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Sustainable and Inclusive Economic Growth Programme

Thematic Evaluation on the Role and Contribution of UNDP to Creating Inclusive Employment in Lesotho

Evaluation Report

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LIST OF ACRONYMS

AfCFTA	African Continental Free Trade Area
AWPs	Annual Work Plans
BEDCO	Basotho Enterprises Development Corporation
BOS	Bureau of Statistics
CPD	Country Programme Document
CSOs	Civil Society Organizations
DIM	Direct Implementation Modality
EU	European Union
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GoL	Government of Lesotho
HACT	Harmonised Approach to Cash Transfers
IOM	International Organization for Migration
MAFS	Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security
MDP	Ministry of Development Planning
M&E	Monitoring and evaluation
MFRSC	Ministry of Forestry, Range and Soil Conservation
MGYSR	Ministry of Gender and Youth, Sports and Recreation
MSMEs	Micro small & medium enterprises
MTEC	Ministry of Tourism, Environment and Culture
MTI	Ministry of Trade and Industry
MTR	Mid – Term Review
NGOs	Non – Governmental Organizations
NIM	National Implementation modality
NSDP II	National Strategic Development Plan II 2019-2023
NUL	National University of Lesotho
OECD-DAC	Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development/Development Assistance Committee
ROARs	Results Oriented Annual Reports
RVCC	Reduce their Vulnerability from Climate Change
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
TORs	Terms of reference
UN	United Nations
UNDAF	United Nations Development Assistance Framework 2019-2023
UNDP	United Nations Development Program
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UNICEF	United Nations International Children’s Emergency
UNRC	United Nations Resident Coordination
WB	World Bank

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Background and Context

In context of Lesotho's development challenges and priorities set out by the NSDP II, creating employment and job opportunities is critical, with focus on the youth and women, who are largely marginalized in opportunities for economic and social development. The SIEG pillar was designed to enable UNDP to strengthen capacities of private and public sector stakeholders to create decent and sustainable jobs, promote economic diversity, facilitate increased economic participation using innovative and technological interventions, collaborative, and informative stakeholder policy-shaping platforms and technical support and development. UNDP has adopted an integrated approach to promote employment creation through collaboration, coordination, and capacity building, working with national stakeholder in government, private sector, and development partners, including UN agencies.

Lesotho's economic structure is characterized by a narrow and undiversified private sector, with government spending accounting for more than 60 percent of GDP. Lesotho's economy is small: textile, manufacturing and mining industries dominate it, alongside the buoyant informal, unrecorded economy.¹ Unemployment remains a major challenge for Lesotho, as it was reported at 22.5 per cent in 2019, a negligible drop from 23.6 per cent recorded a year earlier². Overall, in the last ten years, unemployment averaged about 26 per cent, despite all the Government's efforts. Poverty and unemployment in Lesotho remain high, adversely affecting people in the rural areas, women, and youth. Evidence suggests that the impact of COVID-19 has further decimated employment and livelihoods, in key productive sector, due to changes in global demand and market dynamics. The government is the primary formal employer, while the majority semi-skilled and unskilled labourers are found in the informal sector, particularly in agriculture and retail sectors. The NSDP II gives priority to development of internal capacities, partnerships, and strategies for development of a sustainable and inclusive economic growth, poverty reduction and empowerment of citizens to encourage economic participation and civic engagement. The paramount objective for the NSDP is to create a private sector-led inclusive economic growth and employment, with focus on four economic sectors, viz. manufacturing, tourism, technology, and agriculture. Focus on strengthening the private sector remains a challenge for Lesotho, and to address the economic challenges. Feedback from the NSDP II midterm review has confirmed relevance of the employment objective that is anchored on economic transformation and innovation, in the immediate to long term in Lesotho, to address the pervasive vulnerability and poverty.

Evaluation Objectives and Scope

The objective of this thematic evaluation is to assess the contribution of UNDP projects and programmes to the national objectives for creating inclusive employment in Lesotho, as outlined by the NSDP II, to measure the achievements, impact and role played by UNDP across different projects and partnerships and to inform the design, policy, and implementation strategies of future programmes in UNDP.

¹ Lesotho Development Finance Assessment 2021

² www.bos.gov.ls

This thematic evaluation covered the period between 2019 and 2021. It was conducted from August to October 2022, to provide a strategic direction and inputs to the preparation of the new programming cycle starting from 2024, the country analysis and establish programme niche areas in context of the forthcoming United National Development Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (UNSDf).

Approach and Methodology

The evaluation used a participatory and collaborative approach. The evaluator used a transparent and inclusive approach to ensure theory of change based evaluation findings and recommendations. The evaluation is based on the UNDP Evaluation Policy and used the DAC criteria for evaluation, by addressing of the relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, and sustainability in addition to partnership strategy of UNDP's interventions. As part of the evaluation approach, the evaluator reviewed the evaluation questions and used them to prepare a detailed evaluation matrix. The evaluation matrix presents key and sub-questions for each evaluation criteria along with data sources, data collection methods, indicators of success, and method of data analysis. As part of the process in preparing the evaluation matrix, the evaluation questions identified in the TOR were reviewed, and minor revisions were made to align the question to the theory of change and address inclusion issues to ensure that no one is left behind. The evaluation approach determined the achievements against the intended objectives while also assessing the effectiveness of adopted implementation methodologies and partnerships. Furthermore, the overall approach looked at factors that contributed to and/or impeded the outcomes and sustainability and also identified lessons learned from the implementation of the initiatives.

Key Findings, Lessons Learned and Recommendations

The findings indicate that there are nine initiatives within the UNDP that are perceived to have contributed directly or indirectly to creating job opportunities and improving livelihoods in Lesotho.

Seven initiatives were within the SIEG portfolio namely:

- 1) Lesotho Sustainable and Inclusive Economic Growth Project (2019-2023)
- 2) Lesotho Supplier Development Programme (LSDP) and Green Value Chains Project (GVC) (2020-2023)
- 3) Lesotho Accelerator Labs (2019-2023)
- 4) Enhancing Youth Empowerment for Sustainable Development (EYES) (2019-2020)
- 5) Lesotho COVID-19 Response (2020)
- 6) Lesotho Sustainability Support for Trade Project (SSP) (2019-2022)
- 7) Plastic Life cycle management (PWM) (2021)

Two initiatives were in the Environment and Energy portfolio which were more inclined to improving livelihoods. These are:

- 8) Sustainable Energy for All Project (SEE4ALL) (2016-2021)
- 9) Reducing Vulnerability for Climate Change Project (RVCC) (2015-2019)

Relevance

Interventions are aligned to the NSDP II 2019-2023, UNDAF 2019-2023 and past programmess, are informed by the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and Agenda 2063, and guided by the UNDP Strategic Plan, 2018–2021.

UNDP interventions responded to most pressing challenges faced by Lesotho, particularly youth, women, and those residing in rural areas albeit to a less extent to PWDs. This was reflected in designs, implementation and monitoring of the initiatives. Feedback from stakeholders indicate that employment creation and empowerment remain relevant in Lesotho's development objectives.

UNDP support evolved with the outbreak of COVID-19 to address inclusive employment creation emerging needs. UNDP is viewed to have used design thinking through the Accelerator Lab initiatives to address the challenge. The approaches and the mechanisms introduced facilitated relevance of initiatives and innovation for UN interagency COVID 19 response and economic recovery in particular.

Effectiveness

Evidence and feedback from stakeholders indicate that the UNDP has contributed in several ways in improving capacities to create job opportunities in Lesotho, though not satisfactorily as per the set targets³. The evaluation shows that UNDP contributed partially in strengthening capacities of private and public sector stakeholders to create decent and sustainable jobs, promote economic diversity, facilitate increased economic participation using innovative and technological interventions, collaborative and informative stakeholder policy-shaping platforms and technical support and development. UNDP is perceived to have contributed in enabling effective economic participation of MSMEs and has contributed in strengthening capacities of institutions to promote enterprises development thus contributed indirectly in creating a competitive and gender sensitive business environment. However, stakeholders are of the view that initiatives are spread too thin and interventions are short and small in terms of funding.

The evaluation points to six broad areas where UNDP has made a contribution:

1. UNDP contributed in improved policy and legal environment to induce private sector participation and employment creation.

UNDP supported two policies, the Gender and Development Policy 2018–2030 and the ICT Policy. Both policies are perceived as catalytic in creating a conducive environment for job opportunities. Policies provide an enabling environment for enterprises which is essential in making substantial contribution to employment creation. The ICT Policy is expected to enable accelerated digital governance, transformation, and innovations, particularly in Government, while the gender-sensitive economic policy framework allows employment and economic growth linked to the NSDP II.

³ See annex 3

UNDP further assisted the Department of Youth to develop a Youth Mentorship Strategy aimed at identifying and matching youth entrepreneurs to business partners for technical and business management support, for capacity building and stabilization of youth enterprises. Additionally, the UNDP supported the government in mapping policies for implementation of NSDP II as well as assessment for alignment to the SDGs. This will facilitate coordinated planning and harmonization for policy implementation and monitoring in line with the national development priorities.

2. UNDP facilitated MSMEs participation in policy dialogues for private sector development.

In 2019 UNDP supported establishment of MSMEs District Committees which culminated in Development Forum meetings⁴ where MSMEs stakeholders and MSMEs engaged on successes and challenges of their enterprises. UNDP collaborated with IOM to undertake an assessment on the impact of COVID-19 on the informal cross-border traders in 2020, and co-organized a validation session with representatives from the government, private sector and MSMEs. It contributed in building evidence and dialogue around informal cross-border trade of Basotho which can cascade in appropriate policy development and legal frameworks. An appropriate policy environment and legal frameworks for instance would provide engines to support formalisation of informal trade and to protect safety and livelihoods of informal traders thus ensuring that nobody is left behind. It can also contribute in strengthening national efforts towards accession to the African Continental Free Trade Agreement. These in the long run can strengthen trade thus improve livelihoods and facilitate creation of new jobs.

3. UNDP facilitated promotion of local innovations and creativity to diversify economic opportunities and livelihoods development with a focus on women and youth engaging academia, the private sector and NGOs. It also supported market related capacity building and training programmes for MSMEs (youth and women).

This included working with various entities for innovations including: a) the Tsa Mahlale TV programme which broadcasted local innovations, it was done in collaboration with the National University of Lesotho (NUL); b) A pilot on Youth Diaries for youth engagement and dialogue on business development with the BAM Group and c) the youth mentorship programmes with the Entrepreneurship Network (TEN). Through TEN the UNDP enabled 24,000 youth access to Government information on business and development opportunities.

UNDP supported ten boot camps which employed a design thinking approach to build youth and stakeholder awareness of human-centered approaches to business. UNDP also facilitated capacitation of 2 youth representatives through the YouthConnekt Africa 2021, in Ghana while in 2019 it supported participation of 10 youth entrepreneurs at the same event. In addition with UNDP support 185 youth (103 males and 82 females) were reached with technical development and policy advocacy. The activities contributed to unearthing at least 7 youth-led innovations and 71 youth initiated businesses.

⁴ Number of meetings could not be established from documentation and engagement with implementing partner

Youth engagement was perceived to have high potential to unlock employment opportunities and facilitate economic growth. The approach was viewed as very strategic by UNDP for sustainable development.

4. UNDP contributed in improved market conditions and skills complement of MSMEs

UNDP through the GVC and LSDP contributed in building the capacity and resilience of the local agricultural sector to produce and supply the local market through sustainable production, process, and marketing processes. The GVC and LSDP are perceived as promising significant contributors to job creation. UNDP through these initiatives contributed in creating about 570 jobs (of which 450 are temporary and 120 permanent). GVC and LSDP initiative came at an opportune time to support the rural population particularly small-scale farmers and households whose livelihoods are based on agriculture and are most likely to be affected by climate change induced drought and COVID-19⁵.

UNDP through the Plastic Waste Management (PWM) Project unlocked opportunities for employment where it was operational, it created about 53 job opportunities (38 females and 15 males). UNDP under this initiative street vendors and informal traders were capacitated on repurposing plastic waste to improve their livelihoods and economic activities. The initiative established waste centres where recycled/repurposed plastic waste products are commercially sold. Furthermore, the initiative set up a waste trading platform, which allows for plastic waste to be sold with high likelihood to culminate in creating employment. PWM facilitated production of different plastic products.

5. UNDP injected cash for work to over 2,000 persons valued at US \$500,000 as a way of mitigating COVID-19 impact. This improved livelihoods and contributed in creating job opportunities within the communities in Mohale's Hoek. RVCC's end of project evaluation indicated that the incentives helped in various ways which entailed feeding families and financing small businesses. Also beneficiaries' capacities were strengthened on smart agricultural practices to facilitate vegetables production for markets throughout the year using tunnels, green houses and newly introduced planting technologies and improved seeds that can withstand extreme weather conditions.

UNDP through SE4All catalysed investments in renewable energy-based mini-grids and energy centres. The project built capacities and supported Government to create an enabling environment for private sector investment. It provided financial incentives to the private sector to go into the rural parts of Lesotho that have potential for development and set up energy resource centres or shops where renewable energy technologies were sold thus catalysing job creation.

6. Evidence indicates UNDP facilitated generation of knowledge and data to enable evidence-informed policy and decision making (employment mapping). UNDP supported data collation and disaggregation mechanisms for the business sector. For instance, UNDP supported the One-Stop Business Facilitation Centre (OBFC) in the Ministry of Trade and Industry (MTI) to develop the business register to provide data disaggregation by sector, gender, geography and age of directors as well as provide information on mortality of businesses. UNDP supported the Ministry of Small Business Development to establish a platform for registration of MSMEs, informal businesses and

⁵ Assessment of the Socio-economic Impact of COVID-19 on the Kingdom of Lesotho, June 2020

street vendors, collating all necessary information and details as may be required by different stakeholders. UNDP also supported a mapping of youth enterprises which created a platform for the line ministries which deal with businesses registration to establish integrated systems for data collection and disaggregation by age and gender.

UNDP has assisted the Ministry of Gender, Youth, Sports and Recreation (MGYSR) to take a gender audit study in four ministries. This gender audit study is a prerequisite in ensuring that these ministries mainstream gender equality and women empowerment into their development programmes. Also the COVID-19 Assessment support by UNDP was viewed as contributory to gender considerations regarding employment as it facilitates a conducive environment and contributes in understanding the differential effects of COVID-19 on the society.

Efficiency

UNDP approaches, resources, models, conceptual framework are seen as relevant to achieve the planned results with caveats. UNDP deploys a mix of approaches in implementation of interventions: national implementation modality (NIM) is the default modality for the SIEG interventions but sometimes as necessary direct implementation modality (DIM) is employed. Further, under UNDP's supervision, activities are implemented through various Implementing Partners (IPs), including NGOs, and public sector organizations.

The Harmonised Approach to Cash Transfers (HACT) was employed in implementation and UNDP developed and strengthened IP capacities in this regard. UNDP sometimes supported IPs with procurement and management of financial resources as necessary but actual implementation was done by IPs.

