



Empowered lives.
Resilient nations.



وزارة البيئة والمياه والزراعة
Ministry of Environment Water & Agriculture
Kingdom of Saudi Arabia المملكة العربية السعودية

Final Project Evaluation - Sustainable Development and Integrated Water Management - Kingdom of Saudi Arabia Atlas ID SAU10/107888

Commissioned by
UNDP Country Office and Ministry of Environment, Water and Agriculture,
Kingdom of Saudi Arabia
(2018 – 2023)

Prepared by:

Dr. Tareq AL-ZABET
International Evaluator Consultant
3181 Innisdale Rd., Mississauga, ON, Canada
Tel: +1 647 272 8224
Tareqzabet@yahoo.com

September – October 2022

| Project/outcome Information | |
|---|---|
| Project/outcome title | Sustainable Development and Integrated Water Management |
| Atlas ID | SAU10/107888 |
| Corporate outcome and output | National Capacities Developed for Better Management of Non-oil Natural Resources |
| Country | Saudi Arabia |
| Region | RBAS |
| Date project document signed | 20/02/2018 |
| Project dates | Start Date: 01/03/2018 Planned end date: 28/02/2022 Extended Up to: 28/02/2023 |
| Project budget | US\$ \$24,859,429 |
| Funding source | Government Cost-Sharing |
| Implementing party | Ministry of Environment, Water and Agriculture |
| Evaluation type (project/ outcome/thematic/country programme, etc.) | Final Evaluation |
| Period under evaluation | Start: March 2018 End: August, 2022 |
| Evaluator | Dr. Tareq Al-Zabet |
| Evaluator email address | TAREQZABET@YAHOO.COM |
| Evaluation dates | Start - September 2022 Completion - October 2022 |

TABLE OF CONTENT

| | |
|--|----|
| PROJECT AND EVALUATION INFORMATION | 2 |
| LIST OF ACRONYMS & ABBREVIATIONS | 5 |
| EXECUTIVE SUMMARY | 6 |
| 1. INTRODUCTION AND OVERVIEW | 10 |
| 2. DESCRIPTION OF THE INTERVENTION BEING EVALUATED | 11 |
| 2.1 Project Objectives | 12 |
| 2.2 Key Project Outcomes | 12 |
| 2.3 Project Beneficiaries | 13 |
| 2.4 Implementation Constrains | 13 |
| 2.5 Cross-Cutting Themes | 13 |
| 3. EVALUATION OBJECTIVES AND PURPOSE | 14 |
| 4. EVALUATION SCOPE AND APPROACH | 15 |
| 4.1 The Final Evaluation Scope | 15 |
| 4.2 Evaluation Approach | 15 |
| 4.3 Evaluation Ranking Framework | 17 |
| 4.4 Evaluation Questions | 20 |
| 4.5 Cross-Cutting Issues | 28 |
| 4.6 Data Analysis | 29 |
| 4.7 Evaluation Limitations | 30 |
| 5. EVALUATION FINDINGS | 31 |
| 5.1 Relevance | 31 |
| 5.2 Coherence | 36 |
| 5.3 Efficiency | 39 |
| 5.4 Effectiveness | 45 |
| 5.5 Sustainability | 54 |
| 6. CONCLUSIONS | 56 |
| 7. LESSONS LEARNED | 59 |
| 8. RECOMMENDATIONS | 60 |

ANNEXES

| | |
|---|-----------|
| ANNEX I: TERMS OF REFERENCE | 63 |
| ANNEX II: LIST OF DOCUMENTS REVIEWED | 77 |
| ANNEX III: PLEDGE OF ETHICAL CONDUCT | 79 |
| | |
| TABLE 1: UNDP Consolidated Rating System | 19 |
| TABLE 2 - Detailed Criteria, Sub-Criteria, Indicators | 20 |
| TABLE 3: Risk Mitigation Schedule | 43 |
| TABLE4: Project Risk Log | 43 |
| TABLE 5: Monitoring and Evaluation Monitoring Plan | 46 |
| TABLE 6: Water Abstraction and Licensing Progress Report | 50 |
| TABLE 7: Well Metering Progress Report | 51 |
| TABLE 8: Water and wastewater Quality Monitoring Progress | 51 |
| TABLE 9: Summary of Criteria and Sub-Criteria Scoring | 58 |
| | |
| FIGURE 1: Evaluation Planning and Preparedness Process | 16 |
| FIGURE 2: Data Analysis Steps | 29 |
| FIGURE 3: Data Triangulation and Synthesis Process | 29 |
| FIGURE 4: Alignment with International, National, Water Sector Priorities | 32 |
| FIGURE 5: Alignment with NWS 2030 Goals and Project Programs | 33 |
| FIGURE 6: Alignment Between SDG Goals and Project Objectives | 34 |
| FIGURE 7: NWS 2030 Governance Model | 37 |
| FIGURE 8: Project Original Organization Structure | 41 |
| FIGURE 9: Proposed Organizational structure – May 2020 | 41 |
| FIGURE 10: Latest Organizational Structure - September 2022 | 42 |
| FIGURE 11: KEY PROJECT OUTCOMES | 45 |
| FIGURE 12: UNDP Expert Contribution - MEWA Water Deputyship | 47 |

LIST OF ACRONYMS & ABBREVIATIONS

| | |
|-------|---|
| CTA | Chief Technical Advisor |
| FPE | Final Project Evaluation |
| GEWE | Gender equality and women's empowerment |
| KSA | Kingdom of Saudi Arabia |
| IEO | Independent Evaluation Office |
| IWRM | Integrated Water Resources Management |
| IWIS | Integrated Water Information System |
| M&E | Monitoring and Evaluation |
| MEWA | Ministry of Environment, Water, and Agriculture |
| NCWRS | National Center for Water Research and Studies |
| NWS | National Water Strategy |
| SMART | Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic, and Time-bound |
| KPI | Key Performance Indicators |
| SDG | Sustainable Development Goals |
| OECD | The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development |
| PDD | Project Document Description |
| PPP | Private Public Partnership |
| UNDP | United Nations Development Program |
| WMCC | Water Management and Control Center |
| ECRA | Water and Electricity Regulatory Authority |

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

MEWA partnered with UNDP Country Office to strengthen and optimize the technical and organizational capacities of the MEWA with respect to IWRM strategies, policies and actions. MEWA is the implementing partner with UNDP providing implementation services providing technical advisory support through recruitment of international and national experts and other activities.

This Project is a four-years project intervention (2018 – 2022) with a total value of USD \$24,859,429. The original project concluded on 28 February 2022 but has been extended for a year at no-cost to end of February 2023. The key outcomes and outputs anticipated from this Project are:

- Optimize MEWA's technical and organizational capacities to support water resources and supply management.
- Implement the Integrated Water Information System automated (Realtime) decision-making support at both ends of the water sector supply and demand chain (provider and customer).
- Design of an overall water resources management system with implementation and compliance including groundwater and hydrological (surface water) modelling for water resources assessments.
- Design of an overall Urban Water Supply Management System, including implementation.
- Establish an all-encompassing monitoring system for the surface water and groundwater processes.
- Assess the effects of climate change on society and nature not only in the water business.
- Assessments of secondary water resources including secondary and remote aquifers, surface run-off and rainwater harvesting.
- Evaluate environmental risks associated with the water cycle including groundwater pollution, seawater intrusion, radioactive contamination and elaborate counter measures.
- Hydrothermal Energy capacity building
- Establish an Environmental Awareness Center (Water Extensional Education Center) for public awareness to raise public awareness about challenges related to the water sector in Saudi Arabia.

Dr. Tareq Al-Zabet is retained as an independent evaluator by UNDP to conduct this final evaluation. The evaluation was conducted from September 2022 to October 2022 and builds on previous interim evaluation carried in 2019. The purpose of this final evaluation is to:

- Validate the results reported by the project, identifying any successes, challenges and opportunities and issues to which these contributed to the achievement of project objectives
- Provide specific recommendations to improve any future intervention success help MEWA meet its new mandate.
- Draw lessons on overall project implementation and delivery, potential corrective/adaptive measures and recommendations that need to be applied to the design/implementation to increase sustainability of similar future projects and components

The FPE assessed the extent to which the Project contribution through the 2018–2022 has been relevant, coherent, effective, efficient and sustainable and cross-cutting issues of gender mainstreaming, and marginalized communities' considerations. The primary audiences of the evaluation are the UNDP – KSA country office and MEWA leadership and senior staff.

The evaluation used qualitative and quantitative methods comprising a desk review, key staff interviews and discussions and observations of project sites and activities. Field visits to Riyadh was conducted and on-site face-to-face interviews with a total of 19 interviewers were conducted with senior MEWA and UNDP staff at executive and senior leadership levels. Data and reports were analysed, triangulated and validated by cross-verification of the different sources.

Different gender evaluation approaches were used in this FPE for their appropriateness and suitability. Most of these techniques required certain level of information and details whether in the PDD or other relevant available reports which did not exist or available. The PDD and all relevant documents did not consider this issue, thus, it was not feasible or appropriate to use any of these techniques. Instead, a through a series of assessment questions that would help in making judgments about the intervention.

Data analysis followed methodical steps including qualitative review of information from various sources, triangulation and synthesis using analytical judgement, interpretation and correlation of implemented activities against the PDD, assessment of conformity with project goals and outcomes, and causational analysis impacting deviation or alignment with planned activities.

Data triangulation process triangulated evidence collected from documents and reports produced by UNDP/MEWA, finding from interviews with key stakeholders and field observations, and evidence from third-party and secondary reports.

The UNDP Consolidated Rating System, March 2022 – Rate system is used for quantifying the qualitative analysis rendered in this evaluation. For each of the criteria, a set of sub-criteria, corresponding indicators, and sources of data are defined. The metric used to quantify the programme performance variables is a four-point scale.

The four-point rating scale is used as follows:

- Fully Achieved ≥ 3.5 : Project outputs and outcomes have been fully achieved (or are likely to be achieved), or even exceed expectations.
- $2.5 \leq$ Mostly Achieved < 3.5 : Overall assessment is substantially positive, and problems are small relative to the positive findings. There are some limitations in the contribution that have prevented the achievement of stated outputs and outcomes, but no major shortfalls
- $1.5 \leq$ Partially Achieved < 2.5 : Significant shortfalls are identified. The intended outputs and outcomes have only been partially achieved. Overall, the assessment is moderate, but less positive.
- Not Achieved < 1.5 : Project faced severe constraints and the negative assessment outweighs any positive achievements. There has been limited or no achievement of planned outputs/ outcomes.

Conclusion and Findings

The FPE scoring showed that the Project achievements varied across the various outputs and outcomes at various levels of accomplishment and impacts.

The Project overall Relevancy criteria rated at “Mostly Achieved” relevant to the project goals and objectives. The Project was well aligned with the national development priorities, the priorities of the UNDP Country Program, the UN SDGs, Vision 2030 and MEWA needs and priorities. However, the Project did not address in the PDD the responsive to gender-specific concerns or aspects. Nonetheless, the Project overall outcomes addressed rural communities who benefited greatly from improvements to water systems and risk mitigations in relations to natural flood events through the climate change lens.

The Project overall Coherency criteria rated at “Mostly achieved” with internal and external activities. The project successfully built synergy with MEWA and Country goals and objectives. As well-established strategic relationships with national partners to share information and expertise. However, there were multiple opportunities for establishing effective partnerships beyond the MEWA boundaries.

The potential of private investment in the Project activities was marginally harnessed and no clear evidence of interlinkages with other interventions or intra-project learning exchanges carried out by other UN agencies, NGO or private sector.

The Project overall Efficiency criteria rated at “Partially Achieved”. The project’s tracking and reporting followed an activity-based reporting style. It was difficult to quantitatively measure the level of accomplishments as the Project did not incorporate SMART KPIs that would obtain robust evidence. The governance model is not clear on the roles and responsibilities and doesn’t define clear decision-making process.

The Project overall Efficiency criteria rated at at “Mostly Achieved” of the SDGs, the UNDP Strategic Plan, and national development priorities. The project made significant contribution to enhance water management capacity at MEWA. However, the inclusiveness and gender mainstreaming were not considered in PDD neither was incorporated in the Project activities or outcomes.

Nonetheless, the public awareness and educational campaign were led by a small female expert team who had great success in reaching out to household’s domestic water users who are mainly women and to small farmers in rural communities.

The Project overall Sustainability criteria rated at “Partially Achieved” considering the funding dependencies and ambiguities of the project resources gaps. The evaluation indicated that the funding will be ensured, particularly due to the strong national ownership of and most achievements are mostly institutionalized. However, the Project has no exit strategy to interventions continuity post Project end.

The trade-off between the maturity and extent of impact, time, and cost of the interventions remains a challenge to the Project. Furthermore, risk identification, mitigation and management were not clearly address or updated.

The “Cross-Cutting” themes of inclusiveness and gender mainstreaming were not stipulated in the PDD neither was considered in any reports, presentations or progress reports. This is a key shortcoming in the Project concept from the beginning. Nonetheless, the Project interventions overall impacts had a direct and indirect positive impact on women and people in remote and rural communities.

The Project over all scoring for the evaluation criteria was as rated as follows: Relevance - Mostly Achieved at 3.0 points, Coherence - Mostly Achieved at 3.25 points, Efficiency: Partially Achieved at 2.0 points, Effectiveness - Mostly Achieved at 2.5, and Sustainability - Partially Achieved at 1.75 points.

Lessons Learned

The current Project is a continuum of previous projects and initiatives between UNDP and MEWA responding to evolving country strategic needs and priorities. In essence, the UNDP/MEWA partnership is considered and will continue to be vital and beneficial.

The country national scene is transforming rapidly, with new leadership who is keen towards transforming the country systems and business operation model to up-to-day modern standards. The Saudi Arabia government is now a head of many existing programs that were developed based on previous operational culture. MEWA is starting to take the lead and initiative to design its own priorities, set goals and objectives and decide the necessary interventions that is required to meet these objectives.

The design of any future projects should be based on a solid context analysis. A deeper analysis which feeds into the design of the desired intervention and its overall Theory of Change. Consultations is important to capture all views. An iterative process is important and desirable, especially after a change in leadership, country and programs priorities.

Cross-cutting issues, including gender mainstreaming are paramount and needs to be considered at the start and should be based on a solid analysis to guide the design and implementation of the intervention.

UNDP/MEWA Senior management involvement is key for following up on the implementation of the project objectives and providing a healthy management oversight. People engaged in the project are not limited to the senior management. The selection of the members of the PMU as well as the counterpart are key for ensuring ownership and sustainability.

Working in silos (vertically or horizontally) is ineffective. To increase the effectiveness, more clear and timely communication needs to take place at all levels, including at the staff level to ensure conformity, synergy and to manage expectations. A feedback mechanism would allow staff to provide feedback both positive and negative allowing the project to take corrective measures.

The M&E framework is essential to monitor financial inputs, outputs/activities, but more importantly outcome-level results. The M&E framework should measure not only quantitative data but also use qualitative methodologies. Furthermore, the M&E should inform the communications on the results and achievements to be communicated at different levels by using appropriate means of communications for each audience.

key recommendation suggested for future intervention should consider the following aspects.

Recommendation #1: Pivot towards targeted specific ministry's need or interventions and not a wholesale undertaking, with clear SMART objectives, sound governance structure and oversight. Review the project outputs needs of experts and suggest resources allocations to each output including advice on the contracting modality full time expert vs short time assignment.

Recommendation #2: Carry jurisdictional study of best practices in neighbouring countries with similar demographic, natural and cultural settings i.e., UAE, Jordan, Morocco, Tunisia, Kuwait, and Oman who have a proof of concept specially in the areas of IRWM capacity building, Decision Support Systems (DSS), Supply-Demand strategic planning and management, artificial recharge, treated wastewater reuse, crops management, desalination optimization, public awareness campaigns and outreach, water user advocacy groups. A third-party independent consultant is recommended to carry this task.

Recommendation #3: Build a targeted training and mentoring program designed based on short and long-term needs in partnership with private sector including multi modes of delivery. With the flexibility and agility to adapt to existing and emerging challenges and policies, restrictions and opportunities. This would include defining key positions needed at various levels (leadership, technical, operational, support) and establish a concise talent management list with clearly defined training programs, timelines, destination, type, level and quality of training.

Recommendation #4: Establish a decision-priority matrix as prerequisite ahead of any future interventions to objectively define priorities and interventions should be adopted based on a pre-set and well-defined selection criterion including return on invest (ROI), relevance, effectiveness and sustainable post project end.

Recommendation #5: The project scope and results framework should be reviewed and refined through a highly participatory process involving key stakeholders i.e., ministry staff, upstream and down stream beneficiaries and technical experts from various departments staff that are supposed to be part of producing deliverables through structured and facilitated engagement and brainstorming/blue sky sessions, and focal groups.

Recommendation #6: Seek strategic partnerships with other international and national partners. This would help in ensuring more than one source of funding, diversity of views and exposure, and optimization of activities and interventions.

Recommendation #7: Clear commitment to incorporate inclusiveness consideration of gender mainstreaming, marginalized and disability groups in the structure of any future projects with clear KPIs,

milestones, tracking, reporting that captures the context of change and the degree of its contribution to that change.

Recommendation #8: Developing a new governance model, management arrangements that address the gaps identified in this Project, mainly as related Board governance, coordination and decision-making mechanisms. Supporting the development of liaison and coordination mechanisms and processes through a functional and established Project Management UNIT (PMU) with clear and demarcated lines of reporting and decision-making capabilities between established structures.

Recommendation #9: Establish a M&E system based on a shared understanding of goals and intended results, quantitative and qualitative reporting tools, monitoring and measuring achievements and progress of the project.

Recommendation #10: Develop a comprehensive risk log that identifies emerging risks and mitigation strategies.

Recommendation #11: Define exit strategy including extension scenarios and how the MEWA would be able to run its business independently or with less dependence beyond the project. Institutionalization of the results is a prerequisite for its sustainability.

1. INTRODUCTION AND OVERVIEW

This is a Final Project Evaluation (FPE) of the project titled “Sustainable Development and Integrated Water Management in the Framework of the Vision 2030”¹ (Project) initiated by UNDP_KSA country office and MEWA.

This is a four-years project intervention (2018 – 2022) with a total value of USD \$24,859,429. The original project concluded on 28 February 2022 but has been extended for a year at no-cost to end of February 2023. During the previous four years, one evaluation was carried in 2019.

Dr. Tareq Al-Zabet is retained an independent evaluator by UNDP to conduct this evaluation. The evaluation was conducted from September 2022 to October 2022. The evaluation was done before the project end to inform the preparation of a new project with MEWA under the strategic partnership.

The purpose of this final evaluation is to validate the results reported by the project, evaluate the current situation while identifying any successes, challenges and opportunities and issues to draw lessons on overall project implementation and delivery, potential corrective/adaptive measures and recommendations that need to be applied to the design/implementation to increase sustainability of similar future projects and components.

To collect the stakeholder’s voices, field visit was conducted in Riyadh where additional information was collected through interviews and consultation with key respondents through one on one and in a group face to face meetings.

The evaluation used qualitative and quantitative methods comprising a desk review, key staff interviews and discussions and observations of project sites and activities. Field visits to Riyadh was conducted and on-site face-to-face interviews were conducted with senior MEWA and UNDP staff at executive and senior leadership levels. Data and reports were analysed, triangulated and validated by cross-verification of the different sources.

Different gender evaluation approaches were used in this FPE for their appropriateness and suitability. Most of these techniques required certain level of information and details whether in the PDD or other relevant available reports which did not exist or available. A series of assessment questions that would help in making judgments about the intervention

Data analysis followed methodical steps including qualitative review of information from various sources, triangulation and synthesis using analytical judgement, interpretation and correlation of implemented activities against the PDD, assessment of conformity with project goals and outcomes, and causational analysis impacting deviation or alignment with planned activities. Data triangulation process triangulated evidence collected from documents and reports produced by UNDP/MEWA, finding from interviews with key stakeholders and field observations, and evidence from third-party and secondary reports.

