

EVALUATION REPORT

of the “Prevention and Elimination of Violence against Women for Mainstreaming Gender into the National Development Agenda in Lao PDR” Project

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Disclaimer

The views expressed in this report are solely those of the author and are based on a specialized evaluation methodology. The opinions and perspectives presented herein do not necessarily reflect the views of any stakeholders, members of the evaluation reference group, UNCT, or the donor.

Project and Evaluation Details

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List of acronyms and abbreviations

CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women
COVID-19	Coronavirus disease
CPD	Country Programme Document
CSW	Commission on the Status of Women
EVAW	Ending Violence Against Women
FGD	Focus Group Discussions
GBV	Gender-Based Violence
ICPD	International Conference on Population and Development
KII	Key Informant Interviews
KOICA	Korea International Cooperation Agency
LAO PDR	Lao People's Democratic Republic
LNOB	Leaving No One Behind
LWU	Lao Women's Union
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
NAP	National Action Plan
NAPEVAW	National Action Plan on Preventing and Eliminating Violence against Women
NCAWMC	National Commission for the Advancement of Women, Mothers and Children
NIM	National Implementation Modality
NSEDP	National Socio-Economic Development Plan
PwD	Persons with Disabilities
ROK	Republic of Korea
SDG	Sustainable Development Goals
SOP	Standard Operational Procedure
TOR	Terms of Reference
UNCT	United Nations Country Team
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Brief Description of the Intervention

The project "Prevention and Elimination of Violence against Women for Mainstreaming Gender into the National Development Agenda in Lao PDR" aims to address and reduce violence against women in Laos by supporting national authorities in planning and implementing cross-sectoral initiatives. The project consists of three interrelated components designed to create synergies and a virtuous circle.

Component 1 focuses on supporting the development and implementation of the 2nd Five-year National Plan of Action on Preventing and Combating Violence Against Women and the 4th Five-Year National Plan of Action on Gender Equality. This component involves evidence-based formulation of the next phase 5-year National Strategic Plan on Ending Violence Against Women (EVAW) through research, consultations, and advocacy. Technical assistance is provided to finalize the National Strategic Plan and integrate it into sectoral plans. National and provincial consultations, an international conference, and an exchange program strengthen the institutional capacity of the Lao Women's Union (LWU) to address violence against women. The intervention also aims to contribute to Laos' 9th National Socio-Economic Development Plan and the implementation of international instruments such as Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), Beijing Commission on the Status of Women (CSW), and International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD).

Component 2 supports the development of implementation guidelines and a monitoring and evaluation (M&E) plan for the 5-year National Strategic Plan on EVAW. It involves providing guidance on integrating sectoral and coordination policies into the National Strategic Plan and capacity development programs for LWU, line ministries, and authorities on EVAW planning, data collection, monitoring, and reporting.

Component 3 focuses on strengthening the capacity of the justice and policing sector for gender-based violence (GBV) response and prevention through the implementation of the National Action Plan on Preventing and Eliminating Violence against Women. It includes conducting capacity needs assessments, developing standard operating procedures, and designing capacity development plans based on the SOPs. Research, surveys, international exchanges, and policy dialogues are conducted to strengthen the governance mechanism and policy framework related to GBV. Support is provided to the LWU Media and Advocacy and Culture Departments for communications and community outreach activities to raise awareness about GBV and access to justice.

The Project adopts a gender-transformative approach and a Human Rights Based Approach. By supporting the development and implementation of national plans, capacity building, and strengthening the justice and policing sector's response to GBV, the project aims to accelerate structural transformations and eliminate violence against women in Laos.

The implementation strategies of the project include the effective implementation of existing legislation on violence against women, encouraging reporting through awareness-raising campaigns, ensuring access to legal remedies and victim support services, providing comprehensive support services, and systematic data collection on GBV. These strategies aim to overcome challenges such as limited resources, social stigma, reliance on alternative dispute resolution mechanisms, and lack of data.

The project's Theory of Change is based on transforming institutional policies, societal norms, and attitudes to reduce VAW and promote women's participation. The creation of National Action Plans is expected to enhance the effective implementation of laws, provide better governance, and legal protections for victims. Challenging societal norms and attitudes is crucial for bringing about sustainable change in gender awareness and sensitivity among service providers. The project aims to improve the relationship between victims/survivors and

service providers, empower victims/survivors, and shift the focus from responding to violence to its prevention.

The implementation modality follows a National Implementation (NIM) structure with key partners including the Lao Women's Union, UNFPA, and UNDP. The Lao Women's Union is the implementing partner responsible for resource utilization and progress documentation. UNDP assumes accountability for effective resource utilization and coordination of the justice and policing sector activities. UNFPA plays a pivotal role in developing and implementing National Action Plans and integrating them into the national development plan. The Project Board provides strategic guidance and monitors the project's progress.

The project's resources include both human and financial components. The human resources comprise a diverse team responsible for project governance and implementation. The financial resources amount to approximately USD 2,835,000, with the majority contributed by KOICA, and in-kind support from UNDP and UNFPA. The budget is distributed over four years to meet the project's goals.

The country context in Laos presents challenges and opportunities for development projects. Disparities in education, early marriages, violence against women, and limited economic participation of women are significant limitations. However, positive changes in gender equality, political representation, and initiatives to address violence against women provide a foundation for the project's success.

Evaluation Purpose and Objectives

The purpose of the evaluation is to assess the progress and contribution of the project, providing insights into what has been working well and what areas need improvement. It serves as a mid-term assessment, aiming to inform the next strategy for the remaining timeframe of the project. The evaluation has two main objectives: learning and improvement, and adjustment.

The primary audience for the evaluation includes UNDP (United Nations Development Programme), UNFPA (United Nations Population Fund), LWU (Local Women's Union), and other relevant stakeholders involved in the project. The evaluation aims to create learning opportunities for these stakeholders to enhance the implementation of the project before its completion. The evaluation report will be disseminated to donors, government partners, and beneficiaries, ensuring that the findings and recommendations reach a wide range of stakeholders.

The intended uses of the evaluation findings are to guide the necessary adjustments in project implementation, inform decision-making, and improve project outcomes.

To achieve its objectives, the evaluation follows several criteria, including relevance, coherence, effectiveness, efficiency, and sustainability. Additional criteria such as management and monitoring, Leave No One Behind (LNOB), human rights, and gender equity are also considered. The evaluation criteria align with the UNEG Ethical Guidelines for Evaluation, UNEG Norms and Standards for Evaluation, as well as the OECD/DAC evaluation principles and guidelines, and the DAC Quality Standards for Development Evaluation. These criteria ensure a holistic assessment of the project's consistency with national priorities, its impact on social norms and policies, its cost-effectiveness and resource allocation, and its inclusivity and equity considerations.

Key Aspects of the Evaluation Approach and Methods

The evaluation approach and methods used in the Khan Hom project were characterized by inclusivity, comprehensive data collection, and ethical safeguards. The evaluation team consisted of international and national consultants who brought extensive experience and knowledge of the subject matter and the region. Various data collection procedures were employed, including interviews, focus group discussions, and document analysis. The data

collection process emphasized gender-responsiveness and included consultations with key stakeholders and representatives from various ministries and judicial bodies.

To ensure the reliability and validity of the data, a multi-modal approach was adopted, allowing for data triangulation. Pilot testing was conducted to refine data collection instruments, and the collected data was analyzed using various methods such as thematic content analysis, comparative analysis, and SWOT analysis. The evaluation team received the necessary support and resources for each phase of the evaluation, including access to relevant documents and logistical assistance.

Ethical considerations were carefully observed throughout the evaluation, with the evaluators adhering to the UNEG 'Ethical Guidelines for Evaluators.' Measures were taken to address methodological constraints, such as the language barrier and potential biases in self-reported data. The evaluation team mitigated these limitations by utilizing a national consultant fluent in the local language, cross-checking meeting minutes, and cross-verifying information from different sources.

The evaluation methodology incorporated inclusivity by considering gender equality, disability, vulnerability, and social inclusion. It maintained a gender balance among respondents, applied the 'Leave No One Behind' principle, and engaged a wide range of stakeholders to ensure diverse perspectives.

Regarding data analysis, a thematic and content analysis approach was used, with data being coded and categorized based on pre-identified themes and emergent themes. Comparative and gap analysis techniques were applied to document analysis, while correlation analysis helped understand the project's progress and results. Triangulation of data sources and member checking were conducted to ensure data accuracy and validation.

Synopsis of Findings

- **Relevance:** The project is highly relevant to the national development priorities of Lao PDR and aligns with strategic frameworks and government objectives.
- **Coherence:** The project is coherent with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly Goal 5 on Gender Equality and Goal 16 on Peace, Justice, and Strong Institutions. It contributes to these goals by eliminating violence against women, promoting inclusivity, and strengthening institutions.
- **Effectiveness:** The project is on track to achieve its intended results within the agreed period. It has made significant progress in strengthening the national capacity to prevent and respond to GBV. Challenges have been faced, but continuous monitoring and evaluation are essential for sustained effectiveness.
- **Efficiency:** The project has demonstrated efficiency by adhering to the work plan and effectively utilizing available resources with flexibility and adaptability.
- **Sustainability:** The project has made considerable progress in enhancing human, institutional, and systemic capacities. However, a clearly defined exit strategy would enhance its long-term sustainability prospects.
- **Management and Monitoring:** The project's management and monitoring are comprehensive and well-defined, ensuring effective project delivery and progress tracking. Strengthening gender-responsive monitoring and evaluation is recommended.
- **Commitment to Leave No One Behind, Human Rights, and Gender Equity:** The project prioritizes addressing the needs of vulnerable groups, particularly in the context of GBV. It applies a human rights-based approach and adheres to human rights principles and international standards to further solidify its commitment.

Synopsis of Conclusions

The evaluation report underscores the project's alignment with Lao PDR's national development priorities, strategic frameworks, government objectives, and the SDGs,

specifically Goals 5 and 16. It exhibits significant progress in preventing and responding to GBV and showcases efficiency in its resource management. The project has made significant progress in developing human resources, strengthening institutional mechanisms, and improving systemic capacities.

Lastly, the Khan Hom Project demonstrates a significant commitment to leaving no one behind, human rights, and gender equity. It prioritizes addressing the needs of the most vulnerable groups, particularly in the context of GBV. The project's application of a human rights-based approach and its adherence to human rights principles and international standards further solidify its commitment.

Synopsis of Recommendations

- (1) Further Integration of Existing Gender Analysis: Across all remaining activities, data collection, and capacity-building efforts, the project should continue to use the insights derived from gender analysis during its initial stages. This could provide the project with a robust gender lens, assisting in addressing gender inequality and gender-based violence. This action is recommended to be taken throughout the remaining timeline, with UNDP and UNFPA being responsible.
- (2) Development of an Exit Strategy: To ensure the project's sustainability beyond its active lifespan, a comprehensive exit strategy should be developed. This strategy could include specific actions, timelines, roles, sustainable financial resource strategies, and institutionalization of project activities within existing structures. It is recommended to develop the strategy by the fourth quarter of 2023, with UNDP and UNFPA taking responsibility.
- (3) Strengthening Capacity to Use M&E Mechanisms: Implementing partners could benefit from enhancing their capacity to effectively utilize the Monitoring & Evaluation mechanisms and report disaggregated data relevant to vulnerable groups. It is recommended that the proposed capacity enhancement to be integrated along the project's planned activities to provide support on SOP implementation and/or as part of the improvement of the monitoring and reporting system for gender and EAW/GBV data from district provincial and central levels, with UNDP and UNFPA being responsible.
- (4) Ensuring Vulnerable Groups are Targeted: The project should ensure the continued effective targeting of vulnerable groups during its final phase. The existing forms of analysis could be used to maintain consistency and provide tailored services to these communities. This action is recommended to be taken throughout the remaining timeline, with UNDP and UNFPA being responsible.

1. INTRODUCTION AND OVERVIEW

The purpose of this mid-term evaluation is to critically analyze the performance and impact, highlighting strengths and areas of potential improvement of the project "Prevention and Elimination of Violence against Women for Mainstreaming Gender into the National Development Agenda in Lao PDR" alias the Khan Hom Project.

The evaluation is scheduled at this point to allow for corrective and enhancing measures before the completion of the project. It aims to understand the project's positive and negative aspects and identify the factors contributing to these outcomes. Moreover, the evaluation addresses specific questions formulated in the Terms of Reference to provide a comprehensive examination of the project's relevance, coherence, effectiveness, efficiency, and sustainability, as well as additional criteria comprising management and monitoring, LNOB, human rights, and gender equity. This knowledge will be particularly useful for UNDP and UNFPA, as well as LWU, NCAWMC, and other national and sub-national authorities involved in policy-making and program formation concerning gender mainstreaming and tackling GBV against women. Furthermore, the conclusions drawn from this report will be shared extensively among all stakeholders. This will facilitate fruitful discussions, collective problem-solving, and ultimately, more informed decision-making, ensuring the successful execution of the project and making it an important tool to guide future actions.

In conclusion, this evaluation report provides a comprehensive mid-term review of the "Prevention and Elimination of Violence against Women for Mainstreaming Gender into the National Development Agenda in Lao PDR" project. The report provides a timely understanding of the project's progress to date by highlighting achievements and lessons learned.

2. DESCRIPTION OF THE INTERVENTION

Overview of Intervention's Focus and Problem Context

The project "Prevention and Elimination of Violence against Women for Mainstreaming Gender into the National Development Agenda in Lao PDR" aims to support national authorities in planning and implementing cross-sectoral initiatives to address and reduce violence against women.

The project consists of three interrelated components designed to create a virtuous circle and synergies:

1. Support the development and implementation of the 2nd Five-year National Plan of Action on Preventing and Combating Violence Against Women and the 4th Five-Year National Plan of Action on Gender Equality:
 - This component focuses on evidence-based formulation of the next phase 5-year National Strategic Plan on EAW (2021–2025) through policy-oriented research, participatory consultation processes, and advocacy.
 - Provision of technical assistance to formulate and finalize the National Strategic Plan on EAW and Gender Equality, as well as integrate them into sectoral plans.
 - Organizing national and provincial consultations, and an international conference with an exchange program to strengthen the institutional capacity of the Lao Women's Union (LWU) to address the issue of violence against women.
 - The intervention aims to contribute to the development of Laos' 9th National Socio-Economic Development Plan and the implementation of international instruments such as CEDAW, Beijing/CSW, and ICPD.
2. Support the development of Implementation guidelines and M&E Plan of the 5-year National Strategic Plan on EAW (2021–2025):
 - This component involves providing support in developing an implementation guideline with concrete activities, required resources, and an M&E Plan.

- Providing clear guidance on integrating sectoral and coordination policies into the National Strategic Plan.
 - Providing capacity development programs and training for LWU, line ministries, and authorities on EAW planning, data collection, monitoring, and reporting.
3. Strengthened capacity of the justice and policing sector for GBV response and prevention through the implementation of the National Action Plan on Preventing and Eliminating Violence against Women:
- This component aims to support the justice and policing sector in implementing the National Action Plan on Preventing and Eliminating Violence against Women to prevent and respond to GBV.
 - Conducting a capacity needs assessment and developing an SOP.
 - Designing capacity development plans based on the SOP to ensure effective implementation of NAPEVAW and the provision of quality services to survivors of violence.
 - Conducting research, surveys, international exchanges, and policy dialogues to strengthen the governance mechanism and policy framework related to GBV.
 - Providing support to the LWU Media and Advocacy and Culture Departments for communications and community outreach activities to raise awareness about GBV and access to justice.

The overall interventions of the project seek to adopt a gender transformative approach and a Human Rights Based Approach. By supporting the development and implementation of national plans, capacity building, and strengthening the justice and policing sector's response to GBV, the project aims to accelerate structural transformations and eliminate GBV against women in Lao PDR.

Analysis of the Implementation Strategies

The intervention aims to strengthen the policy framework and governance mechanism in Lao PDR to effectively address GBV against women in the national development agenda while promoting women's participation. The intervention recognizes the challenges faced in combating VAW, including limited state financial resources, lack of human resources to provide qualified expertise, limited opportunities for women's participation in policy dialogue, the social stigma associated with reporting violence, reliance on alternative dispute resolution mechanisms, and lack of data for evidence-based decision making.

