
Final Evaluation

Supporting Recovery and Stability through Local Development in Iraq (LADP-III)

Final REPORT

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Submitted to:
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Submitted by:
Nahla Hassan

Project/Outcome Information		
Project/outcome title	Supporting recovery and stability through local development in Iraq (LADP-III)	
Atlas project ID	00116195	
Corporate outcome and output	People in Iraq, civil society, and communities, particularly women, have improved capacity to lead, participate in and contribute to the design and delivery of equitable and responsive services, especially for the most vulnerable populations.	
Country	Iraq	
Region	Nine Governorates in Iraq: Anbar, Basra, Dohuk, Erbil, Missan, Ninewa, Salah al-Din and Sulaymaniyah	
Date project document signed	20 February 2021	
Project dates	Start	Planned end
	01 January 2019	31 December 2022 Extended to 31 March 2023
Project budget	EUR € 47,500,000 (Approx. USD 54,088,250)	
Approximate total Fund Utilization as of Jan 30 th 2023	USD 39,771,492	
Funding source	European Union (EU)	
Implementing party	UNDP and UN-Habitat	

Evaluation Information		
Evaluation type (project/outcome/thematic/country programme, etc.)	Project Evaluation	
Final/midterm review/ other	Final Evaluation	
Period under evaluation	Start	Planned end
	01 January 2019	31 December 2022
Evaluators	Nahla Hassan	
Evaluator email address	Nahla.hassan@outlook.com	
Evaluation dates	Start	Completion
	29 September 2022	31 March 2023

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LIST OF ACRONYMS

CPD	Country programme document
CSOs	Civil society organizations
DoA	Description of Action
DCPC	Development Coordination Planning Committees
EQs	evaluation questions
EC	Evaluation Consultant
EU	European Union
FGDs	Focus Group Discussions
GBV	gender-based violence
GEWE	gender equality and women’s empowerment
GIS	Geographic information system
GUS	Governorate Urban Strategies
HCCP	High Commission for Coordinating among the Provinces
ICT	Information and communication technology
IDPs	internally displaced people
INGOs	International non-governmental organizations
IOM	International Organization for Migration
ISIL	Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant
KIIs	Key Informant Interviews
KRI	Kurdistan Region of Iraq
LADP-III	Local Area Development Programme III
LGI	Local Governance Index
LVG	Low-Value Grant
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MOP	Ministry of Planning
NDP	National Development Plan 2018-2022
NGOs	Non-Governmental organizations
PDSs	the Provincial Development Strategies
PMF	People’s mobilization forces
PRPs	Provincial Response Plans

PSS	psychosocial support
PwDs	People with disabilities
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
SEAPs	Sustainable Energy Action Plans
ToC	Theory of change
ToRs	Terms of reference
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UN-Habitat	United Nations Human Settlement Programme
UPP	Un Ponte Per Association

PROGRAMME LOCATIONS IN IRAQ

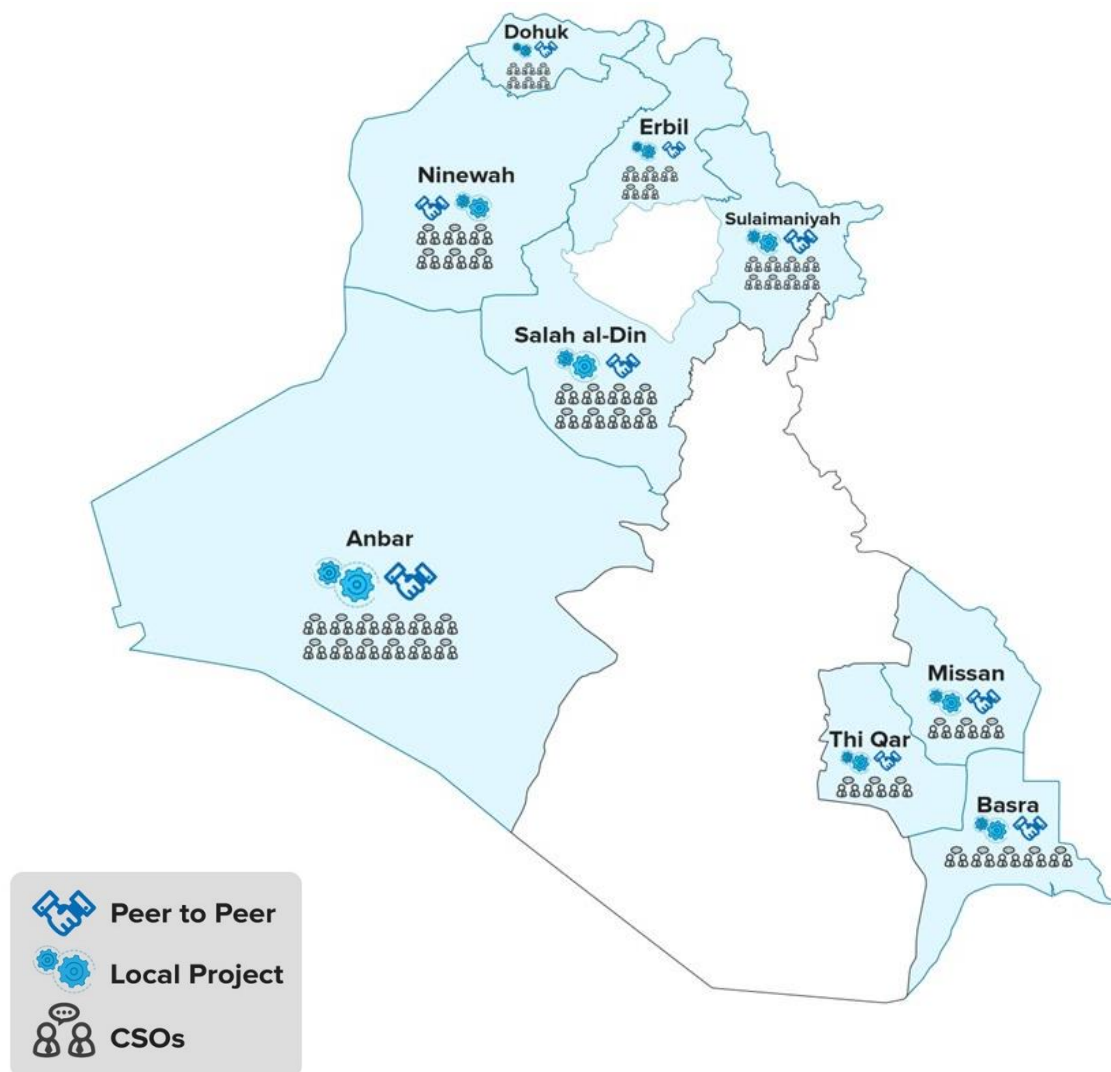


Figure 1: Programme locations in Iraq

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Background

In late 2022, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Iraq Country Office launched a call to conduct an independent final evaluation of the “Supporting Recovery and Stability through Local Development in Iraq”, referred to as “**Local Area Development Programme III (LADP-III)**”. This four-year programme was funded by the European Union (EU) and jointly implemented in partnership between UNDP and the United Nations Human Settlement Programme (UN-Habitat) with a combined budget of EUR 47.5 million. This report presents the findings, conclusions and recommendations of the LADP-III programme’s final evaluation.

Brief Description of the LADP-III Programme

The LADP-III programme was implemented between 01 January 2019 and 31 March 2023 with the overall goal to contribute to the stability and socio-economic development of Iraq by enhancing democratic governance at the local level. The programme interventions focused on supporting decentralisation processes; implementing selected local priority development projects and assisting returns and better living conditions in fragile areas through the rehabilitation and upgrading of housing, community infrastructure and services.

The programme strategic outcomes were:

- SO1: Selected Governorates are able to manage effectively and transparently local government systems and public services.
- SO2: Economic growth and job opportunities have increased in selected Governorates, with special focus on green projects involving youth and women.
- SO3: Living conditions in conflict areas have improved and returnees are assisted.

Evaluation Objectives and Methodology

According to the terms of reference the purpose of this independent final evaluation is to conduct an evidence-based and highly consultative reflection on the LADP-III programme to promote learning and accountability and inform future relevant programming.

The objectives of the final evaluation were to:

- Assess and establish the extent to which the expected outputs and results have been achieved.
- Provide learnings on enabling factors and constraints to implementation, results and sustainability.
- Assess the overall strategy used in pursuing the programme’s outputs and results.
- Assess the programme’s relevance, coherence, effectiveness, efficiency, impact and sustainability.
- Examine the extent to which gender, human rights, environment and other cross-cutting issues were considered in the programme’s design, implementation and monitoring.
- Provide recommendations for improving the design, effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability and mainstreaming of gender and other cross-cutting issues in future programming.

The intended users of this final evaluation include the LADP-III programme teams from UNDP and UN-Habitat and their respective senior management, government of Iraq counterparts, the EU Delegation, development partners, and the general Iraqi public and beneficiaries.

The final evaluation examined all the interventions under the programme, implemented by UNDP and UN-Habitat, in coordination with various implementing partners in nine target Iraqi governorates throughout the period from the 1 January 2019 to 31 March 2023. Field data collection was conducted in Erbil, Dohuk, Salahudin, Ninewa, Basra and Baghdad between 15 and 30 January 2023.

Evaluation Findings

Relevance

The LADP-III programme aimed to improve stability and socio-economic development in Iraq through enhancing democratic governance at the local level. The design was aligned with several national and international policies and supported the EU's New Urban Agenda, EU Strategy for Iraq focusing on better regulation, funding, and knowledge for urban development. The programme bridged the gap between emergency support, stabilization, and long-term recovery, and considered the specific needs of different groups such as youth, people with disabilities (PwDs) and women. Feedback from local government and CSOs confirmed the relevance of the programme in addressing key gaps in Iraq and its alignment with the EU's development cooperation priorities.

The LADP-III initial programme design aimed to support decentralization in Iraq through a bottom-up approach, which was complemented at a later stage of the programme by a top-down approach, engaging central government. It focused on strengthening the capacities and systems of local governorates and municipalities, fostering engagement with CSOs and communities. The implementation methods adopted included gap assessments, door-to-door surveys, participatory consultations, sub-granting to CSOs, learning by doing, and integrated reconstruction and building back better through contractors and NGOs. The evaluation has found that not all implementation methods were appropriate to the context in Iraq, especially the peer-to-peer cooperation approach. The LADP-III programme was designed based on assessments conducted under LADP-II however, no specific assessments were conducted for LADP-III during the design phase and development of the DoA document. Nonetheless, assessments and studies to inform specific interventions were conducted during the life of the programme. For example, UN-Habitat undertook local consultations and extensive physical and socio-economic assessments in the targeted neighbourhoods. UNDP undertook specific assessment to prioritize the local development projects that were implemented.

Although some areas such as gender analysis and disability inclusion were not considered during the programme design phase and DoA development, the activities were found to have been relevant to the needs of vulnerable populations, including IDPs, women, youth and PwDs. For example, under the local area development projects by UN-Habitat, accessibility was considered during the design and then put in practice in the parks, the sidewalks in Baiji and the rehabilitation of the houses. The programme was also

relevant to the needs and priorities of local municipalities through its support to administrative decentralization and the provision of services to address needs in damaged areas, poor quality of public services and lack of livelihood opportunities. The programme supported municipalities with spare parts for heavy duty earth removal vehicles and garbage trucks, as well as office furniture.

Effectiveness

There is a lack of willingness at the high-level administrative authorities to promote decentralization or empower local administration. The contribution of the programme to decentralization reform is limited due to the challenging environment, but it has supported improvement in capacities and systems and high-level dialogue on decentralization and policy analysis. Programme implementation experienced significant delays during the first two years for some outputs under Outcomes 1 and 2, specifically, the revenue generation activities (Output 1.3) and the online CSO multimedia exchange forum (Output 1.4). Whereas, the donor coordination mechanism (Output 1.2) was not achieved and got discontinued by the EU. UNDP worked hard in coordination with CSOs and local authorities to be able to compensate for the delay and achieve the results during the last 18 months of its life. Several internal and external factors contributed to the delay, including UNDP and EU management turnover, political instability and the COVID-19 pandemic. This rapid implementation of activities within a shorter timeframe raises concerns about the quality of outputs and affects impact and sustainability. Outcome 3 progressed at a steady rate with some expected challenges in procurement and bidding processes that did not affect overall achievements, and the challenges were addressed by improved internal controls and capacity building.

In early 2020, the programme's logical framework was revised however, this revision was never formally approved by the EU.¹ According to UNDP, most of these revisions were introduced to make the targets more realistic and to adjust to the challenges in addressing decentralisation and the approach to implementation in Iraq. They were also needed to adjust the fact that many indicators did not have targets and baseline value. They were considered as indicative and required to be updated during the implementation of the Action, with no amendment being required to the financing decision.

The implementation strategies adopted by the LADP-III programme varied in their effectiveness. The gap assessment and gap plugging strategies for local capacity building were effective, as local municipalities were actively involved which helped strengthen their capacities. The peer-to-peer cooperation approach was subject to several challenges, including the need for careful understanding of the Iraqi context and gaps before proposals were submitted. Sub-granting to CSOs was beneficial, as the capacity building provided was well-received and helped to strengthen relationships with local authorities and improve reporting and financial management. Partnering with CSOs and learning by doing was integrated into the local development projects and community initiatives.

¹ Based on UNDP, several exchanges happened between the UNDP Project Manager and the Head of EUD in Baghdad regarding proposed changes to the indicators and changes were formally communicated through the 2020 annual progress report (March 2021), in addition, several exchanges with the EU contained the new logframe. As such, the changes were considered by the project team as approved given that no feedback was received from the EU after six months of submitting the report.

Overall, the programme was affected by a combination of internal and external factors, some hindered, and others enabled the achievement of its expected results. The knowledge and expertise of the UNDP and UN-Habitat as the implementing agencies, as well as the ability of some of the engaged CSOs/NGOs to work closely with local communities and authorities, were the main enabling factors that contributed to the programme's success. On the other hand, the COVID-19 pandemic, delays in the project's inception and preparatory phases, internal management changes, and political factors in Iraq such as security-related delays, protests, and the absence of a government for almost one year, were hindering factors that impacted the implementation of the programme. However, the implementation modality of the rehabilitation work under outcome 3, which relied on locally recruited experts and labourers helped mitigate some of the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic and ensured that no significant delays occurred under this outcome. Additionally, the modality of local area development adopted by UN-Habitat ensured coordinated and systematic relationships with local authorities, communities and citizens.

The evaluation has found that the most effective components of the programme have been activities under Outcome 3. Additionally, components related to the promotion of green energy and the environment have been effective and contribute to sustainability of the interventions. The systematic mainstreaming of gender and empowerment of women has also been a strong component of the project and has been effective in increasing women participation and engagement in various activities.

Efficiency

The structure of human resources of the LADP-III programme for outcomes 1 and 2 was a challenge because the composition of the UNDP team was inadequate compared to the programme size and complexity. The UNDP team was led by a management unit composed of international consultants who were not in country and a team of 11 support staff, which included UN-volunteers. As such, outcomes 1 and 2 lacked technical expertise on core interventions such as decentralization and engagement with CSOs. Later, this was reversed to having more staff on the ground and consultants only in implementation, not management. Staffing for Outcome 3 was adequate; UN-Habitat's team consisted of a smaller group of specialists and support staff that led to the achievement of results. The total programme budget was EUR 47.5 million, and expenditures were slow during the first three years, based on implementation rates. The contractual arrangements with CSOs were complex, and there were difficulties due to changes in financial approaches and requirements by UNDP.

The implementation of the LADP-III programme was slow in its first two years, but the rate of implementation increased in years three and four. In addition to reasons previously discussed, it was also pointed out that the local municipalities started changing their opinions about the participatory plans for local projects after a three-year time gap between planning (LADP-II) and implementation (LADP-III). The programme experienced delays in the second and third payment tranches from the EU, primarily due to adjustments made to the logical framework which were never formally approved by the EU. The visibility and communication strategy of focused on providing comprehensive visibility coverage for each activity through social media campaigns, sharing human stories and updates, and awareness campaigns on some topics. The M&E systems was conducted by UNDP and UN-Habitat by tracking progress on ground against indicators and preparing progress reports. Because the programme indicators were mostly quantitative,

assessing the quality of outputs or progress of capacity strengthening was limited. The evaluation has found that the revision conducted by UNDP to the logical framework was necessary to make the targets more realistic however, some of these changes affected the targeting and the outcome indicators.

Impact

The LADP-III programme had positive impact on the lives of IDPs in Iraq enabling their return to their homes. It prioritized the most vulnerable households and provided them with access to clean water and public spaces that offer various services, such as schools, health care units and parks. The rehabilitation provided job opportunities to women, youth and PwDs who were disproportionately affected by conflict and helped improve their living conditions. The programme included PwDs in the rehabilitation of homes and public spaces, provided vocational training, and promoted inclusive education. It also brought attention to the needs of PwDs in the community and resulted in support from government and CSOs, yet, more work is needed to raise awareness about their rights and change perceptions. Gender equality is evidently a key strength achieved by the programme; women-headed households were prioritized in all activities, and they have access to safer public spaces, in which some were employed. Young women were supported with government grants and others received vocational trainings and a chance to find jobs working in gardens, some with permanent contracts.

The programme also fostered dialogue between local authorities, CSOs and community groups and focused on youth participation in livelihood activities and policy dialogue. CSOs organized trainings for youth on sports and socio-political dialogue, leading to the establishment of youth civic councils at the governorate level. Community participation was central to the programme, and considerations for gender equality and marginalized groups were integrated into all activities. The programme responded to the COVID-19 pandemic and built capacities of the local government in this regard. It continued working to help communities overcome the crisis by implementing innovative solutions.

Despite its efforts, the impact of the programme is mixed, with some areas showing clear positive outcomes while in other areas impact could not be confirmed. It helped in strengthening institutional systems and capacities of government staff at the local level through digitizing revenue collection systems and enhancing the capacities of municipality staff in ICT and GIS. It re-vitalized the decentralization and dialogue process from central to governorate level. Additionally, the programme has supported the establishment of stronger partnerships between local municipalities, CSOs, and communities, as seen in their collaboration in local development projects and community initiatives, as well as the signing of memoranda of understanding between the different parties. The programme strengthened the capacities of small CSOs and helped them play a meaningful role in community development. However, as many of these important achievements happened late in the life of the programme, their impact and concrete results are yet to be seen.

Sustainability

Durability and ownership by local authorities, individuals, and communities was observed in the rehabilitation and reconstruction activities by the project. Public spaces and utilities were rehabilitated

and are providing quality services to communities. The programme also provided equipment and spare parts to municipalities which will help increase the sustainability of the actions. CSOs and NGOs gained capacities and experiences and started to play important roles in local development. The programme aimed to enhance the capacities of municipality staff through revenue generation systems, ICT and GIS training, this has progressed in Mosul and requests received for Baiji and Falluja. A resource mobilization mechanism was also established at the governorate level and staff from municipalities were trained on participatory governance and monitoring. Although the likelihood of sustainability is high, it is too early to assess the impact on revenue collection and resource mobilization.

The programme placed focus on environmental sustainability through peer-to-peer actions and local development projects in renewable energy, water management, waste management and climate adaptation. Prospects of sustainability are supported by capacitated CSOs and individuals, especially youth. Scalability will depend on budgets becoming available for similar projects. The key outputs for economic sustainability are the revenue generation system and the resource mobilization mechanism. Although the trainings and technical assistance were useful, it is still early to assess the success of these systems. The completion and operationalization of these systems will provide resources and regular revenue for the municipalities to sustain improved services. Legal authorization, willingness to pay fees, and the value in local currency are challenges to the success of these systems.

Coherence

The design and implementation were not always coherent, as the eight outputs were disjointed and implemented in isolation from each other for most of the programme's duration, even geographically. The programme was spread too thin in terms of thematic result areas and partners engaged. In the last year, the UNDP increased interlinkages, especially between Outputs 1.1, 1.4 and 2.2. The UNDP and UN-Habitat teams confirmed good working relations but there were missed opportunities for bringing in coordination with other agencies. Worth pointing out that local area development projects implemented by UN Habitat were interlinked and maximised human resources, knowledge sharing and joined procurement processes. Collaboration with other partners was successful in some cases, such as the EU-Madad Fund and with CSOs, who in turn collaborated with other development partners. There was limited coordination between organizations supporting the decentralization portfolio in Iraq, creating overlap and loss of efforts.² UNDP and UN-Habitat were actively involved in sector and UN Cluster meetings, but government officials mentioned the need for better coordination. UNDP was also heading the "Decentralization Support Group" with the major organisations working on it including EU, USAID, World Bank, and GIZ.

Human Rights and Gender Equality

The LADP-III programme promoted human rights and a balanced democratic system in Iraq, with a focus on assisting vulnerable groups such as IDPs, PwDs, women and youth. It helped IDPs return through house reconstruction, provided employment and training opportunities for PwDs, and addressed youth and

² GIZ withdrew from its efforts in fiscal decentralization. The project coordinated with USAID as close as possible building on USAID experiences with the DCPCs.

women unemployment while promoting their civic engagement and leadership. It promoted positive changes in gender equality and placed emphasis on the importance of women's empowerment; the incubator in Basra provided women and youth with vocational training, small grants and psychosocial support. The local bakeries in Erbil reduced women's exposure to carcinogenic fumes from plastic bags. The beekeeping income-generation activities in Duhok created sustainable livelihoods and entrepreneurship. The Yazidi Women project strengthened their role in decision-making as a minority group in Dohuk. Women were engaged in rehabilitation works, agriculture, parks management and employment. The Women Empowerment Directorate (WED) was supported through the development of a policy, a gender mainstreaming manual and toolkit, and a gender analysis. Women engineers were included in the rehabilitation teams, which helped to build a relationship with the community and engage women in rehabilitation.

Conclusions

Relevance and Coherence: The LADP-III programme was aligned with national policies, the EU Strategies for Iraq and to the needs of vulnerable population groups. It adopted a bottom-up approach and focused on local development and reconstruction, not traditional decentralization support strategies. Some adopted implementation methods were not always adequate to the context in Iraq, especially the peer-to-peer approach. Although, stakeholders were not engaged during the initial formulation of programme design and the DoA, they were well-engaged at later stages of inception and implementation. In terms of coherence, interlinkages between the eight outputs were limited, they appeared disjointed and implemented in isolation, with signs of improvement only during the last year. Good working relations between the UNDP and UN-Habitat were confirmed, but coordination with other actors working on decentralization was not evident with possible missed opportunities.

Effectiveness: Generally speaking, all its intended programme results were achieved with some delays and variation in the effectiveness of outputs. Decentralization in Iraq is facing significant challenges due to a lack of understanding and resistance by central authorities, yet, the programme supported improvements in capacities and systems for decentralization. The logical framework was revised by UNDP but was never formally approved by the EU, the revision were necessary for more realistic targets however, some changes affected the targeting and outcome indicators. The main challenges affecting effectiveness were the COVID-19, political instability, UNDP management turnover, lengthy granting modalities for CSOs and unsuitability of the peer-to-peer approach to the Iraqi context.

Efficiency: The UNDP human resources structure of the LADP-III programme was a challenge and the evaluation concludes that it was rather inadequate compared to the size and complexity especially for Outcomes 1 and 2. Outcomes 1 and 2 experienced severe challenges and delays in its first two years but the rate of implementation increased in years three and four, while Outcome 3 progressed smoothly with limited delays. Because the programme indicators were mostly quantitative, assessing the quality of outputs or the progress of capacity strengthening was limited.

Impact: The programme strengthened capacities of government staff and CSOs and fostered dialogue, collaboration and trust between local municipalities, CSOs and communities, especially with youth groups. The greatest impact could be observed in the programme's activities focusing on the green practices and women empowerment which were an integral part of several interventions. The evaluation concludes that the activities under outcome 3 have positively contributed to improving the lives of women and IDPs by facilitating return to their homes and bringing a level of normalcy to their lives.

Sustainability: Environmental protection and green energy projects are likely to be sustainable due to the low cost associated and investments in building local ownership among municipalities and communities. In addition to offering technical training of government staff for the maintenance of solar system. Some of the jobs created are also likely to continue especially long-term employment and small businesses. Parks and other rehabilitation work is likely to be sustainable because of the modality of providing spare parts and equipment necessary to ensure maintenance by the municipalities. The programme supported revenue generation systems, ICT and GIS capacity building, and decentralized fiscal management. Concrete results in terms of revenue collection and resource mobilization are yet to be seen, making it early in time to assess the likelihood of their sustainability.

Cross-Cutting: Human rights considerations were evident, the programme identified and responded to the specific needs of IDPs, PwDs, women and youth in vulnerable situations, and ensured their active engagement in assessments and implementation. Advancing women's empowerment was a clear achievement, gender equality was mainstreamed in activities and women-targeted actions were implemented, such as the incubator in Basra, local bakeries in Erbil, and beekeeping in Duhok. Provision of technical support to WED improves sustainability prospects for women empowerment at local level.

Recommendations

Recommendation 1: Reconceptualize LADP programming for policy dialogue with central government and capacity building of local authorities for decentralization.

Recommendation 2: Align implementation strategies with Iraq context through needs assessments, using assessments to tailor programme design, and adjusting logical framework early.

Recommendation 3: Design a CSO service facility to strengthen CSO capacities and engagement with local authorities in post-stabilization Iraq.

Recommendation 4: Develop logical framework with vertical and causal linkages and M&E tools for structured data collection.

Recommendation 5: Revisit human resources structure for adequate technical expertise and geographic presence, including decentralization, resource mobilization, and policy experts.

Recommendation 6: Ensure the programme's exit and transition is in place, considering the sustainability strategy developed by UNDP. The initiated deliberation and LGI activities, and the DCPCs would strongly benefit from a continuous implementation.

Recommendation 7: Engage private sector in decentralization for economic growth, infrastructure improvement, job creation, and advocating for improved decentralization with central government.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. Overview

The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the United Nations Human Settlement Programme (UN-Habitat) have joined efforts over the past four years for the implementation of the “Supporting Recovery and Stability through Local Development in Iraq”, also referred to as “**Local Area Development Programme (LADP-III)**”. The programme was implemented between 2018 and 2022 at a total combined budget of EUR 47.5 million targeting nine governorates, building on the success and lessons learned of previous programme phases. The overall objective was to promote the stability and socio-economic development of Iraq, to be achieved through three specific outcomes: (i) Selected Governorates are able to effectively manage local government systems and public services, (ii) Economic growth and job opportunities have increased, with special focus on green projects involving youth and women, and (iii) Living conditions in conflict areas have improved and returnees are assisted.

To this end, UNDP Iraq Country Office has launched a call to conduct an independent final evaluation of the LADP-III programme with the aim to promote learning and accountability, and to inform the design and implementation of future relevant programming.

This Final Report presents the findings, conclusions and recommendations of the LADP-III programme’s final evaluation. It starts with a description of the context in Iraq and the approaches adopted throughout the evaluation processes. The report provides answers to each of the 28 evaluation questions (EQs) defined under six criteria; relevance, coherence, effectiveness, efficiency, impact and sustainability. It then presents a set of recommendations based on the evaluation findings, evidence and conclusions.

1.2. The Context in Iraq

The World Bank Systematic Iraqi country diagnosis conducted back in 2017 identified three characteristics that underlie Iraq's development challenges.³ These are poor governance, dependence on oil resources, and ethnic and regional diversity. Conflict, violence and fragility resulting from a combination of oil wealth and ethnic and religious divisions caused longstanding governance problems.⁴ On another front, the economic conditions in Iraq are challenging in general, affected by the political instability, social unrest and a deepening state-citizen divide.⁵ This is also now exacerbated by more recent crises, majorly the early

³ World Bank Group. 2017. Iraq Systematic Country Diagnostic. World Bank, Washington, DC. <https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/handle/10986/26237>

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ World Bank. 2020. *Addressing the Human Capital Crisis: A Public Expenditure Review for Human Development Sectors in Iraq*. <https://documents.worldbank.org/en/publication/documents-reports/documentdetail/568141622306648034/addressing-the-human-capital-crisis-a-public-expenditure-review-for-human-development-sectors-in-iraq>

2020 decline in oil prices⁶ and the repercussions of the COVID-19 pandemic on jobs and revenue losses. The poverty rate in Iraq nearly doubled, reaching 31.7 percent, while the unemployment rate around 14 percent.⁷

The economy is gradually recovering, the turnaround in oil markets has significantly improved the economic outlook in the medium term. Real GDP edged up by 1.3 percent in 2021, after a sharp contraction of 11.3 percent in 2020. Both oil and non-oil growths are on track to reach their pre-pandemic levels, as oil production increases and the easing of COVID-19 restrictions restore domestic economic activity. The non-oil economy grew by over 6 percent in the first nine months of 2021. Overall growth in 2022 is now forecast at 8.9 percent, as this recovery outpaced the slowdown in the oil sector as Iraq adjusted to its OPEC+ quota early in the year.⁸ This recovery is, however, fraught with major risks posed by structural bottlenecks. Risks include public investment management constraints that have impacted public service delivery, the slow clearance of arrears (especially those related to public wages), and large exposure of state-owned banks and the central bank to the sovereign. These fragilities are aggravated by fragile political conditions, a legacy of under-investment in infrastructure and public services, a weak healthcare system and rampant corruption that continue to trigger unrest across the country.⁹

Iraq Vision 2030 priorities¹⁰ and related Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), namely, human development (SDGs 1, SDG3, SDG4 and SDG5), good governance and safe society (SDG16), economic diversification (SDG8 and SDG9), sustainable environment (SDG6, SDG11 and SDG13) are being implemented through various national plans and strategies. This includes the Iraq National Development Plan 2018-2022 (NDP)¹¹ which aligns with more than 70 percent of the SDG targets. Data limitations, including the lack of disaggregated data, place huge constraints on SDG monitoring (with close to 70 percent of SDG indicators currently missing)¹². However, available data in 2019 showed improvements in enrolment ratios, fertility rates and child and maternal mortality. Poverty experienced a relative decline, despite a significant rise during the crisis. Efforts are being made to expand the coverage of social protection programmes for the poor and vulnerable. Efforts to promote women's empowerment and reduce gender-based violence (GBV) have led to improvement in gender related indicators, although much remains to be done.

Another challenge is the urgent need to facilitate the return of the remaining 1.2 million internally displaced people (IDPs) to their homes and to restore their conflict-affected communities. OCHA Iraq¹³ indicated that IDPs currently live in all 18 governorates, in over 100 districts throughout the country. Their return requires, in addition to rebuilding homes, the rehabilitation of public facilities, restoration of basic

⁶ Iraq is one of the most oil-dependent countries in the world. Over the last decade, oil revenues have accounted for more than 99 percent of exports, 85 percent of the government's budget, and 42 percent of GDP. <https://www.worldbank.org/en/country/iraq/overview#1>

⁷ World Bank. 2022. *World Bank in Iraq Website: Iraq Overview*. <https://www.worldbank.org/en/country/iraq/overview>

⁸ World Bank Iraq 2022. Overview. [Iraq Overview: Development news, research, data | World Bank](#)

⁹ Ibid

¹⁰ Iraq Ministry of Planning 2019. *The Future We Want*. [1568714423e99cb9efb0b0a786344a1294683d4931--2030 رؤية, e.pdf \(mop.gov.iq\)](#)

¹¹ Iraq Ministry of Planning 2018. *National Development Plan 2018-2022*. [iraq_national_development_plan_2018-2022_summary_english.pdf \(unesco.org\)](#)

¹² Sustainable Development Portal. 2022. *Iraq Key Messages 2019*. [Microsoft Word - Iraq_VNR Messages final_English.docx \(un.org\)](#)

¹³ OCHA. 2021. *Iraq Humanitarian Bulletin*, July 2021

https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/july_2021_humanitarian_bulletin_final_en.pdf

services, removal of unexploded ordnance and jobs. Challenges to the return and reintegration of IDPs is also related to humanitarian needs, and the lack of social acceptance, trust and cohesion between returnees and different communities who are unwilling to live alongside. Stigmatization of individuals perceived as having family ties to the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) often results in their economic and social exclusion, difficulties in finding employment, public shaming and in some cases extrajudicial violence. Local conflicts, lack of communal trust and weak governance are so far-reaching that ISIL members or IDPs with perceived ISIL Affiliation get banned from return to their homes, including such as access to housing, land and property, as well as insecurity and crime.¹⁴ In many cases, tribes have split along pro-ISIL and anti-ISIL lines, causing deep cleavages within Iraq's entrenched tribal system.

A substantial portion of returnee households face obstacles across indicators related to lack of livelihoods opportunities and absence of available income-generating activities, which are of the most pervasive challenges to durable solutions in Iraq. 39 percent of returnees live in locations with inoperative businesses and other 22 percent live in locations with inoperative agriculture. Many are awaiting compensation for property damage or destruction due to conflict and are facing difficulties to access healthcare, psychosocial (PSS) and protection services.¹⁵ These issues are prolonging the Iraq's displacement conundrum, exacerbating intergroup tensions and heightening the country's fragility and risk of backsliding into conflict.

Furthermore, according to the International Organization for Migration (IOM), 49 percent returnee households live in locations at risk of violence, 44 percent experience restrictions of movement, and 32 percent have a women member who feels unsafe moving around.¹⁶ Displaced women and children, including widows of ISIL combatants face additional challenges such as the threat of sexual exploitation and SGBV.¹⁷ Hence, gender inequalities and the systemic exclusion of women and girls, exacerbated by conflict and fragility, also undermine Iraq's social cohesion and produce gendered vulnerabilities.