The UNDP Consolidated Rating System, March 2022 – Rate system is used for quantifying the qualitative analysis rendered in this evaluation. For each of the criteria, a set of sub-criteria, corresponding indicators, and sources of data are defined. The report includes eight sections. Section One presents an introduction and overview of the project and discusses the need of this evaluation. Section two describes intervention being evaluated. Section three describes the objectives, purpose scope of the evaluation. Section four spells the evaluation methodology, approach and discusses how

mixed methods and tools were used to collect and analyze the data and information . Section five presents the final evaluation findings.

These findings and conclusions are discussed based on relevance, coherence, effectiveness, efficiency, impacts, sustainability, and human rights. Section six, list the conclusions summaries. Section seven lists specific recommendations and section eight describes the key evaluation learnings.

In the annexes, the evaluation TOR, list of documents reviewed, and Code of Conduct signed by evaluator have been included.

2. DESCRIPTION OF THE INTERVENTION BEING EVALUATED

Saudi Arabia with its almost 2.2 million km² is dominated by an arid climate. Several desalination plants have been built and several are under construction. Water supply still dominantly is provided by groundwater mainly for agricultural purposes. Given that the present population of around 32 million is supposed to increase to almost 40 million over the next two decades, and given that the per capita water consumption is far above the OECD average, one of the most prominent challenges of Saudi government policies is the sustainable water supply of all urban, agricultural, and industrial sectors of Saudi Arabia over the next decades while also dealing with other challenges like aging water and wastewater infrastructure, aquifer depletions, climate change, increasing torrential flood risks and other environmental risks.

KSA adopted in April 2016 the Saudi Vision 2030*, a strategic framework to reduce Saudi Arabia's dependence on oil, diversify its economy, and develop public service sectors such as health, education, infrastructure, recreation, water sector and tourism. Key goals include reinforcing economic and investment activities, increasing non-oil international trade.

Ensuring the availability of water is key to economic and social growth, June 2016, the Council of Ministers approved the National Transformation Program** which set out the goals and targets to be achieved by various economic sector in the Kingdom and thus water is part of it.

The NTP aims at achieving government operational excellence and establish the necessary infrastructure to improve economic enablers and raise the standard of living through its eight strategic themes. Including the development of relevant infrastructure and the environment that enables the public, private and non-profit sectors to achieve the Kingdom's Vision 2030.

Considering the Kingdom's Vision 2030 and the NTP, the MEWA as the leading agency responsible to address these strategic goals, has developed the National Water Strategy 2030*** in 2017 based on the principles of integrated water resources strategies and interventions to simultaneously target the supply side, curtail water demands in various productive sectors, and mitigate the environmental risks.

More specifically, ensure sustainable use of water resources, improve quality of services provided in Saudi cities, improve quality of services provided to citizens, and reduce all types of pollution e.g., air, noise, water and soil.

Furthermore, to achieve the UN SDG goals**** especially as pertains to this project in terms of water in Goal 6: Clean Water and Sanitation, Goal 11: Sustainable Cities and Communities, Goal 12: Responsible Consumption and Production and, Goal 13: Climate Action.

* KSA Vision 2030 - <https://www.vision2030.gov.sa/>

** National Transformation Plan <https://www.mep.gov.sa/en/Pages/NationalTransformationProgram.aspx>

*** National Water Strategy - <https://swforum.sa/sitecontent/uploads/editor/SWF2020/Presentations/w1.03-Arif%20Alkalali.pdf>

**** UN SDG goals - <https://sdgs.un.org/goals>

In this regard, MEWA partnered with UNDP Country Office to strengthen and optimize the technical and organizational capacities of the MEWA with respect to IWRM strategies, policies and actions. MEWA is the implementing partner with UNDP providing implementation services providing technical advisory support through recruitment of international and national experts and other activities.

In this partnership, MEWA is the implementing partner with UNDP providing implementation services for providing technical advisory support through recruitment of international and national experts and other activities as noted in the Multi-Year Work Plan to all activities through the UNDP Country Office in Riyadh.

This Project is a four-years project intervention (2018 – 2022) with a total value of USD \$24,859,429. The original project concluded on 28 February 2022 but has been extended for a year at no-cost to end of February 2023.

2.1 Project Objectives

- Optimize MEWA's technical and organizational capacities to support water resources and supply management.
- Implement the Integrated Water Information System automated (Realtime) decision-making support at both ends of the water sector supply and demand chain (provider and customer).
- Design of an overall water resources management system with implementation and compliance including groundwater and hydrological (surface water) modelling for water resources assessments.
- Design of an overall Urban Water Supply Management System, including implementation.
- Establish an all-encompassing monitoring system for the surface water and groundwater processes.
- Assess the effects of climate change on society and nature not only in the water business.
- Assessments of secondary water resources including secondary and remote aquifers, surface run-off and rainwater harvesting.
- Evaluate environmental risks associated with the water cycle including groundwater pollution, seawater intrusion, radioactive contamination and elaborate counter measures.
- Hydrothermal Energy capacity building
- Establish an Environmental Awareness Center (Water Extensional Education Center) for public awareness to raise public awareness about the challenges related to the water sector in Saudi Arabia.

2.2 Key Project Outcomes

- MEWA capacity from a human and system perspectives is enhanced and optimized.
- Integrated water resources management system implemented.
- Overall secondary water resources supply-mix increased.
- Integrated water supply management system fully operational.
- Climate change mitigation and adaptation plans implemented.
- Public relation center established.
- The National Water Research and Studies Center established.
- The Water Management and Control Center established.

2.3 Project Beneficiaries

Internally, this Project is targeted mainly toward strengthening and optimizing of MEWA's technical and organizational capacity with respect to water resources and water supply management of the Kingdom is the core objective of this project. The project activities are distributed among the key directorates under the deputy ministry of water affairs. These include:

- General Directorate of Water Information and Risks.
- General Directorate of Water Regulation.
- NCWRS.
- Directorate of Water Planning & Development.
- Project Management Office.
- Water Resources Awareness group.
- Directorate of Water Resources.

Externally, the PDD defined several stakeholders that were identified and crucial to the project success. These include:

- The National Water Company (NWC) - responsible for water distribution in the main urban centers.
- Saline Water Conversion Company (SWCC) responsible to produce desalinated water for the national water demand.
- The Agricultural Development Fund (ADF) major player in the agricultural sector with an influence on the largest group of water consumers.
- World Bank providing management expertise and expertise in the PPP projects.
- Major universities and research institutions.
- SABIC and Ma'aden representing the heavy water user industries.
- ARAMCO's water division sharing data from its own operational water wells.
- The Armed Forces sharing data from its own run multiple installations for water supply and treatment facilities.

2.4 Implementation Constrains

The PDD defined three major implementation constrains that will affect the Project implementation. First, the absence of ARAMCO's tremendous groundwater database especially in Rub' Al Khali and the Eastern Province. Second, the Armed Forces water demand, abstraction, and number of wells data for their water use in their facilities, including areas for housing of their personnel and their families (e.g., King Khalid Military City). Third, the discrepancy between operational and control operating systems between the MEWA's headquarter in Riyadh and the regional offices of MEWA, creating systems adaptability, data migration, quality assurance and control issues.

2.5 Cross-Cutting Themes

The PDD did not address or provide any description or data analysis in relation to gender equality, human rights, vulnerable/ marginalized groups affected by the Project. Neither was described as an outcome or in the project progress reports, activities and discussions.

3. EVALUATION OBJECTIVES AND PURPOSE

The objectives of this FPE are to capture and demonstrate evidence of its contribution to development results at the international and country level through the implemented services, programmes, projects and initiatives.

This evaluation was carried out following the guidance, rules, and procedures established by UNDP with the purpose to:

- Assess the alignment of the project with the national development priorities, the UNDP country program and strategic plan, and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).
- Analyze the project design, implementation strategy, approaches, challenges, and the extent to which these contributed to the achievement of project objectives.
- Provide a summative evaluation of the performance and results in relation to the stated objectives by the project towards the attainment of the results as specified in the project results resource framework / Annual work plan.
- Identify challenges to project implementation, good practices, and lessons to promote learning, feedback and knowledge sharing on results among the UNDP and its partners.
- Provide specific recommendations to improve the project's success and realign it if necessary and to re-positioning the project to help MEWA meet its new mandate.
- Improve the design and implementation of a new project supporting MEWA under the strategic partnership.

A theory of change underpinning the Project is stipulated around the preconditions and change pathways of:

- If MEWA has an updated and modernized structure, roles and improved resourcing of directorates and services; and
- Can build sufficient technical and organizational capacity to better plan strategically, manage project delivery more efficiently and effectively; then
- This would lead to better integrated water resources strategies and interventions and practices on to simultaneously target the supply side, curtail water demands in various productive sectors, and mitigate the environmental risks; and
- Most importantly lead to integrated social and environmental sustainability leaving no one behind avoiding, minimizing, mitigating and managing potential harm to people and the environment is wherever possible; and eventually
- Improve economic enablers and raise the standard of living through in alignment with the Kingdom's Vision 2030 and the NTP.

4. FINAL EVALUATION SCOPE AND APPROACH

4.1 The Final Evaluation Scope

The FPE Review is an independent review aimed at assessing the impacts of the Project interventions according to the criteria listed in the UNDP Evaluation Guidelines Policy, June 2021. Namely Relevance, Effectiveness/Impact, Efficiency, Sustainability, and Coherence of the Project and cross-cutting issues represented in gender equality mainstreaming and rural communities – now one left behind considerations.

The project scope considered assessing all Project outcomes as described in the PDD for the period from 2018 - 2022. Geothermal Energy component was not evaluated as it has been removed from the Project scope by the Project leadership.

This evaluation examined whether the produced results were in the right direction to achieve the intended results and how the governance of the project was in line with the capacity building efforts to achieve intended goals and priorities.

4.2 Evaluation approach

The evaluation process is independent of UNDP, the MEWA, and project partners. The opinions and recommendations in this FPE are those of the Evaluator and do not necessarily reflect the position of UNDP, or any of the project stakeholders.

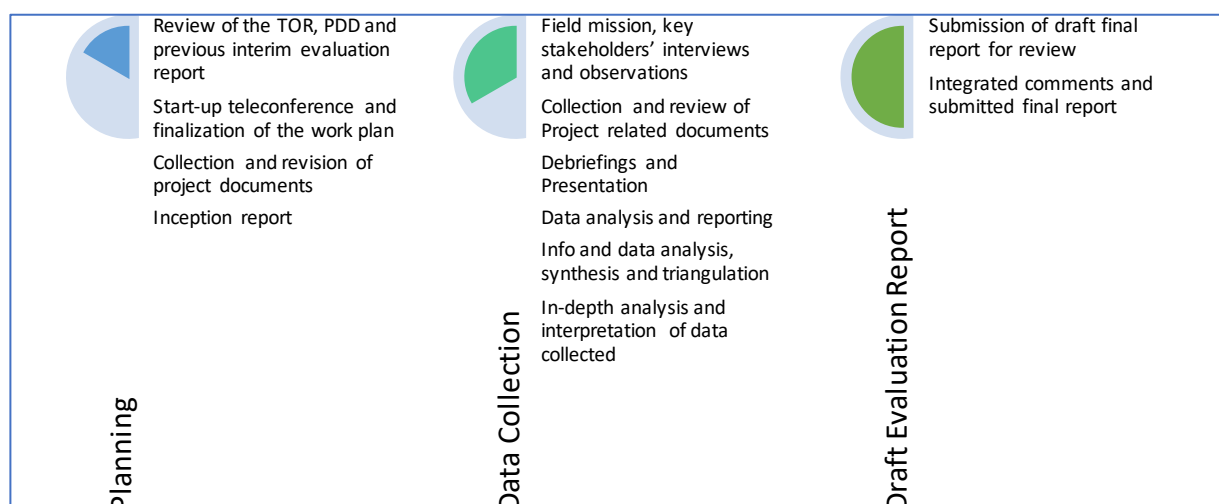
This FPE is implemented by an independent, international Consultant in line with UNDP's principles concerning independence, credibility, utility, impartiality, transparency, disclosure, ethical, participation, competencies and capacities. A signed Code of Conduct, thereby agreeing to abide by the UNEG Code of Conduct in the UN System is attached in Annex-III. The TOR for this FPE is based on the UNDP guidance for evaluations is attached on Annex-I.

The evaluation was conducted from September 2022 to October 2022. The field mission comprised five days in-country (September 11th – 15th) meeting and interviewing implementing partners, experts, beneficiaries and other key stakeholders. This evaluation was done before the project end planned for February 2023 to inform the preparation of a new project with MEWA under the strategic partnership. All components of the outcomes were assessed against the PDD.

The evaluation is comprised of a combination of quantitative and qualitative methods including a participatory and consultative approach through engagement with the UNDP and MEWA teams to adequately capture information. Evidence was gathered by reviewing documents, interviewing key, selected stakeholders and from other ad hoc observations.

The evaluation planning and preparedness process implemented by the evaluator included a detailed structural implementation process of the scope of evaluation activities as shown in Figure 1.

Figure 1: Evaluation planning and preparedness process.



Data and information were collected via various methods, including interviews with participants involved in the development project, desktop review and analysis of reports. Mainly three sources of primary data and information were collected and examined.

- A wide variety of Project/UNDP/MEWA documents
 - Project design and description, Terms of Reference and joint agreements
 - Annual Project reviews, annual workplans, consolidated quarterly and annual reports, results-oriented monitoring report, highlights of project board meetings, technical/financial monitoring reports, implementation progress and monitoring
 - Financial Project budget, budget master tracking sheets, financial revisions, audits, invoices, procurement agreements, tenders
 - Lesson learns reports
 - Technical reports
 - National strategic documents
 - Legal, directives and policy documents
 - Programme and project quality assurance reports
- Field mission and on-site validation of key tangible outcomes and interventions
 - Face-to-face interview with a wide range of stakeholders, using “semi-structured interviews” with a key set of questions in a conversational format. Overall, a total of 19 key participants of which two were females who were the only ones available to interview and 17 were males. Overall, all positively responded to the request for interviews meetings. All interviews were undertaken in full confidence and anonymity.

Key individuals interviewed during the field mission include the following:

UNDP

- Resident Representative – Dr. Mohammed Mudawi
- Chief Technical Officer - Dr. Mohammad Al-Mahmoud
- Assistant Resident Representative – Mayssam Tamim
- Senior Programme Associate - Asim Saleh

MEWA

- Deputy Minister - Dr. Abdulaziz AlShaibani
- General Directorate of Water Information and Risks - Dr. Eng. Abdulhakeem Al-Turki
- General Directorate of Water Resources – Eng. Ahmad Al-Ghamdi
- General Directorate of Water Regulation – Eng. Mohammed Al-Fahmy
- Director NCWRS – Dr. Jalal Basahi
- Directorate of Water Planning & Development – Dr. Saud Al-Marshad
- Manager of Project Management Office – Abd Al-Aziz Al-Fandi
- Water Resources Awareness group – Eng. Abdullah Al-Ghamdi
- General Advisor – Directorate of Water Resources – Eng. Arif Al-Kalali

- **Triangulation Analysis**

Triangulation techniques are used comparing information from different sources, such as documentation and interviews, interviews on the same subject with different stakeholders to corroborate or check the reliability of evidence.

In addition, direct observations of project results and activities at a selection were done. Qualitative methods were used to investigate the perspectives and interpretations of participants in a holistic fashion utilizing the experience and long involvement of the evaluator in the water resources management field.

The method was tailored to the nature and availability of the data. PDD and MEWA policy and priorities materials were reviewed to develop a sound understanding of the Project and address evaluation questions related to the project.

4.3 Evaluation Ranking Framework

The UNDP Consolidated Rating System – UNDP Manual March 2022 – Rate system is used as a practical and flexible framework for quantifying the qualitative analysis rendered by in this evaluations, Table 1.

The performance rating enabled evidence-based discussion on what the Project performance entails, how the different dimensions of performance are manifested, areas that performed well and those that

did not, learning from key dimensions of well-performing programmes, and dimensions that reduced programme performance and informed change processes.

The use of a quantitative rating approach to performance assessment, helped further improve the transparency in the way that evaluative judgment is rendered, and provide a basis for constructive dialogue over Project performance, thus contributing to organizational learning. For each of the criteria, a set of sub-criteria, corresponding indicators, and sources of data are defined.

The metric used to quantify performance variables is a four-point scale. A set of guiding questions is provided for each indicator, to promote uniformity across evaluations. While the indicators remain constant, the questions can be adapted to reflect programme specificities and context.

The four-point rating scale is used as follows:

- Fully Achieved ≥ 3.5 : A rating of this level means that Project outputs and outcomes have been fully achieved (or are likely to be achieved), or even exceed expectations. This score indicates high performance.
- $2.5 \leq$ Mostly Achieved < 3.5 : A rating of this level is used when the overall assessment is substantially positive, and problems are small relative to the positive findings. There are some limitations in the contribution that have prevented the achievement of stated outputs and outcomes, but no major shortfalls. Many of the planned programme outputs/ outcomes have been delivered. This score indicates moderate, but good, performance.
- $1.5 \leq$ Partially Achieved < 2.5 : A rating of this level is used when significant shortfalls are identified. The intended outcomes have only been partially achieved. Overall, the assessment is moderate, but less positive.
- Not Achieved < 1.5 : A rating of this level means that the contribution of the Project faced severe constraints and the negative assessment outweighs any positive achievements. There has been limited or no achievement of planned programme outputs/ outcomes. This score indicates poor performance.

Table 1: UNDP Consolidated Rating System – UNDP Manual March 2022*

| Criteria and sub-criteria | Overall rating |
|--|----------------|
| 1. Relevance | |
| 1.A. Adherence to national development priorities | |
| 1.B. Alignment with United Nations/ UNDP goals | |
| 1.C. Alignment with gender considerations and vulnerable communities | |
| 2. Coherence | |
| 2.A. Internal programme coherence | |
| 2.B. External programme coherence | |
| 3. Efficiency | |
| 3.A. Timeliness | |
| 3.B. Management and operational efficiency | |
| 4. Effectiveness | |
| 4.A. Achievement/ eventual achievement of stated outputs and outcomes | |
| 4.B. Prioritization of development innovation | |
| 4.C. Prioritization of gender equality and women's empowerment | |
| 5. Sustainability | |
| 5.A. Sustainable capacity | |
| 5.B. Financing for development | |

* UNDP Consolidated Rating System – UNDP Manual - <http://web.undp.org/evaluation/ratingsystem.shtml>

4.4 Evaluation Questions

The key questions to respond to these criteria have been structured along the main purposes of the evaluation as per UNDP Rating System Manual March 2022 – Table 2.