To address these challenges, the intervention proposes several strategies:

- *Implementation of legislation:* The intervention emphasizes the importance of effective implementation of existing legislation, such as the Law on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Children. This includes allocating sufficient human, financial, and technical resources for handling complaints and operating referral systems.
- *Encouraging reporting:* The intervention aims to encourage women and girls to report all cases of GBV by enhancing awareness-raising campaigns through media and public education. By reducing the social stigma associated with reporting, more victims may come forward, enabling appropriate action to be taken.
- *Access to legal remedies and victim support:* Ensuring that women and girls who are victims of GBV have direct access to legal remedies, victim and witness assistance, as well as protection programs, represent some of the key aspects of the intervention.
- *Access to support services:* The intervention emphasizes the need for women and girls who are victims of domestic violence, especially those in remote areas, to have adequate access to shelters, psychosocial counseling, legal assistance, and protection orders against abusive partners. This recognizes the importance of providing comprehensive support to survivors.
- *Data collection:* To enable evidence-based decision-making, the intervention stresses the importance of systematic collection of data on GBV against women and girls. This includes

collecting data on domestic and sexual violence, disaggregated by age, ethnicity, and the relationship between the victim and the perpetrator.

The intervention aligns with the Noi 2030 Framework and commitments made by the Lao Government at the 25th anniversary of the International Conference on Population and Development's Programme of Action, which emphasize the need to protect girls and women from GBV.

By implementing these strategies, the intervention seeks to strengthen the policy framework, governance mechanisms, and institutional capacities of relevant stakeholders, such as the National Commission for the Advancement of Women and Mothers & Children and the Lao Women's Union, which is expected to contribute to effectively combating GBV and promoting gender equality in Lao PDR.

Explanation of the Project's Theory of Change

The Theory of Change underpinning this project operates on a few core principles. It is based on the belief that changing institutional policies and procedures, coupled with changing societal norms and attitudes about gender and violence, can lead to a significant reduction in VAW and promote increased participation of women in various sectors of society in Lao PDR.

The first component of the project aims to create National Action Plans (NAPs) to guide the implementation of the Law on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Children and the Law on Gender Equality. Once these NAPs are created and adopted, it is expected that the effective implementation of these laws will be enhanced, leading to better governance and more robust legal protections for victims of violence. Additionally, it would create an environment conducive for victims/survivors to assert their rights, and receive quality services from the health, social, justice, and policing sectors.

The project's second component focuses on challenging deeply ingrained societal attitudes and norms that perpetuate GBV, utilizing theories of social and behavioral change communication to bring about the desired outcomes. The intervention allocates to the Lao Women's Union and its networks the role to disseminate these new ways of thinking, aiming to raise gender awareness among the population and promote greater sensitivity towards gender issues among service providers.

The end goal of the project is to improve the relationship between victims/survivors of violence and service providers, encouraging a culture of reporting and ensuring a high-quality response from the relevant sectors. This in turn should empower victims/survivors to access justice and hold perpetrators accountable, thereby shifting the focus from merely responding to violence to its prevention. The successful execution of these plans is set to contribute to achieving the UNSDCF Outcome 3, which envisions improved public services that are inclusive, transparent, and uphold international human rights commitments.

However, the success of this theory of change relies considerably on three key external factors:

1. The commitment of duty bearers/service providers to policy qualitative development and implementation. Without this, there could be delays and a lack of ownership that could hamper policy endorsement and application.
2. An increase in understanding and changes in attitudes towards gender equality and GBV. This is crucial as it fosters an environment where individuals are more receptive to changes and proactive in supporting initiatives that challenge harmful norms and stereotypes, leading to a more sustainable change in societal attitudes and behaviors.
3. The willingness of the public to accept and adopt new ways of thinking and working is also critical. The project's initiatives are aimed at improving health, social, justice, and policing services would be ineffective without the cooperation and participation of the intended beneficiaries.

In summary, the Project's Theory of Change offers a multidimensional approach to eliminating violence against women and promoting gender equality by simultaneously targeting institutional frameworks and societal norms. It acknowledges the complexity of these issues and proposes strategies to tackle them at various levels, aiming to ultimately create a safer, more equitable society.

Changes in the Implementation of the Intervention

The updated project document and the interviews with the project team outlined that collaboratively with the Lao Women's Union, the donor, UNFPA, and UNDP, several modifications to the project's structure have been endorsed:

- Inclusion of Project Strategy and Theory of Change: Initially omitted in the original project document, these important elements have been incorporated.
- Modifications in Activities and Outputs: Amendments have been made in Sub-output 1, Activities 15 and 16, Sub-output 2, Activities 2.1 to 2.4, and Sub-output 3, Activities 3.1 to 3.4. Additionally, Activity 3.5 has been introduced. Respective updates have been made to the Problem and Solution Tree Diagram, Logical Framework, Work Plan, and Timetable.
- Budget Adjustments: Funds have been reallocated and repurposed to accommodate the additional activity. However, despite these modifications, the overall budget remained unchanged.
- Schedule Consistency: The Summary Installment Plan and Reporting Schedule were set to be maintained as per the original plan.

According to the project narrative report, there has been a change in UNDP's activities as agreed upon by the stakeholders. After discussions with partners and stakeholders, it was decided that UNDP would specifically concentrate its efforts on the justice and policing sector, following the Essential Services Package for Women and Girls Subject to Violence. This adjusted focus aims to ensure that the project remains aligned and consistent with the areas where UNFPA is prioritizing its work, namely the social and health sectors.

Description of the Implementation Modality

The implementation of the project was carried out within the framework of a National Implementation (NIM) structure, with key partners including the Lao Women's Union, the UNFPA, and UNDP. Each partner had specific responsibilities and roles, which were integrated to ensure a cohesive and effective implementation process.

The Lao Women's Union, as the implementing partner, was primarily responsible for the efficient utilization of resources and the delivery of anticipated outputs outlined in the project document. LWU was also assigned with maintaining comprehensive documentation of resource usage and progress, adhering to relevant regulations and project guidelines. Additionally, it was responsible for periodic reporting, providing accurate updates on the project's progress based on agreed-upon work plans.

Under the NIM framework, the UNDP assumed accountability for the effective utilization of resources towards the achievement of the project's results, in collaboration with the Lao Women's Union. This covered the project's design, capacity assessment of implementing partners, selection of implementing partners, and financing and evaluation of the project's activities. Moreover, the UNDP, acting as the Convening Agency under the pass-through modality, was accountable for coordinating the operational and programmatic aspects of the project. The UNDP Multi-Partner Trust Fund Office, serving as the Administrative Agent, was responsible for fiduciary management, financial reporting, receiving donor contributions, and disbursing funds to the Participating UN Organizations based on the Project Board's instructions. In terms of the implementation side, UNDP took charge of the activities focused on the justice and policing sector.

The UNFPA played a pivotal role in the areas related to combating violence against women and promoting gender equality. UNFPA was involved in developing and implementing the National Action Plan on Combating Violence Against Women and the National Plan of Action for Gender Equality. Furthermore, it was mandated with the integration of these plans into the national socio-economic development plan and developed comprehensive guidelines for preventing and responding to violence against women and girls in the health and social sectors.

The implementation of the project was governed by a Project Board comprising Participating UN Organizations, the Lao Women's Union, the donor, and a representative from the Ministry of Planning and Implementation. This board provided strategic guidance, monitored the project, and approved annual work plans. The project followed the pass-through fund management modality, with each participating UN organization assuming programmatic and financial accountability for the funds disbursed by the Administrative Agent.

Gender Analysis of the Intervention

The analysis of gender within the intervention encompasses the inclusion of relevant cross-cutting issues such as gender equality, human rights, and the inclusion of vulnerable and marginalized groups. It incorporates specific data and analysis of social groups affected, ensuring that no individual is neglected.

The socio-cultural landscape of the Lao PDR is complex as the traditional norms, gender roles, and perceptions shape its profile. Within this intricate setting, a grave human rights violation unfolds - GBV against women. The severity of this issue is evident through surveys like the 2014 National Survey on Violence Against Women, which reveals the widespread nature of this problem across various demographics, with a particularly significant impact on young women.

Among the affected demographics, young women aged 15-19 years report the highest prevalence of sexual violence, with rates reaching 12.9%. This is in stark contrast to their counterparts in their 50s and 60s, whose reported rates range between 4.6% and 7.8%. This discrepancy highlights the alarming vulnerability of the younger demographic, necessitating immediate attention and targeted intervention. A concerning aspect of this scenario is the prevalent acceptance of VAW, as evidenced by the Lao Social Indicator Survey (LSIS) 2011-2012, which revealed that 58% of women and 49% of men believed VAW was justified in certain situations. The normalization of VAW among both genders, particularly in rural areas and the country's northern region, poses a significant challenge.

The data demonstrates that societal acceptance of GBV against women stems from deep-rooted beliefs and discriminatory customs, thereby infringing upon the fundamental human rights of women. Moreover, low rates of reporting GBV against women, weak rule of law, and governance mechanisms collectively pose a significant threat to promoting and safeguarding gender equality in society. The COVID-19 outbreak has further exacerbated these issues, as lockdowns and quarantine measures have increased the incidence of GBV due to victims being confined with abusers, with limited possibilities for help and support.

The overarching aim of the intervention is to address these issues comprehensively and ensure that no individual is left behind, following the principle of 'leave no one behind' from the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). This necessitates integrating measures against GBV into the national development agenda, particularly within the 9th National Socio-Economic Development Plan (NSEDP) and related sectoral plans, while preserving and enhancing the progress made in gender equality and women's empowerment in previous years.

Overview of the Intervention's Resources

This sub-chapter provides an overview of the resources utilized in the project, which includes both human and financial. It offers a thorough understanding of how these resources are allocated to meet the project's goals.

Human Resources

The project's human resources structure is composed of a diverse, inter-organizational team designed to ensure project governance and implementation. The strategic guidance for the project is provided by KOICA, UNDP and UNFPA.

At the helm of the project, the Project Board provides ongoing monitoring, reviews, and approves annual work plans, and will lead the end-of-project review. The Board's composition includes the Participating United Nations Organizations (PUNOs), the implementing partner, the donor, and a representative from the Ministry of Planning and Implementation.

The delegated representative from the Department of Planning and International Cooperation of the Lao Women's Union takes the role of Project Manager, with the President of the Lao Women's Union acting as the National Project Director. In addition, the Programme officers of PUNOs provide project quality assurance and technical support, which includes liaison with the KOICA Bilateral Project Management Committee (PMC) team for the implementation of the project.

Financial Resources

The project has a total estimated budget of 2,835,000 USD. This figure includes both program costs and indirect support costs. The largest portion of the funding comes from KOICA, contributing a substantial 2,700,000 USD. Additionally, the UNDP and UNFPA contribute in-kind amounts of 80,000 USD and 55,000 USD, respectively. This collaborative funding approach diversifies the financial resources and bolsters the overall financial structure of the project.

The distribution of the budget has been structured over four years, following the installment plan below:

- Year 1 (2020 Q4 – 2021 Q2): USD 731,658
- Year 2 (2021 Q3 – 2022 Q2): USD 679,344
- Year 3 (2022 Q3 – 2023 Q2): USD 607,561
- Year 4 (2023 Q3 – 2024 Q3): USD 681,437

Country Context

The country context description is derived from The Country Analysis Report: Lao PDR Analysis, informing the Lao People's Democratic Republic - United Nations Partnership Framework (2017-2021)¹ and supplemented by data from the Project Document.

The Lao People's Democratic Republic, a landlocked and mountainous nation, spans over 236,800 square kilometers, bordered by China, Myanmar, Vietnam, Thailand, and Cambodia. The geographical landscape of the country is challenging, with 80 percent comprised of hilly or mountainous terrain, which can be remote and difficult to access. Only 20% of the area, accommodating over half the country's population, comprises lowland terrain.²

The report outline that there are trends of positive change in Lao PDR, with disparities and determinants in education and gender gradually shifting. The gender equality gap in education enrollment is narrowing, yet completion challenges persist, particularly in rural areas, where girls are less likely to proceed to secondary education. Interestingly, once enrolled, girls generally perform better than boys at the primary level, reflecting a potential opportunity for

¹ Lao PDR Analysis to inform the Lao People's Democratic Republic– United Nations Partnership Framework (2017-2021),

https://www.undp.org/sites/g/files/zskgke326/files/migration/la/Country_Analysis_Report_Lao_PDR.pdf

² USAID, Country Overview, <https://www.usaid.gov/laos>

improving gender equality in education if these girls can be supported through secondary schooling.

However, persisting sociocultural norms and practices continue to constrain these opportunities. Traditional norms prioritize boys' education over girls', especially beyond primary schooling. Further, due to safety concerns and household responsibilities, girls are often kept home, especially if secondary schools are distant. The deepest gender equality gap in education is observed among rural children without road access, non-Lao-Tai ethnic groups, children of uneducated mothers, and families in the poorest quintiles.

Literacy is another area where gender disparity has shown little significant change. In 2011/12, the Gender Parity Index (GPI) for literacy among 15-24-year-olds was 0.89, only marginally improved from 0.90 in 2001. These figures reflect the reality that primary education does not guarantee literacy.³

In sexual and reproductive health, the high rates of early marriage and associated early pregnancies impose further challenges, limiting women's education and livelihood opportunities. A considerable one-third of women marry before the age of 18, with one-tenth even before 15.⁴

The economic dimension also reveals gender disparity. While women and men form an equal share of the working population, women mostly occupy lower rungs of the labor market. Women also engage in more unpaid work for the family and bear heavier household responsibilities. In addition, lack of access to and control over farming inputs and credit constrains women's roles in agriculture.

Despite these challenges, there are some promising developments. Lao PDR boasts one of the highest proportions of women in national parliaments worldwide, reflecting growing political participation. However, representation in other government decision-making positions remains low. To address this, the government has developed a Gender and Governance Sector Strategy, with targets to increase women's representation.

Lastly, violence against women, a persistent and prevalent issue, impacts women's health and well-being. A study showed that approximately 30% of Lao women had experienced some form of violence. However, the government and civil society organizations are actively working to address this issue through mediation, counseling mechanisms, and pilot projects in schools to tackle GBV.⁵

In conclusion, the socio-economic, political, institutional, and geographical landscape in Lao PDR presents both challenges and opportunities for development projects. The disparity in education and economic participation, the prevalence of early marriages, and violence against women are significant limitations to overcome. However, the narrowing gender gap in education, increased political representation of women, and the initiatives to address violence against women provide a foundation to build on. Recognizing and aligning with these dynamics is essential for successful project implementation and outcomes in the Lao PDR.

³ The World Bank, Lao PDR, <https://data.worldbank.org/country/LA>

⁴ Ibidem.

⁵ Lao PDR Analysis to inform the Lao People's Democratic Republic– United Nations Partnership Framework (2017-2021), https://www.undp.org/sites/g/files/zskgke326/files/migration/la/Country_Analysis_Report_Lao_PDR.pdf

3. EVALUATION SCOPE AND OBJECTIVES

The *overall objective* of the evaluation is to determine and analyze the progress and contribution of the project thus far. This mid-term evaluation also aims to identify the strategy that has been working, or not working, so far. Respectively, it is expected that the evaluation report will outline lessons learned and inform the next strategy to implement for the rest of the project.

The assignment defined two *purposes* for the evaluation (1) learning and improvement, and (2) adjustment, by creating learning opportunities for UNDP, UNFPA, LWU, and other relevant stakeholders to improve the implementation before the end of the project. The evaluation aims to determine the effectiveness of various aspects, highlighting both successful and components that need improvement, and analyzing the reasons behind them. These findings will be disseminated to relevant stakeholders, including donors, government partners, and beneficiaries. Consequently, these results will enable necessary adjustments in relevant areas.

The scope of the evaluation is expected, but not limited to, to be in the areas of the following:

- The relevance of the project's strategy, objective, and priorities, including the validity of the project components and the implementation arrangements, should be assessed.
- The (mid-term) project's results should be evaluated against the expected outcomes outlined in the revised project document.
- The project management, including monitoring activities, reporting, and communication to ensure donor visibility, knowledge product management, and the inclusion of cross-cutting issues such as disability and ethnic minority considerations, needs to be examined.
- Actionable recommendations should be provided following the evaluation and can serve as inputs for the rest of the project period. The recommendations should be presented in a way that would be achievable for the project team. The project team also outlined that the recommendations should define the main directions that could improve the implementation for the rest of the project.

Evaluation Criteria and Key-Questions

The evaluation has followed the OECD-DAC criteria of relevance, coherence, effectiveness, efficiency, and sustainability. Additional criteria such as management and monitoring, LNOB, human rights, and gender equity were also evaluated. The evaluation has answered the fundamental questions as per following:

- To what extent has the project achieved its intended and unintended results?
- What are the factors that support and/or hinder the project's achievements?
- What are the lessons learned from the project? What can be improved to ensure that objectives will be achieved for the rest of the project implementation?

The structure and approach of the mid-term evaluation for the Khan Hom project seek to efficiently address the information needs of the users and provide a comprehensive spectrum of information needed for this type of evaluation. The list of questions for the evaluation is presented as an attachment to the report in Annex 1.

