is recognized that the NRP will only make a partial contribution towards this larger outcome. The programme therefore focuses on developing the capacities of the implementing partner ministries for integrating a gender- 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> While the NRP identified that it would only be able to make partial contribution towards transformational progress, it did not take adequate measure to reduce the breadth of the programme and focus on increasing the depth of the interventions. Hence, <i>NRP</i>

<p>disaster risk management and resilience building</p> <p>(Moderate)</p>	<p>sensitive, multi-hazard risk informed approach into their programmes and policies and supporting other government entities to do so as well.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The programme governance structure is set up to both ensure empowerment of implementing partner ministries in implementing disaster risk management and resilience building activities and bring the partner ministries' representatives together for dialogue. The Programme Steering Committee (PSC) will high-level representation from all implementing partner ministries, while the Programme Implementation Committee) convenes representatives from key divisions/departments of the ministries. • Across programme outputs, activities are planned to develop the understanding and capacity of a diverse set of stakeholders, including private sector leaders, parliamentarians, line ministry officials and staff, key NGOs, academia, the women's empowerment and gender equality machinery, organizations of people living with disabilities, and urban local government. 	<p>would do well to take a more pragmatic approach towards the extent of changes it wishes to effect.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The programme governance structure has ensured wholehearted participation of the government. The effort of the entire NRP team including the government counterparts is really commendable in this respect. <i>However, the NRP would also need to ensure an informal coordination structure to maximise all-of-society approach among the implementing partners.</i> • <i>Transformational change can only be brought about by linking capacity building with transformational aspects. The NRP needs to reconsider some of its activities and link them with desired systemic changes to avoid being merely transactional in its intervention selection.</i>
<p>Weak sustainability of project outputs and models due to lack of integration in existing government structures and programmes</p> <p>(Moderate)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National Implementation Modality has been adopted to ensure strategic guidance from decision-makers in the implementing partner ministries, operational coordination with government agencies, and alignment with government initiatives, policies and programmes. • Activities have been designed to dovetail with existing structures and systems, not separately. Dialogue on hand-over and institutionalisation of outputs and products (i.e., models around Flood & Earthquake Preparedness, DRR inclusive Social Safety Net, Resilient Livelihood etc, 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The NRP has taken the right approach towards integrating systemic changes and tools by involving the government counterparts from the initial stages of the interventions. • Working with existing systems and introducing small changes with larger impacts is the right way to ensure uptake and sustainability. <i>Breakthrough changes are important but require more effort in</i>

	<p>and tools around SADDD, Gender Marker, Asset Management, Disaster Impact Assessment and Risk Information Platform etc) will be initiated from the beginning of each activity, to ensure that they fit the needs, structure and realistic capacity of the final “owner” government agency.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Each sub-project will develop an exit strategy within the first 12 months of the programme period. 	<p><i>integration and sustainability and would therefore require better planning with clearer change pathways defined.</i> Changes that require least disruption would have greater chance of success.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • While each NRP sub-project was supposed to prepare an exit strategy, none of them was actually prepared to ‘exit’ and all the sub-programmes operated under the assumptions that the next phase of NRP will surely come. This is optimistic thinking at best. <i>NRP needs to ensure that exit strategies are in place immaterial of whether the programme would be continued.</i>
Operational risk		
<p>Time cost and complexity of coordinating sub-projects and partnering agencies that may delay decision-making and disbursement of funds</p> <p>(Moderate)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The programme has been designed so that overarching decision-making authority and approval of funds disbursement rests with the Programme Steering Committee (PSC). Upon approval of Annual Work Plans by the PSC, funds will be disbursed through the UN system directly to the implementing partner ministries. • In order to ensure that the PSC may make informed, timely decisions, they are supported by the Programme Implementation Committee in which all sub-project directors are represented and a staffed Project Coordination and Monitoring Team (PCM Team) facilitates. The PCM Team will ensure that sub-projects submit inputs for PSC discussions when required, ensuring that the PSC is provided with the required information and high-quality 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The complexity of the NRP almost guarantees unhomogenised progress of sub-projects. <i>The operational and financial structure of the NRP needs to accommodate for this and a more flexible project operation structure is required to ensure maximum efficiency and timeliness in utilisation of funds. Ring-fencing funds for specific project activities, no matter the outcome, is not the right approach for NRP.</i> • <i>The PCMT needs to play a bigger role in coordinating between the sub-projects and to ensure that all the 4 sub-projects are working towards a common goal,</i>