Table 2 - Detailed criteria, sub-criteria, indicators, guiding questions and data sources

| Criteria and sub-criteria | Indicators | Guiding questions | Data sources |
|--|--|---|--|
| 1. RELEVANCE The extent to which the Project objectives and design respond to country/ beneficiary needs and continue to do so if circumstances change; the degree of alignment with human development needs, Project mandate, existing country strategies and policies, adequacy of financial/human resources, and recognized good practices. | | | |
| 1. A. Adherence to national development priorities | Project responded to major development priorities in the country as defined in the country's development plans | a. To what extent is the Project in line with national development priorities, country outputs, outcomes, and strategic Plan? b. To what extent does the Project contribute to the theory of change for the relevant country programme outcome? c. To what extent has the Project been appropriately responsive to political, legal, economic, and institutional, changes in the country? d. What potential shifts are necessary to address current priorities? e. Did the Project respond to changing national priorities were strengthening of national capacities and policy processes where needed? | • Documents review, Vision 2030, National Water Strategy, SDG framework, UNDP programme-related documents, theory of change, stakeholder mapping • Interviews with United Nations country team, government senior officials |
| 1. B. Alignment with United Nations/ UNDP goals | Project responded to UNDP goals | a. To what extent is the Project in line with UNDP and the SDGs? b. Did Project outcomes enable the advancement of the SDGs? | • Documents review, Vision 2030, National Water Strategy, SDG framework, UNDP programme-related documents, theory of change, stakeholder mapping • Interviews with United Nations country team, government senior officials |

| | | | |
|---|--|--|--|
| 1. C. Alignment with gender and vulnerable groups consideration | UNDP Project is responsive to gender-specific development concerns | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. To what extent were resources used to address inequalities in general, and gender issues in particular? b. To what extent does the project contribute to gender equality, the empowerment of women and the human rights-based approach? c. How the project integrated gender considerations and vulnerable groups lens? d. What have been the key results and changes attained for disadvantaged and marginalized groups benefited from the work of UNDP in the country? | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Document review – National and United Nations reports on challenges in GEWE, gender strategy • Interviews on the extent to which Project design and implementation strategies reflected gender considerations |
|---|--|--|--|

2. COHERENCE

The compatibility of the Project within and with other Projects in a country internal and external coherence.

| | | | |
|---|---|--|--|
| 2. A. Internal Project coherence | Linkages between Project outputs and outcomes are identified and established to enhance UNDP contribution | a. Did Project design take into consideration complementary areas of UNDP support (outputs and outcomes)? | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Document review, Project strategy, theory of change, project documents and design • Interviews with UNDP country office on the rationale behind programme construct, selection, and design of projects under each output and outcome; with development partners |
| 2. B. External Coherence | Project established strategic and programmatic partnerships with government development initiatives | a. Did Project approaches improve strategic partnership with the government (in terms of aligning with government initiatives)? b. Were Project choices and approaches appropriate for promoting longer-term development efforts? | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Document review- Project documents; partnership agreements and MOUs • Interviews on the extent sought to engage relevant line agencies for enhanced national development process; Project enabled national programme coherence |

| 3. EFFICIENCY | | | |
|--|---|---|---|
| The extent to which Project resources were managed adeptly, with timely delivery within the intended timeframe, or a timeframe adjusted to the demands of the evolving context, maximizing utility of resources, and achieving maximum operational efficacy. | | | |
| 3.A. Timeliness | Project is completed according to established plans | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Did the project implementation and completion timeline follow the work plan? b. Were delays addressed in a timely manner? c. To what extent have Project funds and activities were delivered in a timely manner? d. Did delays increase the cost of the project? e. Were innovative practices developed to overcome operational challenges? | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Document review- Project documentation of extensions/ delays (i.e., may include reports, audits, Atlas financials, Atlas risk logs, meeting minutes as necessary), audit reports • Interviews on Project implementation |
| 3. B. Management and operational efficiency | The Project has the necessary technical capacity to achieve goals and results | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. To what extent have the Project implementation strategy and execution been efficient and cost-effective? b. Did Project address programme risk in the design and implementation of projects? c. How did the Project leadership balance current short-term priorities with its longer-term planning objectives? d. Were there innovative practices developed to overcome recurrent operational challenges and/ or favor efficient delivery of Project results? e. Did Project ensure multiple sources of Programme funding? | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Document review- Project staff structure • Interviews on staff structure and programme technical capacities; the extent country office efficiently allocated human resources to achieve results, vacancies/ gaps, staff perceptions on workload and human resource capacity, partner perceptions on UNDP technical capacity and productivity |

| | | | |
|--|--|---|--|
| | Project resources were strategically allocated | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Was the Project oversight leadership efficient in allocating human resources to deliver Project results? b. Was the Project oversight leadership successful in mobilizing the aspired Project resources? c. To what extent was the management structure outlined in the project document efficient to generate the expected results? d. Were Project financial resources optimized? | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Document review – project budget information; resource mobilization strategy; audit reports; financial reports • Interviews on budget planning, resource mobilization opportunities and use |
|--|--|---|--|

4. EFFECTIVENESS/IMPACT

The extent to which the Project has achieved, or expected to achieve, its objectives and results, including any differential results across groups.

| | | | |
|--|--|--|--|
| <p>4. A.</p> <p>Achievement/ eventual achievement of the stated outputs and outcomes</p> | <p>Project outputs are achieved or will eventually be achieved</p> | <p>a. To what extent did the Project contribute to the country programme outcomes and outputs, the SDGs, the UNDP Strategic Plan, and national development priorities?</p> <p>b. What factors have contributed to achieving, or not, intended Project outputs and outcomes?</p> <p>c. To what extent has the Project partnership strategy been appropriate and effective?</p> <p>d. In which areas does the Project have the greatest achievements? Why and what have been the supporting factors?</p> <p>e. In which areas does the Project have the biggest challenges? What have been the constraining factors and why?</p> <p>f. Are there any apparent gaps in the Project programming to address the current challenges?</p> <p>g. What, if any, alternative strategies would have been more effective in achieving the project objectives?</p> <p>h. Are the project objectives and outputs clear, practical, and feasible?</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Document review – evaluation reports on outputs achieved or in progress; on potential for risks; theory of change • Interviews with Project oversight leadership partners |
|--|--|--|--|

| | | | |
|--|---|--|---|
| <p>4.B</p> <p>Prioritization of development innovation</p> | <p>Project took measures to enable development innovation</p> | <p>a. Did Project prioritize development innovation in its support areas?</p> <p>b. Was Project successful in promoting innovative development practices among wider development actors?</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Document review – Evaluation data on innovation in programme support • Interviews with UNDP country office MEWA Project oversight leadership partners |
| <p>4.C.</p> <p>Programme Inclusiveness (especially those at risk of being left behind)</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Outcomes have been beneficial for those at risk of being left behind (Outcomes benefited those at risk of being left behind) • Outcomes have contributed to enhancing the processes for gender equality and women's empowerment (Outcomes contributed to GEWE) | <p>a. Did the Project contribute to addressing issues of those who are at risk of being left behind in rural/urban areas?</p> <p>b. Did the Project contribute to addressing the issues of the least developed regions of the country?</p> <p>c. Did the Project contribute to strengthening policies/programmes that would positively impact those left behind?</p> <p>d. Did the Project contribute to gender-inclusive development processes?</p> <p>e. Did the Project make concerted efforts to promote GEWE at policy level?</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Document review – evaluation reports on outputs achieved or in progress; on potential for risks; theory of change • Interviews with UNDP country office MEWA Project oversight leadership partners |

5. SUSTAINABILITY

The extent to which the results of Project interventions are likely to be sustained and carried forward

| | | | |
|---|--|---|--|
| <p>5.A. Sustainable Capacity</p> | <p>Target institutions and/or beneficiary groups are equipped with knowledge, skills, partnerships to continue with Project related efforts after their completion</p> | <p>a. What is the ability of the Project interventions to continue to deliver benefits for an extended period after completion?</p> <p>b. To what extent will financial and economic resources be available to sustain the benefits achieved by the Project?</p> <p>c. Are there any social or political risks that may jeopardize sustainability of project outputs and the project contributions to country programme outputs and outcomes?</p> <p>d. What is the chance that the level of stakeholder ownership will be sufficient to allow for the project benefits to be sustained?</p> <p>e. Are the intended individual beneficiary groups and/or institutions equipped with knowledge/ skills/ partnerships to continue with Project -related efforts after their completion?</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Document review – Programme/ project reports, government records on the level, areas of human and institutional capacity improvement supported by Project; and mapping of programme partnerships, including new partnerships • Interviews on the areas and scale of capacities enhanced |
| <p>5.B. Financing for development</p> | <p>Financial and human resource needs for sustaining/ scaling results achieved are addressed</p> | <p>a. To what extent did the Project address and consider future interventions financing?</p> <p>b. Did the Project use appropriate tools for diversifying financing?</p> <p>c. Was the Project successful in facilitating development financing?</p> | |

4.5 Cross-Cutting Issues

Different gender evaluation approaches were used in this FPE for their appropriateness and suitability. The following approaches were explored:

- UN Women Evaluation Handbook: How to manage gender-responsive evaluation (2022) *
- Integrating Human Rights and Gender Equality in Evaluations August 2014) **
- Harvard Gender Analytical Framework (Gender Roles Framework) ***
- Inclusive Systemic Evaluation for Gender Equality, Environments and Marginalized Voices *****
- Evaluation of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) contribution to GEWE (2015) *****
- Employing contribution analysis to assess contributions to gender equality outcomes *****

Most of these techniques required certain level of information and details whether in the PDD or other relevant available reports which did not exist or available. The PDD and all relevant documents did not consider this issue, thus, it was not feasible or appropriate to use any of these techniques.

Instead, a through a series of assessment questions that would help in making judgments about the intervention. Assessment questions included the following:

- Did the Project contribute to addressing issues of those who are at risk of being left behind in rural/urban areas?
- Did the Project contribute to addressing the issues of the least developed regions of the country?
- Did the Project contribute to strengthening policies/programmes that would positively impact those left behind?
- Did the Project contribute to gender-inclusive development processes?
- Did the Project make concerted efforts to promote GEWE at policy level?
- To what extent does the project contribute to gender equality, the empowerment of women and the vulnerable-based approach?
- To what extent were perspectives of men and women who could affect the outcomes, considered during project design processes?

To address these assessment questions, approaches were used including asking directly or indirectly by reviewing the PDD, progress reports, programs, observations and hiring practices.

* UN Women Evaluation Handbook: How to manage gender-responsive evaluation (2022) <https://www.unwomen.org/en/digital-library/publications/2022/05/un-women-evaluation-handbook-2022>

** Integrating Human Rights and Gender Equality in Evaluations August 2014 <http://www.uneval.org/document/download/2107>

*** Harvard Gender Analytical Framework (Gender Roles Framework)
<http://awidme.pbworks.com/w/page/36321576/Gender%20Roles%20Framework>

**** Inclusive Systemic Evaluation for Gender Equality, Environments and Marginalized Voices <https://www.unwomen.org/-/media/headquarters/attachments/sections/library/publications/2018/ise4gems-a-new-approach-for-the-sdg-era-en.pdf?la=en&vs=2242>

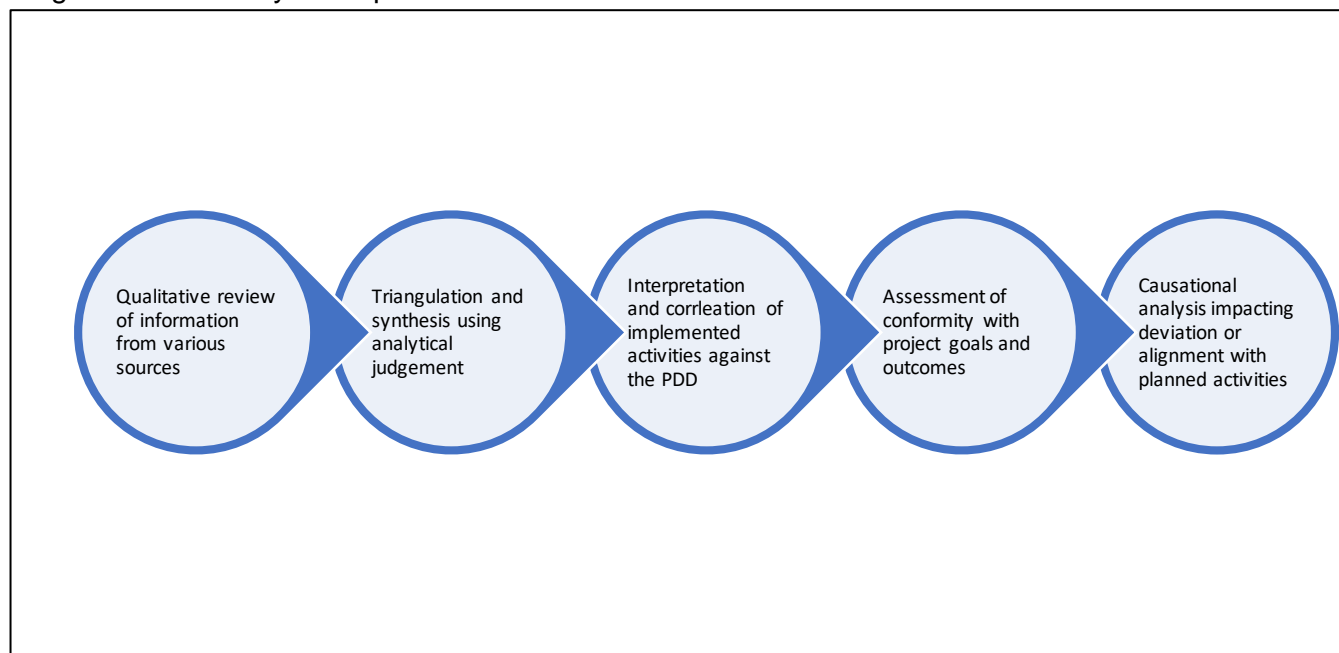
***** Evaluation of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) contribution to GEWE (2015)
<http://web.undp.org/evaluation/evaluations/thematic/gender.shtml>

***** Employing contribution analysis to assess contributions to gender equality outcomes
<https://www.betterevaluation.org/en/resource/example/PerformanceStory>

4.6 Data Analysis

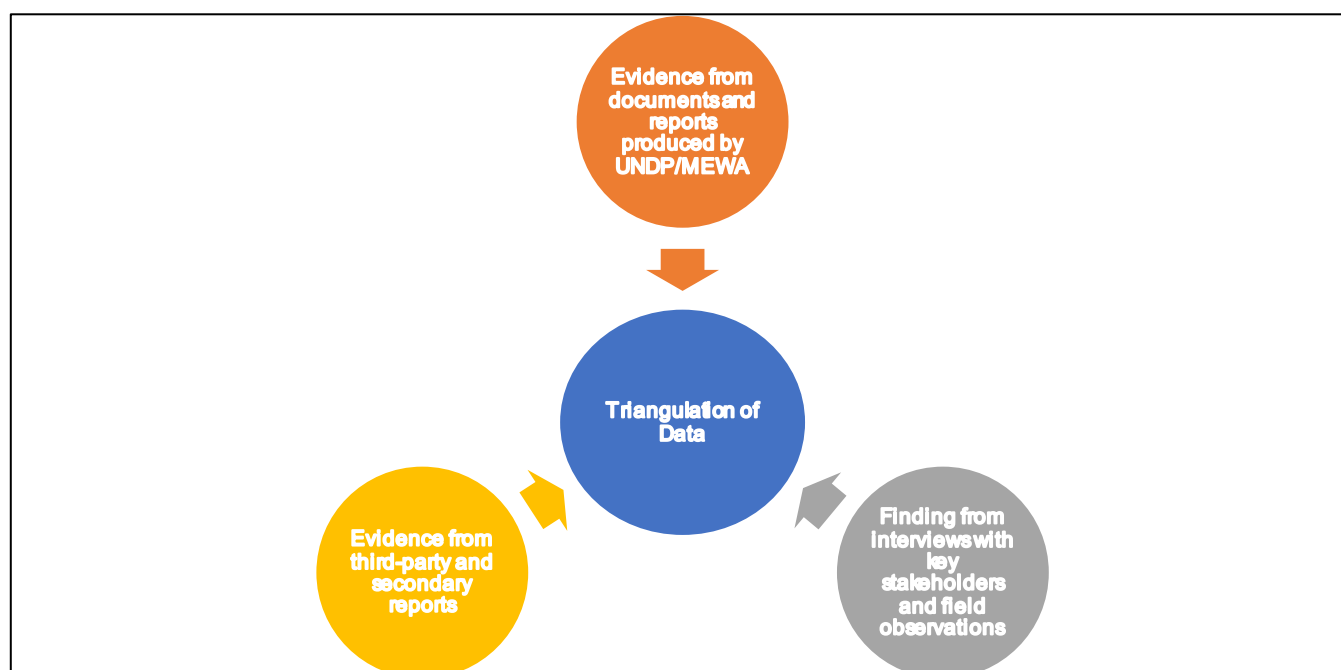
To be able to generate credible, reliable, and to enhance the validity of the evaluation findings, an in-depth analysis of all available documents, observation and discussion with key stakeholders who in one way or another participated in project designing, planning, financing, monitoring and supervision, and implementation of the Project following steps in Figure 2.

Figure 2: Data analysis steps



To allow for greater confidence in the findings, triangulation and synthesis of the data sources by cross-checking statements and finding from one source with other sources or the multi year reporting, also through field observation, staff verbal feed back and previous assessment and audit reports (Fig-3).

Figure 3: Data triangulation and synthesis process



4.7 Evaluation Limitations

The principal challenges facing the FPE are availability of Project staff given turn-over and staff changes. The access to necessary information is paramount to provide an evidence-based evaluation.

To mitigate these challenges, the evaluator reviewed all available reports and studies produced by previous staff and complementing this information by interviewing individuals who still holds the institutional memory and have a recollection on the history of this Project.

In regards, to timely availability of data, the evaluator made all efforts possible to identify a head of time to UNDP all necessary documents and studies needed to carry on this evaluation in a timely manner.

During this process multiple correspondences were made identifying the status of receiving these documents and identifying any new documents needed based on further reviews and analysis.

5. EVALUATION FINDINGS

The Project PDD has evolved drastically from the original set objectives partially due to COVID-19 and due to major government transformation initiatives, the country and the ministry went through major transforming forcing the Project team to address new priorities while trying to achieve variable levels of progress against original Project outcomes.

The 2019 and 2022 achievements reports contained information about the international experts hired with the support of UNDP and dedication to the expansion of project scope related to the new mandate of MEWA.

The periodic assessments of the project progress according to the PDD produced couple of progress and evaluation reports authored by different sources and most of information, processes, outputs, and other accomplishments were dispersed through many reports and briefings.

To complement and connect these various data sources, more emphasis was put on interviews and secondary data sources such as internal reports and technical documents. Most of the evidence was gathered through a set of interviews with MEWA management and technical staff.