The set of questions under 'Relevance' are exploring the alignment of the project with the national development priorities of Lao PDR, the UNDP Strategic Plan, and the UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework and other strategic documents.

The 'Coherence' evaluation questions provide information on the project's alignment with existing initiatives, how it fills gaps in current interventions, and how well it utilizes the advantages and expertise of participating UN agencies. This helps stakeholders understand how the project fits within the broader development system and how it is contributing to the attainment of the SDGs, particularly Goal 5 on Gender Equality.

Under 'Effectiveness', questions regarding whether the project is on track to achieve its intended results, the factors influencing these results, and its contribution to changes in social norms and policies, provide information on how effective the project is at meeting its intended goals and the factors influencing those outcomes.

The 'Efficiency' related questions provide an understanding of the cost-effectiveness and time efficiency of the project's strategy and activities. It also provides information on whether the project has been managed efficiently in terms of resource allocation, whether it is in line with the approved work plan, and whether the available resources were sufficient to achieve the intended results.

Questions related to 'Sustainability' cover aspects like capacity building, stakeholder engagement, and the project's long-term presence. This addresses the need to understand if the project has the potential to create a lasting impact and whether there are strategies in place to ensure this.

The 'Management and Monitoring' section provides information on the project's internal mechanisms for tracking progress and impact. The focus on gender-responsive M&E systems is particularly relevant for ensuring the project management processes are inclusive and equitable.

Finally, the 'LNOB', 'Human Rights', and 'Gender Equity' criteria ensure that the project does not simply aim for broad development targets, but actively focuses on the most vulnerable and marginalized groups. This is critical to ensuring the project aligns with UN principles of inclusivity and equity and is crucial for users seeking to understand the project's reach and inclusivity.

Additionally, significant attention has been given to the use of the Quality Self-Assessment Criteria (Annex 4) throughout this evaluation. This table, based on the UNDP Evaluation Quality Assessment, has shaped the evaluation's structure and guided its methodology and data sources. Its inclusion in this report not only strengthens its credibility but also ensures it meets the UNDP's evaluation requirements. Therefore, it plays an important role in enhancing the quality of the report's findings, establishing it as a reliable and valuable resource for assessing project effectiveness and achieving success.

4. EVALUATION APPROACH AND METHODS

Evaluation Approach

The evaluation approach of the Khan Hom project was underpinned by an inclusive, ethical, and comprehensive strategy. The method encompassed broad stakeholder involvement and incorporated detailed data collection tools. Despite certain limitations, effective mitigation measures were in place to uphold the integrity and accuracy of the results. A significant emphasis was given to inclusivity, covering aspects of gender equality, disability, and social vulnerability in methodology.

Evaluation Team Overview

The evaluation team for the Khan Hom project was composed, considering the background, skills, and diversity of its members. The team consisted of an international and national evaluation consultant who worked in close cooperation throughout the evaluation process. Both consultants brought extensive experience in conducting evaluations, particularly those related to the subject matter of the Khan Hom project, and possessed in-depth knowledge of the region and Lao PDR. Their complementary expertise and perspectives ensured a comprehensive approach to the assignment, facilitating a thorough assessment of the project. This tandem proved invaluable in conducting the evaluation comprehensively and ensuring the appropriateness of the technical skill mix, and geographical representation for the evaluation.

Data Collection and Sources

The interlocutors for the evaluation were selected through a preliminary stakeholder analysis, resulting in three distinct groups. Group 1 was comprised of the project team, and UN agencies UNDP and UNFPA. Group 2 was made up of Direct Beneficiaries of the Project, and Group 3 consisted of External Stakeholders such as NGOs and the donor. The selection of individuals from these groups was driven by their degree of relevance and interaction with the project, with a focus on those with a close interrelation with the project's activities.

In the selection of interlocutors, a purposive sampling strategy was employed, underpinned by the principle of maximum variation to integrate the range of experiences and perspectives pertaining to the project. This approach ensured the inclusion of individuals exhibiting varying degrees of relevance, proximity, and interaction with the project, thereby strengthening the diversity and inclusivity of the sample.

The total number of individuals interviewed was 33, of which 80% were women, emphasizing the gender-responsive nature of this evaluation process.

The primary data collection took place in Vientiane, the capital city of Lao PDR, between the 12th to 16th of June 2023, as the majority of the interlocutors and relevant institutions were located there. The evaluation also sought to integrate perspectives from the provincial level through the inclusion of representatives involved in project implementation who were present in Vientiane during the field visit.

A mix of Key Informant Interviews (KIIs) and Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) was chosen as the main data collection techniques. These qualitative research methods were designed to capture particular insights and experiential knowledge from the interviewees.

The KIIs were utilized to explore in-depth individual experiences, gather expert opinions, and understand complex phenomena related to the project. They facilitated the extraction of specific insights from key representatives of different institutions associated with the project. In total, nine KII were conducted with interlocutors from Care International, KOICA, Ministry of Justice, Ministry of Public Security, NCAWMC, Office of the Supreme People's Prosecutor, People's Supreme Court, UNDP Finance Officer, and UNFPA Finance Officer.

The FGDs, conducted with ten distinct groups, allowed for dynamic discussions and shared narratives, providing a rich source of data on collective experiences, common perspectives,

and divergent viewpoints. By fostering interaction among participants, FGDs offered an environment conducive to the emergence of insights not often apparent in individual interviews. The FGDs were conducted with Gender and Development Association, Lao Women's Union project team, Lao Women's Union representatives from Savannakhet province, Central, and a representative from Provincial LWU, Division of Protection of Women, Media Department, Subcommittee on the Advancement of Women (Sub-CAW) of the Ministry of Health (MoH), UNDP Governance unit, and UNFPA project team.

To further fortify the reliability and validity of the findings, a triangulation approach was employed. This involved the correlation of data obtained through different methods – KIIs, FGDs, and document analysis – to identify convergence and divergence in the findings, thereby enhancing the robustness and credibility of the results.

The document analysis involved a meticulous review of a variety of project documents, reports, and relevant policy documents from government bodies, UNDP, and UNFPA. This enabled an understanding of the project's alignment with strategic frameworks and gender equality policies and also provided a context for interpreting the findings from the interviews.

Resources and Assistance

During the organization of the evaluation assignment, the necessary support for detailed resource requirements has been provided. These requirements were directly linked to the evaluation activities and deliverables specified in the work plan. The resource requirements for each phase of the evaluation are as follows:

Phase 1: Desk review and inception report

- The evaluation team has been granted access to all the necessary documents essential to the evaluation process. These documents included past reports, project documents, meeting minutes, surveys, financial data, and relevant publications.
- Logistical support has been provided to facilitate the kick-off meetings. This included booking appropriate venues and arranging the necessary technology for discussions with remote interlocutors.

Phase 2: Data-collection mission

- Assistance has been given to set up meetings and interviews with key staff members, partners, and beneficiaries.
- Support has been provided in obtaining relevant contact lists to facilitate interviews and consultations with stakeholders.

Phase 3: Final Evaluation Report

- Feedback has been gathered from various stakeholders during the review process of the report. Support has been given to organize a debriefing meeting to discuss the findings.
- Assistance has been provided in disseminating the final report to the relevant stakeholders, ensuring wide distribution and accessibility.

Ethical Safeguards

During the evaluation assignment, ethical considerations were carefully observed and followed. The UNEG 'Ethical Guidelines for Evaluators' were used as a reference to ensure the protection of informants' rights and confidentiality. Before each interview, the evaluators summarized the ethical commitments relevant to the assignment to ensure a shared understanding of proper conduct. At the outset of the assignment, the evaluators duly signed the Pledge of Ethical Conduct in Evaluation. Additionally, to assure data protection, the evaluation report avoided disclosing the names of individuals involved in its annex.

Assessing Methodological Constraints and Mitigation Strategies

In conducting the evaluation, it is important to acknowledge and address certain limitations that may impact the accuracy and validity of the findings. Specifically:

- **Language Barrier:** One potential limitation of the evaluation process was the language barrier, especially in the interaction between the international consultant and local counterparts that did not speak English, which could have resulted in misunderstandings or misinterpretations of information gathered from interviews. To address this issue, measures were taken to mitigate the language barrier. Firstly, the national consultant was fluent in Lao, which facilitated effective communication during meetings where English proficiency was limited. Additionally, after each meeting, the minutes of the national consultant were cross-checked with the minutes compiled by the international consultant. These steps ensured accurate understanding, minimized linguistic challenges, and contributed to maintaining the reliability of the gathered data.
- **Inclusion of Self-Reported Data:** Another limitation of the evaluation methodology was the inclusion of self-reported data. These data could have contained inherent biases, as respondents could have been inclined to give socially desirable responses, which could have potentially affected the objectivity of the data collected and thus the validity of the evaluation conclusions. To mitigate this limitation, the evaluation team cross-verified information from different sources and used triangulation to enhance the validity and reliability of the data. This cross-checking and validation process helped to reduce the risk of data inaccuracies, ensuring an objective analysis.

Despite these limitations, the mitigation strategies employed by the evaluation team helped to manage these challenges effectively, ensuring the credibility and reliability of the evaluation process and its findings.

Incorporating Inclusivity: Gender, Disability, Vulnerability, and Social Inclusion in Methodology

The methodology effectively addressed gender equality, disability, vulnerability, and social inclusion in a multifaceted approach. The principle of inclusivity was key in data collection, guided by a mixed-methods approach that allowed for collecting different stakeholder experiences. The data collection tools - document analysis guides, interview guides, and focus group discussion guides - were designed to elicit gender-specific experiences and attitudes.

The gender lens was further integrated into the interview process, with an attempt to maintain gender balance among respondents. The methodology employed a 'Leave No One Behind' (LNOB) principle, giving particular attention to the experiences of individuals with disabilities and other marginalized groups.

The methodology acknowledged the importance of stakeholder diversity in enriching the evaluation process. A wide range of stakeholders, from project staff to beneficiaries and relevant government officials, were engaged in the process, making it participatory, transparent, and inclusive. This method offered a broad view of the project's effects and relevance from various perspectives.

Through its comprehensive stakeholder outreach, the methodology delivered a targeted understanding of the project's context, effectively factoring in the intersectionality of gender, disability, vulnerability, and social inclusion. By applying such an approach, the methodology assured the commitment to upholding gender equality and social inclusion throughout the project's evaluation.

5. DATA ANALYSIS

The data analysis process is essential for any evaluation as it aids in understanding the collected data and determining the assessment of the evaluation criteria. This chapter outlines the approach used in analyzing data collected during the Khan Hom Project evaluation.

Data Analysis Approach

The data analysis process began immediately after the data collection phase. The multi-modal data collected - document analysis, interviews, and focus group discussions - were subjected to meticulous thematic and content analysis. This approach helped reveal patterns, themes, and categories within the data.

The interview and focus group discussion transcripts were initially coded and categorized based on pre-identified themes in the Evaluation Matrix. A subsequent round of inductive coding was performed to capture any emerging themes that were not initially anticipated. This approach ensured that the evaluation team was open to new ideas and patterns that the participants brought forward.

Comparative and gap analysis approaches were applied to document analysis data to understand how well the project aligns and contributes to various strategic plans and frameworks. This process was also helpful in evaluating the project's effectiveness, with correlation analysis being utilized to understand the project's progress, the contribution of each activity, and their correlation with the results.

Data Accuracy and Validation

Data accuracy and validation are critical in ensuring the integrity of evaluation findings. Several measures were taken to confirm the accuracy of the collected data. Triangulation was a key technique employed to confirm the accuracy of the data. Findings from document analysis, interviews, and focus groups were cross-checked and confirmed. In case of inconsistencies or gaps, the evaluation team sought further clarification or additional data.

Furthermore, the evaluation team conducted member checking, where preliminary findings were shared with the participants, allowing them to confirm the accuracy and interpretative validity of the data. This feedback mechanism ensured the data represented the participants' views and experiences accurately.

Appropriateness of the Analyses to the Evaluation Questions

The chosen methods of analysis were specifically selected to provide comprehensive answers to the evaluation questions. The use of thematic and content analysis helped to identify significant themes and patterns related to the project's objectives, implementation process, achievements, and challenges. The correlation analysis provided insights into the cause-effect relationships between different activities and the project's overall results.

Similarly, the comparative analysis was beneficial in addressing the evaluation questions concerning the project's relevance and alignment with strategic plans and frameworks. The disaggregated analysis presented how different social and demographic groups were affected by the project, addressing evaluation questions about equity and inclusion.

Limitations and Potential Weaknesses in the Data Analysis

Despite diligent efforts to ensure the robustness of the data analysis, certain limitations exist that might influence the interpretation of findings and conclusions. While efforts were made to disaggregate data by sex, disability status, and other categories, limitations arose due to the available data. The project's monitoring and evaluation framework, coupled with a general deficit of disaggregated data from the side of LWU and other entities, did not fully capture data for all these categories, resulting in gaps in the analysis of disaggregated data.

Nevertheless, the evaluation team attempted to utilize rigorous data collection and analysis methods to ensure the validity and reliability of the evaluation findings. The collected data and

conducted analysis provide a robust and comprehensive insight into the project's performance. However, it is important to consider these potential weaknesses when interpreting the findings and drawing conclusions.

6. FINDINGS

The findings are organized in a manner that aligns with the evaluation questions, facilitating a clear link between the queries posed and the corresponding assessments for the ease of comprehension by report users.

6.1. Relevance

To what extent is the project relevant to the national development priorities of Lao PDR as reflected in the 9th NSEDP (and 8th NSEDP), UNDP CPD 2022-2026, UNDP Strategic Plan, and UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework?

In this section of the evaluation report, the extent to which the project aligns with the national development priorities of Lao PDR, as reflected in the 9th National Socio-Economic Development Plan (NSEDP) and the preceding 8th NSEDP, the UNDP Country Program Document (CPD) for the period of 2022-2026, the UNDP Strategic Plan, and the UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework, will be examined. By analyzing the project's relevance to these strategic frameworks, an assessment is made regarding its potential to contribute to the national development agenda and promote sustainable progress in Lao PDR.

Alignment with the national development priorities of Lao PDR as reflected in the 9th NSEDP and 8th NSEDP

Findings based on the analysis of the data regarding the relevance of the project to the national development priorities of Lao PDR as reflected in the 9th NSEDP and 8th NSEDP are as follows:

- The objectives of the project, as stated in the Project Document, are aligned with the strategic goals of the 9th NSEDP and 8th NSEDP. The project aims to strengthen the governance mechanism and policy framework to mainstream the prevention and elimination of GBV against women in the national development agenda. This objective aligns to achieve socio-economic development with inclusive, equal, and fair access to benefits as outlined in the strategic goals of the 9th NSEDP.
- The project also promotes women's participation in Lao PDR, which is in line with the strategic goals of the 9th NSEDP and 8th NSEDP. These goals emphasize the development of human resources, creating quality economic growth, and enhancing national potential. Promoting women's participation contributes to achieving these goals by harnessing the potential of all segments of society, including women.
- The strategic goals of the 9th NSEDP, such as ensuring employment and improved living standards, political stability, balanced economic, social, and environmental development, and green growth, are also relevant to the project. By addressing GBV against women and promoting women's participation, the project contributes to creating a peaceful, united, democratic, just, civilized, and orderly society as envisioned in the strategic goals.
- Similarly, the key government directions of the 8th NSEDP, such as achieving economic growth with quality, sustainable development, strengthening human resource capacity, maintaining political stability, and widening international cooperation, are relevant to the project. The project's objectives align with these directions.

In summary, the *project's objectives are well-aligned with the strategic goals and priorities of both the 9th NSEDP and 8th NSEDP*. It contributes to the national development priorities of Lao PDR by addressing GBV, promoting women's participation, and supporting the overall socio-economic development and well-being of the country.

Alignment with UNDP CPD 2022-2026

- Capacity Building and Strengthening of the Justice System: The project also aligns with the CPD's focus on strengthening governance, the rule of law, and justice-related

- institutions. By aiming to strengthen the capacity of the justice and policing sector for GBV response and prevention, the project mirrors the CPD's focus on building the capacity of key judicial bodies, improving service delivery, and ensuring access to justice for marginalized and vulnerable groups.
- Promotion of Inclusivity, Transparency, and Accountability: The project aims to build transparent and participatory policy-making and decision-making processes, a priority that echoes in the CPD's focus on enhancing transparency, inclusivity, and accountability of state institutions. The project's emphasis on integrating sectoral and coordination policies into a National Strategic Plan also aligns with the CPD's goal to promote policy coherence and subnational implementation.
 - Support to International Commitments: The project supports the implementation of international instruments, including CEDAW, Beijing/CSW, and ICPD, reflecting the UNDP CPD's emphasis on upholding international human rights commitments made by Lao PDR.
 - Supporting Gender Equality: The project is especially relevant to the CPD's focus on the most vulnerable in society, including women. By addressing GBV and promoting women's participation, the project directly contributes to gender equality, a key priority under the CPD.