Implementing partners perceived HACT processes to have derailed implementation and payment of services rendered particularly under GVC and SSP. IPs in this regard felt UNDP did not communicate explicitly the requirements for funds disbursements as such there was a lot of back and forth before the second tranche of funds could be released and this culminated in substantial delays in activity implementation such that most activities will not be covered even in the event of project extension. IPs also perceived UNDP as not adequately conversant with HACT requirements and processes, it appears UNDP is still learning itself hence it was not able to offer timely guidance to IPs in this regard. The SSP IP is not satisfied with how UNDP managed the project funds because it did not communicate in advance that it would charge the HACT trainings offered to the IP from the project funds as such funds that were earmarked for approved activities paid the HACT trains. But payments for activities that were in the approved work plan are still outstanding because funds have run out and service providers are still expecting their payments, creating a very contentious situation. Therefore, an open and transparent discussion is needed between UNDP and its IPs to adopt principles of consensus around HACT requirements before implementation to avoid delays and grievances. Also, there is need for further capacitation on HACT for both UNDP and IPs.

UNDP procurement requirements and internal processes are perceived as unnecessarily lengthy thus derail implementation. For instance when requests for procurement are put forward, a concept note is required before approval even if activities are in an approved work plan, this tends to delay execution

of activities and add unnecessary workload on IPs. IPs perceive this requirement as redundant in light of the fact that an approved work plan connotes approval of activities entailed in it.

Despite challenges delivery has been robust (average 71%) and stakeholders are generally happy with the planned results. Resources were viewed as modest to adequately catalyse creation of sustainable and inclusive employment (projects are rather small in funds and short in the timeframe).

Sustainability

UNDP established mechanisms to ensure sustainability of interventions intended to create or catalyse employment and the selected implementing partners can to some extent continue to lead the interventions beyond interventions' implementation cycle. UNDP has been intentional and deliberate on building institutional and individual capacities of IPs and beneficiaries to facilitate sustainability and scale up.

By design interventions capacitated beneficiaries to commercialise their undertakings such that they can be sustainable beyond implementation of interventions.

As a mechanism for assuring sustainability implementing partners and beneficiaries voiced their commitment and support in continuity of benefits rendered with UNDP support.

Government as a partner was perceived as a poor exit strategy for these interventions, as it often does not have the capacity to sustain results when it is left as the main responsible party, as such focus should be on strengthening the community and the private sector to take over at the end of project to sustain results of interventions. A challenge that was noted was that there might be inadequate financial and economic resources to sustain the benefits achieved by interventions and this is exacerbated by short duration of interventions which does not allowing adequate time to develop a proper exit strategy. Therefore, stakeholders recommended that UNDP should support Government to mobilise potential development partners and private sector to acquire subsequent funding.

Evaluation Ratings and Achievement Summary Table (for more details refer to Annex 3 regarding indicators, baselines and targets)

Criteria or measure	SIEG outputs	Evaluation Ratings	Achievement description
Relevance		HR	Highly relevant and interventions aligned to national priorities
Effectiveness	2.1. National and local level institutions have enhanced technical capacities to coordinate and facilitate effective planning, implementation, analysis and national reporting on the SDGs using innovative and data driven-solutions	S	Capacity building have been completed and support ongoing regarding collection of disaggregation data
	2.2. Capacities of government institutions and private sector	U	While gender sensitive policy and planning instruments have been developed, they have not been

Criteria or measure	SIEG outputs	Evaluation Ratings	Achievement description
	improved to create competitive and gender-sensitive business environment and enable effective economic participation of MSMEs		mainstreamed into sectors where they can be owned and implemented.
	2.3. Capacities of national public and private sector institutions strengthened to promote enterprises development	U	Though businesses have been established by youths and created jobs in agriculture and technology sectors but much has to be done in terms of data regarding sustainability of those businesses, access to formal financial services and data disaggregated by gender and age.
Efficiency		S	71% of financial resources utilized by 2021
Sustainability		ML	There are moderate risks due to financial resources availability to continue after the projects funding are expended by implementing partners and beneficiaries. However, there is commitment from IP and beneficiaries to continue implementing project activities due to capacity provided by UNDP.
Partnership Strategy		S	All partnerships are contributing positively towards outputs. There are no overlaps but more partnerships should be sought with CSOs and Private Sector. However, opportunity still exist for complementary partners such as WB regarding PPP with establishment of mini-grids.
Cross – Cutting issues		S	Gender and human rights are integrated in projects even though human rights strategies and action plans are missing for vulnerable groups and indigenous people, whom are not as strong as they could be, as is the case with gender.

Key for Evaluation Ratings:

Rating Scale for Relevance

- | | |
|--------------------|--|
| 4. Highly Relevant | Explicit and full alignment of all aspects |
| 3. Relevant | Explicit and full alignment on some and partial alignment and partial considerations on some |
| 2. Moderately | Relevant Partial alignment and partial considerations |
| 1. Not Relevant | Lack of alignment and minimal considerations |

Rating Scale for Effectiveness, Efficiency and Sustainability and Partnerships

- | | |
|------------------------|--------------------|
| 6. Highly Satisfactory | No shortcomings |
| 5. Satisfactory | Minor shortcomings |

4. Moderately Satisfactory	Moderate shortcomings
3. Moderately Unsatisfactory	Significant shortcomings
2. Unsatisfactory	Major shortcomings
1. Highly Unsatisfactory	Severe shortcomings

Rating Scale for Sustainability

4. Likely	Negligible risks to sustainability
3. Moderately Likely	Moderate risks to sustainability
2. Moderately Unlikely	Significant risks to sustainability
1. Unlikely	Severe risks to sustainability

Partnerships

UNDP does systematically plan their partnership building with the view of achieving their objectives and priorities.

UNDP partnerships are in line with objectives and priorities set out in each initiative. UNDP has a guide of building partnerships but there are no explicit criteria or guidelines for selecting partner organizations. Partnerships are established around specific stakeholders with potential for mobilising resources.

Consulted partners are satisfied with UNDP partnerships with some caveats

According to the interviews that were carried out during the evaluation, there appears to be general satisfaction with the UNDP as a partner. The evaluation indicates that UNDP makes concerted efforts to form strategic partnerships in the sphere of sustainable economic development. UNDP also keep channels of communication open and shares the right information on potential areas of partnerships with proper potential partners. UNDP is viewed as collaborative by other development partners in the sustainable economic development sphere. Furthermore, UNDP SIEG interventions are viewed as complementary to other partners or internal programmes, they do not overlap or duplicate interventions by other partners or internal programmes

There is considerable evidence that UNDP partnerships have resulted in positive changes

Most of the partnerships have met their stated objectives. The evaluation found evidence of a wide range of positive achievement and changes that partnerships have contributed to.

UNDP partnerships are not well documented and there has been no indication of sharing information about partnership and their performance both internally and externally.

UNDP partnerships are documented on individual project reports (meeting reports, work plans) and there is no systematic filing of information about partnership progresses.

Cross Cutting Issues

The evaluation assessed the extent to which gender equality and the empowerment of women have been addressed in the design, implementation, and monitoring of the interventions. It also assessed how interventions considered inclusion of marginalized groups, especially PwDs, youth and rural

residents in activities. Gender and human rights are integrated in initiatives even though human rights strategies and action plans are missing for vulnerable groups such as PWDs and indigenous people, whom are not as strong as they could be, as is the case with gender.

Lessons Learned

Key lessons learned for future programming on SIEG interventions include:

- Solutions mapping and collective intelligence exercises held among the stakeholders in determining feasibility of experiments prior to its commencement, influences participants to perceive the concept as their own, thus encouraging them to lead the implementation of the intervention. This approach is most effective in ensuring ownership and sustainability.
- Engaging diversified partners is important in fostering strong collaboration with local NGOs and could build a broader understanding and commitment to interventions. This could help widen dialogue and facilitate new partnerships.
- The consultative and inclusive processes adopted by various interventions were important to building ownership among national and local stakeholders.
- Timely communication of established processes and time requirements to IPs will help a more realistic activity planning and healthier working partnerships.
- Intervention designs should match resources and time available for implementation to enhance effectiveness and efficiency. If the objective of an intervention is to transform thinking and behaviour, it should take a longer time and hence should be planned for a phased-approach.
- Postponing of project activities due to delays in disbursements of funding leads to “bunching up” of activities, eventually contributing to inefficiencies and affecting effectiveness. This included delays in execution of some activities with risk of not completing all activities and rushed preparation for activities.

Recommendations

1. Effectiveness
<p>Recommendation 1.1: UNDP should deepen use of the AccLab processes and methods in programming to enhance its interventions, focus more on bringing in innovative solutions into programming.</p> <p>Recommendation 1.2: UNDP should continue contributing in building the capacity and resilience of the local agricultural sector to produce and supply the local market through sustainable production, process, and marketing processes but should improve intervention scale and duration. UNDP should support setting up legal frameworks for value chains in agriculture which will be engines for development.</p> <p>Recommendation 1.3: Innovative financing is needed to scale up and sustain the economic development and environmental focused natural resources business programmes. UNDP should scale up initiatives on inclusive business by promoting access to financial services and inclusive markets for MSMEs and facilitate their participation in public-private dialogues.</p>

2. Efficiency

Recommendation 2.1: UNDP should consider focusing its resources for adequate time to make an impact. UNDP should avoid spreading its resources thin and moving from initiative to initiative without making meaningful impact, it should focus its resources until meaningful results can be attained this will also facilitate sustainability.

Recommendation 2.2: In order to avoid delays in implementation, funds disbursements and general dissatisfaction among implementing partners UNDP should further strengthen capacities of implementing partners on operationalisation of the HACT and related reporting mechanisms. It should also communicate expectations in advance to IPs regarding any expenditure that can be charged on their approved budgets to cover HACT capacity building related expenses

Recommendation 2.3: In order to ensure timely execution of activities UNDP should employ agile mechanisms in procurement of services and avoid lengthy requirements that derail processes such as requiring a concept note particularly for activities that are in an approved annual plan. Lessons can be learned from partners in the private sector on how they execute their procurement processes.

Recommendation 2.4: Improve the programme results framework to cover the qualitative indicators in the SIEG programme. The indicators in results framework are mainly quantitative. Including qualitative indicators at the output level will be important as a way to focus on the quality of results. This will also enable a more holistic assessment of the actual achievements of the programme and enable the identification of necessary adjustments to maximize impact.

Recommendation 2.5: UNDP should strengthen its internal monitoring to make sure there is adequate programme and project data that can be used in tracking progress towards employment objectives. Overall employment data and information require strengthening. At the end of the projects, information should be collected to strengthen baseline data for future phases by performing an end of project survey to determine how constituents and other project recipients benefited from the initiatives.

Recommendation 2.6: UNDP should co-opt other UN agencies in exploring an option of “One Fund” mechanism for the country or multi-donor trust fund to improve data availability in Lesotho for monitoring and evaluation of employment related high level results.

3. Sustainability

Recommendation 3.1: UNDP should focus on strengthening the community and the private sector to take over at end of interventions to facilitate sustainability: Government as a partner was perceived as a poor exit strategy for sustainability of interventions.

Recommendation 3.2: UNDP should build capacities for resource mobilisation and partnership work within the UNDP and its implementing partners. Innovative financing is needed to scale up and sustain the economic development and environmental focused natural resources business interventions.

Recommendation 3.3: UNDP should support Government to mobilise potential development partners to acquire subsequent funding to ensure maintenance and sustainability of intervention results, also ensure continuity of IPs to lead the interventions beyond project/programme cycle.

4. Partnerships

Recommendation 4.1: UNDP should strengthen its partnership and implementation with the private sector and civil society both at national and local levels such that it works through the people mostly affected and informed in the areas of job creation, this will facilitate ownership of initiatives and create inroads for the marginalised groups and ensure no one is left behind.

Recommendation 4.2: UNDP should consider strengthening partnerships in research, though there is a standing partnership with research institutions such as NUL which is often co-opted in project boards there is immense potential to improve in this area. This collaboration needs to be strengthened to ensure that some of the solutions that are being promoted are well tested before they can be deployed to enhance effectiveness of interventions.

Recommendation 4.3: UNDP should timely communicate issues that could potentially constitute conflict of interest before partners can engage in collective intelligence and design thinking of interventions to avoid grievances and perceived intellectual property infringements that can easily escalate to unpleasant partnerships and work relations

5. Cross-cutting Issues

Recommendation 5.1: UNDP should continue focusing/ concentrating on the youth in its interventions particularly those in the rural areas, expose them to excursions and innovations.

Recommendation 5.2: UNDP in the spirit of leaving no one behind should deliberately design its interventions to include people with disabilities and indigenous people such as the Xhosa speaking people found mainly in the southern part of Lesotho. UNDP should also be cognisant of Lesotho's social reality where at it stands there is a glaring boy child problem not necessarily a girl child problem as is the context in other developing economies.

Recommendation 5.3: UNDP should assist the gender audited ministries to appreciate and implement the recommendations of the Gender audit study. UNDP to co-opt other sister agencies like UNICEF in contributing in the gender audit study of other ministries like the Ministry of Education and Training and Ministry of Social Development to hasten the process and ensure that all ministries are audited and can too embark on implementing recommendations to unlock employment opportunities.

Recommendation 5.4: UNDP should follow through with supporting the Ministry of Public Service to implement the 'Counter sexual, abuse and harassment' at workplace mechanisms to facilitate inclusivity, gender responsiveness and human rights regarding employment. To ensure that UNDP is actually gender responsive and inclusive in its programming all the employment creation and governance initiatives should be subjected to a gender audit.

1 BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

UNDP is the UN global development network, advocating for change and connecting countries to knowledge, experience, and resources to empower and help people build a better life. It works with individual countries on their own solutions to global and national development challenges. The UNDP Country Programme for Lesotho (2019-2023), is based on the UNDAF (2019-2023), as a UN common vision, planning, and implementation instrument on how the UN system can support the national needs and priorities as described in Vision 2020 and the National Strategic Development Plan 2019–2023 (NSDP II). The programme is also aligned to the UNDP Strategic Plan (2017-2021). The Programme comprises three pillars: (i) Governance, Accountability, Social Cohesion and Stability; (ii) Sustainable and Inclusive Economic Growth (SIEG) and (iii) Environmental Sustainability, Climate Change and Resilience.

Lesotho's economic structure is characterized by a narrow and undiversified private sector, with government spending accounting for more than 60 percent of GDP. Lesotho's economy is small: textile, manufacturing and mining industries dominate it, alongside the buoyant informal, unrecorded economy.⁶ Unemployment remains a major challenge for Lesotho, as it was reported at 22.5 per cent in 2019, a negligible drop from 23.6 per cent recorded a year earlier⁷. Overall, in the last ten years, unemployment averaged about 26 per cent, despite all the Government's efforts. Poverty and unemployment in Lesotho remain high, adversely affecting people in the rural areas, women, and youth. Evidence suggests that the impact of COVID-19 has further decimated employment and livelihoods, in key productive sector, due to changes in global demand and market dynamics. The Government is the primary formal employer, while the majority semi-skilled and unskilled labourers are found in the informal sector, particularly in agriculture and retail sectors. The NSDP II gives priority to development of internal capacities, partnerships, and strategies for development of a sustainable and inclusive economic growth, poverty reduction and empowerment of citizens to encourage economic participation and civic engagement. The paramount objective for the NSDP is to create a private sector-led inclusive economic growth and employment, with focus on four economic sectors, viz. manufacturing, tourism, technology, and agriculture. Focus on strengthening the private sector remains a challenge for Lesotho, and to address the economic challenges. Feedback from the NSDP II midterm review has confirmed relevance of the employment objective that is anchored on economic transformation and innovation, in the immediate to long term in Lesotho, to address the pervasive vulnerability and poverty.