5.1 Relevance

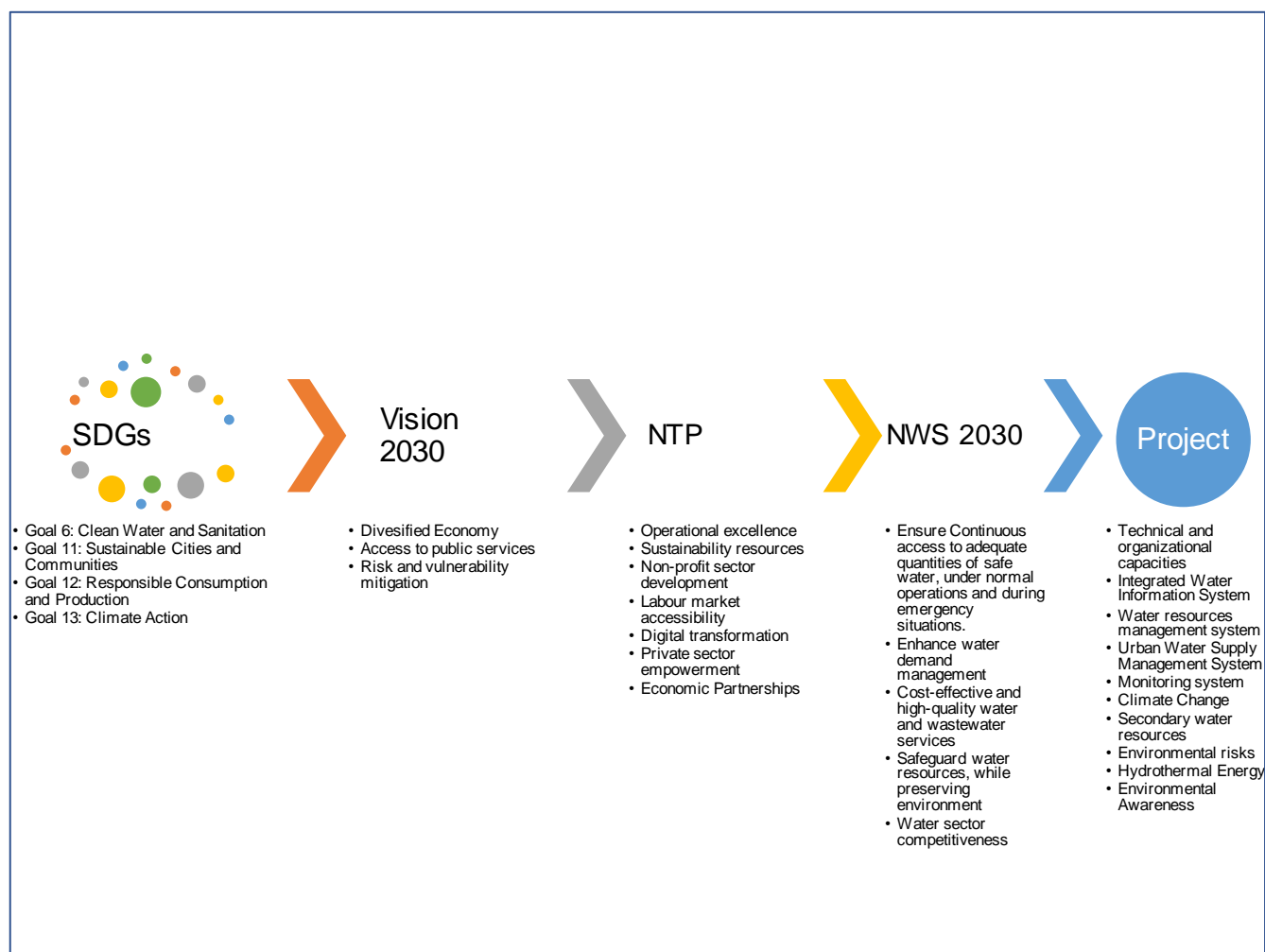
The project interventions objectives and outcomes are highly relevant. The Project addresses the priority needs of beneficiaries. The Project was aligned with the national development priorities, the priorities of the UNDP Country Program and the UN SDGs. The project overall objectives and outputs are well aligned with MEWA needs and priorities, vision 2030 and UNDP priorities.

| 5.1 Relevance | |
|---|------------|
| 5.1.A Adherence to national development priorities | 3.5 |
| 5.1.B Alignment with United Nations/ UNDP goals | 3.5 |
| 5.1.C Alignment with gender considerations and vulnerable communities | 2.0 |
| The Project Mostly Achieves the programme outputs and outcomes | 3.0 |

Fully Achieved ≥ 3.5 ■ 2.5 \leq Mostly Achieved < 3.5 ■ 1.5 \leq Partially Achieved < 2.5 ■ Not Achieved < 1.5

The government of KSA had an ambitious strategy called Saudi Vision 2030, a country wide strategy goal to reduce the country's dependence on oil, diversify its economy, and develop public service sectors such as health, education, infrastructure, recreation, water sector and tourism. Specifically, areas of diversification and growth; employment and vulnerability; access to efficient public services; and non-oil natural resources management. The project directly relevant to the pillar three and helps manage the most significant non-oil natural resource, water (Fig. 4)

Figure 4: Alignment with international, national, water sector priorities and the Project



5.1.A. Alignment with national development priorities

The project is highly aligned with Vision 2030, the NTP and NWS 2030 goals. Specifically, the Project played a key role in the implementation, and tracking of the NWS 230 key five objectives through nine implementation programs that highly resembles the Project objectives (Fig. 5)

Ultimately, the Project aimed to strengthen and optimize the technical and organizational capacities of the Water Deputyship, allowing staff to successfully implement IWMS principles ensuring monitoring mechanisms for the NWS were streamlined across policy and project mechanisms.

5.1.B Alignment with United Nations/ UNDP goals and the SDGs

There is a high level of alignment and relevance with the UNDP SDG goals especially as pertains to water in Goal 6: Clean Water and Sanitation, Goal 11: Sustainable Cities and Communities, Goal 12: Responsible Consumption and Production and, Goal 13: Climate Action (Fig. 6).

Figure 5: alignment with NWS 2030 goals and Project Programs



Figure 6: Alignment between the SDG goals and Project objectives



5.1.C Alignment with gender considerations and vulnerable groups lens

There is no mention in the PDD or in any of the implementation reports on how the Project considered or addressed gender mainstreaming and vulnerable groups concerns.

The deficiencies in the implementation plans are mainly related to the inherent absence in the PDD of these considerations where no goals were set, measures or actions to address or track relevant to the results and activities. The absence of any evidence in the implementation plan is mainly related to the absence of these goals in the first place.

Despite the fact the PDD did not consider cross-cutting issues, nonetheless the type of interventions proposed and implemented, addressed inequalities in communities is relevant in a way addressing inequality problems like distributional justice and improved quality of life was highly beneficial to rural communities who are the highest vulnerable groups.

These marginalized groups including low-income families, women, and communities with sub-bar government services benefited hugely from extending and expanding services to their livelihoods i.e., better access to clean water, better services, increase level of awareness through targeted educational

campaigns, digital transformation eliminating the need to travel long distances for requesting services, and risk reduction by addressing natural disaster risks i.e., flooding under the climate change program. However, considering the lack of any consideration in the PDD, one would find that it does not reach to the level of systematic incorporation of cross-cutting, and that little attention was given to social dimension of targeting.

5.2. Coherence

The Project “Mostly Achieved” the programme outputs and outcomes.

The Project was instrumental and foundational in building capacities to address national policy and ministry specific commitments and building synergy to a certain degree with other MEWA projects supported by UNDP initiatives. The long- and well-established relationship between UNDP and MEWA helped in integrating the Project objectives, implementations plan, outcomes with Vision 2030, NTP and the NWS 2030.

| 2. Coherence | |
|--|-------------|
| 5.2.A Internal programme coherence | 3.5 |
| 5.2.B External programme coherence | 3.0 |
| The Project mostly achieved the intended outputs and outcomes | 3.25 |

Fully Achieved ≥ 3.5 ■ Mostly Achieved < 3.5 ■ Partially Achieved < 2.5 ■ Not Achieved < 1.5

5.2.A Internal coherence

The project was designed based on the success of the first phase of the project named "Capacity Development for Sustainable Development and Management of Water Resources in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia – 2012" between UNDP and what was previously known as the Ministry of Water and Electricity before it got merged with the Ministry of Agriculture and Environment and at present is known as Ministry of Environment, Water and agriculture.

Accordingly, and due to the in-depth knowledge of MEWA existing priorities, programs as well challenges, the Project generated synergies between and among the Project's activities and other initiatives supported by UNDP.

The project activities were interlinked with each other within the project outputs and among the activities. The NTP was one of the first programs to be created under Saudi Vision 2030.

For example, the NTP had significant impact on the water sector, particularly through the second key theme: ensuring sustainability of vital resources.

Specifically, the NWS included five strategic objectives:

- Ensure continuous access to adequate quantities of safe water, under normal operations and during emergencies.
- Enhance water demand management across all uses.
- Deliver cost-effective and high-quality water and wastewater services, accounting for affordability.
- Safeguard and optimize the use of water resources, while preserving the local environment for the highest benefit of Saudi society in this generation and the future.
- Ensure water sector competitiveness and positive contribution to the national economy through promoting effective governance, private sector participation, localization of capabilities and innovation.

Through the Project, MEWA Water Deputyship was responsible for five out of 10 strategic programs : Water Law and Resource Management Regulations - Introducing a comprehensive set of policies and implementing an adequate legal and regulatory framework.

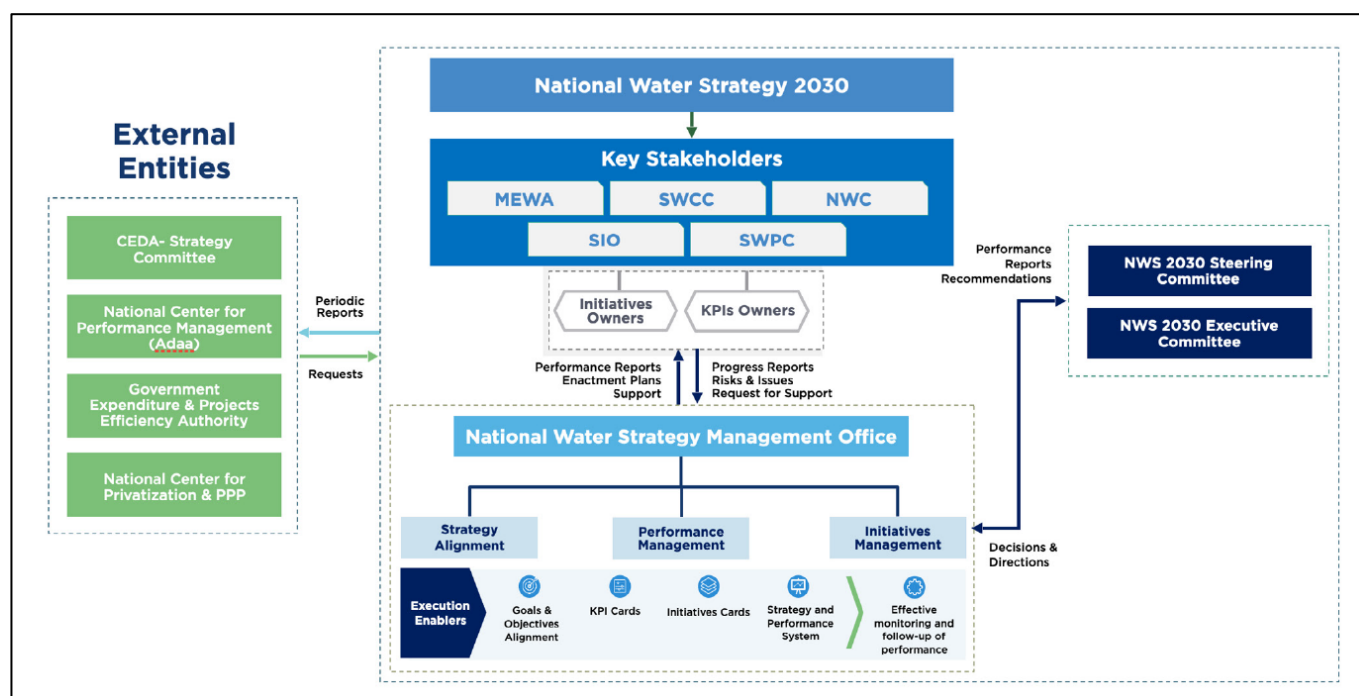
- Water Resource Management - Implementing integrated resources management and planning at the national level and optimizing the use of available water resources.
- Sector Resilience - Ensuring that the water and wastewater sectors are prepared to meet any disruption to day-to-day operations.
- Innovation and Capability Building - Promoting research and development and localization and enhancing leadership and water management capabilities.
- Supply Chain Efficiency and Service Quality - Improving the sector's operations and service delivery.

As seen from the Project objectives and outputs, the internal coherence with the existing MEWA priorities is extremely high and integrated with the NWS strategic objectives, sub-objectives and strategic KPI, MEWA programs and systems.

5.2.B External coherence

Water resources is a cross sectorial responsibility and requires active engagement from cross-government actors. The Project capitalized on the NWS - 2030 cross-government governance model bringing multiple actors into decision making bodies and creating shared accountability by spreading implementation through different government entities (Fig. 7)

Figure 7: NWS 2030 Governance Model



Collaboration with other agencies of external partnerships including with the National Water Company (NWC), the National Water Conversion Company (SWCC), the Agricultural Development Fund (ADF), ARAMCO and local universities was evident at multiple levels.

These partnership agreements helped in sharing information, exchange expertise, conduct and fund research, and provide access to technical databases that was relevant to the success of the Project deliverables and outcomes.

However, there were multiple opportunities for establishing effective partnerships beyond the MEWA boundaries. The potential of private investment in the Project activities was marginally harnessed .

There was no clear evidence of interlinkages with other interventions or intra-project learning exchanges carried out by other UN agencies, NGO or private sector.

The project collaboration with other partners would have been beneficial for implementation of innovative delivery of certain technical work e.g., GIS, IT, monitoring, O&M, field surveys, field services, training, research, modeling and IT and would have achieved coherence, efficiencies, integration and possibly cost sharing.

5.3. Efficiency

The Project “Partially Achieved” the intended outputs and outcomes.

The application of conventional efficiency indicators to this Project was not feasible. The project's tracking and reporting followed an activity-based reporting style, hindering the systematic documentation and measurement of progress and achievements against the SMART project goals and outcomes.

| 3. Efficiency | |
|---|-----|
| 5.3.A Timeliness | 2.0 |
| 5.3.B. Management and operational efficiency | 2.0 |
| The Project Partially Achieved the intended outputs and outcomes | 2.0 |

Fully Achieved ≥ 3.5 ■ $2.5 \leq$ Mostly Achieved < 3.5 ■ $1.5 \leq$ Partially Achieved < 2.5 ■ Not Achieved < 1.5

5.3.A Timeliness

The Project faced a “Force majeure” delay due to COVID-19 pandemic which impacted the Project delivery timelines for one more year at no cost.

During this evaluation, it was challenging to assess the extent of how Project resources were impacted by COVID-19 and how the project was managed within the intended timeframe, and reasonably adjusted to the demands of the evolving context of the pandemic, maximizing utility of resources, as there were no progress reports showing progress against timelines, project management charts or dashboards, updated risk registry or any comparative data to make fair operational or cost-efficiency judgment.

An attempt was considered to assess how the project cost was impacted by the pandemic to measure if there were cost saving due to lack of field activities, resources mobilization, or rescheduling of activities. Nonetheless, the only information available through verbal communication that the project extension for one more year came at no extra costs reflecting saving during the pandemic two years period.

It was difficult to measure the level of accomplishments quantitatively or qualitatively as the Project Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) framework overall design as described in the PDD did not include Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic, and Time-bound (SMART) Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) that would obtain robust evidence for the project efficiency. The defined KPIs in the project document are repetitive and some monitoring instruments that were originally proposed were either not available or implemented.

5.3.B Management and operational efficiency

There are four key areas that were specifically considered and reviewed to assess and provide a good sense of the project management and operation efficiencies.

5.3.B.1 Project financial reporting and tracking

The M&E progress reports were not available neither there was any documentation of any methodical mitigation measures being adapted or resources changes made to address obstacles, challenges, costs

diversions, technical issues, therefore, it was not possible to assess the variances between planned and actual expenditures or assess what type of adaptation or rework were considered during the project life cycle.

The provided financial reports including Combined Delivery Reports (CDR) for 2020 and 2021, were related to expenditure e.g., salaries, contractual, assets, invoices, and monetary matters that were financial transactional in nature.

The MEWA 2021 external audit report, showed certain discrepancies and shortfalls with low to medium risk and were focused on documentation of vouchers, approvals documentation, and archiving issues. The external audit report provided observation and recommendation to be implemented.

The 2021 MEWA Audit Action Plan responding to this audit report, provided commitment to address these issues and confirming corrective actions completion. There was no documentation provided to validate these corrective actions in a way that can be correlated in a meaningful way or directly correlated to the project outcomes or outputs, cost efficiencies or best value for money.

5.3.B.2 Governance structure

The design of the governance structure, as envisioned in the original PDD presented a significant challenge to project deliverables. There were ambiguities in the original governance structure as shown in Figure 8.

The governance model did not define clear decision-making process. It did not entail what decisions and who can make these decisions. The Project board and steering committee structures were not clear neither functioning at the right level or capacity, creating multiple reporting burden, contradicting guidance from project management personnel to the output managers.

The UNDP experts fill senior positions at the MEWA, managed by UNDP experts, creating confusion about reporting lines between MEWA and UNDP and deviation from the original technical duties that these experts were meant to deliver on, by doing managerial work at the expense of utilizing their technical competencies.

Further iteration of the organization re-structuring was proposed in May 2020* external progress with the intent to enhance the project management capacity, streamline decision making process and overcome barriers and clarifying project management duties clearly between the Project teams (Fig. 9).

Multiple attempts were implemented after that to re-organize the governance structure to align with the recently developed NWS 2030 and the initiatives of the National Transformation Plan.

This required substantive changes to the project organizational structure, deputyship oversight and reporting mechanisms.

This included establishing new Water Regulation Directorate, Water Planning Directorate, National Center for Water Research and Studies (NCWRS), Center for Water Management and Control (CWMC), Directorate of Communication and Supporting Works and Water Projects Following-up Office, (Fig. 10).

