



**MID-TERM EVALUATION
BUSINESS AND HUMAN RIGHTS IN ASIA:
Enabling Sustainable Economic Growth through
the Protect, Respect and Remedy Framework
1 January 2020 – 31 December 2023**

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PROJECT PROFILE

Project Identification		
Project Title:	Business and Human Rights in Asia – Enabling Sustainable Economic Growth through the Protect, Respect and Remedy Framework (B+HR Asia)	
Project ID:	00110712	
Output IDs:	Output Name	Output Number
	Output 1.1: Enhance Common Understanding and Policy Convergence of the UNGPs on BHR	00110712 - O2.3
	Output 1.2: Reinforce Skills and Competencies of Government to Draft and Implement NAP on BHR	00110712 - O2.3
	Output 2.1: Development of Communications Products furthering Public Discourse and Greater Appreciation for the UNGPs and its positive impact on Human Rights	00110712 - O2.3
	Output 2.2: Enhance Discussion and Awareness of Human Rights Dimensions of Trade and Investment Policy	00110712 - O2.3
	Output 3.1: Awareness and access to remedies for parties subject to adverse human rights impacts improved	00110712 - O2.3
	Output 3.2: Reinforce skills and competencies of business to conduct human rights due diligence and operate grievance mechanisms	00110712 - O2.3
	Output 3.3: Set up actions that strengthen capacities of justice institutions to address human rights abuses in the context of business operations	00110712 - O2.3
	Output 4.1: Create knowledge products on topics addressing the intersection of human rights, environmental degradation, climate change, and related priorities in Asia	00110712 - O2.3
	Output 4.2: Multi-Stakeholder Dialogue on Impact of Business on Supply Chains on the Environment	00110712 - O2.3
	Output 4.3: Promotion of Communications Products in furtherance of efforts to address impact of business on the environment and climate	00110712 - O2.3
Linkages to UNDP Strategic Plan and Regional Programme Document 2018-2021		
UNDP RPD BRH 2018-2021 Outcomes	<p>Outcome 2: Accelerate structural transformations for sustainable development</p> <p>Indicative RP Output 2.3: Institutions, networks and non-state actors strengthened to promote inclusion, access to justice, and promote human rights (UNDP Strategic Plan 2018-2021, Outputs 2.2.2 and 2.2.3)</p> <p>RP Output Indicator 2.3.2: The United Nations Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights are translated into country level action plans for implementation</p> <p>RP Output Indicator 2.3.4: Number of National Human Rights Institutions support to undertake new initiatives that relate to emerging issues such as conflict and preventing violent extremism, the SDGs, lesbian, gay, bi-sexual, transgender and intersex issues, climate change financing, business and human rights and women, peace and security</p>	

UNDP B+HR Project Outcome	Outcome 1: To engender greater awareness and to build knowledge and political will including training and peer-to-peer exchange in furtherance of policy convergence and compliance Outcome 2: To heighten communications and public diplomacy profile of the Business and Human Rights Agenda thereby building public interest and support Outcome 3: Greater access to remedy and ensure rights-based solutions that also prevent future human rights abuses, while leveraging thought leadership and innovation to unleash new approaches and technology in the service of human rights and environmental sustainability		
UNDP SP Vision and Outcome:	Vision: to help countries achieve sustainable development by eradicating poverty in all its forms and dimensions, accelerating structural transformations for sustainable development and building resilience to crises and shocks. SP Outcome 1: Advance poverty eradication in all its form & dimensions SP Outcome 2: Accelerate Structural Transformations for Sustainable Development		
Project Information			
Project Duration:		Start Date: 1 January 2020 (22 November 2019 signed)	End Date: 31 December 2023
Implementing Partner:		UNDP	
Responsible Parties:		UNDP Bangkok Regional Hub Business and Human Rights Asia Team (Direct Implementation Modality – DIM)	
Regional Coverage:		Yes	
Targeted Countries		India, Indonesia, Malaysia, Mongolia, Myanmar, Sri Lanka, and Thailand	
Region		Asia Pacific	
Project Budget			
Cost Sharing Agreement		30/11/2020	
Project budget		EUR 6,500,000 approx. US\$ 7,282,037	
Project expenditure as at time of evaluation – 31.12.2021		US\$ 2,013,510	
Funding source		Foreign Policy Instruments (FPI), European Union Commission (EUC)	
Evaluation Details			
Evaluation Type		Mid-Term Evaluation	
Evaluation dates		01/01/2020 – 31/12/2021	

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ABBREVIATIONS

AICHR	ASEAN Intergovernmental Commission on Human Rights
ASEAN	Association of Southeast Asian Nations
BHR	Business and Human Rights
B+HR Asia	Business and Human Rights Asia Project
BRH	Bangkok Regional Hub
CO	Country Office
CSO	Civil Society Organisation
EU	European Union
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
GCN	Global Compact Network
HRBA	Human Rights Based Approach
JSC	Joint Steering Committee
KII	Key Informant Interview
MTE	Mid-Term Evaluation
NAP	National Action Plan
NHRI	National Human Rights Institution
OECD/DAC	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development/Development Assistance Criteria
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MTE	Mid-Term Evaluation
RPD	Regional Programme Document
RRF	Results and Resources Framework
SIDA	Swedish International Development Agency
SMSE	Small and Medium Sized Enterprises
ToC	Theory of Change
ToR	Terms of Reference
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNEG	United Nations Evaluation Group
UNGP	United Nations Guiding Principles
UNWG	United Nations Working Group

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This evaluation is an external, independent mid-term evaluation (MTE) of UNDP's Business and Human Rights in Asia: Enabling Sustainable Economic Growth through the Protect, Respect and Remedy Framework (B+HR Asia) project (1 January 2020 – 31 December 2023). The evaluation was commissioned by the project and covers the period 1 January 2020 – 31 December 2021.

The overall scope of the MTE is to assess the progress towards the achievement of the project objectives and outcomes as specified in the project document and identify early signs of project success and areas for improvement that will guide the future direction of the project, both in the short-term, meaning the remaining project implementation period, as well as in the longer term in view of a future programming cycle. The evaluation was based on data available at the time of the evaluation, including project documents and other relevant reports, as well as extensive stakeholder consultations, conducted over a period of one month. The primary audience for the evaluation is the project and the UNDP Bangkok Regional Hub, the European Union (EU), the project's donor, governments in the region, representatives of the Project Board and other development partners. The secondary audience for the evaluation are other stakeholders, including CSOs and the private sector.

The methodology used a mixed-methods approach but was essentially qualitative. It comprised an analysis of all relevant project documentation shared by the project, and data collected through a total of 34 meetings including eight focus group discussions with 47 stakeholders. Participants included government representatives, global, regional and national civil society organisations, National Human Rights Institutions, private sector representatives, the EU, UNDP and other UN Agencies and the UN Working Group on Business and Human Rights. A total of 28 women and 19 men were consulted.

The project is without doubt contributing to its objective *to promote the agenda on BHR and ensure that it is taken up by Asian governments and businesses, thereby levelling the playing field for businesses that integrate human rights considerations into their operations and supply chains*. At the mid-term point, the project has already over-achieved on 6/8 of its activity level targets, a hugely impressive result. The remaining two are anticipated to be fully achieved by the end of the project in December 2023. When looked at per output, the project has over-achieved on outputs 2 and 3, but not fully achieved on output 1 in particular and also output 4. However, there are gaps in the project's results and resources framework, which prevent the monitoring and evaluation of the project's contributions towards its outputs, outcomes and impact. The project has achieved a consistently high delivery rate, although this is masked to some extent by over-delivery under output 2.

While the project has not yet met its targets under outcome 1, its results to date show that it has succeeded in engendering greater awareness and knowledge, and strengthening political will in furtherance of policy convergence and compliance with the UN Guiding Principles of Business and Human Rights (UNGPs). This can be evidenced by the progress in both India and Indonesia, both of whom now have draft National Action Plans (NAPs) on Business and Human Rights (BHR), as well as Malaysia, which has committed to adopting a NAP by 2023. It is also anticipated that Mongolia will have adopted its NAP by the end of 2023. Despite disappointment not to have secured more results by this point, this is still an impressive achievement after only two years of implementation of the project.

The project has succeeded in making considerable gains in terms of heightening the communication and public diplomacy profile of the BHR Agenda to build public interest and

support (outcome 2). For example, over 6,200 participants in events organised by the project, 17 publications, 221 communication products etc. The newsletter now has over 7,500 subscribers and the website traffic has increased by 114%. The Covid-19 Rapid Self-Assessment Tool, has been downloaded over 3000 times to date and been translated into 14 different languages. Indeed all practical tools that have been developed by the project to date are seen as a major success by stakeholders. All of this evidences the reach that the project has had in the two short years since it started. Going forward however, more efforts should be made in terms of measuring impact.

While the project has already over-achieved its targets under outcome 3 in terms of supporting access to remedy and other rights-based solutions to prevent future human rights abuses, this picture can be slightly misleading. The MTE observes that continued efforts are required to further strengthen access to remedy and in particular in terms of prevention.

Outcome 4 was only added to the project at the start of 2021, so has had less time to show results. That said, the project is making good inroads into understanding the interlinkages between adverse environmental and human rights impacts by business operations, has put in place solid foundations for taking the conversation forward and is already stepping up efforts in this regard in 2022.

This evaluation report provides a set of 16 findings, 10 recommendations and four lessons learned. It should be noted that it was beyond the scope of the evaluation to include contextualised findings and recommendations for all 7 countries where the project is being implemented. Instead, general findings and recommendations are provided, which can be further contextualised and localised at the CO level. A summary of the key findings and recommendations are provided below.

Findings

Relevance

Finding 1: The B+HR Asia Project is fully in line with regional development priorities and the UNDP Strategic Plan 2018-2021 as well as UNDP's Regional Programme Document 2018-2021. The project is in line with the national development priorities and respective Country Office programme's outputs and outcomes in its target countries, as well as the regional priorities of its donor, the EU. Further, the project contributes towards achievement of the SDGs, although alignment of the project with the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs could be further strengthened.

Finding 2: The project design process was inclusive and participatory and reflected the views of its donor, the EU. It was informed by a thorough scoping phase and was able to build on the regional momentum generated through the SIDA funded Business and Human Rights project in Asia. The project was designed well and all of the ingredients were in place. However, there are certain gaps in its theory of change and results framework, which potentially lead to the project not fully capturing its results and its contributions to higher-level outcomes.

Finding 3: The project has shown flexibility and adaptability to changes within its operational context, including political and environmental changes. It has been reactive to changing situations and been able to adjust its approaches and activities according to the context within which it is working. It has shown a high level of adaptability and flexibility.

Effectiveness

Finding 4: Overall, the project has made significant progress in terms of the achievement of its results and has over-achieved in a number of results areas. However, to date it has focused more

on outputs 1 and 2 and less on outputs 3 and 4. This is evidenced by both the achievement of results as well as the delivery per output, in particular delivery under output 2. To address this, the project has ramped up its workplan year on year, to be more ambitious across all outputs, while paying increased attention in 2022 to outputs 3 and 4. Progress under output 1 has yet to be fully secured.

Finding 5: The project has succeeded in raising the profile of BHR substantially as well as the project's visibility, in particular through the use of social media platforms. While the project has over-achieved to date in terms of its progress and results under Outcome 2 and has successfully expanded the reach of the project through its communication activities and knowledge products, there has been less assessment of the impact of its activities. Key successes include the Covid-19 Rapid Self-Assessment Tool and the HRDD Training Facilitation Guide, as well as the expansion of its website and introduction of the quarterly newsletter. However, a number of stakeholders commented that the tools and products could have higher utility if they were further contextualised to the local contexts and available in local languages. There are limited gains with regards to enhancing the discussion on human rights dimensions of trade and investment policy.

Finding 6: The project has had some successes under output 3.2 with regards to strengthening capacities and awareness of human rights due diligence, but less so on access to remedy and strengthening capacities of judicial institutions. Access to remedy will remain a key issue going forward. Despite this, the project has already at the midway point over-achieved on its targets under this outcome.

Finding 7: The project identified a gap and seized the opportunity to introduce work on the interlinkages between adverse environmental and human rights impacts by businesses, an issue that many stakeholders see as being key in the region. This has brought the project forefront in the dialogue on BHR and the environment, providing it with significant opportunities in taking the discourse forward.

Finding 8: Partnerships are key to the advancement of the project and the BHR agenda in the region. The project has invested considerable resources into cultivating and strengthening partnerships with a wide variety of stakeholders including government, the private sector and businesses, CSOs, NHRIs, other international organisations and academia. This investment has paid off with the project being able to convene and engage with different stakeholders both thematically and geographically. The project has also benefitted from the partnership with its donor, the EU.

Finding 9: Engaging with SMSEs is one of the biggest challenges facing the project. While the project is engaging mainly with large companies, where there is already some level of compliance with BHR, there is still a lack of full understanding of the BHR agenda and the value of the UNGPs in the private sector, in particular among SMSEs.

Efficiency

Finding 10: The project has been able to build a strong level of expertise within its team that is highly regarded among stakeholders. It is able to offer technical knowledge and expertise that can bring about change. The strategies and approaches that it has adopted have proved successful, and where they have not, the team is able to adapt and respond effectively. The level of organisation within the project, led by its project manager, is impressive.

Finding 11: The project has put in place extremely efficient internal communication mechanisms, which have led to efficiency gains and created a strong sense of unity among the team, which is credit to its robust leadership. It has invested time and resources into continuously strengthening

internal communications both horizontally and vertically. Individual team members benefit from both a high level of independence as well as consistent assistance and support. The modality of CO level support is a good model that can be considered by other regional projects and programmes. There is still room to strengthen external communication at the individual partner level.

Finding 12: The project is very rich in data and as such is very evidence based. This sets it apart from other projects and can be considered a best practice example for other projects within the BRH as well as other UN/DP entities. Through the use of modern analytical methods and tools the project is able to capture additional data to inform its planning and future programming.

Finding 13: The project has successfully been able to adopt tailor made solutions to the disparate national contexts within which it is operating. There is a need for continuing localisation to the national context.

Finding 14: At the programmatic level, there is good cooperation and synergy between the SIDA funded regional B+HR Asia project and the EU funded national B+HR Asia project, which contributes to the efficiency of both projects. There is a tight, programmatic narrative and strategy between the two projects, who share the same website, branding and logos. There is room for improved coordination between the projects in terms of planning and implementation, shared knowledge and learning and a more equitable division of human resources for even greater efficiency gains.

Sustainability and impact

Finding 15: It is without doubt that the project has already achieved considerable impact in furthering the BHR Agenda in the region and raising awareness of the UNGPs, although it does not have indicators in place to measure this. While it is premature at the midway point to assess the sustainability of a project, there are strong indications that point towards sustainability prospects.

Finding 16: While the project document does not reference the human rights-based approach, the project was designed with a human rights-based approach in mind. A participatory gender analysis of the project was conducted at the outset and the project has tried to insure the principles of inclusivity and participation in all its activities.

Recommendations

Recommendation 1: Going into the second phase of the project, the project should ensure a stronger theory of change and results framework, which will enable it to report against results and contributions towards higher level goals and outcomes. Indicators should be revised to more accurately reflect SMART principles. The project should ensure constant alignment with strategic priorities in the region as well as those of UNDP and its donor, the EU. The human rights-based approach and gender should be fully mainstreamed into both the design and implementation of the project to ensure that no one is left behind.

Recommendation 2: In the remaining implementation period the project should strive to secure the results gained by the midway point and in particular progress made under output 1 with regards to the policy frameworks in the region. It is important for governments in the region to ascribe to the policy agenda, which will strengthen ownership and contribute to the sustainability of the results to date.

Recommendation 3: The project should continue with the excellent progress made to date in terms of M&E and data collection and ensuring a strong evidence base for future planning and programming. This should be enhanced to include impact assessments and going into the second phase, a comprehensive baseline assessment against which future progress can be assessed. The project should ensure that all knowledge and lessons learned gained during phase I are fully captured and institutionalised.

Recommendation 4: In the remaining implementation period, the project should focus its attention on obtaining results under outputs 3 and 4 with regards to access to remedy and in particular prevention, strengthening the capacities of the judiciary and the interlinkages between BHR and the environment. Enhanced work on human rights due diligence and longer-term engagement with civil society could also be considered as the project seeks to consolidate gains and ensure sustainability moving forward. The project should assess its capacities to continue with its efforts to enhance the discussion on human rights dimensions of trade and investment policy and decide whether to continue with this workstream.

Recommendation 5: Going forward, the project should continue to strengthen its partnership base, while also expanding its efforts in engaging with the private sector. The project should continuously ensure that it is aligned with the priorities of its donor and recognise the priorities of its partners, as well as consider including partners in the planning processes.

Recommendation 6: The project should try to engage more with SMSEs in order to gain traction with the second tier of business, where large numbers of people are employed and where there is perhaps greater potential for human rights abuses. Consideration should also be given of how to engage with the informal economy in phase II.

Recommendation 7: The project could consider strengthening its human resource framework in terms of the number of people going forward into Phase II. This could potentially strengthen impact as well as ensure that results are not diluted.

Recommendation 8: The project should continue to make efforts to ensure the localisation of its activities as well as the tailoring of tools and knowledge products to the specific national contexts. More geographical orientation should be considered, allowing for tailor-made solutions to the sensitivities of each country.

Recommendation 9: The EU and SIDA funded B+HR projects should develop a joint strategic vision and goals, bringing the implementation of the projects more under the regional programmatic umbrella. Formal and informal knowledge exchange and learning mechanisms should be established, joint planning mechanisms introduced and efforts made to create a sense of programme amongst all project team members. Synergies with other regional projects should also be explored.

Recommendation 10: The project should continue implementing in all seven countries where it is currently operational but should also consider expanding to include new countries in Phase II. This could include both countries that have accelerated the BHR agenda as well as those that are left behind.

In terms of the OECD-DAC evaluation criteria that the MTE was asked to assess - relevance, efficiency, effectiveness and sustainability/impact – the MTE used an evaluation rating scale of (1) – (4), with 1 being unsuccessful, 2 being moderately successful, 3 being successful and 4 being very successful. The rating scale is further detailed under section 2.5 of the report. It is noted that the project has scored very highly for a mid-term evaluation.