In context of the Lesotho's development challenges and priorities set out by the NSDP II, creating employment and job opportunities is critical, with focus on the youth and women, who are largely marginalized in opportunities for economic and social development. The SIEG pillar was designed to enable UNDP to strengthen capacities of private and public sector stakeholders to create decent and sustainable jobs, promote economic diversity, facilitate increased economic participation using innovative and technological interventions, collaborative, and informative stakeholder policy-shaping platforms and technical support and development.

⁶ Lesotho Development Finance Assessment 2021

⁷ www.bos.gov.ls

In line with the UNDP Lesotho CPD Evaluation Plan (2019-2023), UNDP commissioned the thematic evaluation under the SIEG Pillar, aimed at assessing the role and contribution of UNDP in creating inclusive employment opportunities in Lesotho from 2019 to 2021. This was done through an independent consultant, and with participation from national stakeholders, partners from government, civil society, private sector and academia, as well as beneficiaries of UNDP's programmes and projects.

2 EVALUATION OBJECTIVE, PURPOSE AND SCOPE⁸

2.1 Objective of the Thematic Evaluation

The objective of this thematic evaluation is to assess the contribution of UNDP projects and programmes to the national objectives for creating inclusive employment in Lesotho, as outlined by the NSDP II, to measure the achievements, impact and role played by UNDP across different projects and partnerships and to inform the design, policy, and implementation strategies of future programmes in UNDP.

Specifically, the evaluation is expected to help UNDP establish:

- The extent to which UNDP's programmes and projects, implemented in this period, have contributed to the development objective on employment creation, utilizing data and evidence informed approaches and mechanisms to ensure creation of opportunities for employment and empowerment, MSME development, inclusive finance, youth and women empowerment, innovations and creativity and private sector development
- The relevance, efficiency, and effectiveness of the programme strategies adopted
- Assess the factors affecting the outcome and its sustainability, including contributing factors and constraints
- Role and effectiveness of partnerships adopted in advancing this objective and in establishing an enabling environment

2.2 Evaluation Purpose

UNDP conducts thematic evaluations to assess UNDP performance in areas that are critical to ensuring sustained contribution to development results. Thematic evaluations focus on one or several crosscutting themes that have significance beyond a particular project or initiative, across several outcomes or results areas in a country. These are independent evaluations carried out within the overall provisions contained in the UNDP Evaluation Policy. The purpose of this thematic evaluation is to:

⁸ Terms of reference (TOR) for the Thematic Evaluation on the Role and Contribution of UNDP to Creating Inclusive Employment in Lesotho

- Document and analyze UNDP's role and contribution towards the national objectives for employment and empowerment, particularly for youth and women
- Assess the relevance, effectiveness, and efficiency of UNDP's adopted approaches, implementation strategies and partnerships to achieving outlined objective and programme results
- Assess factors including opportunities and constraints affecting sustainability of UNDP's interventions and outcomes
- Establish lessons learnt and substantiate UNDP's input and direction to the formulation of future strategies, including at programmatic level
- Provide analysis and recommendation to support greater UNDP accountability to national stakeholders and partners in Lesotho
- Serve as a means of quality assurance for UNDP interventions at the country level
- Contribute to learning at corporate, regional, and country levels

2.3 Evaluation Scope

This thematic evaluation covered the period from 2019 to 2021. It was conducted from August to October 2022, to provide a strategic direction and inputs to the preparation of the new programming cycle starting from 2024, the country analysis and establish programme niche areas in context of the forthcoming United National Development Sustainable Development Framework (UNSDF).

Through the Sustainable and Inclusive Economic Growth Programme, UNDP has implemented the following projects aimed at contributing to the national employment creation objectives:

- 1) Lesotho Sustainable and Inclusive Economic Growth Project (2019-2023)
- 2) Lesotho Supplier Development Programme and Green Value Chains Project (2020-2023)
- 3) Lesotho Accelerator Labs (2019-2023)
- 4) Enhancing Youth Empowerment for Sustainable Development (EYES) (2019-2020)
- 5) Lesotho COVID-19 Response (2020)
- 6) Lesotho Sustainability Support for Trade (2019-2022)
- 7) Plastic Life cycle management (2021)

Two projects within the Environment portfolio namely Sustainable Energy for All (SE4ALL) and Reducing Vulnerability for Climate Change (RVCC) were reviewed to the extent that they were relevant to creating opportunities for employment and empowerment, particularly for youth and gender. No projects within the Governance portfolio were identified as relevant for creating inclusive employment.

3 EVALUATION CRITERIA AND KEY QUESTIONS

The thematic evaluation sought to answer questions based on the OECD DAC evaluation criteria⁹ of relevance, effectiveness, efficiency and sustainability, including partnerships (as reflected in Annex 6). The evaluation answers the following main questions:

Evaluation Criteria	Main Questions
Relevance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To what extent do UNDP inclusive employment creation interventions responded to the most pressing challenges faced by Lesotho, youth, women and people with disabilities? How has UNDP support evolved with the outbreak of COVID-19 to address inclusive employment creation emerging needs?
Effectiveness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How effective has UNDP work been in contributing to creating job opportunities? To what extent is progress toward intended results (outputs or outcomes) been achieved?
Efficiency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How economically are resources or inputs converted to results, comparing alternative approaches to achieving the same outputs, to see whether the most efficient processes have been adopted?
Sustainability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To what extent has UNDP established mechanisms to ensure sustainability of sustainable and inclusive employment initiatives? Will the benefits of UNDP programmes, projects and other interventions in respect to creating sustainable and inclusive employment continue or are likely to continue in future?

The rating scale used in this evaluation is presented in Annex 5. The consultant was expected to add and refine these questions in consultation with key stakeholders, and as part of the development of the evaluation methodology. The review ensured that questions were aligned to the evaluation criteria, the theory of change and results framework. The suggested revisions to the original evaluation are reflected in Annex 7.

4 EVALUABILITY ANALYSIS

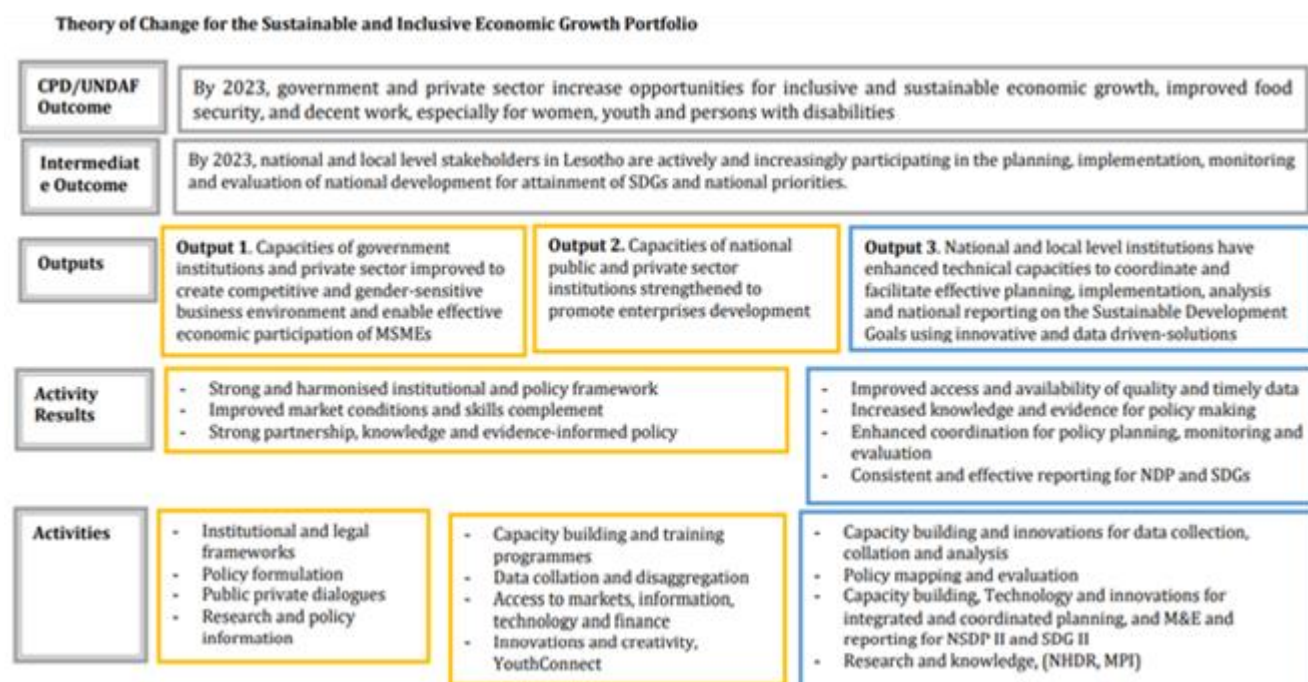
Based on the evaluability assessment, it was concluded that the SIEG portfolio was ready for evaluation. The conclusion was based on the following reasons:

- A formal programme design or model was in place. That is, the programme has a design or model that lays out its goals and objectives, as well as their relationship to programme activities. More importantly, a clear theory of change for the SIEG portfolio and a corporate

⁹ Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development/ Development Assistance Committee (OECD DAC)
<https://www.oecd.org/dac/evaluation/daccriteriaforevaluatingdevelopmentassistance.htm>

results framework to frame the evaluation were present. However, monitoring data on results at intermediate steps of the results chain was lacking, as were outcome/impact-level data

- The programme design or model is sound. That is, the programme is designed to address specific needs or to solve specific problems. Furthermore, it has realistic and achievable goals, plausible objectives that can be measured, and activities related to those objectives. The results framework of the SIEG portfolio presents the following theory of change:



- The programme has the capacity to provide data for an evaluation even though the measures to assess their progress in achieving the goals and objectives are not clearly stated in some instances.

5 CROSS-CUTTING ISSUES

The evaluation assessed the extent to which gender equality and the empowerment of women inclusive of human rights have been addressed in the design, implementation, and monitoring of SIEG interventions. It assessed if interventions devised a deliberate strategy to include marginalised groups such as PWDs, indigenous people, rural residents, youth and women.

6 EVALUATION APPROACH AND METHODOLOGY

6.1 Approach

Based on the objective, the evaluation followed a theory of change approach, to determine if the implemented interventions helped achieve the intended goals. The evaluation was participatory and collaborative in approach. The evaluator used a transparent and inclusive approach to ensure theory of change focused evaluation findings and recommendations. The evaluation addressed the evaluation criteria of relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, and sustainability in addition to partnership strategy. As

part of the evaluation approach, the evaluator reviewed the evaluation questions specified in the TOR and used them to prepare a detailed evaluation matrix. The evaluation matrix presents key and sub-questions for each evaluation criteria along with data sources, data collection methods, indicators of success, and method of data analysis. As part of the process in preparing the evaluation matrix, the evaluation questions identified in the TOR were reviewed, and minor revisions were made to align the question to the theory of change and address inclusion issues to ensure that no one is left behind (as reflected in Annex 7). The evaluation approach determined the achievements of the SIEG Pillar against the intended objectives while also assessing the effectiveness of adopted implementation methodologies and partnerships. Furthermore, the overall approach looked at factors that contributed to and/or impeded results and sustainability and also identified lessons learned from the implementation of the programme.

The approach also examined the extent to which programme design, implementation, and monitoring addressed gender, human rights, and other cross-cutting issues. Overall, the approach was designed to facilitate the making of recommendations for improving design, effectiveness, efficiency, and sustainability in addition to the mainstreaming of gender and other cross-cutting issues in future programming.

6.2 Methodology

The evaluation employed a mixed method data collection strategies to understand the pillar. This helped to triangulate the evidence gathered and analysed. Existing data and additional data was mapped against the theory of change to produce a performance story. This presented evidence of how initiatives have contributed to results. The theory of change also provided a structure for data analysis and presentation of findings.

The following methods were used to collect data and evidence (quantitative and qualitative).

Desk review – A comprehensive review of documents was undertaken. The desk review started during the inception phase and continued into the data collection/analysis phase. Documents reviewed included the National Strategy and Policy documents (including NSDP II, NSDP II Mid Term Evaluation Report; UNDP country and corporate documents (including the CPD); project documents (including contribution agreement, results framework), programme and project quality assurance framework, annual work plans, quarterly and annual reports, monitoring reports, minutes of project board meetings, financial reports, and technical papers among others (including documents indicated in Annex 1).

2. Key informant interviews – Virtual semi-structured interviews and consultations were carried out with key stakeholders, including government counterparts, UN agencies, development partners (donor), private sector and representatives of civil society organizations. Furthermore, the UNDP senior management and project team/staff were also consulted. Interviews included all stakeholders and partners mentioned in Annex 2.

3. Focus groups – Where feasible focus group discussions were conducted with beneficiaries and stakeholders. Focus groups helped to gather group perspectives. A focus group questionnaire was also be used to collect individual perspectives before the start of the group discussions.

6.3 Limitations

The main challenge to the exercise was the paucity of monitoring data (poor data disaggregation for marginal groups, little information on jobs created and access to finance). Making it difficult to fully account the contribution that UNDP made in job creation. To mitigate this challenge, and for triangulation purposes, the evaluator broadened the scope of the secondary data review by including external assessments and evaluations to cross-reference internally available data and validate findings. The compressed time frame compounded the limitation as it limited the extent of data collection and analysis.

7 FINDINGS

This section examines the relevance of the UNDP approach in creating job opportunities and the effectiveness, efficiency and sustainability of results achieved inclusive of partnerships.

Documentation reveals that the Sustainable and Inclusive Economic Growth (SIEG) pillar of the UNDP was designed mainly to enable UNDP to strengthen capacities of private and public sector stakeholders to create decent and sustainable jobs, promote economic diversity, facilitate increased economic participation using innovative and technological interventions, collaborative, and informative stakeholder policy-shaping platforms and technical support and development.

The findings indicate that there are nine initiatives within the UNDP that are perceived to have contributed directly or indirectly to creating job opportunities and improving livelihoods in Lesotho.

Seven initiatives were within the SIEG portfolio namely:

- 1) Lesotho Sustainable and Inclusive Economic Growth Project (2019-2023)
- 2) Lesotho Supplier Development Programme (LSDP) and Green Value Chains Project (GVC) (2020-2023)
- 3) Lesotho Accelerator Labs (2019-2023)
- 4) Enhancing Youth Empowerment for Sustainable Development (EYES) (2019-2020)
- 5) Lesotho COVID-19 Response (2020)
- 6) Lesotho Sustainability Support for Trade Project (SSP) (2019-2022)
- 7) Plastic Life cycle management (PWM) (2021)

Two initiatives were in the Environment and Energy portfolio which were more inclined to improving livelihoods. These are:

- 8) Sustainable Energy for All Project (SEE4ALL) (2016-2021)
- 9) Reducing Vulnerability for Climate Change Project (RVCC) (2015-2019)

7.1 Relevance

This section shares findings that pertain to the relevance evaluation criteria. Under relevance the intent was to understand if UNDP's interventions were doing the right things or focusing on the right things as far as creation of employment is concerned. The findings were derived from answering the following main questions: a) Are UNDP interventions intended to contribute in employment creation relevant to Lesotho's Vision 2020, NSDP II and UNDAF 2019-2023?; b) Did UNDPs inclusive employment creation interventions respond to the most pressing challenges faced by Lesotho, youth, women and people with disabilities (PWDs)? and d) how has UNDP support evolved with the outbreak of COVID-19 to address inclusive employment creation emerging needs?