Figure 8: Project original Organization Structure

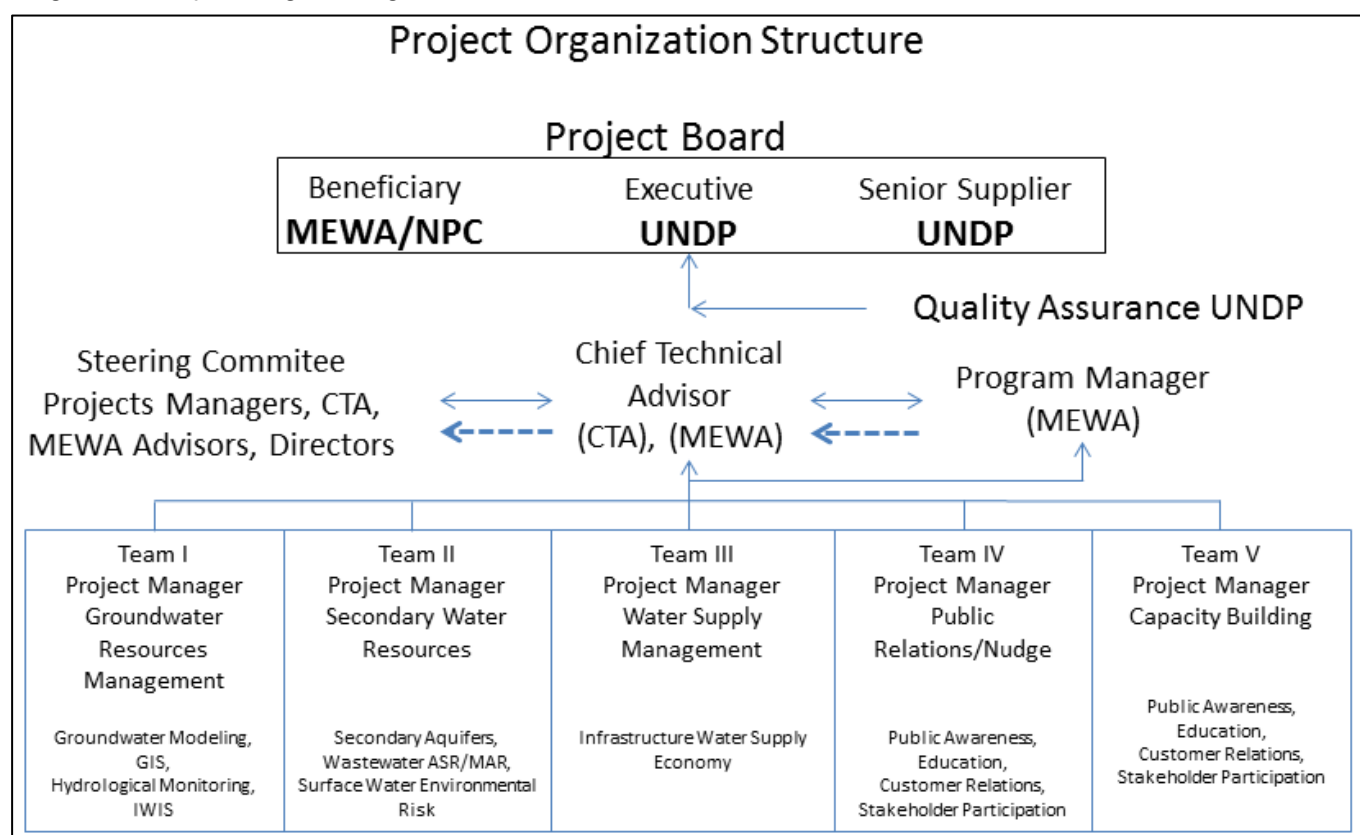


Figure 9: Proposed Organizational structure – May 2020

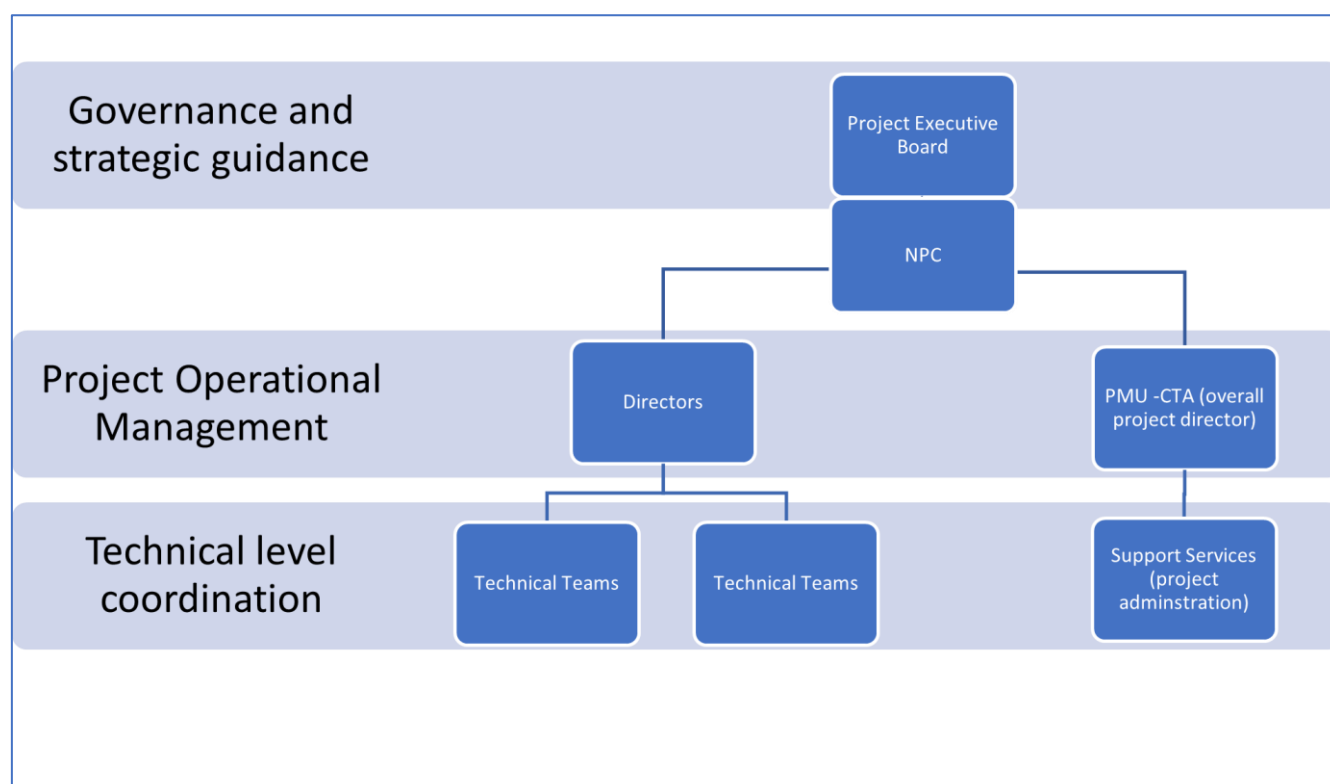
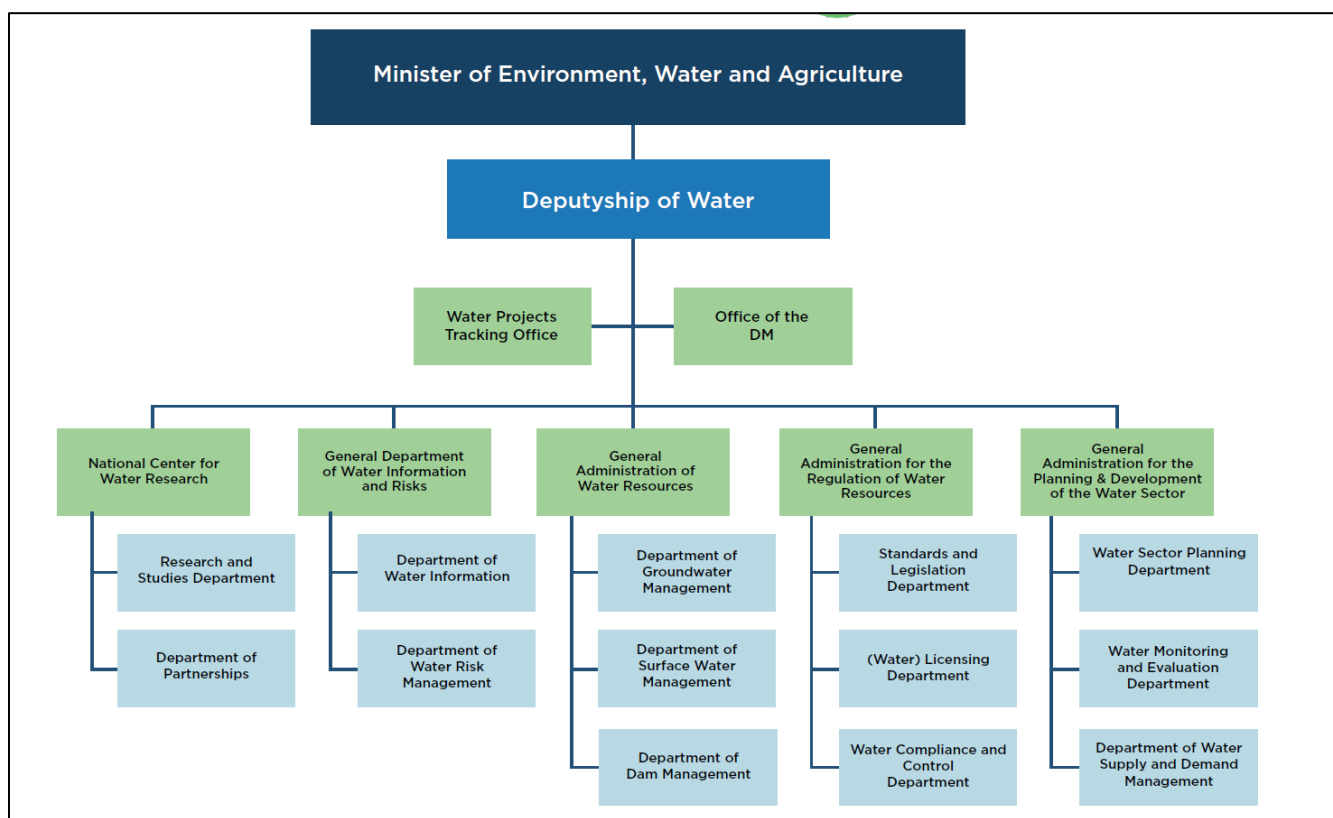


Figure 10: Latest Organizational Structure as of September 2022



Nonetheless, there are still challenges continue to exist including oversight and governance, multiple reporting lines, roles and responsibility, succession planning and sustainability, clarity, and alignment.

5.3.B.3 Risk Identification and Mitigation

The key risks identified in the PDD are illustrated in Table 3. These risks were addressed through the following mitigations as described in the Project Risk Log, (Table 4).

Most of the indicators, if not all, are output delivery-based, with a little insight for the ultimate outcome anticipated in the Project.

There is no record of updated risk registry or project progress updates against the different outcomes which could be used to objectively document if these risks were mitigated or addressed. The Project risks log was not actively maintained, and relevant lessons were not captured regularly.

Large portions of the project activities are reliant on government funding, yet this has not been identified as a risk. Some major outputs may not be delivered at all if external funding is not secured in a timely manner.

The risk log has never been updated nor reported in the project reports. Such a complex and large -scale project requires more robust risk management plan that defines detailed mitigation plans.

Table 3: Risk Mitigation Schedule

| Intended Output | Chapter | Risks and Mitigation |
|-------------------|---------|---|
| Intended Output 1 | 5.1.1 | Delay in provision of regional groundwater models by consultants |
| | 5.1.2 | Strong cooperation with consultants and implementation of milestones from the contracts |
| | 5.1.3 | Lack of interest from stakeholders in contributing data to a shared system (ARAMCO; Armed Forces; mentioned above) Cooperation with respective ministry and Armed Forces |
| | 5.1.3 | Lack of sufficient personnel for data control and migration Legislation to enforce MEWA's rights on all water-related data |
| Intended Output 2 | 5.2.1 | Lack of interest from stakeholders in contributing data to a shared system Legislation to enforce MEWA's rights on all water-related data Close cooperation with stakeholders |
| | 5.2.8 | Vandalism to the System Implementation of strong protection infrastructure Adequate surveillance of equipment |
| | 5.2.11 | Competence Conflict with KACST Legislation to enforce MEWA's rights on all water-related data Close cooperation with KACST |
| | | |
| Intended Output 3 | 5.3.1 | Limited or no access to military installations and ARAMCO Cooperation with respective ministry and Armed Forces |
| | | Conflict of interest between Agricultural Industry and Water Sector Close cooperation with stakeholders |
| | | Lack of interest in conducting water use audits in households Repeated awareness campaigns focusing on water saving |
| | 5.3.2 | Inability to ramp up in line with new requirements of pilgrims Real-time data exchange with Ministry of Hajj Improvement of demand predictions |
| Intended Output 4 | 5.4.1 | Inadequate awareness campaigns that fail to showcase the economic and environmental benefits of water efficiency Permanent self-evaluation and outside evaluation of effectiveness and improvement possibilities |
| | | |

Table 4: Project Risk Log

| # | Description | Date Identified | Type | Impact & Probability | Countermeasures / Mngt response | Owner | Submitted, updated by |
|---|--|-----------------|----------------|--------------------------------------|---|-------|-----------------------|
| 1 | In-time provision of regional groundwater models by consultants | Jan 2018 | Operational | Probability: P = 2 Impact : I = 4 | Strong cooperation with consultants and implementation of milestones from the contracts | MEWA | UNDP |
| 2 | Lack of interest from stakeholders in contributing data to a shared system (ARAMCO; Armed Forces; mentioned above) | Jan 2018 | Organizational | P= 2 I = 2 | Cooperation with respective ministry and Armed Forces | MEWA | UNDP |
| 3 | Lack of sufficient personnel for data control and migration | Jan 2018 | Operational | P= 2 I = 2 | Legislation to enforce MEWA's rights on all water-related data | MEWA | UNDP |
| 4 | Inadequate awareness campaigns that fail to showcase the economic and environmental benefits of water efficiency | Jan 2018 | Operational | P= 2 I = 4 | Permanent self-evaluation and outside evaluation of effectiveness and improvement possibilities | MEWA | UNDP |

5.3.B.3 Monitoring and evaluation

There was a strong focus on activities as opposed to developmental results, (Table 4). The Project did not have a robust Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) architecture and limited risk identification and management in place, which has hindered the systematic documentation of progress and achievements.

Project monitoring and evaluation plan log was not actively maintained, and relevant updates were not captured. This makes the application of conventional efficiency indicators to these areas not feasible.

Table 5: Monitoring and Evaluation Monitoring Plan

| Monitoring Activity | Purpose | Frequency | Expected Action | Partners (if joint) | Cost (if any) |
|------------------------------------|--|---|---|---------------------------------|---------------|
| Track results progress | Progress data against the results indicators in the RRF will be collected and analysed to assess the progress of the project in achieving the agreed outputs. | Quarterly, or in the frequency required for each indicator. | Slower than expected progress will be addressed by project management. | UNDP/MEWA | 0 |
| Monitor and Manage Risk | Identify specific risks that may threaten achievement of intended results. Identify and monitor risk management actions using a risk log. This includes monitoring measures and plans that may have been required as per UNDP's Social and Environmental Standards. Audits will be conducted in accordance with UNDP's audit policy to manage financial risk. | Quarterly | Risks are identified by project management and actions are taken to manage risk. The risk log is actively maintained to keep track of identified risks and actions taken. | UNDP/MEWA | 0 |
| Learn | Knowledge, good practices and lessons will be captured regularly, as well as actively sourced from other projects and partners and integrated back into the project. | At least annually | Relevant lessons are captured by the project team and used to inform management decisions. | Project CTA/external consultant | 5,000 |
| Annual Project Quality Assurance | The quality of the project will be assessed against UNDP's quality standards to identify project strengths and weaknesses | Annually | Areas of strength and weakness will be reviewed by project management and | UNDP/Project CTA | 0 |
| | and to inform management decision making to improve the project. | | used to inform decisions to improve project performance. | | |
| Review and Make Course Corrections | Internal review of data and evidence from all monitoring actions to inform decision making. | At least annually | Performance data, risks, lessons and quality will be discussed by the project board and used to make course corrections. | Project Board | 0 |
| Project Report | A progress report will be presented to the Project Board and key stakeholders, consisting of progress data showing the results achieved against pre-defined annual targets at the output level, the annual project quality rating summary, an updated risk log with mitigation measures, and any evaluation or review reports prepared over the period. | Quarterly, Annually, and at the end of the project (final report) | | Project CTA | 0 |
| Project Review (Project Board) | The project's governance mechanism (i.e., project board) will hold regular project reviews to assess the performance of the project and review the Multi-Year Work Plan to ensure realistic budgeting over the life of the project. In the project's final year, the Project Board shall hold an end-of project review to capture lessons learned and discuss opportunities for scaling up and to socialize project results and lessons learned with relevant audiences. | Specify frequency (twice a year) | Any quality concerns or slower than expected progress should be discussed by the project board and management actions agreed to address the issues identified. | MEWA/Project CTA/UNDP | 0 |

5.4 Effectiveness

The Project “Mostly Achieved” the intended outputs and outcomes.

The Project achieved significant progress against the SDGs, the UNDP Strategic Plan, and national development priorities. The project has made significant contribution to enhance water management capacity at MEWA, that was evidently lacking prior project implementation commences. However, the Project produced significant direct and indirect outcomes that cannot be measured or quantified wholistically to provide a full picture of the Project contribution. Some of the services provided through the Project were not all directly related to the Project objectives and outputs. The services provided covered other areas including drafting policy documents, briefing notes and conference papers, management and administration support, and consultation above and beyond the PDD scope of work.

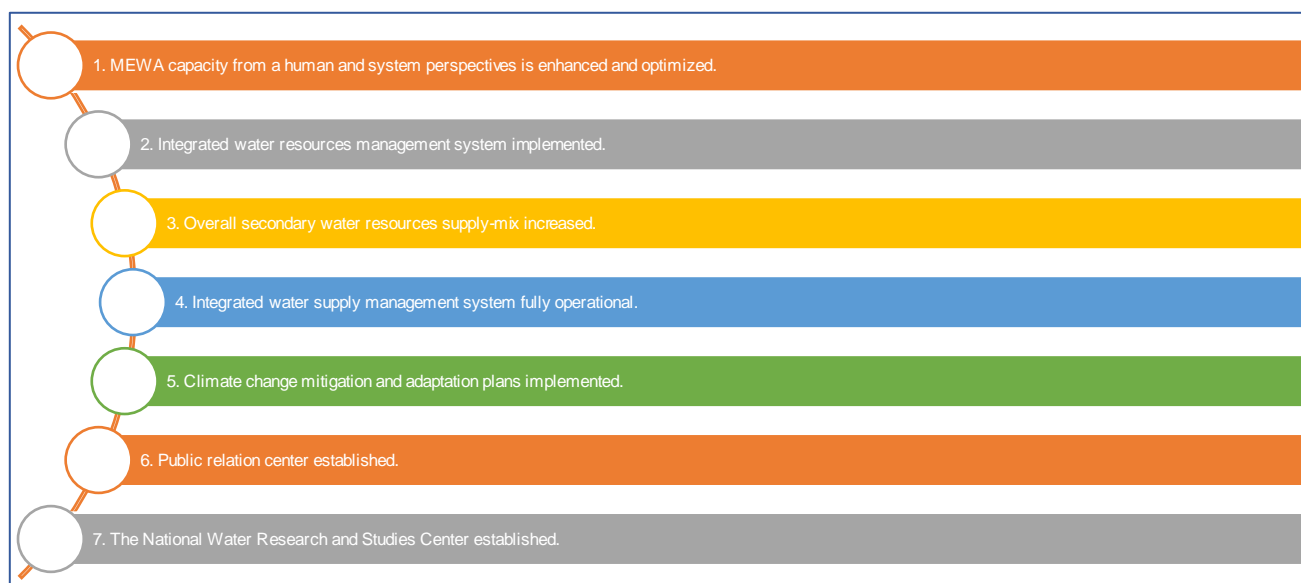
| 5.4 Effectiveness | |
|--|-----|
| 4. A. Achievement/ eventual achievement of the stated outputs and outcomes | 2.5 |
| 4.B. Prioritization of development innovation | 2.5 |
| 4.C. Programme Inclusiveness (especially those at risk of being left behind) | 2.5 |
| The Project “Mostly Achieved” the intended outputs and outcomes | 2.5 |

Fully Achieved ≥ 3.5 ■ $2.5 \leq$ Mostly Achieved < 3.5 ■ $1.5 \leq$ Partially Achieved < 2.5 ■ Not Achieved < 1.5

5.4.A Achievement/ eventual achievement of stated outputs and outcomes

Most of the objectives set in the PDD are either in progress or partially achieved at different levels of completion. The degree of completion for the activities were less than planned as per the original set timelines. In this sense, the set goals, timeframe, resources allocated may have been overly ambitious in terms of the expected targets as well as dealing with the COVID-19 pandemic. Key Project Outcomes are listed in Figure 11.

Figure 11: Key project outcomes



A run down of key outcomes is described here under with a lot of deliverables and achievement, with examples described hereunder with an estimate of programs accomplishment.

Nonetheless, it was not possible to quantitatively assess the level of accomplishment of each outcome as there was no registry or tracking mechanism to each activity contribution against project-related and not related activities or the level of technical capacity gained by MEWA staff, or experts' contribution to other non-Project related activities or the systems that were built and operated. Thus, this outcome was considered partially complete.

5.4.A.1 Enhance MEWA Capacity (Partially completed)

The project took three approaches for capacity building including Human capital building, organizational capacity building and technical support.

- Human resources' wise, the Project was able to deploy 19 international experts and 33 nationals over the duration of the project. Providing 22 training courses to over 300 beneficiaries. The experts provided everyday technical assistance and developing the capabilities of MEWA' staff.

When considering the level of exiting MEWA capacities without the project expertise, the MEWA would not have been able to achieve what has been achieved. There is clear evidence of the contribution of the Project to develop capacities of MEWA on matters related to implementation of the NWS priorities. These resources proved to be pivotal to support the realignment of resources to the IWRM process.