Iraq is also grappling with significant and interconnected environmental challenges. Rising temperatures, intense droughts, declining precipitation, desertification, salinization, and the increasing prevalence of dust storms have undermined Iraq's agricultural sector, already long in decline. Urban dwellers have also experienced the deterioration of living conditions in cities. Compounding these trends is the threat of water scarcity. National and regional political volatility and uncertainty will make mitigating the effects of climate change and addressing the critical issue of transnational water management very difficult. The current trajectory of increasing temperatures and increasing water scarcity will likely have serious implications for the country. The energy sector serves as the predominant source of greenhouse gas

¹⁴ UNDP. 2021. Pathways to Reintegration: IRAQ Families Formerly Associated with ISIL [file:///C:/Users/doaa.arafa/Documents/DA percent20Family percent20IDs percent20& percent20Passports/Other/Iraq percent20C2RI/UNDP-IQ-Pathways-to-Reintegration-Report percent20\(1\).pdf](file:///C:/Users/doaa.arafa/Documents/DA%20percent20Family%20percent20IDs%20percent20&%20percent20Passports/Other/Iraq%20percent20C2RI/UNDP-IQ-Pathways-to-Reintegration-Report%20(1).pdf)

¹⁵ IOM. 2021. *Home Again? Categorising Obstacles to Returnee Reintegration In Iraq* https://iraqdtm.iom.int/files/DurableSolutions/202216553131_iom_Iraq_Home_Again_Categorising_Obstacles_to_Returnee_Reintegration_in_Iraq.pdf

¹⁶ IOM. 2021. *Home Again? Categorising Obstacles to Returnee Reintegration In Iraq* https://iraqdtm.iom.int/files/DurableSolutions/202216553131_iom_Iraq_Home_Again_Categorising_Obstacles_to_Returnee_Reintegration_in_Iraq.pdf

¹⁷ UNDP. 2022. *Conflict Analysis, Community-Based Reconciliation & Reintegration in Iraq*. <https://www.undp.org/iraq/publications/community-based-reconciliation-and-reintegration-iraq-c2ri-conflict-analysis-2022>

emissions in Iraq, with nearly half of emissions from fugitive emissions, followed by electricity/heat, transportation and manufacturing/construction.¹⁸ Climate migration is already a reality in Iraq; Iraqis are forced to relocate in order to survive.¹⁹

1.3. Decentralization in Iraq

Currently, Iraq has a legal federal system of government that promotes a decentralized administration, with powers devolved to the governorates and provinces to make decisions on local issues and manage their own resources. The Iraqi Council of Representatives adopted two transformative legislations in 2008, namely Law No. 21 of the Governorate not Incorporated into a Region, and Law No. 36 of the Provincial, District and Subdistrict Council elections. These put Iraq on a decentralisation pathway that is still evolving. However, after more than a decade of experimentation, the decentralisation process has failed to tackle the on-going crises of legitimacy and a lack of trust in government. It has failed to address problems of rampant corruption, inefficiency and an inability to improve the lives of citizens.²⁰

The decentralization process in Iraq has faced numerous obstacles, including the ongoing conflict, sectarian tensions, corruption, and weak institutional capacity. The country is still struggling to build effective, accountable, and transparent local governance structures, and there are concerns about the unequal distribution of resources and decision-making powers between the central government and local communities.²¹ There have also been disputes over the allocation of oil revenues, with some regions seeking greater control over their own resources. While decentralization in Iraq is a work in progress, it holds the potential to create a more democratic, efficient and representative system of governance that is more responsive to the needs of local communities. The process requires sustained efforts to address challenges and build effective and transparent local governance structures.

1.4. The LADP-III Programme 2019-2022

As signified in the programme's Description of Action (DoA), the massive assistance to Iraq provided by the international community has shown that financial and technical resources are not sufficient, on their own, to achieve the foundations of an effective development state with social responsibility. In the absence of security and adequate governance, they may even be counter-productive or may postpone the resolution of underlying constraints by facilitating existing dysfunction.

The LADP-III programme was implemented between 01 January 2019 and 31 March 2023²² with the overall goal **to contribute to the stability and socio-economic development of Iraq by enhancing democratic governance at the local level.** The outcomes and outputs are shown in Figure 1.

¹⁸ Climate Links: [Iraq | Global Climate Change \(climatelinks.org\)](https://www.climatelinks.org/)

¹⁹ IOM. 2022. Migration, Environment, and Climate Change in Iraq <https://iraq.un.org/en/194355-migration-environment-and-climate-change-iraq>

²⁰ Dla'awar Alaudin. 2020. Decentralization in Iraq: Process, Progress & a New Tailor-Made Model. Middle East Research Institute. [Decentralisation in Iraq: Process, Progress & a New Tailor-Made Model | MERI \(meri-k.org\)](https://meri-k.org/publications/Decentralisation-in-Iraq-Process-Progress-&a-New-Tailor-Made-Model)

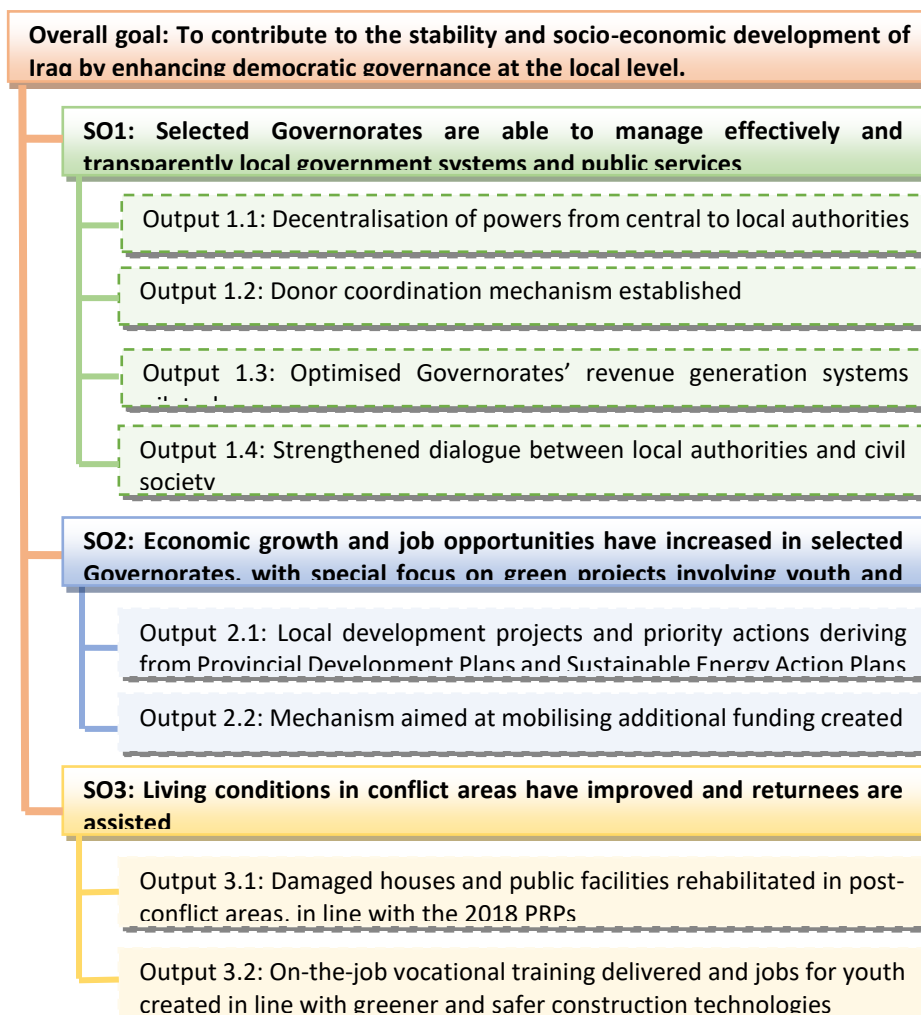
²¹ UN in Iraq. 2022. Iraq Country Analysis. https://iraq.un.org/sites/default/files/2022-07/CCA_percent20Iraq_percent20percent20Condensed.pdf

²² The programme's original end date was 31 December 2022, and was extended until 31 March 2023

The LADP-III programme interventions aimed at restoring the legitimacy of the state and building inclusive institutions. Essentially, the programme is designed to intrinsically decentralise basic services, enhance local revenue generation and promote CSO participation in local development policies. It also aimed to support urban recovery and development of cities and towns affected by a decade of conflict, promote sustainable development and decrease consumption of non-renewable resources, as well as to boost economic growth and job creation.

The LADP-III programme was relevant to national priorities for Iraq, including the NDP, the Reconstruction and Development Framework and the Poverty Reduction Strategy 2018-2022. It was aligned with the Sustainable Development Agenda 2030, the Global Initiative towards a Sustainable Iraq and the Paris Agreement. It also came in line with the key priorities of the EU Strategy for Iraq and the EU Humanitarian-Development nexus. It contributed to the UNDP and UN-Habitat’s Strategic Plans and the UNDP Country Programme Document (2020-2024). Programme activities intended to focus on enhancing local government systems by supporting decentralisation processes; implementing selected local priority development projects already listed in the existing local development plans at provincial level and assisting returns and better living conditions in conflict/fragile areas, through the rehabilitation and upgrading of housing and community infrastructure and services.

Figure 1: LADP-III Strategic Objectives and Outputs



2. EVALUATION OBJECTIVES AND METHODOLOGY

2.1. Evaluation Purpose, Objectives and Scope

Purpose

The purpose of this independent final evaluation is to conduct an evidence-based and highly consultative reflection on the LADP-III programme to promote learning and accountability. The evaluation findings and recommendations are expected to inform and improve future relevant programme design and implementation. Information will increase knowledge and understanding of the benefits and challenges of similar interventions in future.

Objectives

The specific objectives of this independent final evaluation are to:

1. Assess and establish the extent to which the expected outputs and results of the LADP-III programme have been or are being achieved.
2. Provide key learnings and inputs regarding the factors affecting the programme implementation, outputs and its sustainability, including contributing factors and constraints.
3. Assess the overall strategy used in pursuing the programme's outputs and results including the use of partnerships, implementing partners, contractors, direct engagement of governorates.
4. Assess relevance, coherence, effectiveness, efficiency, impact, and sustainability of the LADP-III programme.
5. Examine the extent to which gender, human rights, environment and other cross-cutting issues were considered in the project's design, implementation and monitoring.
6. Provide recommendations for improving the design, effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability and mainstreaming of gender and other cross-cutting issues in future programming.

Scope

Thematic scope: The independent final evaluation of the LADP-III programme covered all interventions under the three specific outcomes, as implemented by UNDP and UN-Habitat, in coordination with implementing partners at national, governorate and district levels.

Temporal scope: The evaluation covered the programme implementation period from the 1st of January 2019 to 31st of March 2023.

Geographical scope: The evaluation assessed actions in the intervention areas, specifically in the nine Iraqi target governorates of Anbar, Basra, Dohuk, Erbil, Missan, Ninewa, Salah al-Din, Sulaymaniyah and Thi-Qar.

Primary users

The intended users of this final evaluation include the LADP-III teams from UNDP and UN-Habitat and their respective senior management, government of Iraq counterparts, the EU Delegation, development partners, and the general Iraqi public and beneficiaries.

2.2. Evaluation Criteria and Stakeholders

As indicated by the ToRs, the independent final evaluation systematically used the OECD/DAC criteria²³ of relevance, coherence, effectiveness, efficiency, impact and sustainability. It adhered to the UNDP Evaluation Guidelines, UNEG Evaluation Norms and Standards,²⁴ UNEG Ethical Guidelines and UNEG Standards and Norms for Review in the UN System and disability inclusion.²⁵ It considered whether aspects of human rights and gender equality and women's empowerment (GEWE) were integrated, and ensured transparency, inclusion and participation. 28 EQs were used (Annex x) as provided by the UNDP ToRs and approved in the Inception Report. xx people were interviewed in total.

In identifying the categories of stakeholders, the consultant made sure to stay inclusive and engage a wide range of stakeholders who have direct involvement with the programme. Six governorates were visited during field data collection, those were Erbil, Dohuk, Salahuddin, Ninewa, Basra, and Baghdad.

2.3. Evaluation Approaches

The evaluation considered different approaches in an interlinked manner to ensure adequate response to the evaluation questions. These include the theory-based approach, participatory approach, mixed-method approach and integration of Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment. The use of participatory methods ensured that the views of a wide range of stakeholders is reflected in the findings and triangulated to ensure rigor of findings. The use of the theory-based approach enabled an analysis of the causal relationships that were envisaged and allowed to test the validity of and reconstruct the ToC as initially envisaged.

The evaluation matrix presented in **Annex 2** was the center piece to the methodological design of the independent final evaluation. During the field phase, the matrix served as a reference document that ensured data was systematically collected and documented in a structured and organized way. At the end of the field phase, the matrix was useful to verify whether sufficient evidence has been collected to answer all EQs. In the reporting phase, it facilitated the drafting of findings per question and the articulation of conclusions and recommendations.

2.4. Data Collection, Analysis and Validation

The independent final evaluation utilized several data collection methods, including KIIs and FGDs with beneficiaries and stakeholders of the different activities in all governorates. They were conducted either remotely or face to face using semi-structured interview guides tailored as necessary for each target group. In-depth review of documents was an on-going process throughout the phases of the evaluation. **Annex 3** outlines the guides for the planned FGDs and KIIs.

²³ OECD.2021. *Evaluation Criteria*. <https://www.oecd.org/dac/evaluation/daccriteriaforevaluatingdevelopmentassistance.htm>

²⁴ UNFPA. UNEG/UNFPA review norms and standards <http://www.unevaluation.org/document/guidance-documents>

²⁵ It is worth noting that UNEG guidance on Disability inclusion was issued after the project design. Hence the evaluation will consider disability inclusion in a general sense.

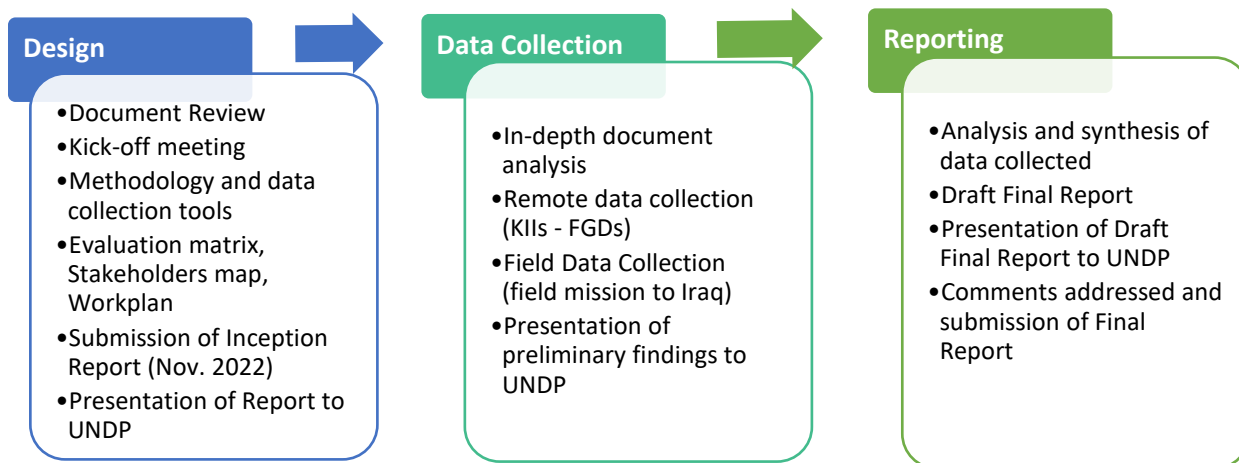
Analysis examined the criteria and questions generated in the evaluation matrix and were organized around the programme’s three specific objectives. Cross-checking and integration of different information sources was a guiding principle for this evaluation. Secondary data was triangulated with primary data from KIIs and FGDs, which increased the validity and reliability of results and permitted the consultant to provide detailed and credible answers to all the EQs. Validation was guided by the regular exchanges with the UNDP team and with the support of the Review Reference Group who provided a second level of quality assurance. Their feedback allowed for further refinement of the review recommendations and conclusions.

2.5. Evaluability Assessment and Limitations

The Final Evaluation Design Report included an evaluability assessment that ensured sound planning of the review process and systematic identification of potential challenges and possible limitations. The review matrix (**Annex 3**) identifies assumptions and indicators that formed the basis for data collection and analysis. Some local stakeholders were not available for interviews during the field mission of this final evaluation, and this affected the ability of the Evaluation consultant to assess some specific elements, for example in relation to sustainability and durability of some outputs.

2.6. Evaluation Phases

Figure 2: Phases of the Final Evaluation



3. EVALUATION FINDINGS

3.1. Relevance

EQ 1: To what extent has the strategy, expected outputs, and proposed activities of the LADP-III programme reflect the strategic considerations of host country's policies, donor's priorities, and UNDP's strategic policies.

Relevance to national policies

The LADP-III programme goal was to contribute to the stability and socio-economic development of Iraq by enhancing democratic governance at the local level. The design of its outcomes reflects strategic consideration of the national priorities in Iraq, as defined in the NDP 2018-2022,²⁶ which aims to establish the foundations of an effective development state with social responsibility. The programme's three Outcomes contributed to several of the NDP's strategic objectives. Primarily, NDP-SO1 'Establishing the foundations of good governance', NDP-SO2 'Achieving economic reform in all its financial, monetary, banking and commercial dimensions', NDP-SO3 'Recovery of communities affected by the displacement crisis and the loss of human security', NDP-SO7 'Reducing unemployment and underemployment', NDP-SO10 'Laying the foundations for decentralized spatial development', and NDP-SO11 'The alignment between the general development framework and urban structures based on the foundations of urban planning and spatial comparative advantages'.

The LADP-III programme was also aligned with the Iraq Reconstruction and Development Framework Plan 2018-2027,²⁷ developed by the Government of Iraq with the World Bank in 2018. It aligned its strategic focus with the Framework's four integrated recovery pillars 1) Governance, 3) Human and Social Development, 4) Infrastructure, and 5) Economic Development. The activities were designed to develop new models for sustainable delivery of public services and promote CSO participation, boost economic growth and job creation, enhance local revenue generation, support urban recovery, promote sustainable development, and decrease consumption of non-renewable resources. The programme had therefore considered the framework's investment and reform priority areas (i) renewing the social contract between the State and its citizens, including to combat corruption; (ii) promoting economic and business recovery, with the introduction of reforms to attract the private sector; and (iii) the rehabilitation of services across the country.

The LADP-III programme's interlinked outcomes and outputs considered the pillars of the Iraq Sustainable Development Vision 2030.²⁸ Specifically, pillar 1 'Human Capital Development', pillar 2 'Good Governance', pillar 3 'Diversified economy' and pillar 5 'Sustainable environment'. It considered the priorities of the

²⁶ Ministry of Planning, Republic of Iraq. 2017. National Development Plan 2018-2022. https://www.iraq-iccme.jp/pdf/archives/nationaldevelopmentplan2018_2022.pdf

²⁷ Ministry of Planning and World Bank Group. 2018. Iraq Reconstruction and Development Framework 2018-2027 <https://documents1.worldbank.org/curated/en/846201597292562703/pdf/Iraq-Reconstruction-and-Investment.pdf>

²⁸ Ministry of Planning, Republic of Iraq, 2018. The Future We Want Iraq Vision for Sustainable Development 2030. https://planipolis.iiep.unesco.org/sites/default/files/ressources/iraq_vision_2030_en.pdf

Poverty Reduction Strategy 2018-2022²⁹ with the goal of reducing poverty by at least 25 percent by 2022. Focus of activities under Outcomes 1 and 2 supported disadvantaged community groups to improve economic participation and resilient livelihoods for the poor.

Similarly, in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq (KRI), the programme came in alignment with the region's KRI Regional Strategic Development Vision for 2020,³⁰ by encompassing the main development priorities of the KRI for the governorates of Erbil, Sulaymaniyah and Duhok. The design respected the KRI's roadmap of the Reforming the Economy for Shared Prosperity and Protecting the Vulnerable developed in 2016 with the support of the World Bank.

Building on the LADP-II, the programme considered the Iraq General Framework of the National Plan for Reconstruction and Development of Damaged Governorates due to conflicts and liberation activities. Due consideration during the design was given to the strategies developed during LADP-II, including the Provincial Response Plans (PRPs), the Provincial Development Strategies (PDSs), the Sustainable Energy Action Plans (SEAPs) and the Governorate Urban Strategies (GUS). The programme's support to decentralisation was in line with the Law of Governorates Not Incorporated into a Region (Provincial Powers Act, 2018).³¹

Feedback during the evaluation from local government staff and CSOs, confirmed the relevance of the different focus areas of the programme in responding to key gaps in Iraq in relation to decentralization of fiscal and administration aspects, reconstruction and rehabilitation, and environmental protection. It considered specific needs of different groups, such as the engagement of youth, inclusion of people with disabilities (PwDs), and women empowerment.

Relevance to EU priorities

The design of the LADP-III programme reaffirmed the commitments made by the EU for the New Urban Agenda,³² adopting actions to localize sustainable urban development at the local level in Iraq. It supported the three pillars of the New Urban Agenda through its focus on (i) better regulation for a more effective and coherent implementation of existing policies, legislation and instruments; (ii) better funding opportunities for urban authorities; and (iii) better knowledge on urban issues and exchange of best practices that provide tailor-made solutions to major challenges.

²⁹ Ministry of Planning, Republic of Iraq. 2018. Strategy for the Reduction of Poverty in Iraq 2018-2022.

https://planipolis.iiep.unesco.org/sites/default/files/ressources/iraq_prs_summary_en_2018.pdf

³⁰ KRG Ministry of Planning. 2013. *A vision for the Future*: Kurdistan Region of Iraq 2020.

https://us.gov.krd/media/1286/krq_2020_last_english.pdf

³¹ World Bank. 2016. Decentralisation and Subnational Service delivery in Iraq: Status and Way Forward.

<https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/bitstream/handle/10986/24757/Iraq0Decentral0t0Report0March02016.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y>

³² EU. 2022. Urban Agenda for the EU website. <https://futurium.ec.europa.eu/en/urban-agenda>

The programme is aligned with the EU Strategy for Iraq 2018,³³ contributing to its strategic objectives to strengthen the Iraqi political system, support an inclusive, accountable and democratic system of government that provides a strategic response to the priority needs in the country, in addition to promoting sustainable, knowledge-based and inclusive economic growth and job creation. The programme also considered the operationalisation of the EU Humanitarian-Development nexus in Iraq, as it bridges gaps in the EU response between emergency support, stabilisation and long-term recovery. In addition, the programme is aligned to the EU Global Strategy³⁴ that ensured human rights, sustainable development and lasting access to the global commons, and to the EU consensus on Development,³⁵ which defined a shared EU vision and action framework for development cooperation on poverty eradication, while integrating '5Ps' of economic, social, and environmental dimensions; People, Prosperity, Planet, Peace and Partnership.

Finally, the programme was designed to contribute to the localization of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in an integrated manner. It contributed to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), primarily, SDG 11: Sustainable cities and communities, and including SDG 5: Gender equality, SDG 6: Clean water and sanitation, SDG 7: Affordable and clean energy and SDG 8: Decent work and economic growth.

Relevance to UNDP's strategic policies

The LADP-III contributed to the UNDP Strategic Plan 2018-2021³⁶ and continues to contribute to the Strategic Plan 2022-2025³⁷, specifically to outcome 2: 'No-one left behind centring on equitable access to opportunities and a rights-based approach to human agency and human development' and outcome 3: 'Resilience built to respond to systemic uncertainty and risk'. On the Country Programme Document for Iraq (CPD) 2020-2024³⁸, the programme directly contributed to the following outputs:

- Output 1.1: Infrastructure for basic service delivery improved in locations affected by crisis and vulnerable to conflict.
- Output 1.2: Civil society and academic institutions strengthened to promote social cohesion, prevention of violent extremism and sustainable development
- Output 2.1: Priority policies and partnerships approved and implemented for inclusive green economic growth and employment creation

³³ European Commission. 2018. Elements for an EU Strategy for Iraq.

https://www.eeas.europa.eu/sites/default/files/join_2018_1_f1_communication_from_commission_to_inst_en_v2_p1_961709.pdf

³⁴ EU.2016. A Global Strategy for the European Union's Foreign and Security Policy.

https://www.eeas.europa.eu/sites/default/files/eugs_review_web_0.pdf

³⁵ EU. 2017. Joint Statement on The New European Consensus on Development 'Our World, Our Dignity, Our Future'

https://international-partnerships.ec.europa.eu/system/files/2019-09/european-consensus-on-development-final-20170626_en.pdf

³⁶ UNDP. 2017. UNDP Strategic Plan 2018-2021. <https://www.undp.org/iraq/publications/undp-strategic-plan-2018-2021>

³⁷ UNDP. 2021. UNDP Strategic Plan 2022-2025. <https://www.undp.org/publications/undp-strategic-plan-2022-2025>

³⁸ UNDP.2020. Country Programme Document for Iraq 2020-2024. '

- Output 2.2: Access to livelihood and employment creation opportunities increased in locations affected by and vulnerable to conflict.

The programme activities correspond to three of four CPD pathways: (b) diversified pro-poor economic growth for sustainable livelihoods; (c) improved governance with accountable institutions that protect the rights of vulnerable groups and pave the way for citizen-state trust; and (d) decreased fragility to climate change. These pathways are all underpinned by a strategy for achieving social cohesion, protection and inclusion, as critical to ensuring the humanitarian-peace-development nexus and forging a new social contract in Iraq.

EQ 2: To what extent did relevant stakeholders participate in the LADP-III programme (design, implementation, monitoring and ownership)

The programme’s DoA included a stakeholder mapping that provided an account of the stakeholders that will be engaged in the implementation clarifying the importance of their engagement. Discussions with stakeholders during the evaluation process suggest that some stakeholders especially government were engaged in the planning and implementation but not necessarily during the initial phase of programme design and formulation of DoA. The evaluation found that, for example, top decision makers at governorate level were involved in the selection of projects and locations, governorate and local municipalities and CSOs participated in gap assessments, articulation of some of the peer-to-peer actions and the local development projects, the targeting for house and public spaces rehabilitation, among others (details in EQ3).

EQ 3: To what extent has the selected implementation methods been appropriate to the development context, which means a) were based upon adequate needs-assessment and b) show understanding of the development situation of Iraq?

Needs-assessments as basis for the implementation methods

The LADP-III was based on the experience and lessons learned from LADP previous phases. There were no specific assessments conducted during the design phase as a basis for the selection of the implementation methodologies used. However, assessments were carried out after the programme start to gear the implementation for some outputs by both UNDP and UN-Habitat. For example, very late in the programme’s life, an assessment on decentralization in Iraq was conducted, it provided an understanding of what decentralization means for the country, its legal framework and managing stakeholders. It also looked at results and lessons learned from previous UNDP and partners efforts on decentralization and what objectives are intended in future. This was complemented by a survey in Thi-Qar and Missan and consultation meetings with the High Commission for the Coordination between Provinces (HCCP). During this final evaluation, the UNDP team clarified how important this assessment was because there was no in-depth analysis previously done on decentralization in Iraq, in consideration of its sensitivity and the power struggles. A roadmap was put in place to advocate for decentralization in the sense of service

provision among different stakeholders and to adopt some of the recommendations that came out of the assessment to move forward.

Specific assessments were also conducted to allow for the implementation of the output activities. For example, for Output 1.1 'Decentralisation of powers from central to local authorities', the programme conducted nine gap assessments, including in the fields of education, waste management, energy, employment, agriculture and water management. A capacity building needs assessment helped to design specialized trainings to advance decentralization at the local level in Iraq, with focus on the High Commission for Coordinating among the provinces. For Output 2.1 'Local development projects implementing priority actions deriving from provincial development plans (PDPs) and sustainable energy action plans', the interviewed CSOs and municipalities mentioned conducting assessments and consultations prior to the implementation of their interventions. For Output 2.2 'Mechanism aimed at mobilising additional funding created', the status in the governorates had to be understood first to enable the development of a financial information system. Therefore the UNDP project team developed a detailed concept note that was submitted to the EU with additional elements related to the financial situation and legal framework at local and national levels.

For Output 3.1 'Damaged houses and public facilities rehabilitated in post-conflict areas', at the onset of the programme, UN-Habitat carried-out consultations with local authorities who work closely on the selection of target neighbourhoods where the agency could implement projects of public interest and support the highest number of vulnerable beneficiaries through housing rehabilitation. A full assessment of the selected neighbourhoods were conducted, along with socio-economic surveys giving an indication of where to operate. UN-Habitat consulted extensively with UNDP's Stabilisation team to avoid overlapping or duplication.

Appropriateness of implementation methods to the development situation in Iraq

The LADP-III programme was designed to provide a bottom-up approach to decentralization, anchored around strengthening capacities and systems of municipalities and local governorates. It integrated an emphasis on local reconstruction and rehabilitation, in addition to local development and livelihoods support, complementary to stabilization efforts in the country. In addition, it focused on establishing linkages between, local authorities and the communities they serve through CSOs, which built on efforts by the LADP previous phases. At the beginning of the project there were no plans to create linkages between central and local authorities as such, targeting policies, federal authorities and central government were originally out of the programme's scope. It could be argued that the LADP-III was not conceptualised initially as a decentralization project in the traditional sense, the emphasis of the programme was geared towards local development and urban recovery. Hence, from the onset it lacked the means and contractual base with the key stakeholders that should be engaged in decentralisation efforts i.e. central government which possess the authority and capacities to push the decentralisation agenda forward.

The key implementation methods adopted by the LADP-III programme were not all fully adequate to the context in Iraq, especially for the peer-to-peer approach. The implementation methods included:

- Gap assessment and gap plugging for local capacity building, used to engage local government in assessing needs of communities they serve and needs for a more adequate capacity building support on fiscal and administrative local governance. This approach was adequate as it focused on participatory approaches and ensured the reflection of stakeholders views into the activities
- Sub-granting to CSOs who were provided with low-value grants (LVGs) to build their capacities for a more active role in community development, focusing on environmental protection. This approach while adequate and logically sound lacked a clear understanding of the capacities and challenges of CSOs in Iraq including their weak mandates and institutional capacities and abilities.
- Learning by doing, was relevant to establish partnerships with CSOs and NGOs, ensure a strengthened relationships with local authorities and engage CSOs and NGOs in local development projects
- Integrated reconstruction and Building Back Better was relevant to promote IDPs' return and improved living conditions through rehabilitation of houses, parks and utilities and promoting job creation, adhering to "Building Back Better" principle with eco-friendly and climate-adaptive approach.
- Peer-to-peer cooperation (Output 1.1) as an approach was not fully aligned with the context in Iraq. It aimed to involve European municipalities for decentralized cooperation with Iraqi local authorities. Stakeholders interviewed during the evaluation expressed different views about this approach for local development and strengthening capacities of municipalities. Views by the UNDP team highlighted that the peer-to-peer activity was copied from the "twinning" approach, which was not applicable in the country, and therefore it was inadequately designed for this programme. Those with prior relationships with Iraqi and European municipalities succeeded, while others encountered -partially serious- obstacles before achieving the targets . Half of the interviewed European and Iraqi municipalities reflect that this implementation method was appropriate to the development context. They find that, despite challenges faced, they were at the end adequate due to needs-assessment and the fact that there was some level of understanding from the European municipalities about the development situation in Iraq. The other half of those interviewed did not find the engagement of the Iraqi municipalities sufficient.

EQ 4: To what extent were considerations for gender equality and women's empowerment, and the needs of people with disability, IDPs, vulnerable and marginalized groups integrated into the design of the programme?

The design of the programme considered different vulnerabilities however, the design was not supported by a gender analysis at its start, there were no scorecards to assess partners, M&E and programmatic and organizational aspects. Not all indicators in the logical framework were disaggregated by age or gender. Similarly, despite the fact that Iraq has one of the largest populations of persons with disabilities in the

world,³⁹ the needs of PwDs was not considered during the design, almost not mentioned in the programme's DoA. Having said that, the evaluation acknowledges that the implementation and outputs showed strong consideration of gender equality, disability inclusion and youth engagement as will be reflected throughout the report, especially under the Cross Cutting section 3.6. Through its infrastructure upgrading and open spaces projects, UN-Habitat was able to address some of the needs of families with perceived association with ISIL, who at the moment are still amongst the most marginalised groups in post-conflict areas, for whom it could not improve housing conditions because of security restrictions and community threats. Additionally, the programme conducted a gender analysis in 2021 providing useful and relevant information on the consistency of the structural changes achieved and their effect on reducing inequalities.

EQ 5: How do stakeholders perceive the relevance of the programme and how has the activities implemented improved the lives of beneficiaries? Are there any stories of change?

The LADP-III programme was relevant to the needs of the vulnerable population groups, including IDPs, women, youth and PwDs, as well as local municipalities and utility directorates. The evaluation accounted for evidence that the project activities contributed to changing lives of assisted beneficiaries, which reached around 80,000 people as reported by UNDP in December 2022.⁴⁰

Interviewed municipality staff mentioned that the support provided by the LADP-III programme was relevant to their needs for fiscal and administrative decentralization, and for the provision of services to the surrounding communities. They all agreed that the financial resources allocated to them by the governorate, or the central government is usually insufficient, and the programme's interventions complemented the construction works by the government that is confined to some fields only. Poor quality of public services in target areas was addressed through local development projects and peer-to-peer actions in agriculture, energy, water and education that helped to improve services and utilities. Hence, the projects jointly implemented by the LADP-III and the municipalities have addressed the mistrust of the people in the local authorities as they engaged in dialogue, participatory design and implementation and addressed specific needs of the communities. Municipalities have shown a high degree of positive reception to the work introduced by the programme, especially the rehabilitation and reconstruction activities. One staff said *"They (the programme) provided capacity to the municipality and helped us with fixing our equipment and this builds confidence and helps us with the services to people. We have no support from the governorate"*. In implementing the local projects, strong focus was placed on job creation in construction and public spaces that are needed to increase income and improve livelihoods, complemented by enhanced vocational skills in specialized areas.

Municipal staff mentioned that many returnees did not have minimum shelter standards neither access to potable water. As quoted by municipality staff, *"We did not have space for those who have been living in the tents. In coordination with UN-Habitat, the houses were repaired and people were able to come back"*.

³⁹ IOM Iraq. 2021. Persons with Disabilities and their Representative Organizations in Iraq: Barriers, Challenges, and Priorities. https://iraq.iom.int/sites/g/files/tmzbdl1316/files/documents/OPDs_percent20report_percent20English.pdf

⁴⁰ UNDP. Steering Committee presentation, shared with the evaluation by email on 19 January 2023

One of the LADP-III programme team also explained *“You would find an empty house of an IDP family that got destroyed, we start a discussion and they agree to return if the house is restored. Some come back and live in unsanitary conditions or in a tent on the site of the house”*. Interviewed CSOs as well identified a significant gap between the government and people with disabilities (PwDs) in Dohuk. There was no engagement between the two, and no services were available for PwDs.

The public spaces created by the projects were important to the communities, the locations of public parks selected for rehabilitation were central and once culturally important to the people but had been destroyed during war. With the renovations, they now offer a common space for social activities, including the Yarmouk Park in Mosul, the Shuhada Park in Telafar, AlAlleya Park in Yathrib and AlBaiji Park in Baiji and several others. *“We are a conservative community, yet we need to go out a bit and see different activities and the parks really helped and provided the people with space that many families use”*, mentioned another municipality staff.

Individuals whose houses were rehabilitated and who were able to come back to their homes and areas spoke at length during the evaluation about the value added of the programme and how relevant it was for them. Iraqi citizens, especially women, explained that they had nothing to come back to and that through the support of the programme they were able to return to their communities and cease being internally displaced people living in camps or cities that they were not familiar with. Women particularly explained that their ability to come back to their community has increased their sense of security and belonging and allowed them the opportunity to resume their lives. Families and individuals who benefited from the flood-control project in Mosul explained that this was the most needed intervention in their communities. Interviewed Iraqi citizens explained that during rain and flood seasons they would lose belongings as well as livelihoods (those who have small shops inside their homes) as the flood water would destroy all belongings and merchandise. Hence the activities related to flood control were highly needed and had a positive impact of the lives of some 1,000 inhabitants.

3.2. Effectiveness

EQ 6: To what extent did the programme achieve the intended results of (i) Improving the capacity among the 9 partner governorates to manage local government systems; (ii) Strengthening dialogue between civil societies and state institutions; (iii) Promoting economic growth and job opportunities (with special focus on green projects involving youth and women); and (iv) improving living conditions in conflict areas and returnees.