Finding: Interventions were found to be aligned with the objectives and priorities of the Government of Lesotho, UN Programming in the country and wider regional and international efforts focused on creating inclusive employment and opportunities. As reflected in the matrix below.

NATIONAL PRIORITY OR GOAL: Enhancing inclusive and sustainable economic growth and private sector-led job creation		
UNDAF OUTCOME INVOLVING UNDP #3.1: Outcome 3.1: By 2023, government and private sector ensure inclusive and sustainable economic growth for poverty reduction, improved food security, decent work and structural transformation of the economy		SDG 1,2,5,8, 9,10,17
RELATED STRATEGIC PLAN OUTCOME: Outcome 1: Advance poverty reduction in all its forms and dimensions		

The evaluation further indicates that all interventions were highly relevant to the needs of Basotho. UNDP interventions responded to the most pressing challenges faced by Lesotho, youth rural residents and women, albeit to a lesser extent to PWDs. This is reflected in designs, implementation and monitoring of the interventions. In order to reinforce relevant contribution UNDP relied on evidence to inform designs of the interventions. It also built on past initiatives to ensure current interventions were aligned to recommendations from their predecessors. For instance the GVC built on the RVCC end of project evaluation recommendation that advised subsequent projects to engage RVCC beneficiaries and capacitate them on the good practices and interventions to ensure that their produce meet local and regional markets.

Finding: UNDP support evolved with the outbreak of COVID-19 to address inclusive employment creation emerging needs. The UNDP was the technical lead on COVID socio-economic assessment and recovery planning across the UNRC system. UNDP introduced the Accelerator Lab as an innovation modality for integrating emerging issues and is a solid mechanism for developing new ideas with design thinking. The Accelerator Lab is keeping UNDP's initiatives very relevant and it is proving to be a cross-pillar modality and potentially integrated into the programming approach of UNDP.

COVID-19 presented an unprecedented challenge to Lesotho and the world at large and this called for a change in programming within UNDP Lesotho to address emerging needs. The accelerator lab opened new opportunities for emerging and emergency work for the economic growth sectors. Accelerator Lab interventions were very responsive to COVID-19 and UN partnerships for COVID. The SIEG portfolio has benefited from the accelerator lab to realize work on the economy through the GVC. Though the innovative interventions were viewed as small they were believed to address emerging issues effectively. The Accelerator Lab approaches and the mechanism introduced facilitated relevance of interventions and innovation for UN interagency COVID 19 response and economic recovery in particular. It has emerged as example of an effective cross-pillar mechanism for integrating emerging issues across the programmes though is situated under SIEG pillar.

7.2 Effectiveness

This section explores the evidence available to corroborate that UNDP has contributed towards creating opportunities and capacities to enable inclusive employment targeting youth, women and people with disabilities. The intent of the section is to examine if the interventions achieved their objectives pertaining to job creation. The theory of change was employed to provide a framework for a “performance story”: a narrative about how the interventions made contributions in creating job opportunities and improving livelihoods.

The section answers the following main questions: a) Did UNDP improve capacities of government institutions and private sector to create a competitive and gender sensitive business environment to enable economic participation of MSMEs?; b) Did UNDP strengthen capacities of public and private sector institutions to promote enterprise development; c) What evidence is available to corroborate that UNDP has contributed towards creating opportunities and capacities to enable inclusive employment, targeting youth, women and people with disabilities.

Finding: Evidence and feedback from stakeholders indicate that the UNDP has contributed in several ways in improving capacities to create job opportunities in Lesotho, though not satisfactorily as per the set targets¹⁰. The evaluation shows that UNDP contributed partially in strengthening capacities of private and public sector stakeholders to create decent and sustainable jobs, promote economic diversity, facilitate increased economic participation using innovative and technological interventions, collaborative and informative stakeholder policy-shaping platforms and technical support and development. UNDP is perceived to have contributed in enabling effective economic participation of MSMEs and has contributed in strengthening capacities of institutions to promote enterprises development thus contributed indirectly in creating a competitive and gender sensitive business environment. However, stakeholders are of the view that initiatives are spread too thin and interventions are short and small in terms of funding.

Six broad categories of success and contributions were noted as follows:

7. UNDP contributed in improved policy and legal environment to induce private sector participation and employment creation.

Since 2019 UNDP supported two policies, the Gender and Development Policy 2018–2030 and the ICT Policy. The ICT Policy is expected to enable accelerated digital governance, transformation, and innovations, particularly in Government, while the gender-sensitive economic policy framework allows employment and economic growth linked to the NSDP II. Both policies are perceived as catalytic in creating a conducive environment for job opportunities. UNDP further assisted the

¹⁰ See annex 3

Department of Youth to develop a Youth Mentorship Strategy aimed at identifying and matching youth entrepreneurs to business partners for technical and business management support, for capacity building and stabilization of youth enterprises. Additionally, the UNDP supported the government in mapping policies for implementation of NSDP II as well as assessment for alignment to the SDGs. This will facilitate coordinated planning and harmonization for policy implementation and monitoring in line with the national development priorities.

8. UNDP facilitated MSMEs participation in policy dialogues for private sector development.

In 2019 UNDP supported establishment of MSMEs District Committees which culminated in Development Forum meetings¹¹ where MSMEs stakeholders and MSMEs engaged on successes and challenges of their enterprises. This enabled the Ministry of Small Business Development, Co-operatives and Marketing to create linkages with MSMEs and their stakeholders to further its mandate. Under the SIEG Project 54 MSMEs participated in policy dialogues organized by UNDP in 2021. Documentation reveals that UNDP collaborated with IOM to undertake an assessment on the impact of COVID-19 on the informal cross-border traders in 2020, and co-organized a validation session with representatives from the government, private sector and MSMEs. This study was further used as a resource for the national consultations and high-level dialogues on the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) Protocol on Women in Trade, with government and private sector to establish priorities for development of cross border trade, particularly for women traders.

9. UNDP facilitated promotion of local innovations and creativity to diversify economic opportunities and livelihoods development with a focus on women and youth engaging academia, the private sector and NGOs. It also supported market related capacity building and training programmes for MSMEs (youth and women).

This included working with various entities for innovations including: a) the Tsa Mahlale TV programme which broadcasted local innovations, it was done in collaboration with the National University of Lesotho (NUL); b) A pilot on Youth Diaries for youth engagement and dialogue on business development with the BAM Group and c) the youth mentorship programmes with the Entrepreneurship Network (TEN). Through TEN the UNDP enabled 24,000 youth access to Government information on business and development opportunities aligned to the four sectors identified by the Government for driving economic growth and employment creation (manufacturing, tourism, agriculture, and technology and innovation).

UNDP supported ten boot camps which employed a design thinking approach to build youth and stakeholder awareness of human-centered approaches to business. MGYSR discovered that youth were not very open to processes of ideation and stakeholder engagement in training programmes particularly in Semonkong and Molepolole. Stakeholders critiqued the approach of design thinking tool/approach and stated it needed to be imparted to many trainers first especially business development services providers to adapt and use it. Furthermore some form of formal

¹¹ Number of meeting could not be established from documentation and engagement with implementing partner

accreditation should be introduced to help standardise and formalise the implementation of the tool. Stakeholders were also of the view that a follow-up training in a year would be helpful to find out how participants are progressing with their businesses. UNDP also facilitated capacitation of 2 youth representatives through the YouthConnekt Africa 2021, in Ghana while in 2019 it supported participation of 10 youth entrepreneurs at the same event. In addition, with UNDP support 185 youth (103 males and 82 females) were reached with technical development and policy advocacy. The activities contributed to unearthing at least 7 youth-led innovations and 71 youth-initiated businesses.

Youth engagement was perceived to have high potential to unlock employment opportunities and facilitate economic growth. The approach was viewed as very strategic by UNDP for sustainable development. It could possibly break the monotone and culture of youth dependence on Government as the main employer upon formal education attainment. This could instigate a mind shift to the youth to be entrepreneurs and creators of employment.

The implementing partners indicated that the initiatives need to be more long-term and better resourced to facilitate impact and sustainability. Cue should be taken from the young graduates' programme, the National Volunteer Corps (NVC) Programme which was funded for four years before it was fully funded by Government. UNDP should also engage the private sector as key mentors in youth interventions and consider innovative financing. The innovative resourcing should be linked to the mentoring mechanisms. UNDP should also support Government to strategically engage with other development partners for resources mobilization and scale-up of such interventions.

10. UNDP contributed in improved market conditions and skills complement of MSMEs

UNDP through the GVC and LSDP contributed in building the capacity and resilience of the local agricultural sector to produce and supply the local market through sustainable production, process, and marketing processes. UNDP in collaboration with the private sector built national agricultural capacities to improve production quality and quantity. UNDP also collaborated with NGOs and strengthened capacities of about 120 small holder farmers on agri-business to access local and national markets. This was done with the understanding that behind every business there is job creation and scaling up creates more opportunities for employment beyond self-employment. The capacity building facilitated a mindset shift in doing business for the farmers, for instance the farmers are now aware that they first need to establish the market before embarking on production to avoid produce wastage. This has also facilitated collaborations, unionisation, and partnerships of the farmers, as they approach the market and operate their agri-businesses which has strengthened their delivery stance and increased the likelihood of attaining orders from chain supermarkets like Shoprite. This has also opened avenues for the farmers and facilitated market linkages within the Mohale's Hoek district and across. This has seen engagement of about 450 temporary workers as orders begin to increase for the farmers. This was achieved through the GVC Project and LSDP which were merged to leverage on synergies in terms of resources.

Furthermore, as part of national and institutional capacity building UNDP also collaborated with government ministries and the private sector to promote adoption of Global Good Agricultural Practices (Global GAP) to enhance opportunities for participating in local and regional markets.

Capacities of 50 local experts from the government ministries, academia, private sector and farmers were strengthened to acquire internationally recognized certification to provide technical support to farmers on adoption of food safety standards. **One local expert has already embarked on an international consultancy using the Global GAP skills.**

The GVC and LSDP are perceived as promising significant contributors to job creation. UNDP through these initiatives contributed in creating about 570 jobs (of which 450 are temporary and 120 permanent). GVC and LSDP initiative came at an opportune time to support the rural population particularly small-scale farmers and households whose livelihoods are based on agriculture and are most likely to be affected by climate change induced drought and COVID-19¹². **The GVC is built on RVCC project which at the end of implementation recommended that subsequent projects work with identified and capacitated lead farmers on good practices and interventions to ensure that their produce meet local and regional markets.**

GVC is esteemed as one of the most relevant initiatives in improving the livelihood of the small farmer holders and unlocking potential for job opportunities. The main challenge that was experienced within the GVC is maintaining consistent participation of youth, who seemed not to have an invested interest in agriculture and the model of the GVC as it does not promise quick benefits. Future interventions should consider this challenge and devise innovative ways to enhance the agriculture sector such that it presents as an initiative of choice to the youth.

Regarding the value chains interventions, the stakeholders would like UNDP's current assistance to continue and set up authorities for piggery and poultry but also to continue to research potential for additional value chains. Help conduct feasibility on even more possibilities to see about developing other value chains, for example, horticulture, and beef, and then help to popularise and address the institutional aspects relating to them, such as producers and different stakeholders. UNDP assistance is needed on a short-term basis to develop institutional and policy instruments for coordination work on the business ecosystem to get firmly established.

UNDP supported the Ministry of Tourism, Environment and Culture to implement a project on plastic-life cycle management to promote sustainable environment and consumption relative to plastics and expose opportunities for livelihoods derivative from the sustainable management and use of plastic. **UNDP through the Plastic Waste Management (PWM) Project unlocked opportunities for employment where it was operational, it created about 53 job opportunities (38 females and 15 males).** UNDP under this initiative street vendors and informal traders were capacitated on repurposing plastic waste to improve their livelihoods and economic activities. The initiative established waste centres where recycled/repurposed plastic waste products are commercially sold. Furthermore, the initiative set up a waste trading platform, which allows for plastic waste to be sold with high likelihood to culminate in creating employment. PWM facilitated production of different plastic products (Training of 25 female inmates to make shoes, hats, bags); Production of plastic-made crafts and Production of reusable

¹² Assessment of the Socio-economic Impact of COVID-19 on the Kingdom of Lesotho, June 2020

shopping bags: with South African retailers based in the country no longer importing reusable plastic bags from South Africa which might have facilitated employment creation.

PWM leveraged the power of the Accelerator Lab (AccLab) network that led to a South–South cooperation between Lesotho and Eswatini. A solutions mapping and collective intelligence exercise was held among the stakeholders in order to determine the feasibility of the experiment prior to its commencement, and to also influence the participants to perceive the concept as their own, thus encouraging them to lead the implementation of the experiment. Stakeholders indicated this approach as most effective in ensuring ownership and sustainability. UNDP in this initiative did not only partner with government but included private sector and NGOs (vendor associations and consumer protection association). UNDP was applauded for moving away from including the Government as the only key player but including other critical players at grassroots who understood intrinsic and practical issues on the ground. However, there were grievances from one vendor association that felt their intellectual property was infringed on because their intelligence was used in the design of the project but later on they were excluded from applying for grants and participating in competitions as that was viewed as conflict of interest. Apparently this condition was not cleared nor communicated directly to the stakeholders at an initial stage so that they could understand that by agreeing to participate in the design thinking they would be excluded from participation and application of certain beneficial activities of the project. As a result going forward it is important for UNDP to clarify such issues that could constitute conflict of interest from the onset.

11. UNDP injected cash for work to over 2,000 persons valued at US \$500,000 as a way of mitigating COVID-19 impact. This improved livelihoods and contributed in creating job opportunities within the communities in Mphahle's Hoek. RVCC's end of project evaluation indicated that the incentives helped in various ways which entailed feeding families and financing small businesses. RVCC introduced the incentive of paying a minimal fee to community members for taking part in the land rehabilitation initiatives as way of mitigating COVID-19 impact to complement an incentive package that included agricultural inputs that the project was providing over the years. Also, food insecure communities and smallholder farmers' capacities were strengthened on smart agricultural practices to facilitate vegetables production for markets throughout the year using tunnels, green houses and newly introduced planting technologies and improved seeds that can withstand extreme weather conditions. The skills acquired are believed to be crucial in improving livelihoods and facilitating job opportunities.