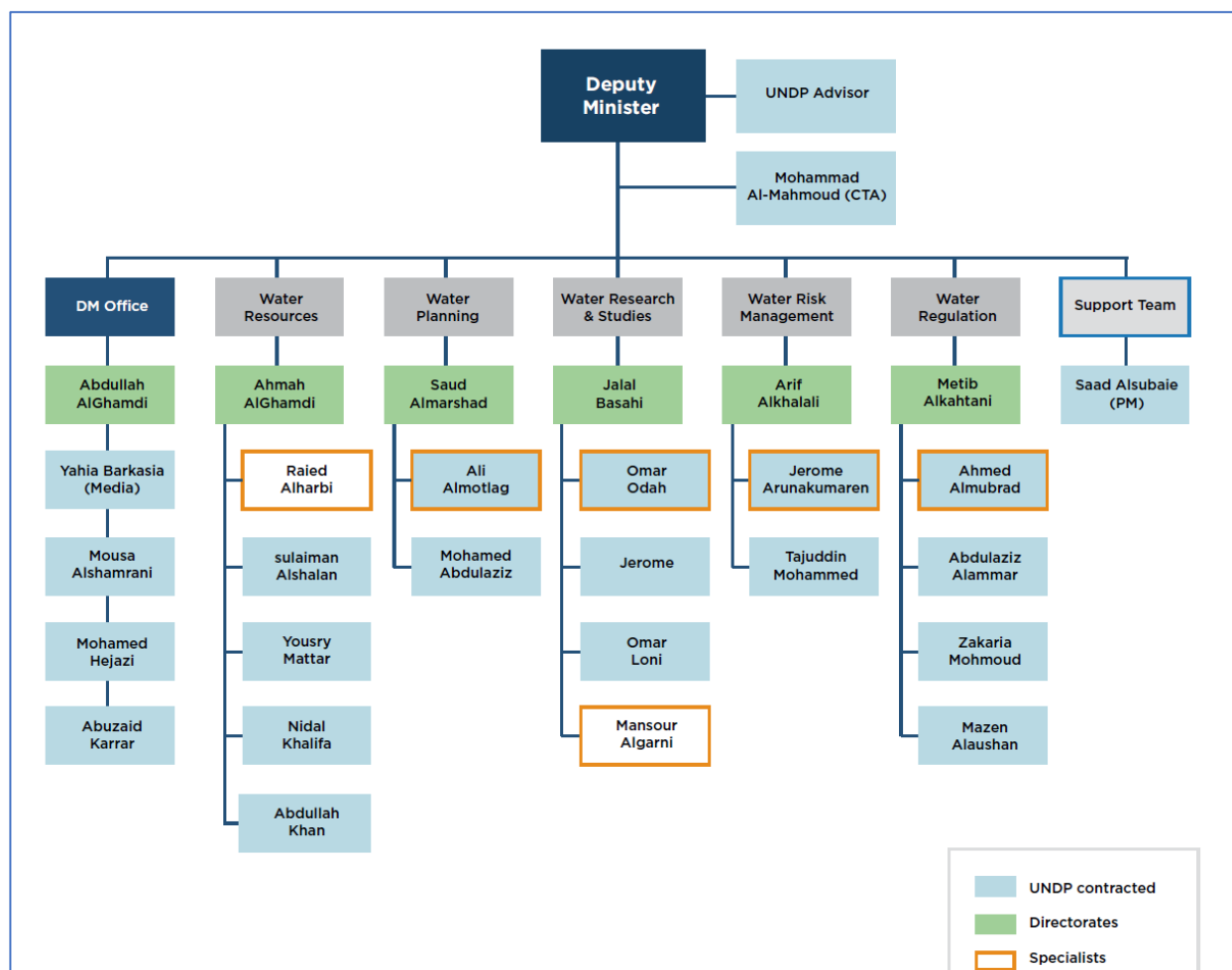
While these experts provided direct and indirect services, it was not possible to quantify their level of contribution against the specific project objectives and outputs. There is no clear metrics to measure their contribution or impact against MEWA staff or consultants.

- Organizationally, the Project played the key role in supporting the restructuring of MEWA and the formation of its new organization and assumed UNDP experts' roles in the newly formed General Directorates mainly in relation to capacity development and institutional adaption to the amplification of MEWA's responsibilities and tasks. These experts' contribution is infused at different level in MEWA. Some at Director level and some are technical with dual roles.

Among the two leadership roles that of greatest significance are for the Water Regulation General Directorates and The Water Planning General Directorate where the Water Law and the National Water Strategy. A full representation of the distribution of UNDP experts across the Deputyship is outlined in Figure 12.

While the organization structure keeps evolving to align with NWS 2030 and MEWA priorities, there are still challenges with lines of reporting, role and responsibilities, dependencies, decision making hierarchy, management vs. technical roles, and sustainability of these resources post Project end.

Figure 12: UNDP expert contribution to MEWA Water Deputyship



- Technically, the Project provided technical experts has helped support the implementation of water resources programs, key areas of technical support included Dam Planning and Management, Groundwater Modeling, Project Management, Strategy and Water Management, Remote Sensing, Water Supply and Demand Planning, Water Regulations and Implementation, Geophysics, Water Monitoring, Media advocacy, and GIS.

These services were fundamental to MEWA's ability to deliver in highly technical and complex programs and benefited well from the international knowledge transfer and on the job training and coaching.

However, it was not possible to quantify the exact level of contribution of these services against the program outcomes, as there was no record keeping of resources contribution against the Project deliverables.

5.4.A.2 Climate Change, (Partially completed)

The Project established an updated regional climate change model for Saudi Arabia. Based on the results of initial modelling there is a decision to support the construction of more than 500 dams remaining under the National 1,000 Dams Plan, supporting flash flood mitigation in the vicinity of villages

and to protect vital infrastructure. While the focus was to mitigate floods risks, there is no evidence of any other work-related on climate change research.

5.4.A.3 Assessing Secondary Water Resources, (Partially completed)

The Project helped improving the quality of hydrometeorological via better interpolation of missing values were interpolated, using global satellite products and the most applicable scientific methods.

Allowing MEWA staff to maximize the benefit from existing dams by providing near real-time information to support the operational plans of the dams to meet their purposes and strengthen flood risk management plans by providing a high reliability database.

While the data communication systems are being conceptualized, more work is still being envisioned to capture information. This is now being implemented through third-party consultants and is still being planned and programmed.

5.4.A.4 Providing Comprehensive Reviews of Renewable Groundwater, (Partially completed)

The Project team provided oversight, review and quality control, particularly related to the numerical simulation models for three regional studies. The first covered an area extending from the watershed of the Al-Hijaz Mountains in the west to the Arabian Platform in the east, and from the Saudi – Jordanian border in the north to the Saudi – Yemeni boundary in the South. The area is approximately 1,600 km long and about 200 km wide. The second study, the Harrats Project in main valleys of the Arabian shield Located East of Al-Hijaz Mountains and a third project assessed the water resources of the Western Coastal Plan.

This activity is one of the most important activities that were done and invested including deploying various groundwater models and trying to connect these models together to provide a more comprehensive understanding of the groundwater aquifer systems.

However, the linkage between various model types, methods, technologies and approaches remains a challenge and is hindering the ability to have a fulsome system that can support decision making.

5.4.A.5 Development of Criteria for Aquifer Storage and Recovery, (Partially completed)

The Project contributed to the development of technical criteria for the selection of Aquifer Storage and Recovery (ASR) sites with the goal to maximize the utilization of surplus winter water to recharge the aquifer and then supply water during drought seasons. Four pilot ASR assessment sites were selected in the aquifers of Abyar Al Mashi, Malakan Valley, Rabigh Dam reservoir and Khulais Dam reservoir.

More sites will be selected based on the lessons learned from these pilot projects and to define priorities that are commensurate with the vision of the Kingdom. These pilots' sites are still in progress.

5.4.A.6 Development of Dam Management Master Plan (Completed)

The Project helped in establishing a dam management master plan, including operation and maintenance guidelines, planning, design and construction of 57 assessment and design processes, 10 were at the conceptual design stage, 30 were at preliminary design stage and 17 were at the final-pre-construction design stage.

Geological, hydrological and geotechnical studies were conducted to assess geomorphology and the physical characteristics of the catchment area such as area, shape, slope, mainstream length, and the basin slope of the controls the hydrograph shape and determines the Lag time and to predict the peak discharge value and the hydrograph as input to the hydraulic and structural design of the dam and the geotechnical and engineering properties of both soil and rocks at the dam site, which is used in the dam design.

5.4.A.7 Assessing Non-Renewable Groundwater Resources, (Partially completed)

The Project supported the modelling work to estimate existing groundwater reserves, compiling, analysing and interpreting relevant data available in eight previous reports and to prepare a first foundation to start assessing reserves in 11 aquifers: six of the eight principal and five secondary aquifers.

These conceptual design models are still in being prepared and in conceptual design phase.

5.4.A.8 Hydrothermal Energy, (Cancelled)

While most activities were addressed, the Project leadership decided to remove this component as part of the re-alignment process as it was noted that the hydrothermal energy component of the project was irrelevant to the MEWA mandates and priorities.

5.4.A.9 Water Extensional Education Center (Partially completed)

The Project supported the establishment of the Water Resources Awareness Center. Key outputs include the design and implementation of ten campaigns to raise awareness about water use efficiency and demand-side-management programs and the development of 12 publications and 3 videos about water rationalization. Furthermore, posting more than 110 tweets in support of spreading water awareness and of the importance of water.

It is estimated that more than 500,000 people were reached through these campaigns. “From remaining water, we save lives” Campaign: An awareness campaign, for all segments of society, aimed at making use of the remaining water in bottled water cans and reusing it in different fields through social media, online newspapers and MEWA events.

There are plans to merge this program with other cross-government communication programs and locate them all in one central location. Work is in progress to build a new center and mobilize a number of the engagement and communication staff. There are still key ambiguities on who will transfer and who would stay behind, roles and responsibilities and strategic direction.

5.4.A.10 Developing Regulation and Compliance Systems, (Partially completed)

The Project helped in modernizing and updating the Water Act, well water abstraction licensing regulations, and water and wastewater quality standards, regulation and monitoring. The legislative framework is an important enforcement tool, helping to ensure effective implementation of the IWMS.

Issuance of well abstraction licences is an important component of the broader system needed to collect data via the Central Electronic Water System. These activities relate directly to the implementation of the National Water Strategy. Particularly, the KPI that measures the proportions (%) of wells from which

abstraction is licensed for urban and industrial water supply and agriculture, is being measured through this activity. Baselines and 2030 targets are 0% and 100%, respectively. Well water abstraction licensing progress is shown in Table 6.

The regulatory and compliance regime is not fully done and still in progress to address water sector challenges mainly addressing Tariffs, licensing and permits, water allocations, technology standardization and legislative review processes.

Table 6: Water abstraction licensing progress.

| Category | Total 2030 | Progress end 2020 | |
|------------------|------------|-------------------|----|
| | | Licensed | % |
| Municipal | 5,046 | 751 | 15 |
| Industrial (all) | 300 | 90 | 30 |
| Agriculture | 26,936 | 4,059 | 15 |

Sources: Domier (active agricultural wells) and Saudi Authority for Industrial Cities and Technology Zones.

5.4.A.11 Monitoring system

One of the project objectives is to establish integrated monitoring system for the surface water and groundwater processes. There are different components of an integrated monitoring system, including well monitoring, for non-renewable and renewable groundwater resource assessment, which has been outlined earlier in this report, and real-time electronic monitoring of production wells and abstraction entitlements is outlined in the section above.

The Project supported the development of agricultural water abstraction control and data transition system for the agricultural wells.

The system is expected to support agricultural and urban groundwater resource abstraction licensing systems and compliance mechanisms.

Tariff rates are being established to serve both urban and agricultural water users to recover the costs of providing water and reduce non-renewable groundwater abstraction.

The progress below shows the increase from zero (baseline) until the end of 2020. The aim is to have 100% of meter installation complete by 2030, Table 7.

Water quality standards and monitoring are also a critical part of a monitoring system of surface water and ground water processes.

To achieve the aims of the National Water Strategy, the proportion of water and TSE quality, meeting standards, should each increase from zero (baseline) to 100% in 2030.

In 2030 there are projected to be 1,800 urban municipalities (1,500) and private industries (300) and about 15,000 private farms with individual wells.

The annual monitoring target is to sample 10% of each category. The Water Deputyship started water and wastewater quality monitoring in 2020, Table 8.

Table 7: Meter installation progress

| Use | Total 2030 | Progress end 2020 | |
|--------------------|------------|-------------------|----|
| | | Installed | % |
| Municipal | 5,046 | 2446 | 48 |
| Industrial (large) | 34 | 11 | 32 |
| Agriculture | 26,936 | 880 | 3 |

Source: MEWA reports

Table 8: Water and wastewater quality monitoring progress.

| Category | | Total 2030 Number | Target | Progress end 2020 | |
|----------------------|-----|-------------------|--------|-------------------|---|
| | | | | Sampled | % |
| Urban and Industrial | WQ | 5,346 | 535 | 40 | 7 |
| | TSE | 5,346 | 535 | 5 | 1 |
| Agriculture | WQ | 29,936 | 2,994 | 80 | 3 |

Source: MEWA reports.

5.4.A.12 Evaluating Environmental Risk, (Partially completed)

One of the Project objectives is to evaluate the environmental risks associated with the water cycle (groundwater pollution, seawater intrusion, radioactive contamination) and elaborating counter measures. An RFP is being drafted to assess water risk and support the development of a national risk registry and mitigation plan. Once the RFP is executed and implemented, it will provide standardized methodology for identifying and updating risks along the water supply and the roles of all stakeholders. It will also work to define the methodology regarding best practices and standards for assessing and classifying water risks along the water supply chain and resources in Saudi Arabia.

5.4.A.13 National Centre for Water Research and Studies - NCWRS, (Partially completed)

The purpose of the NWRS is to bridge the science-policy interface to help establish a sustainable water management system, harmonise research and development activities through innovative partnerships, and consolidate objectives and goals, providing policy-led strategic direction to research partners.

Since its establishment in 2017, NCWRS has made significant progress on all three initiatives. NCWRS is led by a UNDP expert and more than 70% of staff members within the Centre are experts who supported the development of strategy development process, detailed business plan, outlining goals and objectives and including a regulatory framework and provided operational and procedural guidelines.

Since its inception, the Project supported more than 18 major projects in key areas of research including water treatment and quality and water sources (aquifers and desalinisation). Furthermore, providing leadership and technical support, including the development and preparation of Terms of Reference (TOR), review of project technical reports, engagement in meetings and field visits and assessments.

Currently, there are plans to centralize all government research entities into one agency or office and final plans are still being finalized to clearly delineate mandate, scope, relationship with government department and universities involved.

Center for Water Management and Control (CWMC), (Not completed)

The CWMC will play a key role in optimization of IWRM, which will reduce costs of water production, conveyance and delivery and reduce non-revenue water. It will significantly reduce decision-making time, serve as a single point of control in regulatory processes and use advanced technology to estimate water consumption for all uses.

The Project supported building a Business Plan for the Centre. The planning for certain activities is underway, as outlined below.

- Designing Integrated Water Information System
- Development of Water Management Tools: IWMIS.
- Compiling National Water Database
- Establishing Hydro-Informatics Lab

This activity is still in the planning phase and not completed.

As listed and described above, the Project contributed significantly directly and indirectly to MEWA priorities and programs, supporting and delivering on NWS 2030 strategy goals and milestones.

However, the services provided by the Project were not all implemented or executed specifically towards the Project deliverables as stated in PDD. Instead, it was addressing MEWA's various requests and needs that sometimes were not part of the Project scope.

The activities that were directly related to the Project goals and outcomes are not being executed using a SMART approach. Absence of actual Project tracking and monitoring made it unrealistic to measure the effectiveness of the Project in a quantifiable and objective manner.

5.4.B Prioritization of development innovation

The Project introduced and promoted innovative technologies, scientific methodologies and best practices in integrated water resources management (IWRM), which forms the conceptual foundations of the NWS 2030. However, is no clear evidence or documentation that indicates when, how, and by whom these innovative concepts, studies and technology transfer were decided, prioritized or introduced.

As mentioned earlier, KSA witnessed huge transformation in all sectors, and MEWA as the leading agency on Water, also rose to the occasion and was able to address this new mandate with the support of this Project and other projects.

However, the continues increase in mandate and responsibilities coupled with more pressing need to address short term priorities may have influenced the Project to address these needs and prioritize them.

Areas where the Project is successful in promoting innovative development practices among wider development actors, includes providing highly subject matter experts with significant depth and technical experience supporting at all levels in a participatory role leading to on-the-job training for MEWA staff while each expert is assuming a technical specific topic.

Areas of innovation included innovative water resources management system", development of strategies to mitigate and counter the effects of climate change (increasing rainfall with flash flood risk while taking advantage of the additional potential water resources), consideration of surface water as a supplementary strategic reserve and its exploitation, exploring the potential for secondary groundwater resources and resources in remote areas and provision of the infrastructure necessary , amalgamation of the existing databases and database systems plus adaption to the increasing portfolio of the MEWA.

5.4.C. Programme Inclusiveness

Inclusiveness and gender mainstreaming was not part of the PDD neither was considered in any reports, presentations or progress reports. This is a key shortcoming in the Project design from the beginning.

Nonetheless, the Project interventions in its end goa; had a direct and indirect positive impact on women, marginalized groups and people with accessibility challenges. The improvement in expansion and delivery of water to different water users specially in remote areas, helped in addressing water distribution inequalities, access to clean and sustainable drinking water, providing services to rural communities who were historically marginalized, and providing better quality of life by tackling water contamination, aquifers depletion and better use of treated wastewater in restricted irrigation. The ongoing digitization of online services, permits and tracking systems, made it easier to access these services remotely without the need to travel long distances and incur huge costs. Addressing environmental risks, climate change threats such as flooding benefited rural communities protecting them from this natural disaster and stabilize their livelihoods and communities.

While this was not part of the PDD and not intentional, the Project retained and hired two female staff who are passionate and experienced in community engagement and outreach building a water saving awareness program that was successful in reaching out to households in rural and urban communities.

5.5 Sustainability

The Project “Partially Achieved” the intended sustainability outputs and outcomes.

The provision of capacity building, capacity development and technical assistance to the MEWA introduced an element of sustainability into the interventions implemented. However, the sustainability of the project is uncertain considering the funding dependencies and ambiguities of the project resources gaps and mobilization plan. Risk Identification, mitigation and management were not addressed well neither were updated.

| 5. Sustainability | |
|---|-------------|
| 5.5.A Sustainable capacity beyond the project end | 1.5 |
| 5.4.B Financing for development | 2.0 |
| The Project “Partially Achieved” the sustainability outputs and outcomes | 1.75 |

Fully Achieved ≥ 3.5 ■ 2.5 \leq Mostly Achieved < 3.5 ■ 1.5 \leq Partially Achieved < 2.5 ■ Not Achieved < 1.5

5.5.A Sustainable capacity beyond the project end

From a systematic and structural point of view, the Project PDD did not address Project sustainability beyond the Project life cycle and how it should be sustained through the Project results.

Therefore, multiple aspects were considered to assess sustainability based on analysis of different criteria including a) interest from MEWA and UNDP to continue working collaboratively, b) MEWA's continuous need and level of dependence on existing experts and other to continue to deliver on government priorities and NWS 2030, c) exit strategy, d) availability of financial support, e) future for renewal, f) interdependencies between the different components of this Project, and g) level of completion of existing programs.

Desktop reviews and interviews with different stakeholders, indicates that at the end of this Project in early 2023, MEWA will not be ready to completely deliver on the various Project outcomes or be able to sustain the momentum without continuous support from experts and consultants.

There are key concerns over the sustainability of the program results, especially in terms of skills and knowledge transfer from experts to the MEWA staff, and ability to run the business beyond the expert's presence. Its clearly obvious that there is no “exit” to ensure that the MEWA can sustain and expand their activities independently without support from existing experts and consultants.

The existing UNDP experts and staff complement at MEWA are dispersed at different levels and most importantly some are at executive and senior roles with no clear plans how these positions will be filled or retain existing ones without a new project mandate that ensure their continuous retention and compensation levels which is normally higher than local staff under the Public Service Commission.

The sustainability of the UNDP's hired General Director roles at MEWA beyond the project timeframe is critical, if the hiring contracts will no not be extended, this means that leadership roles will be vacated from the director roles with no replacement strategy in place.

While some attempts are being considered to reclassify and create new job description to address this dilemma, its not clear that this would occur in time before the end of this Project.

The nature of existing technical programs is vast in their scope of work, complex in terms of their technical requirements and interwind with other programs creating a huge dependency between these different programs and the need to work in synergy between the different divisions.

Therefore, any expert's loss, programs halt, schedule interruptions and delays, conflicts could have serious impacts on the sustainability of these programs and ripple effect beyond these programs to other departments and agencies. This is clearly a huge risk and a major challenge from sustainability point view.