Relevance – 4/4 – Very successful

The project is very relevant in the region. It is aligned with regional and national priorities, including those of national partners as well as the UNDP COs. It is aligned with the UNDP BRH RPD, the Strategic Plan and UNDP's Global Programme on Rule of Law. It is aligned with the priorities of its donor, the EU. It is also relevant in relation to the needs and priorities of its target beneficiaries. Furthermore, the project contributes to a number of the SDGs.

Effectiveness – 3/4 – Successful

The overall effectiveness of the implemented output activities is successful, in particular the NAP development processes in India, Indonesia, Thailand and Malaysia and the body of knowledge and research that has been created with support of the project. The projects communications, both internal and external and very highly regarded. Fewer results have been seen so far with regards to access to remedy and BHR and the environment.

Efficiency – 4/4 – Very successful

The project has consistently delivered at a high level despite the challenges posed by COVID-19, which did derail certain activities. The project structure is now complete, however additional human resources should be considered in any future phase of the project. Its internal communication mechanisms are exemplary.

Sustainability – 3/4 – Successful

At the mid-way point there are already some strong indications of sustainability of some of the project results. Going forward the project should address more the issue of ownership and try to ensure that results gained are not lost.

Overall – 14/16 – Very/Successful

The project is on the right track with some key results achieved to date. With further efforts to consolidate its results, localise its approaches and tools and secure gains made at the midway point, it has the potential for further successes.

Legend

- Very successful (4)
- Successful (3)
- Moderately successful (2)
- Unsuccessful (1)
-

For a detailed explanation of the evaluation ranking scale, please see section 2.5 below.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

UNDP has been supporting the project “Business and Human Rights in Asia: Enabling Sustainable Economic Growth through the Protect, Respect and Remedy Framework,” (B+HR Asia) since 1 January 2020. It is a 4-year project with an anticipated end date of 31 December 2023 and a total budget of €7,000,000 (approx. US\$7,300,000). This follows an amendment in mid-2020, when the EU approached UNDP to provide for supplementary funding to support the opening of activities in Mongolia and for the uptake of regional level work linking BHR to environmental issues. An amended project document was agreed on November 2020, with activities commencing in January 2021.

Building on from the Business and Human Rights in Asia: Promoting Sustainable Business through *Regional Partnerships* project, the project was designed with an aim to promote the implementation of the UNGPs in Asia at the *country* level, focused on advocacy, policy development, technical advisory support, capacity building, awareness-raising, innovation platforms, regional peer learning events, and South-South cooperation.

This project contributes to the UNDP Asia-Pacific Regional Programme Output 2.3 Institutions, networks and non-state actors strengthened to promote inclusion, access to justice, and protect human rights (UNDP Strategic Plan 2.2.2 and 2.2.3).

Project activities are channelled towards four (4) principal outputs:

- 1) To engender greater awareness and knowledge, and strengthen political will in furtherance of policy convergence and compliance with the UNGPs;
- 2) To enhance communication and public diplomacy around Business and Human Rights thereby building public interest and support;
- 3) To support access to remedy and other rights-based solutions such that human rights abuses are prevented; and
- 4) To explore inter-linkages between adverse environmental and human rights impacts by business operations is better understood and policy action is more clearly articulated.

In line with the Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) plan for the project a Mid-Term Evaluation was commissioned.

This MTE Report provides readers with an introductory chapter containing the context of the project (chapter 1), the evaluation objective, purpose and scope (chapter 2), evaluation approach and methodology (chapter 3), analysis and findings of the evaluation (chapter 4), conclusions (chapter 5), recommendations arising from the findings and conclusions (chapter 6), and lessons learned (chapter 7).

The primary users of the evaluation report are the B+HR Asia project team, the B+HR Asia programme team and other staff from the UNDP Bangkok Regional Hub (BRH) and national governments. Secondary users include the project’s partners and beneficiaries and the project’s donor, the EU.

1.2 Context

The UN Guiding Principles (UNGPs) on Business and Human Rights (BHR) are widely recognised as the most authoritative, normative framework guiding efforts to reduce or eliminate

the adverse impact of business operations on human rights. The UNGPs consist of three pillars and are grounded on a polycentric governance framework promoting a so-called “smart mix of measures.” The first pillar of the UNGPs concerns the State duty to protect human rights in business operations under established international human rights law. The second pillar addresses the responsibility of business enterprises to respect human rights through policy commitments and processes. The third and final pillar stresses the need for both State and non-State actors to promote access to effective remedies to victims of business-related abuses through providing or cooperating in judicial and non-judicial grievance mechanisms

In Asia, governments and business are more widely aware of the UNGPs and its importance to ensuring high volumes of trade and investment. Thailand adopted Asia’s first stand-alone National Action Plan on BHR (NAP) on Business and Human Rights in 2019, followed by Japan and Pakistan. Other States in Asia are following suit with NAPs in development in India, Indonesia, Malaysia and Mongolia. There is a unique opportunity to build momentum in the region, building on existing political commitments from states, while engaging business and civil society under a wider heading of responsible or sustainable business practices.

The UNDP Asia-Pacific, Bangkok Regional Hub, Business and Human Rights unit, has been playing a central role in promoting the implementation of the UNGPs in Asia. Based on a year-long piloting phase including scoping missions between June 2017 and March 2018, funded by the Regional Development Cooperation Section at the Embassy of Sweden in Thailand, UNDP identified seven countries— Bangladesh, India, Indonesia, Malaysia, Sri Lanka, Thailand and Viet Nam to accelerate *regional* momentum taking place in Asia towards the implementation of the UNGPs. As *regional* momentum took shape, the European Union (EU), Service for Foreign Policy Instruments was approached to deepen engagement at the country level, which led to the development of this project and which would eventually include India, Indonesia, Malaysia, Mongolia, Myanmar, Sri Lanka and Thailand.

2. Evaluation objective, purpose and scope.

2.1 Evaluation Objective

The Mid-Term Evaluation (MTE) aims to inform UNDP B+HR Asia team and its partners of lessons learned, results achieved and areas for improvements, while drawing out progress toward specific EU-supported B+HR Asia project deliverables, identifying any gaps in programming, and recommending any course correction required for the second half of programming.

Furthermore, the findings of MTE will inform the future designing of UNDP's work on BHR in the region along with the final evaluation. As this project is one of the first initiatives developed in UNDP on BHR, the MTE is able to produce valuable lessons and experiences, providing useful findings to the other relevant BHR projects and various initiatives organised by UNDP Regional Hubs as well as Country Offices (COs) globally.

Responding to the Theory of Change (ToC) as described in the project document, the agreed results and resources framework (RRF) and the approved workplans, the MTE assessed the relevance of the project, quality of the project design, effectiveness and efficiency of the implementation to date, sustainability of the overall project results, impact of intervention made to date, and forward-looking directions for future. To meet these ends, the MTE:

1. Assesses project performance and progress against the expected outcomes, outputs and targets including indicators presented in the RRF
2. Reviews and documents the successes and draws out lessons for deepening impact
3. Assesses the effectiveness of the project's engagement with diverse stakeholders including governments, businesses, civil society organisations, national human rights institutions, human rights defenders and other rights-holder groups in the implementation of the UNGPs and the development process of the NAPs
4. Reviews the role of the project in enhancing the importance of and the space for the UNGPs at the national, and to a lesser extent, the regional level, while contributing knowledge, guidance and the development and application of the UNGPs through advocacy, policy development, technical advisory support, capacity building, awareness raising, innovation platforms, regional peer learning events, and South-South cooperation
5. Identifies challenges and the effectiveness of the strategic approaches that the project adopted for addressing those challenges
6. Ascertains the relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, and sustainability of the project interventions
7. Outlines recommendations, including potential realignments in scope and approach in line with the project's desired outcome
8. Provides forward-looking recommendations to inform the future of UNDP's work on BHR in the region along with the final evaluation. These are in line with UNDP's newly launched Regional Programme document (RPD) for Asia and the Pacific.

2.2 The Scope of the MTE

The MTE assesses the B+HR Asia project progress against the project's ToC and the achieved results from 1 January 2020 to 31 December 2021, and proposes recommendations, which will inform and help improve the implementation of the project during 2022 – 2023 and in designing any future projects. The MTE is based on a desk review of project related documents and in-depth virtual interviews as outlined in the methodology section. The MTE evaluates the project against the RF contained in the project document and not the separate M&E framework developed for the EU, which contains different indicators and targets.

The MTE's geographical coverage includes the project's targeted countries in Asia Pacific, namely India, Indonesia, Malaysia, Mongolia, Myanmar, Sri Lanka and Thailand. The MTE has focused primarily at country level, and not at the regional level as measured by resources available.

2.3 The Project's Theory of Change

The theory of change for the project, as presented in the project document, articulates:

Theory of Change

If UNDP, the EU and their various partners, demonstrate sufficiently, how respect for human rights can assist firms in managing risk, and help countries to enhance trade flows and attract FDI, thereby enhancing transparency; and

If UNDP, the EU and their various partners encourage more public attention to human rights risks and abuses in the production of goods, commodities and services; and

If UNDP, the EU and other international, regional and national organisations and make their respective comparative advantages converge through an agreed international framework, namely the UNGPs; and

If the efforts of UNDP, the EU and their various partners, lead to the effective adoption and implementation of the UNGPs in the selected countries, with a specific focus on the provision of remedy;

Then stronger human rights conditions, instead of being seen as a burden for profitable business, would be perceived as a comparative economic advantage by governments, as well as the private sector, in a similar situation in the region, and as a necessary precondition for engaging in fruitful sustainable trade relations with other regions; and

Policy makers, consumers and business actors would become more aware of the potential adverse impacts of business operations on human rights, and work to prevent these risks, or ensure in greater measure that remedies are provided for abuses that have occurred; and

Human rights conditions would be strengthened and the risks of disruptions to commercial flows between the EU and Asia would be mitigated, leading to heightened levels of prosperity, stronger levels of sustainable development, and greater recognition of the positive role of trade and increased mutual respect between regions; and

Greater legitimacy would be conferred to multilateralism as the preferential way to promote and defend values at a global level.

There is no visualisation of the theory of change included in the project document. As this is a criteria based evaluation and not a theory based evaluation, the MTE has not assessed the ToC to a large extent.

The MTE was also asked to analyse the effectiveness of the BHR programme at the regional level, including but not limited to how integration efforts between the SIDA and EU funded projects have succeeded or fallen short, with recommendations to strengthen integration. As agreed with UNDP, this will be covered in a separate paper and will not be covered in this evaluation report.

2.4. Evaluation criteria and questions.

The MTE was conducted in line with UNEG's Evaluation Guidelines and Norms and Standards for Evaluation as well the OECD-DAC evaluation criteria - (a) relevance; (b) effectiveness; (c) efficiency; and (d) sustainability. The evaluation also considers any impact that the project has had to date, as well as assessing the potential future impact of the project interventions.

As per the ToR, the consultant was asked to consider a number of key questions shaped around the OECD-DAC evaluation criteria. The key evaluation questions are provided in Annex I. While not specifically contained in the ToR, the consultant also assessed the project's integration of gender and the human rights-based approach (HRBA).

2.5. Evaluability Analysis and Evaluation Ranking Scale

The consultant evaluated the project and its outputs as presented in the RF in the project document against the evaluation criteria as well as against its context, theory of change and organisational performance.

As agreed with the project team, the consultant applied a rating scale to rank each evaluation criteria – relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, and sustainability. The consultant evaluated the project against a 4-fold rating scale as described below.

- 3 Highly Satisfactory (4)
- 4 Satisfactory (3)
- 5 Moderately satisfactory (2)
- 6 Unsatisfactory (1)

Scoring of Project Performance:

Rating	Performance description
4 Highly satisfactory (Always/almost always)	Performance is clearly very strong in relation to the evaluation question/criterion. Weaknesses are not significant and have been managed effectively.
3 Satisfactory (Mostly, with some exceptions)	Performance is reasonably strong on most aspects of the evaluation question/criterion. No significant gaps or weaknesses, or less significant gaps or weaknesses have mostly been managed effectively.
2 Moderately satisfactory (Sometimes, with many exceptions)	Performance is inconsistent in relation to the question/criterion. There are some serious weaknesses. Meets minimum expectations/requirements as far as can be determined.
1 Unsatisfactory (Never or occasionally with clear weaknesses)	Performance is unacceptably weak in relation to the evaluation question/criterion. Does not meet minimum expectations/requirements.

3. Evaluation approach and methodology

3.1 Approach and Methodology

The evaluation was guided by the basic methodology as set out in the ToR, in line with the UNEG, the revised UNDP Evaluation Guidelines from June 2021 and the OECD/DAC Quality Standards for Development Evaluation, and keeping in mind the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness. As required by the ToR, the evaluation assessed the relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, and sustainability of the project.

The evaluation was multi-faceted and the methodological approach used mixed (qualitative and quantitative) methods, as the best vehicle for meeting the evaluation's needs. The consultant ensured that the evaluation was conducted through a participatory and consultative process, which included all relevant stakeholders.

To this end, a total of 49 stakeholders were consulted during the course of the evaluation in 23 key informant interviews and five focus group discussions. Participants included government representatives, global, regional and national civil society organisations, National Human Rights Institutions, business and private sector representatives, UNDP and other UN Agencies and the UNWG B&HR. A total of 29 women and 20 men were consulted. A full list of stakeholders who were consulted is provided at Annex II, including the organisation or institution that they represented.

The methodological approach was synthesised into an Evaluation Matrix (see Annex III), which guided the consultant and provided the analytical framework for conducting the evaluation. The evaluation matrix sets out the relevant evaluation criteria, key questions and sub-questions, data sources, data collection methods/tools, indicators and methods for data analysis. The evaluation matrix was divided into each of the 4 evaluation criteria – relevance, effectiveness, efficiency and sustainability. Within the effectiveness criteria, each of the project's outputs were individually scrutinised.

The evaluation's principal guide was the project document for the B+HR Asia project and in particular the Results Framework containing its logframe and M&E framework, which contain indicators, targets and "means of verification" (i.e., data and documents) for the project's outputs. This allowed the consultant to conduct a critical analysis of the Project's logframe indicators and targets.

The consultant identified a cross-section of data sources in order to optimise data collection and ensure triangulation. A large focus of the evaluation was on obtaining qualitative data through interviews and focus group discussions with relevant stakeholders and beneficiaries, as per the stakeholder list provided at Annex III. As already mentioned, efforts were made not to duplicate with the EU and SIDA evaluation processes that took place in the second half of 2021, to avoid stakeholder fatigue.

The consultant conducted as many interviews as possible within the scope of the evaluation and given the complexities of conducting the evaluation remotely using virtual tools, in order to ensure the integrity and the comprehensiveness of the evaluation. Wherever possible data gathered, both qualitatively and quantitatively was triangulated, through cross verification from two or more sources. For interviews, this was done through posing a similar set of questions to multiple interviewees. For the document review it was accomplished through crosschecking data and information from multiple sources to increase the credibility and validity of the material. Draft

Informant Guides are provided at Annex IV, which provide an indication and outline as to the set of questions that the consultant asked each group of stakeholders. Additional questions are provided in the Evaluation Matrix at Annex III.

The evaluation was conducted in a non-linear, sequential methodology consisting of three main phases – desk research, document review and Inception Report; virtual data collection, analysis and validation; and drafting, revision and finalisation of the report.

3.2 Sampling Methods for Qualitative and Quantitative Data Collection

The geographical scope of the evaluation included 7 countries in Asia Pacific, namely India, Indonesia, Malaysia, Mongolia, Myanmar, Sri Lanka, and Thailand. The MTE ensured that stakeholders from each country were included in the data gathering process, as well as regional and global stakeholders. In addition, the MTE reviewed and analysed documents relating to each of the countries, although a detailed assessment of each location is beyond the scope of the evaluation and is not included.

The MTE used a purposive sampling approach. The MTE consulted with the project to develop and refine a list of potential key informants to participate in the interviews and FGDs. This included efforts to ensure a 50:50 ratio of female to male participants, as well as efforts to ensure that all geographical locations where the project is implemented were represented.

The sampling approach was purposive due to the small scale of the evaluation, but criteria considered the following contextual and operational factors as appropriate:

- Geographically proportional taking into account each of the countries;
- Sex of participants;
- Sensitivity to the inclusion of diversity of participants;
- A balance of different levels and types of engagement with the project; and
- Socio-economic diversity.

3.3 Challenges and Limitations of the Evaluation

There were several challenges and limitations confronting the evaluation. The first relates to the challenges of conducting the evaluation remotely using virtual tools. While this is generally a satisfactory substitution for data gathering during the COVID-19 pandemic, it does not allow for building up a rapport with participants, for more informal communication which often takes place before and after formal meetings, or for conducting site visits. Stakeholders are often more reluctant to speak openly and freely into a screen, which acts as a barrier between the evaluator and the participant. In order to mitigate this, the MTE tried to “warm-up” the participants at the beginning of each interview or FGD with some general questions, and also assured all participants that their responses were confidential and anonymous.

Another challenge, which is frequently faced during evaluations relates to biases. Each bias and the corresponding mitigation efforts are described below.

- *Recall bias*: B&HR has conducted many activities to date and it is quite possible that key informants may not accurately remember particular specific B+HR Asia project intervention activities. A similar problem is that participants in multiple UN activities – in particular activities under the SIDA funded B+HR Asia project - may have blended their experiences into a composite memory or response and, subsequently, did not distinguish between them as separate activities in their responses.

The consultant mitigated this bias primarily through a semi-structured interview protocol that called for questioning about specific activities; through gentle reminders and nudging about the activities of the EU project; and through being aware of the activities of the SIDA funded project, which allowed the consultant to distinguish the responses. Triangulation of data also mitigated this bias.

- *Response bias*: Informants may have given the consultant positive remarks about the project because they would like to stay involved with the intervention in the future and they think that a negative evaluation could mean the end of project opportunities. The MTE adopted two main strategies for mitigating this bias. First, it reiterated for each informant the maintenance of confidentiality and anonymity and then explained the evaluation's independence from both UNDP and the project. Second, as with recall bias, questions designed to elicit specific examples helped to identify response bias.
- *Selection bias*: Stakeholders provided by UNDP and its partners could mean that the consultant hears only from people who had positive experiences. As with the other forms of bias, multiple sources of data and questions eliciting specific examples helped to mitigate the risk of this bias. In addition, the MTE sought additional interviews with varied stakeholders to mitigate further this bias.