Overall, *the Khan Hom Project aligns with the key areas of emphasis of the UNDP CPD 2022-2026 for Lao PDR, demonstrating high relevance to the national development priorities of the country.* The project's focus on improving governance, strengthening the justice sector, enhancing policy coherence, and promoting gender equality directly aligns with the goals of the UNDP CPD, positioning the project as a significant contributor to national development efforts.

Alignment with the UNDP Strategic Plans

The Khan Hom Project has a high degree of alignment with the national development priorities reflected in the UNDP Strategic Plans for both the 2018-2021 and 2022-2025 periods. The focus of the Project on GBV and promoting women's participation in Lao PDR corresponds directly with both the UNDP Strategic Plans' focus on gender equality. This emphasis is evidenced in the UNDP 2022-2025 Strategic Plan as one of its six signature solutions and was also an important element of the 2018-2021 Strategic Plan.

The project components are well aligned with UNDP's strategic directions and solutions in the following manner:

1. The first Project component involves supporting the development and implementation of the National Plan of Action on Preventing and Combating Violence Against Women (2021-2025) and the National Plan of Action on Gender Equality (2021-2025). This component aligns with the UNDP's strategic direction of 'leaving no one behind' and directly supports the 'gender equality' signature solution.
2. The second Project component focuses on creating implementation guidelines and a monitoring and evaluation (M&E) Plan for the 5-year National Strategic Plan on EVAW (2021-2025). This aligns with the UNDP's strategic enabler of 'strategic innovation' as it seeks to innovate in the implementation and evaluation of GBV programs. This also aligns with the UNDP 2018-2021 Strategic Plan's focus on ensuring greater availability and use of disaggregated data for sustainable development (SDG 17.18.1).
3. The third Project component involves strengthening the capacity of the justice and policing sector for GBV response and prevention. This ties directly into the 'governance' solution in the UNDP 2022-2025 Strategic Plan. It also aligns with the UNDP 2018-2021 Strategic Plan's focus on achieving gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls (SDG 5.2.1).

Furthermore, *the project's overall objective of tackling GBV against women in the national development agenda aligns with the structural transformation direction in the UNDP's 2022-*

2025 Strategic Plan. By addressing structural barriers to gender equality, the project aims to transform the social and institutional structures in Lao PDR.

Alignment with the UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework

The Khan Hom Project has a high degree of alignment with the national development priorities of Lao PDR, as outlined in the UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework. It particularly addresses *key areas such as governance, the rule of law, and the overall well-being of the people*, making it highly relevant to the country's objectives.

- Governance and rule of law:

The Khan Hom Project operates towards enhancing the efficiency, transparency, and effectiveness of institutions. It does this by supporting the development and implementation of the 2nd Five-year National Plan of Action on Preventing and Combating Violence Against Women (2021-2025) and the 4th Five-Year National Plan of Action on Gender Equality (2021-2025). These actions directly contribute to strengthening governance mechanisms and align with the UN Cooperation Framework's focus on governance and the rule of law.

In addition, the project's emphasis on strengthening the capacity of the justice and policing sector for GBV response and prevention supports the advancement of the human rights agenda, which is a key area under the UN Cooperation Framework's strategic priority of Governance and rule of law.

- People's well-being:

The Khan Hom Project directly contributes to people's well-being, another priority area of the UN Cooperation Framework, by focusing on the issue of GBV against women. By tackling GBV in the national development agenda and promoting women's participation, the project is contributing to the overall well-being of women in Lao PDR, which in turn contributes to the overall well-being of society.

The project's emphasis on integrating the National Plan on EAW into sector plans and on developing an implementation guideline for the National Strategic Plan on EAW underscores its commitment to people's well-being. These actions will not only help ensure a coordinated and efficient approach to addressing GBV but also help enhance the quality of support services for GBV victims, thus contributing to their well-being.

Overall, the Khan Hom project aligns well with the national development priorities of Lao PDR as reflected in the UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework, specifically in the areas of governance, rule of law, and people's wellbeing. By focusing on these areas, the project is likely to make a significant contribution to Lao PDR's efforts to achieve the goals outlined in the UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework.

Additionally, in the process of document review and background research, the relevance of the intervention with the *UNDP Lao PDR Gender Equality Strategy 2022-2026 (and the Action Plan)* was also conducted yielding the additional findings presented below.

The Khan Hom Project is highly relevant in the context of the UNDP Lao PDR Gender Equality Strategy 2022-2026 and the accompanying Action Plan. The Project's objective, which aims to strengthen governance mechanisms and policy frameworks to tackle GBV against women in the national development agenda, fully aligns with the UNDP's strategic solutions and expected outcomes.

Here are some specific areas where the relevance is pronounced:

- **Strengthening Governance:** The project's first component which supports the development and implementation of national plans aligns with the UNDP's focus on Governance and Rule of Law, including women's participation in decision-making processes. The Khan Hom Project's aim to integrate National Action Plans (NAPs) on Ending Violence Against

Women (EVAW) and Gender Equality in sector plans can help in creating an evidence-based policy and decision-making process.

- Alignment with Signature Solutions: The Khan Hom Project's focus on strengthening the response to GBV aligns with the UNDP Strategy's five Signature Solutions, particularly regarding governance and gender equality. It also aligns with the three interrelated pillars of the UNDP Strategy, particularly on Governance and Rule of Law.
- Promoting Gender Equality: The project's overall goal aligns with the fifth Signature Solution of the UNDP Strategy which emphasizes gender equality and women's empowerment.
- Building Resilience: The project's focus on strengthening the capacity of the justice and policing sector aligns with the UNDP's approach to building resilience, particularly in communities affected by violence against women.
- Leaving No One Behind: The focus of the project on victims/survivors of violence, aligns with the UNDP's principle of "Leaving no one behind", addressing multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination.
- Policy and Operational Framework: The project's efforts to support the development of an Implementation guideline and M&E Plan for the 5-year National Strategic Plan on EVAW aligns with the expected outcomes and outputs of the UNDP Strategy. This contributes to the assurance of program quality, effective design, and implementation, monitoring and evaluation, and progress towards gender equality and women's empowerment.

Additionally, the project aligns with the first and second pillars of the *Lao PDR – United Nations Partnership Framework from 2017 to 2021*. The first pillar focuses on inclusive growth, livelihoods, and resilience, with a key outcome being increased access to social protection benefits for vulnerable groups and impoverished individuals. The third pillar pertains to governance. Two expected outcomes under this category are the establishment of institutions and policies at national and local levels to support high-quality service delivery responsive to people's needs, and the improved access to justice and fulfillment of human rights for all individuals.

In conclusion, the Khan Hom Project demonstrates strong alignment with the national development priorities of Lao PDR as reflected in the 9th NSEDP, 8th NSEDP, UNDP CPD 2022-2026, UNDP Strategic Plans, UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework, and the UNDP Lao PDR Gender Equality Strategy 2022-2026 and the Lao PDR – United Nations Partnership Framework from 2017 to 2021. The project's objectives and activities are in line with the strategic goals and priorities of these frameworks, focusing on addressing GBV, promoting women's participation, strengthening governance mechanisms, and enhancing the rule of law. By addressing these key areas, the project contributes significantly to the national development efforts of Lao PDR, aiming for inclusive and sustainable socio-economic development and gender equality.

To what extent is the project in line with the government's gender equality priority in general and the elimination of violence against women (EVAW) in particular?

The Khan Hom Project displays a strong correlation with the government's gender equality priorities and the elimination of violence against women (EVAW) initiatives, as evidenced by its objectives, actions, and stakeholder feedback.

The project's relevancy is highlighted by its alignment with the government's key objectives and the incorporation of multiple components that address both gender equality and EVAW. The project's objectives aim to reinforce governance mechanisms and policy frameworks to tackle GBV in the national development agenda. This promotes women's participation in Lao PDR and is in line with government priorities.

Support for the 2nd Five-year National Plan of Action on Preventing and Combating Violence Against Women and the 4th Five-Year National Plan of Action on Gender Equality is evidenced within the project's structure. Additionally, the project's commitment to developing and

implementing the National Strategic Plans on EAW and Gender Equality for 2021-2025 strengthens its relevancy and solidifies its alignment with the national development agenda.

The project's emphasis on institutional capacity building, specifically strengthening the justice and policing sector's response to GBV, matches government efforts to boost institutional responses to GBV issues. Furthermore, the project's commitment to developing an Implementation Guideline and M&E Plan of the 5-year National Strategic Plan on EAW reflects its adherence to these efforts.

The project also shows alignment with the 8th and 9th National Development Strategies, with a particular focus on gender equality and EAW. This alignment, along with the development of policies and SOPs that comply with existing laws and the strengthening of staff capacity, indicates that the project is not just consistent with the national development strategy but also seeks to build long-term impact.

Additionally, the Project's alignment with the institutional framework in Laos is high, particularly with the Lao Women's Union and National Commission for the Advancement of Women, Mothers, and Children. Both organizations play critical roles in promoting and monitoring gender equality and women's empowerment, a purpose that directly corresponds to the project's objectives.

Further evidence of its alignment comes from the project's adherence to international instruments such as CEDAW, Beijing/CSW, and ICPD. This, coupled with the alignment with SDG indicators, particularly those related to gender equality, reinforces the project's relevance and potential contribution to the global sustainable development agenda.

In addition, the project is integrated into LWU's Programs No. 4 and 7, consolidating its relevance within the broader structure of government efforts to promote gender equality and combat violence against women.

To summarize, the Khan Hom Project demonstrates a high level of relevance to the government's gender equality priorities, including the elimination of violence against women. It is aligned with national strategies and plans, the national institutional framework, and international gender equality and EAW commitments. Its focus on policy development, strategic planning, and institutional capacity building, and its integration into the institutional and legal frameworks of the country suggest not only alignment with current priorities but also contribute to their sustained long-term impact.

To what extent does the project incorporate gender analysis into its design? Does the project appropriately use the analysis to create measures to address gender equality issues?

The project demonstrates an understanding of the importance of gender analysis through its explicit focus on addressing GBV in Lao PDR. While there isn't a dedicated gender analysis document, the "Situation Analysis" chapter provides extensive data on the prevalence of GBV in the region, the societal factors contributing to its persistence, and existing mechanisms to address this problem. This understanding of the context is crucial for a gender-sensitive project design and implementation.

The project also acknowledges the role of social norms, like traditional gender roles and beliefs, in perpetuating GBV and includes measures to challenge these norms, indicating a gender-transformative approach. It proposes to do this through awareness-raising initiatives and assistance to government bodies, among others.

The project uses these insights to inform its objectives and activities. It recognizes the need to address the normalization of GBV, the lack of resources and knowledge to effectively tackle it, and the need for systemic changes in governance mechanisms.

Its measures include developing and implementing national strategic plans for eliminating GBV and promoting gender equality, integrating these plans into sectoral plans, strengthening

the capacity of government staff, conducting needs assessments, developing standard operating procedures, and enhancing GBV data reporting systems.

Moreover, the project uses the “Problem and Solution Tree Diagram” to articulate the connection between causes, problems, and activities, signifying that the interventions proposed are based on a solid understanding of the issue at hand.

In summary, the project demonstrates an understanding of the gender dynamics surrounding GBV in Lao PDR and uses this analysis to inform its design and measures. This project is likely to contribute to gender equality by addressing GBV, provided that its interventions are implemented effectively, and its gender-related impacts are adequately monitored and evaluated.

6.2. Coherence

To what extent does the project contribute to achieving SDGs in Lao PDR, especially Goal 5 of Gender Equality?

The project demonstrates a high degree of SDG mainstreaming within its design, aligning with and contributing significantly to the Sustainable Development Goals particularly SDG 5 (Gender Equality) and SDG 16 (Peace, Justice, and Strong Institutions) within the context of Lao PDR. The project outcomes and outputs not only align with the specific targets of these SDGs but also embody the overarching principles of these global goals.

Upon reviewing the Project design, the following key findings can be extracted in this regard:

- *Project's Outcome:* Strengthened National Capacity for Effective, Systematic, and Accountable Prevention of and Response to Violence Against Women in Lao PDR. The achievement of this outcome directly contributes to SDG 5 (Target 5.2: Eliminate all forms of violence against all women and girls in the public and private spheres, including trafficking and sexual and other types of exploitation) and SDG 16 (Target 16.1: Significantly reduce all forms of violence and related death rates everywhere). It mirrors the global effort to establish gender equality and just societies by systematically curbing VAW and enhancing accountability in such issues.
- *Project's Output:* Improved Institutional and Policy Framework Aimed at Accelerating the Elimination of Gender-Based Violence Against Women and Promoting Women's Participation. This output seeks to align with SDG 5, specifically Target 5.1: End all forms of discrimination against all women and girls everywhere, and Target 5. C: Adopt and strengthen sound policies and enforceable legislation for the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls at all levels. Moreover, it also contributes to SDG 16 by promoting peaceful and inclusive societies and building effective and inclusive institutions.

The project, thus, complements the national, regional, and global initiatives toward reducing gender discrimination and enhancing women's participation. This approach underscores the project's commitment to advancing gender equality as a prerequisite for sustainable development.

- *Project's Lessons Learned:* The project's successful implementation, with its roots in prior experiences from UN Agencies, namely UNDP and UNFPA, reaffirms the significance of strategic partnerships, community-led interventions, localized strategies, and ongoing collaboration. Building upon these robust experiences has led to the development of an approach sensitive to the Lao context, thereby enhancing its efficiency and effectiveness. This form of practical learning and adaptation is crucial for the progressive realization of SDGs, especially SDG 5 and SDG 16. Furthermore, the project has been able to capitalize on the expertise of local institutions like the Lao Women's Union, which has been instrumental in localizing SDGs while remaining sensitive to the national context and practices.

- *Project Activities and Indicators:* The project's specific activity of providing technical assistance for formulating the National Strategic Plan on Ending Violence Against Women (EVAW) 2021-2025 is explicitly aimed at supporting the implementation of SDG 5. Furthermore, aligning outcome indicators with SDG 5 underpins the project's commitment to not only align with the global gender equality agenda but also to incorporate SDGs within the project's monitoring and evaluation mechanism, thereby enhancing the project's coherence with the SDGs.

In conclusion, the project has a high degree of mainstreaming of SDGs in its design, demonstrating how such interventions can align with and contribute towards achieving global development goals.

Does the project fill in the gaps of the current similar interventions by the government, other UN agencies, and other development partners?

The Khan Hom Project presents an integrative and coordinated response to several existing gaps in the current interventions that aim to combat GBV and promote gender equality in Lao PDR. During the process of data collection, it became evident that two primary gaps exist within current interventions: the lack of effective coordination between key agencies and concerns regarding the application of international standards in services provided for women.

The coordination gap is evident in the disjointed collaboration among vital institutions, such as the Supreme Court and the Prosecutor's Office, which hampers the overall effectiveness of GBV interventions. The Khan Hom Project addresses this gap through a strategic focus on fostering relations between these institutions, thus creating a more coherent and integrated approach to tackling GBV. This approach offers a distinctive perspective compared to similar initiatives by fostering new partnerships beyond the traditional, often isolated, partnerships inherent in other projects.

Additionally, there are concerns regarding the alignment of women-focused services with international standards, which indicates a potential quality gap in the current interventions. The Khan Hom Project targets this issue by seeking to enhance these services, ensuring adherence to international norms. Notably, while the project initially stresses capacity building, there are ongoing discussions to extend its reach and provide direct support to GBV survivors, thus addressing an unmet need in the existing operational landscape.

Another distinctive feature of the Khan Hom Project is its focus on policy-level interventions, aiming to tackle GBV issues strategically. This focus stems from the recognition of the existing gap, where interventions often fall short of instigating substantial impact at the policy level. In this respect, the project establishes a close collaboration with the UNFPA, which assumes a leading role in GBV-related work in Lao PDR in the absence of UN Women.

Further reinforcing its comprehensive approach, the project draws from the learnings and experience of ongoing initiatives such as the Governance for Inclusive Development Program (GIDP) and the extensive experience of UNDP and UNFPA in the Lao context. It underscores the importance of strong governance mechanisms and aims to integrate these efforts into its strategy, which includes enhancing access to justice for women and girls and strengthening legal institutions' capacity for gender-sensitive responses.

Lastly, the project recognizes the significant role of education in mitigating GBV and fostering gender equality. By focusing on policy-level intervention, the project indirectly tackles issues like early marriage, which curtails girls' education and is a recognized form of violence.