Furthermore, MEWA existing governing structure challenges and lack of centralized decision support unit to coordinate such a complex and multidisciplinary program and ensure strategic alignment pose a huge sustainability risk and the ability to sustain the project beyond the project completion date.

Although its not confirmed yet and based on verbal communication with the leadership team, there is a strong potential for a project renewal that would build on the accomplishments of this Project and a level of confidence that there will be future funding to support a new project considering the importance of the water sector to the national strategic goals, experience and understanding of government funding processes. While this could be highly likely and feasible, it should not be considered a structured and methodical way to build a sustainable systems and programs.

5.4.B Financing for development

The Project budget design covered fairly the cost of the experts and project management. However, it is noted that most of the program lacks operational budget. This leaves the Project unable to sustain or outsource the operational activities where needed.

The Project is largely reliant on single funding source mainly from government to implement its activities and no other clear resources mobilization plan outlining funding alternatives exists and increase the reliance on single government funding, and subsequently pose a higher risk for not delivering if government priorities change or should the government funding fails to support the Project outcomes or staff post its end.

6. CONCLUSION

The Project created various levels of outputs and results at various levels of impact potential for successor projects, should they be proceeding on lessons learned and good practices.

The Project **Relevance** is rated “Mostly Achieved” relevant to the priority needs of the key stakeholders. The Project was aligned with the national development priorities, the priorities of the UNDP Country Program, the UN SDGs vision 2030 and MEWA needs and priorities. However, fell short on alignment with gender and vulnerable groups consideration.

While this was not a planning outcome in the PDD, the Project did address the gender streaming and vulnerable groups (no one left behind) through the overall impacts of the Project on rural communicates and marginalized groups.

The project **Coherency** is rated “Mostly achieved” with internal and external activities. The project was instrumental building capacities to address national policy and departmental commitments. The Project was able to successfully build synergy with MEWA projects supported by other UNDP initiatives. Collaboration with other agencies was evident at multiple levels and forms.

These partnership agreements helped in sharing information, exchange expertise, conduct and fund research, and provide access to technical database that was relevant to the success of the Project deliverables and outcome.

However, there is no clear evidence of interlinkages with other interventions carried out by other UN agencies or private sector. The project collaboration with private investment would have been beneficial for implementation of innovative delivery of certain technical work and would achieve efficiencies, integration and possibly cost sharing.

The overall Project **Efficiency** criteria is rated “Partially Achieved” the Project outcomes and outputs, the SDGs, the UNDP Strategic Plan, and MEWA priorities. The project’s tracking and reporting followed an activity-based reporting style and included elements of soft assistance.

The governance model in the PDD was not clear on the roles and responsibilities creating multiple reporting burdens, contradicting guidance from the Project leadership to the output managers, neither defined clear decision-making process. Its imperative to design projects with the activities and bound them with a robust governance, monitoring and evaluation.

It was difficult to quantitatively measure the level of efficiency as the Project did not incorporate SMART KPIs that would obtain robust evidence for the project efficiency. The defined KPIs in the project document are repetitive and several monitoring instruments that were originally proposed were not implemented or discontinued.

The over all project **Effectiveness** criteria is rated “Almost Achieved” against the Project outcomes and outputs, the SDGs, the UNDP Strategic Plan, and national development priorities. The project has made significant contribution to enhance water management capacity at MEWA, that was evidently lacking prior project implementation commences.

The Project produced significant direct and indirect outcomes that cannot be measured or quantified wholistically to provide a full picture of the Project contribution. The project was able to attract water management expertise who helped to finalize the strategic plan and its indicators. The technical experts

hired with the support of UNDP provided everyday assistance in developing the capabilities of MEWA to reach a high-performance standard. In terms of innovation, the project adopted best practices in integrated water resources management.

In the organizational capacity building, the Project played the key role in the restructuring of the Water Deputyship. The review of these achievements indicates generally a strong focus on activities as opposed to developmental results.

Technically, the Project contributed significantly to MEWA strategic programs and priorities in the areas of integrated water resources management, secondary water resources increase, improved regulatory compliance and enforcement system, conventional and non-conventional water resources assessment and management, water information management systems, research, public awareness and participation, and risk reduction of flooding through the climate change program.

The degree of completion for the activities were less than planned as per the original set timelines. In this sense, the set goals, timeframe, resources allocated may have been overly ambitious in terms of the expected targets as well as dealing with the COVID-19 pandemic.

The over all Project **Sustainability** criteria is rated “Partially Achieved” considering the funding dependencies and ambiguities of the project resources gaps and mobilization plan. Despite the evaluation indicated that the sustainability of project achievements should be ensured, particularly due to the strong national ownership of these achievements and most achievements are already institutionalized, which is an excellent first step toward sustainability. However, the Project has no exit strategy, clear plan to ensure intervention sustainability post Project end. The trade-off between the maturity and extent of impact, time, and cost of the interventions remains a challenge to the Project.

The project budget design has fairly covered the cost of the experts and project management leaving the Project unable to sustain or outsource the activities where needed, and increase the reliance on single government funding, and subsequently a higher risk for not delivering. Furthermore, risk identification, mitigation and management were not clearly address or updated.

The “**Cross-Cutting**” themes of inclusiveness and gender mainstreaming were not stipulated in the PDD neither was considered in any reports, presentations or progress reports. This is a key shortcoming in the Project concept from the beginning. Nonetheless, the Project interventions overall impacts had a direct and indirect positive impact on women and people in remote and rural communities. The improvement in expansion and delivery of water to different water users specially in remote areas, helped in addressing water resources challenges, improve service delivery and access these services remotely without the need to travel long distances and incur huge costs, and address natural flooding disasters through the climate change lens helped in stabilizing the livelihoods and quality of life.

Table-9 summarize quantitatively evaluation results based on the five criteria of Relevance, Coherence, Efficiency, Effectiveness and Sustainability.

Table 9: Summary of Criteria and Sub-Criteria Scoring

| Criteria and sub-criteria | Overall rating |
|---|----------------|
| 1. Relevance | |
| 1.A. Adherence to national development priorities | 3.5 |
| 1.B. Alignment with United Nations/ UNDP goals | 3.5 |
| 1.C. Alignment with gender considerations, human rights, disability | 2.0 |
| The Project Mostly Achieved the programme outputs and outcomes | 3.0 |
| 2. Coherence | |
| 2.A. Internal programme coherence | 3.5 |
| 2.B. External programme coherence | 3.0 |
| The Project Mostly Achieved the intended outputs and outcomes | 3.25 |
| 3. Efficiency | |
| 3.A. Timeliness | 2.0 |
| 3.B. Management and operational efficiency | 2.0 |
| The Project Partially Achieved the intended outputs and outcomes | 2.0 |
| 4. Effectiveness | |
| 4.A. Achievement/ eventual achievement of stated outputs and outcomes | 2.5 |
| 4.B. Prioritization of development innovation | 2.5 |
| 4.C. Programme Inclusiveness | 2.5 |
| The Project Mostly Achieved the intended outputs and outcomes | 2.5 |
| 5. Sustainability | |
| 5.A. Sustainable capacity beyond the project end | 1.5 |
| 5.B. Financing for development | 2.0 |
| The Project Partially Achieved the sustainability outputs and outcomes | 1.75 |

Fully Achieved ≥ 3.5 ■ $2.5 \leq$ Mostly Achieved < 3.5 ■ $1.5 \leq$ Partially Achieved < 2.5 ■ Not Achieved < 1.5

7. LESSONS LEARNED

7.1 UNDP/MEWA partnership is considered and will continue to be vital and beneficial.

The current Project is a continuum of previous projects and initiatives between UNDP and MEWA. These various projects were and continue to be transformative and cumulative in nature evolving and responding to country changing strategic needs and priorities.

7.2 MEWA is leading the initiative to design its own priorities, set goals and objectives and decide the necessary intervention that is required to meet these objectives.

The country national scene is transforming rapidly, with new leadership who is keen towards transforming the country systems and business operation model to be up-to-day modern standards. This shift is creating a new paradigm in which the Saudi Arabia government is a head of many programs that were developed based on previous government operational culture.

7.3 Consultations is necessary to better understand the context, and proposed intervention is important to capture all views.

The design of any project goals should be based on a solid context analysis. A deeper analysis which feeds into the design of any intervention and its overall Theory of Change. An iterative process is important and desirable, especially after a change in leadership, country and programs priorities.

7.3 Cross-cutting issues, including gender mainstreaming is paramount.

Needs to be considered from the start and should be based on a solid analysis to guide the design and implementation of the intervention.

7.4 The establishment and selection of the members of the PMU as well as the counterpart(s) are key for ensuring ownership and sustainability.

Senior Management involvement is key for following up on the implementation of the project objectives and providing a healthy management oversight. People engaged in the project should not be limited to the senior management.

7.5 Clear and timely communication needs to take place at all levels, including at the staff level to ensure conformity, synergy and to manage expectations.

Working in silos (vertically or horizontally) is ineffective. To increase the effectiveness, a feedback mechanism would allow staff to provide feedback both positive and negative which would allow the project to take corrective measures.

7.6 M&E robust quantitative and qualitative framework should be part of any project

The M&E system should inform the communications for the results and achievements to be communicated at different levels. The M&E framework is essential to monitor financial inputs, outputs/activities, but more importantly outcome-level results.

8. RECOMMENDATIONS

8.1 Recommendation #1

- 8.1.1 Undertake a different shift in any future project proposals. The pivot of future projects, interventions must be targeted towards specific ministry's need and specific activities and not a wholesale undertaking, with clear SMART objectives, sound governance structure and oversight.
- 8.1.2 Review the project outputs needs of experts and suggest resources allocations to each output including advice on the contracting modality (full time expert vs short time assignment).
- 8.1.3 This should be done at the planning stage of any new projects and at should be collaboratively carried by MEWA and UNDP leadership steering committee.

8.2 Recommendation #2

- 8.2.1 Carry jurisdictional study of best practices in neighbouring countries that have similar demographic, natural and cultural settings i.e., UAE, Jordan, Morocco, Kuwait, Tunisia and Oman who have started the path of IWRM and have a proof of concept specially in the areas of IWRM capacity building, Decision Support Systems (DSS), Supply-Demand strategic planning and management.
- 8.2.2 The study should be implemented independently by a third-party consultant to ensure best practices are being explored and captured with minimum influence and bias from existing staff at the earliest possible. The findings of this comparative study will help MEWA and UNDP focus on what's most important and relevant.

8.3 Recommendation #3

- 8.3.1 Build targeted training and mentoring programs designed based on short and long-term needs and priorities in partnership with private sector including creative multi modes of delivery. With the flexibility and agility to adapt to existing and emerging challenges and policies, restrictions and opportunities.
- 8.3.2 This would include defining key positions needed at various levels (leadership, technical, operational, support) and establish a concise talent management list with clear actions on training steps, timelines, destination, type, level and quality of training.
- 8.3.3 This undertaking needs to be core to any future projects at the inception level with the goal to ensure ability to own and deliver without the continuous risk of falling short to fund and secure experts to run the business.

8.4 Recommendation #4

- 8.4.1. Establish a decision-priority matrix as prerequisite ahead of any future project scope, that defines scientifically and objectively what priorities and interventions should be selected based on a pre-set selection criterion including return on invest (ROI), relevance and effectiveness and

sustainable post project end. This would ensure that future interventions are thoughtful, relevant and aligned with the strategic goals.

- 8.4.2. This activity needs start a head of any future TOR or project description and would needs to collaboratively implement among MEWA's senior leadership to ensure alignment and buy in through brainstorms and blue skying sessions.
- 8.4.3. It's suggested that a third-party moderator facilitate these sessions to ensure maximum participation and constructive structured sessions.

8.5 Recommendation #5

- 8.5.1 The project scope and results framework should be reviewed and refined regularly through a highly participatory process involving key stakeholders i.e., ministry staff, upstream and down stream beneficiaries and technical experts from various departments staff that are supposed to be part of producing deliverables.
- 8.5.2 This should occur through structure and facilitated engagement and brainstorming/blue sky sessions, and focal groups. This would ensure buy in, continuous commitment, common and unified support to the project during it full life cycle implementation.
- 8.5.3 This should be carried on a regular basis and led by the Project Management Unit team with input from divisions leads.

8.6 Recommendation #6

- 8.6.1 Seek strategic partnerships with other international and national partners. This would help in ensuring more than one source of funding, diversity of views and exposure, and optimization of activities and interventions.
- 8.6.2 This activity should be at the design stage of any future project discussions and part of any financial risk mitigations discussions between MEWA and UNDP.

8.7 Recommendation #7

- 8.7.1 Both UNDP and MEWA needs to ensure incorporation and implementation of gender mainstreaming and other inclusive considerations at the planning stage ensuring best practices are being considered and implemented.
- 8.7.2 Build clear KPIs, milestones, tracking, reporting that captures the context of change and the degree of its contribution to that change.

8.8 Recommendation #8

- 8.8.1 Developing a new governance model arrangements that address the gaps identified in this Project, mainly related to Board governance, coordination and decision-making mechanisms.

- 8.8.2 Development of liaison and coordination mechanisms and processes between the MEWA and the UNDP through a functional and established Project Management UNIT (PMU) with clear and demarcated lines of reporting and decision-making capabilities across and between established structures.
- 8.8.3 It's suggested that a third-party consultant or expert be retained on a long-term basis for the full duration of new projects to develop, design and build a sound governance structure and PMU to ensure sustainability, continuous support and independent advice when needed and to minimize scope creep, mandate influence and deviation, professional documentation of actions and decisions, a catalyst and a go-to person when there is conflict or confusion. This role should not be confused with CTA position.
- 8.8.4 This is a key task that requires strong determination and commitment at the highest level and at the earliest possible to ensure sustainability and success of this Project.

8.9 Recommendation #9

- 8.9.1 Establish a M&E system based on a shared understanding of goals and intended results, the architecture of the new agreement and the approved multi-year work plan.
- 8.9.2 Ensure quantitative and qualitative reporting tools are built in, to monitor and measure achievements and progress of the project.
- 8.9.3 Management and operation of this system as to be within the PMU to ensure continuous tracking, support and oversight.
- 8.9.4 Further audits by third-party expert or firms are also highly recommended.

8.10 Recommendation #10

- 8.10.1 Develop a comprehensive risk log that identifies emerging risks and mitigation strategies.
- 8.10.2 Management and operation of this system as to be within the PMU to ensure continuous tracking, support and oversight.
- 8.10.3 Further audits by third-party expert or firms are also highly recommended.

8.11 Recommendation #11

- 8.11.1 Define exit strategy including extension scenarios and how the MEWA would be able to run its business independently or with less dependence beyond the project. Institutionalization of the results is a prerequisite for its sustainability.
- 8.11.2 This task should be part of the PDD of any new project and should be considered upfront and then be retroactively built to ensure sound project closer and successful end.

ANNEX-I. TERMS OF REFERENCE

Sustainable Development and Integrated Water Management**Final Project Evaluation Terms of Reference****UNDP Country Office and Ministry of Environment, Water and Agriculture
Kingdom of Saudi Arabia****1. Background and context**

With a rapidly growing population of presently close to 32 million, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia faces several challenges including growing urbanization and environmental change. While urbanization poses great pressure on regional water and sewage infrastructure and bears pollution risks, environmental challenges include depletion of aquifers and increasing torrential flood risks. Earning relatively high annual revenues from natural resources, Saudi Arabia has invested heavily in development and upgrading infrastructure during the past few decades, including in water and sewage infrastructure, road networks, housing, hospitals, and schools.

Due to Ministry of Environment, Water and Agriculture's (MEWA) recent initiatives, efficient water uses and governance in the municipal and irrigation subsector, reuse of wastewater and exploitation of shallow aquifers caused significant reduction of groundwater abstractions.

Nevertheless, a set of bolstering measures towards sustainable water supply even in stress and emergency situations and minimizing the climatically induced environmental risks needs to be formulated. These actions or interventions simultaneously should target the supply side; curtail water demands in various productive sectors; and mitigate the environmental risks.

However, to make a transition from the current patterns of water administration to sound water management mode, **two prerequisites are required**. First, there is strong need to strengthen the technical and organizational capacities of the MEWA to deal with the triple challenge of water exploitation and distribution (operational side), research for additional resources and cutting-edge technologies to satisfy the increasing demand (research side), and rigid control and administration of all water-related aspects (control side). Second, a sound information base covering data on groundwater availability, quality, withdrawal, and usage is about to be put in place.

The transformation of this information into an all-encompassing water resources management requires sustained long-term efforts, especially since the MEWA has limited capacity and experience in this field. It needs to go a long way in terms of development and strengthening its technical capacities to be able to meet its mandates.

To this effect MEWA partnered with UNDP Country Office to address challenges being faced in capacity development and strengthening institutional role of the Ministry. The project has been designed to initiate a systematic process of capacity development to help in sustainable development of water resources and management of water-related affairs in the Kingdom to ensure permanent and sufficient supply.

Annual evaluations are set within this project document to ensure targets are met and course of action corrected when needed during the lifetime of the project. A first evaluation was conducted in 2019 which resulted in a list of recommendations by the evaluator. Since then, all recommendations have been addressed. Due to the ongoing global pandemic of coronavirus disease all subsequent planned annual evaluations have been halted; however, a final evaluation will be taking place.

This intervention requires working with all heads of departments involved with the various outcomes as well as all consultants on the project and other relevant project and ministry staff.

The evaluation will take place in Riyadh, within the offices of MEWA but may require meetings with various national stakeholders.

| PROJECT/OUTCOME INFORMATION | | |
|---|--|-------------|
| Project/outcome title | Sustainable Development and Integrated Water Management | |
| Atlas ID | SAU10/1078 88 | |
| Corporate outcome and output | National Capacities Developed for Better Management of Non-oil Natural Resources | |
| Country | Saudi Arabia | |
| Region | RBAS | |
| Date project document signed | 20/02/2018 | |
| | Start | Planned end |
| Project dates | 01/03/2018 | 28/02/2022 |
| Project budget | \$24,859,429 | |
| Project expenditure at the time of evaluation | | |
| Funding source | Government Cost-Sharing | |
| Implementing party ¹ | Ministry of Environment, Water and Agriculture | |

2. Evaluation purpose, scope, and objectives

This evaluation is the final evaluation for the afore mentioned project aimed at re-positioning the project to help MEWA meet its new mandate. The evaluation and ensuing recommendations will help build a new project document serving MEWA better deliver its intended task and learn lessons from previous activities.

Scope and objectives of the evaluation:

- This evaluation will cover all outcomes of the project documents. It will delve into the details of the achievements, how these feed into the final target (or fail to do so).
- Coordination amongst all project components has also been a matter of concern
- This evaluation will cover all activities held during the span of the project and highlight issues and recommendations in all aspects (technical, financial, management, structural and operational), including the effective use of resources and delivery outputs in the signed project document and workplan
- The evaluation will suggest recommendations which will help build a new project document.
- Issues relate directly to the questions the evaluation must answer so that users will have the information they need for pending decisions or action. An issue may concern the relevance, coherence, efficiency, effectiveness, or sustainability of the intervention. In addition, UNDP evaluations must address how the intervention sought to mainstream gender in development efforts, considered disability issues and applied the rights-based approach.

3. Evaluation criteria and key guiding questions

Evaluation questions define the information that the evaluation will generate. This section proposes the questions that, when answered, will give intended users of the evaluation the information they seek to make decisions, act or add to knowledge. Questions should be grouped according to the four OECD-DAC evaluation criteria: (a) relevance; (b) effectiveness; (c) efficiency; and (d) sustainability (and/or other criteria used).

Project evaluation sample questions:**Relevance/ Coherence**

- To what extent was the project in line with national development priorities, country programme outputs and outcomes, the UNDP Strategic Plan, and the SDGs?
- To what extent does the project contribute to the theory of change for the relevant country programme outcome?
- To what extent were lessons learned from other relevant projects considered in the design?
- To what extent were perspectives of men and women who could affect the outcomes, and those who could contribute information or other resources to the attainment of stated results, considered during project design processes?
- To what extent does the project contribute to gender equality, the empowerment of women and the human rights-based approach?
- To what extent has the project been appropriately responsive to political, legal, economic, institutional, etc., changes in the country?