3.4 Data analysis

3.4.1 Analytical methods

In order to analysis the collected data, the following analytical methods were applied:

- Political economy analysis;
- Quantitative and qualitative data analysis;
- Data synthesis;
- Triangulation; and
- Verification and validation.

Political Economy Analysis

A political economy analysis helped the MTE to understand who seeks to gain and lose from the project's interventions, as well as to identify who has vested interests and the social and cultural norms that need to be taken into account.

Quantitative and Qualitative Data Analysis

Most of the primary data collection methods (interviews and FGDs) collected qualitative data. These were analysed using a code structure, which was aligned to the key evaluation questions, sub-questions and indicators. The qualitative data from the primary data collection methods was cross-referenced with other sources such as documents. The quantitative data produced descriptive analysis (rather than more complex regressions).

Triangulation

Triangulation is the process of using multiple data sources, data collection methods, and/or theories to validate research findings. The MTE used more than one approach (data collection method) to address the evaluation questions in order to reduce the risk of bias and increase the chances of detecting errors or anomalies. The MTE applied three approaches to triangulation: methods triangulation (checking the consistency of findings generated by different data collection methods); interrogating data where diverging results arise; and analyst triangulation (discussion and validation of findings, allowing for a consistent approach to interpretive analysis).

Data Synthesis

The process of bringing all the evidence together to synthesise the data and formulate findings and conclusions took place in two ways. The first was the process of articulating the key findings and cross-checking the strength of the evidence for each. Based on this, the conclusions were then developed and cross-checked for their relevance to the findings.

Verification and Validation

The above steps incorporate verification and validation of evidence during the data collection and data analysis processes. In addition, the MTE presented its preliminary findings and recommendations at an evaluation de-brief held with the Evaluation Reference Group and the draft report was shared widely amongst the project team and other key stakeholders, allowing for review and comments. These processes provided an opportunity to share key findings, offer mutual challenges, and discuss the feasibility of and receptiveness to draft recommendations. It also provided an important opportunity to foster buy-in to the evaluation process particularly for the stakeholders who will have responsibility for implementing recommendations.

3.4.2 Attribution of Results

In the complex development context in Asia and in the specific countries in which the B+HR Asia project is being implemented, it is difficult for the MTE to attribute the observed results solely to the project. This is partly because of the number of stakeholders involved, partly because of other exogenous factors, and partly because of the complex nature of the project itself. For this reason, the MTE adopted a *contribution approach*, which does not firmly establish causality but rather seeks to achieve a plausible association by analysing the project's ToC and results framework, documenting the project's successes and value added, applying the "before and after" criterion, i.e. what exists now that did not exist before and what has changed since the start of the project, and through considering the counterfactual – what would have happened without the B+HR Asia project.

3.4.3 Contextualisation of Findings and Recommendations

It should be noted that it was beyond the scope of the evaluation to include contextualised findings and recommendations for all 7 countries where the project is being implemented. Instead, general findings and recommendations are provided, which can be further contextualised and localised at the CO level.

4. Analysis and Findings of the Mid-Term Evaluation

This chapter presents the analysis and findings of the MTE grouped around each of the evaluation criteria and cross-cutting issues and based on the analysis of the qualitative and quantitative data collected. Each of the key evaluation questions is answered within the narrative and the analysis and findings are also informed by the guiding questions provided in the ToR. The guiding questions are extensive and are not included here but are provided at Annex I.

4.1. Relevance

Finding 1: The B+HR Asia Project is fully in line with regional development priorities and the UNDP Strategic Plan 2018-2021 as well as UNDP's Regional Programme Document 2018-2021. The project is in line with the national development priorities and respective Country Office programme's outputs and outcomes in its target countries, as well as the regional priorities of its donor, the EU. Further, the project contributes towards achievement of the SDGs, although alignment of the project with the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs could be further strengthened.

The MTE finds that the B+HR Asia project is fully aligned with Outcome 2 of the Regional Project Document (RPD) 2018-2021, which mirrors the UNDP Strategic Plan 2018-2021, and in particular is aligned with its outcome 2, “*accelerate structural transformation for sustainable development.*” Within this, it is aligned with and contributes to the RP’s Output 2.3 “*Institutions, networks and non-state actors strengthened to promote inclusive access to justice and promote human rights*” (UNDP Strategic Plan 2018-2021, Outputs 2.2.2 and 2.2.3). The project undoubtedly contributes to the RPD’s output indicators 2.3.2 and 2.3.4, respectively RP Output Indicator 2.3.2: *The United Nations Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights are translated into country level action plans for implementation* (as appropriate to the project); and RP Output Indicator 2.3.4: *Number of National Human Rights Institutions support to undertake new initiatives that relate to emerging issues such as conflict and preventing violent extremism, the SDGs, lesbian, gay, bi-sexual, transgender issues, climate change financing, business and human rights and women, peace and security* (as applicable to the project). However, despite this alignment, contributions of the project towards these higher-level outputs and outcomes are not reflected in its RRF, and thus there is no quantifiable evidence to support this.

Further, the MTE finds that the project contributes to the national development priorities of its beneficiary countries, as well as the Country Programme Documents of the respective Country Offices, as informed by various national level actors and CO representatives. For example, the MTE was informed that in India the project engaged a wide range of partners to strengthen dialogue and enhance policy coherence towards the development of the NAP. This included the organisation of a number of closed door and open events including the India Sustainability Standards Conference. In Indonesia the project contributed to the development of the National Strategy on Business and Human Rights, resulting in the draft being released by the Ministry of Law and Human Rights for public comment. In Malaysia, with the project’s support, the Minister for Parliament and Law made a public commitment to launch the Malaysia NAP on Business and Human Rights by 2023, while in Mongolia, the project has supported the development of a National Baseline Assessment on BHR, which will feed into the longer-term process of developing a NAP. Due to the national contexts in Myanmar and Sri Lanka, NAP processes are not on-going, while in Thailand, the project intensified efforts on NAP implementation, for the already adopted NAP. As commented by one stakeholder:

“The project has huge potential because everyone is talking this language (BHR) now. The project is very relevant, especially at this moment, in the aftermath of COVID-19.”

Another commented that:

“BHR is very important because it covers state responsibility to workers, as well as corporate responsibility, as well as raising awareness. All three pillars of the UNGPs are hugely relevant and the project addresses all three.”

The project document itself does not reference how the project will contribute to specific SDGs, in part due to donor requirements, since the project does not fall under the Development Cooperation service line of the EU. However, the MTE observes that the overall objectives of the project do include furtherance of the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs. The MTE notes that the project directly contributes towards attainment of the SDGs, notably by promoting Decent Work and Economic Growth (SDG 8); Reducing Inequalities (SDG 10); achieving greater levels of Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions (SDG 16), and to the Revitalisation of the Global Partnerships for Sustainable Development (SDG 17). The links between the SDGs and environmental rights (including Goals 13-15 on the environment and climate action) are also substantial. The MTE finds that while the links between B&HR and the SDGs are strong, there are opportunities to leverage the SDGs further to drive policy coherence and to bring more stakeholders on board. Many key informants commented that businesses in particular are more familiar with the SDGs than they are with B&HR, that the SDGs are more interesting and less threatening to them and that businesses gravitate towards this agenda more. It is also noted that any contribution of the project towards the SDGs is not captured in its RRF.

As found by the EU’s own Evaluation of Partnership Instrument Actions on Responsible Business Conduct, Women’s Economic Empowerment and Social and Solidarity Economy undertaken in 2021, the project also “*incorporates priorities and objectives of relevant EU strategic and political frameworks and Action Plans linked to promoting responsible business conduct, human rights and sustainable development.*” These are elaborated in length in that evaluation report and so are not repeated here.

Finding 2: The project design process was inclusive and participatory and reflected the views of its donor, the EU. It was informed by a thorough scoping phase and was able to build on the regional momentum generated through the SIDA funded Business and Human Rights project in Asia. The project was designed well and all the ingredients were in place. However, there are certain gaps in its theory of change and results framework, which potentially lead to the project not fully capturing its results and its contributions to higher-level outcomes.

The project commenced in January 2020, with a six-month inception phase followed by 42 months of anticipated implementation. The regional approach provided the opportunity to get things off the ground at the country level and the project design was informed by both the scoping study undertaken as part of the SIDA project, as well as the first 18 months of its implementation. Amendments were introduced to the project document commencing in January 2021 to include Mongolia programming, regional programming on the Environment and the introduction of an M&E Officer.

As captured in the project document, the project has 4 mutually reinforcing outcomes broadly focused on enhancing knowledge and political will to further policy convergence and compliance with the UNGPs; raising awareness on BHR; access to remedy; and BHR and the environment. Outcome 1 has two contributing outputs focused on raising awareness and capacity building towards adoption and implementation of NAPs; outcome 2 also has two corresponding outputs

focused on the development of communication products, and somewhat disparately, discussions on human rights dimensions of trade and investment. Outcome 3 is centred around access to remedy and has three contributing outputs, firstly on strengthening awareness and provision of access to remedy, second on human rights due diligence and grievance mechanisms and third on strengthening the capacities of justice institutions to address human rights abuses in the context of business operations. Finally, outcome 4 also has three outputs, firstly focused on developing knowledge products on the interlinkages between human rights and environmental impacts of business operations through knowledge products, secondly on understanding the policy options and other pathways towards the greater uptake of action to address environment-related human rights risks and impacts, and thirdly to widen public awareness of the environment/human rights nexus, in the context of business operations. In its results framework, the project has a total of eight indicators which are presented against what are termed four *outputs*, which loosely correspond to the four *outcome* areas presented in the narrative. However, the indicators are all quantitative and are largely developed at the activity level. The gaps in the results framework, by not having any qualitative indicators or any indicators at the outcome or impact level, result in the project being unable to record or report on its progress towards higher level goals and objectives. The project is over-achieving on many of its indicators, suggesting that they were not appropriately developed at the project development stage. It is noted, that the indicators were originally designed by an external consultant hired by the donor, to ensure alignment with their requirements, which perhaps led to some of the challenges noted.

Finding 3: The project has shown great flexibility and adaptability to changes within its operational context, including political and environmental changes. It has been reactive to changing situations and been able to adjust its approaches and activities according to the context within which it is working. It has shown a high level of adaptability and flexibility.

The project started immediately prior to the outbreak of the global COVID-19 pandemic. Somewhat fortunately for the project, given its nature of covering seven countries within a large region, it already had in place many online mechanisms and tools to ease implementation. This allowed it to easily transition to a fully online modality at the start of the pandemic and to immediately start focusing on adapting its activities to the changing context. For example, the project developed a COVID-19 tool for businesses, which became a huge success. A number of stakeholders also informed the MTE about the utility of the Covid-19 Rapid Self-Assessment Tool, which is also evidenced by the tool being downloaded over 6000 times as of January 2022 and having been translated into 14 different languages. The MTE was informed that a second edition was released in cooperation with UNICEF to ensure that messages on children's and women's rights were further emphasised and references to additional resources were included. Additional evidence of its utility is that the tool has also been used beyond the region, for example, in Central and Eastern Europe, where companies in Turkey were trained on how to use the tool.

The project has also been able to adapt to changes in government, for example in Malaysia, and changes in political contexts, for example following the coup in February 2020 in Myanmar. However, as one stakeholder observed:

“The project relies heavily on securing the buy-in of governments. As a result, if there is a change in government, this can lead to a vacuum.”

The MTE observes that this is something the project is well aware of and that it has consistently adapted its focus and activities to the local and evolving context. It identifies a blockage and is then tests ways around it. For example, in Indonesia where there were challenges with the national counterpart, the project widened its partnerships with other state institutions, which had the double of effect of not only securing additional buy-in but also putting pressure on the original counterpart

to commit more fully. Working on HRDD also allows the project the possibility of engaging with both governments and the private sector, so where there may be blockages with one, the project can pivot to the other.

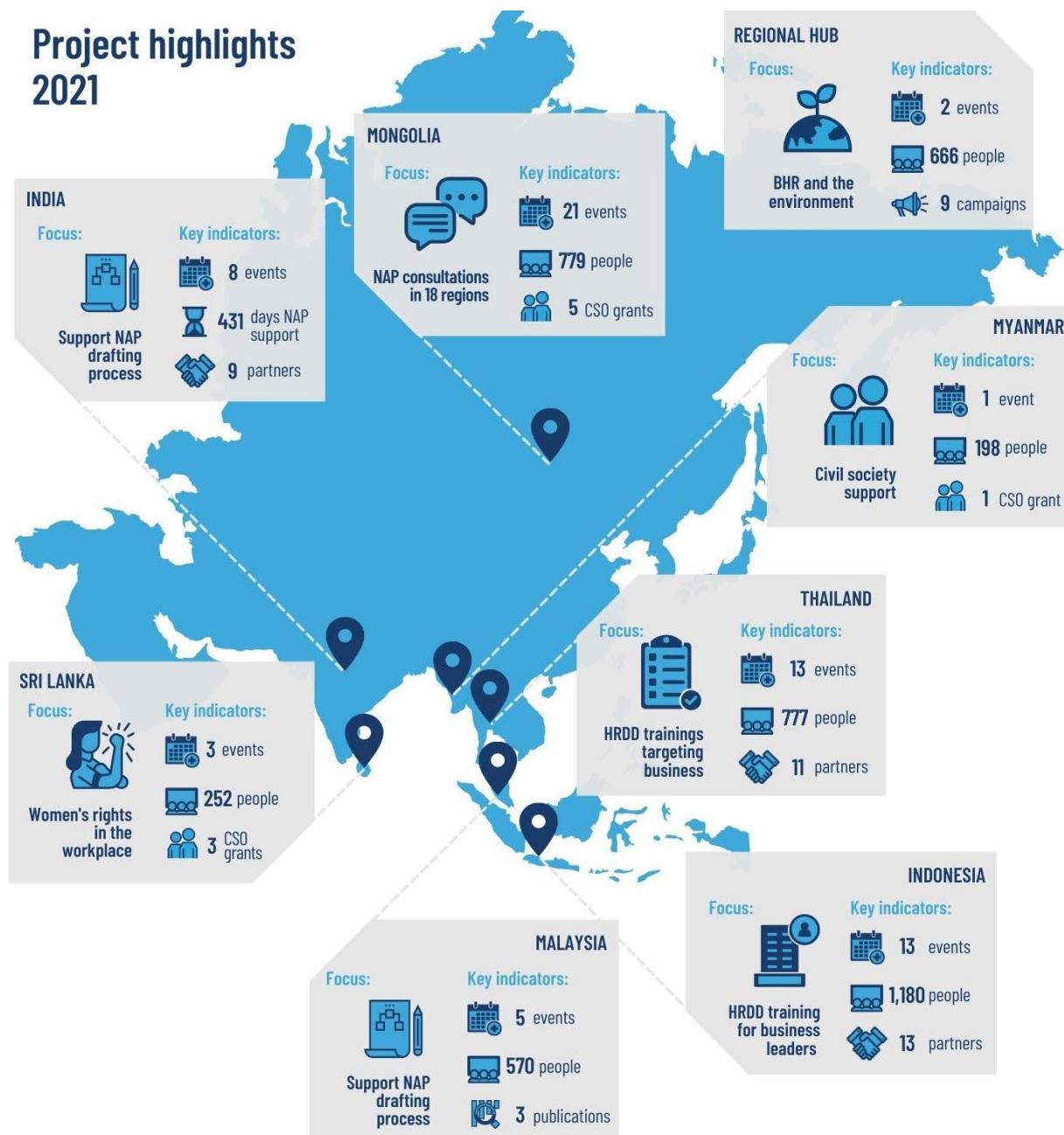
4.2. Effectiveness

In order to assess the effectiveness of the project to date, the MTE reviewed the project's technical as well as operational approaches, the deliverables, the quality of results and any preliminary indications of their impact, alignment with national priorities and the level of response to the needs of the stakeholders. This was done by assessing the results achieved, the partnerships established as well as issues of capacity. In order to answer the key evaluation questions, the analysis of the effectiveness of the project has been broken down into each of the five output areas. Due to the gaps in the results framework, it is very challenging for the MTE to evaluate progress towards outcome or higher-level goals, however progress against the project's eight indicators is captured.

Finding 4: Overall, the project has made significant progress in terms of the achievement of its results and has over-achieved in a number of results areas. However, to date it has focused more on outputs 1 and 2 and less on outputs 3 and 4. This is evidenced by both the achievement of results as well as the delivery per output, in particular delivery under output 2. To address this, the project has ramped up its workplan year on year, to be more ambitious across all outputs, while paying increased attention in 2022 to outputs 3 and 4. Progress under output 1 has yet to be fully secured.

Since its inception, the project has made considerable progress towards its results and has overachieved in a number of results areas, as evidenced by the results tables shown under each of the outputs below. The infographic below provides a summary snapshot of some of the project's achievement during 2021 in numbers. These are impressive and indicate breadth and depth of project activities and results.

Project highlights 2021



Outcome 1: Greater awareness and knowledge engendered, and political will strengthened in furtherance of policy convergence and compliance with the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights.

Output 1.1: Common understanding enhanced, and policy convergence encouraged, through dialogue, training and knowledge sharing, in conjunction with the implementation of the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights.

Output 1.2: Skills and competencies of government to draft and implement National Action Plans on Business and Human Rights or other policy instruments is reinforced

Outcome 1 is focused on progressing the development of National Action Plans in countries that do not have existing NAPs and further implementation in countries that do. The MTE observes that the project has invested considerably into the achievement of output 1 in terms of time, expertise and other resources. The MTE was informed that in 2021, 600 working days were

invested by the team on the development of NAPs. This has paid off with considerable gains as a result of additional and more experienced staff, coupled by renewed commitments from partners in government. In 2020, despite the challenges of implementing a new project during the COVID-19 pandemic, the project was able to drive the BHR discourse forward leading to some of the project's strongest progress to date in 2021 under this output. This include the release of draft versions of NAPs in India and Indonesia and the Malaysian government announcing its intention to finalise a draft NAP in 2023. Through the NAP processes, the project has contributed to shifting the paradigm of BHR from a sectoral to a holistic approach. As commented by one stakeholder:

“UNDP’s role in advancing the Business and Human Rights agenda in the region, and in the world, is crucial and the project has already had a lot of achievements on its journey including strengthening the policy framework through support to the development of National Action Plans.”