Overview of Implementation

Most of the programme’s intended results were achieved and some were overachieved, especially for job creation (Outputs 2.1, 2.2 and 3.2), vocational training (Output 3.2), awareness campaigns (Output 3.2) and rehabilitation of houses and public spaces (Output 3.1). It integrated different strategies that appeared fragmented under eight outputs, not focusing only on decentralisation, rather also with focus on local development, reconstruction, job creation and incentivising economic growth. Outcome 3 had better coherence and hence better effectiveness compared to Outcomes 1 and 2.

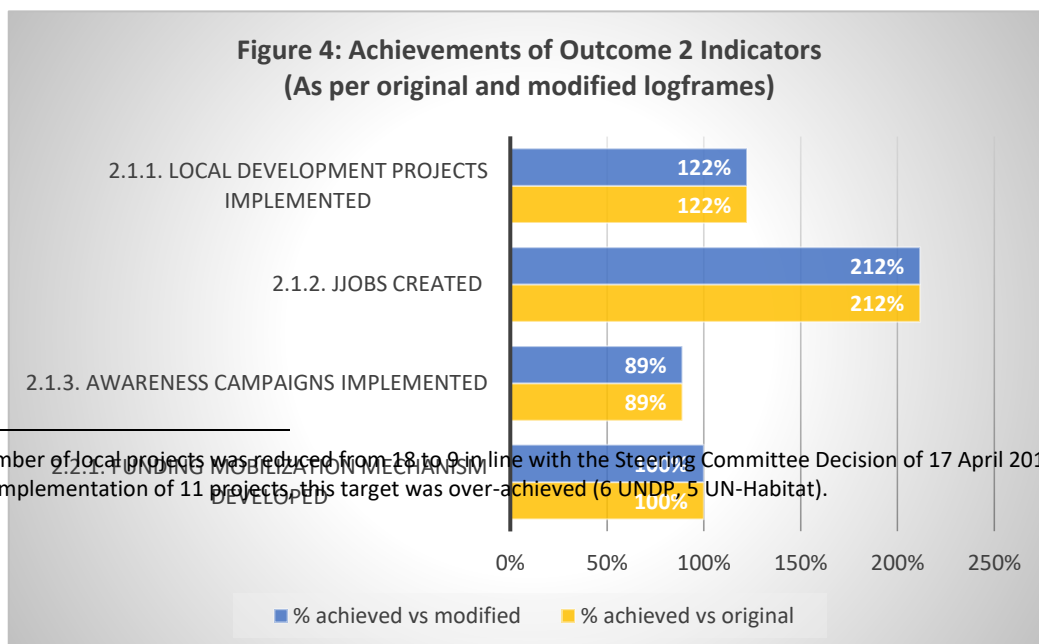
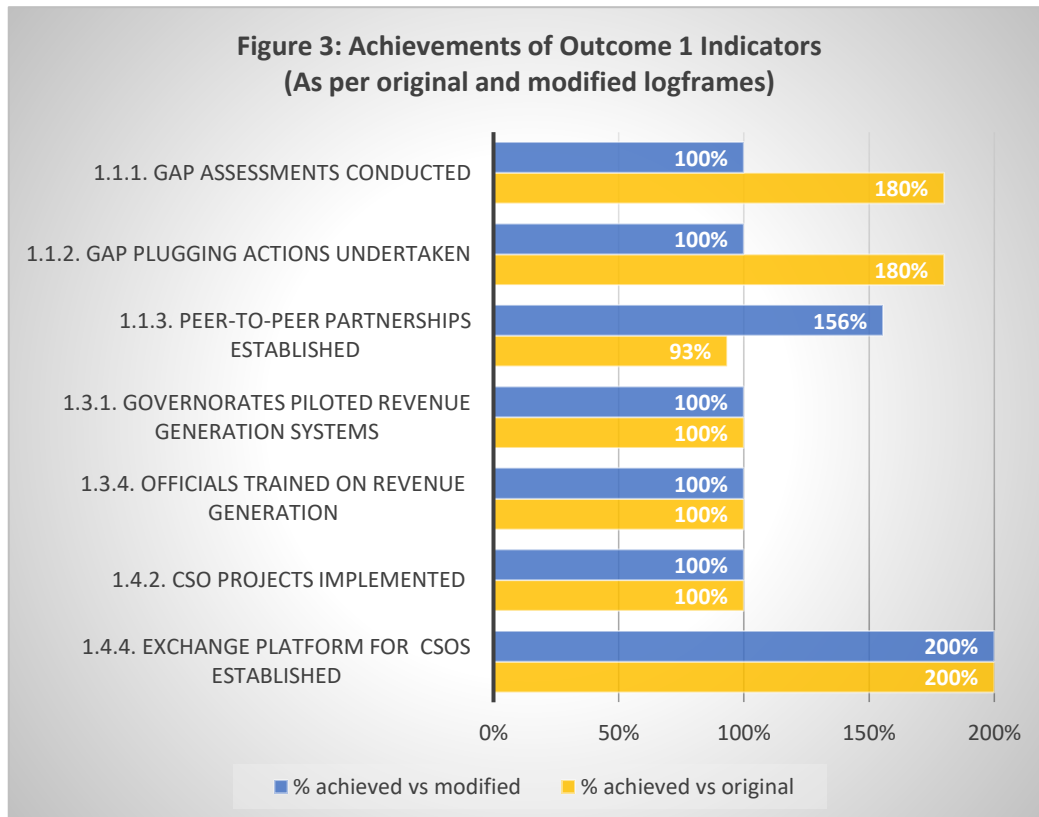
There was an overall delayed timeframe of implementation during the first two years of the programme for some outputs under Outcomes 1 and 2, specifically, the revenue generation activities (Output 1.3) and the online CSO multimedia exchange forum (Output 1.4). Whereas, the donor coordination mechanism (Output 1.2) was not achieved and got discontinued by the EU. Several internal and external factors contributed to the delay, including changes in UNDP management, political instability and riots and the COVID-19 pandemic.

This rapid implementation of activities within a shorter timeframe of 18 months raises concerns about the quality of outputs and affects also impact and sustainability. It is important to point out that activities under Outcome 3 were progressing at a steady rate, with slower rates in some cases due to procurement and bidding processes. UN-Habitat worked on overcoming this through improved internal controls, procurement capacity building, market surveys against quality services. The staffing structure of LADP-III was also a challenge for the effective implementation of activities.

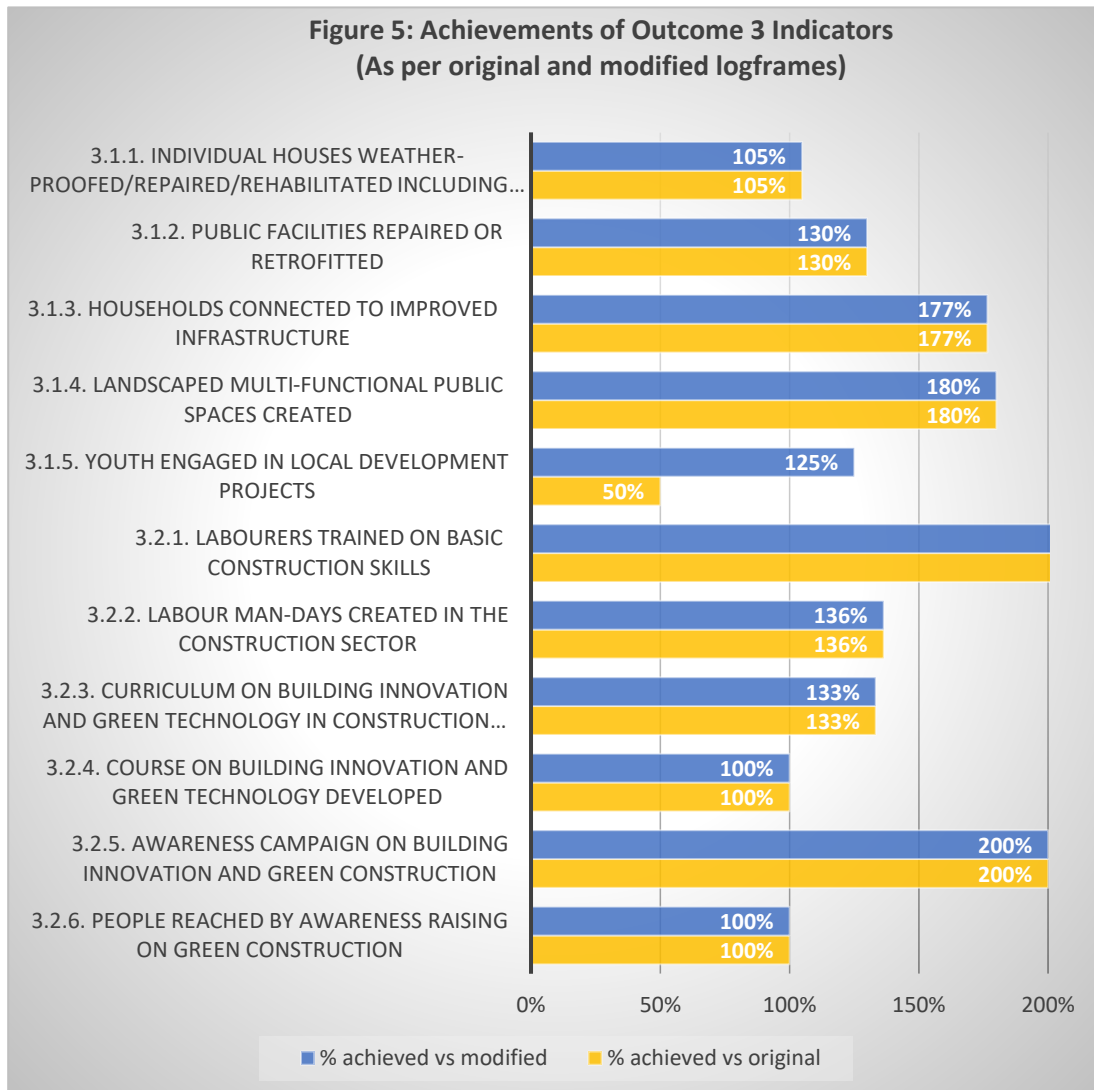
The programme's logical framework underwent adjustments by UNDP in 2020 to make the targets more realistic and to adjust to the challenges in addressing decentralisation and the approach to implementation in Iraq. They were also needed to adjust the fact that many indicators did not have targets and baseline value. They were considered as indicative and required to be updated during the implementation of the Action, with no amendment being required to the financing decision. However, a formal approval from the EU was never received. Some of the modifications were minor, such as replacing "platform" with "online multimedia forum" in Indicator 1.4.4, while some modifications impacted the original target group, such as shifting the focus from "returnees" to "beneficiaries including returnees" in Indicator 3.1 to ensure the needs of the population who stayed and are vulnerable are addressed. Some changes were substantial and altered the type of progress being measured to become more relevant to the type of activities implemented. For example, Outcome Indicator 1.1 "Percentage of citizens confidence increase in local government at governorate level" that was changed to "Number of Governorates with increased capacity to manage decentralised public services under COVID-19 pandemic", and the Output Indicator 1.4.1 "Number of public consultations on local development priorities implemented" changed to "Number of local development priorities related to COVID -19 addressed implemented". In discussions with UNDP, it was mentioned that: *"The changes made the outcome more realistic as originally envisaged. It also affected the orientation of the programme because the original would have required lots of directly confidence building measures (what the DoA was not geared for), while the modified version just measures the likely direct impact of the activities"*.

The below three graphs provides an overview of the analysis conducted by the evaluation regarding achievements of the programme according to what was originally envisaged and what was actually done as reported within the modified logical framework. According to programme reports and interviews during

this evaluation achieved its intended activities. However, the effectiveness and quality as well as the actual results is not so easily attested for.⁴¹



⁴¹ The number of local projects was reduced from 18 to 9 in line with the Steering Committee Decision of 17 April 2019, therefore with the implementation of 11 projects, this target was over-achieved (6 UNDP, 5 UN-Habitat).



(i) Improving the capacity among the 9 partner governorates to manage local government systems

Under Outcome 1: Selected governorates are able to manage effectively and transparently local government systems and public services - Output 1.1: Decentralisation of powers from central to local authorities and Output 1.3: Optimised Governorates' revenue generation systems piloted

The LADP-III programme conducted nine gap assessments, including in the fields of education in Duhok governorate; waste management in Nineveh, Salah al Din and Thi-Qar governorates; energy in Erbil governorate; employment in Basra governorate; agriculture in Missan and Anbar governorates; and finally, on water management in Sulaymaniyah governorate. Following the assessments, conducted in collaboration with European municipalities, the programme concepts as presented by the European municipalities had to be redesigned and adjusted to match the local contexts and meet the expectations of the Iraqi municipalities. Implementation of the peer-to-peer actions with different durations. The design and implementation of the actions were challenging. Although peer-to-peer partnerships faced

considerable delay to be established, they were able to produce results according to the UNDP reporting. For example, the development of educational material and networks, such as videos on agriculture solutions in Anbar, a handbook and a digital tool on solar solutions in Erbil, guidelines on managing local markets in Missan, and a handbook on plastic recycling solutions in Salah-al-Din. International networks were established, such as between teachers from Sweden and Duhok.

In addition and according to the thematic focus of each action, local staff received specialized capacity building, for example, on agriculture management and marketing for the Anbar Agriculture Development Centre; on business skills and financial and project management for the Basra Business Incubator; on inclusive education for Duhok teachers and staff of the education, labour and social affairs directorates; on innovation and investment in solar energy solutions for Erbil governorate staff; on leadership and managing local markets for the Training for Development Coordination and Planning Council members in Missan; on management landfills and procurement procedures in waste management for Mosul municipality; on pump and motor maintenance for Sulaimaniyah water municipality; and on models for integrated solid waste management for the waste management municipalities.

The programme supported the decentralization agenda in Iraq through the conduct of an assessment and a road map with ownership of the High Commission for Coordinating amongst the Provinces level. Moreover, an analytical report on the status of decentralization legislations was developed, and underway is the creation of a searchable website of legal text and verdicts. At the time of this final evaluation, a capacity building needs assessment is being conducted to help advance decentralization at the local level in Iraq, with focus on the High Commission for Coordinating among the Provinces (HCCP). Most recently, the programme managed to re-invigorate the discussion on decentralization by developing a policy analysis on the decentralization legal framework in Iraq. It also supported the HCCP a national consultation workshop in September 2022 and a series of dialogue events that took place between and across central government, local governorates and CSOs.

The programme developed and tested electronic fee collection systems in Erbil, Dohuk, Ninewa, Anbar and Salah-al-Din, in consultation with municipal officials and local utilities directorates. Training was provided for officials of municipalities and directorates on digital skills for mapping assets, accounting, GIS and on ICT systems. Business developers, telecommunications providers and Fintech companies in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq are assessing interest in the deployment of a cashless payment system.

(ii) Strengthening dialogue between civil societies and state institutions

Under Outcome 1: Selected governorates are able to manage effectively and transparently local government systems and public services - Output 1.4: Strengthened dialogue between local authorities and civil society

The programme also introduced a Local Governance Index (LGI); a CSO-led monitoring approach whereby civil society assesses local authorities based on specific criteria and international experience. It has developed a localized LGI, identified suitable mechanisms and trained CSOs in Thi-Qar and Missan. The aim is to enable citizens and businesses to participate with the government in improving the quality and

accessibility of public service delivery, as well as to assist policymakers in creating local action plans. Results were shared with representatives of all nine governorates through a video posting, which raised awareness of the LGI's benefits.

57 national civil society organizations (CSOs) were awarded engaged by the LADP-III programme and conducted a range of activities that have built engagement with local authorities. 17 CSOs were awarded Low Value Grants (LVGs) by UNDP and 40 CSOs were identified sub-granted⁴² through a Responsible Party Agreement between UNDP and Un Ponte Per (UPP) Association⁴³ as requested by the EUD in writing. The implemented CSO community initiatives were in the fields of social and economic empowerment, waste management, youth engagement, community awareness, education, GBV and legal advisory. The programme fostered strategic dialogue between the CSOs and local authorities, reflected clearly through the LGIs, the DCPCs, the LVGs and the COVID-19 awareness raising activities. The DCPCs were supported in improving their organisation, selecting and admitting CSOs and their strategic planning skills. It started with Missan and Thi-Qar, shortly afterwards Basra requested to join.

(iii) Promoting economic growth and job opportunities (with special focus on green projects involving youth and women)

Under Outcome 2: Economic growth and job opportunities have increased in selected Governorates, with special focus on green projects involving youth and women - Output 2.1: Local development projects and priority actions deriving from Provincial Development Plans and Sustainable Energy Action Plans and Output 2.2: Mechanism aimed at mobilising additional funding created

11 local projects were implemented in the nine governorates; six by UNDP under the provincial development strategies and sustainable energy action plans (SEAPs) and five implemented by UN-Habitat under the provincial response plans (PRPs). The projects were selected by a technical committee building on plans developed during the LADP-II and were approved by the programme's Steering Committee. Albeit, they started more than two years late.

The six projects assigned to UNDP entailed job creation through green rehabilitation, cultural restoration and the urban beautification of Basra governorate; a sustainable electricity supply based on solar energy in Duhok Governorate; renewable solar energy in rural areas in Erbil Governorate; job creation through green rehabilitation, cultural restoration and urban beautification in Missan Governorate; the modernization and transformation of streetlights in the Governorate of Suleimaniyah; and job creation through ecotourism development, conservation and the cultural restoration of the Mesopotamian Marshes and the City of Ur in Thi-Qar Governorate.

⁴² According to the LADP-III progress report, thirty-five grants were initially intended but five additional CSOs were awarded grants to correct errors made during the evaluation of applications.

⁴³ Un Ponte Per (UPP) is an international solidarity association and NGO founded in 1991 immediately after the Iraq war. Its focus is on the solidarity for the Iraqi population affected by the war. Its work expanded beyond Iraq into Serbia, Kosovo and other Middle Eastern and Mediterranean countries. <https://www.unponteper.it/en/chi-siamo/>

Although the implementation of the projects was delayed and only completed around the last quarter of the LADP-III programme's lifetime in 2022, monitoring data indicate that UNDP and UN-Habitat together have created around 7,000 jobs through these local projects (Indicator 2.1.2).⁴⁴ The majority were short-term jobs ranging between 5 days and 5 months, especially those in the field of construction. Very limited number of jobs were created in KRG because job creation in the field of renewable energy is minimal.

(iv) Improving living conditions in conflict areas and returnees

Under Outcome 3: Living conditions in conflict areas have improved and returnees are assisted - Output 3.1: Damaged houses and public facilities rehabilitated in post-conflict areas, in line with the 2018 PRPs and Output 3.2: On-the-job vocational training delivered and jobs for youth created in line with greener and safer construction technologies

In post-conflict areas of Ninewa, Anbar and Salah-al-Din, the programme rehabilitated, weather-proofed and repaired 690 war-damaged houses and 12 public facilities, including schools and health centres and created or rehabilitated 10 public open spaces. Moreover, the programme connected around 3,000 households to new potable water networks, and over 6,570 people now receive improved water supply from rehabilitated water treatment plants.⁴⁵ The programme created seven multifunctional public spaces, such as Al Yarmouk Park in Mosul and Al Shuhada Garden in Telafar. In doing so, it works in line with the 'building back better' approach, adopting greener and locally sourced materials, particularly in public buildings.

Over the course of the programme, UN-Habitat enrolled 880 youth (M/716 and F/164) from Mosul, Telafar, Heet, Baiji and Yathrib through the Vocational Training Centres located in Mosul, Ramadi and Tikrit operating under MoLSA. Additionally, in 2022 it delivered on-the-job training for 66 youth in Mosul, Baiji and Heet through local contractors, as well as 30 female gardeners in Mosul, 5 of which were hired by the Municipality as permanent gardeners in Yarmouk Park.

The programme annually organized the Mosul Engineering Week at Mosul University to learn about building innovations and green building, attended by over 3,400 people in 2021 and 2022. It also delivered a Summer Course in "Green Building and Sustainable Technologies" at the Mosul University attended by 30 students and 10 professors. Two competitions on innovative building and environmental subjects took place at Mosul University, involving over 50 students, as well as an awareness campaign on building innovation and greener technologies in construction.

EQ 7: To what extent did the programme contribute to decentralization reforms? Were there any unintended effects (positive/negative)?

Decentralisation as a concept is challenging in Iraq. According to several stakeholders interviewed during the evaluation process other agencies engaged in decentralisation work have ceased their activities on this

⁴⁴ UNDP. Steering Committee presentation (December 2022), shared with evaluation by email on 19 January 2023

⁴⁵ UNDP. LADP-III progress report, August 2022

sector because of the structural challenges associated with it. The ability of the LADP-III to contribute to decentralisation reform was thus limited to several activities which focused on strengthening dialogue between CSOs and local authorities and engaging central and district level officials in dialogue around decentralisation.

It could be argued that work on decentralisation in Iraq within LADP-III was perhaps not well thought out from the onset. No clear and active steps are taken by national decentralization actors in that direction. During interviews with government officials in Baghdad in the course of this evaluation, they mentioned that decentralization is challenging because Iraq is a big and culturally complex country. They acknowledged that decentralization is needed but that the country has always been governed by a central system and making the shift is very complex. According to Iraqi government officials in Baghdad, some governors do not know their authority and jurisdictions, so implementation is challenging in this regard. To reduce uncertainty, UNDP conducted the legal/regulatory analysis and repository.

Reportedly, some government staff told LADP III staff that decentralization would shift the structure of the state into federalism and break-up the social fabric in Iraq. Centralised decision-making prevails and render the local government officials reluctant to listen to suggestions or engage actively, despite their interest and willingness in some cases. Most government officials at the local level highlighted that they cannot implement any activities unless approvals and information are shared by the central government. For example, some governorates had weakly participated in the decentralization study consultations that were supported by LADP-III, as well as in the governorate-level meetings on the resource mobilization system although they attended all events but their contribution was limited. LADP-III staff explained that the *“Central government says yes to administrative decentralisation of services and blaming the governorates for not doing enough, while never supporting fiscal decentralisation”*.

The study conducted by LADP-III on decentralisation revealed that the political environment in Iraq is dominated by resistance from concerned central authorities and by the idea that it could affect stability and social cohesion in Iraq. There is a lack of willingness at high level administrative authorities to promote decentralization or empower local administration, in addition, decentralisation is a long-time process. The study also concluded that despite the investments made throughout the years on decentralization at the central and governorate levels, a master plan is lacking to enhance capacities of national actors who are all struggling on this file. Despite the presence of Law 21 which provides the guidelines on the powers of the provinces and provides greater administrative and fiscal authority to sub-national actors, including provincial councils and governors, yet in practice governorate-level officials recognize that the governance whether fiscal or administrative is still highly centralized. The study also revealed that there is a limited understanding by governors about decentralization compared to federalism and what aspects it affects. Very few governors (eg: Missan) understood what decentralisation means in terms of fiscal profits and administrative responsibilities. The local councils for example are not clear about their authorities and abilities to take decisions, there was no transition period and no clear decentralization strategy, as was suggested in recommendations by the LADP-II programme. As explained by one LADP-III staff, *“Municipalities are decentralised entities and they have powers and able to take decisions, the directorates of the line ministries are not as decentralised. The ministry of municipalities is decentralised but the line*

ministries are not, the federal government passed decentralisation decrees and hence some master plans could be developed at governorate and municipal level but these are not funded, which ends up being very frustrating to them.”

Within this context, the contribution of the programme to decentralisation reform is limited because of the environment in which it was operating. The LADP-III activities aimed at increasing revenues through revenue generation activities which started late in the life of the programme because the municipalities were not ready for this activity. Under outcome 2, it implemented activities to create a mechanism for mobilising additional funding in Sulaymaniyah and Ninawa with the aim to build their capacity to develop quality projects that can attract funding from development partners, donors or private sector companies and banks. The programme assessed the financial mobilization and management structures of these two governorates to help understand existing gaps and capacities and how these can be improved. Dialogue with both governorates was initiated for the establishment of functional project management units (*likely to have been established by the time this report is circulated*) with the provision of necessary technical assistance to prepare and pitch project proposals and monitor implementation.

The engagement from CSOs with local authorities and dialogue was a positive step to enhance continued cooperation between citizens and municipalities. Nonetheless, CSO activities were also implemented rather late in the life of the programme making it challenging to determine the actual contribution of these dialogues and interactions in strengthening the relationship and role of CSOs which could potentially contribute to decentralisation.

Despite the above, the programme clearly supported improvement in capacities and systems in relation to decentralization in Iraq. Examples include the establishment of the governorate-level resource mobilization mechanism as a step towards enhancing fiscal autonomy and financial self-sufficiency at the governorate level. One of important decisions towards decentralization by the Government of Iraq was allowing the governorates to open separate accounts and manage some of their own finances. The LADP-III programme did work on influencing policy in this regard. According to UNDP, the EU preferred to work with GIZ on fiscal decentralisation who later stopped engagement with the decentralisation file in Iraq. The high-level dialogue on decentralization and the policy analysis conducted by the programme is considered a value-added to the conversation on decentralisation in Iraq.

Most outputs focused on improving the capacities of municipalities. Engaging and working hand in hand with municipalities influenced the latter's practices and helped them adopt principles in relation to environmental sustainability, using local products, hiring local labourers, improving their services in general and raising local revenues from fees. Through the design and establishment of public spaces, the municipalities made stronger linkages with academia, VTCs, CSOs and the communities.

EQ 8: How effective are the strategies and tools used in the implementation of the programme?

The level of effectiveness of the programme's strategies and implementation tools vary from one output to the other, depending on the adequacy of the original design to the context in Iraq and whether or not

the potential to achieve results was realistic. The effectiveness of the strategies was additionally affected by the evolving security and political conditions, the COVID-19 pandemic, and UNDP management turnover. The evaluation assessed the effectiveness of these strategies, in consideration of the methodology described in the programme's DoA.

Gap assessment and gap plugging for local capacity building, Outputs 1.1, 1.3, 2.1 and 2.2

The effectiveness of supporting decentralization and inclusive local governance through gap assessments was clear for the peer-to-peer actions and local actions that progressed over the past 18 months. For others that saw a further delayed start, it is early to assess. Local municipalities interviewed talked about their active involvement in the assessments together with CSOs in most cases, which contributed to building their capacities. Designs of projects were tailored to fill the gaps and improve services, implement awareness campaigns and design financial mechanisms. Systems to enhance local governance were modestly supported through the digitisation of paper records in Falluja Water Directorate and enumeration of businesses for Mosul and Baiji Municipalities to increase revenue within utility directorates and the resource mobilization system (both still ongoing). Both systems however are facing difficulties in relation to their actual application because they were not developed against in-depth study of the different contextual aspects within institutions at central and local levels in Iraq . The legal framework for cashless payments did not exist in 2018 when the project was written but was due to be developed within 2-3 years. Unfortunately, as of early 2023 the Iraq Ministry of Finance and banking systems are not yet ready for this step. On decentralization capacity strengthening, the programme conducted in-depth assessments and studies that allowed for drawing recommendations as a basis to advocate and promote decentralization of services and administration at the local level, as reported by the UNDP. Interviewed team reflected that the provision of capacity building and coaching to local government staff increased their knowledge on participatory and accountable governance, Local Government Index (LGI) and increased their learning on funding and financial analysis.

Peer-to-Peer cooperation, Output 1.1

According to many stakeholders interviewed, the peer-to-peer approach was not applicable in Iraq. The assumption in the design was that European municipalities would be interested and able to bid for identifying gaps at the local level and then support to address these gaps; meaning that they bid for gaps unknown to them. This resulted in proposing ideas that needed adjustment prior to implementation to match the context and not based on actual identified gaps, with a lot of technical negotiations and changes and readjustments to the contracts. The process was lengthy, included literature review, inception and filed missions (when possible), the peer-to-peer actions got signed only towards the end of 2021. Some of the interviewed European municipalities and their Iraqi counterparts found the peer-to-peer to be appropriate. They mention facing challenges at the beginning to adjust mis-match of expectations between European and Iraqi peers, which took time to adjust and continue implementation in a manner that was relevant to the contexts based on conducted stakeholders mapping and gap analysis. *“At the beginning we needed to spend a lot of time explaining what the programme is about. As at the start there were some adjustments and we continued but at the beginning there was mismatch”*, said one European municipality staff.

The evaluation has found that the peer-to-peer as an approach was subject to numerous challenges, including the necessity for careful consideration on coherence with the Iraqi context and gaps before proposals are submitted. Barriers such as language and time zone differences were also evident, in addition to virtual activities, which come with their own challenges. It was clear to the evaluation that the peer-to-peer actions that exhibited an acceptable level of success were those where the relationship between the European and Iraqi peers has been established before the LADP-III and the programme only contributed to increasing collaboration and implementation of workplans that were already negotiated and discussed well before. This was particularly evident in Dohuk with the education for children with special needs and the solar energy projects in Erbil. LADP-III enabled a continuation of these relationships to transfer knowledge to the Iraqi peers, elaborate capacity gap assessments and conduct plugging actions.

Sub-granting to CSOs, Output 1.4

UNDP directly provided 17 LVGs to 17 CSOs to implement small projects focusing on job creation, economic growth, youth civic engagement and environmental protection, among others. In addition, following a written request by EUD, the programme engaged UPP to increase emphasis on the work with CSOs and dialogue with the local authorities and to compensate for the delay in the activities targeting CSOs. As such, UPP provided grants to an additional 40 CSOs. UNDP and UPP-supported CSOs benefited from tailored capacity building through coaching sessions on planning, technical report writing, financial review, procurement procedures, HR processes and communication protocols. Interviewed UNDP and UPP-supported CSOs during the evaluation maintained that the capacity building provided was welcomed and very useful. UPP-supported CSOs reflected benefits of working with UPP as a new experience that helped them strengthen relations with the local authorities and on reporting and financial management.

Partnering with CSOs and learning by doing, Outputs 1.4 and 2.1

Local consultations, roundtable discussions and meetings were an integral part of the community initiatives, whether the 17 that received LVGs directly from UNDP or the 40 UPP-supported CSOs, which enhanced learning at the local level. Moreover, the engagement of CSOs in dialogue events with local authorities about key aspects and concerns in the community promoted stronger partnerships between CSOs and municipalities, evident in several Memoranda of Understanding signed between CSOs and directorates. Engagement of CSOs in the LADP-III programme was deliberate across the outputs and it succeeded to improve their capacities and provided them with opportunities and experiences to strengthen their relationship with municipalities on the longer term.

Donor coordination, Output 1.2

The output to establish donor coordination mechanisms was suspended by the EU towards the end of the programme due to delays and operational difficulties, as explained by the LADP-III team during the evaluation. The interviewed UNDP staff mentioned that they were able to work on aid coordination and would have been able to achieve the necessary targets as they have experience in this area through a separate contribution received from the Australian Government.

Integrated reconstruction and Building Back Better, Outputs 3.1 and 3.2

Under Outcome 3, the implementation approach was to integrate physical intervention, technical support and social programmes through local area development in-depth approach in the target neighbourhoods and to avoid diluting the investments across the cities. Hence the activities under Outcome 3 focused on rehabilitation, job creation in the construction sector which were all implemented in coordination with municipalities. Rehabilitation focused on war-damaged houses of returnee and stayees, WASH infrastructure, then public spaces, including flood protection in Mosul, while adhering to the “Building Back Better” principle by reducing ecological footprint, using local material and promoting climate adaptation.

EQ 9: What were the major factors influencing the achievement or non-achievement of the objectives?

Many factors affected the achievement and non-achievement of programme objectives some were internal and related to project management and its design in general, others were by-products of the COVID-19 and its aftermath as well as other political conditions in Iraq during the life of the programme.

Enabling Factors influencing achievement of results

- Knowledge and expertise of the UNDP and UN-Habitat as implementing agencies of the LADP-III programme were the main factor to reach the achieved results. Both agencies have long-standing partnerships with and trust by the Government of Iraq. Despite challenges at the start of the programme (discussed below), the realignment in UNDP’s management benefited the programme and enabled an upward trajectory towards the its goal.
- Many of the CSOs who were engaged in the different project activities had strong networks and ability to work closely with local communities, this was specifically critical for increasing dialogue with local authorities under output 1.4. They also had a good understanding of gender equality and mainstreaming into the implemented projects. The ones working under UPP mentioned during interviews that it provided an opportunity for them to engage with the local authorities, they were able to establish relationships with the government and learn how to possibly work with them in the future.
- The modality of implementation of Outcome 3 supported the achievement of results. It considered the remoteness of some locations such as Telafar and rural Yathrib. The implementation modality relied on the presence of local experts from the target areas, the use of staff from the same neighbourhoods or at least same districts/governorates to ensure a hands-on presence during rehabilitation work. Additionally, rehabilitation prioritised contractors who either were from the same locations, could access these locations, or had previous experience working in these districts/governorates. Hiring teams from the community and identifying local contractors enabled the continuation of work even during the COVID-19 pandemic because they did not need to travel between cities or locations. Moreover, during lockdown and movement restrictions, the team would take permission from Governors’ offices to resume work and that was always granted. It is of note that the local projects managed to develop excellent working relations with the local

authorities who became in many cases implementing partners. For example in the case of the flood protection works in Mosul, the Sewage Directorate contributed over 40 percent of the value of the project. Similarly, Mosul Municipality built a cycle track and two large parking areas at their own costs to serve the newly rehabilitated Yarmouk Park.

Hindering factors influencing achievement of results

- The COVID-19 pandemic hit during the second year of the programme in 2020. This resulted in a slowdown of implementation due to lock-down, precautionary measures and travel restriction. Several of the activities that required international expertise were stopped because travel into the country was not possible for almost a year and a half. On Peer-to-peer actions, it was reported by European municipalities that due to COVID-19 pandemic, the entire programme was moved online and the proposals were adjusted in 2020. The projects that were planned for one year were delayed and only completed during the time of the evaluation. For rehabilitation work, the programme was able to mitigate some of the effects of the pandemic because local level engineers and labourers were initially hired.
- The inception and preparatory phases of the programme in terms of calls for proposals for European peers, CSO activities (Outcome 1) and the start of the local development projects (Outcome 2) experienced extreme delays. As reported in the ROM report there were extreme delays in the ability of LADP-III to attract European peers to support selected governorates in addressing local development needs . UNDP could only secure the commitment of a number of European peers after several rounds of advertising the Expression of Interest. LADP-III delays were also attributed by the ROM to some of the internal procedures of UNDP such as the lengthy grant application process for CSOs which resulted in delayed start of the grants scheme and the dialogue establishment between local authorities and civil society.
- The LADP-III programme faced internal management turnover. There was a gap in management from UNDP's side with the departing of the former LADP-III/UNDP first programme manager (March 2021) and the arrival of the new UNDP manager (September 2021). It was also pointed to the evaluation that UNDP management of the programme between March 2020 with the onset of COVID-19 and March 2021 was done largely remotely for Outcomes 1 and 2 which appears to have affected the effectiveness of the implementation. Management of Outcome 3 by UN-Habitat experienced no challenges or turnover.
- A number of external political factors that have also affected the programme implementation for example security related delays include, for example, the protests of October 2019 in South Iraq which have delayed selection of beneficiaries for the Local Priority Development Actions in the South, the absence of a government between October 2021 and almost October 2022, demonstrations in the summer of 2021 among other political unrest which caused delays in engaging with the government and local authorities at times.