UNDP through the Sustainable Energy for All (SE4All) Project catalysed investments in renewable energy-based mini-grids and Energy Centres, to reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions and contribute to the achievement of Lesotho's Vision 2020 and SE4All goals. SE4All built capacities and supported Government to create an enabling environment for private sector investment hence job creations. The Energy Project provided financial incentives to the private sector to go into the rural parts of Lesotho that have potential for development and set up energy resource centres or shops where renewable energy technologies were sold which included energy efficient stoves. The Project awarded grants to private developers in order to kick start the market for the renewable energy technologies and minimise the risk associated with capital investment. Stakeholders are of the view that the initiative this way contributed to creating job opportunities. Strategic engagement and partnering by UNDP on potential lead donors such as World Bank can be of great value for

scaling up as it is willing to assist the government to establish mini-grids through the Private Public Partnership (PPP) arrangement.

- 12. Evidence indicates UNDP facilitated generation of knowledge and data to enable evidence-informed policy and decision making (employment mapping).** UNDP supported data collation and disaggregation mechanisms for the business sector. The business sector is viewed as operating in the absence of disaggregated data and so a key UNDP plan has been on data and data systems. For instance, UNDP supported the One-Stop Business Facilitation Centre (OBFC) in the Ministry of Trade and Industry (MTI) to develop the business register to provide data disaggregation by sector, gender, geography, and age of directors as well as provide information on mortality of businesses. UNDP supported the Ministry of Small Business Development to establish a platform for registration of MSMEs, informal businesses and street vendors, collating all necessary information and details as may be required by different stakeholders. The platform is accessible both online and as an application to enable self-registration to help address the challenges of data and informality issues. The platform enables registration and certification of the MSMEs to be able to get some basic support services directed to them such as the recent relief funds for COVID-19. UNDP also supported a mapping of youth enterprises which created a platform for the line ministries which deal with businesses registration to establish integrated systems for data collection and disaggregation by age and gender. The evaluation found that the availability of a clear database on youth enterprises has created a clear platform for the Department of Youth to identify opportunities for strengthening internal programmes for youth for development and support. This way the Ministry can identify innovations among youth entrepreneurs.

UNDP has assisted the Ministry of Gender, Youth, Sports and Recreation (MGYSR) to take a gender audit study in four ministries (the Ministry of Finance; Development Planning; Public Service and MGYSR) with intention to include other ministries. This gender audit study is a prerequisite in ensuring that these ministries mainstream gender equality and women empowerment into their into their development programmes. This attracted support of partners like the IMF which supported the Ministry of Finance in holding awareness workshops for budget officers on gender responsive budgeting based on the recommendation of the audit study supported by UNDP. UNDP in this regard is perceived to have contributed in enabling effective economic participation of MSMEs and has contributed in strengthening capacities of institutions to promote enterprises development thus contributed indirectly in creating a competitive and gender sensitive business environment.

Also the COVID-19 Assessment support by UNDP was viewed as contributory to gender considerations regarding employment as it facilitates a conducive environment and contributes in understanding the differential effects of COVID-19 on the society though it might be in an indirect manner. The COVID-19 assessment was done for MSMEs, gender, employment and LNOB. UNDP is seen as appreciative of gender as an enabler for development and this is seen in implementation of activities as tangible efforts are visible of integrating gender. The COVID-19 Assessment serves as knowledge creation for employment policy mapping. The Midterm review of the NSDP II was also concluded with support from UNDP, facilitating review and reprioritization of national development agenda.

Stakeholders indicated that the UNDP assisted in the development of a Marketing Application that contains all information regarding what has been produced and the prices of those products and further assisted by publicizing the Application. The Application was promoted in 2019 in different districts. This Application can be accessed by everyone and is reported to be functioning well.

7.3 Efficiency

This section assesses how well resources were used to deliver results in an economic and timely manner. It explores performance around efficiency by asking these questions: a) How did UNDP policies, decisions, capabilities, practices, and constraints affect the performance of interventions for job creation?; b) Could a different approach have led to better results?; c) Were resources adequate to catalyse creation of sustainable and inclusive employment?; d) To what extent did achieving key results deviate from what was planned (in terms of costs and deadlines) and why?; e) To what extent do the M&E systems utilized by UNDP ensure efficient SIEG interventions management?

Finding: UNDP approaches, resources, models, conceptual framework are seen as relevant to achieve the planned results with caveats. UNDP deploys a mix of approaches in implementation of interventions, national implementation modality (NIM) is the default modality for the SIEG interventions but sometimes as necessary direct implementation modality (DIM) is employed. Further, under UNDP's supervision, activities are implemented through various Implementing Partners (IPs), including NGOs, and public sector organizations.

The Harmonised Approach to Cash Transfers (HACT) was employed in implementation and UNDP developed and supported stakeholder capacities in this regard. Regular project and management audits and spot checks were carried out to ensure efficiency of internal controls and accountability. UNDP would sometimes supported IPs with procurement and management of financial resources as necessary but actual implementation was done by IPs. There is flexibility in this regard where IPs are at liberty to request UNDP to assist with procurement of any service if UNDP is best placed to procure such a service. UNDP made efforts to capacitate the IPs on HACT and compliance of relevant processes in implementing projects and procurement. Where improvements were observable IPs were allowed to manage the finances and report. However, there were notable challenges, where some activities would creep in into the budget that did qualify for inclusion, necessitating vigilance when managing interventions in this regard.

Implementing partners perceived HACT processes to have derailed implementation and payment of services rendered particularly under GVC and SSP. IPs in this regard felt UNDP did not communicate explicitly the requirements for funds disbursements as such there was a lot of back and forth before the second tranche of funds could be released and this culminated in substantial delays in activity implementation such that most activities will not be covered even in the event of project extension. IPs also perceived UNDP as not adequately conversant with HACT requirements and processes, it appears UNDP is still learning itself hence it was not able to offer timely guidance to IPs in this regard. The SSP IP is not satisfied with how UNDP managed the project funds because it did not communicate in advance that it would charge the HACT trainings offered to the IP from the project funds as such funds

that were earmarked for approved activities paid the HACT trains. But payments for activities that were in the approved work plan are still outstanding because funds have run out and service providers are still expecting their payments, creating a very contentious situation. Therefore, an open and transparent discussion is needed between UNDP and its IPs to adopt principles of consensus around HACT requirements before implementation to avoid delays and grievances. Also, there is need for further capacitation on HACT for both UNDP and IPs.

UNDP procurement requirements and internal processes are perceived as unnecessarily lengthy thus derail implementation. For instance when requests for procurement are put forward, a concept note is required before approval even if activities are in an approved work plan, this tends to delay execution of activities and add unnecessary workload on IPs. IPs perceive this requirement as redundant because an approved work plan connotes approval of activities entailed in it.

Finding: Despite challenges delivery has been robust (average 71%) and stakeholders are generally happy with the planned results. Resources were viewed as modest to adequately catalyse creation of sustainable and inclusive employment (projects are rather small in funds and short in the timeframe). As reflected in the matrix below.

Project Name	Approved Total Budget			Total Budget	Total Delivered			Total Delivered %		
	2019	2020	2021		2019	2020	2021	2019	2020	2021
Reducing Vulnerability from Climate Change	2,214,026	3,768,721	2,015,539	7,998,286	1,780,840	2,817,864	1,180,078	80%	75%	59%
Sustainable Energy for All	842,410	775,449	814,667	2,432,526	422,595	706,138	263,692	50%	91%	32%
Green Value Chain			800,000	800,000			689,504			86%
Economic Growth	203,370	175,800	298,663	677,833	203,136	176,981	298,084	100 %	101%	100 %
Youth Empowerment	311,891	409,711	-	721,602	311,726	406,807	-	100 %	99%	-
Accelerator Facility	180,405	262,377	295,358	738,140	113,332	236,312	289,515	63%	90%	98%
EIF – SSP	-	150,000	142,460	292,460	-	82,540	135,821		55%	95%
COVID - 19 Response	-	829,924	-	829,924	-	817,085	-		98%	-
Plastic Waste Management	-	-	500,000	500,000	-	-	493,215			99%

7.4 Sustainability

This section assesses the sustainability of achieved results, while considering potential for continuation, replication, and or up-scaling. The following questions were asked to assess sustainability of interventions: a) Did UNDP establish mechanisms to ensure sustainability of sustainable and inclusive employment interventions?; b) Will the benefits of the interventions continue/last beyond intervention implementation?

UNDP established mechanisms to ensure sustainability of interventions intended to create or catalyse employment and the selected implementing partners can to some extent continue to lead the interventions beyond interventions' implementation cycle. UNDP has been intentional and deliberate on building institutional and individual capacities of implementing partners and beneficiaries to facilitate sustainability and scale up.

Stakeholders were of the opinion that benefits of interventions in respect to creating sustainable and inclusive employment will continue in future because of the capacity building initiatives and the partnerships that have been formed. By design interventions capacitated beneficiaries to commercialise their undertakings such that they can be sustainable beyond implementation of interventions. For instance, beneficiaries under GVC and LSDP were capacitated to run their farms as agribusinesses such that upon termination of these interventions beneficiaries can still apply these skills to scale up and even access financial solutions available within the country. Furthermore, to ensure that capacitation of farmers continues beyond the interventions, expertise of extension officers within the MAFS was strengthened around agri-business as registered Global Gap trainers.

The evaluation further found that beneficiaries felt empowered with skills, knowledge, partnerships, and institutions for managing natural resources to reduce vulnerability to climate change and increase the resilience of natural and social capital even beyond RVCC. Documentation reveals that beneficiaries were very excited with the empowerment and also indicated commitment to continue applying these skills beyond project life. **As a mechanism for assuring sustainability implementing partners and beneficiaries voiced their commitment and support in continuity of benefits rendered with UNDP support.** For instance under the RVCC initiative the implementing partner (MFRSC) indicated continued support to beneficiaries with skills acquired during the project, while beneficiaries attested to continue applying the knowledge and skill they had acquired beyond project implementation. Under SEE4ALL and PWM engagement of the private sector to drive the interventions facilitates sustainability and scale up as the private sector is driven by profits.

Government as a partner was perceived as a poor exit strategy for these interventions, as it often does not have the capacity to sustain results when it is left as the main responsible party, as such the main focus should be on strengthening the community and the private sector to take over at the end of project to sustain results of interventions. However, Government should be supported to strengthen its partnership and resource mobilisation strategy as a facilitator and overseer in development. A challenge that was noted was that there might be inadequate financial and economic resources to sustain the benefits achieved by interventions and this is exacerbated by short duration of interventions which does not allowing adequate time to develop a proper exit strategy. Therefore, stakeholders recommended that UNDP should support Government to mobilise potential development partners and private sector to acquire subsequent funding. The evaluation highlighted throughout the report the issue of small inputs and short timing of interventions. Stakeholders clearly mentioned that one of UNDP advantaged is its ability to mobilize resources for longer and bigger interventions including innovative financing and private public partnerships. Here the evaluation found the need to build capacities for resource mobilization and partnership work within the UNDP and its implementing partners. Innovative financing is needed to scale up and sustain the economic development and environmental focused natural resources business interventions. UNDP should invest more in assessing

and implementing further work for value chains. These interventions are key to enabling environment for rural development and equitable access to most vulnerable and marginalized groups. However, it is notable that other broader enabler like internet and subsidies are necessary to kick start the rural economies.

7.5 Partnerships

Partnerships are instrumental for results both in terms of mobilizing resources and in the successful coordinated approach to the implementation of initiatives. The evaluation found that UNDP objectives and priorities presented in the Partnerships and Communication Strategy and Action Plan (PCAP) lack approach for deciding on partnerships. The feedback from consulted partners however suggests general satisfaction to the quality and technical support provided by UNDP. UNDP is described as respected and valued partner and most partners are motivated to continue the partnership with UNDP. Having an up-to-date partnership and resources and results framework strategy will support results. The window is currently wide open for a partnership strategy that is holistic and considers the current conducive enabling environment and need for all of UNDP work, the role of business for youth and women participation, economic empowerment and development.

The following are findings related to partnerships:

Finding: UNDP does systematically plan their partnership building with the view of achieving their objectives and priorities.

UNDP partnerships are in line with objectives and priorities set out in each initiative. UNDP has a guide of building partnerships but there are no explicit criteria or guidelines for selecting partner organizations. The PCAP does not specify the expected outcome and schedule of the implementation of activities. Furthermore, it was not possible to define the total amount of resources UNDP has invested in partnerships but available information indicates that working on partnerships is a significant part of staff time, cost of mission and cost of meetings. Resource planning concerning partnerships is not systematic even though it is clear that partnerships maybe costly in terms of both human and financial resources. Partnerships are established around specific stakeholders with potential for mobilizing resources including development cooperation agencies, international financial institutions and private sector. For instance, UNDP has managed to mobilise the private sector (LNDC, Standard Lesotho Bank, Fin Mark Trust) to initiate a value chain programme to consolidate efforts towards creating sustainable green livelihoods and jobs, through the development of local value chains and supplier development systems. There are formal meetings and talks about the overall state of partnerships. Communication is based on transparency and trust. Frequency of communication within partnerships is not clearly articulated.

Finding: consulted partners satisfied with UNDP partnerships with some caveats

According to the interviews that were carried out during the evaluation, there appears to be general satisfaction with the UNDP as a partner. The evaluation indicates that UNDP makes concerted efforts to form strategic partnerships in the sphere of sustainable economic development. UNDP also keeps channels of communication open and shares the right information on potential areas of partnerships with proper potential partners. UNDP is viewed as collaborative by other development partners in the

sustainable economic development sphere. Furthermore, UNDP SIEG interventions are viewed as complementary to other partners or internal programmes, they do not overlap or duplicate interventions by other partners or internal programmes.

While UNDP financial contributions are relatively modest, partners stressed the helpfulness of UNDP presence. With the technical contributions interviewees described it as experience based, honest and able to work with multiple stakeholders. All partners were really motivated to continue to partner with UNDP. With regard to challenges, some of the interviewed partners mentioned the lengthy financial arrangements (procurement), and lack of detailed project description.

Finding: there is considerable evidence that UNDP partnerships have resulted in positive changes

Most of the partnerships have met their stated objectives. The evaluation found evidence of a wide range of positive achievement and changes that partnerships have contributed to, in particular the following: Enhanced cooperation with beneficiaries, capacitated implementing partners on technical capabilities and beneficiaries. The results are mostly relevant and meaningful in terms of their potential (future) contribution to further changes and improving the living conditions of affected populations and the condition of affected ecosystems. For greater results of the partnerships in SIEG work, it can be expanded for private sector and the business sector broadly together for instance, with the World Bank and others in the business community across and in the private sector.

Findings: UNDP does not indicate the sustainability mechanisms for partnerships

Partners interviewed indicated enhanced capacities as a result of UNDP partnerships but it is difficult to determine whether these are sustainable, that is, if they are likely to continue without further support from UNDP and its partners. Sustainability relates to the extent to which the UNDP and its partners track and document their progress and results, during the evaluation there is very limited systematic data available that documents change processes over time. While tracking results does not affect the sustainability of results, it is relevant for UNDP to be able to plan and report on the sustainability of its partnerships and their ongoing relevance.