All stakeholders consulted agreed on the importance and relevance of the development of a policy framework to support implementation of the UNGPs in their respective countries. However, a number of stakeholders commented that the issue of business and human rights is still very sensitive in their countries and can sometimes be seen as the imposition of a Western agenda. As one stakeholder commented:

“It is important to present the BHR agenda in terms of economic benefits, so that it is not seen as a Western agenda being forced on developing countries. There is a sense among some stakeholders that BHR is a first world problem, so it needs to be carefully presented.”

The MTE observes that the project has succeeded in attracting significant buy-in among a wide variety of stakeholders and is cognisant of the importance of crafting the BHR Agenda to the local context and de-sensitising the language it uses, for example, by framing the Agenda in economic terms rather than human rights issues.

However, despite these successes, the project has been unable to secure these results or meet its targets for 2020 and 2021 under this outcome/outputs as illustrated in the table below. The MTE observes however, that considerable time and resources has been invested into the achievement of output 1, sometimes to the expense of other outputs, and that the indicators as designed, do not allow for capturing progress towards the adoption of the NAPs. In terms of delivery, the project struggled to deliver under this output in 2020, largely due to the COVID-19 pandemic and achieved a delivery rate of 44%. This has picked up in 2021 to a solid 78% delivery rate.

Output 1	Output Indicators	Targets – year 1 - 2020	Targets – year 2 – 2021	Targets – cumulative 2020 - 2023	Results
Policy convergence and compliance with the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights increased	1. Number of National Actions Plans or their equivalent developed	1	2	4	0 – under-achieved

Outcome 2: Communication and public diplomacy profile of the Business and Human Rights Agenda is heightened thereby building public interest and support

Output 2.1 Development of communication products is supported, furthering public discourse and greater appreciation of the UNGPs and its positive impact on human rights

Output 2.2: Discussion on human rights dimensions of trade and investment policy is enhanced

Finding 5: The project has succeeded in raising the profile of BHR substantially as well as the project's visibility, in particular through the use of social media platforms. While the project has over-achieved to date in terms of its progress and results under Outcome 2 and has successfully expanded the reach of the project through its communication activities and knowledge products, there has been less assessment of the impact of its activities. Key successes include the Covid-19 Rapid Self-Assessment Tool and the HRDD Facilitation Guide, as well as the expansion of its website and introduction of the quarterly newsletter. However, a number of stakeholders commented that the tools and products could have higher utility if they were further contextualised to the local contexts and available in local languages. There are limited gains with regards to enhancing the discussion on human rights dimensions of trade and investment policy.

Under this outcome the project aims to develop a variety of different awareness raising products including short-form documentaries, video animations and social media promotional materials to enhance understanding of UNGPs, and trade and human rights nexus, as well as to conduct research and publish short think tank pieces on trade and investment issues as they relate to the UNGPs and broader Business and Human Rights agenda. Under this outcome, the MTE finds that the BHR agenda was raised substantially, as was the visibility of the EU-UNDP partnership. For example, the evaluation was informed that in 2021, 11 publications, including issue briefs, reports and training materials, were shared and promoted through 114 communication products and 21 communication campaigns. 63 events were held, hosting 4,523 participants. In 2020, six publications were completed through 107 communication products and 17 communication campaigns. 29 events were held with a total of 1,697 participants. As commented by one key informant:

“The project's biggest support to us is to transfer knowledge and share global trends and best practices.”

Many participants in the KIIs and FGDs articulated the value and worth of the knowledge products created with support of the project. As one stakeholder commented:

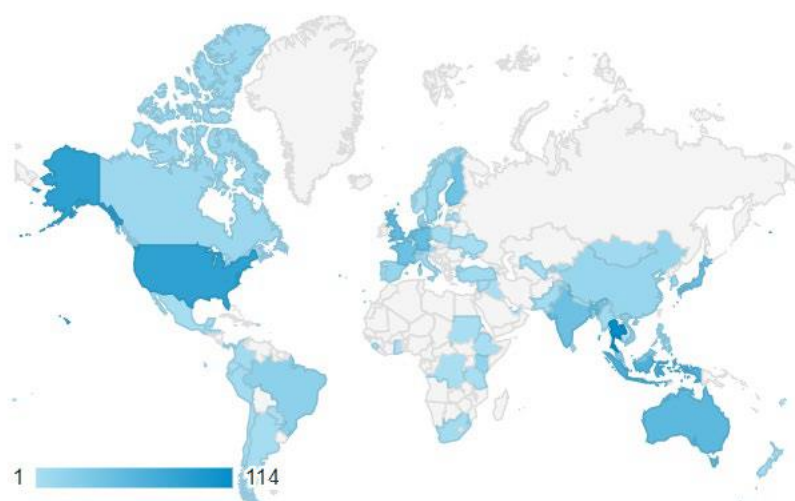
“The HRDD Facilitation Guide and Self-Assessment Training Tool are good and can be used.”

The HRDD Facilitation Guide is perceived to be one of the key successes of the project as raised by a number of stakeholders. It clarifies what is required for companies to conduct HRDD and provides an easy step-by-step approach to training professionals in HRDD. The Facilitation Guide is complemented by a Human Rights Self-Assessment Tool for companies, containing 99 potential business-related human rights risks with references to international human rights instruments and relevant SDGs. The Self-Assessment allows the production of a heatmap to highlight priority areas for action.

The MTE was informed by stakeholders that this tool is particularly relevant given the increasing attention being paid to HRDD and the growing enactment of mandatory HRDD (mHRDD) legislation being brought into national legislations, particularly in Europe. If the EU adopts its own mHRDD legislation then the needs will be heightened even further. The MTE finds that the project

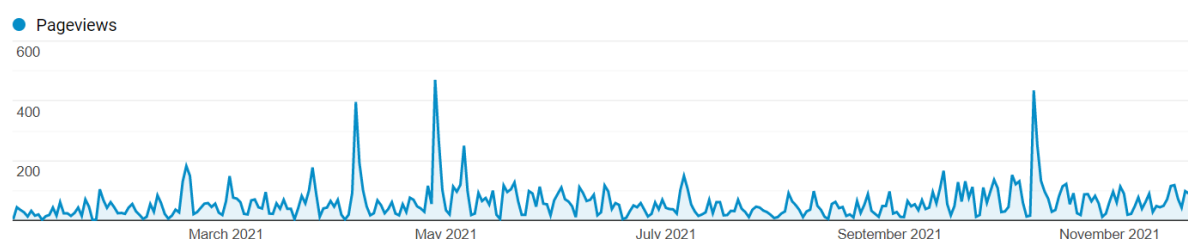
has been successful in leveraging the Facilitation Guide to provide trainings to companies in multiple sectors across its focus countries. The high level of participation in these trainings signifies the seriousness by which HRDD is being treated in the region. As HRDD continues to pick up pace in the region and mHRDD is expected to be brought into legislation at the EU level, businesses will have to understand that they have to meet the expectations of buyers and address human rights needs.

The MTE was informed that as of 19 December 2021, the Facilitation Guide has been downloaded 957 times and its website had received 1,181 individual users and 5,359 page views since its launch. The infographic below shows the number of visitors to the Guide’s website and its geographical reach.



A number of stakeholders also informed the MTE about the utility of the Covid-19 Rapid Self-Assessment Tool, discussed under Finding 3, which is also evidenced by the tool being downloaded over 6000 times as of January 2022 and having been translated into 14 different languages.

The MTE was informed by stakeholders that in the fourth quarter of 2020, the project developed its first quarterly newsletter aimed at informing subscribers about past and future BHR events and project activities and directing them to the website to learn more about key stories. This initiative has been continued throughout 2021 and has been incredibly successful in increasing traffic to the website and generating interest in other communication products. This has led to an increase in website visitors by 114% and 7500 subscribers to the newsletter, considerably– expanding the reach of project and its products. The infographic below shows an increase in website traffic directly linked to the sharing of the newsletter.



However, a number of stakeholders commented that while the knowledge products are of high quality, their utility can be diminished when they are not available in local languages, and that it

some contexts they need to be further tailored to the specific local context and operationalised, requiring people trained on how to operationalise them. However, the MTE was informed that in cases where the project has translated tools, such as the COVID-19 Rapid Self-Assessment, when translated into some languages there has been a larger uptake, but for other languages there has been no uptake, despite the translation.

Further, while the presented data is impressive, there have been no significant efforts as yet to assess the impact of the project's communication and awareness raising activities. It is noted that it is planned during 2022 to onboard a data analyst to address this.

The MTE was informed that there are considerable challenges in finding quality research partners, as well as challenges in the time it takes to refine products. Research assets are not available in abundance in the region and research production requires significant levels of outreach, oversight and time, as well as financial commitment. The over-achievement of targets under output 2, have perhaps been at the expense of outputs 3 and 4. If the project is to shift its attention to these outputs going forward, this will take energy and resources from research provision.

There are limited gains with regards to enhancing the discussion on human rights dimensions of trade and investment policy. As some stakeholders suggested, this is because UNDP as an organisation has less capacity in this area, however going forward trade and investment will remain key.

In terms of delivery under output 2, the project has consistently over-delivered to a staggering 474% in 2020 and 372% in 2021, suggestion that a reallocation of resources and streamlining of budget might be necessary. The project's successes under this output are highlighted in the table below.

Output 2	Output Indicators	Targets – year 1 – 2020	Targets – year 2 – 2021	Targets – cumulative 2020 - 2023	Results
Public awareness of the Business and Human Rights Agenda enhanced	2.1 Number of communications products shared with the public	4	8	24	21 campaigns (a total of 114 products) - over-achieved
	2.2 Number of knowledge products, including issue briefs, think pieces, and research products shared with the public	5	10	25	11- over-achieved

Outcome 3: Access to remedy and other rights-based solutions are supported such that future human rights abuses are prevented

Output 3.1 Access to remedies for parties subject to adverse human rights impacts is strengthened through awareness raising and rights provision

Output 3.2 Skills and competencies of businesses to conduct human rights due diligence and operate effective grievance mechanisms is reinforced

Output 3.3 Capacities of justice institutions to address human rights abuses in the context of business operations is strengthened

Finding 6: The project has had some successes under output 3.2 with regards to strengthening capacities and awareness of human rights due diligence, but less so on access to remedy and prevention and strengthening capacities of judicial institutions. Access to remedy will remain a key issue going forward. Despite this, the project has already at the midway point over-achieved on its targets under this outcome.

As mentioned above, the project initially focused more attention on outcomes 1 and 2 and less so on outcome 3. The MTE notes that this has been addressed in the 2022 Annual Work Plan, which sees a greater focus on outcome 3, and is something that the project is cognisant of. Some gains have been made as the project pivoted its attention from duty bearers towards rightsholders. For example, in 2020 the project awarded three small grants to civil society organisations, however this increased more than threefold in 2021 to ten. These grants largely focused on conducting research and training to support access to remedy for people and communities negatively impacted by business operations. The MTE notes that this change in approach has been recognised and acknowledged and is valued by stakeholders, one of whom commented:

“The project gets better and better because earlier UNDP was only working with government. Now it is using bottom-up approaches as well.”

For example, in India, the project provided a small grant to the CSO, Change Alliance, to conduct a baseline assessment on the adverse impacts of human rights abuses amongst women workers in the Ready-Made Garment Industry. Targeting this group, the CSO also conducted awareness raising activities related to access to remedies. The MTE was informed that as a result of this training, women workers not only increased their knowledge, but importantly increased their confidence to claim their rights and approach grievance mechanisms in the workplaces.

The project has also made gains in terms of awareness raising and capacity building on HRDD throughout its target countries.

However, many stakeholders commented that there have been less gains in terms of access to remedy:

“Access to remedy is a big missing piece of the jigsaw all over the world not just in Asia and we have to work within the given constraints.”

When it comes to the judiciary, training needs assessments concerning judicial to support Pillar 3 of the UNGPs on access to remedy is in progress in Mongolia. The MTE was informed that a customised training programme for the judiciary will be developed based on the training needs assessment to improve access to remedy in cases of business-related human rights violations. In other countries the project has started with awareness raising and capacity building, which some stakeholders commented is already beginning to show:

“I have never seen a judgement that quotes the UNGPs but some judgements you can see have been informed by them.”

However, the MTE was informed that access to grievance mechanisms remains a challenge throughout all project countries, both state run mechanisms and those in the private sector.

The impressive results of the project under this outcome to date are captured below, which show the extent to which the project has over-achieved in terms of targets under this outcome. In terms of delivery, in 2020 the delivery rate was impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic and stood at 54%, however in 2021, the project achieved an impressive 96% delivery rate.

Output 3	Output Indicators	Targets – year 1 – 2020	Targets – year 2 – 2021	Targets – cumulative 2020 - 2023	Results
Output 3 Access to remedy and other rights-based solutions increased	3.1 Number of beneficiaries in pursuit of access to remedy supported by civil society actors	10	30	70	2,456 – over-achieved
	3.2 Number of training and events organized or supported to reinforce skills and competencies of businesses to conduct human rights due diligence and operate effective grievance mechanisms	4	8	16	25 – over-achieved

Outcome 4: The interlinkages between adverse environmental and human rights impacts by business operations is better understood and policy action is more clearly articulated

Output 4.1 Deeper appreciation of the interlinkages between human rights and environmental impacts of business operations through knowledge products is achieved

Output 4.2 Understanding of the policy options and other pathways towards the greater uptake of action to address environment-related human rights risks and impacts is deepened

Output 4.3 Wider public awareness of the environment/human rights nexus, in the context of business operations is achieved

Finding 7: The project identified a gap and seized the opportunity to introduce work on the interlinkages between adverse environmental and human rights impacts by businesses, an issue that many stakeholders see as being key in the region. This has brought the project forefront in the dialogue on BHR and the environment, providing it with significant opportunities in taking the discourse forward.

Despite being added one year into the project implementation, the project has already seen progress under outcome 4. This issue is key for many stakeholders and one that has largely been unexplored. The project has been able to capitalise on this opportunity and leverage it to its advantage. The project has adopted a very methodical approach to outcome 4, as it has with other outputs. For example, first the project conducted an online survey to understand environmental priorities in Asia. The MTE was informed that this arose out of a desire to explore more deeply how BHR and environmental issues impact people on the ground. Air pollution emerged as the subject of deepest concern, followed by climate change. The MTE was informed that these findings were subsequently validated by a panel of eminent academics and advocates and were used to inform the planning and prioritisation of future project activities. This has included initiating a large-scale research project on air pollution, human rights, and industry. Through these activities, the project is putting the foundations in place to scale-up as it moves forward. As commented by one stakeholder:

“UNDP has built a niche around BHR and the environment and is definitely recognised as a leader on this in this region.”

Through approaching this output in such a systematic way, the project has positioned itself well for future impact. This output is a clear example of where the project can punch above its weight with the resources it has.

As can be seen in the table below, UNDP has already over-achieved on two of its target areas under this output. While the third target has yet to be fully achieved, it is anticipated that within the remaining implementation period to the end of 2023, this target will also be reached. As this output was only introduced in 2021, there is no delivery during 2020. In 2021, the project achieved a solid 91% delivery rate under this output.

Output 4	Output Indicators	Targets – year 1 – 2020	Targets – year 2 - 2021	Targets – cumulative 2020 - 2023	Results
Output 4 Interlinkages between adverse environmental and human rights impacts by business operations is better understood so that policy action is more	4.1 Number of knowledge products, including issue briefs, think pieces, and research products shared with the public	1	3	5	11 – over-achieved
	4.2 Number of events organized or supported to	1	2	5	38 – over-achieved

clearly articulated	enhance multi-stakeholder dialogues on the impact of Asian business operations and supply chains on the human rights and environment nexus				
	4.3 Number of communications products shared with the public	4	8	12	5 – not-achieved

EFFICIENCY Continued

Finding 8: Partnerships are key to the advancement of the project and the BHR agenda in the region. The project has invested considerable resources into cultivating and strengthening partnerships with a wide variety of stakeholders including government, the private sector and businesses, CSOs, NHRCs, other international organisations and academia. This investment has paid off with the project being able to convene and engage with different stakeholders both thematically and geographically. The project has also benefitted from the partnership with its donor, the EU.

Many stakeholders informed the MTE that a key advantage of UNDP and the project is its ability to convene a wide variety of stakeholders. The project team are noted to be very supportive in terms of ensuring communication with stakeholders. As one informed the MTE:

“With the support of the EU and UNDP we have managed to include all necessary stakeholders into the NAP development process and to get the voices of rights-holders and duty bearers both thematically and regionally.”

Another echoed this sentiment:

“UNDP is the key partner in driving the BHR agenda in Thailand. It brought together all the key stakeholders including government, CSOs, private sector and others.”

However, some stakeholders commented that UNDP is sometimes seen as being too close to government and that it has limitations in terms of its access to CSOs, in particular those working at the grassroots level.

“UNDP is still seen as a new face by some CSOs and it doesn’t yet have full trust – there are still some gaps. UNDP’s close relationship with government leads CSOs to question UNDP’s independency.”

That said, all partners that the project is engaging with highly appreciate UNDP and the project, not just for its convening power, but also in terms of supporting their activities. The MTE was consistently informed that the project is open and responsive to its partner’s needs.

“UNDP and the project really appreciate their partners and are always ready to listen to their partners and to help. They are flexible and responsive and understand the context. They always reflect the voices of their partners.”

The project has also benefitted from its partnership with its donor, the EU. The EU has taken important and high-level steps, which has attracted stakeholders to the BHR narrative and which the project has then been able to leverage well.

Finding 9: Engaging with SMSEs is one of the biggest challenges facing the project. While the project is engaging mainly with large companies, where there is already some level of compliance with BHR, there is still a lack of full understanding of the BHR agenda and the value of the UNGPs in the private sector, in particular among SMSEs.