	planning documents in a timely manner.	<i>following an all-of-implementers approach instead of siloed operation.</i>
Delay in implementation of activities due to sudden changes in the security environment (Moderate)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This external risk cannot be fully contained at project level. However, impact on activities will be mitigated through a comprehensive contingency plan. Risk assessments will be conducted, and risk logs maintained and updated regularly by the project. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The evaluation team did not find any evidence that any risk assessments (from security or environmental hazards perspective) were conducted during the implementation of the programme. However, the programme had to face a once-in-a-century disruption in the form of COVID-19. The programme has been quite successful in navigating through COVID-19 related disruptions and have shown adequate flexibility in adopting to changed ways of working during COVID-19. The entire NRP team should be commended for this. <i>It is a suggestion from the evaluation team that the NRP develop an internal knowledge product on the steps and actions taken for minimising the disruptions due to COVID and sue it as a standard template for possible future interruptions in project delivery.</i>
Small- or medium-scale disaster that may prevent/delay the implementation of activities (Moderate)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This external risk cannot be fully contained at project level. However, impact on activities will be mitigated through a comprehensive contingency plan. The work plan will consider seasonality of hydro meteorological hazards, biological hazards (Epidemic/Pandemic) and their potential impacts on mobility and activity implementation. Risk assessments will be conducted, and risk logs maintained and updated regularly by the project. 	
A major disaster that may disrupt the function of the participating UN organizations, government and/or programme units (Low)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This external risk cannot be fully contained at project level. However, impact on activities will be mitigated through a comprehensive contingency plan for the programme, the UN system contingency plans, and the business continuity plans of the participating UN organizations. The work plan will consider seasonality of hydro meteorological, geo-physical and biological hazards (Pandemic) and their potential impacts on mobility and activity implementation. 	
Fiduciary risk (Moderate)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Checks and balance will be introduced in the major decision-making process related to tendering, procurement and selection of implementing partners. The project will facilitate regular audit by Foreign Aided Project Audit 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>The evaluation team did not see adequate evidence that the selection, planning, budgeting and approval of projects underwent any systematic discussions and/or quality control to</i>

	<p>Directorate of the Auditor General Office.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Spot checks and other missions will be undertaken to assess and reduce fiduciary risks (in addition to the regular audits). Internal audit of the programme will follow the procedures set out in the Guidance Note on Joint UN Programmes. For its output 5, the project will introduce and gradually upscale a social audit mechanism which will allow beneficiaries to review the project and give critical feedback, which will be reviewed by the Programme Implementation Committee. 	<p><i>ensure the NRP achieve its declared goals as a programme and not as a combination of 4 sub-programmes while achieving value-for-money. Rather, selection of some of the activities under NRP calls into question the reasoning behind selection of such activities. There has been no internal central mechanism to ensure that the money is well-spent. As stated earlier, the PCMT need to play a bigger role in mitigating such fiduciary risks.</i></p>
<p>Political influence on geographical targeting of the implementation.</p> <p>(Moderate)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identification of beneficiary communities based on agreed selection criteria. Endorsement of targeted communities by all key parties. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> For a programme with significant government partnership, this is a risk which cannot be eliminated entirely. The evaluation team have found no evidence of this risk playing out in the selection of the geographic areas or socio-economic beneficiaries
Social and environmental risk		
<p>Environmental degradation, pollution, extraction of resources from sensitive and protected natural sites, or adverse impacts to habitats from project activities</p> <p>(Low)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Due to its nature as a strategic capacity development support programme targeting government agencies and their practices, the NRP contains few activities likely to have an environmental impact. The activities which may have a direct environmental impact have been identified as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 5.1 (Model for risk reduction through social protection) 5.3 (Resilient and empowering livelihoods for women) While both these activities are of limited scale within the programme, the purpose is to create models which may 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The evaluation team did not find any evidence that this risk has played out during the implementation of the programme. In general the NRP has maintained a 'Do No Harm' philosophy.