Effectiveness

- To what extent did the project contribute to the country programme outcomes and outputs, the SDGs, the UNDP Strategic Plan, and national development priorities?
- To what extent were the project outputs achieved, considering men, women, and vulnerable groups?
- What factors have contributed to achieving, or not, intended country programme outputs and outcomes?
- To what extent has the UNDP partnership strategy been appropriate and effective?
- What factors contributed to effectiveness or ineffectiveness?
- 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?
- 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?
- What, if any, alternative strategies would have been more effective in achieving the project objectives?
- Are the project objectives and outputs clear, practical, and feasible within its frame? Do they clearly address women, men, and vulnerable groups?
- To what extent have different stakeholders been involved in project implementation?
- To what extent are project management and implementation participatory, and is this participation of men, women and vulnerable groups contributing towards achievement of the project objectives?

Efficiency

- To what extent was the project management structure as outlined in the project document efficient in generating the expected results?
- To what extent have the UNDP project implementation strategy and execution been efficient and cost-effective?
- To what extent has there been an economical use of financial and human resources? Have resources (funds, male and female staff, time, expertise, etc.) been allocated strategically to achieve outcomes?
- To what extent have resources been used efficiently? Have activities supporting the strategy been cost-effective?
- To what extent have project funds and activities been delivered in a timely manner?
- To what extent do the M&E systems utilized by UNDP ensure effective and efficient project management?

Sustainability

- Are there any financial risks that may jeopardize the sustainability of project outputs affecting women, men, and vulnerable groups?
- To what extent will targeted men, women and vulnerable people benefit from the project interventions in the long-term?
- To what extent will financial and economic resources be available to sustain the benefits achieved by the project?
- Are there any social or political risks that may jeopardize sustainability of project outputs and the project contributions to country programme outputs and outcomes?
- Do the legal frameworks, policies and governance structures and processes within which the project operates pose risks that may jeopardize sustainability of project benefits?
- To what extent do mechanisms, procedures and policies exist to allow primary stakeholders to carry forward the results attained on gender equality, empowerment of women, human rights, and human development?
- To what extent do stakeholders (vulnerable groups) support the project's long-term objectives?
- To what extent are lessons learned documented by the project team on a continual basis and shared with appropriate parties who could learn from the project?
- To what extent do UNDP interventions have well-designed and well-planned exit strategies which include a gender dimension?
- What could be done to strengthen exit strategies and sustainability to support female and male project beneficiaries as well as marginalized groups?

Evaluation questions on cross-cutting issues

Methodology

Evaluation should employ a combination of qualitative and quantitative evaluation methods and instruments. The evaluator is expected follow a participatory and consultative approach that ensures close engagement with the evaluation managers, implementing partners and male and female direct beneficiaries. Methodological tools and approaches may include:

- **Document review.** This would include a review of all relevant documentation, inter alia
 - Project document (contribution agreement).
 - Theory of change and results framework.
 - Programme and project quality assurance reports.
 - Annual workplans.
 - Activity designs.
 - Consolidated quarterly and annual reports.
 - Results-oriented monitoring report.
 - Highlights of project board meetings.
 - Technical/financial monitoring reports.
- **Interviews and meetings** with key stakeholders (men and women) such as key government counterparts, donor community members, representatives of key civil society organizations, United Nations country team (UNCT) members and implementing partners:
 - **Semi-structured interviews**, based on questions designed for different stakeholders based on evaluation questions around relevance, coherence, effectiveness, efficiency, and sustainability.
 - Key informant and **focus group discussions** with men and women, beneficiaries and stakeholders.
 - All interviews with men and women should be undertaken in full confidence and anonymity. The final evaluation report should not assign specific comments to individuals.
- **Surveys and questionnaires** including male and female participants in development programmes, UNCT members and/or surveys and questionnaires to other stakeholders at strategic and programmatic levels.
- **Field visits** and on-site validation of key tangible outputs and interventions.
- The evaluator is expected to follow a participatory and consultative approach that ensures close engagement with the evaluation managers, implementing partners and direct beneficiaries.
- **Other methods** such as outcome mapping, observational visits, group discussions, etc.
- **Data review and analysis** of monitoring and other data sources and methods. To ensure maximum validity, reliability of data (quality) and promote use, the evaluation team will ensure

triangulation of the various data sources.

- **Gender and vulnerable groups lens.** All evaluation products need to address gender, disability, and human right issues.

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

4. Evaluation products (deliverables)

- **Evaluation inception report (10-15 pages).** The inception report should be carried out following and based on preliminary discussions with UNDP after the desk review and should be produced before the evaluation starts (before any formal evaluation interviews, survey distribution or field visits) and prior to the country visit in the case of international evaluators.
- **Evaluation debriefings.** Immediately following the evaluation, UNDP expects a preliminary debriefing and findings.
- **Draft evaluation report (within an agreed length).**² A length of 40 to 60 pages including executive summary is suggested.
- **Evaluation report audit trail.** The programme unit and key stakeholders in the evaluation should review the draft evaluation report and provide an amalgamated set of comments to the evaluator within an agreed period, as outlined in these guidelines. Comments and changes by the evaluator in response to the draft report should be retained by the evaluator to show how they have addressed comments.
- **Final evaluation report.** With a one-page evaluation summary to be presented to HE the Minister. The one pager is to highlight key achievements of the project and their impact.
- **Presentations to stakeholders and/or the evaluation reference group** (if required).
- **Evaluation brief and other knowledge products** or participation in knowledge-sharing events, if relevant.

5. Required competencies

- **Required qualifications:** PHD degree in relevant discipline, minimum 10 years' experience in evaluations, preferable in the field of Water Resources Management, knowledge of Saudi, region or similar context, a plus.
- **Technical competencies:** Team leadership skills and experience, technical knowledge in UNDP thematic areas, with specifics depending on the focus of the evaluation, data analysis and report writing etc.
- **Technical knowledge and experience:** Gender and disability inclusion competencies preferable. Technical knowledge and experience in other cross-cutting areas such equality, disability issues, rights-based approach, and capacity development.
- **Language skills required:** Fluent English, knowledge of Arabic considered an asset

Evidence to be presented:

- resume
- work samples
- references

To support claims of knowledge, skills and experience.

Explicit statement of evaluators' independence from any organizations that have been involved in designing, executing, or advising any aspect of the intervention that is the subject of the evaluation.³

6. Evaluation ethics

Evaluations in UNDP will be conducted in accordance with the principles outlined in the UNEG 'Ethical Guidelines for Evaluation'.³

This evaluation will be conducted in accordance with the principles outlined in the UNEG 'Ethical Guidelines for Evaluation'. The consultant must safeguard the rights and confidentiality of information providers, interviewees and stakeholders through measures to ensure compliance with legal and other relevant codes governing collection of data and reporting on data. The consultant must also ensure security of collected information before and after the evaluation and protocols to ensure anonymity and confidentiality of sources of information where that is expected. The information knowledge and data gathered in the evaluation process must also be solely used for the evaluation and not for other uses with the express authorization of UNDP and partners.

7. Implementation arrangements

The section describes the specific roles and responsibilities of all involved in this evaluation:

1. Evaluation commissioner: The Resident Representative
2. Evaluation manager: Lead the evaluation process and participate in all its stages - evaluability assessment, preparation, implementation, management and use. Ensure quality assurance and manage the ERC portal
3. Evaluator:
 - a. Fulfil the contractual arrangements under the TOR
 - b. Develop the evaluation inception report, including an evaluation matrix and a gender responsive methodology, in line with the TOR, UNEG norms and standards and ethical guidelines
 - c. Conduct data collection and field visits according to the TOR and inception report
 - d. Produce draft reports adhering to UNDP evaluation templates, and brief the evaluation manager, programme/project managers and stakeholders on the progress and key findings and recommendations
 - e. Consider gender equality and women's empowerment and other cross-cutting issues, check if all and respective evaluation questions are answered, and relevant data, disaggregated by sex, is presented, analysed and interpreted

- f. Finalize the evaluation report, incorporating comments and questions from the feedback/ audit trail. Record own feedback in the audit trail including those of the members of the team, the evaluation manager, the commissioning programme unit, and key stakeholders.
- 4. Project manager:
 - a. Provide inputs/ advice to the evaluation manager and evaluation reference group on the detail and scope of the TOR for the evaluation and how the findings will be used
 - b. Ensure and safeguard the independence of evaluations
 - c. Provide the evaluation manager with all required data (e.g., relevant monitoring data) and documentation (reports, minutes, reviews, studies, etc.), contacts/ stakeholder list etc.
 - d. Ensure that data and documentation in general, but related to gender equality and women's empowerment and other cross-cutting issues, are made available to the evaluation manager
 - e. Provide comments and clarification on the TOR, inception report and draft evaluation reports
 - f. Respond to evaluation recommendations by providing management responses and key actions to all recommendations addressed to UNDP
 - g. Ensure dissemination of the evaluation report to all the stakeholders including the project board
 - h. Implement relevant key actions on evaluation recommendations

8. Period for the evaluation process

This section lists and describes all tasks and deliverables for which the evaluator will be responsible and accountable, as well as those involving the commissioning office (e.g., workplan, agreements, briefings, draft report, final report).

- Desk review.
- Briefings of evaluator.
- Finalizing the evaluation design and methods and preparing the detailed inception report.
- In-country data collection and analysis (visits to the field, interviews, questionnaires).
- Preparing the draft report.
- Stakeholder meeting and review of the draft report (for quality assurance).
- Incorporating comments and finalizing the evaluation report.
- In addition, the evaluator may be expected to support UNDP efforts in knowledge sharing and dissemination.

| ACTIVITY | ESTIMATED # OF DAYS | DATE OF COMPLETION | PLACE | RESPONSIBLE PARTY |
|--|---------------------|---|------------------------------|--|
| Phase One: Desk review and inception report | | | | |
| Meeting briefing with UNDP (programme managers and project-staff as needed) | - | At the time of contract signing 1 November 2021 | UNDP or remote | Evaluation manager and commissioner |
| Sharing of the relevant documentation with the evaluator | - | At the time of contract signing 1 November 2021 | Via email | Evaluation manager and commissioner |
| Desk review, Evaluation design, methodology and updated workplan including the list of stakeholders to be interviewed | 3 days | Within two weeks of contract signing 1-15 November 2021 | Home- based | Evaluator |
| Submission of the inception report (15 pages maximum) | - | Within two weeks of contract signing 15 November 2021 | | Evaluator |
| Comments and approval of inception report | - | Within one week of submission of the inception report 22 November 2021 | UNDP | Evaluation manager |
| Phase Two: Data-collection mission | | | | |
| Consultations and field visits, in-depth interviews, and focus groups | 10 days | Within four weeks of contract signing 28 November - 9 December 2021 | In country With field visits | UNDP to organize with local project partners, project staff, local authorities, NGOs, etc. |
| Debriefing to UNDP and key stakeholders | 1 day | 9 December 2021 | In country | Evaluator |
| Phase Three: Evaluation report writing | | | | |
| Preparation of draft evaluation report (50 pages maximum excluding annexes), executive summary (4-5 pages) | 9 days | Within two weeks of the completion of the field mission 12-24 December 2021 | Home- based | Evaluator |
| Draft report submission | - | | | Evaluator |
| Consolidated UNDP and stakeholder comments to the draft report | - | Within one week of submission of the draft evaluation report 30 December 2021 | UNDP | Evaluation manager |
| Debriefing with UNDP | 1 day | Within one week of receipt of comments 6 January 2022 | Remotely UNDP | UNDP, stakeholder, and evaluator |
| Finalization of the evaluation report incorporating additions and comments provided by project staff and UNDP country office | 2 days | Within one week of final debriefing 13 January 2022 | Home- based | Evaluator |
| Submission of the final evaluation report to UNDP country office (50 pages maximum) | - | Within one week of final debriefing 13 January 2022 | Home- based | Evaluator |

9. Application submission process and criteria for selection

As required by the procurement unit.

10. TOR annexes

Annexes can be used to provide additional detail about evaluation background and requirements to facilitate the work of evaluators. Some examples include:

- **Intervention results framework and theory of change.** Provides more detailed information on the intervention being evaluated.
- **Key stakeholders and partners.** A list of key stakeholders and other individuals who should be consulted, together with an indication of their affiliation and relevance for the evaluation and their contact information. This annex can also suggest sites to be visited.
- **Documents to be consulted.** A list of important documents and web pages that the evaluators should read at the outset of the evaluation and before finalizing the evaluation design and the inception report. This should be limited to the critical information that the evaluation team needs. Data sources and documents may include:
 - Vision 2030
 - National Transformation Plan
 - Project Document and Budget Revisions
 - Partnership arrangements (e.g., agreements of cooperation with Governments or partners).
 - Minutes of all meetings
 - National Water Strategy
- **Evaluation matrix** (suggested as a deliverable to be included in the inception report). The evaluation matrix is a tool that evaluators create as map and reference in planning and conducting an evaluation. It also serves as a useful tool for summarizing and visually presenting the evaluation design and methodology for discussions with stakeholders. It details evaluation questions that the evaluation will answer, data sources, data collection, analysis tools or methods appropriate for each data source, and the standard or measure by which each question will be evaluated.

Sample evaluation matrix

| Relevant evaluation criteria | Key questions | Specific sub questions | Data sources | Data-collection methods/tools | Indicators/success standard | Methods for data analysis |
|------------------------------|---------------|------------------------|--------------|-------------------------------|-----------------------------|---------------------------|
| | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | |

- **Schedule of tasks, milestones and deliverables.** Based on the time frame specified in the TOR, the evaluators present the detailed schedule.
- **Required format for the evaluation report.** The final report must include, but not necessarily be limited to, the elements outlined in the quality criteria for evaluation reports (see annex 7).
- **Dispute and wrongdoing resolution process and contact details (annex A)**
- **Pledge of ethical conduct in evaluation.** UNDP programme units should request each member of the evaluation team to read carefully, understand and sign the 'Pledge of Ethical Conduct in Evaluation of the United Nations system'.⁵

UNDP Evaluation dispute resolution process

Dispute settlement

Should you or a member of the evaluation team feel unduly pressured to change the findings or conclusions of an evaluation you have been contracted to undertake you are freely able to raise your

concerns with the management within UNDP.

Please send your concerns to the Deputy Director of the Region who will ensure a timely response. Please also include the Independent Evaluation Office, in your correspondence (evaluation.office@undp.org).

Reporting wrongdoing

UNDP takes all reports of alleged wrongdoing seriously. In accordance with the UNDP Legal Framework for Addressing Non-Compliance with UN Standards of Conduct, the Office of Audit and Investigation is the principal channel to receive allegations*.

Anyone with information regarding fraud against UNDP programmes or involving UNDP staff is strongly encouraged to report this information through the Investigations Hotline (+1-844-595- 5206).

People reporting wrongdoing to the Investigations Hotline have the option to leave relevant contact

information or to remain anonymous. However, allegations of workplace harassment and abuse of authority cannot be reported anonymously.

When reporting to the Investigations Hotline, people are encouraged to be as specific as possible, including the basic details of who, what, where when and how any of these incidents occurred. Specific information will allow OAI to properly investigate the alleged wrongdoing.

The investigations hotline, managed by an independent service provider on behalf of UNDP to protect confidentiality, can be directly accessed worldwide and free of charge in different ways:

[ONLINE REFERRAL FORM](#) (You will be redirected to an independent third-party site.)

PHONE - REVERSED CHARGES [Click here for worldwide numbers](#) (interpreters available 24 hours/day) Call +1-844-595-5206 in the USA

EMAIL directly to OAI at: reportmisconduct@undp.org

REGULAR MAIL

Deputy Director (Investigations)
Office of Audit and Investigations

United Nations Development
Programme One UN Plaza, DC1, 4th
Floor

New York, NY 10017 USA

* <https://www.undp.org/accountability/audit/investigations>

Annex-II. List of Supporting Documents Reviewed

- 1 Capacity Development and Related Services for an Integrated Sustainable Development and Management of The Water Sector in The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia in the Framework of the Vision 2030. Project Report 2018-2022
- 2 KSA Vision 2030 - <https://www.vision2030.gov.sa/>
- 3 National Transformation Plan
<https://www.mep.gov.sa/en/Pages/NationalTransformationProgram.aspx>
- 4 National Water Strategy -
<https://swforum.sa/sitecontent/uploads/editor/SWF2020/Presentations/w1/03-Arif%20Alkalali.pdf>
- 5 The Multi year work plan included costs for experts hiring, software, systems and infrastructure. Supporting documents that links the expenditure, hiring and facilities.
- 6 Financial Reports - Financial multiyear tracking sheets, Memos, briefings on financial progress
- 7 Executive board meetings, memos, emails. List of project team meetings calendar, etc.
- 8 The project audit documents of the project.
- 9 Partnerships agreement with other agencies
- 10 Response report to the 2019 Evaluation report i.e., acknowledgment of the findings, corrective actions, Organization structure realignment – management vs. technical governance, project management.
- 11 2021 MEWA Audit action plan
- 12 Capacity Development and Related Services for an Integrated Sustainable Development and Management, Project Document 2012.
- 13 Evaluation Report: Annual Evaluation of “Sustainable Development and Integrated Water Management”, November 2019
- 14 190325 MEWA Signed Final CDR 2018-AS
- 15 Combined Delivery Report Project: 00107640 - Quarter 4, 2019
- 16 Combined Delivery Report Project: 00107640 - Quarter 4, 2020
- 17 Combined Delivery Report Project: 00107640 - Quarter 4, 2021
- 18 MEWA Audit Report 2021
- 19 Annual Workplan Report, 2022
- 20 Capacity Development and Related Services for an Integrated Sustainable Development and Management of the Water Sector in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia – Independent audit Report 2021
- 21 Presentation to DMW 2021-09-05
- 22 Project Board Meeting Minutes April 2020 - AS-edit-MK
- 23 UNDP Specialists Workshop Water Sector Capacity Development Project MEWA, June 2021
- 24 Executive Board of the United Nations Development Programme, the United Nations Population Fund and the United Nations Office for Project Services Distr. Country programme document for Saudi Arabia (2017-2021)

- 25 Sustainable Development and Integrated Water Management in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia Desk Review and Scoping Mission First project recommendations by Gustavo E. Diaz, August 2, 2021
- 26 Design Capacity Building Concept with Training Needs for the Employees of the Ministry of Water Affairs August 11, 2020, Summary Branches Report.
- 27 Design Capacity Building Concept with Training Needs for the Employees of the Ministry of Water Affairs, Annex 3. Details of training modules per Branch, May 30 - 2020
- 28 Continuous training Program-First Season (2021-2022)
- 29 UNDP IWRM Capacity Development Project Proposed IWRM Working Groups – Draft Proposal
- 30 MEWA Management Response of Mid-term Evaluation, November 2020
- 31 220904_2022-2021 التقرير النهائي لبرنامج التدريب المستمر_الموسم الأول
- 32 Project re-structure report water SDG KSA, 2020
- 33 Re-structuring project management unit, “Sustainable Development and Integrated Water Management” Project, 2020

ANNEX III - DECLARATION

“This evaluation was conducted in accordance with the principles outlined in the UNEG ‘Ethical Guidelines for Evaluation’. The rights and confidentiality of information providers, interviewees and stakeholders were safeguarded through measures to ensure compliance with legal and other relevant codes governing collection of data and reporting on data. The security of collected information before and after the evaluation and protocols was anonymous and confidentiality of sources of information protected. The information knowledge and data gathered in the evaluation process was solely used for the evaluation and not for other uses with the express authorization of UNDP and partners.”

Tareq Alzabet

Tareq Al-Zabet, October 8th, 2022