The UNGPs apply to businesses of all sizes and from all industries. The project’s approach has been to engage with larger companies at the outset. The MTE was informed that this is because it is easier to engage with the larger companies who already speak the same language and many of whom already have a certain understanding of the UNGPs and/or responsible business mechanisms in place. In addition, if the larger companies come on board then it is anticipated that this will have a trickle down affect through the supply chains to smaller companies. As one stakeholder commented:

“It is easier to work with larger companies because they speak the same language, but this is not where the intervention should be focused in my opinion.”

Another recognised the importance of engaging with businesses:

“Businesses are a very significant agent of change.”

While it may be easier to engage with larger companies at the beginning, as the project has progressed it has identified the importance of also engaging with SMSEs. These make up about 70 per cent of the formal employment market in the region and while human rights issues may not be their top priority, this is where human rights abuses have more potential to occur. As one stakeholder commented:

“SMSEs do not see the value of the UNGPs in their businesses.”

This was echoed by another:

“There is an apprehension and lack of understanding among SMSEs of business and human rights and the value of the UNGPs on their businesses.”

UNDP is trying to bridge this, for example through supporting the BHR Training Academy in Thailand, however the project is still only covering formal SMSEs who are part of the global supply and value chains – the biggest challenge is reaching the informal sector and this is where people are most at risk of human rights abuses. With regards to the knowledge products created by the project, some stakeholders commented that these need to be much simpler and more straightforward for SMSEs to use them, since most SMSEs do not have the resources to implement even the simplest BHR tool at present.

4.3. Efficiency

Finding 10: The project has been able to build a strong level of expertise within its team that is highly regarded among stakeholders. It is able to offer technical knowledge and expertise that can bring about change. The strategies and approaches that it has adopted have proved successful, and where they have not, the team is able to adapt and respond effectively. The level of organisation within the project, led by its project manager, is impressive.

The project has created an excellent staffing structure, which is not only highly regarded among its external partners, but equally as important, it highly valued within the team itself. As one external partner commented:

“The project is doing the right job with the right people. The project has clear expertise and the level is high – that is why the results are so good.”

Team members receive individual capacity building and support but are also given significant independence to implement their country level AWP. The project has created a safe space for the national experts to facilitate this and allows the team the ability to amplify activities and results at the country level. The MTE observes that the culture created by the project team based in Bangkok is very responsive, ensuring that everyone is on the same page. This is credit to the robust leadership of the project. For example, in August and September 2021, the project organised a retreat aimed, among other things, at reviewing progress to date and identifying gaps and challenges, undertaking a SWOT analysis of the team and developing indicators to measure progress towards team goals. Participants informed the MTE that the retreat provided an opportunity for everyone to reflect where the project is as well as what had been working well and not. It helped to identify strengths and weaknesses and make the project more data driven. The retreat was highly appreciated by the project team members and is a good practice that should be continued as the project progresses.

The level of organisation within the team and the methodical approach to the project's implementation is impressive. For example, despite the difficulties of the Covid-19 pandemic, due to a high level of organisation, as well as dedication within the team – which was still very new at that point - the project was able to continue, virtually without delay in its implementation and without impact on its delivery rate. This indicates very strong leadership as well as commitment within the team. As one stakeholder commented:

“The project started at the time of Covid and UNDP has done an extremely good job in overcoming the difficulties of the pandemic. The project deserves great credit for that.”

Despite the very high regard with which the project staff are held by its partners, many informed the MTE that there is a need for additional human resources at the national level, although it should be noted that the percentage of expenditure for human resources under the project stands quite high at nearly 30% (28% in 2020 and 29% in 2021). At present the project structure allows for only one person at the national level, and while the project does use consultants, there are challenges to maintaining the continuity of work through consultants and challenges with regards to identifying capable consultants in the first place. Stakeholders informed the MTE that if UNDP and the project want to have deeper conversations on BHR then they need to use more local experts to help them develop knowledge products. At present they are quite general, which while useful limits their reach and operational potential. For this to happen, as one stakeholder commented:

“There needs to be a breakout pool of human resources that UNDP can access who go beyond the usual suspects.”

Finding 11: The project has put in place extremely efficient internal communication mechanisms, which have led to efficiency gains and created a strong sense of unity among the team, which is credit to its robust leadership. It has invested time and resources into continuously strengthening internal communications both horizontally and vertically. Individual team members benefit from both a high level of independence as well as consistent assistance and support. The modality of CO level support is a good model that can be considered by other regional projects and programmes. There is still room to strengthen external communication at the individual partner level.

The project recognised early on the need and benefits of establishing strong internal communication mechanisms, in particular for a project which spans seven countries throughout the region – internal communication is key. This immediately came to fruition with the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic, when the project already had effective mechanisms in place and was able to immediately switch to prioritising continued implementation of its activities, rather than having to establish remote communication mechanisms and tools. The project has established a number of different processes to ensure both vertical and horizontal communication, including the use of sharepoint and teams, developing standardised templates and online resources and the MTE was informed that the team is very active in sharing information, knowledge and resources. This has helped to facilitate south-south cooperation and peer learning. The modality of CO level support is a good model that can be considered by other regional projects and programmes.

With regards to external communication processes, to a large extent this has been covered under output 2 above. However, the MTE notes that some stakeholders would appreciate a higher level of communication with the project, in particular with regards to planning and also with regards to follow-up of certain activities. For example, a number of stakeholders commented that once they had completed their study or report for the project, they were not informed as to what would happen with that product, how it would be used, if there would be follow-up etc. Additional mechanisms are required to keep partners more in the loop.

Finding 12: The project is very rich in data and as such is very evidence based. This sets it apart from other projects and can be considered a best practice example for other projects within the BRH as well as other UN/DP entities. Through the use of modern analytical methods and tools the project is able to capture additional data to inform its planning and future programming.

The MTE finds that the project is aware of the need for data and is constantly striving to improve its data collection methods as well as its analytical tools, to ensure the project remains evidence based in terms of its future planning. The initial project document did not foresee the need for a dedicated M&E officer, who would be responsible for data collection. During the first year of implementation of the project, the MTE was informed that this was identified as a gap and despite trying to fill that through the use of an M&E consultant, it was agreed in consultation with the EU, that a dedicated M&E officer would be brought into the organisational structure of the project. This led to an M&E officer being engaged from January 2021 to support with reporting and collecting verifiable data. Since then, a number of M&E mechanisms have been introduced to strengthen the data collection within the project, for example, the use of google analytics for all knowledge products. This allows the project to collect and analyse data on who is using its products, how and from where. Other mechanisms include standardised excel data collection templates for all COs, monthly digest reports as well as the introduction of Leo, an AI bot who collects data throughout the month for internal usage. These mechanisms all lend themselves to

increasing the overall efficiency of project implementation, although the sustainability and added value of the AI bot should be considered.

The level of data collection conducted by the project can be considered an example of best practice, which should be exported to other projects and programmes at the BRH as well as other UN/DP entities.

Finding 13: The project has successfully been able to adopt tailor made solutions to the disparate national contexts within which it is operating. There is a need for continuing localisation to the national context.

The project is working in seven countries throughout the region, all of whom have very different operational contexts and needs. The MTE observes that the project has been able to adapt its approaches to fit the local context and needs rather than offer a one size fits all approach. For example, in Myanmar, shortly after the project commenced, the government was overthrown in a military coup. With the UN not recognising the legitimacy of the military government, the project has had to focus its attention on providing capacity development and awareness raising support at the grassroots level on access to remedy. Through a local NGO, the project has established a Labour Help Centre, which conducts local trainings for paralegals, who are able to raise awareness in the communities, as well as mediate between employers and employees in potential cases of human rights abuses. In Sri Lanka, the project has been unable to gain much traction with the government, so while still engaging at that level to the extent possible, has pivoted its attention more towards raising the capacities of business as well as at the local level. The other countries are at different stages of the NAP process, with Thailand having already adopted its NAP, India and Indonesia with draft NAPs, and Malaysia having committed to adopting a NAP by 2023. Mongolia is at the initial stages of the NAP development process and the project is supporting the country to undertake a National Baseline Assessment.

This approach, of developing tailor-made solutions to fit the individual country contexts is very much appreciated by all stakeholders who participated in the evaluation. As one commented:

“We always plan our activities jointly so they reflect our needs.”

However, as noted under Finding 5, there is a continuous need for localisation to the national context.

Finding 14: At the programmatic level, there is good cooperation and synergy between the SIDA funded regional B+HR Asia project and the EU funded national B+HR Asia project, which contributes to the efficiency of both projects. There is a tight, programmatic narrative and strategy between the two projects, who share the same website, branding and logos. There is room for improved coordination between the projects in terms of planning and implementation, shared knowledge and learning and a more equitable division of human resources for even greater efficiency gains.

Many stakeholders informed the MTE of the great value that the two B+HR Asia projects bring to each other through having a regional and national focus respectively. The projects are certainly programmatically linked in terms of their strategic vision and goals and at the higher, programmatic level, are well coordinated, mutually reinforcing the achievement of higher level goals. SIDA has considerably amplified the BHR agenda at the regional level and the strengthening of regional level political will has helped the EU project to leverage political will at the country level. Correspondingly, greater political will and commitment generated through the EU project has garnered additional interest in regional level cooperation and south-south exchange. That said,

there is still room for greater cohesion and synergy. The reporting of results is challenging to ensure that there is no double reporting or ambiguity of donor contributions, which makes it more challenging to facilitate greater cohesion. At the programme level and advisory level, there are attempts and successes in bringing the projects together, but this needs to be broadened to bring everyone together within one joint and agreed programmatic framework. Time constraints impact on the level of cohesion between the two projects, with individual project implementation and delivery overshadowing the need for greater cohesion. Joint Steering Committee meetings are conducted on an annual basis, however additional planning mechanisms have not really been introduced.

At the working level the projects are not jointly involved in the development of planning including strategic planning. The consultant was informed that each year the EU receives a certain amount of budget at the country level, which it has to programme and implement on behalf of the SIDA project. It was commented that the SIDA project is more reactive rather than proactive and that there is limited discussion around planning, so it is very challenging for the EU project when it receives SIDA funding. While joint Steering Committee meetings are conducted on an annual basis, there are no regular internal coordination meetings between the two projects. To address this, the EU regularly – approximately on a quarterly basis – invites the SIDA project team to its monthly EU project coordination meetings. However, time constraints and conflicting schedules sometimes prevent the SIDA project's participation in these meetings. Additional efforts have included the country level experts' proposal for some joint strategic planning to feed into the AWP development process between the two projects, however for various reasons, this did not actualise.

The SIDA project presents a great opportunity for knowledge sharing and learning for the EU project, show-casing examples and best practices. Similarly, the SIDA project could learn from country level examples to further the regional momentum. However, there are currently no formal mechanisms in place to share learning between the EU and SIDA projects. This is a missed opportunity for the projects to learn from each other and results in informal reaching out to learn about the experiences from one project to the other. The programme and both projects would benefit from knowledge platforms and sharing mechanisms, which would also lead to greater alignment.

Human resource capacities, in particular at the country level are very stretched. Many stakeholders, during both evaluations, commented on the need to have greater in-country capacities. This requires a more effective use of human resources to ensure that results are not diluted due to lack of capacities and over-stretching. While the EU project has established a sense of great solidarity within the team with strong mechanisms for peer learning and unity, this has left out the SIDA project team members to some extent. Both projects can be too risk adverse on occasion when it comes to being open and sharing knowledge.

4.4. Sustainability and Impact

Finding 15: It is without doubt that the project has already achieved considerable impact in furthering the BHR Agenda in the region and raising awareness of the UNGPs, although it does not have indicators in place to measure this. While it is premature at the midway point to assess the sustainability of a project, there are strong indications that point towards sustainability prospects.

In terms of raising awareness and promoting the UNGPs, the MTE finds that the project has already had considerable impact, although it is too premature to assess the impact of other activities and impact measurements are not in place to assess the full contribution. The numbers detailed

above under finding 5 speak for themselves, with for example over 6,200 participants in events organised by the project, 17 publications, 221 communication products etc. The newsletter now has over 7,500 subscribers and the website traffic has increased by 114%. The Covid-19 Rapid Self-Assessment Tool, has been downloaded over 6000 times as of January 2022 and been translated into 14 different languages. All of this evidences the impact and reach that the project has had in the two short years since it started.

While sustainability is also difficult to assess at the midway point of a project, there are already indications of sustainability prospects. For example, the level of ownership of those countries involved in the NAP development process is assessed by the MTE as being high. The number of knowledge products that have been produced will continue beyond the lifespan of the project and will continue to extend their reach and impact. Similarly, capacity development efforts will continue to reap gains beyond the lifespan of the project. For example, in Myanmar, through training paralegals who are engaged at the community level, the project is able to ensure that this work will continue once the project has been finalised.

4.5. Gender and Human Rights Based Approach

Finding 16: While the project document does not reference the human rights-based approach, the project was designed with a human rights-based approach in mind. A participatory gender analysis of the project was conducted at the outset and the project has tried to insure the principles of inclusivity and participation in all its activities.

The MTE notes that the project was designed with the human rights-based approach in mind in that it aims to conduct activities with both rights holders and duty bearers. However, as mentioned elsewhere in this report, some stakeholders perceive a weakness of the project being that it is very top down, and that the real gap is to get companies and SMSEs to apply UNGPs and to address further pillars 2 and 3 of the UNGPs, which, according to some stakeholders, are largely neglected. The MTE observes that the project is aware of this and has already put in measures to address the needs of rights holders more. This was confirmed by some stakeholders, one of whom commented:

“UNDP has done a lot to empower marginalised communities but we need more emphasis on how to access marginalised groups and how to operationalise special mechanisms in the workplace for women and other vulnerable groups.”

The MTE was informed that the project undertook at its outset a participatory gender analysis. This analysis reflects on the different needs, roles and access to/control over resources of women and men, and it is fully integrated into the project document. The project established concrete priorities to address gender inequalities in its strategic approach. The results framework includes outputs and activities that specifically respond to this gender analysis, with indicators that measure and monitor results contributing to gender equality. For example, in Sri Lanka, the project supported a local CSO to undertake a study on the impact of COVID-19 on women garment workers. The study was very comprehensive and included questionnaires, FGDs, KIIs, validation and the development of a handbook. The MTE was informed that not only did this lead to an increase in networking among both rights holders and duty bearers but it also led to some women gaining the confidence to use existing grievance handling mechanisms. The report confirmed that knowledge is very low and that women were largely unaware of their rights or how to access them, including that they were unaware of either the responsibilities of the state or of their employers. Similarly, in Mongolia, the project supported a local NGO to undertake a study of sexual harassment in the workplace. Over 3000 women contributed. As one stakeholder commented:

“Participation in the training gave the women the confidence to speak out about the violation of their rights.”

All stakeholders commented on the level of discrimination in the region against women and other vulnerable groups. Trying to close the gender gap remains a challenge in the region and for other vulnerable groups, including LGBTI+ there is considerable pushback. In general, there is a need to explore in more depth the interlinkages between gender and BHR across all project countries.

5. Conclusions and general assessment against evaluation criteria

As agreed with UNDP, the MTE has ranked the project against the four key evaluation criteria in accordance with the ranking scale agreed in the Inception Report. Below follows a brief conclusion of the MTE assessment of each evaluation criteria, followed by its individual ranking and with a ranking of the overall project provided at the end.

MTE Criteria	MTE Conclusion	Ranking
Relevance	The project is very relevant in the region. It is aligned with regional and national priorities, including those of national partners as well as the UNDP COs. It is aligned with the UNDP BRH RPD, the Strategic Plan and UNDP's global programme on Rule of Law. It is aligned with the priorities of its donor, the EU. It is also relevant in relation to the needs and priorities of its target beneficiaries. Furthermore, the project contributes to a number of the SDGs.	4
Effectiveness	The overall effectiveness of the implemented output activities is successful, in particular the NAP development processes in India, Indonesia, Thailand and Malaysia and the body of knowledge and research that has been created with support of the project. The projects communications, both internal and external and very highly regarded. Fewer results have been seen so far with regards to access to remedy and BHR and the environment.	3
Efficiency	The project has consistently delivered at a high level despite the challenges posed by COVID-19, which did derail certain activities. The project structure is now complete, however additional human resources should be considered in any future phase of the project.	4
Sustainability	At the mid-way point there are already some strong indications of sustainability of some of the project results. Going forward the project should aim to secure results gained and consolidate all activities to ensure sustainability across all project outputs.	3
Overall	The project is generally on the right track with some key results achieved to date. With an additional push on outcomes 3 and 4 it has the potential for further successes.	14/16

Legend:

- 1 – Unsuccessful
- 2 – Partially successful
- 3 – Successful
- 4 – Very successful

6. Recommendations

At the mid-way point, the MTE is not recommending any major course corrections but moreover some additional push and focus that will help steer the project both in the remaining implementation period and going forward into a potential next phase of the project. The project should start to shift towards more refined ways of working through enhanced capacity development, building on the results it has already achieved and seeking to consolidate gains made.

The following section provides a set of forward-looking recommendations for the B+HR Asia Project and UNDP, which are practical and actionable. Each recommendation is linked to the relevant finding upon which it is based and provides an indication as to the timescale to address the recommendation. The recommendations are provided in the same order as the evaluation questions, and as per the order of the findings, rather than in order of priority.

Each recommendation also includes some next steps, indicating whether this is a short-term priority (remaining project implementation period), mid-term priority (for second phase) or both.

Recommendation 1: Going into the second phase of the project, the project should ensure a stronger theory of change and results framework, that will enable it to report against results and contributions towards higher level goals and outcomes. Indicators should be revised to more accurately reflect SMART principles. The project should ensure constant alignment with strategic priorities in the region as well as those of UNDP and its donor the EU. The human rights-based approach and gender should be fully mainstreamed into both the design and implementation of the project, to ensure that no one is left behind.

Recommendation targeted at B+HR Asia project and UNDP, short-mid-term priority, based on findings 1, 2 and 16

In preparation for the second phase of the project, the project should ensure a stronger, evidence-based theory of change, based on the considerable knowledge and evidence it has gained in Phase I, as well as a stronger results framework. This should include indicators at the output, outcome and impact level, which will be able to capture all results of the project, including those at the higher level. The project should ensure that it is fully aligned with and contributes to the Regional Programme Document, UNDP's Global Rule of Law Programme – Phase IV, as well as the UNDP Strategic Plan 2022 - 2025. It is noted that Phase IV of the Global Rule of Law Programme has specific references to BHR, which should lead to a coherent alignment.