	<p>be replicated at scale through government programmes. As such, the utmost consideration will be given to ensuring that these programme activities are designed to support environmental sustainability, prevent mal adaptation to climate change, and minimize adverse environmental impacts (such as habitat/environmental degradation and extraction of resources from sensitive sites).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implementation guidelines have been devised for environmental sustainability, considering 'Do No Harm'. 	
<p>Decision-making processes in the programme and its activities (including community mobilisation) are dominated by the elite and unequal power dynamics and structures which create barriers for gender equality machinery and women's groups to engage in DRM and exclude key target groups such as women and girls, adolescents, the extreme poor, persons with disabilities, elderly and ethnic and religious minority groups.</p>	<p>Due to its particular focus on gender mainstreaming in disaster and climate risk management and resilience-building, the programme will both develop a gender mainstreaming plan and hire a full-time gender mainstreaming advisor for the duration of the programme. The advisor will support sub-projects on how to integrate gender issues into the technical and operational aspects of their activities, including community mobilisation processes. In addition, UN Women as participating UN organization will contribute with advice based on its expertise in women's empowerment and gender equality, including gender-responsive resilience, climate change and DRM. UN Women will also contribute with its strong partnerships with the gender equality machinery and advocates, as well as women's groups.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In order to ensure that the programme considers the needs and rights of persons with disabilities and minimize unintended exclusionary effects on this population, the programme will a) include a senior representative of the Ministry of Social Welfare (mandated government agency for disability inclusion and rights) on the PSC; b) consider the concerns and call of the 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>The programme has not addressed this risk in its entirety. Rather, the structure of the programme worked towards exclusion of gender sensitisation in the sub-programmes. This has primarily happened due to the perception that gender inclusivity is solely the role of UN Women whereas gender inclusion is a cross-cutting issue and should have been everybody's responsibility. It is therefore suggested that to eliminate this risk, each sub-project within the NRP should have separate gender focal points. The NRP as a whole should adopt a two-pronged approach where UN Women provides guidelines and expertise but the gender focal points in each sub-project ensure gender mainstreaming in its activities.</i>

(Moderate)	Dhaka Declaration on Disability and Disaster Risk Management in activities as far as possible; and c) partner with organizations of persons to identify ways in which their rights and inclusion can be integrated into models generated by the project.	
Field level activities aiming to empower women, girls and marginalized groups create conflict by challenging gender and social norms (Moderate)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There will be an emphasis on ensuring that programme interventions at the community level (including planning, beneficiary selection, baseline data collection, monitoring and evaluation) are implemented based on thorough context and situation analysis. • The programme will ensure substantive sensitisation of community members including local community leaders (local authorities, men in the community, community elders, religious leaders, etc) to benefits to the broader community from programme activities. There will be a systematic process for engaging men and local leaders and authorities as gender equality champions, to strengthen community support for the programme. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The evaluation team did not find any evidence that this risk has played out during the implementation of the programme. However, <i>to further mitigate this risk, the evaluation team would suggest to employ women trainers for women training and locally influential people like religious leaders (imams) be co-opted for social messaging.</i>

4 Lessons Learnt

Some of the lessons learnt from implementation of the NRP is as follows:

- A participatory approach in programme design and implementation ensures greater buy-in by government counterparts. NRP's inclusive design approach followed by tailoring priorities in line with specific requirements of the nodal ministries, has been a major contributing factor for success. The NRP's flexible approach of responding to demand-driven initiatives was a key to success and increased both ownership and buy-in among national and sub-national counterparts.
- A sub-project approach is indeed a good approach to leverage existing relationships with government counterparts. However, to be successful in achieving greater value for money, this approach requires a strong coordination mechanism among the IEs.
- For a complex project like NRP it is necessary to have a narrower focus as it is not practicable to try to address all resilience issues through one technical assistance project. It is also necessary to have robust programme level planning to ensure that the IEs play to each other's strengths rather than at cross purposes with each other.
- The development and demonstration of innovative tools/approaches instil confidence and increase ownership with governments. The Evaluation Team has noted the passion with which government counterparts have defended the NRP interventions.
- Technical and capacity building support services need to be institutionalised within existing institutions with similar mandates. One-off training activities do not contribute significantly towards transformational changes. It is necessary to design targeted capacity building/training programmes that support adoption of policies/strategies/tools.
- Targeting training and capacity building to either a 'core group' or 'expert group' within nodal departments comprising people at operational levels will have a greater sustainability of policy actions. Such an approach will help manage the risks associated with the frequent transfer of higher-level officials.
- Existence of other donor funded programmes in the same sector lead to better complementarity and value addition. It is also a commendable approach to continue with the activities conducted in other precursor programmes.
- The importance of champions and the early engagement of stakeholders in pushing the programme towards its goals should be noted.
- A siloed approach is not the correct way for gender mainstreaming since gender is a cross-cutting issue which need to be addressed by everybody. Gender

mainstreaming and gender budgeting should be integrated in project designs right from the inception of the interventions