7.6 Cross Cutting Issues

The evaluation assessed the extent to which gender equality and the empowerment of women have been addressed in the design, implementation, and monitoring of the interventions. It also assessed how interventions considered inclusion of marginalized groups, especially PwDs, youth and rural residents in activities. Gender and human rights are integrated in initiatives even though human rights strategies and action plans are missing for vulnerable groups such as PwDs and indigenous people, whom are not as strong as they could be, as is the case with gender. UNDP interventions were seen to have accommodated youth, women and rural residents but not so much PwDs and did not consider indigenous people completely.

8 LESSONS LEARNED

Furthermore, lessons learned have been documented by various project team on a continual basis and shared with appropriate parties who could learn from the initiatives.

Key lessons learned for future programming on SIEG related and other initiatives include:

- Solutions mapping and collective intelligence exercises held among the stakeholders in determining feasibility of experiments prior to their commencement, influences participants to perceive the concept as their own, thus encouraging them to lead the implementation of the intervention. This approach is most effective in ensuring ownership and sustainability.
- Engaging diversified partners is important in fostering strong collaboration with local NGOs and could build a broader understanding and commitment to interventions. This could help widen dialogue and facilitate new partnerships.
- The consultative and inclusive processes adopted by various interventions were important to building ownership among national and local stakeholders.
- Timely communication of established processes and time requirements to IPs will help a more realistic activity planning and healthier working partnerships.
- Intervention designs should match resources and time available for implementation to be effective and efficient. If the objective of an intervention is to transform thinking and behaviour, it should take a longer time and hence should be planned for a phased-approach.
- Postponing of project activities due to delays in disbursements of funding leads to “bunching up” of activities, eventually contributing to inefficiencies and affecting effectiveness. This included delays in execution of some activities with risk of not completing all activities and rushed preparation for activities.

9 RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on evidence gleaned throughout the evaluation this section provides recommendations on how UNDP can most effectively support the national objectives for employment creation, working with national and local government, non-governmental organisations, private sector and academic institutions.

1. Effectiveness
<p>Recommendation 1.1: UNDP should deepen use of the AccLab processes and methods in programming to enhance its interventions, focus more on bringing in innovative solutions into programming. Avoid the ‘magic bullet solution’ to programming: try as much as possible to adapt to new ways of programming, use systems’ transformation and multiple interventions, which allow that at different stages of the system emerging needs of the nation can be addressed. Invest more in this way of building partnerships and collective intelligence such that interventions are more likely to be owned by the relevant stakeholders which promises sustainability.</p>
<p>Recommendation 1.2: UNDP should continue contributing in building the capacity and resilience of the local agricultural sector to produce and supply the local market through sustainable production, process, and marketing processes. UNDP should support setting up legal frameworks for value chains in agriculture which will be engines for development. UNDP should continue embarking on</p>

agricultural initiatives such as the GVC and LSDP but should improve intervention scale and duration thus generate growth in the sector that creates jobs. Agriculture is still one of the largest employers and amongst the key drivers for Lesotho's economy. Agriculture could be a much significant employer if the sector moved from subsistence to commercial farming, and produced in quality and quantity for domestic, regional and international markets. But cognisance of the inhibiting factors is important as well as addressing them, these includes: a) Lack of technical and business skills within the sector especially within MSMEs; b) Limited access to domestic, regional and global markets due to challenges meeting specific standards and c) Limited access to financial products and services tailored to the needs of MSMEs, especially addressing their limited collateral, long-term capital needs, risk management needs and limited financial literacy levels

Recommendation 1.3: Innovative financing is needed to scale up and sustain the economic development and environmental focused natural resources business programmes. UNDP should scale up interventions on inclusive business by promoting access to financial services and inclusive markets for MSMEs and facilitate their participation in public-private dialogues. Access to finance remains a major problem for the private sector's development even though Lesotho's financial sector is liquid and robust. Interestingly, the banking sector plays a minor role in supporting the local entrepreneurial efforts. Many aspiring entrepreneurs would consider engaging informal lenders and the alternative non-bank sources of finance. UNDP should also explore equity investment as an option to access of capital for entrepreneurs to grow their businesses instead of awarding grants. Mentorship should be an integral part of the package to facilitate success of businesses thus facilitate job creation, the experience, knowledge, motivation and leadership skills that mentors will bring on-board will be beneficial in this regard. UNDP should continue to promote private sector investment in the energy sector through establishment of off-grid solution such as mini-grids and village energy centres.

2. Efficiency

Recommendation 2.1: UNDP should consider focusing its resources for adequate time to make an impact. UNDP should avoid spreading its resources thin and moving from initiative to initiative without making meaningful impact, it should focus its resources until meaningful results can be attained this will also facilitate sustainability. Also built on passed initiatives results as is the case with GVC and LSDP. UNDP should also consider reducing recurrent expenditure such as workshops and strive to strike a balance with scaling up initiatives, it should be intentional on how to best spend resources. Spending should be on the most impactful components of the initiative.

Recommendation 2.2: In order to avoid delays in implementation, funds disbursements and general dissatisfaction among implementing partners UNDP should further strengthen capacities of implementing partners on operationalisation of the HACT and related reporting mechanisms. It should also communicate expectations in advance to IPs regarding any expenditure that can be charged on their approved budgets to cover HACT capacity building related expenses

Recommendation 2.3: In order to ensure timely execution of activities UNDP should employ agile mechanisms in procurement of services and avoid lengthy requirements that derail processes such

as requiring a concept note particularly for activities that are in an approved annual plan. Lessons can be learned from partners in the private sector on how they execute their procurement processes.

Recommendation 2.4: Improve the programme results framework to cover the qualitative indicators in the SIEG programme. The indicators in results framework are mainly quantitative. Including qualitative indicators at the output level will be important as a way to focus on the quality of results. This will also enable a more holistic assessment of the actual achievements of the programme and enable the identification of necessary adjustments to maximize impact.

Recommendation 2.5: UNDP should strengthen its internal monitoring to make sure there is adequate programme and project data that can be used in tracking progress towards employment objectives. Overall employment data and information require strengthening. At the end of the projects, information should be collected to strengthen baseline data for future phases by performing an end of project survey to determine how constituents and other project recipients benefited from the initiatives.

Recommendation 2.6: UNDP should co-opt other UN agencies in exploring an option of “One Fund” mechanism for the country or multi-donor trust fund to improve data availability in Lesotho to monitoring and evaluation of employment related high level results. In addition, funding from bilateral donors should be mobilised for improving data availability through this one basket fund.

3. Sustainability

Recommendation 3.1: UNDP should focus on strengthening the community and the private sector to take over at end of interventions to facilitate sustainability: Government as a partner was perceived as a poor exit strategy for sustainability of interventions.

Recommendation 3.2: UNDP should build capacities for resource mobilisation and partnership work within the UNDP and its implementing partners. Innovative financing is needed to scale up and sustain the economic development and environmental focused natural resources business interventions. One of UNDP advantages is its ability to mobilize resources for longer and bigger interventions including innovative financing and private public partnerships.

Recommendation 3.3: UNDP should support Government to mobilise potential development partners to acquire subsequent funding to ensure maintenance and sustainability of intervention results, also ensure continuity of IPs to lead the interventions beyond project/programme cycle.

4. Partnerships

Recommendation 4.1: UNDP should strengthen its partnership and implementation with the private sector and civil society both at national and local levels such that it works through the people mostly affected and informed in the areas of job creation, this will facilitate ownership of initiatives and create inroads for the marginalised groups and ensure no one is left behind. Building partnership

with CSOs and private sector will bring added value, complementary and synergistic skills and capacities including expertise on new tools and technologies. The Evaluation indicates that partnerships are seen as critical in development. Economic development requires a civil society that is proactive, economic development requires a balance between politics and development. Looking at critical issues of the country the civil society needs to hold government to task in making sure that they implement development plans and also civil society becomes implementers in creating the inroads that will afford development. All these critical issues form a holistic picture to facilitate solutions in critical development problem such as unemployment.

Recommendation 4.2: UNDP should consider strengthening partnerships in research, though there is a standing partnership with research institutions such as NUL which is often co-opted in projects boards there is immense potential to improve in this area. This collaboration needs to be strengthened to ensure that some of the solutions that are being promoted are well tested before they can be deployed to enhance effectiveness of interventions.

Recommendation 4.3: UNDP should timely communicate issues that could potentially constitute conflict of interest before partners can engage in collective intelligence and design thinking of interventions to avoid grievances and perceived intellectual property infringements that can easily escalate to unpleasant partnerships and work relations

5. Cross-cutting Issues

Recommendation 5.1: UNDP should continue focusing/ concentrating on the youth in its interventions particularly those in the rural areas, expose them to excursions and innovations. In particular it should work with youth groups like Junior Chamber Lesotho to enable other young people to see opportunities thus contribute in innovations and solutions that speak to their lives to unlock job opportunities. They should be allowed to engage robustly in significant area of development. Most importantly UNDP can be catalytic in making sure that civic engagement at the local level for the young people is regularised where they can push for development at the grassroots level then upscale to district level then ultimately to national level. This will ensure that relevant voices are gathered to solve the glaring development problems

Recommendation 5.2: UNDP in the spirit of leaving no one behind should deliberately design its interventions to include people with disabilities and indigenous people such as the Xhosa speaking people found mainly in the southern part of Lesotho. UNDP should also be cognisant of Lesotho's social reality where at it stands there is a glaring boy child problem not necessarily a girl child problem as is the context in other developing economies. As such interventions should be seen to address this reality to avoid this reality cascading into a girl child problem.

Recommendation 5.3: UNDP should assist the gender audited ministries to appreciate and implement the recommendations of the Gender audit study. There is an appreciation that the Ministry of Finance in the Budget Division has started with implementation of these recommendation but it must be acknowledged that the Ministry of Finance is broad and it would be imperative to include other divisions in this consideration. The Budget Division has started with a gender

responsive budgeting and has raised awareness of finance officer where intend is to pilot the implementation of the gender study (Health; Education and Training; Social Development; and MGYSR). UNDP to co-opt other sister agencies like UNICEF in contributing in the gender audit study of other ministries like the Ministry of Education and Training and Ministry of Social Development to hasten the process and ensure that all ministries are audited and can too embark on implementing recommendations to unlock employment opportunities. UNDP should use its convening power and resource mobilisation to support the government in implementation of the gender audit study recommendations. However, Government should be accountable to upholding the various commitments it has made in ratifying various agreements.

Recommendation 5.4: UNDP should follow through with supporting the Ministry of Public Service to implement the 'Counter sexual, abuse and harassment' at workplace mechanisms to facilitate inclusivity, gender responsiveness and human rights regarding employment. To ensure that UNDP is actually gender responsive and inclusive in its programming all the employment creation and governance initiatives should be subjected to a gender audit. UNDP should honour the recommendations of such an audit study to unlock employment opportunities

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ANNXES

Annex 1 List of Documents reviewed

1. Midterm review – NSDP II
2. Midterm evaluation of the UNDP Lesotho Country Programme 2019 – 2023
3. Projects Reports

- a. Green Value Chains Project
 - b. Empowerment for Youth Empowerment
 - c. Accelerator Labs
 - d. COVID projects
 - e. SDG Fund/INFF
4. Other programmes
- a. Governance and Peacebuilding Unit
 - b. Environment and Energy
5. Previous Project Evaluations
- a. SEA4ALL
 - b. Reducing Vulnerability to Climate
 - c. LNSDP

Annex 2 List of Key Stakeholders and Partners Interviewed

Participant	Names of Contact persons	Contact details (e-mail)	Date and time
1. UNDP			
○ SIEG	Mabulara Tsuene	Mabulara.tsuene@undp.org	Thursday 25 Aug 2022
○ LSDP & GVC	Motlatsi Phasumane	Motlatsi.phasumane@undp.org	Thursday 25 Aug 2022
○ AccLab; Plastic Management& COVID-19 Response	Lebesa Nkune	Lebesa.nkune@undp.org	Monday 5 Sept 2022 15.00-15.50
○ AccLab; Plastic Management& COVID-19 Response	Neo Matsoso	neo.matsoso@undp.org	Monday 5 Sept 2022 15.00-15.50
○ AccLab; Plastic Management& COVID-19 Response	Teboho Khoali	Teboho.khoali@undp.org	Monday 5 Sept 2022 15.00-15.50
○ Environment	Limomane Peshoane	Limomane.peshoane@undp.org	Monday 29 Aug 2022 14.00-14.50
○ Governance	Thabo Mosoeunyane	Thabo.mosoeunyane@undp.org	Monday 29 Aug 2022 15.00-15.50
2. Ministry of Development Planning			
○ Dept of M&E	Malefu Khanyapa	Nokufa67@gmail.com	Monday 5 Sept 2022 09.00-09.50
○ Dept of Policy &	Molehe Mokone	molehej@yahoo.co.uk	Tuesday 30 Aug 2022

Participant	Names of Contact persons	Contact details (e-mail)	Date and time
Strategic Planning			11.00-11.50
○ Bureau of Statistics	Malehloa Molato	cmolato@gmail.com	Friday 26 Aug 2022 18.00-18.50
3. Ministry of Gender, Youth, Sports and Recreation			
○ Dept of Youth	Lintle Rabolinyane	Mrabolinyane80@gmail.com	Tuesday 30 Aug 2022 10.00-10.50
○ Dept of Gender	Matau Futho Letsatsi	futholetsatsi@gmail.com	Friday 26 Aug 2022 11.00-11.50
4. Ministry of Trade and Industry			
○ Dept of Trade	Angela Rapotso	Angela.rapotso@gov.ls	Thursday 1 Sept 2022 15.00-15.50
○ Dept of Planning	Phera Lepati	Phera.lepati@gov.ls	Friday 2 Sept 2022 12.00-12.50
5. Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security	Matsoanelo Maketela	makopoit83@gmail.com	Friday 2 Sept 2022 08.00-08.50
6. Ministry of Small Business Development	Soole William	sooleswmwilli@yahoo.ca	Tuesday 30 Aug 2022 09.00-09.50
7. Ministry of Finance	Maseeiso Lekholoane Florence Mohasoa	mplekholoane@gmail.com fmohasoa@yahoo.com	Tuesday 30 Aug 2022 15.00-15.50
8. National University of Lesotho	Mosotho George	Maluti2005@gmail.com	Monday 29 Aug 2022 16.00-16.50
9. The Entrepreneurship Network	Rethabile Shale	rvshale@yahoo.co.uk	Tuesday 30 Aug 2022 19.00-19.50
10. SMME Support Network	Makama Masitha	coordinator@smmenet.org.ls	Saturday 27 Aug 2022 10.00-10.50