The project design should also fully mainstream the human rights-based approach and gender considerations into all project activities. The issue of inequalities is paramount in the region and principles of gender equality, equity and inclusion should underpin the project's interventions.

Next Steps:

- Review existing indicator framework to ensure that all indicators are SMART and are not over-achieving – short-term
- Develop stronger and attainable theory of change with outcome and impact level indicators that can measure progress towards higher-level goals – mid-term
- Fully mainstream gender and HRBA from project design, through implementation and including M&E – mid-term

Recommendation 2: In the remaining implementation period the project should strive to secure the results gained by the midway point and in particular progress made under output 1 with regards to the policy frameworks in the region. It is important for governments in the region to ascribe to the policy agenda, which will strengthen ownership and contribute to the sustainability of the results to date.

Recommendation targeted at B+HR Asia project, short-term priority, based on findings 4, 2 and 15

In the remaining project implementation period, the project should try to secure ownership of the NAP processes, in particular in India, Indonesia and Malaysia and to continue its efforts with Mongolia to adopt its NAP in 2023, however it should also develop indicators that can capture progress gained along the ways towards adoption of the NAPs. All countries are at different stages of the process but it is important that the project consolidates the gains it has made thus far and for the governments to ascribe to the policy agenda. In some countries where progress towards a NAP are less advanced, in particular Sri Lanka, this may require a shift in language to shift the narrative more towards economic benefits and away from human rights *per se*. Once policy frameworks are in place, this will allow the project to concentrate more on engaging with businesses and rights holders and addressing more concretely pillars 2 and 3 of the UNGPs. As one stakeholder commented:

“We need to move away now from policy development and get our hands dirty. There should be increased capacity building to meet the increasing global standards as well as raising awareness for the general public.”

Next Steps:

- Dedicate time and resources to securing ownership of the NAP process and obtainment of results – short-term
- Develop indicators that capture progress towards the final attainment of adoption of the NAPs – short-term

Recommendation 3: The project should continue with the excellent progress made to date in terms of M&E and data collection and ensuring a strong evidence base for future planning and programming. This should be enhanced to include impact assessments and going into the second phase, a comprehensive baseline assessment against which future progress can be assessed. The project should ensure that all knowledge and lessons learned gained during phase I are captured and institutionalised.

Recommendation targeted at B+HR Asia project, short-mid-term priority, based on findings 5, 10, 11, 12

While the project is very data driven and informed by a strong evidence base, it is important for the project to consider undertaking regular impact assessments of its communications and awareness raising activities. This can not only be used to inform future planning and programming but can also be used to assess the impact of the project’s interventions. At the start of Phase II, the project should consider undertaking a broad baseline assessment, against which future progress can be tracked.

The project should continue to push the boundaries in terms of data collection, which is a real added value of this project. For example, it could consider engaging more with data thinktanks

who can articulate what is the existing data on BHR and what is the impact. This would allow for an assessment both of the impact of the project as well as the current discourse and trends on BHR and how the project can best capture this. This would feed into the development of Phase II, setting the project apart as an industry leader in terms of its evidence base.

In the remaining implementation period, the project should ensure that it captures all knowledge and lessons learned and fully institutionalises it.

Next steps:

- Conduct impact assessments of results achieved to date – short and mid-term
- Conduct baseline assessment to feed into phase 2 – mid-term
- Capture knowledge and lessons learned and ensure they are institutionalised – short and mid-term

Recommendation 4: In the remaining implementation period, the project should focus its attention on obtaining results under outputs 3 and 4 with regards to access to remedy, strengthening the capacities of the judiciary and the interlinkages between BHR and the environment. Enhanced work on human rights due diligence and longer-term engagement with civil society could also be considered as the project seeks to consolidate gains and ensure sustainability moving forward. The project should assess its capacities to continue with its efforts to enhance the discussion on human rights dimensions of trade and investment policy and decide whether to continue with this workstream.

Recommendation targeted at B+HR Asia project and UNDP, short-mid-term priority, based on findings 5, 6 and 7

During the remaining project implementation period, subject to available resources, the project should focus more on access to remedy and grievance mechanisms, both state run and those within companies, although this will require the project to divert attention away from time-intensive efforts such as research. For example, the project could prepare a toolkit of best practice grievance mechanisms in different contexts with tips on how to introduce and operationalise them. Many stakeholders commented on the need for more models and best practice examples to be shared. The project should continue to work with HRDs in terms of strengthening their capacities, as well as working with the private sector on how to enhance protection of HRDs and continually advocating for their protection. The project should also step-up its efforts with regards to awareness raising and capacity building of the judiciary in its target countries.

With regards to CSOs and HRDs, the project could consider longer-term engagement, which would potentially increase impact and also allow for continuation and follow-up. Following the good practice established in the first half of the project, the team should continue to expand the small grants mechanism but with additional processes for follow-up. Civil society and HRDs are a very rich source of data and gathering this data will help to indicate where the project should focus in Phase 2 as well as complementing what the project knows governments are already doing. The project should be conscious of keeping a balance between top-down and bottom-up approaches. CSOs can be utilised further to bridge the gap between communities and the private sector and governments.

Recommendation 5: Going forward, the project should continue to strengthen its partnership base, while also expanding its efforts in engaging with the private sector. The project should continuously ensure that it is aligned with the strategic priorities of its donor

and recognise the priorities of its partners, as well as consider including partners in the planning processes.

Recommendation targeted at B+HR Asia project, short-mid-term priority, based on findings 18, 2 and 9

As detailed above, businesses and the private sector are very engaged and are eager to learn and do more. There is a strong focus by the private sector to contribute towards and achieve the SDGs. This should be capitalised on by the project going forward, as the project consolidates progress under output 1, Pillar 1 UNGPs and turns its attention more towards outputs 3 and 4, Pillars 2 and 3. With the increase focus on HRDD and potential introduction of mHRDD, the interest of businesses and their needs are anticipated to increase. This provides a great opportunity for the project to leverage this interest in terms of furthering the BHR Agenda and promoting the UNGPs.

The project should ensure continued alignment with EU strategic priorities, which are anticipated to evolve in the forthcoming period, as well as recognising the priorities of its partners. This could be achieved through increased involvement of partners in the project's planning processes.

Next steps:

- Strengthen partnership with private sector – short and mid-term
- Ensure alignment with donor and partner priorities – mid-term

Recommendation 6: The project should try to engage more with SMSEs in order to gain traction with the second tier of business, where large numbers of people are employed and where there is perhaps greater potential for human rights abuses. Consideration should also be given of how to engage with the informal economy in phase II.

Recommendation targeted at B+HR Asia project and UNDP, short-mid-term priority, based on findings 8, 9 and 15

While the project has made efforts to engage with SMSEs during the first two years of its implementation, this should be increased going forward. For example, the project could invest in a mapping exercise to show the economic benefits and potential for BHR. This could be done with Chambers of Commerce, who are generally respected as being impartial by both industry and government. The mapping would highlight the potential of each country and all the stakeholders who would benefit from this as well as the differences required in approach in the differing countries of project implementation. The exercise could also help to define the second phase of the project as well as UNDP's role going forward.

It is important for the project to continue to gain traction with the second layer of business. In some countries the social enterprise sector could be used to identify success stories and best practices. The project should consider partnerships with associations and federations of SMSEs as well as trade union where they exist. However, it will be important to contextualise the approach in each project implementation country. It is important that the project continuously invest in capacity building and awareness raising activities and that it has materials and knowledge products that can reach SMSEs.

While the informal economy is currently beyond the scope of the project, according to ILO, more than 68 per cent of the employed population in Asia-Pacific are in the informal economy. This covers a staggering 1.3 billion people who work informally in Asia-Pacific, comprising 65 per cent

of the world's informally employed. Most of them lack social protection, rights at work and decent working conditions. If and how to bring in these groups is a key question for the project going forward.

Next steps:

- Conduct mapping exercise to highlight potential of each country in terms of B+HR – short-mid-term to feed into Phase 2.
- Develop knowledge products and tools and conduct capacity building that can reach SMSEs – mid-term
- Conduct analysis on how to engage with informal sector – mid-term

Recommendation 7: The project could consider strengthening its human resource framework, in terms of the number of people, going forward into Phase II. This could potentially strengthen impact as well as ensuring that results are not diluted.

Recommendation targeted at B+HR Asia project and UNDP, short-mid-term priority, based on findings 1 and 10

At the country level in some countries, stakeholders commented there is a lack of sufficient human resources, because the current human resources framework only allows for one person at the country office level. While the project relies on using consultants, it can be challenging to maintain the continuity of work as well as identifying consultants with the correct capacities. If the project moves towards Phase II, there is a need for a stronger human resources framework to ensure impact and that results are not diluted. This could include a dedicated communications officer at the country level and/or a project assistant as well as the creation of a pool of local consultant experts that the project can call on when required.

Next Steps:

- Consider expanding human resource framework – mid-term
- Identify local experts that can be used to support the project's human resource framework – short-mid-term

Recommendation 8: The project should continue to make efforts to ensure the localisation of its activities as well as the tailoring of tools and knowledge products to the specific national contexts. More geographical orientation should be considered, allowing for tailor-made solutions to the sensitivities of each country.

Recommendation targeted at B+HR Asia project and UNDP, short-mid-term priority, based on findings 3 and 13

There is still a lot of sensitivity among some of the target countries around human rights. In order for governments to ascribe to the policy agenda the language should be de-sensitised and framed around the economic benefits. The focus should be on the benefits and economic benefits for governments and companies as well as for rights holders. By changing the narrative and quantifying the value of the UNGPs for businesses and government, the project will likely secure additional buy-in and commitment. For example, the project should ask both larger companies and SMSEs what their needs and expectations are both and tailor solutions accordingly. There is a need for the tools to be holistic and graspable i.e. more hands on and with additional practical advice.

The project should continue to pivot strategies and approaches to fit the national context, including sensitisation of language. This will help to attract government buy-in. Localisation and contextualisation of activities is important to ensure that everyone is on the same page, i.e. – urban/rural, government/CSOs, and here it is recommended that the project consider mixed group training.

UN/DP has a lot of materials but they are all mainly in English and language is a barrier that was raised by many stakeholders. The project should make efforts to develop more local resources and more local resource persons. It is important to craft the message to the local context, through greater geographical orientation. However, analysis of the potential uptake of the tools in local languages should also be undertaken, including as part of the recommended impact assessment, to allow for translation of tools where potential uptake is assessed as high.

Next steps:

- Conduct analysis of the potential uptake of tools in local languages – short-term
- Continued contextualisation and localisation of activities – short-mid-term

Recommendation 9: The EU and SIDA funded B+HR projects should develop a joint strategic vision and goals, bringing the implementation of the projects more under the regional programmatic umbrella. Formal and informal knowledge exchange and learning mechanisms should be established, joint planning mechanisms introduced and efforts made to create a sense of programme amongst all project team members. Synergies with other regional projects should also be explored.

Recommendation targeted at both EU and SIDA B+HR Asia projects and UNDP, short-mid-term priority, based on finding 14

While the two B+HR projects are linked programmatically in terms of their vision and goals, they should be linked more clearly in terms of their contributions at the strategic level to avoid duplication and dilution of results. The projects both have a distinct focus and there is value in keeping the project separate but aligned. Efforts should be made on how to articulate that they are moving together and contributing as a programme and not as individual projects. This will require matching the vision of the projects and programme with common objectives that are complementary and strategically linked. Additional leadership at the programmatic level could help to bring the two projects and teams together. Additional synergy at the regional level could also lead to even greater cohesion. Continued efforts are required to ensure coherence and avoid any overlap or duplication, while at the same time ensuring that resources are maximised and used strategically to achieve the best results.

Additional planning mechanisms should be introduced to maximise results and resources. This should include joint strategic planning on the development of the AWP within the project, as well as joint planning at the CO level between the EU and SIDA projects. The project should consider a tighter programmatic approach at the implementation level to further improve harmonisation and coordination between the SIDA funded and EU funded projects. There is a need to create more of a sense of balance between the two projects and their implementation. The projects should come together to find formal and informal mechanisms for easily exchanging knowledge, experiences and practices. This will also assist in terms of planning and knowing what each project is doing. The projects should learn from each other to maximise results, ensure greater alignment and maximise resource potential.

There is a need to create a sense of all project members being part of a programme team and not just members of individual project teams. Structures should be put in place to create a sense of programme and for all team members from both projects to see the programmatic value in what they are doing and the contributions they are making both individually and as part of a project and ultimately programme team.

While outside the scope of the current evaluation, it is also recommended that the project explores synergies with other regional projects working on similar issues, such as the NCE, Youth and the Future of Work projects. This is particularly important with B+HR and the environment initiatives.

Next steps:

- Organise a joint strategic retreat and jointly develop strategic vision – short-term
- Introduce regular planning meetings including for AWP – short-term
- Establish a formal knowledge platform for both projects where knowledge products, lessons learned and best practices can be exchanged – short-term
- Establish more informal sharing mechanisms to ensure greater alignment – short-term
- Explore synergies with other regional projects – short-mid-term

Recommendation 10: The project should continue implementing in all seven countries where it is currently operational but should also consider expanding to include new countries in phase II. This could include both countries that have accelerated the BHR agenda as well as those that are left behind.

Recommendation targeted at B+HR Asia project and UNDP, mid-long term priority, based on findings 1, 13, 15

Going forward into Phase II, the project should consider expanding the scope of countries that are included in the project. This should include both countries that have accelerated in terms of the BHR agenda from which the project can learn, for example, Vietnam, as well as countries that have so far been left behind, for example, Laos and Cambodia. This could be a launching pad for engaging with government in the future if the context changes.

While it may seem advantageous to drop certain countries where the political context is very challenging, it is not recommended by the MTE to do this. For example, the project has not really found its place yet in Sri Lanka due to the complexities of engaging with the government, so here it should focus more on the private sector as well as access to remedy and HRDs. By continuing to support countries such as Myanmar and Sri Lanka through capacity building and awareness raising, the project will be laying the groundwork for future interventions at the policy level, which future phases of the project can then capitalise on.

Next steps:

- Conduct mapping of relevant countries to identify both advanced countries and those left behind in terms of BHR to identify potential future implementation countries – short-term

7. Lessons learned

Lesson learned 1

Considerable time is required to invest with government to ensure the policy framework is in place

Additional time has been required to invest with government than was envisaged, resulting in gains not being secured as yet under output 1. Going forward the project needs to allow for additional time to realise results when engaging with governments and to ensure the policy framework is in place. Where results were gained was where champions among respective government counterparts remained in place.

Lesson learned 2

Partnerships are key to furthering the BHR Agenda and securing the results of the project

A comprehensive engagement with partners is key to furthering the BHR agenda. This can connect and amplify stakeholder efforts, showcase impact, share best practices, incubate and test out innovative efforts around the NHR agenda and advocacy whilst encouraging and make available BHR accountability mechanisms.

Lesson learned 3

It is important to localise and tailor make solutions to the local context

The project has seen most results where it has been able to tailor its approaches and methodologies to the local context. This should be kept in mind going forward as the project seeks to further refine tools and solutions that are fit for purpose.

Lesson learned 4

Internal communication and solid M&E mechanisms help oil the wheels for smoother and more successful project implementation

The projects exemplary internal communication mechanisms – both horizontal and vertical – as well as its solid M&E mechanisms and enhanced data collection tool help ensure successful project implementation that further project results. This is particularly important in a regional project where the target countries are geographically removed. Having a dedicated M&E officer is crucial to ensure proper data collection, a sound evidence base and to inform future planning and programming.

8. Report annexes

ANNEX I –KEY EVALUATION CRITERIA AND QUESTIONS

Relevance: review the progress against project outputs and contribution to outcome level results as defined in the project's theory of change and ascertain whether assumptions and risks remain valid. Identify any other intended or unintended, positive or negative, results using the following guiding questions:

1. To what extent was the project in line with the regional development priorities and UNDP Strategic Plan and its direction on human rights?
2. To what extent does the project contribute to the ToC for the relevant regional programme outcomes?
3. To what extent were the project activities in target countries in line with national development priorities and country development programme outputs and outcomes?
4. To what extent is the overall design and approaches of the project relevant?
5. To what extent were the inputs and strategies identified realistic, appropriate and adequate to achieve the results?
6. To what extent did the project achieve its overall outputs? Are the project's contributions to outcomes clear?
7. To what extent was/is the project able to raise awareness of the UNGPs in the region and translate them into country-level action plans for implementation of the UNGPs and development of the NAPs?
8. To what extent did the project contribute to promoting responsible business practices as well as overall human rights conditions in the region?
9. To what extent does the project contribute to gender equality and women's empowerment?
10. To assess whether the results achieved had a differentiated impact on women and other vulnerable groups?
11. To what extent has the project been appropriately responsive to the COVID- 19 pandemic as well as other political, legal, economic, institutional changes in target countries and the region?
12. To what extent have the component parts of the programme (both SIDA and EU funded projects) worked effective together in reaching objectives, and what further integration efforts might be undertaken?

Effectiveness: Effectiveness of implementation approaches: review the project's technical as well as operational approaches, the regionality and deliverables, quality of results and their impact, alignment with national priorities and responding to the needs of the stakeholders; covering the results achieved, the partnerships established, as well as issues of capacity using following guiding questions:

1. To what extent have the project activities been delivered effectively in terms of quality, quantity, and timing?
2. How effective were the strategies used in the implementation of the project?
3. To what extent was the project successful in enhancing the capacity of States to implement the UNGPs and the development process of the NAPs into the governments' priorities?
4. What are the key internal and external factors (success & failure factors) that have contributed, affected, or impeded the achievements, and how have UNDP and other partners managed these factors?
5. In which areas does the project have the greatest achievements? Why and what have been the supporting factors? How can the project build on or expand these achievements?
6. In which areas does the project have the fewest achievements? What have been the constraining factors and why? How can or could they be overcome?

7. To what extent have stakeholders been involved in project implementation? To what extent are project management and implementation participatory?
8. To what extent have project deliverables been facilitated by work done by the SIDA-funded B+HR Asia project at the regional level, and vice versa?