- Knowledge management of the NRP needs to be strengthened to establish the relevance of the project interventions in meeting with the NRP goals
- Internal monitoring of the NRP needs significant strengthening to capture the success as well as failures of the NRP and for identifying process inefficiencies.
- A technical assistance project should aim to work towards more strategic projects instead of smaller interventions. Smaller interventions should always be followed up either with policy directions, up-scaling or mechanisms for replication. Technical assistance programmes take longer time to be adopted and demonstrate impact.

5 Recommendations

There are several recommendations provided throughout Chapter 3 while discussing the findings from the evaluation. The following recommendations follow from the discussions earlier and should be read in conjunction.

5.1 Recommendations for Donors consideration

- Deliverables from a technical assistance programme requires a longer gestation period to be integrated in government systems and even longer time to demonstrate impact. Therefore, a technical assistance programme with the time-frame of 3 years is extremely ambitious and the programme duration may not be adequate to effect transformational changes. This drives project implementers to target low hanging fruits without considering whether such interventions would actually serve towards actual changes. It is thus recommended that technical assistance programmes as complex as NRP be designed with a minimum duration of 5 years and allowing for a longer inception period where the selection of activities can be thoroughly vetted.
- Since increasing the resilience of vulnerable population is intricately linked with economic resilience of the target population, it is recommended that a component to leverage additional finance is built into any programme that seeks to address disaster resilience, sustainable planning, livelihood support or climate change.
- To actively seek mandatory inclusion/ consideration of gender and social inclusion in all interventions of the sub-projects as well as in the narrative and financial reporting.

5.2 Recommendations for Implementing Partners

- Define the log-frame of the project such as to create logical change pathways from deliverables to outputs to impacts. Consider shifting monitoring priorities from deliverables to outputs and to intermediate outcomes which are crucial for converting outputs to outcomes and eventually impacts. Overall, enhance the internal monitoring system of the project.
- Create a centralised project coordination structure which is empowered to approve projects and budgets, periodically monitor progress and fund utilisation and if need be, reallocate funds between projects. This would ensure stricter operational control of the project, better delivery as well as better utilisation of funds.
- Prepare an exit strategy well in advance of the ending of the project. The exit strategy should clearly highlight the steps envisaged for the sustainability of the

interventions in the absence of the project. This should also include, if applicable, guidelines for replication and scaling up of pilots and identification of complimentary projects from other donors that may be used for funding. However, it would be more impactful if such funding sources could be identified or created from within government systems.

- Training strategies should always be linked with higher purpose of the training such as to embed policies or tools or guidelines and followed up after adequate time to assess the effectiveness of the training. Training feedback should be diligently collected, and training impact should be assessed as part of the project monitoring.
- Ironical as it may sound, gender mainstreaming activity should be 'mainstreamed' in the programme interventions right from the planning stages. NRP should develop an overarching gender and social inclusion policy and clear strategy with a plan of action and steps for mainstreaming gender and social inclusion across all the activities of the sub-projects. This should include assessment of gender related budgets and expenses. A gender focal point is a necessity for all the sub-projects as well as the PCMT. This does not have to be separate person but the role needs to be identified. There needs to be coordination and regular communication between the Program Managers of the sub-projects to ensure that GESI is being adequately mainstreamed
- Knowledge management system for the project needs to be improved to communicate the relevance of the project interventions to all stakeholders. Some recommendation on this has been provided in chapter 3.
- While the programme has been successful in leveraging informal relation with other donors and donor funded projects, this should be formalised in the programme structure. This will aid in cross-learning and cross-dissemination of products and would lead to faster replication of tools/ system enhancements. This does not mean arranging of workshops or seminars but to purposefully engage with complimentary programmes that may act as force multipliers.
- Introduce a workstream to leverage finance for enhancing resilience of the most marginalised. This may be through international funds such as the GCF, through other donor projects which are more suited for implementation projects or through influencing changes in government financing and existing schemes. Involve Ministry of Finance and Planning Commission to develop a gender responsive investment strategy for DRR based on SADD and gender and social analysis. Currently Sendai Framework Priority 3 for gender responsive investments seems to be a weak area for the NRP.