3.3. Efficiency

EQ 10: To what extent have the programme management structure, and allocated resources been efficient in achieving the expected results? Does the actual or expected results (outputs and outcomes) justify the costs incurred?

Human Resources

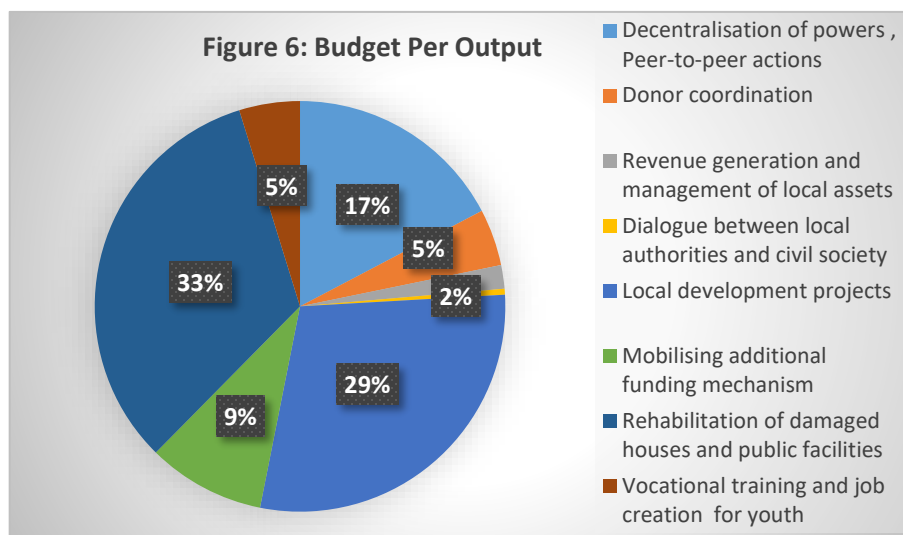
UNDP is the lead and primary agency responsible for the programme. The structure of the human resources was a challenge and could be considered rather inadequate compared to the size, complexity and geographical spread for outcomes 1 and 2. For Outcome 3, UN Habitat staffing was adequate and ensured the continuation of activities smoothly during the life of the project. No turnover was observed within UN Habitat teams. From UNDP's side, the programme was initially led by a management unit composed of international consultants, this structure was not adequate to manage a programme of a USD 54 million budget and did not allow for a dedicated core expertise required in Iraq for key areas such as decentralization, capacity strengthening of local authorities and engagement of civil society. This structure also affected coordination as the international consultants were not always in country due to the COVID-19 pandemic, as indicated by the UNDP team. The UNDP team was composed of up to 11 staff members in total, including a programme manager, one procurement officer, one communications officer, one M&E officer, one programme officer and one finance officer, in addition to two staff members based in Baghdad. Because of limited project management budget, the programme relied on hiring UN-Volunteers to support the implementation. Also, there has been turn-over in staff and limited traveling ability into the country during the pandemic. Later, this was reversed to having more staff on the ground and consultants only in implementation, not management.

UN-Habitat's team consisted of a Senior Programme Manager, assisted by an architect programme associate (later promoted to Programme Officer), a GIS specialist, and a procurement and logistics support team based in Erbil and two senior engineers based in Baghdad. The structure also included teams of Field Engineers and Community Liaison/Logistics Assistants recruited in Mosul, Telafar, Heet, Baiji and Yathrib, including women engineers (in Mosul and Telafar) and shared with other programmes its core support staff, such as drivers, security officer, HR, admin/Ops and international and national communications specialists.

Financial Resources

The total LADP-III programme budget was EUR 47,500,000 (Approximately USD 54,118,250), divided between the eight outputs as illustrated in figure 6. The highest budget allocation was for the rehabilitation of damaged houses and public spaces (Output 3.1) at 33 percent and for the local development projects (Output 2.1) at 29 percent. The evaluation had no access to financial reporting by the programme due to challenges in UNDP financial systems, hence budgetary and expenditure analysis was not possible, being one of the limitations of this final evaluation. According to the programme ROM review report dated June 2021, the expenditures only, approximately USD 8 million was spent, while a substantial share of the budget had been committed leaving EUR 5 million for the remaining period of implementation.

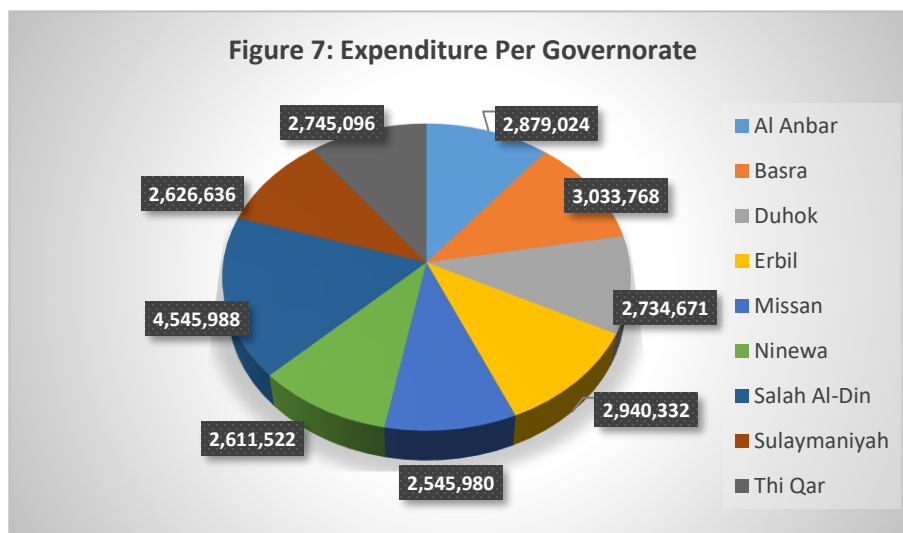
In interviews with the programme teams and the desk review of document, it could be concluded that the LADP-III programme’s burn rates were slow during the first three years. The teams estimated that around EUR 5 million were spent on reconstruction projects under Output 3.1. The rehabilitation cost per house was EUR 3,000 in average.



In discussions with the CSOs both directly contracted by UNDP and those sub-contracted by UPP, they highlighted some difficulties due to changes in the financial approaches and that the financial and narrative requirements were many. One CSO said, *“Contractual arrangements were complex and payment of instalments were delayed that we had to borrow money for implementation from our resources”*.

An analysis of the budget spent in each governorate under Outcome 3 on different activities was almost within the same range (approximately between EUR 2.5 and 3 million), with the exception of Salah-el-Din where the budget spent was considerably higher (EUR 4.6 million).⁴⁶

⁴⁶ Analyzed based on a document shared by UNDP with the evaluation “Government briefs November 2022”



EQ 11: To what extent have programme funds and activities been delivered in a timely manner?

The implementation rate of the LADP-III programme was slow during the first two years, implementation started at a faster rate in years three and four. Reasons behind the delay were many, including the COVID-19 pandemic, political instability in Iraq, especially in the South, and the 2019 riots. Management turnover also contributed to delaying implementation. There was a time gap between the end of the LADP-II and the start of the LADP-III implementation on ground, hence the momentum, ownership and convenience decreased affecting the achievement and durability of results. For example, the UNDP team shared during the evaluation that the local municipalities started changing their opinions about the participatory plans for the peer-to-peer actions, after almost three years between the time they were planned and the time implemented.

The peer-to-peer actions took a long time to establish partnerships, identify needs, agree on projects' ideas and detailed design before they started. Additionally, international procurement was a very lengthy process. Similarly, the activities in relation to institutional and individual capacity strengthening were delayed, such as the development of revenue generation system and the resource mobilization system, allowing no time for their actual operationalization and expansion. Additionally, all CSOs complained about the delays in payments from the programme's side.

There were delays in payment of the third and fourth tranches of instalments from the EU's side to UNDP, primarily due to the adjustments made to the logical framework by the UNDP that were not formally approved by the EU. It is worth pointing out that although the EU never formally approved the changes in the logical framework, yet the new (never approved logical framework) was used in exchange of communications and in reporting and discussions between both sides. For UN-Habitat components, the funds were delivered to them by UNDP in a timely manner, especially a first tranche of EUR 12,7 million which enabled the activities to progress smoothly. However, due to the delays in payment by EU to the

UNDP, the second and third tranches for UN Habitat were received only mid-2022 after EU disbursed UNDP.

EQ 12: What is the visibility and communications strategy adopted by the programme? Has it been cost-effective in terms of promoting the programme and its achievements?

The visibility and communications strategy of the programme focused on providing a comprehensive visibility coverage for each and every activity that are multiple and geographically spread. Communications was essential to the effectiveness of several awareness campaigns that were implemented on specific areas, such as decentralization, youth engagement, women empowerment, environment, sustainable development, energy and water saving. Two awareness campaigns on GBV were organized in Erbil and in the South, in addition to the use of green materials and renewable energy during the two Mosul Engineering Week organized by UN-Habitat. Two other campaigns were organized on single-use plastic (described as unsuccessful by the UNDP staff), and a website to promote energy efficiency and renewable energy and water saving. This is in addition to the COVID-19 pandemic awareness campaign (Output 1.4 in the modified logframe) that had wide reach of 20 million people, as reported by UNDP.

The communication and visibility activities were implemented in accordance with the Annex VI Communication and Visibility Plan, Article 8 of the PAGODA General Conditions and the Joint visibility guidelines for EC-UN actions in the field.⁴⁷ Focus was on social media campaigns, sharing human stories and programme updates shared on UNDP and UN-Habitat websites and on social media accounts of municipalities and governorates. Branding of visibility items was considered according to guidelines and agreement with the EU.

EQ 13: Has the monitoring and evaluation systems put in place helped to ensure that the programme is managed efficiently and effectively?

The original LADP-III programme's logical framework was revised in early 2020 (based on which the evaluation is assessing this programme), however, this revision was never formally approved by the EU. It is important to point out that UNDP continued to use the modified version of the logical framework for over one year.⁴⁸ Most of these revisions were introduced to make the targets more realistic define baselines and targets to the indicators. The changes came in consideration of the challenges in addressing decentralisation and the approach to implementation in Iraq, with no amendment being required to the financing decision.

. Some of the modifications were minor and others are major. For example, "online multimedia forum" instead of "platform" (Indicator 1.4.4), "system developed and tested" instead of "piloted" (Indicator 1.3.1), "unemployed youth" instead of "labourers" (Indicator 3.2.1). Some adjustments were substantial,

⁴⁷ EU and UN. 2014. Joint Visibility Guidelines for EC-UN Actions in the Field. https://aidvisibility.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/09/guidelines-joint-visibility-eu-un_en.pdf

⁴⁸ Based on UNDP, several exchanges happened between the UNDP Project Manager and the Head of EUD in Baghdad regarding proposed changes to the indicators and changes were formally communicated through the 2020 annual progress report (March 2021), in addition, several exchanges with the EU contained the new logframe As such, the changes were considered by the project team as approved given that no feedback was received from the EU after six months of submitting the report.

such as “beneficiaries including returnees” instead of “returnees” (Indicator 3.1). The change was logical because UN-Habitat rapidly found out that many residents who had stayed in their homes during ISIL occupation were actually worse-off or in very similar living conditions as returnees. Thus, the programme widened the scope of this indicator to include “stayees”, taking into account the needs of the population, shifting from a humanitarian approach to an area-based approach.

Other changes had implications on the type of achievement to be measured, such as changing the Outcome Indicator 1.1 from “Percentage of citizens confidence increase in local government at governorate level” to “Number of Governorates with increased capacity to manage decentralised public services under COVID-19 pandemic”, almost a complete change in the outcome indicator. The indicator with the change is measuring a different outcome instead of citizens and their confidence in the government to governorates and their capacities, in more alignment with the intended result. Output Indicator 1.4.1 changed from “Number of public consultations on local development priorities implemented” to “Number of local development priorities related to COVID-19 addressed implemented”, to consider the integrated COVID-related response.

The programme indicators were mostly quantitative in nature, not qualitative, they did not allow to capture the progress made on capacity strengthening or assess the quality of the outputs. For example, UN-Habitat mentioned struggling to meet one of the indicators in relation to the revenue generation, which was too optimistic in the original programme design. Similarly, there were challenges in measuring the impact of environmental protection interventions, whether in solar energy or water savings. Reporting against indicators was not disaggregated.

According to the programme’s M&E plan, monitoring of the programme was conducted jointly by UNDP and through a number of activities, including tracking progress against the logical framework indicators, capturing good practices and lessons and preparing progress reports. The programme’s site engineers and supervisors were present in every city where implementation was taking place. They monitored and communicated daily on progress on ground and shared weekly reports, documentation also took place through pictures and videos. Every few months, monitoring visits took place to the established public spaces when equipment and spare parts are provided as needed to ensure sustainability. Monitoring is also supported through Stars Orbit, contracted by UNDP specifically tasked with monitoring the local development projects and the CSO LVG community initiatives, they were able to monitor activities in hard-to-reach locations.

Reporting arrangements were clear although not strictly adhered to. According to LADP-III staff some reporting was done through emails at the beginning of the programme (also according to Article 4.3 of the agreement Special Conditions) and through discussions between UNDP and the EU. The change in management of the programme in 2021 saw a change in reporting which became more organised and clearer. Annual reports were submitted, albeit not approved by EU due to the ongoing discussion related to the changes in the logical framework of the programme, even after one year of the time the reporting had happened with no comments from EUD’s side.

3.4. Impact

EQ 14: To what extent did the LADP-III programme contributed to or is likely to contribute to the goal of promoting the stability and socio-economic development of Iraq?

During the last 18 months of its lifetime, LADP-III had strived to contribute to promoting stability and socio-economic development in Iraq. This could be observed through conversations with different stakeholders during the evaluation and which are further detailed below.

Strengthening institutional systems and capacities of government staff at the local level. In support of the revenue collection system in governorates, the programme piloted the geo-localized mapping of revenue sources and promote the digitization of user data and payment of fees. The municipality staff now have enhanced capacities in ICT and GIS enabling them to map assets within their areas and identify where revenues are not paid on monthly basis. The programme has also supported them with enumerators and equipment to map all the businesses together with the municipality staff and digitize records and registries. One municipality staff interviewed in Baiji talked about the benefits of the system saying that *“Each municipality has different sources of income, like shops, but since the war, all were destroyed, no one wanted to pay at all and there are no funds. Now the market is a bit more active”*.

Fostered dialogue and trust between local municipalities, CSOs and communities. The programme engaged all three through the LVG CSO community initiatives, local development projects and in dialogue and information sharing. They participated in training on participatory, accessible, public and accountable governance, as well as monitoring through the Local Government Index (LGI). The CSOs were involved through the social activities and vocational trainings offered in public spaces, as well as in rehabilitation construction services together with the hired contractors. Stronger partnerships were created between CSOs and municipalities, evident in several Memoranda of Understanding signed between CSOs and directorates. Towards the end of the programme, cross exchanges were supported between different governorates who pitched their ideas and shared experiences. The programme also established an online platform for knowledge management, yet its sustainability is not guaranteed due to pertinent operational cost, albeit intentionally kept extremely low. Building trust between people, local authorities and CSOs was one of the main impact areas seen during field data collection. As mentioned during an interview with one CSO from Baiji, *“We had challenges that people did not believe us and through this was a lie, then they saw all the support and that there were people following up. The housing rehabilitation and the community really benefited”*.

Especially with youth groups, the programme strengthened trust and links between them and the local authorities, *“with CSOs acting as a bridge between both”*; an analogy mentioned by one UPP-supported CSO. Local authorities mentioned that they learned many things with regards to youth engagement in local projects through numerous activities by UNDP and CSOs. Youth bring enthusiasm and energy, as well as technical knowledge to innovative local projects, examples mentioned during interviews include recycling of vape. One staff from local government in Basra said during attending meetings with the High

Commission for Human Rights, *“We are working on increasing partnerships with youth and increasing their knowledge and expertise and promote protection of human rights”*.

Strengthening capacities of small CSOs. Throughout planning and implementation, the LADP-III programme has built capacities of CSOs and enabled them to gain experience and to play a meaningful role in community development. Feedback by CSOs during this evaluation reflects learning in terms of programmatic and operational policies, response strategies, participatory approaches, as well as professional capacities of staff. They gained experience in technical and thematic areas, such as engineering and construction. For the small CSOs, the programme provided opportunities for them to participate effectively in community development, particularly to work in marginalized areas and to include a diverse group of beneficiaries in their interventions. It was the first time for them to collaborate with local authorities on implementation and dialogue forums. This may help in their longer-term sustainability beyond the programme; however their financial capacities remain questionable. Having said that, some interviewed CSOs on the other hand believed that they possess capacities that are stronger than the level of capacity building provided by the programme, which they found slow and under-qualify their experiences and abilities. One from Basra explained saying *“UNDP’s routine is very boring and hence we get bored. They have been talking about the same programme and we know it, they have the same plan and they do not take us forward”*.

Contributed to reconstruction in specific cities and building back better through rehabilitation of houses, infrastructure and public spaces, while reducing ecological footprint and introducing new ideas to the areas such as clean energy and the use of greener materials. Municipalities and local CSOs have collaborated in planning and implementation of construction projects and in social activities offered to communities in public spaces, hence building local capacities and increasing sustainability prospects. UN-Habitat facilitated the projects and provided training to people in the area. The reconstruction through the programme had a visible impact on the communities and beneficiaries. They also created jobs for women and men, with focus on youth and women, which had an impact on changing lives of target vulnerable groups in Iraq.

Promoted youth civic engagement and strengthened their relations with local authorities. The LADP-III programme interventions support the vision of the governorates to address youth unemployment and provide a space for young people to be part of positive change in the country. Through different activities, the evaluation could see increased participation of youth in policy dialogue, community development and recognition by local authorities. Of the concrete results are the establishment of the Hiwar Network by the UPP with 40 small CSOs, as well as an agreement by UNDP for the establishment of youth civic councils at the governorate level in Basra, Missan, and ThiQar. Positive feedback was noted during the evaluation by CSOs and local municipalities about how the CSOs’ community initiatives helped in coordination between young people and authorities, including forming a national dialogue with the government through events, raising awareness through a social media campaign, including 12 sponsored radio programs. It implemented events involving young people, civic organizations, and local authorities to promote the importance of youth engagement, as well as initiating a network at the KRI level. It was coordinated in coordination with the Ministry of Culture and Youth in KRI. Partnerships with other INGOs, leading to results and the formation of a regional coalition with UNFPA.

Promoted gender equality and women social and economic empowerment. The LADP-III programme has successfully promoted gender equality in various aspects through most of the outputs. Some of the evident outcomes in terms of promoting women's social and economic empowerment is that 51 percent of rehabilitated households were those of women-headed households.⁴⁹ Additionally, many of the economic activities and job creation was focusing on women such as women's work in gardening, park management, and entrepreneurship through grants. Parks were designed to cater to the needs of women and girls, while women received vocational training in horticulture leading to job opportunities. The Women Empowerment Directorate was supported through policy development and staff training, and a gender analysis was conducted to assess the programme's success in gender mainstreaming. Women engineers were included in the programme's team on the ground, also as a bid evaluation criteria, contractors and NGOs were requested to consider employing female engineers as supervisors, and they were hired in several projects. This has led to improved relationships with the community and greater engagement of women in park construction and rehabilitation.

One of the projects visited by the evaluation consultant was Al-Shuhada Park for women in Telafar, Ninewa, it is featuring women empowerment which was considered as a result of community feedback that showed that women have no space for social activities in this very conservative and remote community. UN-Habitat rehabilitated a garbage dump and turned it into a beautiful small garden only for women. Al-Shuhada Park has a play area for children, a place to sit and chat, get to know each other and grow vegetables and fruits that they can then take home with them. It also has an open-air gym and a close-by kindergarten that was also rehabilitated by UN-Habitat. Women were engaged in the construction works of the park resembling a best practice of community engagement, in addition to its string focus on the use of renewable energy and smart agriculture through solar powered irrigation systems. Also in Telafar, the LADP-III programme is rehabilitating another large park that will be used by the community at large and is building a standard local livestock market that is safe and healthy.

Contribution to a revitalized decentralization agenda in the country, the LADP-III programme got the central government engaged, primarily the Ministry of Planning (MoP) and the HCCP and agreed on a Roadmap for Decentralization. Although impact might be too early to assess, it is recognized by the evaluation that UNDP has exerted efforts attempting to complement the bottom-up approach with a top-down policy level approach. Such efforts require longer term interventions and sustained policy dialogue. In that sense, the programme worked on an analysis of the decentralization legal framework in Iraq, identified gaps and drew recommendations. A national decentralization conference was held followed by a series of dialogue events organized with the local administration through workshops and meetings. Focus was around four aspects; technical, administrative and institutional, legal and financial management and business environment. Most government staff provided positive feedback about the national conference and dialogue events, especially that it brought governorates together unifying planning and strategies. Only few found the conference not useful and needed different in-depth and strategic expertise. With HCCP, an optimized organizational structure and organizational processes are supported to strengthen HCCP's

⁴⁹ UNDP presentation to the Steering Committee 14 December 2022, shared with the consultant by email in February 2023

position as driving force behind decentralization. Moreover, the programme revitalized three governorate-level Development Coordination Planning Committees (DCPC), with on-going support to another two.

Environmental protection was promoted, a key feature of the peer-to-peer and development projects, they were particularly considered in the open public spaces created by the LADP-III programme. Many parks use solar power as a main or secondary source for electricity generation and they use water efficient systems for irrigation. They offered awareness raising activities to the public on environment and water conservation. They created opportunities for employment and access to livelihoods during construction phases and beyond in horticulture and maintenance, following vocational trainings that were provided by the programme to women and youth. Peer-to-peer actions focused on various environment aspects on solar energy, water management and waste management.

Another project featuring environmental protection was the flood control project in the neighborhood of Matahin, Mosul, Ninewa. Mosul is the second largest city in Iraq. It suffered incredible damage as a result of war and armed conflicts. As many areas in Mosul, Matahin is low and used to be totally flooded during rain, its sewage system was in bad shape, houses, small shops and workshops used to be extremely affected and livelihoods lost. People in the area had to build small walls to protect their houses and businesses, but this never worked with flash floods which could reach 1.2 meter in height during the rainy season. In partnership with Mosul Sewage Directorate who made an in-kind contribution providing all the fiberglass pipes, UN-Habitat created an alternative rainwater duct to drain the excess water from the most critical streets. A poorly designed vehicular bridge that used to obstruct the flow of water towards the *wadi* was rebuilt with larger pipes and the dumping of garbage discouraged by a tall new fence. In the same area, 120 damaged IDP houses were rehabilitated, weather-proofed and more were connected to water networks.

Projects that promote environmental protection also included the solar energy and waste management in Erbil, Thi-Qar, Ninewa and Salahudin implemented through the peer-to-peer actions. They aimed to contribute to addressing some of the challenges facing the country by promoting solar energy and waste management. They emphasized the importance of women's empowerment and gender equality, through the coaching and training provided to local authorities. The pilot projects in Erbil and action plan for plastic waste management in Thi-Qar and Ninewa helped to build the competence and capacity of local authorities in these areas. This had a tangible impact, as evidenced by the positive feedback from the European municipality engaged (Fonds Mondial pour le Development des Villes). The partnership between European cities and Iraq in other areas could further contribute to the promotion of women's empowerment and gender equality in the country.

EQ 15: To what extent and in what ways did or is the programme likely to contributed to the achievement of the SDGs (specifically SDG 5, 6, 7, 8, 11 and 13)?

The LADP-III programme contributed to the localization of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development promoting progress SDG 5: Gender equality through its support to the women empowerment units and awareness campaigns. It also contributed to SDG 6: Clean water and sanitation and to SDG7: Affordable

and clean energy through the design and implementation of peer-to-peer actions and local development projects in the area of waste management, energy, water management, SDG 8: Decent work and economic growth by promoting jobs through the local projects, as well as providing vocational trainings to youth to promote their employability and access to jobs and livelihoods for improved inclusive socio-economic conditions. The LADP-III programme contributed to SDG 11: Sustainable cities and communities through rehabilitation and construction, as well as strengthened linkages between civil society and local municipalities. Finally, SDG 13: Climate adaptation by promoting the use of clean energy and positive agriculture practices.

EQ 16: What real difference has the programme made or likely to make in the beneficiaries?

Internally Displaced People

Through the rehabilitation activities, the LADP-III programme changed the lives for IDPs by facilitating their return to their home locations when their houses got rehabilitated, which was identified as the primary factor for their decision to return. *“No one wanted to come back as they had no space and no houses to come back but now, they have life”*, explained one municipality staff from Baiji. Beneficiary IDPs now have repaired houses with adequate space and access to clean water. The programme focused on rehabilitation of houses of the most vulnerable, for example women-headed households, households with larger number of children and PwDs. This includes the right to potable and clean water and regularising these rights through formal water sources, in coordination with municipalities.

The programme established public spaces that offer services to people living in the target communities. The rehabilitated public parks and spaces have availed open and safe spaces for communities, especially for women and children. Social activities were offered through the parks, examples mentioned by CSOs include awareness for families on health, hygiene and water preservation, drawing workshops for children and provision of meals. CSOs explained that the public parks were significantly useful to the communities, one CSO staff from Baiji said *“The Park is a major change and all the beneficiaries make use of the park and it is important for everyone and all families comes here. The play area is useful for the children and this used to be a landfill. This has changed everything”*.

Some of the rehabilitated public facilities also included schools, day-care spaces and primary health care units. The governorates and municipalities do not have sufficient financial resources and human capacities for the provision of quality services, including housing, health and education. This has its toll on people, for example, women had to travel to go to the central hospital to be able to have pregnancy follow-up or deliver. According to the staff of the primary health care facility in Baiji that was rehabilitated by the programme, the enhancement of the primary health care unit and the establishment of space for pregnancy follow-up for women was of great value for pregnant women. They also explained that the rehabilitation of the drug-storage space was particularly relevant to them. *“Before the programme about 30 to 35 percent of our supplies would get damaged because of lack of electricity and our cold-chain management systems. The rehabilitation and the new drug-storage space ensures that our supplies are well maintained and reduces the loss”* explained a municipality staff during the evaluation.

The programme additionally promoted livelihoods and economic growth through job creation, with focus on women, youth and PwDs. Beneficiaries, including target heads of households have better access to job opportunities to sustain their livelihoods, either in projects implemented through the LADP-III or beyond. Examples include women who were hired as gardeners in Yarmouk and Al-Shuhada public parks, PwDs who were hired in media outlets, youth who started their income projects through the Basra incubator. An example of LVG community initiative by one CSO (Ster) in Dohuk aimed to combat unemployment and improve job opportunities by training 150 individuals in eight professions and enrolling a hundred in apprenticeships. The initiative encountered challenges such as lack of coordination and low employer participation, but also had positive outcomes including updated employer databases.

Nevertheless, the programme could not rehabilitate the homes of families with perceived ISIL affiliation, both who stayed and who returned, because of the high level of stigma and legal authorisations required, although they live in the most marginalised and vulnerable situations and face barriers in realising their needs and rights. The reason behind that, as described by the interviewed LADP-III programme team, was being forced to exclude them under pressure by the municipalities and security in the different governorates. Alternatively, through area-based integrated interventions, UN Habitat was able to address the rights of all citizens residing in target areas through WASH projects, flood protection, garbage removal, sidewalks, creation of parks and public facilities. The evaluation yet finds that UNDP expertise on social cohesion could have played a more significant role in strengthening this aspect of the programme.

People with disabilities

The programme recognized that persons with disabilities in Iraq have been disproportionately impacted by war, armed conflict, terrorism, violence and the economic hardship. Disability was not appropriately covered in design phase, yet it was considered during implementation. In every bill of quantity, the programme included a priority for employing people with disabilities and local people from the area. Although construction work is not possible for PwDs and may constitute a liability for the contractor, there were some instances where some PwDs were involved in construction projects, as in Mosul. Women and men with disabilities and trauma benefited from the vocational trainings provided by the programme, *“we had one young man with trauma in Mosul since the American occupation; he was beaten up, and he has not spoken ever since. He was deeply engaged in the vocational training and his father said he has been reborn”*. Since some of the rehabilitated houses included a PwD within the family, disability standards were considered during rehabilitation, also in public spaces PwD needs and accessibility were considered. The established Yarmouk Park was inaugurated by a girl with disability during the launch event.

The evaluation accounts for disability inclusion in local development projects and CSO LVG community initiatives. It was also among the points of dialogue between government, CSOs and communities which drew attention to the needs of PwDs and supported in meeting them. Interviewed CSOs mentioned support provided to PwDs; few were hired in media outlets as experts in sign language, a decree from the governor in Basra on commitments to PwDs, a girl with disability was supported to complete her education by the government. A lot of work is still needed to raise awareness of local officials on Law 38 on PwD rights to provide them with equal opportunities, as well as of families to accept and deal with a PwD within the family and change perceptions within the communities.

Perhaps the most evident impact by the programme was in relation to the promotion of the inclusive education approach implemented in Dohuk, in coordination with the DOE and DOLSA. ToT was provided, schoolteachers trained, modules on inclusive education developed, and physical upgrades ensured inclusive school environment. Trainers mentioned that schools used not to accept children with disabilities as they were not well equipped. Now, they find that schools are able to integrate PWDs and ensure lack of discrimination. One trained teacher said *"The success stories are amazing, many students who can't see or hear are attending and have a normal life and we are happy to have contributed to this. Everyone has the right to education"*. DoE staff explained that *"The perceptions and mindsets changed about children with disabilities. We learnt how to identify the cases, follow-up with them, maintain communication between schools and parents, in addition to referral"*.

Youth

Fostering dialogue between the local authorities, CSOs and different community groups is important and has the potential to create better dynamics and response to address the needs. CSOs and community groups, such as youth, are now better engaged and play an active role in community services and local development projects. During the field data collection, municipality and governorate staff talked about how the LADP-III programme interventions support the vision of the governorates to address youth unemployment and provide a space for young people to be part of positive change in the country. *"Youth who are unemployed are engaged in negative coping strategies and end up in prison, being able to reduce crime, violence and drugs and to engage them in different activities is important. We were hoping to benefit more people"*, was mentioned by one CSO. The programme also focused on youth participation in livelihood activities, especially in the South where young people are very discontent. They were engaged in policy dialogue, which increased the recognition by the local government that their participation in governance processes is essential for a viable and vivid democratic culture by the local government. The programme enrolled 880 youth in vocational training courses in construction works delivered by the VTCs in partnership with NGOs and organized trainings to youth on sports and on social and political dialogue so they become leaders and able to engage in political discussions about their rights and develop policy papers, for example. An agreement for the establishment of youth civic councils at the governorate level, which was done in Missan, Thi-Qar and Basra, youth participated in dialogue activities and in the incubator peer-to-peer action. One interviewed staff from central government mentioned that *"The youth parliament is important and it is a shadow parliament and this was with UNDP to strengthen the role of young people whether female or male and the 3 Southern governorates and they really need empowerment"*.

In interviews with UPP-supported CSOs, they reflected the importance of working with youth, whose relationship was strengthened with municipalities through the local projects. Gaining experience as volunteers or as CSO staff encourages the youth to reach out to them for sharing project ideas or seeking specific support. They were engaged in SWOT analysis and assessments and were active in their communities and can solve some of the problems, like supporting one school against flooding, and helping with modifying streetlights. *"At the social level we have many young people who were volunteers have their own small NGOs and many are also influential so we continue to work with young people and we do*

not cut the relations after initiatives and we also work with women and add new people all the time”, one CSO staff in Basra mentioned.

Community participation was assumed by many activities of the LADP-III programme and it created partnerships specifically with women-focused or disability-focused CSOs. CSOs were engaged in gap assessments, local development projects, LVG community initiatives, dialogue with municipalities, as well as livelihoods and job creation activities. Considerations for gender equality, the needs of marginalized groups were integrated into the design of the network and its members ensured gender balance and staffing and sought to involve both men and women, as well as minorities, such as Yazidis, and Kakis, and PWDs.

Women

Women have benefited specifically from many activities of the programme (more details provided under cross-cutting themes). During field data collection and interviews with women engineers, women gardeners, women working in the rehabilitated parks, women-headed households that were able to return, and women who benefited from grants or economic empowerment activities, it was evident that the impact of the programme activities on women is very high. Interviewed women, many divorced, separated or widowed, believed that the activities especially concerning economic empowerment has improved their lives and the lives of their families. Women headed households who returned home spoke about the value of having a home and being able to live back in a safe environment.

Those who secured jobs or received grants explained that they have more support from their families who trust them more and can see that they can be more autonomous and able to take decisions. On a micro-scale some women spoke about how having extra income allowed them to improve their living conditions at home by investing in furniture or equipment and others even explained that they were able to improve the nutrition of their children as a result of additional funds. One of the engineers interviewed explained that being engaged in this programme has increased the sense of pride that her male relatives have for her as they see her not only as an engineer but also as an important member of the community contributing to building a better Iraq. Most impactful is the women in Telafar who supported the rehabilitation of the Shuhada park who explained that their male relatives have better trust and belief in their abilities and explained that before being engaged in this activity they were hardly allowed out of their houses. With this exposure and experience their families have more trust and allows them more space to engage within their communities.

EQ 17: What are the positive and negative, intended and unintended, changes produced by the programme?

Under Outcome 1, the programme aimed to enable selected Governorates to manage effectively and transparently local government systems and public services. It analysed the decentralization legal framework, held a national conference and supported the HCCP, which was important to complement implementation strategy with a top-down approach. It revitalized five governorate-level DCPC and aimed to strengthen the HCCP's position as a driving force behind decentralization. Feedback from government

staff was positive, with a few calling for know-how transfer of expertise and long-term engagement. The programme fostered dialogue, partnerships and trust between local municipalities, CSOs and communities through LVGs and capacities of small CSOs was strengthened. Youth engagement was also improved, with CSOs acting as a bridge between youth and local authorities, increasing youth participation in policy dialogue and community development. The implemented peer-to-peer actions had the potential to build capacities of local municipalities, however, they started late in the programme lifetime and not all had an impact. The actions that exhibited an acceptable level of success were those where the relationship between the European and Iraqi peers has been established before the LADP-III and the programme only contributed to increasing collaboration and implementation of workplans that were already negotiated and discussed well before.

The programme supported the creation of a revenue collection mechanism to map data collection methods and promoting digitization, allowing staff to have enhanced capacities on mapping assets and identifying unpaid revenues.

Under Outcome 2, the programme aimed to increase economic growth and job opportunities, with special focus on green projects involving youth and women. It also provided staff with enumerators and equipment to digitize business records and registries. This had a positive impact on revenue collection processes as interviewed municipality staff in target governorates reported. Women economic and social empowerment was also seen with women in target communities having an improved access to job opportunities and to safe public spaces.