In conclusion, the Khan Hom Project marks a strategic effort to bridge the gaps observed in current/other interventions. Its commitment to fostering new partnerships, aligning services to international standards, and focusing on policy-level interventions bolsters its potential to make a significant and coherent contribution to tackling GBV in the Lao PDR. By learning from existing initiatives and integrating efforts across various sectors, the Khan Hom Project is well-

positioned to address GBV into the national development agenda, thereby advancing gender equality and the prevention and combating of violence against women.

To what extent does this project leverage the comparative advantage and expertise of the participating UN agencies, UNDP, and UNFPA, vis-à-vis relevant stakeholders to achieve the development results of the project?

The Project exhibits substantial coherence with the comparative advantage and expertise of participating UN agencies, UNDP, and UNFPA. The project's alignment with these agencies' experience and knowledge significantly contributes to its capacity to achieve development results.

UNDP and UNFPA have both demonstrated expertise and experience in addressing gender-based violence, women's rights, legal aid, and capacity-building initiatives, which both entities bring to the project. UNFPA has extensive experience in addressing GBV, focusing on the life cycle approach and an essential package of services for GBV. Its work has included capacity building for duty-bearers on GBV interventions and sensitizing rights holders. On the other hand, UNDP has been instrumental in strengthening rule of law initiatives in Laos, particularly with a focus on eliminating GBV at this level. The efforts have included facilitating training for legal officers and providing legal aid to GBV victims.

These areas of expertise have been leveraged to achieve project outcomes through various activities. For instance, UNFPA's experience with GBV interventions has guided the formulation and implementation of the National Strategic Plan on Eliminating Violence Against Women (EVAW), while UNDP's work in strengthening the rule of law has been instrumental in developing the capacity of the justice and policing sectors.

Overall, the project effectively leverages the expertise and comparative advantages of UNDP and UNFPA to achieve its developmental objectives. By fostering stronger partnerships, promoting cross-sectoral collaborations, and integrating lessons learned from ongoing initiatives, these advantages can be further amplified in future projects.

6.3. Effectiveness

Is the project on track to achieve its intended results within the agreed period? Which specific activities/outputs contribute to the achieved results? What are the contributing factors to the results that are achieved? What are the challenges that hinder the achievement of results and how to overcome them?

Attached to the report is an exhaustive analysis, offering a holistic review of the status of activity implementation. The primary insights are as follows:

- The project is generally on track to achieve its intended results within the planned timeline, with most activities as being completed or in progress of fulfilment. Most activities are either completed or in the process of fulfillment. However, certain activities – specifically, Activity 2.2 and some aspects of Activities 1.5, 2.3, 2.4, 3.2, and 3.3 – are yet to be implemented or remain partially completed. If not advanced promptly, the status of these activities could potentially affect the project's completion timeline. Therefore, it is essential for the project team to closely oversee these tasks, accelerating their progress as necessary.
- Speaking about the specific activities/outputs contribute to the achieved results, Activities 1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 1.4, 3.1, and 3.5 have all been completed, which contributes to the overall achieved results of the project. The successful development of the National Plans of Action on EVAW and Gender Equality (Activities 1.1 and 1.3) and its subsequent integration into sectoral plans (Activities 1.2 and 1.4) have been significant contributors to project progress. Similarly, the completion of the capacity assessment of the justice sector (Activity 3.1) and the development of a communication strategy (Activity 3.5) have also been instrumental in moving the project forward.

- Several factors have significantly influenced this process. Firstly, the prompt initiation of activities, facilitated by UNFPA's technical expertise and available resources, took place before the receipt of the donor's allotment. This was further enhanced by the cooperative partnership with the LWU. Lastly, the readiness of certain public institutions to adopt provisions and commitments from the plans streamlined their integration into policies, making a significant contribution to the achieved results.
- Several challenges have been identified in the report, including the hesitation of authorities to integrate plans due to fear of taking on additional responsibilities, insufficient funding at both the ministerial and provincial levels, and difficulties in mobilizing authorities and securing high-level decision-maker involvement.

The report elaborates on how to surmount these challenges in the subsequent "Recommendations" chapter.

To what extent does the project instigate change in social norms that promote gender equality?

Evaluating the project's influence in initiating change in social norms promoting gender equality involves a comprehensive understanding of the project activities, outcomes, and societal context. The project's focus on the eradication of gender-based violence against women in Lao PDR through structural interventions, as well as its commitment to the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women directives, makes it an integral part of the broader initiative to promote gender equality.

In terms of project effectiveness in changing social norms, the project seeks to engage multiple layers of society, from local village levels to national government offices, to shift the deep-rooted cultural norms that perpetuate gender-based violence. The project aims to challenge beliefs that justify violence against women, with the Lao Social Indicator Survey revealing that a significant proportion of both women and men accepted violence against women in certain situations.

The project's work to include women in the development and implementation of initiatives tackling VAW is a promising move toward empowering women and influencing societal norms that have historically affected women. It underlines the importance of women's voices in shaping policies that directly affect them.

The adoption of the Noi 2030 Framework and the Lao Government's commitments to the ICPD Program of Action reaffirm the need to protect girls and women from GBV. These commitments signal a broader societal and governmental will to address GBV and promote gender equality.

In conclusion, the project seeks to encourage change in social norms that promote gender equality. Still, its effectiveness is challenged by resource limitations, infrastructural challenges, and deeply rooted societal norms. Continued support for capacity building, resource allocation, and integrating gender equality initiatives into the broader development framework is recommended for the project to fully realize its potential.

To what extent does the project contribute to the overall effort at the policy and community level to eliminate GBV in the country?

Effectiveness at the Policy Level

The analysis of data indicates that the Khan Hom Project aligns closely with the policy objectives of various national and international strategic frameworks such as the 9th and 8th NSEDP, UNDP CPD 2022-2026, UNDP Strategic Plans, UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework, and the UNDP Lao PDR Gender Equality Strategy 2022-2026. This strong alignment reveals that the project represents a consolidated effort to tackle GBV in Lao PDR.

The project's effectiveness at the policy level is mainly evidenced by its commitment to strengthening governance mechanisms and policy frameworks, particularly aiming to mainstream the prevention and elimination of GBV against women into the national development agenda. These policy objectives are in line with the strategic goals of both the 9th and 8th NSEDP, thereby contributing to the national development priorities of Lao PDR. Furthermore, by aligning with the UNDP CPD's focus on gender equality, social protection, justice, and the prevention of GBV, the project demonstrates effectiveness in addressing the national policy priorities of Lao PDR.

This effectiveness at the policy level is further highlighted through the project's emphasis on capacity building and strengthening of the justice sector actors, promoting inclusivity, transparency, and accountability, and supporting international commitments and gender equality.

Effectiveness at the Community Level

The project's focus on promoting women's participation and strengthening the capacity of the justice and policing sector actors for GBV response and prevention demonstrates its effectiveness at the community level. By working towards a GBV-free society, the project contributes to the well-being of women and society as a whole in Lao PDR.

In addressing GBV, the project places a significant emphasis on the victims/survivors of violence, reflecting its commitment to the LNOB principle. This focus indicates the project's effort in addressing multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination at the community level. The project's efforts to support the development of an Implementation guideline and M&E Plan for the 5-year National Strategic Plan on EAW also signify its commitment to assure program quality and progress towards gender equality and women's empowerment in the communities.

Moreover, the project aligns with the UNDP Lao PDR Gender Equality Strategy 2022-2026 and its Action Plan, reinforcing its effectiveness in promoting gender equality at the community level. The project's commitment to improving governance structures, a key focus of the UNDP Strategy, enables it to foster women's participation in decision-making processes, thereby directly addressing gender inequalities at the community level. Moreover, its alignment with UNDP's Signature Solutions ensures the project's strategic focus is attuned to areas that have a profound impact on gender equality, thereby magnifying its potential effectiveness.

The interviews with the direct beneficiaries and external stakeholders of the Project have revealed a noticeable increase in women's awareness regarding the importance of addressing GBV and the significance of reporting GBV cases as a direct outcome of the intervention. Nevertheless, while these observations are promising, they lack comprehensive measurements to precisely quantify the extent of the change.

Overall, it can be concluded that the Khan Hom Project effectively contributes to the overall effort at both the policy and community levels to eliminate GBV in Lao PDR. The project demonstrates strong alignment with various national and international strategic frameworks and is well-positioned to advance the country's development priorities in the coming years.

6.4. Efficiency

To what extent have the project's strategy and implementation activities been cost-effective and time-efficient? Were resources, human, financial, and time, used as planned and appropriately? Did the project underspend or overspend resources?

On the subject of cost-effectiveness, the data indicates variable levels of spending efficiency. The project experienced cases of overspending, which were largely due to external factors such as inflation and fluctuations in the exchange rate between the US Dollar and the Lao Kip. The inflation not only increased the costs of goods but also raised meeting room rental costs. However, it is important to note that these represent uncontrollable costs that are largely subject to external economic conditions rather than the project's financial management.

On the other hand, the project experienced underspending in some areas. This was attributed to changes in the plan such as a lower actual number of meeting participants than initially planned and some planned meetings not being held, thereby leaving parts of the budget unused.

The implementation of sanitary limitations during the COVID-19 pandemic timeframe resulted in a decrease in project spending due to the reduced intensity of activities being carried out. As for time efficiency, the project struggled with a delay in the first installment of funding, disrupting the initial implementation plans. However, the team displayed resourcefulness by using co-funding from the UNFPA to develop the National Action Plan and conduct other afferent activities. This action reveals an adaptive management strategy that might have mitigated the impact of the initial delay.

Were the project's activities conducted and completed within the approved project's work plan?

Based on the triangulated data obtained, it can be stated that the project's activities were primarily conducted and completed within the confines of the approved project's work plan. There were adjustments to the project schedule, costs, and resource allocation as necessary to align with the actual situation. No significant deviations from the initial plan were reported. This demonstrates a level of flexibility and adaptability that ensures the efficiency of the project implementation.

However, it should be noted that there were a few delays, particularly in the progress of the elaboration of the SOP for the justice sector. The causes of these delays were multifaceted and included the complexity of integrating inputs from four justice parties and adapting international SOP standards to the Lao context. The COVID-19 pandemic also contributed to the postponement of the project kickoff. These unforeseen factors resulted in some activities commencing only in 2022. Despite these delays, the implementation of the justice sector SOPs is expected to proceed smoothly upon their completion.

Furthermore, adjustments to the work plan were necessary due to the initial plan's lack of full awareness of certain challenges, particularly relating to the SOP of the justice sector. The unexpected impact of the COVID-19 pandemic also necessitated adjustments.

Overall, while the project experienced minor delays due to unforeseen challenges, the ability to adjust and adapt to these challenges demonstrates a considerable level of efficiency in the implementation of project activities.

To what extent were the resources mobilized/available enough to achieve their intended results?

The analysis of the available evidence indicates that the resources acquired and utilized for the project were generally sufficient to accomplish the anticipated results as outlined in the initial plan. This derives as well from the review of the project timeline, which consistently demonstrates a robust capacity for efficient resource mobilization and allocation.

The decisions made by the project team regarding resource utilization and optimization have played a crucial role in improving efficiency and minimizing potential waste. By effectively utilizing the resources at their disposal, the team has demonstrated competency in resource management.

6.5. Sustainability

To what extent does the project enhance capacities (human, institution, system) to create a sustained impact of the project, and what could be done to strengthen sustainability?

In terms of human capacity, the project enriches the expertise of representatives of the Lao Women's Union, line ministries, and authorities through specialized training on EAW planning, data collection, monitoring, and reporting. This facilitates informed decision-making and more effective execution of duties, fortifying the resilience of interventions against GBV. To improve this dimension further, regular refreshing events could be introduced to ensure the acquired skills and knowledge are retained and updated in line with evolving best practices and local contexts.

Institutionally, the project empowers organizations such as the justice and policing sector by conducting a comprehensive needs assessment, developing an SOP, and designing capacity development plans based on the SOP. This bolsters their ability to implement the National Action Plan on Preventing and Eliminating Violence against Women and deliver quality services to victims and survivors of GBV. To enhance this component, establishing more robust feedback mechanisms might be beneficial to enable these institutions to continually learn from their experiences and fine-tune their strategies accordingly.

Systemically, the project strengthens the policy framework and governance mechanism in Lao PDR through the development and implementation of the 2nd Five-year National Plan of Action on Preventing and Combating Violence Against Women (EAW NPA) and the 4th Five-Year National Plan of Action on Gender Equality. This amplifies the project's sustainability by facilitating coordinated efforts toward eliminating violence against women and promoting gender equality. To further strengthen this aspect, it may be beneficial to invest in greater policy-oriented research and advocacy to support the evidence-based formulation of future national strategic plans.

Lastly, to facilitate sustainability, efforts to foster local ownership of the project outcomes should be reinforced. This can be achieved by continually engaging local stakeholders in project implementation and decision-making processes, thereby encouraging continued commitment and utilization of the improved capacities even beyond the project's duration.

Was the project able to forge new partnerships with relevant stakeholders? Or strengthen the existing ones?

Based on the triangulated data derived from various stakeholders' interviews and the progress reports, it can be concluded that the project has been able to foster new partnerships and bolster existing ones effectively.

An important partnership that the project succeeded in establishing was with the LWU. Traditionally, the LWU was more commonly aligned with activities realized by UNFPA, not with UNDP. However, the project facilitated a shift in this dynamic, laying the foundation for improved relations and paving the way for meaningful collaboration on the project.

Additionally, the project managed to enhance trust with the government, a stakeholder often seen as conservative. It is noteworthy since many projects have struggled to build this trust in the past. The development and implementation of SOPs explicitly aimed to augment the existing partnership with relevant government stakeholders. This coordinated effort, which involved various government staff, is indicative of a robust partnership that is crucial for the project's sustainability.

On a broader scale, the project also enhanced coordination between UNDP, UNFPA, and KOICA, thereby strengthening existing partnerships. This improved cooperation ultimately resulted in more efficient resource allocation and project implementation, contributing to the achievement of the respective organizations' shared sustainable development goals.

To what extent has the project actively engaged and involved the relevant stakeholders in the project design and implementation?

The project has demonstrated a comprehensive level of stakeholder engagement and involvement throughout both its design and implementation stages. In the design phase, a

Situation Analysis and Problem and Solution Tree Diagram were elaborated, addressing issues of gender equality and Violence Against Women. This analysis relied on active engagement from relevant stakeholders to provide data and information, serving as the basis for initiating activities to address identified issues.

For instance, the 2014 National Survey on VAW was conducted in collaboration with the UNFPA and the National Commission for the Advancement of Women of Lao PDR. Similarly, the Lao Social Indicator Survey 2011-2012, which presented women's perceptions on VAW, was jointly undertaken by the Ministry of Health, Lao Statistics Bureau, UNICEF, and UNFPA. Furthermore, data was provided by the Lao Women's Union (LWU) on topics such as counseling services related to legal, health, and psychological issues associated with VAW. These inputs were utilized to formulate the Problem and Solution Tree Diagram, underscoring the project's commitment to stakeholder involvement.

During the implementation stage, SOPs were developed with robust participation from the government counterpart and backing from international agencies such as UNDP and UNFPA. This direct involvement in the process reflects a strong commitment to stakeholder integration and assures the SOPs are in line with both local needs and international best practices.

Overall, based on a triangulated analysis of the collected data, it can be concluded that the project has actively engaged and involved relevant stakeholders to a considerable extent in both its design and implementation.

To what extent is the ownership of the national partner (LWU) able to sustain the positive impact of the project?

Based on the analysis of collected data, the Lao Women Union has demonstrated significant ownership and willingness to sustain the positive impact of the project.

The LWU is well-positioned to continue the work of the project. The LWU has been the core coordinator of the project, which facilitated the development and improvement of National Policies, Action Plans, and Standard Operating Procedures. The LWU's familiarity with the existing system has been heightened through the project support, which in turn has systematically improved coordination. This high level of involvement and ownership has been crucial in reinforcing LWU's capacities, which is important for the sustainability of the project.

The financial resources are an essential factor to sustain the project's impact. According to the LWU, the activities will continue to be implemented within the available budget post-project. Notwithstanding, the project faces challenges in sustaining certain aspects, particularly regarding the financial support needed for services to victims/survivors at the counseling service center. Therefore, while the LWU has shown commitment and has the mandate to continue the work, the financial aspect remains a challenge to the sustainability of the project.

In terms of human, institutional, and system capacity, the project has also performed well. The project has been successful in building knowledge and skills at the individual and institutional levels, increasing understanding and engagement across all sectors. The project has developed SOPs and embedded them in the government system, establishing a clear institutional structure with defined roles and responsibilities. This systemic approach and government support bode well for the project's sustainability.