Efficiency: Efficiency of the project management structure and the added value of the project's regional approach: review planning, management, monitoring and quality assurance mechanisms for the delivery of the project interventions and the added value of the regionality of the project set up in the context of fiscal reform at national and subnational level using following questions:

1. To what extent is the existing project management structure appropriate and efficient in generating the expected results?
2. Have resources (funds, human resources, time, expertise, etc.) been allocated strategically to achieve outcomes?
3. Was the process of achieving results efficient? Were the resources effectively utilised?
4. Did the project activities overlap, and duplicate other similar interventions funded nationally, and/or by other donors?
5. To what extent did the project produce synergies within UNDP and with other development partners and play complementary roles to each other?
6. What is the added value of the project's approach for influencing the implementation of the UNGPs and development process of the NAPs at the national level?
7. How does the project align with other regional and national level initiatives/activities on BHR; including with other BHR programming at UNDP at the regional level? How efficiently are national and regional activities connected and complement each other?

Sustainability: Sustainability of the project results and risks along with opportunities related to future interventions: review and assess if the current project setup has plans for future resource mobilisation, synergy, long term partnership and / or taking into account institutionalisation of the project impact for continued support after the project end using the following questions:

1. What is the likelihood of the continuation and sustainability of national level dialogues engaging various stakeholders and strengthening national and regional partnership architectures, made up of UN system, NHRIs, CSOs, and private sector actors working on BHR?
2. How were capacities of a various set of BHR stakeholders strengthened at the national level through regional peer-learning and south-south cooperation?
3. Describe key factors that will require attention to improve the prospects of sustainability of Project outcomes and the potential for replication of the approach?
4. To what extent do stakeholders support the project's long-term objectives?
5. To what extent will financial and economic resources as well as political will be available to sustain the benefits achieved by the project?
6. Are there any social or political risks that may jeopardise sustainability of project outputs and the project's contributions to country programme outputs and outcomes?
7. What have the benefits or return on investment of the outputs of the project, and which can be reasonably sustained and/or scaled up over time?

ANNEX II - LIST OF STAKEHOLDER CONSULTATIONS

Number	Name-Surname	Affiliation
1	Sean Lees	Business and Human Rights Specialist, UNDP Asia-Pacific
2	Surya Deva	Chair of the Working Group on Business and Human Rights
3	Belinda Hlatshwayo	M&E Officer, B+HR Project, UNDP Asia-Pacific
4	Laura Keller	Communications Officer (former) B+HR Project, UNDP Asia-Pacific
5	Livio Sarandrea	Crisis Prevention and Rule of Law Specialist, UNDP Asia-Pacific
6-12	Nusrat Khan	National Business and Human Rights Specialist, UNDP India
	Myanathi Peiris	National Business and Human Rights Specialist, UNDP Sri Lanka
	Tarinee Suravoranon	National Business and Human Rights Specialist, UNDP Thailand
	Puteri Noor Jehan Wan Abdul Aziz	National Business and Human Rights Specialist, UNDP Malaysia
	Sagita Adesywi	National Business and Human Rights Specialist, UNDP Indonesia
	Zoljargal Gantumur	National Business and Human Rights Specialist, UNDP Mongolia
	Wint Yee	National Business and Human Rights Specialist, UNDP Myanmar
13	Fredy Guayacan	Programme Manager (ILO) International Labour Organization
14	Georgina Lloyd	Regional Coordinator Environmental Law and Governance, (UNEP) United Nations Environment Programme
15	Ms. Nandini Sharma -Director	Centre for Responsible Business
16	Laura Liguori	International Relations Officer, Foreign Policy Instruments, Asia-Pacific · Delegation of the European Union to Thailand
17	Mr. Anand Kumar Bolimera - CEO	Change Alliance
18	Ms. Sarayu Natarajan	Aapati Institute
19	Edmund Bon	Collective of Applied Law & Legal Realism (CALR)
20	Dr. Cheah Swee Neo	NHRC Malaysia
21	Navchaa Ts.	Head, Human Rights Division, MoFA, Mongolia
22-23	Batbuyan S. + 1 other colleague	Partner, MDS&KhanLex LLP

24	Ariunaa Sh.	Head, Mongolian Women's Employment Federation
25	Undrakh U.	Head, International Law and Cooperation Division, National Human Rights Commission of Mongolia
26	Karina Ufert	EuroCham Myanmar
27	Daw Hla Hla Yee	Legal Clinic Myanmar
28	Selyna Peiris	Selyn
29	Padmini Weerasooriya	Women's Centre, Sri Lanka
30	Gayani Gomes	Women's Centre, Sri Lanka
31-32	Semini Satarasinghe + 1 colleague	German Industry of Trade & Commerce
33	Amar Gunatilleke	Marga Institute
34	Nareeluc Pairchaiyapoom	Ministry of Justice, Thailand
35-36	Dr. NETITHORN PRADITSARN + 1 colleague	Global Compact Network, Thailand
37	Sor.Rattanamanee Polkla	Community Resources Centre Foundation (CRC), Thailand
38	Asst. Prof. Dr. Darunee Paisanpanichkul	Chaing Mai university
39-40	Ms. Hajerati Ichwan Milono	Ministry of Law & Human Rights, Indonesia
41	Mr. Reynaldi Istanto	Ministry of State Owned Enterprises, Indonesia
42-44	Mr. Billy Esratian Malika Vasadani Riri Maharani Raditya Herpramudita	Executive Office of the president, Indonesia
45	Mr. Bahtiar Manurung	Director of Operations, Foundation for International Human Rights Reporting Standard (FIHRRST)
46-47	Mr. Adi Condro Bawono Ms. Resi Hardiyanti	EuroCham, Indonesia

ANNEX III - EVALUATION MATRIX

Relevant Evaluation criteria	Key Questions	Specific Sub-Questions	Data Sources	Data collection Methods/Tools	Indicators/ Success Standard	Methods for Data Analysis
The relevance of B+HR Asia's project design, with a specific focus on its theory of change and how the project outputs realistically and effectively contributed to its overall objective.	<p>*To what extent was the project in line with the regional development priorities and UNDP Strategic Plan, Regional Programme Document, UNWG Priorities and its direction on human rights?</p> <p>*To what extent is the project in line with and has influenced Phase IV of UNDP's Global RoL programme?</p> <p>*To what extent does the project contribute to the ToC for the relevant regional programme outcomes?</p> <p>*To what extent were the project activities in target countries in line with the national development priorities and country development programmes' outputs and outcomes?</p>	<p>* Were any stakeholder inputs/concerns addressed at the project formulation stage? Was the EU included?</p> <p>*How does the project align with related national strategies?</p> <p>*How does the project address the human development needs of intended beneficiaries?</p> <p>*What analysis was done in designing the project – context, stakeholder, PEA etc.?</p> <p>*Was the project able to adapt to evolving needs/changing context?</p> <p>*How well were gender aspects taken into account into project design and concretely and effectively implemented?</p> <p>*What project revisions were made and why?</p>	<p>*National policy documents including relevant strategies and action plans in the 7 target countries</p> <p>*UNDP Strategic Documents incl. UNSDCF, UNDP GP B+HR, UNDP BRH Regional Programme</p> <p>*B+HR Asia Project Document</p> <p>*B+HR Asia Progress Reports</p> <p>*B+HR Asia Quality Assurance report, results</p>	<p>Document review and desk research</p> <p>Independent external research and reports</p> <p>Key informant interviews</p> <p>Focus group discussions</p> <p>Online surveys if conducted</p> <p>Email, phone and online follow-up where necessary</p>	N/A	<p>*Qualitative and quantitative data analysis</p> <p>*Data synthesis</p> <p>*Descriptive statistical analysis</p> <p>*Process tracing</p> <p>*Triangulation</p> <p>*Discussion of data amongst the consultant and the B+HR Asia team</p> <p>*Verification of data with Stakeholders</p> <p>*Fact checking by UNDP comment and feedback to consultant</p>

	<p>*To what extent the overall design and approaches of the project were relevant?</p> <p>*To what extent, the inputs and strategies identified were realistic, appropriate and adequate to achieve the results?</p> <p>*What is the degree to which the BHR project activities were overlapping with and/or complementing other interventions in the domain – in particular the SIDA funded project?</p> <p>*What is the level of acceptance for and support to the Project by relevant stakeholders?</p>	<p>*To what extent does the project contribute to gender equality, the empowerment of women, social inclusion and the human rights-based approach?</p> <p>*To what extent has the project been appropriately responsive to political, legal, economic, institutional, etc., changes in the target countries throughout the project period, including the COVID-19 pandemic?</p>	<p>orientated monitoring reports</p> <p>*Relevant partner reports</p>			
<p>Effectiveness – The overall effectiveness of the implemented project activities towards the expected results</p>	<p>*To what extent the project activities were delivered effectively in terms of quality, quantity, and timing?</p> <p>*How effective were the strategies used in the implementation of the project?</p> <p>*To what extent the project was effective in enhancing the capacity</p>	<p>- In what way did the Project come up with innovative measures for problem solving?</p> <p>- What good practices or successful experiences or transferable examples were identified?</p> <p>- What is the level of expertise and acceptance of UNDP work on BHR: which added value does</p>	<p>*National policy documents including relevant strategies and action plans in the 7 target countries</p> <p>*UNDP Strategic Documents</p>	<p>Document review and desk research</p> <p>Independent external research and reports</p> <p>Key informant interviews</p>	N/A	<p>*Qualitative and quantitative data analysis</p> <p>*Data synthesis</p> <p>*Descriptive statistical analysis</p> <p>*Process tracing</p> <p>*Triangulation</p> <p>*Discussion of data amongst the consultant and</p>

	<p>of States on implementing UNGPs and the development process of the NAPs into the governments' priorities?</p> <p>*What are the key internal and external factors (success & failure factors) that have contributed, affected, or impeded the achievements, and how UNDP and the partners have managed these factors?</p> <p>*In which areas does the project have the greatest achievements? Why and what have been the supporting factors? How can the project build on or expand these achievements?</p> <p>*In which areas does the project have the fewest achievements? What have been the constraining factors and why? How can or could they be overcome?</p> <p>*To what extent have stakeholders been involved in project implementation?</p>	<p>UNDP have and what are its comparative advantages in the sector?</p> <p>- What are the direct and indirect results (at both output and impact level) of the project implementation and their sustainability?</p> <p>-How does the project complement/overlap with other UNDP and UN initiatives – in particular the SIDA B+HR Asia project?</p>	<p>incl. UNSDCF, UNDP GP B+HR, UNDP BRH Regional Programme</p> <p>*B+HR Asia Project Document</p> <p>*B+HR Asia Progress Reports</p> <p>*B+HR Asia Quality Assurance report, results orientated monitoring reports</p> <p>*Relevant partner reports</p>	<p>Focus group discussions</p> <p>Online surveys if conducted</p> <p>Email, phone and online follow-up where necessary</p>	<p>the B+HR Asia team</p> <p>*Verification of data with Stakeholders</p> <p>*Fact checking by UNDP comment and feedback to consultant</p>
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	<p>*To what extent are project management and implementation participatory?</p> <p>*To what extent have the South-South cooperation and knowledge management contributed to the national (and regional) momentum on developing the NAPs? - What were the constraining and facilitating factors and the influence of the context on the achievement of results?</p>					
<p>Output 1: Policy convergence and compliance with the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights increased</p>	<p>- How many NAPs or their equivalent have been developed to date? How many consultation processes? National Baseline Assessments?</p> <p>- What role has the project had in the development of these NAPs (advocacy, policy development, technical advisory support, capacity building, awareness raising etc.)?</p> <p>- How would you assess political will and interest in BHR in the target</p>	<p>- What are the key achievements under this output?</p> <p>- What are the key challenges?</p> <p>- Is progress on track?</p> <p>- What are the main lessons learned so far?</p> <p>- Has the approach changed during the project implementation period? If so, why?</p>	<p>*B+HR Asia Project Document</p> <p>*B+HR Asia Progress Reports</p> <p>*B+HR Asia Quality Assurance report, results orientated monitoring reports</p> <p>*Relevant partner reports</p>	<p>Document review and desk research</p> <p>Independent external research and reports</p> <p>Key informant interviews</p> <p>Focus group discussions</p> <p>Online surveys if conducted</p>	<p>1. Number of National Actions Plans or their equivalent developed</p> <p>Baseline 2019 - 0</p> <p>Target 2023 - 4</p>	<p>*Qualitative and quantitative data analysis</p> <p>*Data synthesis</p> <p>*Descriptive statistical analysis</p> <p>*Process tracing</p> <p>*Triangulation</p> <p>*Discussion of data amongst the consultant and the B+HR Asia team</p> <p>*Verification of data with Stakeholders</p>

	<p>countries – has this increased during the lifespan of the project?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - What have been the main outcomes of the NAPs? Is the project monitoring or supporting their subsequent implementation? - How does the project facilitate peer-to-peer exchanges and what have been the results of this? 			Email, phone and online follow-up where necessary		*Fact checking by UNDP comment and feedback to consultant
Output 2: Public awareness of the Business and Human Rights Agenda enhanced	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To what extent has public awareness of the UNGPs and the BHR agenda increased during the project implementation period – how are you tracking and measuring this? - Have you conducted any impact assessments of your awareness raising activities and/or knowledge products? - Which strategies and approaches are proving most effective and why? Which are least effective and why? - How do you tailor your approaches to 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - What are the key achievements under this output? - What are the key challenges? - Is progress on track? - How do you measure results? - What are the main lessons learned so far? - Has the approach changed during the project implementation period? If so, why? - To what extent are gender and HRBA considerations addressed in the design and implementation of awareness raising and 	<p>*B+HR Asia Project Document</p> <p>*B+HR Asia Progress Reports</p> <p>*B+HR Asia Quality Assurance report, results orientated monitoring reports</p> <p>*Relevant partner reports</p>	<p>Document review and desk research</p> <p>Independent external research and reports</p> <p>Key informant interviews</p> <p>Focus group discussions</p> <p>Online surveys if conducted</p> <p>Email, phone and online follow-up</p>	<p>2.1 Number of communications products shared with the public</p> <p>Baseline 2019 – 0 Target 2023 – 24</p> <p>2.2 Number of knowledge products, including issue briefs, think pieces, and research products shared with the public</p> <p>Baseline 2019 – 0 Target 2023 – 25</p>	<p>*Qualitative and quantitative data analysis</p> <p>*Data synthesis</p> <p>*Descriptive statistical analysis</p> <p>*Process tracing</p> <p>*Triangulation</p> <p>*Discussion of data amongst the consultant and the B+HR Asia team</p> <p>*Verification of data with Stakeholders</p> <p>*Fact checking by UNDP comment and</p>

	<p>different stakeholders?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - How do you ensure that the hardest to reach are reached through the public awareness and that no one is left behind? - To what extent have discussion been held on the HR dimensions of trade and investment policy? 	<p>communication activities?</p>		<p>where necessary</p>		<p>feedback to consultant</p>
<p>Output 3: Access to remedy and other rights-based solutions increased</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - What approaches has the project used to enhance access to remedy and which have been the most successful? - How many capacity development and training events have been organised under this output and what have the results of these events been? Who have been the recipients? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In what ways has the project addressed the issue of grievance mechanism s and access to them? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - What are the key achievements under this output? - What are the key challenges? - Is progress on track? - How do you measure results? - What are the main lessons learned so far? - Has the approach changed during the project implementation period? If so, why? - To what extent are Gender and HRBA considerations addressed in the design and implementation of activities? 	<p>*B+HR Asia Project Document</p> <p>*B+HR Asia Progress Reports</p> <p>*B+HR Asia Quality Assurance report, results orientated monitoring reports</p> <p>*Relevant partner reports</p>	<p>Document review and desk research</p> <p>Independent external research and reports</p> <p>Key informant interviews</p> <p>Focus group discussions</p> <p>Online surveys if conducted</p> <p>Email, phone and online follow-up where necessary</p>	<p>3.1 Number of beneficiaries in pursuit of access to remedy supported by civil society actors</p> <p>Baseline 2019 – 0</p> <p>Target 2023 – 70</p> <p>3.2 Number of training and events organised or supported to reinforce skills and competencies of businesses to conduct human rights due diligence and operate effective grievance mechanisms</p> <p>Baseline 2019 – 0</p> <p>Target 2023 - 16</p>	<p>*Qualitative and quantitative data analysis</p> <p>*Data synthesis</p> <p>*Descriptive statistical analysis</p> <p>*Process tracing</p> <p>*Triangulation</p> <p>*Discussion of data amongst the consultant and the B+HR Asia team</p> <p>*Verification of data with Stakeholders</p> <p>*Fact checking by UNDP comment and feedback to consultant</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How has the project strengthened justice institutions to address HR abuses in a business context? 					
Output 4: Interlinkages between adverse environmental and human rights impacts by business operations is better understood so that policy action is more clearly articulated	- How does the project measure increase in awareness of national stakeholders on the UNGPs and linkages between human rights and the environment? - What awareness raising activities have been conducted and how has the project measured the impact of these activities? - What trainings have been conducted and to whom? How is impact measured? Are pre and post training assessments conducted? - How many knowledge products and communication products have been disseminated? Is any follow-up	- What are the key achievements under this output? - What are the key challenges? - Is progress on track? - How do you measure results? - What are the main lessons learned so far? - Has the approach changed during the project implementation period? If so, why? - To what extent are Gender and HRBA considerations addressed in the design and implementation of activities?	*B+HR Asia Project Document *B+HR Asia Progress Reports *B+HR Asia Quality Assurance report, results orientated monitoring reports *Relevant partner reports	Document review and desk research Independent external research and reports Key informant interviews Focus group discussions Online surveys Email, phone and online follow-up where necessary	4.1 Number of knowledge products, including issue briefs, think pieces, and research products shared with the public Baseline 2020 – 0 Target 2023 – 5 4.2 Number of events organised or supported to enhance multi-stakeholder dialogues on the impact of Asian business operations and supply chains on the human rights and environment nexus Baseline 2020 – 0 Target 2023 – 5 4.3 Number of communications products shared with the public	*Qualitative and quantitative data analysis *Data synthesis *Descriptive statistical analysis *Process tracing *Triangulation *Discussion of data amongst the consultant and the B+HR Asia team *Verification of data with Stakeholders *Fact checking by UNDP comment and feedback to consultant

	conducted to measure usage/impact etc.?				Baseline 2020 – 0 Target 2023 - 12	
Efficiency in delivering outputs The cost efficiency of the implemented project activities towards the expected results	*To what extent is the existing project management structure appropriate and efficient in generating the expected results? *Have resources (funds, human resources, time, expertise, etc.) been allocated strategically to achieve outcomes? *Was the process of achieving results efficient? *Were the resources effectively utilised? *Did the project activities overlap, and duplicate other similar interventions, in particular the SIDA funded project? *To what extent did the project produce synergies within UNDP and with other development partners and play complementary roles each other? *How does the project align with other regional	*Does the project coordinate its activities sufficiently with other initiatives in the field? *Is the project being implemented within deadline and cost estimates? *Has UNDP solved any implementation issues promptly? *Are project resources focused on the set of activities that were expected to provide significant results *Is there any unified synergy between UNDP initiatives that contributed towards reducing costs? (In particular SIDA project) *How often has the project board met? *How did UNDP programming overlap, if at all with other initiatives? *To what extent were UNDP able to synergise with other UN agencies?	*National policy documents including relevant strategies and action plans in the 7 target countries *UNDP Strategic Documents incl. UNSDCF, UNDP GP B+HR, UNDP BRH Regional Programme *B+HR Asia Project Document *B+HR Asia Progress Reports *B+HR Asia Quality Assurance report, results orientated monitoring reports	Document review and desk research Independent external research and reports Key informant interviews Focus group discussions Online surveys Email, phone and online follow-up where necessary	N/A	*Qualitative and quantitative data analysis *Data synthesis *Descriptive statistical analysis *Process tracing *Triangulation *Discussion of data amongst the consultant and the B+HR Asia team *Verification of data with Stakeholders *Fact checking by UNDP comment and feedback to consultant