Under Outcome 3, the programme aimed to improve living conditions in conflict areas and assist returnees. Targeting areas in Ninewa, Anbar and Salah-al-Din, it did so by rehabilitating damaged houses and public facilities, such as schools, health centres, WASH infrastructure and open spaces, with a focus on adopting greener and locally sourced materials. The programme provided vocational training courses in construction, sewing/upholstery and entrepreneurship to 880 youth, and capacitated public officials on green building and sustainable technologies. The Mosul Engineering Week was organized annually at Mosul University to promote building innovations and green building, attracting over 3,400 attendees and featuring competitions and awareness campaigns on these subjects.

In addition to the impact discussed earlier, the programme responded to the COVID-19 pandemic and built capacities of the local government in this regard. It continued working to help communities overcome the crisis by implementing innovative solutions, such as rehabilitation of emergency departments, new water network extensions, and WASH and child accident prevention sensitization activities. Other activities related to the rehabilitation of schools, parks, and damaged houses was possible through the recruitment of local labourers and field staff. The programme also distributed awareness information on COVID-19 and preventive healthcare awareness campaigns.

3.5. Sustainability

EQ 18: To what extent are sustainability considerations (environmental footprint, mitigation measures, maintenance, etc.) integrated into programme implementation? EQ 19: What components or which interventions of the programme are likely to be sustainable and/or scalable, and why?

Prospects of sustainability were assessed for the programme's outputs analysing the institutional, social, environmental and financial conditions against the likelihood to sustain benefits over time.

Institutional Sustainability

In the first three years of the programme, municipalities and utility directorates were involved in the assessment of needs, selection of projects and design of public spaces (parks and sidewalks). They were provided through the programme with spare parts, equipment and training on renewable energy. Municipalities were supported through a revenue generation system in governorates and enhanced capacities of municipality staff on legal frameworks, ICT and GIS, assessments to map assets and collect revenues on monthly basis. The Heads of municipalities became aware of the importance of the system to increase their revenues and accordingly improve the quality of services to citizens. The new revenue generation system has progressed in Mosul, where the municipality believes that the process will not negatively affect the relationship with citizens and will improve the services and aims to improve the satisfaction of citizens with the government. In Baiji and in Falluja, requests have been received by water directorates for support on digitizing ledgers, mapping payments and digital equipment for their use.

A resource mobilization mechanism (Output 2.2) was created whereby funds would be mobilized and managed at the governorate level. Supported by the programme, institutions were strengthened through establishing management units, revolving loans, financial analysis funding proposals and public-private partnerships. Due to the delay in starting these activities, and despite a likelihood for sustainability, it was too early at the time of this final evaluation to draw concrete evidence on improved resource mobilization or revenue collection as a result of these capacity strengthening efforts that aimed at decentralizing fiscal aspects at the governorate level. The likelihood of sustainability of these activities is underpinned by a number of factors including the willingness of local authorities to continue to use the systems developed and ensure the continued engagement in this area. It is fair to say that, by observing how the local authorities have embraced and supported the pilot initiatives, and based on feedback by the UN Habitat team, it is in their interest to continue to use the new systems. It is not likely that they will go back to paper records or unmapped water networks.

Social Sustainability

The durability and ownership by individuals and communities is highly visible in the rehabilitation and reconstruction activities by the programme. According to an assessment by UN Habitat, about 58 percent of IDP houses were completely destroyed and that this is the primary reason hindering their return to their

area of origin.⁵⁰ The programme provided the returnees with safe houses including clean water and sanitation, they now receive improved water supply from rehabilitated water treatment plants in Yathrib, Heet and Baiji.

Public spaces/ parks were established in close consultation with the target communities, they are assets that will continue to provide community activities in coordination with CSOs and municipalities beyond the programme. Public buildings such as schools, water plants were also rehabilitated and equipped and are providing quality adequate services to the communities they serve. Some peer-to-peer actions and local development projects also focused public services and utilities, such as renewable energy in Dohuk and Erbil, waste management and water management in Ninewa, Salah al-Din, Thi-Qar, Sulaymaniyah. Sustainability of all these rehabilitated public spaces and utilities will depend on the ability to provide maintenance and equipment for continued service provision. This could be covered on the short term with the presence of UNDP and UN-Habitat, however on the long term will require spendings from the side of the municipalities and directors of education and health, which is uncertain. It requires the allocation of maintenance budgets which is not always the case in the smaller urban centres that depend on the Head of Municipalities sitting in the governorate capital.

Conditions that increase likelihood of sustainability and community ownership are visible in CSOs who gained capacities and experiences as a result of the programme through their engagement in the implementation of local projects, capacity building activities, cross-government exchanges and knowledge sharing, proposal writing and resource mobilization. CSOs started to play more important roles in local development within the local areas and became recognized by municipalities. Memoranda of Understanding were signed, such as between Tadamun-IOWAF and the Health Directorate in Al-Anbar, Al-Taqwa and the Directorate of Labour and Social Affairs (DOLSA) in Basra, Bojeen and the Agricultural Directorate in Duhok and Rwanga foundation and General Directorate of Education (GDoE) in Erbil. In addition, the staff from municipalities were trained on participatory, accessible, public and accountable governance, as well as monitoring through the Local Government Index (LGI). Local municipalities who worked with the UPP-supported CSOs were not available during the field mission of the final evaluation so the level of engagement of the local authorities with these CSOs could not be established.

Environmental Sustainability

Considering environmental aspects was a key feature in the LADP-III programme. Peer-to-peer actions and local development projects focussed on renewable energy, water management, waste management and climate adaptation. They were designed to address an issue and were planned and implemented in close participation by the municipalities, CSOs and the communities. Promotion of renewable energy came as a step to address the problem of pollution created by the neighbourhood generators and the electricity issues in Iraq and in line with the government's national direction to convert to solar power. The use of drip irrigation and vocational trainings also promote sustainable use and management of water resources. Prospects of sustainability of environmental projects is supported with the capacitated CSOs and

⁵⁰ UN-Habitat and Shelter Cluster in Iraq. 2021. The Status of Housing Rehabilitation Programs in Iraq in the Post ISIL Conflict. https://sheltercluster.s3.eu-central-1.amazonaws.com/public/docs/the_status_of_housing_rehab_programs_iraq_post_isil_conflict_2020_10_24_en.pdf

individuals, especially youth. However, only if budgets become available and allocated to local governorates for similar projects, the introduced environmental-friendly models would have the potential for scalability and replication into other areas.

Economic Sustainability

Perhaps the two programme outputs key for economic sustainability are the resource mobilization mechanism and the revenue generation system already discussed under Institutional Sustainability section, along with pertinent staff capacity building. Although the trainings and technical assistance were very useful, it is still early to assess the success of the systems or the effect on revenue generation. On one side, difficulties on legal authorisations affects the deployment of cashless payments systems, and on the other side, the ability of the local authorities to adopt fees that are less cumbersome and context-specific. There are also difficulties due to reluctance by people to pay fees for unsatisfactory quality of services and the insignificant revenue value in the local currency where fees are established in precise figures by the law and therefore cannot be updated according to locations or inflation. When completed and operational as planned, should provide resources and regular revenue for the municipalities to sustain improved services to the community. The programme thus helped to overcome the huge load of work that impeded transformation with the current work modalities within local authorities, now that assets and records have been digitized, the likelihood is that there is not going back to old manual processes. It is however not clear how the systems and local staff will be further receiving technical assistance when the programme ends. As the systems stand now, they appear to be yet premature to be managed and run on their own by the municipalities beyond the five cities that the programme supported and will largely depend on expansion in the whole country.

The LADP-III programme incentivized local economic growth in target locations for individuals and the community at large. Beneficiary women and men, mostly youth, received vocational trainings. They had improved access to jobs within the communities in the local projects implemented, especially in the construction sector. Their income increased, however most jobs were short-term, while some were able to secure permanent jobs, including women.

Some of the peer-to-peer actions and local development projects implemented by the LADP-III focused on economic empowerment and could become potentially sustainable and replicable. Yet, financial resources remain a challenge hindering sustainability and replicability of the incubator to support more young people. One example is the Basra incubator that was seen by interviewed local government as a success model, one specifically saying that *“The other governorates are getting in touch with us to see how they can replicate this model and to understand the idea itself. It is a success story”*. During the site visits of this evaluation, there were no signs that the incubator was operational since the programme ended.

Additionally, the programme stimulated local markets, the benefits of which could promote local economic growth on the longer term. This includes establishing local market, conducting market assessments and providing vocational trainings in relation to marketing and digital marketing of agricultural products.

Policy-Level Sustainability

The central policy-level activities were limited and started late in the programme's life with the development of policy analysis on decentralization legal framework. Additionally, the deliberative democracy and training on dialogue and engagement with local authorities, although happened late in the life span of the LADP-III programme, they present a good step towards fostered peace building at the local level, which may be sustainable if more time and interventions were possible. Specific focus was given to dialogue with MoP and HCCP being the lead entities on decentralization, through which policy level sustainability could only be achieved. Yet, it is uncertain at the time of the programme completion if their long-term support will be provided to the practical application of financial and administrative decentralisation.

EQ 20: Which key factors will be required to improve prospects of sustainability of programme outputs/outcomes and the potential for replication? EQ 21: How likely is it that the exit strategies, and approaches to phase out assistance provided will be effective considering existing contributing factors and constraints?

The LADP-III programme team developed a plan for sustainability measures for each of its components⁵¹, which the evaluation team considers to be a key element for the programme that has started some of its activities late in time. The sustainability measures that the outputs stand on include the capacities built at the local level, the networks established of youth, education supervisors, youth, volunteers and others, the communication channels between central and local government, academia and CSOs, the produced awareness material, mobilization of additional resources, among others. Sustainability measures defined by the plan include the continued referrals of youth to the vocational training centres through CSOs, as well as referrals for GBV cases to support services. Moreover, some of the actions integrated within the rehabilitation works under Outcome 3 and implemented by UN-Habitat have integrated sustainability within the design from the onset. This is evident in the provision of spare parts and training on maintenance of parks and other public spaces. Additionally, some of the solar energy projects implemented by the local projects by UNDP include within the contracts maintenance and rehabilitation for periods beyond the life of the project which should also continue to the sustainability of the solar power plants.

For some of the programme's outputs, the sustainability and ownership of benefits at the institutional, policy and economic aspects are questionable as discussed earlier. The programme team at the time of the evaluation was working towards an exit plan to ensure sustainability. There was an attempt to discuss sustainability and next steps during consultation workshops in October and November 2022 with government partners. This was done for specific outputs, such as the peer-to-peer actions, the funding mechanisms and subsequent capacity building to local municipalities.

Despite these challenges and as discussed above, the sustainability of the activities could be assumed in several areas. For example, the local area development approach to reconstruction and rehabilitation is a model that can be replicated and is likely to be sustainable. This was evident in discussions with

⁵¹ LADP-III sustainability measures, document shared with the evaluator by email dated 27 Feb 2023

municipalities where it was made clear that they intend to manage the public spaces in a way that would generate income and ensure the self-sustainability of the parks. The rehabilitated public parks employ solar energy which requires minimal maintenance for example. Likewise, the synergy projects in Dohuk and Erbil and their relations with the universities are also likely to be sustained over a long period of time especially that the construction contracts included a maintenance component for several years beyond the life of the programme.

Sustainability of the CSO components of the programme could have been better conceptualised by creating the necessary linkages between the CSOs themselves and ensuring that like-minded or like-mandated CSOs are able to continue to cooperate and engage with the local authorities. For example, through the Peer-to-Peer action in Dohuk the focus was on inclusive education while some of the CSOs in Erbil implemented projects on inclusive education, the link between both is missing and if established could lead to improved relationships between small and medium size CSOs who are already engaged with local authorities. Likewise, more than one CSO project focused on women economic empowerment and if better linked could increase chances of sustainability. The programme established a CSO networking platform and efforts should be made to promote such networking through that platform.

Other factors that could potentially improve sustainability is the willingness and commitment of local municipalities. The evaluation recognises that municipalities engaged are on different levels of maturity and empowerment. Some of the municipalities are strong and have clear visions making the cessation of programme funding and activities less likely to affect them especially with many donors and partners already engaged with them such as the Municipality of Mosul. While others such as Telafar or Baiji are likely to also continue although less development compared to Mosul as a result of the fact that the programme has provided necessary equipment to the municipalities and spare parts for the equipment which would allow them to continue to provide services to their communities.

3.6. Coherence

EQ 22: To what extent is the programme coherent internally, especially considering the two implementing partners (UNDP and UN-Habitat) and the interlinkages within and between their result areas?

The design of the programme and its implementation modality were not conducive to internal coherence. Even the linkages between outcomes 1, 2, and 3 are not evident and were not integrated by design since inception. Each output stands alone with limited linkages to the rest and hence internally the coherence is limited. The programme was spread too thin in terms of thematic result areas and their coverage, as well as the number of national partners engaged. The eight programme outputs, are disjointed and were implemented in isolation from each other, including geographically. In the last year, the UNDP increased interlinkages, especially between Outputs 1.1, 1.4 and 2.2. Both UNDP and UN-Habitat teams that were interviewed confirmed coherent working relations between the two agencies, with clear roles in alignment with their mandates throughout the programme. Regular coordination meetings were held between both

organizations helping to strengthen synergies on the implementation of activities. The main issue is that the activities of the two UN partners were not integrated by design since inception.

This was also recognized by the programme team during interviews, especially for Outcomes 1 and 2 which they found to be more complex, but outcome three was more action-focused with clear approaches and intended results. For example:

- It is not clear how Output 1.2 on donor coordination on decentralization is relevant to Outcome 1, which has an overall focus on strengthening government systems and public services.
- There are two separate and fragmented outputs related to fiscal aspects, namely Output 1.3 on revenue generation and Output 2.2 on resource mobilization mechanisms.

By design, the programme activities targeted implementation in different areas, the reason for that was not clear to the evaluation. Habitat focusing on the newly liberated areas, and UNDP taking the rest, with only some peer-to-peer actions geographically overlapping. By coincidental selection according to grant proposals, there were also some CSO geographically overlapping, but this could not be steered by the project. UNDP team highlighted that Ninewa was selected for Output 2.2 because UN-Habitat was working there on revenue generation (Output 1.3) and synergies may be created. Supposedly each agency focused on different outcomes that should complement each other within the same target locations. In some situations, this was seen by the evaluation as a missed opportunity to bring in the full experience and expertise of each agency for the advancement of the programme as a whole, especially in conflict-affected governorates. For example, it was noted that in some locations, the programme managed to address the needs of different groups, such in Yathrib Sub-district where both Shia and Sunni communities who are living in very close proximity were assisted and 21 IDP households were built for IDPs who were able to return from Suleymaniye in 2020 following the signing of the 2018 Yathrib Agreement and further negotiations led by tribal leaders. Notwithstanding, the rehabilitation of some houses was not possible as these houses were owned by perceived ISIL affiliated families of returnees and stayees. LADP III/UN-Habitat which focused on neighbourhoods whose inhabitants are included in the wider social inclusion discussion with the local authorities. Hence, the programme team did not engage the local authorities in discussion about the value of social cohesion within the UNDP's flagship programmes on social cohesion and the reintegration of families of perceived ISIL affiliations.

EQ 23: Are there any concrete examples of successful models of collaboration with other partners (especially considering national level priorities, other EU-funded projects interventions and those of other donors active in the recovery, stability and decentralization arena in Iraq) towards avoiding duplication as well as increasing complementarity and integrated activities to improve reach and impact on beneficiaries?

The UN-Habitat implements rehabilitation interventions for houses and public spaces through other projects, including EU-funded projects in different areas. For example, public spaces in Basra which is based on the experience from the LADP-III programme. Designs, engineering drawings and Bill of Quantities (BoQs) are usually complex and that is why they could be adapted and used within other projects, such as the Japan-funded projects. The Mosul flood protection project was implemented in partnership with the

EU-Madad Fund in Iraq and Mosul Sewage Directorate. The programme team acknowledged the value added by the EU in bringing in an integrated perspective to rehabilitation, improving on economic sustainability, social reconciliation and climate adaptation.

Interviewed government officials perceived that there are several organizations supporting them on the decentralization portfolio in Iraq, in addition to other areas. There is limited coordination between them because they all work with all entities and in all governorates, which creates overlap and loss of efforts. Attempts to improve on this regard include the "Decentralization Support Group" created by MoP and HCCP consisting of all donors active in decentralization, which is coordinated by UNDP and met twice. UNDP team shared that it coordinated its activities on DCPCs and also HCCP with USAID, who had previously worked with DCPCs and still works with HCCP.

At the national level, UNDP had been actively involved in sector meetings and UN Cluster meetings. Collaboration with CSOs was a key implementation strategy of the LADP-III programme, CSOs in turn collaborate with other development partners. Interviewed CSOs mentioned examples of work with UN agencies, such as UNHCR, IOM and UNICEF; with INGOs such as TDH, CARE, Mercy Corps and IHF, as well as work with donors such as BMZ. And worked on wash and protection and also on relief and development.

3.7. Cross-Cutting Themes

3.7.1 Human Rights

EQ 24: To what extent is the programme promoting a rights-based approach for all groups of persons, especially to promote international laws and commitments made by Iraq?

The LADP-III programme design took into consideration a human-rights approach at its core as it aimed at promoting the establishment of a balanced democratic system of government in Iraq that respects the rule of law and human rights. An efficient and accountable central and local administration are an essential part of this, which the programme supported through decentralization of powers from central to local authorities, revenue generation and strengthening dialogue between local authorities, CSOs and various community groups. The programme also strived to facilitate the return of IDPs through rehabilitation of houses, infrastructure and public spaces, in addition to improving livelihoods and living conditions for the most vulnerable communities.

EQ 25: To what extent have the poor, women, internally displaced, returnees and other disadvantaged and marginalized groups benefitted from the LADP-III programme?

The programme placed efforts to assist diverse groups in vulnerable situations, including IDPs, PwDs, women and youth in Iraq. The programme facilitated the return of IDPs through the reconstruction of vulnerable settlements, prioritizing the rehabilitation of houses for the most vulnerable groups, such as women-headed households and households with larger numbers of women and PwDs. This rehabilitation included access to clean water and the establishment of public spaces that offer services to the local

community. The programme also aimed to promote livelihoods and job creation for women, youth and PwDs.

With regards to PwDs, the programme recognized that they have been disproportionately affected by conflict, violence, and economic hardship in Iraq. Although disability was not initially considered in the programme design, it was considered during implementation. The programme ensured that employment and training opportunities were prioritized for people with disabilities and local people from the area. Houses were also rehabilitated with disability standards in mind, and public spaces were designed to be accessible for people with disabilities. The programme also promoted inclusive education through a peer-to-peer action and raised awareness of the rights of PwDs through policy dialogue between the government, CSOs and communities.

The programme also placed a strong emphasis on supporting youth in Iraq with interventions aimed to address youth unemployment and provide them with opportunities to participate in positive change. Youth were engaged in policy dialogue and trained in leadership skills, sports, and political and social discussions. Youth networks and youth civic council were established by the LADP-III programme to support young people in civic engagement and dialogue with the local government. CSOs reported positive outcomes from working with youth, who were encouraged to participate in initiatives and share project ideas. Feedback from municipalities and CSOs showed that young people were at the center of the efforts, with a focus on creating positive change and preventing negative involvement in Iraqi society.

3.7.2 Gender Equality

EQ 26: To what extent has gender been mainstreamed within the design, implementation, and monitoring of the programme?

As previously discussed in this report, overall gender equality and empowerment of women was a cornerstone of the activities and the implementation. Within the design itself the programme considered vulnerable groups of which women are a key category. All rehabilitation works and other activities were designed and implemented with special focus on women empowerment and gender inclusivity. Perhaps the weak component is related to the monitoring of the programme itself. Nonetheless, the inclusion of gender was not explicit in the design; the initial programme design was not based on a gender analysis or gender scorecards. Yet, implementation succeeded to support women empowerment through many of the activities although they started late and were not measured or assessed during the first two years. The programme improved data collection and capturing of progress on gender equality and women's empowerment towards its last year. The programme's conducted gender analysis in 2021 is a key product that provides useful and relevant information on the consistency of the structural changes achieved and their effect on reducing inequalities.

EQ 27: To what extent has the programme promoted positive changes in gender equality and advanced the empowerment of women?

Gender equality is evidently a key strength achieved by the LADP-III programme in almost all activities across different sectors. 51 percent of the rehabilitated households were women-headed, women were engaged in agriculture, women managed the parks, including a women-led park, employment was taken on by the government and grants were provided to young women entrepreneurs. The creation of parks in different governorates focused on gender elements to ensure they consider the needs of women and girls, in addition to environmental considerations. Women who received vocational trainings on horticulture had the chance to find jobs working in the gardens, some with permanent contracts.

During the last year of the programme, it supported the Women Empowerment Directorate (WED) at the governorates level. A policy was developed with stakeholders mapping and an assessment of partners and local CSOs. Challenges related to gender were identified and a training was accordingly provided to WED staff to address the main gaps. Additionally, a gender mainstreaming manual and toolkit were developed, and a gender analysis on how successful the LADP programme was on gender mainstreaming with recommendations. Interviewed staff from WED mentioned that the UNDP was very supportive on the development of the national strategy for women.

The programme rehabilitation teams on ground included women engineers, such as in Telafar and Mosul, which enabled the team to build a stronger relationship with the community. When the engineers conducted assessments, they could go into the houses during the day and speak with the women. They were able to build a solid relationship with the women within the community and allowed them to later engage them in the construction and rehabilitation of the established Telafar and Mosul parks. In general all programme components considered gender as an important element in the design and implementation, however. Other initiatives within the programme supported the advancement of GEWE. Some succeeded strongly to place emphasis on the importance of women's empowerment and gender equality and promote change. Examples include:

- The Incubator in Basra

In Basra, where more than 80 percent of youth are unemployed, the Basra incubator supported women and youth, who were excluded by the community. It considered the specific needs and roles of young women after the collection of gender disaggregated data with communication elements. The beneficiaries received vocational training for 21 days in four different fields, they were then provided with small grants and supported to find jobs or start their own income generation activities. Women felt that they were finally able to see themselves in leadership positions because they could explore different opportunities and see fellow women developing business and taking on untraditional roles. Close follow-up by UNDP and CSOs has contributed to the success of the project ideas and coordination with DOLSA, WED and the governorate. This initiative also included psychosocial support to girls to address challenges they face, especially with no support by their families. Women really started to believe in themselves and see other women be more successful.

- Local bakeries in Erbil

Working with local bakeries in Erbil recognizing how women's health was disproportionately affected. The Eco Vital CSO undertook a value chain analysis realizing that women are particularly affected by the use of plastic in bakeries (in addition to plastic being bad for the environment). Their study showed that women are the ones often collecting the bread from the bakeries and as such are exposed to carcinogenic fumes when the hot bread interacts with the plastic bags. Thus the project also focused not only on banning plastic but also on supporting measures to promote better health for women. Hence, the use of paper or handmade bags for the bakeries would be beneficial for both the environment and women's health.

- Beekeepers in Duhok

The beekeeping income-generation activities for women in Duhok governorate created sustainable livelihoods and promoted entrepreneurship that were particularly needed during the economic crisis of the COVID-19 pandemic. The project, implemented by Bojeen organization, provided the participating women with training on beekeeping and equipped them with tools, hives and initial livestock. Because the focus was on beneficial insects, these activities also enhanced the overall agricultural potential in the region.

- Empowering Minority Yazidi Women

The Development of Yazidi Women project aimed to empower minority women in Dohuk by strengthening their role in decision-making. The project consisted of two round tables, one with government stakeholders and the other with activists, media representatives, and religious leaders. Additionally, a 4-day training program was organized for 15 minority women to educate them about gender equality and decision-making. The project also involved creating a video to raise awareness about the challenges faced by minority women. The outcome of the project was positive, with religious leaders expressing their support and parliamentarians being willing to listen to the needs of minority women.

4. CONCLUSIONS AND LESSON LEARNT

4.1 Conclusions

Relevance

The LADP-III programme was aligned with the Iraqi national policies and Sustainable Development Vision 2030 and supported the EU's commitments to the New Urban Agenda and the EU Strategy for Iraq 2018, contributing to strengthening the Iraqi political system and promoting economic growth, stabilization and long-term recovery. The programme focused on local development and reconstruction, not traditional decentralization support strategies. It adopted a bottom-up approach that emphasized building capacities and systems of municipalities and fostering dialogue at the local level. The programme's support was well received by the municipalities who noted filling gaps with regards to fiscal and administrative management and provision of public services.

The programme was also relevant to the needs of the vulnerable population groups, including IDPs, women, youth and PwDs. Despite its relevance and alignment with the needs and priorities of Iraq, the implementation methods adopted were not totally adequate to the context in Iraq, especially the peer-to-peer approach. Gap assessments were carried out after the start of the programme, despite being crucial to understanding the development needs at local levels. Additionally, stakeholders were not engaged in programme design, formulation of activities, outputs or implementation strategies, however, they were engaged at later stages of implementation through gap assessments, peer-to-peer actions, local development projects and rehabilitation activities. Being engaged in participatory assessments and implementation was appreciated.

Effectiveness

Decentralization in Iraq is facing significant challenges due to a lack of understanding and resistance from central authorities, which made it challenging for the LADP-III programme to make a significant progress. Despite the challenges, the programme supported improvements in capacities and systems for decentralization in Iraq, such as the governorate-level revenue generation system and revitalizing policy dialogue between local authorities and central government. The high-level dialogue and policy analysis on decentralization conducted by the programme added value to the conversation on decentralization in Iraq, and the engagement with municipalities has improved their practices, including principles of environmental sustainability and local service improvement.

The programme's logical framework underwent one adjustment, attempting to make the programme goals more attainable and realistic, given the limitations and challenges faced. Some of the modifications had a substantial impact on the original target group and progress being measured. They were imperative but were not formally approved by the EU. Based on the revised but not formally approved logical framework, the programme achieved results in 21 out of 22 targets according to the modified logframe, and 18 out of 22 targets according to the original logframe such as job creation, vocational training and rehabilitation of houses and public spaces. It also overcame the challenges faced in the implementing of Outcomes 1 and 2. The main challenges affecting programme effectiveness included COVID-19, political instability, UNDP management turnover, lengthy granting modalities for CSOs, and the unsuitability of the peer-to-peer approach to the Iraqi context. Nonetheless, the programme achievements could be attributed to the strong expertise of UNDP and UN Habitat in Iraq as well as the strong partnerships with local communities and governments. It is worth pointing out that the implementation of activities within a shorter timeframe of 18 months raises concerns about their quality, impact and sustainability.

Efficiency

The human resource structure of UN Habitat for outcome 3 was adequate and well suited for the activities planned and implemented. UN-Habitat deployed staff with human resources and technical expertise commensurate to the programme activities. However, the same cannot be said for human resources under outcomes 1 and 2 managed by UNDP. The human resources structure of the UNDP for this programme was a challenge and the evaluation concludes that it was rather inadequate compared to its size and complexity of Outcomes 1 and 2 and lacked core technical expertise. The implementation of outcomes 1 and 2 was slow in its first two years, but the rate of implementation increased in years three and four.

Outcome 3 progressed at a steady pace during the complete life of the project. The M&E system allowed for tracking progress on ground against indicators however, those were mostly quantitative and did not allow an assessment of the quality of outputs.

Impact

The programme strengthened capacities of government staff at the local level and fostered dialogue, collaboration and trust between local municipalities, CSOs and communities, especially with youth groups. Most recently, the programme put effort to complement the bottom-up approach with a top-down policy level approach engaging central government, necessary to ensure political ownership and an enabling environment. The programme improved capacities of small CSOs and the potential of their role in community development. Environmental protection and women empowerment were key features in rehabilitation, local development projects, CSO community initiatives and peer-to-peer actions. It was also successful in improving the lives of IDPs by facilitating the return to their homes through rehabilitation of houses, parks and public utilities. Community participation was central and gender equality and marginalized groups were considered through local projects and community initiatives that focused on youth engagement, inclusive education and livelihoods promotion for women, youth and PwDs.

Sustainability

Environmental protection and green energy projects are likely to be sustainable due to their low associated costs. Some of the job creation opportunities are also likely to continue especially for those who the project helped secure long-term employment or supported through grants to start their own businesses. UN Habitat made sure that in each park the municipality committed to hiring the adequate number of guards and gardeners. Additionally, the rehabilitation of parks and public facilities is likely to be sustainable because of the modality of providing spare parts and other necessary equipment to ensure the ability of the municipality to provide necessary maintenance work. The programme supported municipalities through revenue generation systems, ICT and GIS capacity building, and decentralized fiscal management. Concrete results in terms of revenue collection and resource mobilization are yet to be seen, it will need to be verified at a later stage.

Coherence

There was limited coherence and interlinkages between the programme eight outputs, they appeared disjointed and implemented in isolation from each other, even geographically. Good working relations between the UNDP and UN-Habitat teams were confirmed but coordination with other actors working on decentralization was limited, leading to possible missed opportunities.

Cross-Cutting

Human rights considerations were evident, where the programme identified and responded to the specific needs of IDPs, PwDs, women and youth in vulnerable situations, and ensured their active engagement in assessments and implementation. Advancing women's empowerment was a clear achievement by the programme, gender equality was mainstreamed in different activities and women-targeted actions were

implemented, such as the incubator in Basra, local bakeries in Erbil, and beekeeping in Duhok. Provision of technical support to WED improves sustainability prospects related to women empowerment at local level.

4.2 Lessons Learnt

- Decentralization is a complex and challenging concept in Iraq due to structural challenges and cultural complexities. Programmes that seek to promote decentralization must recognize these challenges and adapt their approaches accordingly while carefully considering the unique contexts, key players and actors, as well as the unique added value of the various development partners working on decentralization in Iraq to maximize impact and ensure goals are achievable.
- The expertise and meaningful collaboration between programme implementing agencies are critical factors, they bring knowledge, skills and resources that are necessary for effective implementation and impactful outputs.
- Conducting specific assessments during the design phase early in the process to ensure that the programme is adequately designed with appropriate implementation methodologies, especially in challenging development contexts. A well-studied development context is key to avoid inadequate approaches and ensure that the programme achieves its intended objectives.
- Learning by doing, gap assessment and plugging, sub-granting to CSOs, and integrated reconstruction are all relevant approaches to promote local development, build capacities of municipalities and improve living conditions in Iraq. Careful consideration of the sub-granting process is crucial to ensure that the programme benefits are realized within the planned timeframe.
- Engaging local stakeholders, including communities, municipalities and utility directorates, in the design and implementation of the programme is crucial to ensure relevance and sustainability. Activities where local stakeholders are engaged are able to better identify the specific needs of communities and effectively address them. This is in addition to clear communication and active collaboration and dialogue events between all relevant stakeholders.
- Establishing strong partnerships and collaboration structures are essential to ensure effective programme delivery, resource optimization and risk management. Future programmes must prioritize collaboration and partnership among partners to ensure success.
- It is essential to consider gender and disability analysis during the programme design phase and throughout implementation to ensure that the programme is relevant to the needs of vulnerable groups and does not risk exacerbating inequality or leaving behind any specific groups.
- The engagement of CSOs in different activities and their ability to work closely with local communities and authorities are crucial for increasing dialogue, addressing local needs and mainstreaming gender equality into implemented development projects and community initiatives. Therefore, effective engagement with CSOs can help ensure that the programme's objectives are aligned with the needs of local communities.

- However, small CSOs often lack the resources to build their capacities effectively, prioritizing capacity strengthening of CSOs is a key element recognized by the LADP-III who provided them with several necessary capacity building activities.
- Fostering dialogue and trust between local municipalities, CSOs and Communities was recognized by the LADP-III achieved through participatory, accessible, public, and accountable governance and improving living conditions of target groups.
- A robust yet flexible M&E system is crucial for tracking progress, providing insights that inform decisions and assessing the impact on beneficiaries against targets and indicators. M&E should allow for necessary improvements to be made when needed according to changing contexts and influencing factors. M&E tools and calendar should be designed and used in an extended manner by the different programme teams and implementing partners.
- External factors can hinder implementation, programmes must be designed with the understanding that external factors may impact implementation and stay flexible to rapidly take steps to mitigate these impacts. Effective risk management strategies must be in place to face external shocks. In the case of the LAPD-III programme, these included political unrest, riots and the COVID-19 pandemic. Utilizing an agile methodology enhanced effectiveness and adaptability to changing circumstances and evolving requirements.
- Capacity building initiatives are essential to ensure stakeholders have the necessary skills and knowledge to deliver effective activities and to increase likelihood of sustainability. In the LADP-III programme, this included training, mentoring, enhancing systems and knowledge transfer activities. Future programmes should continue to prioritize capacity building.
- Efficient leadership and management are essential for complex programmes like the LADP-III for the successful delivery of outputs, relationship and partnerships with government and development partners programs. It can avoid delay and ensure the interventions' logic is followed towards the expected change.
- Continuous learning is necessary for programme improvement to ensure programmes remain relevant and effective over time. Regular assessments, thematic reviews and knowledge management activities are critical to identify opportunities for improvement, best practices and lessons learned.
- Strengthen institutional systems and capacities of government staff play a critical role in promoting stability and socio-economic development in a country. Strengthening capacities of local government staff through the use of ICT and GIS tools was one of the main elements in the LADP-III programme and can hold promising prospects of impact and sustainability.
- Sustainability in different areas learnt from the LADP-III programme show that institutional sustainability is important and approaches include through capacity building, revenue generation systems and public-private partnerships. Rehabilitating public spaces, housing and utilities, and empowering communities have the potential to remain sustainable over the longer time, depending on the allocation of maintenance budgets and the willingness of local authorities to continue using the systems developed.

- Environmental sustainability is achieved by addressing environmental issues relevant to the context and national priorities through renewable energy, water and waste management and vocational training. The introduced environmental-friendly models have the potential for scalability and replication into other areas only if budgets become available and allocated to local governorates for similar projects.

5. RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendation 1: For UNDP and EU/Donors

Re-conceptualize the logic of the LADP programming (moving forward perhaps LADP-IV project) anchored from the onset around an interlinked twin-track of (i) high-level policy dialogue with central government and of (ii) bottom-up approach through capacity building of local authorities, local development and reconstruction. This will help align the programme with the broader decentralization policies and place emphasis on the transfer of power and resources from the central to local level through the operationalization of existing laws and policies and building on the study conducted during LADP-III.

Recommendation 2: For UNDP

Align implementation strategies/ methodologies with the context in Iraq to improve effectiveness of future programming by conducting robust situation analysis, diagnostic studies and in-depth needs assessments during the inception phase of implementation. Enhance the use of the knowledge generated from these assessments to tailor the design and formulation of outputs and outcomes towards the objectives of decentralization in Iraq. This would enable the introduction of adjustments to the programme logical framework early in the process of implementation and based in solid knowledge.