Is there an exit strategy put in place to ensure the sustainability of the project's impact?

The analysis of the Project Document indicates that there is no explicitly defined exit strategy. An exit strategy is of crucial importance as it ensures the continuity of the project's outcomes, making the project's benefits durable beyond the active lifespan of the project. It entails laying down mechanisms and strategies that allow local actors and institutions to continue driving the changes initiated by the project, even after external support has been phased out.

Without a strategically outlined exit strategy, potential challenges could be faced concerning the enduring sustainability of the project. The durability of the project's effects could be challenged due to a lack of local ownership, capacity, or resources to keep driving the project's results once the external support ceases.

To counteract this, it would be highly recommended to devise a robust exit strategy while at the mid-term of the project implementation. It would need to include a transfer of responsibilities, and a plan to ensure resources (financial, human, and material) will continue to be available for the project's objectives to be achieved in the long run. This strategy should foster local ownership, enhancing the probability of sustained impact post-project termination.

6.6. Management and Monitoring

Is there a monitoring system put in place to track the progress and delivery of the project?

Based on the information collected, a monitoring system has been put in place to track the progress and delivery of the project. There is a monitoring plan, as detailed in the project document, that includes varied monitoring activities designed for different purposes and with different frequencies, all intended to oversee the execution of the project effectively.

The system includes 'Tracking results progress' where progress data against the results indicators are gathered and analyzed quarterly, allowing project management to address any slower-than-expected progress. The project's risk management system is another part of the monitoring structure, including quarterly risk identification, monitoring, and action, as well as maintaining an active risk log.

Furthermore, the system aims to 'Learn' by capturing knowledge and lessons at least annually and integrating them back into the project. 'Project Quality Assurance' occurs biennially to assess the quality of the project against UNDP's quality standards, enabling project management to identify areas of strength and weakness, and make informed decisions to enhance project performance.

The project's 'Review and Make Course Corrections' also represents a monitoring mechanism with at least annual internal reviews of data and evidence from all monitoring actions. This data is then used to inform decision-making. The annual 'Project Report' presented to the Project Board and key stakeholders, including progress data, and an updated risk log, also serves as a critical part of the monitoring process.

Moreover, the 'Ad-hoc Reporting for the Instalment Request' and the annual 'Project Review (Project Board)' both contribute to monitoring project progress and making necessary course corrections. These multiple mechanisms triangulate the project monitoring, thus providing a more robust and comprehensive assessment of project progress and enabling effective management decision-making.

Implementation of these monitoring activities was reflected in the project progress reports, with monthly meetings with the LWU, UNFPA, and UNDP to update progress, exchange information, and manage risks. Weekly meetings at different levels ensured continuous monitoring of the project's progress. The project also relied on LWU for data collection and monitoring, as confirmed in the interviews. However, some planned monitoring activities were disrupted due to COVID-19 and consequent restriction measures.

Respectively, despite some interruptions due to the pandemic, the project demonstrated a well-defined and multi-faceted monitoring system, ensuring progress tracking and delivery through consistent evaluation and collaborative efforts.

To what extent is the gender-responsive M&E system used to ensure effective and efficient project management?

The gender-responsive Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) system is an integral component of this project's management mechanism, though it appears that there are some challenges to its effective utilization. The system plays a significant role in project monitoring, risk management, learning and development, and course correction. The project team acknowledges the collection of sex-disaggregated data as a vital component in evaluating project outcomes and in line with the objectives of gender-responsive programming.

Triangulated data from interviews, project documents, and monitoring activities indicates several points of significance. Firstly, the Lao Women Union, a key player in the project implementation, is mandated to collect sex-disaggregated data for all their activities. This practice reflects a concerted effort to ensure gender inclusivity in project implementation and monitoring. However, the challenge of collecting such data is recognized as a prevalent issue within the Lao context. This problem impacts the effectiveness of the gender-responsive M&E system and requires attention for efficient project management.

Secondly, the process of data collection by LWU has been highlighted as a challenging area. These difficulties could potentially hinder the effectiveness of the gender-responsive M&E system. Therefore, tackling these issues must be prioritized to enhance the system's effectiveness.

To what extent is the project's M&E used to measure impact for women and other most vulnerable groups?

Based on the information collected, the extent to which the project's M&E measures impact women and other most vulnerable groups is not explicitly mentioned. The M&E plan outlines a range of measures that track progress, manage risk, enable learning, assure project quality, review and make course corrections, and facilitate various reporting requirements. However, these mechanisms do not specify if and how they assess impacts for particular demographic groups such as women or the most vulnerable.

Similarly, the review and course correction mechanism, as well as the various reporting activities (both annual and ad-hoc), lack a clear focus on these demographic groups. Therefore, from the collected data, it can be concluded that the project's M&E approach does not specify measures to assess the impact on women and other vulnerable groups. To strengthen the M&E approach's focus on these groups, indicators and measures specifically focused on these groups should be integrated into the M&E plan.

6.7. LNOB, Human Rights, and Gender Equity

To what extent does the project address the needs of the most vulnerable groups and people that are left behind (poor, PwD, youths, women, ethnic minorities, and other disadvantaged groups) in the issue of GBV?

The project largely addresses the needs of the most vulnerable groups and those who are often left behind, which include the poor, People with Disabilities, youth, women, ethnic minorities, and other disadvantaged groups, particularly in the issue of Gender-Based Violence.

One of the project's primary focuses is the elimination of GBV and promoting women's participation, indicating a strong commitment to addressing gender inequalities and enhancing women's empowerment. The project outlines an extensive spectrum of activities in support of the Lao Women's Union, reflecting its prioritization of empowering women and fostering participation in decision-making processes. Furthermore, the project's commitment to developing institutional capacities, as well as promoting policy dialogue and women's leadership, serves as a direct response to addressing the needs of women.

While the project document does not explicitly state how it plans to address the needs of the poor, PwD, youth, ethnic minorities, and other disadvantaged groups, it is underpinned by the principle of Leaving No One Behind (LNOB) and Human Rights-Based Approach (HRBA),

which inherently implies the inclusion of these groups. The application of HRBA ensures that the project's actions respect, protect, and fulfill human rights, including the principles of non-discrimination, accessibility, and do no harm, which are inherently linked to addressing the needs of the most vulnerable groups.

Moreover, through the integration of the National Action Plan on Eliminating Violence Against Women and the National Action Plan on Gender Equality into various sector plans, the project facilitates the mainstreaming of gender considerations and the needs of disadvantaged groups across diverse sectors, thereby encouraging a holistic approach to addressing their needs.

The project's intention to strengthen the rule of law and governance mechanisms and to enhance the quality of services for survivors of violence is also likely to directly benefit the most vulnerable and marginalized groups, who often face barriers to accessing justice and quality services.

Capacity development programs, policy dialogues, and technical assistance to national authorities, including the establishment of a monitoring and reporting system for gender and GBV data, indicate the project's comprehensive approach toward addressing the needs of the left-behind groups.

Lastly, the project's international exchange programs and research studies indicate its commitment to evidence-based policy-making and learning from the best practices, which could further improve its effectiveness in addressing the needs of the most vulnerable and marginalized.

Based on these findings, which have been triangulated from the project description and the interview with the project team, the project does demonstrate a considerable extent of commitment to addressing the needs of the most vulnerable groups and those left behind in the issue of GBV.

Is the gender marker assessment assigned to the project accurate?

The analysis of data indicates that the gender marker assessment assigned to the project, GEN3, is accurate. The GEN3 marker signifies that the project's primary objective is the achievement of gender equality and/or the empowerment of women, according to the UNDP's gender marker scale⁶.

Notably, the project directly targets gender issues through various interventions. For instance, it supports the development and implementation of the National Plan of Action on Preventing and Combating Violence Against Women, emphasizing gender issues. The project also provides technical assistance to develop and finalize the National Strategic Plan on ERAW and Gender Equality, ensuring that gender considerations are factored into key sectoral plans. Moreover, the project aims to build capacities in the justice and policing sector for GBV response and prevention, which indicates a clear focus on gender issues.

What proportion of the beneficiaries, both primary and beneficiary, of the project, are persons with disabilities (PwD)?

Based on the information collected, it is important to note that while the project has a comprehensive structure and set of goals aimed at promoting gender equality and supporting victims of gender-based violence, there is no specific reference to persons with disabilities (PwD) among the primary or secondary beneficiaries.

The direct beneficiaries as mentioned in the project document are primarily officials of the Lao Women's Union, the National Commission for the Advancement of Women and Mothers &

⁶ Gender Marker Implementation in UNDP, <https://gendercoordinationandmainstreaming.unwomen.org/gender-marker-implementation-undp>

Children, and other line ministries/authorities at various levels. The indirect beneficiaries are identified as women who have been or could be subject to gender-based violence in Lao PDR.

The Project Document indicates that approximately 3,000 Lao officials (60%) of the Lao Women's Union and other line ministries/authorities are expected to primarily benefit from the proposed project activities. The secondary beneficiaries are all Lao women subject to gender-based violence, with an estimated number from the 2015 Census data of 3,237,458 individuals.

However, despite the expansive reach of this project, no specific inclusion or consideration of persons with disabilities is mentioned in the list of primary or secondary beneficiaries. While it is admissible that some of these beneficiaries may be persons with disabilities, the project document does not provide sufficient information to calculate an accurate or estimated proportion.

To what extent does the project apply a human rights-based approach?

Based on the data gathered and subject to thorough triangulation, it is concluded that the project integrates a human rights-based approach to a significant extent. The framework of the project design, its implementation, and overall objectives are strongly aligned with key human rights principles, specifically those about gender equality and the prevention of gender-based violence.

The project's human rights-based approach is manifest in several key areas, which include:

- Non-discrimination and equality: The project targets beneficiaries who are most at risk of experiencing GBV, namely women and girls, including those with intersectional vulnerabilities such as women with disabilities and those residing in rural areas. This focus demonstrates adherence to the principle of non-discrimination and commitment to ensuring equality.
- Participation and empowerment: The project champions gender equality and the empowerment of women, both of which are crucial aspects of human rights. Its implementation strategy actively fosters the inclusion of women in policy dialogues, promotes women's participation in decision-making processes, and envisages capacity-building and empowerment initiatives, such as the training and development of the Lao Women's Union (LWU).
- Transparency and accountability: The project includes provisions for M&E plans, annual monitoring, and the development of guidelines for the implementation of National Action Plans. This commitment to transparency and the accountability mechanisms embedded in the project's design signifies its adherence to a human rights-based approach.
- Connecting to international human rights standards and principles: The project aligns with international human rights instruments such as the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women, the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, and the commitments made by the Lao Government at the 25th Anniversary of the International Conference on Population and Development's Program of Action.
- Access to justice and legal remedies: The project aims to enhance access to legal remedies and victim support services, emphasizing the need for survivors of violence to access formal justice mechanisms, particularly in cases of domestic and sexual violence. This commitment underscores its human rights-based approach.

In conclusion, the project demonstrates a comprehensive application of the human rights-based approach. It manifests a strong commitment to the principles of non-discrimination, equality, participation, empowerment, transparency, and accountability. The project's strategic alignment with international human rights standards, and its focus on access to justice and legal remedies, further solidify its human rights-oriented stance. Ultimately, the project upholds and advances the fundamental human rights principles, particularly those concerning gender equality and the prevention of GBV.

7. CONCLUSIONS

This chapter aims to provide a comprehensive and balanced overview of the intervention, supported by evidence and logical connections to the evaluation findings. The conclusions respond to key evaluation questions and outline insights relevant to the intended users of this report. These conclusions are well-substantiated by the evidence and respond to key evaluation questions. Additionally, the conclusions take into account the project's impact on gender equality and women's empowerment, as well as its approach towards addressing cross-cutting issues, including disability.

Relevance

The Khan Hom Project's relevance to the national development priorities of Lao PDR, as determined in this mid-term evaluation, is substantial. This relevance is evidenced by the project's alignment with strategic frameworks, including the 8th and 9th National Socio-Economic Development Plans (NSEDP), the UNDP Country Program Document (CPD) 2022-2026, UNDP Strategic Plans, the UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework, UNDP Lao PDR Gender Equality Strategy 2022-2026, and Lao PDR – United Nations Partnership Framework 2017-2021.

The project supports national development by addressing GBV, endorsing women's participation, and indirectly supporting socio-economic development. It aligns with crucial government directions such as sustainable development and human resource capacity enhancement. It has strong relevance to the UNDP CPD 2022-2026, demonstrating congruence with its focus on improved governance and justice-related institutions, and endorsement of gender equality.

The project aligns significantly with UNDP Strategic Plans for both 2018-2021 and 2022-2025 periods. Its components, including capacity building, strategic innovation, and governance, correspond with the Plans' strategic directions. It also demonstrates alignment with the UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework, addressing key areas such as governance, the rule of law, and overall well-being of the people.

The project's relevance to the UNDP Lao PDR Gender Equality Strategy 2022-2026 is supported by its focus on gender equality and inclusivity. It adheres to the strategy's emphasis on governance and integrates into the institutional framework, respecting international instruments, policy, and operational frameworks.

The project helps the government's gender equality objective and efforts to eliminate violence against women, aligning with national strategies that address gender equality and GBV. It strengthens the justice and policing sector's response to GBV, supporting government efforts in this domain.

In sum, the Khan Hom Project aligns with national development priorities, government priorities, and international commitments, focusing on addressing GBV, promoting women's participation, strengthening governance, and enhancing the rule of law. This alignment makes the project highly relevant and contributory to Lao PDR's development efforts, towards inclusive socio-economic development and gender equality.

Coherence

The Khan Hom Project has demonstrated a high degree of coherence in its contribution to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly Goal 5 of Gender Equality, within the context of Lao PDR. The project's outcomes and outputs align with the specific targets of SDG 5 and SDG 16, as well as embody the overarching principles of these global goals.

Moreover, the project has improved the institutional and policy framework aimed at accelerating the elimination of gender-based violence against women and promoting women's participation. This output aligns with SDG 5, particularly by ending all forms of discrimination

against women and girls and adopting sound policies and legislation for gender equality. Additionally, it contributes to SDG 16 by promoting peaceful and inclusive societies and building effective and inclusive institutions.

The project's coherence with the SDGs is further enhanced by its lessons learned incorporation in the project design and adaptation to the intervention. Drawing from the experiences of UN Agencies such as UNDP and UNFPA, the project has emphasized the significance of strategic partnerships, community-led interventions, localized strategies, and ongoing collaboration. This practical learning approach has made the intervention more efficient and effective, ensuring its alignment with SDG 5 and SDG 16.

Regarding the gaps in current interventions, the Khan Hom Project presents an integrative and coordinated response. It addresses the lack of effective coordination between key agencies and concerns regarding the application of international standards in services provided for women. By fostering relations between institutions and ensuring adherence to international norms, the project fills these gaps and offers a more coherent and integrated approach to tackling GBV in Lao PDR.

The project leverages the comparative advantages and expertise of participating UN agencies, UNDP, and UNFPA, effectively aligning their experience and knowledge in addressing GBV, women's rights, legal aid, and capacity-building initiatives. UNFPA's life cycle approach and essential package of services for GBV, along with UNDP's work in strengthening the rule of law, have guided the project's formulation and implementation of the National Strategic Plan on Eliminating Violence Against Women and the development of the justice and policing sectors' capacity.

Effectiveness

The evaluation of the Khan Hom Project's effectiveness criterion reveals that the project is on track to achieve its intended results within the planned period. The completed activities and ongoing progress substantiate the project's effectiveness in achieving its targets related to gender-based violence (GBV) response and prevention. However, continuous monitoring and evaluation will be crucial to ensure the sustained effectiveness of these initiatives.

The project has made significant progress in supporting the development and implementation of the 2nd Five-year National Plan of Action on Preventing and Combating Violence Against Women (EVAW NPA) and the 4th Five-Year National Plan of Action on Gender Equality (Gender Equality NPA). Technical assistance has been provided to formulate and finalize these plans, and they have been successfully completed and integrated into relevant sectoral plans. The cooperation between the National Commission for the Advancement of Women, Mothers and Children (NCAWMC), UNFPA, and other stakeholders has been a contributing factor to these achievements.

Despite these successes, challenges have been encountered during the implementation of some activities. Mobilizing authorities to secure the involvement of high-level decision-makers in the formulation and finalization of the National Plans of Action posed a significant burden. Insufficient public funding has also been an obstacle for the integration of commitments from the plans into public policies. Overcoming these challenges will be essential to ensure the sustained effectiveness of the project.