5.3 Possible new areas to consider

- Government subsidised Weather based livelihood Protection Insurance could be developed in collaboration with International partnerships (such as

InsuResilience Global Partnerships) and Bangladesh Bank's sustainable financing policy. This would be immensely beneficial in protecting livelihoods in the aftermath of disasters.

- Disaster affected population while able to save lives now also needs help to rebuild their lives in the aftermath of disasters. No trainings or tools have been received for rebuilding livelihoods especially when their agriculture has been upended by saline ingress during cyclones (other than some support provided through NGOs). Alternative non-farm livelihood support programme followed by training is likely to be more effective in building their resilience. (Suggested by CSOs as well). Women trainers to be used for training for better outreach among women. A suggestion was also provided to involve the Imams in training as their reach and acceptability is huge.
- A national housing project could be developed (similar to the PM-AWAS scheme in India) to provide low-cost, disaster resilient housing to the poorest in the most vulnerable areas. This would significantly reduce the vulnerable population of the country and also contribute to the SDG goals. The NRP could design the guidelines for those houses depending on the areas and hazard vulnerability
- Flood plain zoning could be built in development master plans followed by awareness building to prevent settlement of population in specifically hazardous areas. Population displacement plans (including rehabilitation) may be drawn up for shifting most vulnerable populations from highly vulnerable regions.
- NRP does not seem to generate new knowledge within the arena of climate change and disaster management, rather it follows the existing practices based on government policies and plans. There were opportunities to feed back the government process with new knowledge such as threshold for resilience, climate modelling, sustainability indices; specific climate model based projections for inner, major, coastal and meandering rivers and such. While knowledge generation was not considered a part of the NRP, it is nevertheless a component with far-reaching implications in guiding resilience planning. It would be prudent for the NRP to consider generation of knowledge as a new intervention if the NRP is continued.

6 Conclusion

The NRP has contributed significantly in raising awareness among the stakeholders in Bangladesh about resilient planning and development.