Participant	Names of Contact persons	Contact details (e-mail)	Date and time
11. Khathang Tema Baitsukuli	Mamolise Lawrence	lawrencemamolise@gmail.com	Friday 26 Aug 2022 18.00-18.50
12. Maseru Street Vendors Association	Lemohang Kobeli	kobelilemohang@yahoo.com	Tuesday 30 Aug 2022 14.00-14.50
13. UN RCO	Potso Sofonia	Potso.sofonia@un.org	Thursday 1 Sept 2022 12.00-12.50
14. UNFPA	Ms Maseretse Ratia	ratia@unfpa.org	Wednesday 7 Sept 2022 09.00-09.50
15. UNICEF			
16. World Bank	Monaheng Seleteng	mseleteng@worldbank.org	Wednesday 7 Sept 2022 14.00-14.50
17. European Union	Tomas Pallas	tomas.pallas@eeas.europa.eu	Tuesday 6 Sept 2022 10.00-10.50
18. Ministry of Tourism, Environment, Culture	Kobeli Tsasanyane	tsasanyanetk@hotmail.com	
	Moleboheng Petlane	marleymjp@gmail.com	
	Semela Mona	monasemela@gmail.com	Wed 31 Aug 2022 15.00-15.50
19. Standard Lesotho Bank	Refiloe Ramone	ramoneref@gmail.com	
	Ntsane Lesenyeho	lesenyehon@stanbic.com	Friday 2 Sept 2022 13.00-13.50
	Eugenea Lekoroane	LekoroanaE@stanbic.com	
20. LNDC	Reboneng Makoa	makoa@lndc.org.ls	Friday 2 Sept 2022 11.00-11.50
21. BEDCO	Thabiso Sebakiso	t.sebakiso@bedco.org.ls	Wednesday 7 Sept 2022 12.00-12.50
	Lesoli		
	Mpoi Lebakeng	m.lebakeng@bedco.org.ls	
22. Private Sector Foundation	Thabo Qhesi	qhesit@gmail.com / thabo.qhesi@psfl.org.ls	Thursday 1 Sept 2022 10.00-10.50
23. Lesotho Chamber of Commerce and Industry	Lesei Lesie		Thursday 1 Sept 2022 11.00-11.50
24. Limkokwing University of	Lisema Ramaili	lisema.ramaili@limkokwing.ac.ls	Saturday 3 Sept 2022 12.00-12.50

Participant	Names of Contact persons	Contact details (e-mail)	Date and time
Creative Technology			
25. Catholic Relief Services	Mofolisa Bartholomew	Bartholomew.mofolisa@crs.org	Friday 2 Sept 2022 12.00-12.50
26. LENAFU	Khotso Lepheana	Khotsolepheana@gmail.com	Monday 5 Sept 2022 18.00-18.50
27. RSDA	Mampho Thulo	thulom@rsda.org.ls	Friday 2 Sept 2022 10.00-10.50
28. FinMark Trust	Mamalala Sematlane	PalesaS@finmark.org.za	Monday 5 Sept 2022 10.00-10.50
29. Red Cross Society	Mokhameleli Sechaba	smokhameleli@redcross.org.ls	Thursday 1 Sept 2022 16.00-16.50
30. World Vision Lesotho	Khetla Khati Tseliso Ncheke	Khetla_khati@wvi.org Tseliso_ncheke@wvi.or	Monday 5 Sept 2022 12.00-12.50

Annex 3 Results Framework for the SIEG Portfolio

NATIONAL PRIORITY OR GOAL: Enhancing inclusive and sustainable economic growth and private sector-led job creation										
UNDAF OUTCOME INVOLVING UNDP #3.1: Outcome 3.1: By 2023, government and private sector ensure inclusive and sustainable economic growth for poverty reduction, improved food security, decent work and structural transformation of the economy							SDG 1,2,5,8,9,10,17			
RELATED STRATEGIC PLAN OUTCOME: Outcome 1: Advance poverty reduction in all its forms and dimensions										
INDICATIVE COUNTRY PROGRAM OUTPUTS	Indicators	Baseline	Target	Data source	Frequency	Latest data 2021	Direction of progress in 2021			
1.1. National and local level institutions have enhanced technical capacities to coordinate and facilitate effective planning, implementation, analysis and national reporting on the SDGs using innovative and data	1.1.1.Extent to which development plans and budgets integrate international agreements across the whole-of-government:	a. 1	a. 3	Ministry of Development Planning	Annual	Capacity building done for Parliament Supported Lesotho SDG Voluntary National Review Report Supported MDP to undertake assessment to integrate SDGs in National Plans	On track			
		b. 0	b. 3							
		a) 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development b) Paris Agreement c) Agenda 2063	c. 1					c. 3		
	1.1.2.Extent to which there are data collection/analysis mechanisms in place providing			a. 1		a. 3	Bureau of Statistics		No specific project supporting BOS	On track
				b. 0		b. 3				
		c. 0	c. 3							

NATIONAL PRIORITY OR GOAL: Enhancing inclusive and sustainable economic growth and private sector-led job creation							
UNDAF OUTCOME INVOLVING UNDP #3.1: Outcome 3.1: By 2023, government and private sector ensure inclusive and sustainable economic growth for poverty reduction, improved food security, decent work and structural transformation of the economy							SDG 1,2,5,8,9,10,17
RELATED STRATEGIC PLAN OUTCOME: Outcome 1: Advance poverty reduction in all its forms and dimensions							
INDICATIVE COUNTRY PROGRAM OUTPUTS	Indicators	Baseline	Target	Data source	Frequency	Latest data 2021	Direction of progress in 2021
driven-solutions	disaggregated data to monitor progress towards the SDGs: a) Conventional data collection methods (e.g. surveys) b) Administrative reporting systems c) New data sources (e.g. big data)					Bophelo – ka – Mosebetsi App (MoH) Capacity building for BOS & ministries for data collection OBFC supported to disaggregate data Support Ministry of Small Business to develop register for micro - business	
1.2. Capacities of government institutions and private sector improved to	1.2.1.Number of gender-sensitive policies/legal frameworks promoting employment	2	5	Ministry of Development Planning	Annul		On track

NATIONAL PRIORITY OR GOAL: Enhancing inclusive and sustainable economic growth and private sector-led job creation							
UNDAF OUTCOME INVOLVING UNDP #3.1: Outcome 3.1: By 2023, government and private sector ensure inclusive and sustainable economic growth for poverty reduction, improved food security, decent work and structural transformation of the economy							SDG 1,2,5,8,9,10,17
RELATED STRATEGIC PLAN OUTCOME: Outcome 1: Advance poverty reduction in all its forms and dimensions							
INDICATIVE COUNTRY PROGRAM OUTPUTS	Indicators	Baseline	Target	Data source	Frequency	Latest data 2021	Direction of progress in 2021
create competitive and gender-sensitive business environment and enable effective economic participation of MSMEs	creation adopted and implemented						
	1.2.2.Number of MSMEs participating in policy dialogues for private sector development	0	100	Ministry of Small Business, BEDCO			
	1.2.3.Proportion of Gender Seal certification areas for private sector adopted and implemented	0	20%	MGYSR, Projects Reports		Not started & deferred	
1.3. Capacities of national public and private sector institutions strengthened to promote	1.3.1.Number of start-up enterprises in priority sectors:	a. tbd	a. 50	One-Stop Business Facilitation Centre	Annual	71 businesses started by youths	On track
	a) registered annually (disaggregated by age, sex of	b. 0	b. 10			Data not available	

NATIONAL PRIORITY OR GOAL: Enhancing inclusive and sustainable economic growth and private sector-led job creation							
UNDAF OUTCOME INVOLVING UNDP #3.1: Outcome 3.1: By 2023, government and private sector ensure inclusive and sustainable economic growth for poverty reduction, improved food security, decent work and structural transformation of the economy							SDG 1,2,5,8,9,10,17
RELATED STRATEGIC PLAN OUTCOME: Outcome 1: Advance poverty reduction in all its forms and dimensions							
INDICATIVE COUNTRY PROGRAM OUTPUTS	Indicators	Baseline	Target	Data source	Frequency	Latest data 2021	Direction of progress in 2021
enterprises development	owner and sector)						
	b) still in business 2 years after registration						
	1.3.2.Percentage of MSMEs with access to formal financial services:	a. 48%	a. 55 %	FinScope MSME	Annual	Not started	
	a) bank	b. tbd	b. tbd				
	b) mobile money						
	1.3.3.Number of new jobs created through MSMEs disaggregated by:	a. 2526 (W:1647, M:879 [2017])	a. 1000 (M:600, W:400)	Projects Reports	Annual	623 (450 temporary and 173 permanent) need revision for accurate UNDP contribution	
	a. gender, and b. age	b. 37	b. 500				

Methodology used for assessing performance for organisational effectiveness and efficiency indicators

The report card for organisational effectiveness and efficiency results assists readers in understanding achievements against annual milestones as measured IRRF indicators. Assessment of effectiveness and efficiency performance is presented at indicator level rather than output level. As the organisational results are determined by a range of organisational processes, assessing progress against indicator level provides a more meaningful picture of UNDP performance. Performance against each indicator is calculated based on the milestones and actual results in 2021 as presented in Evaluation Report, which are converted into “traffic light” coding for the report card.

Traffic light coding	Meaning
Green	If the indicator percentage achievement is equal to or above of the milestone in 2021
Amber	If the indicator percentage achievement is between 50% but not equal of the milestone in 2021.
Red	If the indicator percentage achievement is less than 50% of the milestone in 2021.

Annex 4 Data Collection Tools

Introduction to be used for various guides

Thank you for your time to meet for this interview/focus group discussion which is being conducted as part of the thematic evaluation on ‘the Role and Contribution of UNDP to Creating Inclusive Employment in Lesotho’. UNDP is undertaking this evaluation for accountability and learning purposes and has contracted an independent evaluation consultant to conduct the evaluation.

As a key stakeholder in Lesotho, involved in the SIEG programme/UNDP, your insights and perspectives are highly appreciated in relation to relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, and sustainability in addition to partnerships. Your participation is valuable and your responses will be treated in the strictest confidence.

A) Interview Guide for Government Stakeholders and Partners inclusive of UNDP programme team (to be adapted accordingly)

1. How have you been involved with UNDP and since when?
2. Is the UNDP SIEG Pillar relevant to Lesotho’s Vision 2020, NSDP II and UNDAF 2019-2023?
3. Did UNDP inclusive employment creation interventions responded to the most pressing challenges faced by Lesotho, youth, women and people with disabilities?

4. Did UNDP support evolve with the outbreak of COVID-19 to address inclusive employment creation emerging needs?
5. Is UNDP support relevant for different partners: government, development partners, civil society, and the private sector?
6. Is employment creation and empowerment still relevant in Lesotho's development objectives? What are the critical considerations for potential future programming in this area?
7. Did UNDP strengthen capacities of private and public sector stakeholders to create decent and sustainable jobs, promote economic diversity, facilitate increased economic participation using innovative and technological interventions, collaborative and informative stakeholder policy -shaping platforms and technical support and development?
8. What evidence is available to corroborate that UNDP has contributed towards creating opportunities and capacities to enable inclusive employment, targeting youth, women and people with disabilities?
9. Did UNDP catalyse innovations, explore opportunities for South–South and Triangular Co-operation and adopt best practices from within UNDP and other partners?
10. Did UNDP contribute to inclusive employment at policy and implementation level?
11. Did UNDP enable platforms for dialogue and advocacy for development of inclusive economic policies?
12. Did UNDP programmes, projects and other interventions contributed to promoting inclusive employment that benefits youth, women and other vulnerable groups?
13. In which areas do UNDP initiatives have the greatest achievements so far in creating inclusive employment? Why and what have been the supporting factors? How can UNDP build on or expand these achievements?
14. In which areas do UNDP initiatives have the fewest achievements? What have been the constraining factors and why? How can or could they be overcome?
15. Provide preliminary recommendations on how the sustainable and inclusive growth portfolio in UNDP can most effectively support the national objectives for employment creation, working with national and local government, non-governmental organisations, private sector and academic institutions
16. How much time, resources, capacities and effort it takes to manage the SIEG pillar, and what were the gaps, if any? More specifically, how do UNDP policies, decisions, capabilities, practices, and constraints affect the performance of the portfolio? Could a different approach have led to better results? What would be those approaches? Were resources adequate to catalyse creation of sustainable and inclusive employment? Has UNDP's strategy in producing the programme outputs been efficient?
17. Did achieving key results deviate from what was planned (in terms of costs and deadlines) and why?
18. Do the M&E systems utilized by UNDP ensure efficient SIEG programme management?
19. Do UNDP SIEG interventions overlap or duplicate interventions by other partners or internal programmes?
20. Has UNDP established mechanisms to ensure sustainability of sustainable and inclusive employment initiatives?
21. Have the selected IPs become able to lead inclusive employment creation interventions beyond programme cycle?
22. Will the benefits of UNDP programmes, projects and other interventions in respect to creating sustainable and inclusive employment continue or are likely to continue in future?

23. Will financial and economic resources be available to sustain the benefits achieved by the programme?
24. Are lessons learned being documented by the programme team on a continual basis and shared with appropriate parties who could learn from the programme?
25. Have gender equity and the empowerment of women been addressed in the design, implementation and monitoring of the programme?
26. Has the programme considered the inclusion of the marginalized groups, especially PwDs, youth, rural residents in its activities?

Thank you.

B) Focus group guide for beneficiaries

1. What capacity building/training/technical support activities of UNDP did you participate in?
2. How was it relevant to your work and your organisation/institution?
3. How have you benefitted from the capacity building/training/technical support activities of UNDP?
4. Could you explain what precisely you are doing differently/better than before?
5. Do you think UNDP has helped to strengthen your organisational capacities to create competitive and gender -sensitive business environment and enable effective economic participation of MSMEs or promote enterprises development?
6. Is there organisational support in continuing to do what you learned? What are the challenges?
7. Any comments/suggestions for improving the interventions.

Thank you.

Annex 5 Rating Scale

Rating Scale for Relevance

4. Highly Relevant	Explicit and full alignment of all aspects
3. Relevant	Explicit and full alignment on some and partial alignment and partial considerations on some
2. Moderately	Relevant Partial alignment and partial considerations
1. Not Relevant	Lack of alignment and minimal considerations

Rating Scale for Effectiveness, Efficiency and Overall Project Outcome and Partnerships

6. Highly Satisfactory	No shortcomings
5. Satisfactory	Minor shortcomings
4. Moderately Satisfactory	Moderate shortcomings
3. Moderately	Unsatisfactory Significant shortcomings
2. Unsatisfactory	Major shortcomings
1. Highly Unsatisfactory	Severe shortcomings

Rating Scale for Sustainability

4. Likely	Negligible risks to sustainability
3. Moderately Likely	Moderate risks to sustainability
2. Moderately Unlikely	Significant risks to sustainability

1. Unlikely

Severe risks to sustainability

Rating Scale for Gender

6. Highly Satisfactory Evidence suggests gender considerations in context, log frame and budget and strong gender considerations in project implementation or improvement in gender score.