Recommendation 3: For UNDP and EU/donors

Reinforce CSO knowledge sharing platform established by the LADP-III programme by designing a component that is specifically targeting CSOs. A CSO service facility would be an important next-step post stabilization in order to allow for concrete capacity strengthening of CSOs and supporting a vibrant CSO community in Iraq. This would enable CSOs to play an active role in re-building Iraq. This should start by a mapping of the capacities of CSOs and carefully designing a programme that builds their institutional and management capacities on variety of topics including resource mobilization, engagement with local authorities and implementation of development projects.

Recommendation 4: For UNDP/UN Habitat

In future programming, ensure the development of a logical framework that reflects stronger vertical and causal linkages between results of different levels with well-defined indicators measuring the progress and quality of the activities. This should come along with pertinent M&E tools and systems that allow for a more structured data collection by the implementing agencies and their partners.

Recommendation 5: For UNDP

Revisit the structure of human resources to ensure adequacy in case of future programming in terms of size, technical expertise and geographic presence, additional technical staff may be needed to perform

specific functions according to the nature of policy dialogue and local development interventions. This may include decentralization experts, resource mobilization, and policy and advocacy.

Recommendation 6: For UNDP/UN Habitat

Develop a robust sustainability strategy, with immediate effect, to ensure a rational road guiding the programme’s exit in the near future, in consultation with government stakeholders, CSOs, programme teams and development partners. This may require the allocation of resources specifically for this activity during a transition period to follow-up and sustain benefits, for example of the Hiwar youth network, the business incubator, the policy dialogue between Ministry of Planning (MoP) and Commission for Coordination among the Provinces (HCCP) with local governorates, as well as the scalability of the revenue generation system.

Recommendation 7: For UNDP/UN Habitat and EU/Donors

In future programming, specific focus should be given to the engagement of the private sector in Iraq, who can play a crucial role in decentralization by spurring economic growth, improving infrastructure, creating jobs and improving local government responsiveness to local needs, and likely advocating for improved decentralization with central government.

6. ANNEXES

- Annex 1: Terms of Reference
- Annex 2: Evaluation Matrix
- Annex 3: Data Collection Tools
- Annex 4: Stakeholders Map
- Annex 5: Review Workplan
- Annex 6: Evaluation Methodology

Annex 1: Terms of Reference

TORs of the Final Evaluation

TERMS of REFERENCE (ToR)

Consultants to conduct Final Evaluation

Location:	Nine Governorates in Iraq (Anbar, Basra, Dohuk, Erbil, Missan, Ninewa, Salah al-Din, Sulaymaniyah)
Type of Contract:	Individual Contract

Contract Start Date:	29 September 2022
Contract End Date:	15 December 2022
Post Type:	One International and one National Consultant

Background

Project summary

Project title:	Supporting recovery and stability through local development in Iraq (LADPIII).	
Project overall objective:	To promote the stability and socio-economic development of Iraq.	
CPD Outcome 1:	People in Iraq, civil society, and communities, particularly women, have improved capacity to lead, participate in and contribute to the design and delivery of equitable and responsive services, especially for the most vulnerable populations	
UNDP Atlas Project ID:	00116195	
UNDP Atlas Output ID:	00113449	
EU agreement no:	MIDEAST/2018/399-609	
Country and Geographical coverage:	Iraq: 9 Governorates - Anbar, Basra, Dohuk, Erbil, Missan, Ninewa, Salah al-Din, Sulaymaniyah and Thi Qar.	
Beneficiaries:	Ordinary Iraqi Citizens Local Civil Society Organizations (CSOs). Local Authorities (Governorates and Municipalities)	
Date of Signature:	11 December 2018 (with EU)	17 February 2019 (inter-agency agreement among UNDP and UN-Habitat)
Project dates (UNDP): (UN-Habitat):	Start: 01 January 2019 Start: 17 February 2019	Planned end date: 31 December 2022 Planned end date: 31 December 2022
Project budget:	Overall: EUR € 47,500,000 (Approx. USD 54,088,250.00) UNDP: USD 33,773,419.04; UN-Habitat: USD 20,314,830.96	
Resources mobilized:	USD 54,088,250.00 (as of 9th December 2018)	
Project delivery:	USD \$20.00M (as of 2nd August 2022)	
Donors:	European Union (EU)	
Implementing agencies:	United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat).	

Brief context

Iraq has been suffering decades of violence and armed conflict, which intensified from 2014 with the invasion of IS. On 9th Dec 2017, after government forces gained control of the remaining territory on the border with Syria, former Prime Minister al-Abadi announced the victory over IS. With this, a hopeful new chapter has started for Iraq. Post-IS, attention turns to (i) rebuilding of communities and stabilization of liberated areas and (ii) developing a sound basis for long-term sustainable economic and social development of the country. Successful restoration of territorial control by the Government of Iraq renewed the opportunity to build an inclusive and accountable political system that serves all

communities, regions, and beliefs, as well as preserves the country's diversity, and enhances its democratic order. Asserting such a political system is essential to rebuilding the trust between the people and their Government and to avoiding a return to divisive sectarianism and radicalization of youth. The institutional challenges are also manifested in the form of inefficient institutional performance due to a weak administrative system and low staff productivity, and financial and administrative corruption. The weak institutional capacity has, in turn, contributed to the inability to address the development constraints facing the country. Weak institutional performance is partly the result of the protracted conflict in Iraq. Among the underlying causes are endemic corruption, which siphons funds away from development and security priorities, and mismanagement of national assets and resources.

Iraqi and international efforts to stabilize liberated areas have achieved significant progress – with over 3.8 million Internally Displaced People (IDPs) having already returned to their areas of origin, mostly in a peaceful and orderly manner. Recent returns have been recorded mainly in the four governorates of Nineveh, Salah al-Din, Kirkuk, and Anbar. Nevertheless, much remains to be done to assist the remaining 2.05 million IDPs (of which 1.5 million are living outside camps) – as well as to support the return to the normal life of the millions of returnees and host populations. The IDP return process remains dynamic – with new and secondary displacements being recorded because of limitations in the shelter, basic services, education and healthcare services, and livelihoods opportunities as well as security concerns.

The poor management of Iraq's immense oil wealth – along with the need for public finance reforms, improved accountability, fiscal transparency, and effective anti-corruption measures – are among the key constraints facing the country. Competition over the control of resources has exacerbated ethnic and sectarian divisions, with an ensuing deterioration in governance, security and state legitimacy.

Dominance of the public sector in the Iraqi economy has prevented the emergence of a vibrant private sector and the associated job creation necessary for enhancing the welfare of all Iraqis. Focus on state-owned enterprises discourages entrepreneurship, private sector development, and diversification – while the weakness of the private sector prevents it from being an engine of employment for youth.

The project to be evaluated

The Support to Recovery and Stability through Local Development (LADPIII) in Iraq project, also known as Local Area Development Programme III (LADP III), is a four-year project funded by the European Union (EU) and jointly implemented in Iraq in partnership between UNDP and UN-Habitat (UNDP-led) with a combined budget of EUR 47,500,000.

Overall, the project aimed to assist the Government of Iraq (GoI) to restore the legitimacy of the country's institutions and to renew the social contract between citizens by strengthening local governments' functions and services is key to unlocking the blockages of the current post-conflict scenario and to mitigating the political risks linked to the elections held on May 12, 2018 and the unmet citizen grievances that could contribute to destabilizing the country.

Project activities focused on enhancing local government systems by supporting decentralization processes; implementing selected local priority development projects already listed in the existing local development plans at provincial level and assisting returns and better living conditions in conflict/fragile areas, through the rehabilitation and upgrading of housing and community infrastructure and services.

Objectives/results of the project

The overall objective is to promote the stability and socio-economic development of Iraq⁵². The specific expected outcomes and related outputs are as follows:

52 Full details of the LADPIII project are available in the Project Document (PRODOC) accessible here: <https://open.undp.org/projects/00116195>

Specific Outcome 1: Selected Governorates are able to manage effectively and transparently local government systems and public services

Output 1.1: Decentralization of powers from central to local authorities – Law 21

Output 1.2: Donor coordination

Output 1.3: Optimized Governorates’ revenue generation systems piloted

Output 1.4: Strengthened dialogue between local authorities and civil society

Specific Outcome 2: Economic growth and job opportunities have increased in selected Governorates, with special focus on green projects involving youth and women

Output 2.1: Local development projects and priority actions implemented deriving from Provincial Development Plans (PDPs) and Sustainable Energy Action Plans (SEAPS).

Output 2.2: Piloting mechanism aimed at mobilizing additional funding created

Specific Outcome 3: Living conditions in conflict areas have improved and returnees are assisted

Output 3.1: Damaged houses and public facilities rehabilitated in post-conflict areas, in line with the 2018 PRPs

Output 3.2: On-the-job vocational training delivered and jobs for youth created in line with greener and safer construction technologies.

Overall, the LADPIII project contributes to the following:

UNDP Strategic Plan (2022-2025):	UNDP Strategic Plan Outcome 3: Resilience built to respond to systemic uncertainty and risk UNDP Strategic Plan Outcome 2: No-one left behind, centering on equitable access to opportunities and a rights-based approach to human agency and human development
UNDP Country Programme Document (CPD) (2020-2024):	Output 1.1: Infrastructure for basic service delivery improved in locations affected by crisis and vulnerable to conflict. Output 1.2: Civil society and academic institutions strengthened to promote social cohesion, prevention of violent extremism and sustainable development Output 2.1: Priority policies and partnerships approved and implemented for inclusive green economic growth and employment creation Output 2.2: Access to livelihood and employment creation opportunities increased in locations affected by and vulnerable to conflict.
UN-Habitat Strategic Plan 2020-2023	Domain of Change 1: Reduced spatial inequality and poverty in communities across the urban-rural continuum/ Outcome 1: Increased and equal access to basic services, sustainable mobility, and public space; Outcome 2: Increased and secure access to land, and adequate and affordable housing. Domain of Change 3: Strengthened climate action and improved urban environment/Outcome 3: Effective adaptation of communities and infrastructure to climate change. Domain of Change 4: Effective Urban Crisis Prevention and Response/Outcome 1: Enhanced social integration and inclusive communities; Outcome 2: Improved living standards and inclusion of migrants, refugees, internally displaced persons and returnees through effective crisis response and recovery.
National Priority or Goal: Framework of Government Programme (2014-2018):	Priority/Goal 4: Provide the conditions for an enabling environment for all forms of investment and strengthen the role of the private sector. Priority/Goal 7: Reduce unemployment and underemployment rates.

UNSDCF outcome involving UNDP:	Outcome 2.1: Improved people-centered economic policies and legislation contribute to inclusive, gender sensitive and diversified economic growth, with focus on increasing income security and decent work for women, youth, and vulnerable populations.
UNSDCF outcome involving UN-Habitat:	Strategic Priority 3: Promoting effective, inclusive, and efficient institutions and services / Outcome 3.1: Strengthened institutions and systems deliver people centered, evidence and needs based equitable and inclusive gender- and age responsive services, especially for the most vulnerable populations, with particular focus on advocating for women’s leadership in decision-making processes.
Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs):	SDG 5: Ratio of female to male labour force participation rate SDG 6: Access to improved water source (% pop.); Access to improved sanitation facilities (% pop.) SDG 7: CO2 emissions from fuel combustion /electricity output SDG 8: Unemployment rate (% total labour force) SDG 11: Improved water source, piped (% urban pop. with access) SDG 13: Energy-related CO2 emissions per capita

Evaluation purpose, scope and objectives

Purpose and scope

This evaluation is undertaken as part of the UNDP program management requirements to assess the extent to which the LADPIII project has met its objectives, to provide evidence of UN-HABITAT and UNDP’s contribution towards outcome achievements, impact and role played in the decentralization process of Iraq.

The purpose of this independent final evaluation is to conduct an evidence-based and highly consultative reflection on the LADPIII project to promote learning and accountability. The evaluation findings and recommendations are expected to inform and improve future related projects

Geographically, the final evaluation of the LADPIII project will assess actions in project intervention areas specifically in the nine Iraqi target Governorates of Anbar, Basra, Dohuk, Erbil, Missan, Ninewa, Salah al-Din, Sulaymaniyah and Thi Qar, and shall conduct field visits to these Governorates. The evaluation will cover the project implementation period from the 1st January 2019 to 31st December 2022.

The stakeholders of the evaluation include individuals and organizations from the public and private sectors, as well as civil society organizations, and development partners. The independent evaluator will be expected to contact the key stakeholders and direct beneficiaries for information relevant for arriving at conclusion on the individual evaluation questions. Key findings and recommendations of the evaluation will be shared with the key stakeholders for validation as may be relevant.

Objectives of the Evaluation

The specific objectives of this independent final evaluation are to:

Assess and establish the extent to which the expected outputs and results of the LADPIII project have been or are being achieved;

Provide key learnings and inputs regarding the factors affecting the project implementation, outputs and its sustainability, including contributing factors and constraints

Assess the overall strategy used in pursuing the project’s outputs and results including the use of partnerships, implementing partners, direct engagement of governorates;

Assess relevance, coherence, effectiveness, efficiency, impact, and sustainability of the LADPIII project. Examine the extent to which gender, human rights and other cross-cutting issues were considered in the project's design, implementation and monitoring;
Provide recommendations for improving the design, effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability and mainstreaming of gender and other cross-cutting issues in future projects

The intended users of this final evaluation include:

LADPIII project teams from UNDP and UN-Habitat and their respective senior management,
Government of Iraq counterparts,
EU Delegation,
Development partners, and
The general Iraqi public and beneficiaries.

Information from the evaluation will be used to:

Improve future project design and implementation;
Ensure accountability; and
Increase knowledge and understanding of the benefits and challenges of similar interventions in future.

CRITERIA AND KEY GUIDING QUESTIONS TO THE EVALUATION

The final evaluation will generate evidence of progress, lessons and challenges, helping to ensure accountability for the implementation of the LADPIII project, as well as identifying and sharing knowledge and good practices. Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) Development Assistance Committee (DAC) criteria of relevance, coherence, effectiveness, efficiency, impact, and sustainability will be used to frame the questions 53 and methodology of the evaluation.

Indicative lists of evaluation questions are presented below and will be broadened and agreed further by the evaluator, UNDP and UN-Habitat at the inception phase. The Consultants are expected to critically reflect on them during the development of the evaluation questionnaires.

Relevance:

Establish the extent to which the strategy, expected outputs, and proposed activities of the LADPIII project reflect the strategic considerations of host country's policies, donor's priorities, and UNDP's strategic policies.

To what extent did relevant stakeholders' participate in the LADPIII project (design, implementation and monitoring and ownership)

To what extent has the selected method of delivery been appropriate to the development context, which means a) were based upon adequate needs-assessment and b) show understanding of the development situation of Iraq?

To what extent were considerations for gender equality and women's empowerment, and the needs of people with disability, IDPs, vulnerable and marginalized groups integrated into the design of the project? How do stakeholders perceive the relevance of the project and how has the activities implemented improved the lives of beneficiaries? Are there any stories of change?

Effectiveness:

To what extent did the project achieve the intended results of (I) Improving the capacity among the 9 partner governorates to manage local government systems; (II) Strengthening dialogue between civil

53 ODAC criteria available here:
<https://www.oecd.org/dac/evaluation/daccriteriaforevaluatingdevelopmentassistance.htm>

societies and state institutions; (III) Promoting economic growth and job opportunities (with special focus on green projects involving youth and women); and (IV) improving living conditions in conflict areas and returnees.

To what extent did the project contribute to decentralization reforms? Were there any unintended effects (positive/negative)?

How effective are the strategies and tools used in the implementation of the project?

What were the major factors influencing the achievement or non-achievement of the objectives?

Efficiency:

To what extent have the project management structure, and allocated resources been efficient in achieving the expected results? Does the actual or expected results (outputs and outcomes) justify the costs incurred?

To what extent have project funds and activities been delivered in a timely manner?

What is the visibility and communications strategy adopted by the project? Has it been cost-effective in terms of promoting the project and its achievements?

Has the monitoring and evaluation systems put in place helped to ensure that the project is managed efficiently and effectively?

Impact:

To what extent did the LADPIII project contributed to or is likely to contribute to the goal of promoting the stability and socio-economic development of Iraq

To what extent and in what ways did or is the project likely to contributed to the achievement of the SDGs (specifically SDG 5,6,7,8,11, and 13)

What real difference has the project made or likely to make in the beneficiaries

What are the positive and negative, intended and unintended, changes produced by the project?

Sustainability:

To what extent are sustainability considerations (environmental footprint, mitigation measures, maintenance, etc.) integrated into project implementation?

What components or which interventions of the project are likely to be sustainable and/or scalable, and why?

Which key factors will be required to improve prospects of sustainability of project outputs/outcomes and the potential for replication?

How likely is it that the exit strategies, and approaches to phase out assistance provided by the project will be effective considering existing contributing factors and constraints?

3.6

Coherence:

To what extent is the project coherent internally, especially considering the two implementing partners (UNDP and UN-Habitat) and the interlinkages within and between their respective result areas?

Are there any concrete examples of successful models of collaboration with other partners (especially considering national level priorities, other EU-funded projects interventions and those of other donors active in the recovery, stability and decentralization arena in Iraq) towards avoiding duplication as well as increasing complementarity and integrated activities to improve reach and impact on beneficiaries?

Cross-cutting themes

Human Rights:

To what extent is the project promoting a rights-based approach for all groups of persons, especially to promote international laws and commitments made by Iraq?

To what extent have the poor, women, internally displaced, returnees and other disadvantaged and marginalized groups benefitted from the LADPIII project?

Gender Equality

To what extent has gender been mainstreamed within the design, implementation, and monitoring of the project?

To what extent has the project promoted positive changes in gender equality and advanced the empowerment of women?

The above guiding questions for the final evaluation will be further refined by the Consultants and jointly agreed with UNDP and UN-Habitat stakeholders.

METHODOLOGY

The Consultants will propose an appropriate methodology and agree on a detailed plan for the assignment as part of the application process. The methodology will be further updated after the selection process is completed, and the inception report is developed. However, in general, in terms of design, the final evaluation is expected to be guided by the “theory of change” (TOC) approach to determining causal links between the interventions that the LADPIII has supported and the pathways through which the interventions contribute to intended results, including the ultimate goal of contributing to stability and recovery in Iraq. The theory of change will then inform the appropriate methods of data collection and analysis. Given the multi-governorate/city nature of the LADPIII project activities, it is anticipated that the Consultants will have to adopt mixed method approach consisting of both qualitative and quantitative data collection and analysis tools to generate complementary evidence to substantiate all findings.

The evaluator is expected to adopt a participatory and collaborative approach, that facilitate continuous engagement with the evaluation management team, implementing partners, and direct beneficiaries. The methodology for this final evaluation would include, but not be limited to the following elements:

Desk review of key strategies and documents underpinning the LADPIII project, including:

Project document (Description of Action).

Results framework.

Programme and Project quality assurance reports.

Annual workplans.

Activity designs/concept notes.

Consolidated quarterly and annual reports.

Results-oriented monitoring report.

Highlights of project board meetings.

Technical/financial monitoring reports

An agreed primary data collection which will include but not limited to:

In-depth interview/Semi-structured interviews with government officials (members of local, national, coordination bodies), European Union, project implementing partners, international partners, CSOs, NGOs, and contractors etc.

Questionnaires administered among direct project beneficiaries.

Survey with sample and sampling frame—if a sample is used. This could include the sample size and characteristics; the sample selection criteria; the process for selecting the sample (e.g., random, purposive); if applicable, how comparison and treatment groups were assigned; and the extent to which the sample is representative of the entire target population, including discussion of the limitations of the sample for generalizing results.

Consultations with donors/ international partners and as relevant national non-governmental organizations that were directly engaged in project implementation.

Focus Group Discussions (FGD) with experts/key stakeholder/direct project beneficiaries.
Discussions with senior management, and Project staff of UNDP and UN-Habitat.

All field-related work and relevant logistical arrangements should be made by the Consultants (and are under their responsibility. Identification and selection of beneficiaries and government stakeholders will be done independently by the Consultants. Assistance will be provided by the joint UNDP/UN-Habitat LADPIII project team in contacting key stakeholders and in facilitating the schedule of interviews, focus groups and site visits, when and where required.

Information obtained from the different data sources and through different collection methods will be triangulated to validate and conclude findings. All analysis must be based on observed facts, evidence, and data. Findings should be specific and concise and supported by information that is reliable and valid. Cross-cutting issues and the SDGs should be integrated into the final evaluation report. The final methodological approach including interview schedule, field visits and data to be used in the evaluation should be clearly outlined in the inception report and fully discussed and agreed between UNDP and UN-Habitat key stakeholders and the evaluator.

The Consultants will be assisted by respective LADPIII Project Managers. An Evaluation Reference Group (ERG) will be constituted comprising of key internal and external project stakeholders⁵⁴ who will among other things, review and comment on the inception and evaluation reports.

Overall, the evaluation will be carried out in accordance with UNDP evaluation guidelines and policies including evaluation guidelines during COVID-19, United Nations Group Evaluation Norms and Ethical Standards; OECD/DAC evaluation principles and guidelines and DAC Evaluation Quality Standards and the relevant UN-Habitat evaluation guidelines and policies.

EVALUATION PRODUCTS (KEY DELIVERABLES)

The Consultants will produce the following:

Evaluation inception report (15 pgs. max) and presentation: based on the terms of reference (TOR) and initial debriefing with the joint UNDP/UN-Habitat LADPIII project teams as well as the desk review outcomes. The Consultants is expected to develop the inception report to be presented to the ERG members for comments. This inception report should detail consultants' understanding of the assignment, and how each of the evaluation questions will be answered, proposed data sources, methods for data collection and analysis. The evaluation matrix should also capture sampling plan, and the rationale for their selection and limitations. The report should also include a matrix that summarises the evaluation criteria and process, indicators/success standards, and methods for data analysis. The evaluator should also propose in the inception report a rating scale to assess the evaluation criteria and to standardize judgement criteria. Annexed workplan should include detailed schedule and resource requirements tied to evaluation activities and milestone deliverables. The inception report should be discussed and agreed with the UNDP office and the evaluation team before the evaluator visit Iraq for data collection.

First field data-collection mission: The evaluator is expected to make two field missions for data collection in Iraq. The first field data collection mission is expected in October 2022. This will cover the major parts of the project implementation, and all the activities that have been implement up until October 2022. The

⁵⁴ The ERG will be chaired by the evaluation commissioner or their designated representative. Members of the ERG will include representatives of Government counterparts, Implementing Partners, donor, and project technical teams.

field visit will cover all the nine Governorates in Iraq (Anbar, Basra, Dohuk, Erbil, Missan, Ninewa, Salah al-Din, Sulaymaniyah).

Evaluation debriefing: After completion of the first field work in Iraq, the Consultants will make a PowerPoint presentation of the preliminary findings from the evaluation to the members of the ERG and the project management team from UNDP and UN-HABITAT to help clarify possible issues and provide input in the interpretation of the findings where necessary.

First draft evaluation report (max 40 pp., including executive summary) to be submitted to the evaluation commissioner (see Annexes for suggested report format). The first draft report shall cover the evaluator's findings from the document review and analysis of the data collected from the first field mission. The first draft will be reviewed by the Project management team and the ERG to ensure that the evaluation meets the required quality criteria, standards, and that the evaluation's purpose and objectives are fulfilled. The comments from Project management team and the ERG shall be addressed in the second draft report and submitted to the evaluation Commissioner

Second field data-collection mission: With some project activities expected to be implemented until December 2022, a second round of field data collection mission to Iraq will be undertaken in the first part of December to update the second draft evaluation report. The second field data collection mission is expected to cover the remaining activities that will be implemented after the first data collection mission.

PowerPoint presentation on composite findings: The Consultants will make a PowerPoint presentation on the overall findings from the evaluation based on both the first and second field data collection. This will give the opportunity to the members of the ERG and the project management team from UNDP and UN-HABITAT to clarify possible issues and provide input in the interpretation of the findings where necessary.

Final evaluation report: After the second field data collection mission, the evaluator shall update the second draft report, into a final report to be submitted to the evaluation commissioner. Feedback received on the second draft evaluation report should be considered when preparing the final report. The evaluator should produce an audit trail indicating whether and how each comment received was addressed in revisions to the Final Report.

FEEDBACK ON DELIVERABLES

All deliverables including the inception and final reports are subject to UNDP and UN-HABITAT's approval before they are considered final, and before corresponding milestones payment can be released. Upon submission of any report (draft inception, draft evaluation and final evaluation) as required under the expected deliverables, UNDP, UN-HABITAT, and partners will formulate comments and indicate any factual errors, within ten working days of reception.

Comments will be formulated based on Quality Control Checklists that will be provided to the Consultants at the beginning of the assessment. The Consultants should consider all comments before the two reports are considered completed. The Consultants shall take note of these comments and decide whether or not to revise the reports and, where appropriate, succinctly explain why comments cannot be considered. The Consultants is expected to submit a revised version of the assessment report to UNDP and UN-HABITAT, within five days (Inception Report) / five days (Final Assessment) upon receipt of comments and feedback from UNDP and UN-HABITAT. The revised report should clearly highlight the incorporation of suggested changes made for The Consultant's consideration.

It should be noted that the above list of deliverables, together with the below implementation timeframe are subject to review and revision in discussion with The Consultant in the event of unexpected changes to the context/ working environment in Iraq during the consultancy period.

In line with the UNDP's financial regulations, when determined by the Country Office and/or The Consultants that a deliverable or service cannot be satisfactorily completed due to the impact of COVID-19 and limitations to the assignment, that deliverable or service will not be paid. Additionally, due to the current COVID-19 situation and its implications, a partial payment may be considered if the Consultants

invested time towards the deliverable but were unable to complete it, due to circumstances beyond his/her control.

TEAM COMPOSITION AND REQUIRED COMPETENCIES

The final evaluation will be undertaken by 2 external evaluators, hired as consultants, comprised of an Evaluation Team Leader (International Consultant) and an Associate Evaluator (National Consultant).

The Evaluation Team Leader (International Consultant) will have overall responsibility for the quality and timely submission of the draft and final evaluation report. Specifically, the Evaluation Leader will perform the following tasks:

Lead and manage the evaluation missions;

Develop the inception report, detailing the evaluation scope, methodology and approach;

Conduct the project evaluation in accordance with the proposed objective and scope of the evaluation and UNDP evaluation guidelines;

Manage the team during the evaluation mission, and liaise with UNDP on travel and interview schedules;

Draft and present the draft and final evaluation reports;

Lead the presentation of draft findings in the Debriefing Meetings;

Finalize the evaluation report and submit it to UNDP.

The Associate Evaluator (National Consultant) will provide technical support to the international consultant in drafting the evaluation inception report, preparation of the field activities and collecting and analysing quantitative and qualitative information for the evaluation.

The two consultants will jointly analyse the secondary documents and reflect the results of the primary data collection against the evaluation questions. The responsibility for reporting (inception report, draft and final report) lies with the international Consultant.

Required Qualifications of the Evaluation Team Leader (International Consultant)

Education:

Master's degree in Law, Governance, Development Studies, Monitoring and Evaluation, Project Management, Public Administration, or any other field relevant to the assignment.

Experience:

10 years of experience in programme evaluations and proven accomplishments in undertaking evaluations for UN, EU or other international organizations is essential

Experience in conducting evaluations in post-conflict environments is essential

Experience in the application of qualitative and quantitative methods for evaluations is essential.

Demonstrated experience in coordination and in working with donors and government entities is essential

Some knowledge of the Iraqi political/decentralisation context will be an added advantage

Language:

Fluency in spoken and written English with good report writing skills is essential. Samples of previously written work may be required. Additionally, fluency in spoken Arabic will be considered an added advantage.

Required qualification of the Associate Evaluator (National Consultant)

Master's degree in Law, Governance, Development Studies, Monitoring and Evaluation, Project Management, Public Administration or related subject;

7 years of experience carrying out development evaluations for inter-governmental organizations, government, and civil society in Iraq is required;
Experience in Results Based Management principles and approaches.
Fluency in spoken and written English and Arabic is required
Experience working in or closely with UN agencies, preferably UNDP is essential;

Good communication skills demonstrable through written evaluation reports is essential.

Corporate Competencies (Evaluation Team):

Knowledge of UNDP programming principles and procedures, the UN evaluation framework, norms, and standards; human rights-based approach (HRBA).

Demonstrates commitment to the UN values and ethical standards.

Displays cultural, gender, religion, race, nationality, and age sensitivity and adaptability.

Treats all people fairly and with impartiality.

Good communication, presentation and report writing skills including proven ability to write concise, readable, and analytical reports and high-quality publications in English.

Ability to work under pressure and to meet deadlines.

Flexible and responsive to changes and demands.

Client-oriented and open to feedback.

Functional Competencies (Evaluation Team):

Knowledge Management and Learning

Demonstrates good knowledge of the Iraq economic issues, challenges, and opportunities.

Shares knowledge and experience and contributes to overall reform interventions.

Develops deep knowledge in practice area.

Actively works towards continuing personal learning and development in one or more Practice Areas, acts on learning plan and applies newly acquired skills

Networks in Government, NGOs, and private sector.

Key Performance Indicators:

Planning and organizing: Identifies priority activities and assignments; allocates appropriate amount of time and resources for completing work; foresees risks and allows for contingencies when planning; monitors and adjusts plans and actions as necessary and, uses time efficiently.

Communication: Speaks and writes clearly and effectively; listens to others, correctly interprets messages from others and responds appropriately; asks questions to clarify and, exhibits interest in having two-way communication; tailors' language, tone, style and, format to match the audience and, demonstrates openness in sharing information and keeping people informed.

Client orientation: Considers all those to whom services are provided to be "clients" and seeks to see things from clients' point of view; establishes and maintains productive partnerships with clients by gaining their trust and respect.

Quality of deliverables: Professional skill required for delivering outputs will be assessed.

Satisfactory and timely deliverables: Satisfactory and timely completion of tasks and submission of the deliverables within the provisions of deliverables and outputs above.

EVALUATION ETHICS

Evaluations in the UN are conducted in accordance with the principles outlined in the United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG) 'Ethical Guidelines for Evaluations'⁵⁵. The Consultants must safeguard the rights and confidentiality of information providers, interviewees, and stakeholders through measures to ensure compliance with legal and other relevant codes governing collection of data and reporting on data. The Consultants must also ensure security of collected information before and after the evaluation to ensure anonymity and confidentiality of sources of information where that is expected. The information knowledge and data gathered in the evaluation process must also be solely used for the evaluation purposes and not for other uses with the express authorization of UNDP, UN-Habitat, and their partners.

MANAGEMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION ARRANGEMENTS

The project evaluation is jointly commissioned by UNDP and UN-Habitat and the joint commissioners for this evaluation will be UNDP's Resident Representative and UN-Habitat's Head of Country Programme. Principally, the Consultants will report to the UNDP Resident Representative, who will continuously collaborate with the UN-Habitat counterpart and the LADPIII project managers who will support the process by providing both substantive and logistical support to the Consultants. Assistance will be provided by the UNDP and UN-HABITAT Senior Management and Project Teams as well as PMSU, to make any refinements to the work plan of the selected Consultants. Additional assistance will be provided jointly by UNDP/UN-Habitat LADPIII project teams in supporting the Consultants to advance the evaluation work plan including contacting stakeholders and organizing meetings and facilitating field visits when necessary and if the security and COVID-19 situation permits.

Where necessary, UNDP and UN-HABITAT field monitors will support the international and national Consultants in data collection/information gathering. This will be based on discussions with, and approval of UNDP/UN-HABITAT. The International Consultant will be solely responsible to report to UNDP.

This TOR forms the basis upon which compliance with assignment requirements and overall quality of services provided by the Consultants will be assessed by UNDP and UN-Habitat.

As part of the assignment:

UNDP will provide office space with access to internet and printer when in-country in Erbil in Iraq.

UNDP and UN-Habitat will provide list of additional documents as per TOR Annexes.

The Consultants are expected to:

Use their own laptop/s, and other relevant software/equipment.

Use their own communication platforms, mobile, personal email address etc., during the consultancy period, including when in-country.

Make own travel arrangements to fly in-country and transportation arrangements outside work hours.

Be fluent in Arabic or arrange for a translator to facilitate interviews with government counterparts, Implementing Partners, and beneficiaries.

TIME FRAME FOR THE EVALUATION PROCESS

The detailed timelines for this LADPIII final evaluation will be agreed upon between the UNDP/UN-Habitat and the selected Consultants. The evaluation will take place between 22 September 2022 to 15 December 2022, including a combination of the three phases of desk-review (home-based), field data-collection missions (two in-country visits) and report writing (home-based). The Consultants will be based in Erbil

55 See here for details of UNEG guidelines: <http://www.unevaluation.org/document/detail/100>

(Iraq) as per the requirements. Whenever possible, the Consultants will be required to visit partners and activities in different locations. The security situation in each location will be reviewed prior to roll out of the final field visit plan. The final deliverable is expected to be completed not later than to 15 December 2022.