	<p>and national level initiatives/activities on BHR? How efficiently are national and regional activities connected and complement each other?</p> <p>*Have the implementation modalities been appropriate and cost-effective?</p> <p>*Did the B+HR Asia staffing structure and management arrangements ensure cost-efficiency, value-for-money, and effectiveness of implementation strategies and overall delivery of results?</p> <p>*Was there good coordination and communication between partners in the project?</p> <p>*What impact did COVID-19 have?</p>	<p>*Is the project fully staffed and are the staffing/management arrangements efficient?</p> <p>*Are procurements processed in a timely manner?</p> <p>*Are the resources allocated sufficient/too much?</p> <p>*What were the reasons for over or under expenditure within the Project?</p>	*Relevant partner reports			
Sustainability of the outcome	<p>*To what extent has the project driven momentum for implementation of the UNGPs and development of the NAPs?</p> <p>*To what extent are the</p>	<p>How has UNDP addressed the challenge of building national capacities? (if not covered above)</p> <p>*What is the level of national/regional</p>	*National policy documents including relevant strategies and action plans	Document requests Stakeholder interviews, in particular with UNDP and other	% of Government Co-financing procured by project? # of activities absorbed by national/regional partners/other UNDP projects	<p>*Qualitative and quantitative data analysis</p> <p>*Data synthesis</p> <p>*Descriptive statistical analysis</p> <p>*Process tracing</p>

<p>project activities and results likely to be institutionalised and implemented by each country after the completion of this project?</p> <p>*What is the likelihood of the continuation and sustainability of national level dialogues engaging various stakeholders and strengthening national and regional partnership architectures, made up of UN system, NHRIs, CSOs, and private sector actors working on BHR?</p> <p>*How were capacities of a various set of BHR stakeholders strengthened at the national level?</p> <p>*Describe key factors that will require attention to improve the prospects of sustainability of Project outcomes and the potential for replication of the approach?</p> <p>*To what extent do stakeholders support the project's long-term</p>	<p>ownership of the project activities?</p> <p>* To what extent has the project created a shift in attitudinal and cultural behaviour towards BHR in the target countries?</p> <p>*Has the project managed to procure Gov. co-financing for any of the deliverables?</p> <p>*Is it anticipated that the project will secure financing for 100% of the project activities? If not, why not and what was the shortfall?</p> <p>*Does the project provide for the handover of any activities?</p> <p>*What are the perceived capacities of the relevant institutions for taking the initiatives forward?</p> <p>* Were initiatives designed to have sustainable results given the identifiable risks?</p>	<p>*UNDP Strategic Documents</p> <p>*B+HR Asia Project Document</p> <p>*B+HR Asia Progress Reports</p> <p>*B+HR Asia Quality Assurance report, results orientated monitoring reports, field visit reports</p> <p>*Implementin g partners progress reports</p>	<p>bilateral donors and the national institutions included in the project</p> <p>Independent external research and reports</p> <p>Focus groups</p> <p>Email, phone and Skype follow-up where necessary</p>	<p>*Triangulation</p> <p>*Discussion of data amongst the consultant and the B+HR Asia team</p> <p>*Verification of data with Stakeholders</p> <p>*Fact checking by UNDP comment and feedback to consultant</p>
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	<p>objectives?</p> <p>*To what extent will financial and economic resources as well as political will be available to sustain the benefits achieved by the project?</p>					
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ANNEX IV – Draft Informant Interview Guides

Interview questions for government counterparts

1. What is the policy and legislative framework with regards to BHR in your country and the region?
2. What steps are in place to develop a National Action Plan on BHR of if you already have an NAP on BHR, how would you assess the implementation of this Plan?
3. Are you familiar with UNDP's B+HR Asia project? Is the project relevant to strengthening BHR in your country and/or in the region? Among the activities conducted under the project, which of them are most relevant and why? Are there any less relevant activities?
4. Have you participated in any events organised by the project? If so, which ones and to what extent have they been relevant and applicable to you?
5. Have you used any knowledge products developed by the project? If so, which ones and to what extent have they been relevant and applicable to you?
6. Has the project strengthened national capacity for BHR? If yes, in what areas?
7. What are the main challenges with respect to BHR in your country? How would you assess the awareness of different stakeholders with regards to BHR? Are there different challenges for different groups in terms of BHR in your country– e.g., women, migrant workers, IPs PWDs etc.?
8. What remedies are available in your country for victims of BHR abuses? How would you assess the effectiveness of these remedies? What are the gaps and how can these be addressed?
9. To what extent do you cooperate with other stakeholders active in the field of BHR such as CSOs, NHRIs, media, and businesses?
10. What have been the greatest results and achievements of the project to date and what were the drivers behind these successes?
11. In your view what is the long-term impact made by the project activities?
12. Have you noticed any unintended consequences, whether negative or positive of the project? Give examples
13. In your view, do the project activities contribute to larger reform efforts in the country and region, in particular those linked with achievement of the SDGs?
14. Will the government continue with any of the project activities beyond the lifespan of the project? If so, which ones? And if not, why not?
15. What are your priorities in terms of BHR in the short (1-2 years) and mid-long term (3+years)? How can the project support you with these priorities?
16. In which areas do you think the project should focus on in the short-term (1-2 years) and longer term (3+ years and beyond)?

Interview Questions for National Human Rights Institutions

1. What is the mandate of your Institution?
2. What are the main challenges with respect to BHR in your country? Are there different challenges for different groups in terms of BHR in your country– e.g., women, migrant workers, PWDs etc.?
3. What remedies are available for these victims? How would you assess the effectiveness of these remedies? What are the gaps and how can these be addressed?

4. Are you familiar with UNDP's B+HR Asia project? Is the project relevant to strengthening BHR in your country? Among the activities conducted under the project, which of them are most relevant and why? Are there any less relevant activities?
5. Have you participated in any events organised by the project? If so, which ones and to what extent have they been relevant and applicable to you?
6. Have you used any knowledge products developed by the project? If so, which ones and to what extent have they been relevant and applicable to you?
7. To what extent do you cooperate with other stakeholders active in the field of BHR such as CSOs, governments, media, academia, and businesses?
8. Has the project strengthened local/national capacity for BHR? If yes, in what areas?
9. What have been the greatest results and achievements of the project to date and what were the drivers behind these successes?
10. In your view what is the long-term impact made by the project activities?
11. Have you noticed any unintended consequences, whether negative or positive of the project? Give examples
12. In your view, do the project activities contribute to larger reform efforts in the country in particular those linked with achievement of the SDGs?
13. Will your institution continue with any of the project activities beyond the lifespan of the project? If so, which ones? And if not, why not?
14. What are your priorities in terms of BHR in the short (1-2 years) and mid-long term (3+years)? How can the project support you with these priorities?
15. In which areas do you think the project should focus on in the short-term (1-2 years) and longer term (3+ years and beyond)?

Interview questions for Civil Society Organisations

1. What is the mandate of your organisation?
2. What are the main challenges with respect to BHR in your country? Are there different challenges for different groups in terms of BHR in your country– e.g., women, migrant workers, IPs, PWDs etc.?
3. What remedies are available for these victims? How would you assess the effectiveness of these remedies? What are the gaps and how can these be addressed?
4. Are you familiar with UNDP's B+HR Asia project? Is the project relevant to strengthening BHR in your country? Among the activities conducted under the project, which of them are most relevant and why? Are there any less relevant activities?
5. Have you participated in any events organised by the project? If so, which ones and to what extent have they been relevant and applicable to you?
6. Have you used any knowledge products developed by the project? If so, which ones and to what extent have they been relevant and applicable to you?
7. To what extent do you cooperate with other stakeholders active in the field of BHR such as NHRIs, governments, media, academia, and businesses?
8. Has the project strengthened local/national capacity for BHR? If yes, in what areas?
9. What have been the greatest results and achievements of the project to date and what were the drivers behind these successes?
10. In your view what is the long-term impact made by the project activities?
11. Have you noticed any unintended consequences, whether negative or positive of the project? Give examples

12. In your view, do the project activities contribute to larger reform efforts in the country and region, in particular those linked with achievement of the SDGs?
13. Will your institution continue with any of the project activities beyond the lifespan of the project? If so, which ones? And if not, why not?
14. What are your priorities in terms of BHR in the short (1-2 years) and mid-long term (3years)? How can the project support you with these priorities?
15. In which areas do you think the project should focus on in the short-term (1-2 years) and longer term (3 years and beyond)?

Interview questions for UNDP

1. To what extent is implementation matching your vision for the project? Why/why not?
2. Has the project been able to reach all target groups that it had intended to reach? How has the project mainstreamed gender into its activities?
3. How has the changing context impacted on the programme implementation?
4. How was the project able to adapt to the COVID-19 context?
5. Which aspects of the project, and which of the approaches used were most successful in bringing about change and why? Which approaches did not work and why?
6. Why is progress under output 4 significantly less than under the other outputs?
7. In your opinion what are the biggest challenges in implementing the project? What have been the key results to date?
8. How does the approach of the project complement the regional approach funded through the SIDA project? How do you ensure complementarity while avoiding overlap?
9. How satisfied are you with the partnerships created by the project? Is the project working with the right partners? Are there gaps? How do you reach rights holders? Do you benefit from the partnership architecture developed by the SIDA project?
10. What is the composition (gender, ethnicity, etc.) of project staff and does it reflect the diversity of project stakeholders?
11. What avenues did women and vulnerable groups have to provide feedback on the project, or otherwise influence how and what the project was delivering?
12. What are the project's mechanisms for MEL? Why does the project have both EU and UNDP M&E frameworks? Why are these not unified?
13. Is there evidence that the project advanced any key national human rights, gender or inclusion policies?
14. Have you observed any unintended impact (could be negative as well as positive) of the project?
15. What have been the greatest results and achievements of the project to date and what were the drivers behind these successes?
16. Overall, which were the most important or relevant changes you have noticed as a result of the project?
17. How has the project contributed to and been influenced by the evolving BHR discourse both regionally and globally?
18. To what extent do you think the project has been able to adapt and be flexible to changing needs and demands?
19. What would you do differently now, if you were to start the B+HR Asia project again?
20. What advice would you give to other UNDP Regional Hubs or COs who are interested in BHR programming?

21. What are the short and longer-term priorities of the project and how do these synergise with the Global BHR programme and the UNWG's Global Roadmap?
22. What are the key lessons learned to date?

Interview Questions for the EU

1. To what extent was EU involved in the inception phase of the project and the design of the full project?
2. Were your views/inputs taken into account?
3. How satisfied are you with the communication procedures and mechanisms with the project and with UNDP?
4. Do you receive narrative and financial reports in a timely manner?
5. How satisfied are you with the results achieved by the project to date?
6. What have been the biggest challenges in the project?
7. What have been the greatest results and achievements of the project to date and what were the drivers behind these successes? Are there any specific results related to gender?
8. What are your current development priorities and how does the project fit into these?
9. What are your long-term priorities for the Asia region?
11. Are you satisfied with the level of coordination with the EU B+HR Asia project? Are there any gaps or areas, which could be strengthened?
10. Why did you choose to support a UNDP project? What do you perceive UNDP's comparative advantages to be? Do you feel that you are getting value for money with UNDP?
11. Would you support a UNDP project again in the future? If not, why not?
12. Are you satisfied with the coordination, cooperation, visibility etc. between the EU and SIDA funded B+HR projects? Are there gaps? Overlaps or duplication? What could be done differently? Moving into the second phase would you like to see a closer programmatic approach between the two projects or a more distinct implementation framework?

Interview questions for Country Office National Specialists

1. How relevant is BHR in your country? Is the project tailored to meet BHR needs and demands in your country? How does it match the priorities in your CPD and UNSDCF?
2. What have been the greatest results and achievements of the project to date and what were the drivers behind these successes? How is gender mainstreamed into the project activities?
3. What have been the biggest challenges of the project in your country to date?
4. Which strategies have been the most and least effective in terms of achieving results? What were the enabling and constraining factors?
5. Is the project working with the right partners in your country? Are there any gaps?
6. How are you reaching rights holders and ensuring that no one is left behind?
7. What are the sustainability prospects of the project activities in your country?
8. How satisfied are with the communication and coordination tools and mechanisms in place between your CO, the BHR team at the Bangkok Regional Hub and with other COs involved in the project? What is working well? What could be improved? Are you involved in planning processes?
9. How do you coordinate with the SIDA Regional B+HR project and ensure complementarity while avoiding duplication? Are the right mechanisms in place to facilitate this?

10. What are the priorities of the country going forward on BHR and how do these correspond with the project?
11. In which areas do you think the project should focus in the short and long term?
12. What are the key lessons learned to date?

Interview questions for Business Representatives

1. Are you familiar with the UNGPs and the BHR agenda in your country?
2. How important do you think the linkages between business and human rights are and how relevant is this in your day-to-day work?
3. What are the biggest challenges that you see or face in terms of BHR?
4. Are you aware of complaints mechanisms or remedies for victims of BHR abuses?
5. Are you familiar with UNDP's B+HR Asia project? Is the project relevant to strengthening BHR in your country? Among the activities conducted under the project, which of them are most relevant and why? Are there any less relevant activities?
6. Have you participated in any events organised by the project? If so, which ones and to what extent have they been relevant and applicable to you?
7. Have you used any knowledge products developed by the project? If so, which ones and to what extent have they been relevant and applicable to you?
8. To what extent do you cooperate with other stakeholders active in the field of BHR such as CSOs, NHRIs, governments, media, academia, and other businesses?
9. What have been the greatest results and achievements of the project to date and what were the drivers behind these successes?
10. What are your priorities in terms of BHR in the short and longer term? How can the project support you with these priorities?
11. In which areas do you think the project should focus in the short and longer term?

Annex V 2020 Ethical Guidelines for Evaluation Pledge



ETHICAL GUIDELINES FOR EVALUATION

PLEDGE OF ETHICAL CONDUCT IN EVALUATION



By signing this pledge, I hereby commit to discussing and applying the UNEG Ethical Guidelines for Evaluation and to adopting the associated ethical behaviours.



INTEGRITY

I will actively adhere to the moral values and professional standards of evaluation practice as outlined in the UNEG Ethical Guidelines for Evaluation and following the values of the United Nations. Specifically, I will be:

- **Honest and truthful** in my communication and actions.
- **Professional**, engaging in credible and trustworthy behaviour, alongside competence, commitment and ongoing reflective practice.
- **Independent, impartial and incorruptible**.



ACCOUNTABILITY

I will be answerable for all decisions made and actions taken and responsible for honouring commitments, without qualification or exception; I will report potential or actual harms observed. Specifically, I will be:

- **Transparent regarding evaluation** purpose and actions taken, establishing trust and increasing accountability for performance to the public, particularly those populations affected by the evaluation.
- **Responsive** as questions or events arise, adapting plans as required and referring to appropriate channels where corruption, fraud, sexual exploitation or abuse or other misconduct or waste of resources is identified.
- **Responsible** for meeting the evaluation purpose and for actions taken and for ensuring redress and recognition as needed.



RESPECT

I will engage with all stakeholders of an evaluation in a way that honours their dignity, well-being, personal agency and characteristics. Specifically, I will ensure:

- **Access** to the evaluation process and products by all relevant stakeholders – whether powerless or powerful – with due attention to factors that could impede access such as sex, gender, race, language, country of origin, LGBTQ status, age, background, religion, ethnicity and ability.
- **Meaningful participation and equitable treatment** of all relevant stakeholders in the evaluation processes, from design to dissemination. This includes engaging various stakeholders, particularly affected people, so they can actively inform the evaluation approach and products rather than being solely a subject of data collection.
- **Fair representation** of different voices and perspectives in evaluation products (reports, webinars, etc.).



BENEFICENCE

I will strive to do good for people and planet while minimizing harm arising from evaluation as an intervention. Specifically, I will ensure:

- **Explicit and ongoing consideration** of risks and benefits from evaluation processes.
- **Maximum benefits** at systemic (including environmental), organizational and programmatic levels.
- **No harm**. I will not proceed where harm cannot be mitigated.
- **Evaluation makes an overall positive contribution** to human and natural systems and the mission of the United Nations.

I commit to playing my part in ensuring that evaluations are conducted according to the Charter of the United Nations and the ethical requirements laid down above and contained within the UNEG Ethical Guidelines for Evaluation. When this is not possible, I will report the situation to my supervisor, designated focal points or channels and will actively seek an appropriate response.

Joanna L Brooks

6th September 2021 (Signature and Date)