The evaluation also examined the extent to which the project instigates change in social norms that promote gender equality. The project's focus on eradicating gender-based violence against women and its commitment to international directives and frameworks demonstrate its integral role in promoting gender equality. The project aims to challenge deep-rooted cultural norms that perpetuate violence against women and includes women in the development and implementation of initiatives. The adoption of the Noi 2030 Framework and commitments made by the Lao Government further indicate a broader societal and governmental will to address gender-based violence and promote gender equality. However,

the effectiveness of the project in changing social norms is challenged by country's resource limitations, infrastructural challenges, and deeply rooted societal norms.

Regarding the project's contribution to the overall effort at the policy and community level to eliminate GBV in the country, the evaluation reveals its strong alignment with national and international strategic frameworks. The project effectively addresses national policy priorities by mainstreaming the prevention and elimination of GBV into the national development agenda. It also demonstrates effectiveness at the community level by promoting women's participation, strengthening the capacity of justice and policing sector actors, and addressing multiple forms of discrimination.

Efficiency

The project experienced different levels of spending efficiency. Overspending in certain situations occurred due to external factors such as inflation impacting the cost of goods and meeting room rentals. These uncontrollable costs highlight the project's vulnerability to external economic conditions rather than financial mismanagement. Conversely, underspending resulted from changes in the plan, such as lower meeting participation than initially planned and some canceled events. These adjustments left parts of the budget unused. However, it is worth noting that these instances of underspending could be seen as a reflection of prudent financial management.

The implementation of sanitary limitations during the COVID-19 pandemic led to a decrease in project spending due to reduced activity intensity. While the project faced a delay in the first installment of funding, the team showcased resourcefulness by leveraging co-funding from the UNFPA to develop the National Action Plan and undertake related activities. This adaptive management approach mitigated the impact of the initial delay, highlighting the project's ability to effectively utilize available resources.

Triangulated data suggests that the project's activities were primarily conducted and completed within the approved work plan. Adjustments were made to the project schedule, costs, and resource allocation as necessary, showcasing flexibility and adaptability. Though minor delays occurred, primarily in the elaboration of the SOP for the justice sector, these were attributed to the complexity of integrating inputs from multiple justice parties and adapting international standards to the Lao context. Despite these setbacks, the implementation of the justice sector SOPs is expected to proceed smoothly upon its endorsement.

The analysis of available evidence indicates that the resources acquired and utilized for the project were generally sufficient to achieve the intended results outlined in the initial plan. The project team's decisions regarding resource utilization and optimization played a crucial role in improving efficiency and minimizing waste. By effectively managing available resources, the team demonstrated competency in resource mobilization and allocation.

Sustainability

The Khan Hom Project has demonstrated considerable progress in its sustainability efforts in human, institutional, and systemic capacities, contributing to the overall resilience of the intervention. The project has effectively enhanced human capacity by providing specialized training to representatives of the Lao Women's Union, line ministries, and provincial authorities. This has enriched their expertise in ERAW planning, data collection, monitoring, and reporting, leading to informed decision-making and more effective execution of duties.

Institutionally, the project conducted needs assessments, developing standard operating procedures (SOPs), and provided capacity development plans. This has bolstered the ability of the key-institutions in Lao PDR to implement the National Action Plan on Preventing and Eliminating Violence against Women and deliver quality services to GBV victims and survivors.

Systemically, the project has strengthened the policy framework and governance mechanism in Lao PDR through the development and implementation of strategic plans on ERAW and gender equality. This has facilitated coordinated efforts toward eliminating violence against women and promoting gender equality.

The project has successfully forged new partnerships and strengthened existing ones. A notable partnership was established with the Lao Women's Union, facilitating improved relations and meaningful collaboration. Trust with the government, often seen as conservative, was enhanced through the development and implementation of SOPs, reflecting a partnership necessary for sustainability. Moreover, coordination between UNDP, UNFPA, and KOICA was enhanced, resulting in more efficient resource allocation and project implementation.

The project has actively engaged and involved relevant stakeholders throughout its design and implementation phases. The development of SOPs involved active participation from the government and international agencies, ensuring alignment with local needs and international best practices. The inclusive strategy formation process harnessed the perspectives and expertise of diverse entities, increasing buy-in and commitment during implementation.

The Lao Women's Union has demonstrated significant ownership and willingness to sustain the project's positive impact. The LWU's core coordination role and familiarity with the existing system have been strengthened through the project, contributing to sustainability.

The analysis indicates that while the project demonstrates significant potential for sustainability, it may further benefit from the incorporation of a clearly delineated exit strategy to enhance its long-term sustainability beyond the project's lifespan.

Management and Monitoring

The management and monitoring of the Khan Hom Project demonstrate a well-defined and comprehensive system that ensures effective project delivery and progress tracking. The monitoring plan, as outlined in the project document, encompasses various monitoring activities with different frequencies and purposes, all aimed at overseeing project execution efficiently.

The project's monitoring system includes tracking progress against results indicators on a quarterly basis, allowing timely intervention in case of slower-than-expected progress. Additionally, the project has a robust risk management system in place, involving quarterly risk identification, monitoring, and action, as well as an active risk log. These mechanisms contribute to effective project management and enable the identification of potential areas of strength and weakness.

The project's monitoring process is further supported by the submission of an annual project report to the Project Board and key stakeholders, providing progress data and an updated risk log. Ad-hoc reporting for installment requests and annual project reviews by the Project Board contribute to monitoring project progress and making necessary course corrections. These multiple mechanisms enhance the comprehensiveness and reliability of project monitoring, enabling effective management decision-making.

Involving the Lao Women Union in data collection demonstrates a dedicated commitment to promoting gender inclusivity throughout project implementation and monitoring. Nevertheless, the effectiveness of the gender-responsive M&E system is hindered by challenges inherent in collecting sex-disaggregated data within the Lao context.

LNOB, Human Rights, and Gender Equity

The evaluation findings indicate that the Khan Hom Project demonstrates a significant commitment to addressing the needs of the most vulnerable groups and those left behind, particularly in the context of GBV. The project's primary focus on eliminating GBV and promoting women's participation highlights its pledge to addressing gender inequalities and

enhancing women's empowerment. The comprehensive spectrum of activities outlined in support of the Lao Women's Union reflects the project's prioritization of empowering women and fostering their participation in decision-making processes. The project's commitment to developing institutional capacities, promoting policy dialogue, and fostering women's leadership serves as a direct response to addressing the needs of women.

The application of HRBA ensures that the project's actions respect, protect, and fulfill human rights, including the principles of non-discrimination, accessibility, and avoiding harm, all of which are intrinsically linked to addressing the needs of the most vulnerable groups.

Additionally, by strengthening the rule of law and governance mechanisms and enhancing the quality of services for survivors of violence, the project is likely to directly benefit the most vulnerable and marginalized groups, who often face barriers in accessing justice and quality services.

Regarding the project's application of a human rights-based approach, the evaluation findings confirm its strong integration of human rights principles. The project demonstrates adherence to the principles of non-discrimination and equality by targeting beneficiaries at risk of experiencing GBV, including women and girls with intersectional vulnerabilities. It actively promotes women's participation and empowerment through policy dialogues, capacity-building, and the training and development of the Lao Women's Union. The project incorporates transparency and accountability mechanisms through monitoring and evaluation plans and the implementation of National Action Plans. Its strategic alignment with international human rights standards and principles, as well as its focus on access to justice and legal remedies, further solidify its human rights-based approach.

Finally, the project aligns with the UNDP's gender marker assessment, accurately reflecting its primary objective of achieving gender equality and empowering women.

8. RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the evaluation findings and conclusions, the following actionable recommendations are proposed for the Khan Hom project:

(1) Further Integrating Existing Gender Analysis into Remaining Project Activities, Project Data Collection, and Capacity Building

To sustain gender mainstreaming within the project, it is recommended to further leverage the existing data across all remaining activities and capacity-building efforts. A key approach to effectively achieve this is to draw upon the insights derived from the analysis and data collected during the initial stages of project design. These insights could serve as a significant pillar, providing guidance for the implementation of all subsequent project activities. This includes aligning objectives, strategies, interventions, and monitoring and evaluation frameworks with a gender perspective.

By implementing this recommendation, the project will strengthen its strategies and actions with a comprehensive gender lens. Consequently, the project will have a far-reaching and enduring impact in combating gender inequality and addressing issues related to gender-based violence.

Timescale: Throughout the remaining timeline.

Responsible Agency(ies): UNDP and UNFPA.

(2) Developing an Exit Strategy

As underscored in the project report, the addition of a well-planned exit strategy would augment the benefits derived from the Khan Hom Project, by increasing its sustainability. During the mid-term phase, it is important to prepare a thorough plan fostering the sustainability of the project's impact, even beyond its active lifespan. To achieve this, the following unified action is recommended:

- *Develop a Comprehensive Exit Strategy:* Starting by conducting a comprehensive contextual analysis considering the political, social, economic, and cultural factors impacting the sustainability of project outcomes. With the insights gained, developing an exit strategy specifically tailored to address the project's needs and challenges post-completion. The elaboration of this strategy should actively involve key stakeholders, such as representatives from the Lao Women's Union, line ministries, and civil society organizations, ensuring ownership and buy-in. The document should encompass specific actions, timelines, and roles to facilitate a smooth and efficient shift, incorporating sustainable financial resource strategies, and the institutionalization of project activities within existing structures. Furthermore, the exit strategy should investigate partnerships and mobilization modalities that ensure consistent funding for ongoing initiatives beyond the project's completion.

By implementing this integrated exit strategy, the Khan Hom Project can effectively strengthen the sustainability of its impact.

Timescale: By the fourth quarter of 2023.

Responsible Agency(ies): UNDP and UNFPA.

(3) Strengthening the Implementing Partners' Capacity to Use the M&E Mechanisms Developed and Report Disaggregated Data on Vulnerable Groups

The project has integrated mechanisms for the collection of disaggregated data pertaining to vulnerable groups, with data forms incorporated into all three SOP - social, health, and justice that disaggregate by sex, age, ethnicity, disability, location, and other criteria. However, project evaluation results point to persistent challenges faced in the collection and reporting of this disaggregated data by implementing partners. Thus, an enhancement of partner

capacities, is recommended. This enhancement could focus on effective utilization of the Monitoring & Evaluation (M&E) mechanisms and reliable reporting of disaggregated data relevant to vulnerable groups.

The proposed capacity enhancement could be undertaken as part of planned project activities, notably during the training on SOP implementation. Alternatively, it could also be pursued as part of the improvement of the monitoring and reporting system for gender and EAW/GBV data from district provincial and central levels.

Timescale: According to the Project's Work Plan and Timetable

Responsible Agency(ies): UNDP and UNFPA.

(4) Ensuring Vulnerable Groups Are Further Targeted in Remaining Project Activities

The SOPs have been designed to address the needs of vulnerable groups, such as marginalized and at-risk populations, including people with disabilities, and other vulnerable groups in Lao PDR. The identification of these at-risk groups has been informed by comprehensive literature from various development partners.

To ensure the project's successful conclusion and the continued effective targeting of vulnerable groups, it is recommended leveraging these existing forms of analysis during the final phase. By doing so, the project can uphold consistency in its approach to serving these communities and facilitate the implementation of tailored services through the SOPs.

Timescale: Throughout the remaining timeline.

Responsible Agency(ies): UNDP and UNFPA.

9. LESSONS LEARNED

This chapter of the evaluation report explores the lessons learned from the evaluation process, providing concise insights applicable to similar contexts. These lessons are derived from specific evidence presented in the report, encompassing the intervention's effectiveness, contextual considerations, and evaluation methods utilized. Additionally, the chapter emphasizes the importance of addressing gender equality, women's empowerment, disability, and other cross-cutting issues to enhance the comprehensiveness of the lessons.

Lesson Learned 1. Anticipating Delays and Diversifying Funding: The evaluation emphasized the importance of anticipating delays in money transfers as a crucial factor in project implementation. The Khan Hom project experienced a delay in the transfer of donor's funds, which disrupted project activities during the initial phase. However, the project team effectively addressed this delay by initiating activities that could be started by using the in-kind contribution. To better handle similar challenges in the future, it is recommended that risk management frameworks include the possibility of such scenarios in the Risk Log and outline contingency actions. Furthermore, this situation underscores the value of diversifying funding sources for projects, as it enables a more effective response to such challenges.

Lesson Learned 2. Engaging CSOs for Project Inclusiveness and Sustainability: The engagement of CSOs proved to be an important factor in ensuring the success and inclusivity of the project. The Khan Hom project serves as an example, highlighting the significance of involving CSOs right from the initiation of the implementation process. This approach established a robust foundation for meaningful dialogue and feedback. The active participation of CSOs greatly enhanced the project's inclusiveness, particularly by offering valuable insights derived from their experiences in various provinces. Given these positive outcomes, it is important that future projects prioritize and emphasize the involvement of CSOs. Their contributions have the potential to significantly enhance project effectiveness and inclusivity. Furthermore, by actively involving CSOs, sustainability aspects are nurtured as this collaboration enhances organizational structures and empowers CSOs to sustain their efforts, thereby leaving a lasting impact even beyond the duration of the partnership or intervention.

Lesson Learned 3. Enhancing Stakeholder Engagement and Capacity-building through Extensive Consultations: The evaluation report highlights the positive outcomes resulting from the extensive consultations conducted by both UNFPA and UNDP in the development of SOPs. These consultations have effectively increased stakeholder awareness of their roles and responsibilities, leading to greater participation and the elaboration of tailored documents aligned with the national Lao context. Furthermore, the consultations have indirectly contributed to the capacity-building of various stakeholders by familiarizing them with international best practices, Lao's human rights commitments, the importance of addressing gender-based violence (GBV), gender mainstreaming, and the need for improved service quality.

Based on this evidence, future projects should prioritize a similar level of consultation when formulating policies or similar documents. This approach ensures that all stakeholders are adequately informed and engaged, resulting in enhanced participation, improved capacity-building, and the development of contextually relevant products. Additionally, gender equality, women's empowerment, disability, and other cross-cutting issues should be taken into account throughout the consultation process to ensure inclusivity and comprehensive engagement.

Lesson Learned 4. Enhancing Efficiency and Effectiveness through Coordinated Clustering: The evaluation uncovered a valuable insight: when activities with similarities are grouped or clustered together, as exemplified by the successful implementation of Activities 1.1, 1.2, 1.3, and 1.4, it greatly improves the project's efficiency and effectiveness. Although there were initial difficulties in garnering the involvement of authorities in policy elaboration, once engagement was achieved, it proved beneficial to capitalize on it for all relevant policies, ensuring the simultaneous consideration of similar activities, as demonstrated by the project team. Furthermore, it is important to note that the grouping of activities should not be confused

with cascading planning, where the fulfillment of one activity is followed by another, creating interdependency among them. This lesson underscores the importance of coordinated and parallel development and implementation of policies to achieve efficiency and effectiveness of outcomes.

Lesson Learned 5. Harnessing Synergies among UN Agencies for Holistic Results: The implementation of this joint project between two UN agencies has demonstrated its effectiveness in tackling intricate issues that demand cross-sectoral interventions. Moreover, this collaborative approach enhances inter-agency cooperation, expands institutional networks, and facilitates the transfer of knowledge. The significance of this lesson extends to similar contexts or projects that necessitate collaboration among diverse sectors and a comprehensive approach to attain desired outcomes. By leveraging the expertise and resources of multiple agencies, projects can amplify their impact, reach a broader range of beneficiaries, and accomplish multifaceted results.

ANNEXES

Annex 1. TOR for the evaluation assignment

TERM OF REFERENCE Reference: RPS_027_2023

PROJECT MID-TERM EVALUATION

Position : One (1) International Consultant to conduct a mid-term evaluation of the Project on Prevention and Elimination of Violence against Women for Mainstreaming Gender into the National Development Agenda in Lao PDR.

Duty Station : Remotely, and in-country, Vientiane.