Indicative timeframe for evaluation deliverables

Activity description and expected workflow	# of days	Date of completion	Place	Responsible Party
Phase One: Desk review and inception report:				
Organize a Joint briefing between consultants and LADPIII project teams (joint Project Managers and project staff as needed).	-	At the time of signing contract ⁵⁶ (On 22/09/2022)	UNDP Erbil Office	UNDP & UN-Habitat teams
Share relevant documentation with the evaluator.	-	At the time of signing contract (on 22/09/2022)	Remote (via e-mail)	UNDP & UN-Habitat teams
Desk review, inception report drafting/submission including evaluation design, methodology, evaluation matrix, workplan and proposed list of stakeholders to be interviewed.	5 days	Within 7 days of signing contract, with draft report submission expected on last day of desk review (by 03/10/2022)	Home-based (virtual)	Evaluation consultant
PPT presentation of the inception report (15 pgs. max) including all annexes.	1 day	Within 2 days following submission of inception report (05/10/2022)	Home-based (virtual)	Evaluation consultant (with participation of UNDP, UN-Habitat teams & ERG members)
Comments and approval of inception report (deliverable 1).	-	Within 5 days following submission of inception report (10/10/2022)	UNDP Erbil Office	UNDP, UN-Habitat teams & ERG
Phase Two: First field data-collection mission:				
Consultations and field visits, in-depth interviews, and Focus Group Discussions etc.	10 days	Within 3 weeks of contract signing (by 16/10/2022)	In country (with field visits)	UNDP & UN-Habitat to organize
Debriefing on field work to joint UNDP and UN-Habitat teams (deliverable 2)	1 day	Within 3 days of completing field work (30/10/2022)	In country (UNDP office)	Evaluation consultant
Phase Three: Draft evaluation report writing:				

⁵⁶ “Contract signing is expected to be not later than 22.9.22. In case of later contract signing, all completion dates will shift accordingly”

Activity description and expected workflow	# of days	Date of completion	Place	Responsible Party
Preparation of first draft evaluation report (50 pgs. max excluding annexes) (deliverable 3)	7 days	Within 2 weeks of completing field mission (by 13/11/2022)	Home-based (virtual)	Evaluation Consultant
PPT presentation of the first draft evaluation report	1 day	On the last day of submitting evaluation report (by 13/11/2022)	UNDP Erbil Office	Evaluation consultant (with participation of UNDP, UN-Habitat teams & ERG members)
Comments to draft evaluation report	-	Within one week of submission of draft report (by 20/11/2022)	Remote (via e-mail)	UNDP/ UN-Habitat & ERG members
Consolidate UNDP, UN-Habitat, & ERG comments into a second draft evaluation report, and submission of second draft report (with comments addressed)	1 day	Within three days of receipt of draft report with comments (by 23/11/2022)	Home-based (virtual)	Evaluation Consultant
Phase Four: Second field data-collection mission:				
Consultations and field visits, in-depth interviews, and Focus Group Discussions etc. for capturing the most recent activities	5 days	Within 2 weeks after submission of second draft (by 07/12/2022)	In country (with field visits)	UNDP & UN-Habitat to organize
Phase Five: Finalization & submission of final evaluation report:				
Preparation of final draft evaluation report (50 pgs. max excluding annexes) (deliverable 4)	3 days	Within 5 days after the second field data collection mission (by 12/12/2022)	Home-based (virtual)	Evaluation Consultant
Finalization & submission of Final evaluation report incorporating additions and comments provided by project staff, stakeholders, & UNDP/UN-Habitat teams (deliverable 5)	1	At least 3 days before end of contract (by 15/12/2022)	Home-based (virtual)	Evaluation Consultant
Estimated total workdays for the evaluation	35 days			

INDICATIVE PAYMENT SCHEDULE AND MODALITIES

The Consultants are expected to deliver the following deliverables. It should be noted that the following list of deliverables might be subject to review and revision by UNDP and UN-Habitat in discussion with The Consultants in the event of unexpected changes to the context / working environment in Iraq during the consultancy period. Payments will be made upon acceptance and approval by UNDP focal point of the planned deliverables, based on the following tentative payment schedule:

Terms of Payment	Percentage (%)
First payment will be paid upon submission and acceptance of inception report including work plan and methodology (deliverable 1)	10%
Second payment will be paid upon submission and acceptance of the first draft evaluation report (including PPT presentation) (deliverable 2&3)	50%
Final payment will be paid upon submission and acceptance of final evaluation report and the two summaries (deliverable 4&5)	40%
Notes: The payment is deliverable based, i.e., upon satisfactory completion and acceptance of the deliverable by the UNDP focal point. Each payment claims must be approved by the UNDP focal point. UNDP focal point will make the payments within 14 days from receipt of invoice.	

Note on travel and accommodation

All envisaged travel costs must be included in the financial proposal including all travel within Iraq or outside the duty station/repatriation travel. In general, UNDP does not accept travel costs exceeding those of an economy class ticket.

In cases where UNDP arranges and provides travel and/or accommodation due to security and other reasons, it should be noted that these costs will be deducted from the payments to the Consultants. UN rates applies.

In the case of unforeseeable travel, payment of travel costs including visa, tickets, lodging and terminal expenses should be agreed upon in writing, between UNDP and the Consultants prior to travel and will be reimbursed.

APPLICATION SUBMISSION PROCESS AND CRITERIA FOR SELECTION

Two Consultants (comprising of one International and National Person) shall form a team and work on this evaluation, with primary responsibility to a Team Leader (International Consultant). Interested qualified and experienced individual consultant(s) must submit the following documents/information to demonstrate their qualifications and interest:

Letter of Confirmation of interest and availability using the template provided by UNDP.

Most Updated Personal detailed CV including previous experience in similar assignment and at least 3 references. Standard UN P11 Form ("CV Form")

A detailed methodology on how the candidate will approach and conduct the work and

Two samples of evaluation reports done/authored within the past three years.

Note: Applicants must not have worked in the design or implementation of this LADPIII project or in an advisory capacity for any of the interventions, directly as consultants or through UNDP/UN-Habitat service providers. Submitted proposals will be assessed using Cumulative Analysis Method. The proposals will be weighed according to the technical proposal (carrying 70%) and financial proposal (carrying 30%). Technical proposals should obtain a minimum of 70 points to qualify and to be considered. Financial proposals will be opened only for those application that obtained 70 or above in the technical proposal. Below are the criteria and points for technical and financial proposals:

Evaluation Criteria for the Evaluation Team Leader (International Consultant)		Max. Point 100	Weight
Technical	<p>Criteria A: relevance and responsiveness of candidate's previous experience, Qualification based on submitted documents: Masters' degree in Law, Governance, Development Studies, Monitoring and Evaluation, Project Management, Public Administration, or any other field relevant to the assignment (10 points)</p> <p>In addition, the Consultant must possess the following competencies: 10 years of experience in programme evaluations and proven accomplishments in undertaking evaluations for UN, EU or other international organizations (10 points)</p> <p>Experience in conducting evaluations in post-conflict environments (10 points)</p> <p>Experience in the application of qualitative and quantitative methods for evaluations (10 points).</p> <p>Demonstrated experience in coordination and in working with donors and government entities (10 points)</p> <p>Knowledge of the Iraqi political/decentralisation context (5 points).</p> <p>Fluency in spoken Arabic (5 Points)</p>	60 Points	70%
	<p>Criteria B: relevance and responsiveness of candidate's approach, technical proposal and submitted work plan and Methodologies: Time plan, methodology on how the Consultant will conduct the required tasks (30 points)</p> <p>Experience in the usage of computers and office software packages and online meeting software (MS Word, Excel, etc) (10 points)</p>	40 Points	
Financial	Lowest Offer / Offer*100		30%
Total Score = (Technical Score * 0.7 + Financial Score * 0.3)			

Evaluation Criteria for the Associate Evaluator (National Consultant)		Max. Point 100	Weight
Technical	<p>Criteria A: relevance and responsiveness of candidate's previous experience, Qualification based on submitted documents: Master's degree in the social sciences or related subject (10 points) In addition, the Consultant must possess the following competencies: 7 years' experience carrying out development evaluations for inter-governmental organizations, government, and civil society (10 points) Fluency in spoken and written English and Arabic (10 points) Experience working in or closely with UN agencies, especially UNDP (10 points). An understanding of the development context in Iraq (10 points) Good communication skills demonstrable through the written of evaluation reports (10 points).</p>	60 Points	70%
	<p>Criteria B: relevance and responsiveness of candidate's approach, technical proposal and submitted work plan and Methodologies: Time plan, methodology on how The Consultant will conduct the required tasks (30 points) Experience in the usage of computers and office software packages and online meeting software (MS Word, Excel, etc) (10 points)</p>	40 Points	
Financial	Lowest Offer / Offer*100		30%
Total Score = (Technical Score * 0.7 + Financial Score * 0.3)			

Weight Per Technical Competence	
5 (outstanding): 96% - 100%	The individual consultant/contractor has demonstrated an OUTSTANDING capacity for the analyzed competence.
4 (Very good): 86% - 95%	The individual consultant/contractor has demonstrated a VERY GOOD capacity for the analyzed competence.
3 (Good): 76% - 85%	The individual consultant/contractor has demonstrated a GOOD capacity for the analyzed competence.
2 (Satisfactory): 70% - 75%	The individual consultant/contractor has demonstrated a SATISFACTORY capacity for the analyzed competence.
1 (Weak): Below 70%	The individual consultant/contractor has demonstrated a WEAK capacity for the analyzed competence.

ANNEXES

Annex 1: Project Description of Action (DOA) and Project Document (PRODOC)

Annex 2: Project quarterly and annual reports for 2019, 2020, 2021, and 2022.

Annex 3: Project Annual Work Plan (AWP) for 2019, 2020 and 2021.

Annex 4: Other documents to be consulted

UNDP Handbook on Monitoring and Evaluation for development results accessible here:
<http://web.undp.org/evaluation/handbook/documents/english/pmehttp://web.undp.org/evaluation/handbook/documents/english/pme-handbook.pdf>

UNDP Evaluation Guidelines (2021) accessible here: http://web.undp.org/evaluation/guideline/documents/PDF/UNDP_Evaluation_Guidelines.pdf

UN Ethical Guidelines for Evaluation accessible here:

<http://www.unevaluation.org/document/download/547>

UNDP Country Programme Document (CPD) 2020-2024: <https://www.iq.undp.org/content/iraq/en/home/library/iraq-cpd-2020-2024.html>

National Development Plan for Iraq (2018-2022) and National Development Plan for the Kurdistan Region of Iraq, KRI (2018-2022)

UN-Habitat Evaluation Manual: <https://unhabitat.org/sites/default/files/2018/07/UN-Habitat-Evaluation-Manual-April-2018.pdf>

Annex 5: Sample evaluation matrix (Pg. 113), to be included in the inception report, is accessible here:

[http://web.undp.org/evaluation/guideline/documents/PDF/UNDP_Evaluation_Guidelines.p df](http://web.undp.org/evaluation/guideline/documents/PDF/UNDP_Evaluation_Guidelines.pdf)

Table A. Sample of evaluation matrix						
Relevant evaluation criteria	Key questions	Specific subquestions	Data sources	Data collection methods/tools	Indicators/success standard	Data analysis method

Annex 6: “UN Code of conduct” forms accessible here: <http://www.unevaluation.org/document/detail/100>

The Consultant and each member of the evaluation team will be requested to read carefully, understand, and sign the “UN Code of Conduct.”

Annex 7: Guidance on Evaluation Report Template, refer to Annex 4, pgs. 118-122 for suggested minimum report requirements. The guidance is accessible here: <http://web.undp.org/evaluation/guideline/documents/PDF/section-6.pdf>

Annex 8: UNDP Evaluation guidelines during COVID-19 accessible here: <http://web.undp.org/evaluation/guideline/covid19.shtml>

Annex 9: Integrating Gender Equality and Human Rights in Evaluation - UN-SWAP Guidance, Analysis and Good Practices accessible here:

<http://www.unevaluation.org/document/detail/1452>

<http://www.unevaluation.org/document/download/2107>

<http://www.unevaluation.org/document/download/2695>

Annex 10: Audit trail template accessible here:

<http://web.undp.org/evaluation/guideline/documents/Template/section-4/Sec 4 Template 7 Evaluation Audit trail form.docx>

Annex 11: Quality Assessment Checklists (June 2021) accessible here: <http://web.undp.org/evaluation/guideline/section-6.shtml>

Annex 12: Dispute and wrongdoing resolution process and contact details (to be provided at the time of signing the contract)

Annex 13: UNDP evaluation report template and quality standards (pages 117-121) is accessible here:

[http://web.undp.org/evaluation/guideline/documents/PDF/UNDP_Evaluation_Guidelines.p df](http://web.undp.org/evaluation/guideline/documents/PDF/UNDP_Evaluation_Guidelines.pdf)

6.1 Annex 2: Evaluation Matrix

Assumptions to be Assessed	Indicators/Judgement Criteria	Data Source /Stakeholder	Data Method	Collection
<p>Relevance</p> <p>EQ 1: To what extent has the strategy, expected outputs, and proposed activities of the LADPIII project reflect the strategic considerations of host country's policies, donor's priorities, and UNDP's strategic policies.</p> <p>EQ 2: To what extent did relevant stakeholders participate in the LADPIII project (design, implementation and monitoring and ownership)</p> <p>EQ 3: To what extent has the selected implementation methods been appropriate to the development context, which means a) were based upon adequate needs-assessment and b) show understanding of the development situation of Iraq?</p> <p>EQ 4: To what extent were considerations for gender equality and women's empowerment, and the needs of people with disability, IDPs, vulnerable and marginalized groups integrated into the design of the project?</p> <p>EQ 5: How do stakeholders perceive the relevance of the project and how has the activities implemented improved the lives of beneficiaries? Are there any stories of change?</p>				
The project approaches and methodologies are well suited to the priorities and policies of Iraq, UNDP and donor priorities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extent of alignment with national policies • Extent of alignment with UNDP strategies and policies • Extent of alignment with EU strategies in Iraq 	Project Documents UNDP staff UN Habitat Staff Government of Iraq EU officers	Literature Review KIIs	
Stakeholders played an important role during project design	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extent to which government was consulted during project design • Extent to which other stakeholders were consulted during project design • Degree of national ownership of project activities 	Project Documents UNDP staff UN Habitat Staff Government of Iraq (national and local) European Municipalities	Literature Review KIIs	

The project implementation strategies were backed by context analysis and conflict sensitivity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evidence of needs assessments conducted Evidence on context analysis conducted Evidence of conflict sensitivity and risk matrix developed and continuously updated 	Project Documents UNDP staff UN Habitat Staff	Literature review KIIs
The project mainstreamed gender and ensured that leaving-no-one behind is integrated in design and implementation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Degree to which gender was mainstreamed Degree to which vulnerable groups were identified during design Degree to which implementation ensured leaving no one behind principles 	Project Documents UNDP staff UN Habitat Staff	Literature review KIIs
Stakeholders confirm the relevance of the project and positive change in the lives of beneficiaries	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Extent of support to project design by stakeholders Extent to which beneficiaries report positive change in their lives Extent of local ownership of project interventions 	Project Documents UNDP Staff UN Habitat Staff Government of Iraq (national and local) CSO partners Beneficiaries European Municipalities	Literature Review KIIs FGDs
<p>Effectiveness</p> <p>EQ 6: To what extent did the project achieve the intended results of (I) Improving the capacity among the 9 partner governorates to manage local government systems; (II) Strengthening dialogue between civil societies and state institutions; (III) Promoting economic growth and job opportunities (with special focus on green projects involving youth and women); and (IV) improving living conditions in conflict areas and returnees.</p> <p>EQ 7: To what extent did the project contribute to decentralization reforms? Were there any unintended effects (positive/negative)?</p> <p>EQ 8: How effective are the strategies and tools used in the implementation of the project?</p> <p>EQ 9: What were the major factors influencing the achievement or non-achievement of the objectives?</p>			
The project achieved its intended results	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Extent of improvement in local capacities within local government 	Project Documents UNDP Staff UN Habitat Staff	Literature Review KIIs FGDs

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extent of increased dialogue between NGOs and state actors • Extent of economic growth measured in number of jobs created disaggregated by gender and including youth • Extent of improvement of living conditions including number of rehabilitated houses 	Government of Iraq (national and local) CSO partners Beneficiaries European Municipalities	
The project activities promoted a strong understanding and practice of decentralisation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extent to which local government exhibit an understanding of decentralization • Degree of commitment of national government to decentralisation practices • Degree of commitment of local government to decentralisation practices 	UNDP Staff Government of Iraq (national and local) NGOs, INGOs	KIIs
Project implementation strategies and models have been effective	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extent to which implementation strategies have been flexible and resilient • Extent to which the project has been able to adapt to changes on the ground • Extent to which the project approaches have enabled the achievement of results 	Project Documents UNDP Staff UN Habitat Staff Local government CSOs European Municipalities	Literature Review KIIs
Project was aware of enabling factors and challenges and constantly thrived to address challenges and capitalise on enabling factors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extent to which risk matrix was updated • Degree of success in addressing challenges • Evidence of dialogue with stakeholders to understand and respond to challenges • Evidence of enabling factors supporting the implementation 	Project Documents UNDP Staff UN Habitat Staff Government of Iraq (national and local) CSOs European Municipalities	Literature Review KIIs

Efficiency

EQ 10: To what extent have the project management structure, and allocated resources been efficient in achieving the expected results? Does the actual or expected results (outputs and outcomes) justify the costs incurred?

EQ 11: To what extent have project funds and activities been delivered in a timely manner?

EQ 12: What is the visibility and communications strategy adopted by the project? Has it been cost-effective in terms of promoting the project and its achievements?

EQ 13: Has the monitoring and evaluation systems put in place helped to ensure that the project is managed efficiently and effectively?

The project human and financial resources have been efficient	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evidence of efficient management structure Evidence of efficient resource management 	Project Documents UNDP staff UN Habitat Staff	Literature review KIs
The project has been on track in terms of implementation and funds were disbursed in a timely fashion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evidence of timely disbursement of funds Evidence of timely implementation of activities as per workplan Extent to which delays have been accounted for by the project 	Project Documents UNDP staff UN Habitat Staff EU officer NGOs, INGOs staff	Literature Review KIs
The project adopted a visibility and communication strategy aligned with EU guidelines and supportive of project objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Extent to which communication and visibility plans are aligned with EU visibility guidelines Extent to which communication and visibility activities promote project results and achievements 	UNDP staff UN Habitat Staff EU officers NGOs, INGOs staff	KIs
Project M&E systems enabled an effective implementation of the project	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Extent to which M&E system is developed Extent to which indicators are adequately developed and well defined Extent to which reporting is conducted in a timely manner Evidence of use of M&E data for project management Examples of changes as a result of M&E data generated 	UNDP Staff (mainly M&E officer) UN Habitat Staff NGOs, INGOs M&E officers	KIs

Impact

EQ 14: To what extent did the LADPIII project contributed to or is likely to contribute to the goal of promoting the stability and socio-economic development of Iraq?

EQ 15: To what extent and in what ways did or is the project likely to contribute to the achievement of the SDGs (specifically SDG 5,6,7,8,11, and 13)?

EQ 16: What real difference has the project made or likely to make in the beneficiaries?

EQ 17: What are the positive and negative, intended and unintended, changes produced by the project?

LADPIII contributed to promoting stability and socio-economic development in Iraq	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extent to which LADPIII supported increased dialogue between CSOs and local government • Extent to which LADPIII increased trust between citizens and local government • Extent to which communities have higher trust in CSOs in their community • Degree to which LADPIII increased economic activities in the targeted governorates • Degree to which project activities supported reintegration of returnees and stability within communities 	Project Documents UNDP Staff UN Habitat Staff Government of Iraq (national and local) NGOs, INGOs Beneficiaries European Municipalities	Literature Review KIIs FGDs
The project was able to contribute to the SDGs as initially envisaged in the description of the action	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extent to which the project contributed to SDG 5,6,7,8,11, and 13 	Project Documents UNDP Staff UN Habitat Staff	Literature Review KIIs
The project resulted in change in the lives of beneficiaries	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extent to which project results affected (positively or negatively) CSOs • Extent to which project results affected (positively or negatively) Iraqi citizens benefiting from the project 	Project Documents NGOs, INGOs staff Beneficiaries	Literature Review KIIs FGDs

<p>The project results have enabled positive / negative changes at the institutional, community, and individual levels</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extent to which project results affected (positively or negatively) local government and other institutions • Extent to which project results affected (positively or negatively) CSOs • Extent to which project results affected (positively or negatively) the communities where the project was implemented • Extent to which project results affected (positively or negatively) Iraqi citizens benefiting from the project 	<p>UNDP Staff UN Habitat Staff Local government NGOs, INGOs Beneficiaries European Municipalities</p>	<p>KIIs FGDs</p>
<p>Sustainability</p> <p>EQ 18: To what extent are sustainability considerations (environmental footprint, mitigation measures, maintenance, etc.) integrated into project implementation?</p> <p>EQ 19: What components or which interventions of the project are likely to be sustainable and/or scalable, and why?</p> <p>EQ 20: Which key factors will be required to improve prospects of sustainability of project outputs/outcomes and the potential for replication?</p> <p>EQ 21: How likely is it that the exit strategies, and approaches to phase out assistance provided by the project will be effective considering existing contributing factors and constraints?</p>			
<p>The project has systematically integrated sustainability in all interventions and activities</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extent to which CSOs projects have considered sustainability • Extent to which Peer-to-Peer activities have considered sustainability • Extent to which CSO-LA dialogue is likely to be sustained after the life of the project 	<p>UNDP Staff UN Habitat Staff NGOs, INGOs Local government European Municipalities</p>	<p>KIIs FGDs</p>
<p>The project has considered sustainability risks and focused on addressing them</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extent to which the project identified sustainability risks 	<p>UNDP Staff UN Habitat Staff</p>	<p>KIIs FGDs</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Degree to which activities are likely to continue after the life of the project • Level of ownership of LA and CSOs of local processes • Degree to which CSO-implemented projects are likely to continue beyond the project • Degree to which vocational training of UN Habitat could lead to sustainable income for beneficiaries 	NGOs, INGOs Local government European Municipalities	
Coherence EQ 22: To what extent is the project coherent internally, especially considering the two implementing partners (UNDP and UN-Habitat) and the interlinkages within and between their respective result areas? EQ 23: Are there any concrete examples of successful models of collaboration with other partners (especially considering national level priorities, other EU-funded projects interventions and those of other donors active in the recovery, stability and decentralization arena in Iraq) towards avoiding duplication as well as increasing complementarity and integrated activities to improve reach and impact on beneficiaries?			
Coordination and coherence between UNDP and UN Habitat have enabled an effective implementation of the project	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evidence of clear roles and responsibilities between the partners • Evidence of regular meetings amongst the partners • Evidence of synergies between the different activities 	UNDP Staff UN Habitat Staff EU Officer	KIIs
Coordination and coherence between UNDP, UN Habitat and other actors/projects have enabled an effective implementation of the project and complementarity of donor funding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evidence of coordination with other EU funded projects • Evidence and outcome of coordination with UNDP projects • Evidence and outcome of coordination with other development partners and donors (e.g. USAID, GIZ...etc.) 	UNDP Staff UN Habitat Staff EU Officer GIZ USAID	KIIs
Cross-Cutting Themes			

Human Rights:

EQ 24: To what extent is the project promoting a rights-based approach for all groups of persons, especially to promote international laws and commitments made by Iraq?

EQ 25: To what extent have the poor, women, internally displaced, returnees and other disadvantaged and marginalized groups benefitted from the LADPIII project?

Gender Equality

EQ 27: To what extent has gender been mainstreamed within the design, implementation, and monitoring of the project?

EQ 28: To what extent has the project promoted positive changes in gender equality and advanced the empowerment of women?

The project approaches mainstream rights-based approaches and ensures benefits from the project consider all categories of beneficiaries	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extent to which RBA was mainstreamed in project activities • Extent to which RBA was promoted within project activities • Evidence of change in CSO and LA understanding of RBA. 	UNDP Staff UN Habitat Staff NGOs, INGOs Local Government	KIIs
The project mainstreamed gender and promoted positive change in gender equality and empowerment of women	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extent to which gender was mainstreamed in project activities • Extent to which gender was promoted within project activities • Evidence of change in gender equality and empowerment of women as a result of project interventions 	UNDP Staff UN Habitat Staff NGOs, INGOs Local Government	KIIs

Annex 3: Data Collection Tools

UNDP and UN Habitat Staff

Name of Interviewee:

Position:

Country:

Date of Interview:

Interviewers:

Thank you very much for taking the time to talk with us about your collaboration with UNDP. We anticipate that it will take approximately one hour to respond to these questions. If you need to break off the interview at any point, we will re-schedule and continue later, as we know that time is limited, and lives are increasingly busy.

We also want to assure you that your answers are confidential and will only be analyzed by category of stakeholder. Should we need to directly quote you, this will only happen after receiving a written consent from you.

We would also like to stress that I am an independent evaluator and as such I do not work with UNDP so anything positive or negative would never affect your opportunity now or in the future for collaboration with them.

Before we start the formal interview, we would like to know your level of involvement with UNDP especially in the LAPD project

Relevance

EQ 1: To what extent has the strategy, expected outputs, and proposed activities of the LADPIII project reflect the strategic considerations of host country's policies, donor's priorities, and UNDP's strategic policies.

- To what Extent is the project aligned with UNDP strategies and policies
- To what Extent is the project aligned with EU strategies in Iraq
- To what Extent is the project aligned with Government of Iraq policies and strategies

EQ 2: To what extent did relevant stakeholders participate in the LADPIII project (design, implementation and monitoring and ownership)

- How was the government consulted during project design?
- Which other stakeholders were consulted during project design?
- To what degree there is a national ownership of project activities? How is that measured?

EQ 3: To what extent has the selected implementation methods been appropriate to the development context, which means a) were based upon adequate needs-assessment and b) show understanding of the development situation of Iraq?

- Were needs assessments conducted? How did they affect project design and implementation?
- Were context analysis conducted? How do they affect project design and implementation?
- How often is the risk matrix and conflict sensitivity updated? What was the outcome of these updates?

EQ 4: To what extent were considerations for gender equality and women's empowerment, and the needs of people with disability, IDPs, vulnerable and marginalized groups integrated into the design of the project?

- How was gender considerations integrated in the project design?
- How did the design account for the different needs of the target groups including PwDs, IDPs, and other marginalized groups?

EQ 5: How do stakeholders perceive the relevance of the project and how has the activities implemented improved the lives of beneficiaries? Are there any stories of change?

- To what Extent do beneficiaries report positive change in their lives
- To what extent there is support from stakeholders to the project? (Extent of local ownership of project interventions)

Effectiveness

EQ 6: To what extent did the project achieve the intended results of (I) Improving the capacity among the 9 partner governorates to manage local government systems; (II) Strengthening dialogue between civil societies and state institutions; (III) Promoting economic growth and job opportunities (with special focus on green projects involving youth and women); and (IV) improving living conditions in conflict areas and returnees.

- To what Extent improvement in local capacities within local government can be observed?
- To what Extent increased dialogue between NGOs and state actors can be observed?
- To what Extent economic growth measured in number of jobs created disaggregated by gender and including youth can be observed
- To what Extent improvement of living conditions including number of rehabilitated houses can be attributed to the project

EQ 7: To what extent did the project contribute to decentralization reforms? Were there any unintended effects (positive/negative)?

- To what Extent local government exhibit an understanding of decentralization?
- To what Degree there is commitment of national government to decentralization practices?
- To what Degree there is commitment of local government to decentralization practices?

EQ 8: How effective are the strategies and tools used in the implementation of the project?

- To what Extent implementation strategies have been flexible and resilient?
- To what Extent the project has been able to adapt to changes on the ground?
- To what Extent the project approaches have enabled the achievement of results?

EQ 9: What were the major factors influencing the achievement or non-achievement of the objectives?

- How often has risk matrix been updated? What changed as a result of this?
- How did the project address factors affecting the non-achievement of the objectives?
- How often was the project engaged in dialogue with stakeholders to understand and respond to challenges? What was the outcome of these exchanged
- What were the enabling factors supporting the implementation and achievement of objectives?

Efficiency

EQ 10: To what extent have the project management structure, and allocated resources been efficient in achieving the expected results? Does the actual or expected results (outputs and outcomes) justify the costs incurred?

- What has been the management structure and staffing of the project? Has this been efficient? Why/why not?
- What has been the financial management structure of the project? Has it been efficient? How?

EQ 11: To what extent have project funds and activities been delivered in a timely manner?

- Has the disbursement of funds been timely? Why/why not?

- Has the project been able to implement all activities according to the work plan? Why/why not?
Evidence of timely implementation of activities as per workplan
- How has the project accounted for delays in implementation?

EQ 12: What is the visibility and communications strategy adopted by the project? Has it been cost-effective in terms of promoting the project and its achievements?

- To what Extent has the communication and visibility plans are aligned with EU visibility guidelines
- What has been the visibility and communication activities of the project?
- To what Extent has communication and visibility activities promote project results and achievements

EQ 13: Has the monitoring and evaluation systems put in place helped to ensure that the project is managed efficiently and effectively?

- What is the M&E system of the project?
- How have the indicators been adequately developed and well defined
- How and the frequency of reporting?
- How is M&E data used for project management
- What are some examples of changes as a result of M&E data generated?

Impact

EQ 14: To what extent did the LADPIII project contributed to or is likely to contribute to the goal of promoting the stability and socio-economic development of Iraq?

- To what Extent LADPIII supported increased dialogue between NGOs and local government?
- To what Extent LADPIII increased trust between citizens and local government?
How can this be observed?
- To what Extent communities have higher trust in NGOs in their community? How can this be observed?
- To what Degree did LADPIII increase economic activities in the targeted governorates?
- To what Degree project activities supported reintegration of returnees and stability within communities?

EQ 15: To what extent and in what ways did or is the project likely to contributed to the achievement of the SDGs (specifically SDG 5,6,7,8,11, and 13)?

- How and to what Extent the project contributed to SDG 5,6,7,8,11, and 13? How is this measured?

EQ 16: What real difference has the project made or likely to make in the beneficiaries?

- To what Extent project results affected (positively or negatively) NGOs?
- To what Extent project results affected (positively or negatively) Iraqi citizens benefiting from the project?

EQ 17: What are the positive and negative, intended and unintended, changes produced by the project?

- To what Extent project results affected (positively or negatively) local government and other institutions?
- To what Extent project results affected (positively or negatively) NGOs?
- To what Extent project results affected (positively or negatively) the communities where the project was implemented?

- To what Extent project results affected (positively or negatively) Iraqi citizens benefiting from the project?

Sustainability

EQ 18: To what extent are sustainability considerations (environmental footprint, mitigation measures, maintenance, etc.) integrated into project implementation?

Extent to which NGO projects have considered sustainability

Extent to which Peer-to-Peer activities have considered sustainability

Extent to which CSO-LA dialogue is likely to be sustained after the life of the project

EQ 19: What components or which interventions of the project are likely to be sustainable and/or scalable, and why?

Extent to which the project identified sustainability risks

Degree to which activities are likely to continue after the life of the project

Level of ownership of LA and NGOs of local processes

Degree to which CSO-implemented projects are likely to continue beyond the project

Degree to which vocational training of UN Habitat could lead to sustainable income for beneficiaries

EQ 20: Which key factors will be required to improve prospects of sustainability of project outputs/outcomes and the potential for replication?

EQ 21: How likely is it that the exit strategies, and approaches to phase out assistance provided by the project will be effective considering existing contributing factors and constraints?

Coherence

EQ 22: To what extent is the project coherent internally, especially considering the two implementing partners (UNDP and UN-Habitat) and the interlinkages within and between their respective result areas?

- Evidence of clear roles and responsibilities between the partners
- Evidence of regular meetings amongst the partners
- Evidence of synergies between the different activities

EQ 23: Are there any concrete examples of successful models of collaboration with other partners (especially considering national level priorities, other EU-funded projects interventions and those of other donors active in the recovery, stability and decentralization arena in Iraq) towards avoiding duplication as well as increasing complementarity and integrated activities to improve reach and impact on beneficiaries?

- Evidence of coordination with other EU funded projects
- Evidence and outcome of coordination with UNDP projects
- Evidence and outcome of coordination with other development partners and donors (e.g. USAID, GIZ...etc.)

Cross-Cutting Themes

Human Rights:

EQ 24: To what extent is the project promoting a rights-based approach for all groups of persons, especially to promote international laws and commitments made by Iraq?

- To what Extent RBA was mainstreamed in project activities?
- To what Extent RBA was promoted within project activities?
- What is the Evidence of change in CSO and LA understanding of RBA.?

EQ 25: To what extent have the poor, women, internally displaced, returnees and other disadvantaged and marginalized groups benefitted from the LADPIII project?

- What is the Evidence of benefits received by the different groups?

Gender Equality

EQ 27: To what extent has gender been mainstreamed within the design, implementation, and monitoring of the project?

- To what Extent was gender mainstreamed in project activities?
- To what Extent was gender promoted within project activities?

EQ 28: To what extent has the project promoted positive changes in gender equality and advanced the empowerment of women?

- What is the Evidence of change in gender equality and empowerment of women as a result of project interventions?

National and Local Government

Name of Interviewee:

Position:

Country:

Date of Interview:

Interviewers:

Thank you very much for taking the time to talk with us about your collaboration with UNDP. We anticipate that it will take approximately one hour to respond to these questions. If you need to break off the interview at any point, we will re-schedule and continue later, as we know that time is limited, and lives are increasingly busy.

We also want to assure you that your answers are confidential and will only be analyzed by category of stakeholder. Should we need to directly quote you, this will only happen after receiving a written consent from you.

We would also like to stress that I am an independent evaluator and as such I do not work with UNDP so anything positive or negative would never affect your opportunity now or in the future for collaboration with them.

Before we start the formal interview, we would like to know your level of involvement with UNDP especially in the LAPD project

Relevance

EQ 1: To what extent has the strategy, expected outputs, and proposed activities of the LADPIII project reflect the strategic considerations of host country's policies, donor's priorities, and UNDP's strategic policies.

- To what extent is the project aligned with Government of Iraq policies and strategies

EQ 2: To what extent did relevant stakeholders participate in the LADPIII project (design, implementation and monitoring and ownership)

- How was the government consulted during project design?
- Which other stakeholders were consulted during project design?
- To what degree there is a national ownership of project activities? How is that measured?

EQ 4: To what extent were considerations for gender equality and women's empowerment, and the needs of people with disability, IDPs, vulnerable and marginalized groups integrated into the design of the project?

- How were gender considerations integrated in the project design?
- How did the design account for the different needs of the target groups including PwDs, IDPs, and other marginalized groups?

EQ 5: How do stakeholders perceive the relevance of the project and how has the activities implemented improved the lives of beneficiaries? Are there any stories of change?

- To what extent do beneficiaries report positive change in their lives
- To what extent there is support from stakeholders to the project? (Extent of local ownership of project interventions)

Effectiveness

EQ 6: To what extent did the project achieve the intended results of (I) Improving the capacity among the 9 partner governorates to manage local government systems; (II) Strengthening dialogue between civil societies and state institutions; (III) Promoting economic growth and job opportunities (with special focus on green projects involving youth and women); and (IV) improving living conditions in conflict areas and returnees.

- To what Extent improvement in local capacities within local government can be observed?
- To what Extent increased dialogue between NGOs and state actors can be observed?
- To what Extent economic growth measured in number of jobs created disaggregated by gender and including youth can be observed
- To what Extent improvement of living conditions including number of rehabilitated houses can be attributed to the project

EQ 7: To what extent did the project contribute to decentralization reforms? Were there any unintended effects (positive/negative)?

- What do you understand by decentralisation? How does it manifest in your municipality? (To what Extent local government exhibit an understanding of decentralization?)
- To what Degree there is commitment of national government to decentralization practices?
- To what Degree there is commitment of local government to decentralization practices?

Impact

EQ 14: To what extent did the LADPIII project contributed to or is likely to contribute to the goal of promoting the stability and socio-economic development of Iraq?

- What happened as a result of the project?
- To what Extent LADPIII supported increased dialogue between NGOs and local government?
- To what Extent LADPIII increased trust between citizens and local government? How can this be observed?
- To what Extent communities have higher trust in NGOs in their community? How can this be observed?
- To what Degree did LADPIII increase economic activities in the targeted governorates?
- To what Degree project activities supported reintegration of returnees and stability within communities?

EQ 16: What real difference has the project made or likely to make in the beneficiaries?

- To what Extent project results affected (positively or negatively) NGOs?
- To what Extent project results affected (positively or negatively) Iraqi citizens benefiting from the project?

EQ 17: What are the positive and negative, intended and unintended, changes produced by the project?

- To what Extent project results affected (positively or negatively) local government and other institutions?
- To what Extent project results affected (positively or negatively) NGOs?
- To what Extent project results affected (positively or negatively) the communities where the project was implemented?
- To what Extent project results affected (positively or negatively) Iraqi citizens benefiting from the project?

Sustainability

EQ 18: To what extent are sustainability considerations (environmental footprint, mitigation measures, maintenance, etc.) integrated into project implementation?