5. Satisfactory Evidence suggests gender considerations in context, log frame and budget and moderate gender considerations in project implementation or consistently reflects score of 2a or 2b

4. Moderately Satisfactory Evidence suggests gender considerations in context, log frame and budget and weak gender considerations in project implementation

3. Moderately Unsatisfactory Evidence suggests gender considerations in context, log frame and budget and no gender considerations in project implementation

2. Unsatisfactory Evidence suggests gender considerations in two of three (context, log frame and budget) and no gender considerations in project implementation

1. Highly Unsatisfactory Evidence suggests gender considerations in one of three (context, log frame and budget) and no gender considerations in programme implementation

Note: Gender Score – 0 – gender blind (gender relevance is evident but not at all reflected in the project document; 1 – gender partially mainstreamed (gender is reflected in the context, implementation, log frame or the budget); 2a – gender well mainstreamed throughout (gender is reflected in the context, implementation, log frame and the budget); 2b – targeted action on gender to advance gender equality (the principle purpose of the programme is to advance gender equality; and n/a – gender is not considered applicable (a gender analysis reveals that the project does not have direct interactions with and/or impacts on people, therefore gender is not applicable)

Annex 6 Evaluation Matrix

Thematic Evaluation: Contribution to Employment creation in Lesotho

Key Questions / Specific Sub-questions	Data Sources	Data collection Methods/tools	Indicators/success standard	Methods of data analysis
Relevance To what extent the pillar and its intended outputs and outcomes are consistent with national priorities				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To what extent is UNDP SIEG Pillar relevant to Lesotho's Vision 2020, NSDP II and UNDAF 2019-2023? • To what extent have UNDP inclusive employment creation interventions responded to the most pressing challenges faced by Lesotho, youth, women and people with disabilities? • How has UNDP support evolved with the outbreak of COVID-19 to address inclusive employment creation emerging needs? • How relevant is UNDP's support for different partners: government, development partners, civil society, and the private sector? • To what extent do employment creation and empowerment remain relevant in Lesotho's development objectives? What are the critical considerations for potential future programming in this area? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NSDP II mid-term review • CPD mid-term review • Stakeholders • IPs • UNDP programme team 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Documents review • KII • FGDs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The extent to which the portfolio outcomes are addressing national priorities, in line with the theory of change • Pillar objectives are consistent with national employment strategy which means having at least one objective formulation targeting the same development challenge and at least of one common target group. • At least 50% of stakeholders report endorsement of the pillar interventions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Thematic • Meta- analysis

Key Questions / Specific Sub-questions	Data Sources	Data collection Methods/tools	Indicators/success standard	Methods of data analysis
Effectiveness: The measure of the extent to which progress toward intended results (outputs or outcomes) has been achieved.				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ To what extent has UNDP strengthened capacities of private and public sector stakeholders to create decent and sustainable jobs, promote economic diversity, facilitate increased economic participation using innovative and technological interventions, collaborative and informative stakeholder policy-shaping platforms and technical support and development? What evidence is available to corroborate that UNDP has contributed towards creating opportunities and capacities to enable inclusive employment, and targeting youth, women and people with disabilities? ▪ To what extent did UNDP catalyse innovations, explore opportunities for South–South and Triangular Co-operation and adopt best practices from within UNDP and other partners? ▪ To what extent has UNDP contributed to inclusive employment at policy and implementation level? ▪ To what extent has UNDP enabled platforms for dialogue and advocacy for development of inclusive economic policies? ▪ To what extent have UNDP programmes, projects and other interventions contributed to promoting 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Programme and projects agreements ▪ Progress and M&E reports ▪ Donors and stakeholders ▪ UNDP programme team ▪ IPs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Document analysis ▪ KII ▪ FGDs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The extent to which the portfolio has been able to effectively fill certain gaps in creating sustainable and inclusive employment. ▪ Over 50% of the respondents confirm that the programme’s interventions have been able to fill out certain gaps in facilitating creation of sustainable and inclusive employment. ▪ At least two of the actors interviewed (i.e. UNDP Programme Team, implementing partners and stakeholders) mentioning the same areas of the programme with the greatest achievements so far. ▪ At least two of the actors interviewed (i.e. UNDP Programme Team, implementing partners and stakeholders) mentioning the same areas of the programme with the fewest achievements so far. ▪ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Meta-analysis ▪ Triangulation ▪ Thematic

Key Questions / Specific Sub-questions	Data Sources	Data collection Methods/tools	Indicators/success standard	Methods of data analysis
<p>inclusive employment that benefits youth, women and other vulnerable groups?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ In which areas do UNDP initiatives have the greatest achievements so far in creating inclusive employment? Why and what have been the supporting factors? How can UNDP build on or expand these achievements? ▪ In which areas do UNDP initiatives have the fewest achievements? What have been the constraining factors and why? How can or could they be overcome? ▪ Provide preliminary recommendations on how the sustainable and inclusive growth portfolio in UNDP can most effectively support the national objectives for employment creation, working with national and local government, non-governmental organisations, private sector and academic institutions 				
<p>Efficiency: Measures how economically resources or inputs are converted to results, and comparing alternative approaches to achieving the same outputs, to see whether the most efficient process has been adopted.</p>				

Key Questions / Specific Sub-questions	Data Sources	Data collection Methods/tools	Indicators/success standard	Methods of data analysis
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ How much time, resources, capacities and effort it takes to manage the SIEG interventions, and what were the gaps, if any? More specifically, how do UNDP policies, decisions, capabilities, practices, and constraints affect the performance of the interventions? Could a different approach have led to better results? What would be those approaches? Were resources adequate to catalyse creation of sustainable and inclusive employment? Has UNDP's strategy in producing the programme outputs been efficient? ▪ To what extent did achieving key results deviate from what was planned (in terms of costs and deadlines) and why? ▪ To what extent do the M&E systems utilized by UNDP ensure efficient SIEG interventions management? ▪ To what extent do UNDP SIEG interventions overlap or duplicate interventions by other partners or internal programmes? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Programme and projects agreements ▪ Progress, financial and M&E reports ▪ Donors and stakeholders ▪ UNDP programme team ▪ IPs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Document analysis ▪ KII 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Percent programme progress towards achievements of results to date. ▪ Percent of planned budget actually spent on activities relative to results achieved ▪ 70% of all planned results have been achieved within the planned timeframe and budget allocation. ▪ The extent to which monitoring and evaluation system and reporting is functioning in the programme ▪ All planned monitoring and evaluation activities and reporting are performed according to the plan 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Meta-analysis ▪ Triangulation
Sustainability: Measures the extent to which benefits of project continue after assistance has ended after Programme cycle				

Key Questions / Specific Sub-questions	Data Sources	Data collection Methods/tools	Indicators/success standard	Methods of data analysis
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ To what extent has UNDP established mechanisms to ensure sustainability of sustainable and inclusive employment initiatives? ▪ To what extent have the selected IPs become able to lead inclusive employment creation interventions beyond programme cycle? ▪ To what extent will the benefits of UNDP programmes, projects and other interventions in respect to creating sustainable and inclusive employment continue or are likely to continue in future? ▪ To what extent will financial and economic resources be available to sustain the benefits achieved by the programme? ▪ To what extent are lessons learned being documented by the programme team on a continual basis and shared with appropriate parties who could learn from the programme? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Progress reports ▪ IPs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Document analysis ▪ KII 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Degree of readiness of the selected IPs to continue leading sustainable and inclusive employment creation programmes ▪ At least 50% IPs confirm improved capacity and willingness to lead and deliver employment creation programmes beyond programme cycle. 	Thematic
Cross-cutting issues: Gender and Inclusion				

Key Questions / Specific Sub-questions	Data Sources	Data collection Methods/tools	Indicators/success standard	Methods of data analysis
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ To what extent have gender equity and the empowerment of women been addressed in the design, implementation and monitoring of the programme? ▪ To what extent has the programme considered the inclusion of the marginalized groups, especially PwDs, youth, rural residents in its activities? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Programme & Project docs ▪ Progress reports ▪ UNDP team and IPs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Document analysis ▪ KII ▪ FGD 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The extent to which gender equity and women empowerment tools and practices are clear for the implanting partners and stakeholder ▪ At least 50% of the implementing partners and stakeholders confirm that gender equity tools and implementation practices are clear. ▪ The extent to which inclusion and integration of PwDs, youth, rural residents are addressed in the programme 	Thematic

Annex 7 Revisions to the Original Questions in TOR

Relevance

Original Evaluation Questions from the TOR	Recommended Revision
Relevance: Was the intervention doing the right thing?	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To what extent is the thematic evaluation addressing the objectives and vision of the Country Programme Document (CPD 2019-2023)? To what was UNDP's support relevant to Lesotho's Vision 2020 agenda, NSDP II, UNDAF 2019 – 2023? • To what extent was the selected implementation methods and strategies appropriate to Lesotho's development context? Were the strategies adopted and the inputs identified, realistic, appropriate, and adequate for the achievement of the results? Is there any need to change the focus in view of the next programming? • How relevant was UNDP's support for different partners: government, development partners, civil society, and the private sector? • To what extent did the programme results contribute to the UNDAF and NSDP II results towards creation of opportunities for sustainable and inclusive employment? To what extent do employment creation and empowerment remain relevant in Lesotho's development objectives? What are the critical considerations for potential future programming in this area? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ To what extent is UNDP SIEG Pillar relevant to Lesotho's Vision 2020, NSDP II and UNDAF 2019-2023? ▪ To what extent have UNDP inclusive employment creation interventions responded to the most pressing challenges faced by Lesotho, youth, women and people with disabilities? ▪ How has UNDP support evolved with the outbreak of COVID-19 to address inclusive employment creation emerging needs? ▪ How relevant is UNDP's support for different partners: government, development partners, civil society, and the private sector? ▪ To what extent do employment creation and empowerment remain relevant in Lesotho's development objectives? What are the critical considerations for potential future programming in this area?

Effectiveness

Original Evaluation Questions from the TOR	Recommended Revision
Effectiveness: Is the intervention achieving its objectives/results?	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extent of UNDP's effectiveness in producing results at the local levels and at the aggregate national level? What evidence is available to corroborate that UNDP has contributed towards creating opportunities and capacities to enable inclusive employment, and targeting youth and women • Extent to which the methodologies and strategies advanced through UNDP supported programmes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ To what extent has UNDP strengthen capacities of private and public sector stakeholders to create decent and sustainable jobs, promote economic diversity, facilitate increased economic participation using innovative and technological interventions, collaborative and informative stakeholder policy -shaping platforms and technical support and development? What evidence is available to

Original Evaluation Questions from the TOR	Recommended Revision
Effectiveness: Is the intervention achieving its objectives/results?	
<p>have contributed to establishment of sustainable business and/or social enterprises</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extent to which the partnerships adopted including with government, civil society, private sector, and academia, within the projects and programmes were effective to advance employment creation, what worked and what did not work? • Extent to which UNDP and partners have enabled platforms for dialogue and advocacy for development of inclusive economic policies • Extent to which UNDP has contributed to capacity building, knowledge creation and collaborative engagement to expand opportunities for employment creation and sustainability • Extent to which the adopted strategies were effective to influence creation of opportunities to facilitate employment creation, reviewing also the contributing factors and impediments • Assessment of the capacity and institutional arrangements for the implementation of the UNDP portfolio on sustainable and inclusive growth, in context of the UNDP support to the GoL and within the context of Delivering as One • Are programmes effective in responding to the needs of beneficiaries, and what are result achieved? • Extent to which established coordination mechanisms enabled achievements of programme results and outputs? • Extent to which stakeholders and partners are knowledgeable and aware of UNDP's programmes and have synergized on similar programmes and projects, and the impact thereof. 	<p>corroborate that UNDP has contributed towards creating opportunities and capacities to enable inclusive employment, and targeting youth, women and people with disabilities?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ To what extent did UNDP catalyse innovations, explore opportunities for South–South and Triangular Co-operation and adopt best practices from within UNDP and other partners? ▪ To what extent has UNDP contributed to inclusive employment at policy and implementation level? ▪ To what extent has UNDP enabled platforms for dialogue and advocacy for development of inclusive economic policies ▪ To what extent have UNDP programmes, projects and other interventions contributed to promoting inclusive employment that benefits youth, women and other vulnerable groups? ▪ In which areas do UNDP initiatives have the greatest achievements so far in creating inclusive employment? Why and what have been the supporting factors? How can UNDP build on or expand these achievements? ▪ In which areas do UNDP initiatives have the fewest achievements? What have been the constraining factors and why? How can or could they be overcome? ▪ Provide preliminary recommendations on how the sustainable and inclusive growth portfolio in UNDP can most effectively support the national objectives for employment creation, working with national and local government, non-governmental organisations, private sector and academic institutions

Efficiency

Original Evaluation Questions from the TOR	Recommended Revision
Efficiency: How well were resources being used?	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How much time, resources, capacities and effort it takes to manage the programmes and, including the entire portfolio, and what were the gaps, if any? More specifically, how do UNDP policies, decisions, capabilities, practices, and constraints affect the performance of the programmes and the portfolio? Has UNDP's strategy in producing the programme outputs been efficient? • Extent of M&E contribution to achieve the programme thematic and outputs' indicators • Roles, engagement and coordination among various stakeholders in the inclusive economic growth sector, One UN Programme in project implementation? Were there any overlaps and duplications? Extent of synergies among One UN programming and implementing partners? • Extent to which synergies between national institutions were effective in enhancing UNDP's programming and implementation including between UNDP and development partners? • Could a different approach have led to better results? What would be those approaches? • Extent to which UNDP's programme and project are overlapping or duplicating interventions by other partners or internal programmes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ How much time, resources, capacities and effort it took to manage the SIEG pillar, and what were the gaps, if any? More specifically, how do UNDP policies, decisions, capabilities, practices, and constraints affect the performance of the portfolio? Could a different approach have led to better results? What would be those approaches? Were resources adequate to catalyse creation of sustainable and inclusive employment? Has UNDP's strategy in producing the programme outputs been efficient? ▪ To what extent did achieving key results deviate from what was planned (in terms of costs and deadlines) and why? ▪ To what extent do the M&E systems utilized by UNDP ensure efficient SIEG programme management? ▪ To what extent do UNDP SIEG interventions overlap or duplicate interventions by other partners or internal programmes

Sustainability

Original Evaluation Questions from the TOR	Recommended Revision
Sustainability: Will the benefits last?	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extent to which UNDP established mechanisms to ensure sustainability of sustainable and inclusive employment and employment opportunities • Extent of viability and effectiveness of partnership strategies in relation to achievement of the thematic area? • Provide preliminary recommendations on how the sustainable and inclusive growth portfolio in UNDP can most effectively support the national objectives for employment creation, working with national and local government, non-governmental organisations, private sector and academic institutions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ To what extent has UNDP established mechanisms to ensure sustainability of sustainable and inclusive employment initiatives ▪ To what extent have the selected IPs become able to lead inclusive employment creation interventions beyond programme cycle? ▪ To what extent will the benefits of UNDP programmes, projects and other interventions in respect to creating sustainable and inclusive employment

Original Evaluation Questions from the TOR	Recommended Revision
Sustainability: Will the benefits last?	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assess possible areas of partnerships with other national institutions, CSOs, UN Agencies, private sector and development partners in Lesotho • Assess how knowledge resources generated through UNDP's support, including studies and available data are used to build the sustainability of the programmes • What is the likelihood of continuation and sustainability of the programmes and benefits after the completion of the current programme cycle? • What are the main lessons that have emerged from each programme implementation? 	<p>continue or are likely to continue in future?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ To what extent will financial and economic resources be available to sustain the benefits achieved by the programme? ▪ To what extent are lessons learned being documented by the programme team on a continual basis and shared with appropriate parties who could learn from the programme?
Cross-cutting Issues	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ To what extent have gender equity and the empowerment of women been addressed in the design, implementation and monitoring of the programme? ▪ To what extent has the programme considered the inclusion of the marginalized groups, especially PwDs, youth, rural residents in its activities?