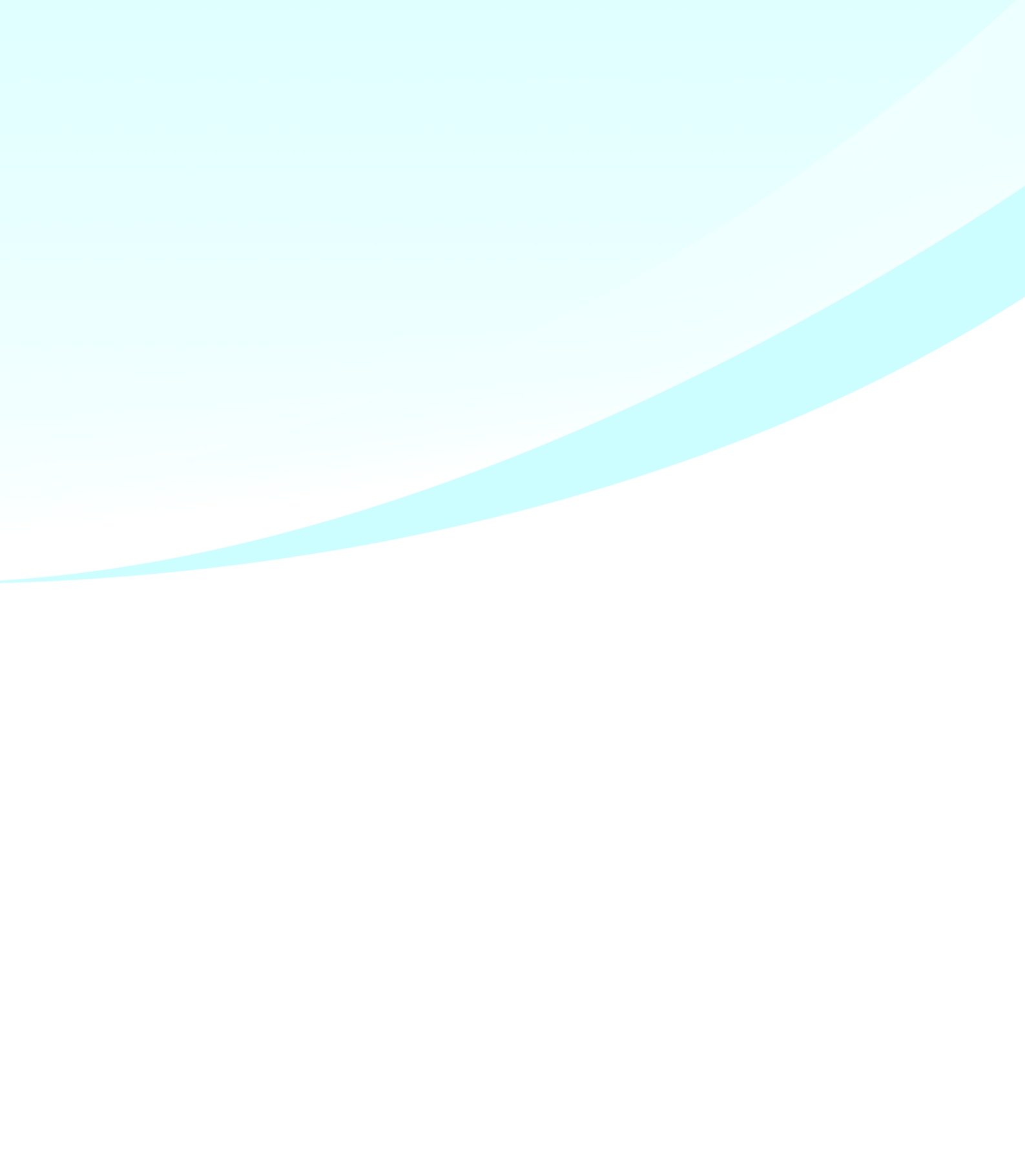
The programme design has good alignment with country priorities, SDG goals, Sendai Framework and development agencies' priorities as well. The NRP has built on existing precursor programmes, therefore maintaining continuity and also ensured that good initiatives started by earlier programmes are taken to their logical conclusion. It has been able to harness great ownership of the Government of Bangladesh through close collaboration and a demand-driven approach. It is the first purely technical assistance programme of this scale in Bangladesh and is hence a paradigm shift in itself from implementation oriented programmes to strategic development programme structure.

The NRP has been successful in creating a common platform on resilience and have been able to bring multiple government ministries on-board. Through its interventions the NRP has taken some very encouraging first steps towards building long-term innovative tools and systems as well as gender integration (AMS, DRIP, DIA, Gender Markers, Supply chain resilience) and have also contributed to policy level changes in few instances (SOD, NPDM, DIA, AMS, SADDD, NWDP). Having to operate during the period of COVID induced disruptions, the NRP has demonstrated extraordinary flexibility in adopting to COVID as well as 2020 floods and cyclone Amphan. It has taken promising steps towards institutionalisation of systemic changes and training programmes and in some cases have also been able to leverage relationships with other donor funded programmes to complement its own activities.

The greatest strength of the NRP has been its ability to engage the Government of Bangladesh right from the inception of the programme. The NRP adopted an approach of implementing the programme 'with the government' instead of 'for the government'. This ensured that the interventions of NRP had sustained ownership with the Ministries that it worked with. The diverse expertise brought on-board by the different UN agencies is another strength of the NRP. Another strength of the NRP was its demand-driven approach whereby it responded well to the requirements of the Government of Bangladesh. Simultaneously, the NRP could have benefited from a stronger coordination mechanism among the UN agencies which could have contributed to more streamlined and gender responsive intervention selection process. The NRP would need to strengthen further its knowledge management and monitoring processes and take a more focused approach towards strategic interventions.

Interventions started by the NRP are in various states of completion and it is the evaluation team's opinion that the NRP will be able to complete the present phase of interventions as agreed with the Government of Bangladesh by the end of 2022. However, as stated earlier, many of the interventions of the NRP will take a considerable bit of time, capacity building and influencing to be further integrated in the Government systems which is not allowed by a three year window for a technical assistance programme. It is therefore the recommendation of the evaluation team that the NRP is

allowed to continue for another suitable period, depending on the resources available, to anchor the changes that was envisaged during selection of the interventions during this phase. This will also allow the NRP to evolve as a stronger, more effective and visionary programme if the recommendations, findings and lessons learnt from this evaluation exercise are implemented in the right spirit.



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