- Extent to which Peer-to-Peer activities have considered sustainability
- Extent to which CSO-LA dialogue is likely to be sustained after the life of the project

EQ 19: What components or which interventions of the project are likely to be sustainable and/or scalable, and why?

- What would continue after the end of the project? What would stop? Why?
- Degree to which activities are likely to continue after the life of the project
- Level of ownership of LA and NGOs of local processes
- Degree to which CSO-implemented projects are likely to continue beyond the project
- Degree to which vocational training of UN Habitat could lead to sustainable income for beneficiaries

EQ 20: Which key factors will be required to improve prospects of sustainability of project outputs/outcomes and the potential for replication?

EQ 21: How likely is it that the exit strategies, and approaches to phase out assistance provided by the project will be effective considering existing contributing factors and constraints?

Coherence

EQ 23: Are there any concrete examples of successful models of collaboration with other partners (especially considering national level priorities, other EU-funded projects interventions and those of other donors active in the recovery, stability and decentralization arena in Iraq) towards avoiding duplication as well as increasing complementarity and integrated activities to improve reach and impact on beneficiaries?

- Are other donors working in your municipality?
- How well did the project coordinate or complement other work done by other donors including the Iraqi government?
- Evidence and outcome of coordination with other development partners and donors (e.g. USAID, GIZ...etc.)

Cross-Cutting Themes

Human Rights:

EQ 24: To what extent is the project promoting a rights-based approach for all groups of persons, especially to promote international laws and commitments made by Iraq?

- To what Extent RBA was mainstreamed in project activities?
- To what Extent RBA was promoted within project activities?
- What is the Evidence of change in CSO and LA understanding of RBA.?

EQ 25: To what extent have the poor, women, internally displaced, returnees and other disadvantaged and marginalized groups benefitted from the LADPIII project?

- What is the Evidence of benefits received by the different groups?

Gender Equality

EQ 28: To what extent has the project promoted positive changes in gender equality and advanced the empowerment of women?

- What is the Evidence of change in gender equality and empowerment of women as a result of project interventions?

National and International NGOs/INGOs

Name of Interviewee:

Position:

Country:

Date of Interview:

Interviewers:

Thank you very much for taking the time to talk with us about your collaboration with UNDP. We anticipate that it will take approximately one hour to respond to these questions. If you need to break off the interview at any point, we will re-schedule and continue later, as we know that time is limited, and lives are increasingly busy.

We also want to assure you that your answers are confidential and will only be analyzed by category of stakeholder. Should we need to directly quote you, this will only happen after receiving a written consent from you.

We would also like to stress that I am an independent evaluator and as such I do not work with UNDP so anything positive or negative would never affect your opportunity now or in the future for collaboration with them.

Before we start the formal interview, we would like to know your level of involvement with UNDP especially in the LAPD project

Relevance

EQ 1: To what extent has the strategy, expected outputs, and proposed activities of the LADPIII project reflect the strategic considerations of host country's policies, donor's priorities, and UNDP's strategic policies.

- To what extent is the project aligned with Government of Iraq policies and strategies
- To what extent is this project aligned with your vision and approaches?

EQ 2: To what extent did relevant stakeholders participate in the LADPIII project (design, implementation and monitoring and ownership)

- How was the government consulted during project design?
- To what extent were you engaged in the design of the project overall and in your own project?
- How does this project complement other activities implemented by your organisation? To what degree there is a national ownership of project activities? How is that measured?

EQ 3: To what extent has the selected implementation methods been appropriate to the development context, which means a) were based upon adequate needs-assessment and b) show understanding of the development situation of Iraq?

- Were needs assessments conducted? How did they affect project design and implementation?
- Were context analysis conducted? How do they affect project design and implementation?
- How often is the risk matrix and conflict sensitivity updated? What was the outcome of these updates?

EQ 4: To what extent were considerations for gender equality and women's empowerment, and the needs of people with disability, IDPs, vulnerable and marginalized groups integrated into the design of the project?

- How were gender considerations integrated in the project design?

- How did the design account for the different needs of the target groups including PwDs, IDPs, and other marginalized groups?

EQ 5: How do stakeholders perceive the relevance of the project and how has the activities implemented improved the lives of beneficiaries? Are there any stories of change?

- To what Extent do beneficiaries report positive change in their lives
- To what extent there is support from stakeholders to the project? (Extent of local ownership of project interventions)

Effectiveness

EQ 6: To what extent did the project achieve the intended results of (I) Improving the capacity among the 9 partner governorates to manage local government systems; (II) Strengthening dialogue between civil societies and state institutions; (III) Promoting economic growth and job opportunities (with special focus on green projects involving youth and women); and (IV) improving living conditions in conflict areas and returnees.

What has been achieved by your project?

- To what Extent improvement in local capacities within local government can be observed?
- To what Extent increased dialogue between NGOs and state actors can be observed?
- To what Extent economic growth measured in number of jobs created disaggregated by gender and including youth can be observed
- To what Extent improvement of living conditions including number of rehabilitated houses can be attributed to the project

EQ 8: How effective are the strategies and tools used in the implementation of the project?

- To what Extent implementation strategies have been flexible and resilient?
- To what Extent the project has been able to adapt to changes on the ground?
- To what Extent the project approaches have enabled the achievement of results?

EQ 9: What were the major factors influencing the achievement or non-achievement of the objectives?

- How often has risk matrix been updated? What changed as a result of this?
- How did the project address factors affecting the non-achievement of the objectives?
- How often was the project engaged in dialogue with stakeholders to understand and respond to challenges? What was the outcome of these exchanged
- What were the enabling factors supporting the implementation and achievement of objectives?

Efficiency

EQ 10: To what extent have the project management structure, and allocated resources been efficient in achieving the expected results? Does the actual or expected results (outputs and outcomes) justify the costs incurred?

- What has been the management structure and staffing of the project? Has this been efficient? Why/why not?
- What has been the financial management structure of the project? Has it been efficient? How?

EQ 11: To what extent have project funds and activities been delivered in a timely manner?

- Has the disbursement of funds been timely? Why/why not?
- Has the project been able to implement all activities according to the work plan? Why/why not? Evidence of timely implementation of activities as per workplan
- How has the project accounted for delays in implementation?

EQ 12: What is the visibility and communications strategy adopted by the project? Has it been cost-effective in terms of promoting the project and its achievements?

- To what Extent has the communication and visibility plans are aligned with EU visibility guidelines
- What has been the visibility and communication activities of the project?
- To what Extent has communication and visibility activities promote project results and achievements

EQ 13: Has the monitoring and evaluation systems put in place helped to ensure that the project is managed efficiently and effectively?

- What is the M&E system of the project?
- How have the indicators been adequately developed and well defined
- How and the frequency of reporting?
- How is M&E data used for project management
- What are some examples of changes as a result of M&E data generated?

Impact

EQ 14: To what extent did the LADPIII project contributed to or is likely to contribute to the goal of promoting the stability and socio-economic development of Iraq?

- To what Extent LADPIII supported increased dialogue between NGO and local government?
- To what Extent LADPIII increased trust between citizens and local government? How can this be observed?
- To what Extent communities have higher trust in NGOs in their community? How can this be observed?
- To what Degree did LADPIII increase economic activities in the targeted governorates?
- To what Degree project activities supported reintegration of returnees and stability within communities?

EQ 16: What real difference has the project made or likely to make in the beneficiaries?

- To what Extent project results affected (positively or negatively) NGOs?
- To what Extent project results affected (positively or negatively) Iraqi citizens benefiting from the project?

EQ 17: What are the positive and negative, intended and unintended, changes produced by the project?

- To what Extent project results affected (positively or negatively) local government and other institutions?
- To what Extent project results affected (positively or negatively) NGOs?
- To what Extent project results affected (positively or negatively) the communities where the project was implemented?
- To what Extent project results affected (positively or negatively) Iraqi citizens benefiting from the project?

Sustainability

EQ 18: To what extent are sustainability considerations (environmental footprint, mitigation measures, maintenance, etc.) integrated into project implementation?

- Extent to which NGOs and INGOs projects have considered sustainability
- Extent to which NGO-LA dialogue is likely to be sustained after the life of the project

EQ 19: What components or which interventions of the project are likely to be sustainable and/or scalable, and why?

- Degree to which activities are likely to continue after the life of the project
- Level of ownership of LA and NGOs of local processes
- Degree to which NGOs/INGOs-implemented projects are likely to continue beyond the project
- Degree to which vocational training of UN Habitat could lead to sustainable income for beneficiaries

EQ 20: Which key factors will be required to improve prospects of sustainability of project outputs/outcomes and the potential for replication?

EQ 21: How likely is it that the exit strategies, and approaches to phase out assistance provided by the project will be effective considering existing contributing factors and constraints?

Cross-Cutting Themes

Human Rights:

EQ 24: To what extent is the project promoting a rights-based approach for all groups of persons, especially to promote international laws and commitments made by Iraq?

- To what Extent RBA was mainstreamed in project activities?
- To what Extent RBA was promoted within project activities?
- What is the Evidence of change in NGO and LA understanding of RBA.?

EQ 25: To what extent have the poor, women, internally displaced, returnees and other disadvantaged and marginalized groups benefitted from the LADPIII project?

- What is the Evidence of benefits received by the different groups?

Gender Equality

EQ 27: To what extent has gender been mainstreamed within the design, implementation, and monitoring of the project?

- To what Extent was gender mainstreamed in project activities?
- To what Extent was gender promoted within project activities?

EQ 28: To what extent has the project promoted positive changes in gender equality and advanced the empowerment of women?

- What is the Evidence of change in gender equality and empowerment of women as a result of project interventions?

European Municipalities

Name of Interviewee:

Position:

Country:

Date of Interview:

Interviewers:

Thank you very much for taking the time to talk with us about your collaboration with UNDP. We anticipate that it will take approximately one hour to respond to these questions. If you need to break off the interview at any point, we will re-schedule and continue later, as we know that time is limited, and lives are increasingly busy.

We also want to assure you that your answers are confidential and will only be analyzed by category of stakeholder. Should we need to directly quote you, this will only happen after receiving a written consent from you.

We would also like to stress that I am an independent evaluator and as such I do not work with UNDP so anything positive or negative would never affect your opportunity now or in the future for collaboration with them.

Before we start the formal interview, we would like to know your level of involvement with UNDP especially in the LAPD project

Relevance

EQ 2: To what extent did relevant stakeholders participate in the Peer to Peer project (design, implementation and monitoring and ownership)

- How was the government consulted during project design?
- Which other stakeholders were consulted during project design?
- To what degree there is a national ownership of project activities? How is that measured?

EQ 3: To what extent has the selected implementation methods been appropriate to the development context, which means a) were based upon adequate needs-assessment and b) show understanding of the development situation of Iraq?

- Were needs assessments conducted? How did they affect project design and implementation?
- Were context analysis conducted? How do they affect project design and implementation?
- How often is the risk matrix and conflict sensitivity updated? What was the outcome of these updates?

EQ 4: To what extent were considerations for gender equality and women's empowerment, and the needs of people with disability, IDPs, vulnerable and marginalized groups integrated into the design of the project?

- How was gender considerations integrated in the project design?
- How did the design account for the different needs of the target groups including PwDs, IDPs, and other marginalized groups?

EQ 5: How do stakeholders perceive the relevance of the project and how has the activities implemented improved the lives of beneficiaries? Are there any stories of change?

- To what Extent do beneficiaries report positive change in their lives
- To what extent there is support from stakeholders to the project? (Extent of local ownership of project interventions)

Effectiveness

EQ 7: To what extent did the project contribute to decentralization reforms? Were there any unintended effects (positive/negative)?

- To what Extent local government exhibit an understanding of decentralization?
- To what Degree there is commitment of national government to decentralization practices?
- To what Degree there is commitment of local government to decentralization practices?

EQ 8: How effective are the strategies and tools used in the implementation of the project?

- To what Extent implementation strategies have been flexible and resilient?
- To what Extent the project has been able to adapt to changes on the ground?
- To what Extent the project approaches have enabled the achievement of results?

EQ 9: What were the major factors influencing the achievement or non-achievement of the objectives?

- How often has risk matrix been updated? What changed as a result of this?
- How did the project address factors affecting the non-achievement of the objectives?
- How often was the project engaged in dialogue with stakeholders to understand and respond to challenges? What was the outcome of these exchanged
- What were the enabling factors supporting the implementation and achievement of objectives?

Efficiency

EQ 10: To what extent have the project management structure, and allocated resources been efficient in achieving the expected results? Does the actual or expected results (outputs and outcomes) justify the costs incurred?

- What has been the management structure and staffing of the project? Has this been efficient? Why/why not?
- What has been the financial management structure of the project? Has it been efficient? How?

EQ 11: To what extent have project funds and activities been delivered in a timely manner?

- Has the disbursement of funds been timely? Why/why not?
- Has the project been able to implement all activities according to the work plan? Why/why not? Evidence of timely implementation of activities as per workplan
- How has the project accounted for delays in implementation?

EQ 13: Has the monitoring and evaluation systems put in place helped to ensure that the project is managed efficiently and effectively?

- What is the M&E system of the project?
- How have the indicators been adequately developed and well defined
- How and the frequency of reporting?
- How is M&E data used for project management
- What are some examples of changes as a result of M&E data generated?

Impact

EQ 14: To what extent did the LADPIII project contributed to or is likely to contribute to the goal of promoting the stability and socio-economic development of Iraq?

- To what Extent LADPIII supported increased dialogue between NGOs and local government?
- To what Extent LADPIII increased trust between citizens and local government? How can this be observed?
- To what Extent communities have higher trust in NGOs in their community? How can this be observed?
- To what Degree did LADPIII increase economic activities in the targeted governorates?
- To what Degree project activities supported reintegration of returnees and stability within communities?

EQ 16: What real difference has the project made or likely to make in the beneficiaries?

- To what Extent project results affected (positively or negatively) NGOs?
- To what Extent project results affected (positively or negatively) Iraqi citizens benefiting from the project?

EQ 17: What are the positive and negative, intended and unintended, changes produced by the project?

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- To what Extent project results affected (positively or negatively) NGOs?
- To what Extent project results affected (positively or negatively) the communities where the project was implemented?
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Sustainability

EQ 18: To what extent are sustainability considerations (environmental footprint, mitigation measures, maintenance, etc.) integrated into project implementation?

- Extent to which Peer-to-Peer activities have considered sustainability

EQ 19: What components or which interventions of the project are likely to be sustainable and/or scalable, and why?

Degree to which activities are likely to continue after the life of the project

EQ 20: Which key factors will be required to improve prospects of sustainability of project outputs/outcomes and the potential for replication?

EQ 21: How likely is it that the exit strategies, and approaches to phase out assistance provided by the project will be effective considering existing contributing factors and constraints?

Cross-Cutting Themes

Human Rights:

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- To what Extent was gender mainstreamed in project activities?
- To what Extent was gender promoted within project activities?

EQ 28: To what extent has the project promoted positive changes in gender equality and advanced the empowerment of women?

- What is the Evidence of change in gender equality and empowerment of women as a result of project interventions?

Focus group discussion guide for beneficiaries

General information

Thank you for taking the time to participate in this group discussion. [Introduction]

Everything you say is important to us and will help us understand better your experiences. Please feel free to speak openly and use any language or words. There are no right or wrong answers. You can choose to stop participating in the discussion at any time and you can choose not to respond to any question you don't want to answer, but we hope you will contribute because your participation will give us insight into experiences and opinions about the activities you participated in or the services you received.

Before we start the interview, I wanted to make sure that the guidelines surrounding consent are clear and if you have any questions, we can address them. Participating in this discussion is completely voluntary; thus, whatever you say will be completely anonymous and would NOT impact your access to UNDP services. We will audio-record this FGD with your consent but let us know if you are not comfortable and we will not record. [Go around and get verbal consent from each participant]

Introduction

Please go around the room and introduce yourselves. Again, in order to protect your privacy, we offer that you turn off your camera and if you want you can change your name on the screen. However, we would like you to introduce yourself, but only mention your first name. It would be great if you could also tell the group where you are from and the nature of your work / department

1. Please tell me about the (insert the service: training, house rehabilitation, vocational training. Employment opportunity...etc.)?
 2. **For training of government officials and NGOs only:** Why do you think your department/government/organisation recommended that you attend this training?
 3. **For training of government officials and NGOs only:** in what way is this training relevant to your everyday work? Can you name two things you do differently as a result of attending this training?
 4. **For training of government officials and NGOs only** what are your views about the training (timing, content, trainer...etc.)
 5. How has this (insert the service: training, house rehabilitation, vocational training. Employment opportunity...etc.) affected you and your family? (positively/negatively) *the work of your department/government/organisation?*
 6. In your view how has this (insert the service: training, house rehabilitation, vocational training. Employment opportunity...etc.) improved the integration and economic development in your community?
 7. Is there anything else about your experience with UNDP that you would like to share with me today
- Thank you!

6.2 Annex 4: Stakeholders Map

Stakeholders	Who they are	What (their role in the intervention)	How (informational, data collection, etc.)	When (in what stage of Review)
UNDP	Senior Management Project Manager Project M&E Field level staff	Management of the project, implementation of some project activities (Supporting the implementing partners); coordinating with other humanitarian actors	Documentation review, KIIs during Design and Data collection	Design phase, data collection work
UN Habitat	Senior Management Project Manager Programme Officer Project Supervisors Project M&E Field level staff International consultant (1)			
European Union	Programme Officer/task manager	Intervention Donor	Data Collection	Data collection (KIIs and FGDs)
Iraqi NGOs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sahlul-Taakhy organization • Bustan Association • Bojeen organization • Eyzidi organization • Eco-vital • Nama organization • Al-Taqwa organization • L&P - forum • Rwanga foundation 	Implementation of decentralisation activities (dialogues, projects)	Data Collection	KIIs, FGDs during data collection

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aid Gate org. (previous HIO) • Roja Shingal organization • Kurdistan Children Nest • Anhur Foundation • Waterkeepers Iraq • Al-Haboby Foundation • Ster Org. for Human Development • Al-Tadhamun Iraqi League for Youth 			
Iraqi NGOs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EADE • AGO • RIRP • SSORD 			
Implementing Partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Oxfam, • Mercy Hands, • UPP, • Furat Gate 			
Local Government	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Anbar • Ninewa • Dohuk • Erbil • Sulaymaniyah • Missan • Salahuddin • Thi Qar • Basra 	Recipients of support through project interventions and duty bearers towards their own citizens as well as implementing partners of some of the activities	Data Collection	KIIs and FGDs

Government Coordination Bodies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Higher Commission for Coordination among the Provinces (HCCP) • Development Coordination and Planning Council (DCPC) • International Cooperation Directorate (ICD) 	Recipients of support through project interventions and duty bearers towards their own citizens	Data Collection	KIIs and FGDs
European Municipalities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Association of Municipalities and Towns Slovenia • Swedish Association of Local Authorities and Regions • Fonds Mondial pour le Développement des Villes • Association of Albanian Municipalities • PIN Prato • Fund of Local Authorities for Decentralized Cooperation and Sustainable Human Development 	Supporting local authorities through peer-to-peer activities	Data Collection	KIIs and FGDs
Beneficiaries	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Government recipients • Iraqi citizens benefiting from employment • NGOs benefiting from capacity building 	Recipients of different project interventions in capacity building (government and NGOs/INGOs); Iraqi citizens benefiting from improved housing, access to employment, and vocational training.	Data Collection	KIIs and FGDs

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Youth benefiting from vocation training Families benefiting from house rehabilitation 			
Other actors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> GIZ USAID 	Partners in implementing some of the actions as well as development partners involved in similar activities	Data Collection	KIIs and FGDs

Project Activity	Stakeholders	For	Governorate
Output 1			
Peer to Peer	European Peers Trained Government Staff Visit Pilot Projects		Erbil Ninewa Salahuddin Basra
	FGD – Entrepreneurs who received grants		Basra
	FGD - trainer-facilitators (employees of the General Directorate of Education and General Directorate of Labour and Social Affairs in Duhok and principals and teachers of pilot		Dohuk

	schools) Visit and meeting with one school	
Revenue Generation	Local authorities	Ninewa/Mosul Erbil Falluja
CSOs Activities/Hiwar	2 FGDs (UNDP CSOs) 2 FGDS (UPP CSOs) 1 FGD Youth Civic Councils in the South Engaged government officials in CSOs Hiwar activities (LVGA)	All Governorates Erbil Ninewa Salahuddin Basra
Decentralization	Consultant – Wassim Harb Higher Commission for Coordination among the Provinces (HCCP) Development Coordination and Planning Councils (DCPCs) of Missan and Thi-Qar; Ministry of Planning GIZ; USAID; World Bank Local Authorities engaged in revenue generation and Minister of Municipalities and Tourism	Erbil

	(Deliberative Democracy) Youth councils	Sulaymaniyah (Baji)
	(Deliberative Democracy) CSOs activities (LGI)	ThiQar Missan
	Gender Mainstreaming activities	ThiQar Missan
Output 2		
Local Development Projects	PDS – Tourism activities in the South + FGD trained men/women on Vocational training	Basra (Tourism and Jobs)
	SEAP (North KRG) – Governorates implementing projects	Erbil (Renewable Energy) Suli
	PRPs (Central) – Governorates involved with UN-Habitat	
	Consultants engaged in Monitoring Employed youth	Ninewa (Waste Management)
Output 3		
Local Area Development	Owners of Rehabilitated Houses Government officials involved in rehabilitation activities Rehabilitated Public Space RIRP and AGO + VTC providing training	Ninewa Salahuddin

	Head of Municipalities of Mosul, Teafar, Baji FGD – Children and youth engaged FGD – Trained youth	
Other Government Stakeholders		

Annex 5: Workplan

Activity	October			November			December			
1.1 Initial review of background documents.										
1.2 Remote kick-off session.										
1.3 Finalisation of the EQs and methodology, Review Matrix, Data Collection Tools, Stakeholders Map and Workplan.										
1.4 Preparation of the Mid-Term Design Report.										
1.5 Remote presentation to the Reference Group.										
1.6 Submission of the Final Design Report with revisions.										
2.1 In-depth analysis of relevant documents.										
2.2 Data collection through KIIs and FGDs and analysis.										
2.3 Formulation of the preliminary responses to each RQs.										
2.4 presentation of the preliminary findings.										
3.1 Analysis and synthesis of the evidence and data collected.										
3.2 Preparation of the Draft Final Report.										
3.3 Presentation of findings and recommendations.										
3.4 Submission of Final Review Report, addressing comments.										

Annex 7: Evaluation Methodology

Evaluation Approaches

The evaluation will consider different approaches in an interlinked manner to ensure adequate response to the evaluation questions. The use of participatory methods would ensure that the views of a wide range of stakeholders is reflected in the findings and triangulated to ensure rigour of findings. The use of the theory based approach would enable an analysis of the causal relationships that were envisaged and would test the validity of the ToC as initially envisaged. The evaluation will also re-construct the ToC.

Theory-Based Approach

The ToC will be an essential building block of the evaluation methodology throughout the process, from the design and data collection to the analysis and identification of findings, as well as the articulation of conclusions and recommendations. It will provide a re-assessment of the strengths and weaknesses of the ToC, which drives the contribution made by the project. The ToC presents the causal conditions that must be in place to achieve the results of the interventions. It also outlines, with evidence, the causal linkage between conditions and results, and spells out the risks and assumptions that may impede the results chain from occurring. A theory-based approach will be fundamental for generating insights about what works, what does not, and why, by exploring how the assumptions behind these causal links and contextual factors affect the achievement of intended results.

Participatory Approach

In line with the ToRs, the independent final evaluation will be based on an inclusive, transparent and participatory approach, involving a broad range of partners and stakeholders at national and sub-national levels. This will preserve the sense of ownership and set the stage to openly address issues and challenges and propose solutions or corrective measures to be addressed in the next funding rounds. All efforts will be exerted by the consultant to speak to a wide range of stakeholders involved in the project's identification, formulation and implementation. These stakeholders include Key UNDP staff in Iraq, government representatives, civil society organisations (CSOs), Implementing Partners, final beneficiaries, private sector, academia, other UN agencies, EU and donors. The comprehensive list of stakeholders is provided in the Stakeholders Map in **Annex 4** of this inception Report. Interactions with the stakeholders will be conducted using both virtual and face to face means.

Mixed-Method Approach

The evaluation will use different methods for data collection, with emphasis on qualitative data collection techniques to answer the EQs. These will include document review, Key Informant Interviews (KIIs) and Focus Group Discussions (FGDs). The qualitative data will be complemented with quantitative data from secondary resources such as project documents and surveys conducted by the project. The mixed-method approach is being designed with caution allowing the consultant to capture a wider range of perspectives of the occurring changes and reveal possible unanticipated results.

Integration of Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment

Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment (GEWE) will be integrated in the scope of data collection and analysis, the indicators are designed in a way that ensures GEWE-related data to be collected. The evaluation objectives require assessment of human rights and gender equality considerations and

these aspects are also mainstreamed in other objectives. The methodology will employ a mixed-method approach, appropriate to evaluating GEWE considerations.

Humanitarian-Development-Peace-Nexus

The consultant will closely consider the work of the UNDP and UN-Habitat in Iraq from a humanitarian-development-peace-nexus lens, which will help to properly understand needs and the root causes of interrelated humanitarian and development issues, inequalities, vulnerability and fragility. Beyond the immediate programme locations, analysis will take into account the broader implications of intervening in both the humanitarian and development settings upon impartial, principled humanitarian action and long-term crisis and emergency response.

4.1. Evaluation Matrix

The evaluation matrix is the center piece to the methodological design of the independent final evaluation as articulated in the UNDP Evaluation Guidelines. The Matrix is presented in **Annex 2** describing what will be reviewed (EQs for all evaluation criteria and key assumptions to be examined), and (ii) how it will be reviewed (data collection methods, sources of information and analysis methods for each question and associated assumptions). The evaluation matrix will link each EQ (and associated assumptions) with the specific data sources and data collection methods to facilitate and ensure adequate answers to the evaluation questions.

The evaluation matrix plays a crucial role before, during and after data collection. In the inception phase, the matrix helped the consultant to develop a detailed agenda for data collection and analysis and to prepare the structure of interviews and group discussions. During the field phase, the Matrix will serve as a reference document to ensure that data is systematically collected for all EQs and documented in a structured and organized way. At the end of the field phase, the Matrix will be useful to verify whether sufficient evidence has been collected to answer all EQs and identify data gaps that require additional data collection. In the reporting phase, it will facilitate the drafting of findings per question and the articulation of conclusions and recommendations.

4.2. Data Collection Methods

The independent final evaluation will utilize several data collection methods, including KIIs with stakeholders, national and sub-national level IPs and FGDs with beneficiaries and stakeholders of the different activities in different governorates. All interviews and FGDs will be conducted either remotely or face to face during the field data collection in Iraq. Data will be collected using semi-structured interview guides tailored as necessary for each group of the target participants of the review. **Annex 3** outlines the guides for the planned FGDs and KIIs.

Desk Review: In-depth review of documents will be an on-going process throughout the different phases of the evaluation. It will inform the evaluation design, establish the understanding of the implementation framework for UNDP, and support the analysis and report writing. It will be further used to triangulate with data provided by primary sources and enrich the evidence base and content of the final report.

Key Informant Interviews: KIIs will be conducted with stakeholders at national and sub-national levels across the nine governorates that are part of the project. Semi-structured guides are designed and will

be used based on the agreed EQs. The intention is to get feedback and inputs on the processes and results of the project from those who interacted with and benefited from the activities both at field and institutional levels. At minimum 2 to 4 KIIs will be conducted in each governorate visited during field data collection. KIIs and would necessarily include managers and M&E officer for UNDP, IPs/NGOs and INGOs, government counterparts at national and sub-national levels.

Focus Group Discussions: FGDs will be conducted with beneficiary groups from the different governorates benefitting from the different CSO and urban recovery projects implemented by UNDP and UN-Habitat. In total, the consultant intends to conduct around 9 FGDs, taking into consideration the following sampling criteria to ensure a representative coverage of respondent groups and geographic locations. Each focus group will be composed of 6 to 10 members (with 8 being the appropriate number). The consultant will rely on the UNDP, UN-Habitat and partner NGOs and INGOs for the recruitment of the FGD participants, which will remain voluntary, taking in consideration the sampling criteria below.

FGDs are designed to ensure coverage of the following:

- The nine governorates where the project was implemented.
- Beneficiaries of different UN agencies and different CSOs interventions
- Gender; women and men

4.3. Data Analysis and Validation

The data analysis for this evaluation will be necessarily qualitative in nature with quantitative data drawn from project documents and surveys and triangulated with qualitative data (desk review, KIIs, FGDs conducted during the field mission), organized around the project's three objectives and specific objectives. Analysis used in the evaluation will examine the criteria and questions generated in the evaluation matrix and its indicators and assumptions (**Annex 2**), and addressed by data sources, mapping the facts, perceptions and opinions across the full spectrum of the assumption's enquiry. Cross-checking and integration of different information sources will be a guiding principle for this evaluation. The use of a variety of information sources is meant to increase the validity and reliability of results that will be presented by the consultant.

Analysis will be done through:

- Review of the documents to provide contextual information and data that, in combination with primary data from KIIs and FGDs, would permit the consultant to provide detailed and credible answers to all the EQs.
- Qualitative data from primary sources will be analysed using the content and analysis framework described in the evaluation matrix, which involves organizing data according to the criteria, review objectives, EQs and the SOs of the project. Some quotes and human stories will also be cited anonymously in the findings to support the analysis. Notes of KIIs and FGDs will be coded for analysis of qualitative data informed by the evaluation matrix. Quantitative secondary data will be analysed to ensure the validity of the collected data.

- Quantitative data collected by UNDP will be analysed.

As such, data validation will be a continuous process throughout the evaluation phases, where the consultant will check the validity of data and verify the robustness of findings at each phase. All findings will be firmly grounded in evidence. Validation will be guided by the regular exchanges with the UNDP team and with the support of the Review Reference Group who will provide a second level of quality assurance. Their feedback will allow for further refinement of the review recommendations and conclusions.

4.4. Selection of the Sample of Stakeholders

Information gathering through stakeholder participation is a key element in the design of this evaluation. In identifying the categories of stakeholders, the consultant aims to be inclusive and engage wide range of stakeholders who have direct involvement with the project, as well as engage with other stakeholders to enable a clear understanding of the context and the outcomes of the project. The list of stakeholders presented in Table 2 and 3 and in **Annex 4** in more detail is a preliminary list of stakeholders that the consultant will strive to engage with through FGDs and KIIs.

In developing a sampling approach, the evaluation aimed to cover all activities (although not necessarily all governorates). To enable a deep understanding of how the project affected different governorates, the evaluation selected two main governorates where both UNDP and UN Habitat have implemented activities to conduct field data collection. These are **Salahuddin and Ninewa**. In addition, two governorates in KRG and the south of Iraq were selected **Erbil and Basra**. The initial review of documents also indicated that in order to cover all sectors where the project had a contribution brief visit to the following governorates would also be necessary:

- Dohuk to understand interventions in the education sector (peer to peer and local development project)
- ThiQar and Missan to better understand the activities related to decentralisation and deliberate democracy activities.

Generally speaking the evaluation aims to speak with the following categories of stakeholders who were engaged in project activities:

- Meeting local, national and central government
- Meeting NGOs, INGOs involved in the project
- Visiting NGOs and INGOs projects (if still operating)
- INGOs involved in implementation. Eg. UPP, Oxfam, Mercy hands, Furat Gate
- European municipalities
- Coordination bodies (HCCP, DCPC,)
- Development partners (GIZ, USAID)
- Other UN agencies
- Youth bodies engaged in different dialogues
-

In addition to site visits and meetings in the six governorates, it is recommended that the following meetings are also organised:

Stakeholder/ involvement in the Initiative	Description
UNDP and UN Habitat	UNDP and UN Habitat Senior Management Project managers Field level staff, project supervisors M&E officers International consultants? National field staff?
Responsible Parties	NGOs, INGOs, local authorities at governorate level, and European Municipalities National NGOs: EADE, RIRP, AGO, SSORD (UN-Habitat)
Government	National and local government as well as coordinating bodies, including municipalities and utility directorates
Beneficiaries	Recipients of different training courses including vocational training, employment opportunities, house rehabilitation, WASH improvements, users of public facilities, government receiving capacity building
Development partners	GIZ, USAID
Other stakeholders	Private sector where applicable - particularly contractors and suppliers that have been contracted by UN-Habitat through its regional office, UNON or UNAMI (depending on Delegation of Authority)

6.3 Table 2: Evaluation Participants

6.4

6.5 Table 3 below provides an overview of the proposed stakeholders that the evaluation wishes to engage with including location and type of activity implemented.

Project Activity	Stakeholders	For	Governorate
Output 1	Interviews/FGDs		
Peer to Peer	European Peers Trained Government Staff Visit Pilot Projects		Erbil Ninewa Salahuddin Basra
	FGD – Entrepreneurs who received grants		Basra
	FGD - trainer-facilitators (employees of the General Directorate of Education and General Directorate of Labour and		Dohuk

	<p>Social Affairs in Duhok and principals and teachers of pilot schools)</p> <p>Visit and meeting with one school</p>	
CSOs Projects/Hiwar	<p>2 FGDs (UNDP CSOs) 2 FGDS (UPP CSOs) 1 FGD Youth Civic Councils in the South</p> <p>Engaged government officials in CSOs Hiwar activities (LVGA)</p>	<p>All Governorates</p> <p>Erbil Ninewa Salahuddin Basra</p>
Decentralization	<p>Consultant – Wassim Harb</p> <p>Higher Commission for Coordination among the Provinces (HCCP)</p> <p>Development Coordination and Planning Councils (DCPCs) of Missan and Thi-Qar;</p> <p>Ministry of Planning</p> <p>GIZ; USAID; World Bank International Cooperation Directorate (ICD)</p> <p>Local Authorities engaged in revenue generation and Minister of Municipalities and Tourism</p> <p>(Deliberative Democracy) Youth councils</p> <p>(Deliberative Democracy) CSOs activities (LGI)</p> <p>Gender Mainstreaming activities</p>	<p>Erbil Sulaymaniyah (Baji)</p> <p>ThiQar Missan</p> <p>ThiQar Missan</p> <p>ThiQar Missan</p>
Output 2		
Local Development Projects	<p>PDS – Tourism activities in the South + FGD trained men/women on Vocational training</p>	<p>Basra (Tourism and Jobs)</p>

	SEAP (North KRG) – Governorates implementing projects + INGOs involved PRPs (Central) – Governorates involved with UN-Habitat Consultants engaged in Monitoring Employed youth	Erbil (Renewable Energy) Dohuk (Education) Ninewa (Waste Management)
Output 3		
Rehabilitation Work	Owners of Rehabilitated Houses Government officials involved in rehabilitation activities Rehabilitated Public Space VTC providing training FGD – Children and youth engaged FGD – Trained youth	Ninewa Salahuddin
Other Stakeholders	To be completed/recommended by UNDP and UN Habitat based	

6.6 Table 3: Proposed list of stakeholder/activity/location for interviews and FGDs