Contract Type : Individual Contract (IC)

Duration : 25 days between April to July 2023

PROJECT INFORMATION		
Project/outcome title	Prevention and Elimination of Violence against Women for Mainstreaming Gender into the National Development Agenda in Lao PDR.	
Atlas ID	Project ID: 00130773 Output ID: 00123987	
Corporate outcome and output	UNSDCF Strategic Priority: Governance and Rule of Law UNDP CPD Outcome 3: Accelerate structural transformations for sustainable development UNFPA CPD Outcome: Gender equality, the empowerment of all women and girls, and reproductive rights are advanced in development and humanitarian settings. Gender Marker: GEN3	
Country	Lao People's Democratic Republic (PDR)	
Region	Asia and the Pacific	
Project dates	Start	Planned end
	October 2020	September 2024
Project budget	US\$ 2,835,000	
Project expenditure at the time of evaluation	US\$ 820,462.90 (UNDP) and US\$ 212,903 (UNFPA)	
Funding source	Korea International Cooperation Agency (KOICA): US\$ 2,700,000 UNDP: US\$ 80,000 (in-kind) UNFPA: US\$ 55,000 (in-kind)	
Implementing party	Lao Women's Union (LWU)	

I. BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

There is a growing global consensus recognizing gender-based violence against women as a serious violation of basic human rights.² In the meantime, the problem is increasingly visible in all sections of society, to which Lao PDR is no exception. According to the 2014 National

Survey on Violence Against Women, undertaken with support from UNFPA with the National Commission for the Advancement of Women of Lao PDR, 15.3 percent of ever-partnered women, aged 15-64, have experienced physical or sexual violence by a current or former male partner. Young women are more vulnerable to gender-based violence against women (VAW) and rape. The lifetime prevalence of sexual violence among teenage women aged 15-19 years was 12.9% compared to those in their 50s and 60s (4.6% to 7.8%, respectively).

In Lao PDR, gender-based VAW is a by-product of a number of factors: traditional beliefs; discriminatory customs regarding the role of men and women in society; low reporting rates and weak rule of law and governance mechanisms for civil remedies, holding perpetrators accountable, and small-scale interventions for the prevention of gender-based violence.

There is on-going evidence of sensitization to gender-based violence in terms of the number of staff trained to respond to such cases within social services, police stations, courts and mediation units. However, this sensitization is yet to be translated into direct service provision for female survivors. LWU has provided counselling services for people at the national and subnational levels incl. villages. There were 11,668 people (71.8 % women and 28.2 % men) using the LWU counselling centers in 2017.

Eliminating gender based VAW is a critical part of the development process. The LWU developed the national plan of action on the prevention and elimination of VAW (2014-2020). The action plan aims for ambitious goals, including the provision of shelters (eight in separate provinces) and the integration of counselling services, particularly in rural health clinics. The 8th NSEDP (2016-2020) also contains a target to implement 70 percent of the national action plan for prevention and elimination of violence against women and children by 2020 (6.7.3.2 Gender Equality and Advancement of Women).

However, by 2019, according to consultations, the targeted implementation is yet to be achieved due to various challenges including, limited resources and lack of human resources. Moreover, there is a lack of integration into the national development agenda; for instance, GBV indicators are missing from the 8th NSEDP M&E Framework.

The project's main outcome is a **strengthened national capacity for the effective, systematic, and accountable prevention of and response to VAW in Lao PDR.**

The project is structured to achieve three main outputs:

- 1. The next phase 5-year National Strategic Plan on EVAW (2021-2025) developed through a participatory process to promote women's participation.**
- 2. The implementation guideline and M&E Plan of the 5-year National Strategic Plan on EVAW (2021-2025) developed.**
- 3. The capacity of the Justice and Policing Sector for GBV response and prevention through the implementation of the NAPEVAW strengthened.**

Please see ANNEX A for the project's Result Framework and Theory of Change diagram

II. EVALUATION PURPOSE, SCOPE AND OBJECTIVES

Purpose

There are two purposes of the evaluation, **(1) learning and improvement**, and **(2) adjustment**. The evaluation will be a learning opportunity for UNDP, UNFPA, LWU, and other relevant stakeholders to improve on the implementation before the end of the project. The evaluation will identify what has been working and what has not been working together with the factors behind them. These discoveries will be disseminated and shared with the

relevant stakeholders, including donors and government partners, and communicated to the beneficiaries. These results will facilitate adjustments in the areas where necessary.

Scope and Objective

The independent mid-term evaluation will cover the beginning of the project up to the day of evaluation. The evaluation will focus on the support the project has been providing on many different fronts of the GBV issue in Lao PDR. The scope of the evaluation is expected, but not limited to, to be in the areas of the following:

- The relevance of the project's strategy, objective, and priorities including the validity of the project components and the implementation arrangements.
- The project's results against expected results outlined in the revised project document. Identifying the gaps to achieve the intended results can be one of the focus areas of the evaluation.
- The project management including, but not limited to, monitoring activities, reporting, communications to ensure donor's visibility, knowledge product management, inclusion of cross-cutting issues such as disability and ethnic minority.
- Actionable recommendations should be provided following the evaluation and can serve as inputs for the rest of the project period.

The overall objective of the evaluation is to determine and analyze the progress and contribution of the project thus far. The evaluation also aims to identify the strategy that has been working, or not working, so far. Therefore, it can help draw lessons from and inform the next strategy to implement for the rest of the project.

III. EVALUATION CRITERIA AND KEY QUESTIONS

The evaluation will follow the OECD-DAC criteria- relevance, coherence, effectiveness, efficiency, and sustainability. Additional criteria such as human rights and leaving no one behind (LNOB) and other cross-cutting issues will be considered. The evaluation will attempt to answer the fundamental questions as per the following:

1. To what extent has the project achieved its intended and unintended results?
2. What are the factors that support and/or hinder the project's achievements?
3. What are the lessons learned from the project? What can be improved to ensure objectives will be achieved for the rest of the project implementation?

In addition, the following questions below are more specific into the evaluation criteria. The list can serve as the guiding questions and should be further enhanced by the evaluation team with prior agreement from UNDP.

Relevance:

1. To what extent is the project relevant to the national development priorities of Lao PDR as reflected in 9th NSEDP (and 8th NSEDP), UNDP CPD 2022-2026, UNDP Strategic Plan, and UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework?
2. To what extent is the project in line with the government's gender equality priority in general and the elimination of violence against women (EVAW) in particular?
3. To what extent does the project incorporate gender analysis into its design? Does the project appropriately use the analysis to create measures to address the gender equality issues?

Coherence:

1. To what extent does the project contribute to achieving SDGs in Lao PDR, especially Goal 5 of Gender Equality?

2. Does the project fill in the gaps of the current similar interventions by the government, other UN agencies, and other development partners?
3. To what extent does this project leverage of the comparative advantage and expertise of the participating UN agencies, UNDP and UNFPA, vis-à-vis relevant stakeholders to achieve the development results of the project?

Effectiveness:

1. Is the project on track to achieve its intended results within the agreed period? Which specific activities/outputs contribute to the achieved results?
2. What are the contributing factors to the results that are achieved? What are the challenges that hinder achievements of results and how to overcome them?
3. To what extent does the project instigate change in social norms that promote gender equality?
4. To what extent does the project contribute to the overall effort in the policy and community level to eliminate GBV in the country?

Efficiency:

1. To what extent have the project's strategy and implementation activities been cost-effective and time-efficient?
2. Were resources, human, financial, and time, used as planned and appropriately? Did the project underspend or overspend resources?
3. Were the project's activities conducted and completed within the approved project's workplan?
4. To what extent were the resources mobilized/available enough to achieve its intended results?

Sustainability:

1. To what extent does the project enhance capacities (human, institution, system) to create sustained impact of the project and what could be done to strengthen sustainability?
2. Was the project able to forge new partnerships with relevant stakeholders? Or strengthen the existing ones?
3. To what extent has the project actively engaged and involved the relevant stakeholders in the project design and implementation?
4. To what extent is the ownership of the national partner (LWU) be able to sustain the positive impact of the project?
5. Is there an exit strategy put in place to ensure sustainability of the project's impact?

Management and Monitoring:

1. Is there a monitoring system put in place to track the progress and delivery of the project?
2. To what extent is the gender-responsive M&E system used to ensure effective and efficient project management?
3. To what extent is the project's M&E used to measure impact for women and other most vulnerable groups?

Leave no one behind (LNOB), Human Rights, and Gender Equity:

1. To what extent does the project address the needs of the most vulnerable groups and people that are left behind (poor, PwD, youths, women, ethnic minorities, and other disadvantaged groups) in the issue of GBV?
2. Is gender marker assessment assigned to the project accurate?
3. What proportion of the beneficiaries, both primary and beneficiary, of the project are persons with disabilities (PwD)?
4. To what extent does the project apply human rights-based approach?

IV. METHODOLOGY

The evaluation methodology must be participatory and inclusive given the complexity and how development challenges are always intertwined. The evaluation analysis must be gender-responsive and use human-rights based approach and leave no one behind (LNOB), and other cross-cutting issues in analyzing the information and evidence gathered from the evaluation.

The findings and the recommendation in the evaluation products must be strictly supported by hard-evidenced data. The following are the methodologies that the evaluators may consider applying:

a. Desk Review

The project manager will provide all the relevant and necessary documents for the evaluation purpose. The documents include, but not limited to, **the Project Document, project progress reports, any surveys and knowledge products the project has, UNDP Lao PDR Country Programme Document 2022-2026 (2017-2021), UNDP Strategic Plan 2022-2025, United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework.**

The evaluators are expected to review all relevant documents, and if necessary, ask for clarification and more documents. The project manager stands ready to provide the documents that are useful for the evaluation.

b. Semi-structured interview

The project manager will facilitate the evaluation team to design the data collection instruments, and conduct interviews with key stakeholders including, but not limited to, national and sub-national government counterparts such as Ministry of Justice, implementing partners such as LWU, members of the community in the targeted areas. The evaluation team is expected to develop the interview and survey questions with the guidance from the list of questions (see section III) with the final confirmation from UNDP before the data collection commences.

c. Project Analysis

The evaluation team is encouraged to have a consultation with the project team from UNDP and UNFPA to verify and triangulate the information gathered from the desk review.

d. Other Methods

Other methods such as FGDs can be chosen.

V. EVALUATION PRODUCTS (KEY DELIVERABLES)

The evaluation team is expected to deliver the following products:

a. Evaluation Inception Report. An inception report is the result of preliminary discussion between the project team (UNDP and UNFPA), and the desk review of the relevant documents. The inception report must be produced before any further evaluation activities, such as interviews and field visits. The inception report should include an elaborated workplan of the evaluation process together with the timeline as accurate as possible. Inception report should include an evaluation matrix that maps out the evaluation design and methodology to approach stakeholders. Please see ANNEX F for evaluation matrix template. The inception report should be between 10-15 pages.

b. Evaluation Debriefings. The evaluation team is expected to provide evaluation debriefing to the Lao Women’s Union (and other government partners if necessary), UNDP, UNFPA, KOICA as the donor, and other relevant stakeholders.

c. Draft Evaluation Report. Following the activities done by the evaluation team collecting data and evidence, a draft report is expected to be submitted to UNDP and UNFPA for comments and feedback. It should be between 40-60 pages. Please refer to ANNEX G for the outline of the report.

d. Evaluation Report Audit Trail. The project team and other relevant stakeholders are expected to provide comments on the draft evaluation report. The comments, and feedback must be compiled in one document where the evaluation team is to address them. The response to the comments by the evaluation team must also be retained.

e. Final Evaluation Report. Following the comments from the project team and other relevant stakeholders, the evaluation team is expected to produce the final evaluation report that addresses the comments as well as questions and clarifications if there is any in the Audit Trail. The final report must be logically structured, supported the evidence-based findings and provides conclusion with recommendations.

The recommendation part of the evaluation is essential. Therefore, the evaluation team should propose concrete, and actionable recommendations.

The final report should be between 50-70 pages, excluding the Annexes. Please refer to ANNEX G for the outline of the report.

f. Any presentations and knowledge products may be produced because of the evaluation activities, such as survey results or Focused Group Discussions slides presentations. These knowledge products can provide insight for the future programming in the related sector of gender equality and governance in general, and GBV in particular.

VI. EVALUATION TEAM COMPOSITION AND REQUIRED COMPETENCIES

The evaluation team will be composed of one (01) International Consultant, and another one (01) National Consultant (being recruited separately). The International Consultant will be the evaluation team leader. The potential consultants must not have involved in the preparation of the evaluation and/or in the implementation of the Project to avoid conflict of interest with the evaluation.

The potential consultants must have the following required qualifications:

A. International Consultant (Team Leader)

Education:

Master’s degree or equivalent in public policy, public administration, development studies, gender studies, social science, or other relevant fields of study.

Competencies:

- Excellent interpersonal and communication (written and verbal) skills
- Strong analytical and reporting skills with the ability to conceptualize, articulate, present (written and verbal) about gender issues in development initiative.
- Demonstrates integrity and ethical standards with the ability to maintain impartiality during evaluation.

- Excellent cultural, gender, age and nationality sensitivity and ability to work with people from different backgrounds.

Technical knowledge and experience:

- Minimum 7 years of solid experience in project design, implementation, result-based management, results-based management, and project M&E
- Strong technical expertise on gender-based violence, gender equality, women's and girls' rights, rights-based approach, disability inclusion, LGBTIQ+ and capacity development.
- Demonstrated experience in conducting and/or leading project evaluation, particularly on the issues of GBV and gender equality.
- Strong working knowledge of Lao PDR, particularly in the development sector and gender equality advocacy, including deep understanding of Lao Government programme, strategies, and policies on GBV and gender equality.
- Demonstrated experience in conducting qualitative and quantitative evaluation methods.
- Demonstrated experience in working with international development organization. Experience with the UN agencies is preferable.

Language skills:

Fluency in English is a requirement.

VII. EVALUATION ETHICS

This evaluation will be conducted in accordance with the principles outlined in the UNEG 'Ethical Guidelines for Evaluation' which are available here: <http://www.unevaluation.org/document/detail/2866>. 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 consultant must also ensure security of collected information before and after the evaluation and protocols to ensure anonymity and confidentiality of sources of information where that is expected. The information knowledge and data gathered in the evaluation process must also be solely used for the evaluation and not for other uses without the express authorisation of UNDP and partners.

VIII. MANAGEMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION ARRANGEMENTS

UNDP's senior management as the **evaluation commissioner** will be acting as the advisory body that ensures the independency of the evaluation team and UNDP's ownership of the report's findings and recommendations.

To manage impartiality, **project managers of UNDP and UNFPA** play a supporting role in ensuring that the evaluation team have the necessary documents and data for the evaluation activities. The project managers also facilitate the evaluation team with the stakeholders for interview and data collection if needed.

Evaluation manager (M&E Focal Point) facilitates and assists the overall evaluation and makes sure the quality of the evaluation. The evaluation manager plays an essential role in reviewing and approving the inception report, the draft and final evaluation report as well as the management of the evaluation recommendation ensuring that the project team and UNDP implement them accordingly.

Evaluation team will be working closely with the Project Officer from UNDP and UNFPA, in close collaboration with the implementing partner from LWU and National Commission for the advancement of Women, Mothers and Children (NCAWMC). **The international consultant** is responsible for leading the evaluation and deliver the outputs as stated in the TOR within the agreed timeline.

IX. TIME FRAME FOR THE EVALUATION PROCESS

The following is the estimated timeline for the evaluation process

Activity	Estimated Number of Days	Date of Completion	Key Deliverables or Output	Responsible Party
PHASE I: DESK REVIEW AND INCEPTION REPORT				
Desk review, evaluation design, methodology, and workplan including the list of interviewees	5 days	Within two weeks of contract signing	A detailed inception report ready for submission	Evaluation team
Submission of inception report	-	Within two weeks of contract signing	A detailed inception report submitted	Evaluation team
Comments and approval of inception report	-	Within one week of the inception report submission	A list of comments and feedback of the inception report	Evaluation manager
PHASE II: FORMAL EVALUATION				
Data collection activities: Field visits, consultations, in-depth interviews, FGDs, and any other methods that will be used	8 days	Within four weeks of contract signing	Set of data and information collected from fieldwork.	Evaluation team, evaluation manager, project manager
Debriefing to UNDP and key stakeholders	0.5 day		Debriefing materials distributed to key stakeholders	Evaluation team
PHASE III: FINAL EVALUATION REPORT				
Report writing	7 days	Within two weeks of the completion of the PHASE II	A draft report ready for submission	Evaluation team
Submission of draft evaluation report	-	Within two weeks of the completion of PHASE II	A draft report submitted	Evaluation team
Comments and approval of	-	Within one week of	An Audit Trail listing the	Evaluation commissioner,

evaluation report (captured in Audit Trail)		submission of the draft evaluation report	comments and feedback of the draft evaluation report	evaluation manager, evaluation focal point, evaluation reference group
Debriefing with UNDP	0.5 day	Within one week of receipt of comments	Debriefing materials distributed to key stakeholders	Evaluation team, UNDP, UNFPA, evaluation reference group, stakeholders, etc
Finalization of the evaluation report taking into consideration the comments from UNDP and UNFPA	4 days	Within one week of final debriefing	A final evaluation report ready for submission	Evaluation team
Submission of the final evaluation report	-	Within one week of final debriefing	A final evaluation report submitted	Evaluation team
Estimated total days for the evaluation	25			

X. SUBMISSION PROCESS AND BASIS FOR SELECTION

Criteria	Weigh	Max. Points
Technical Criteria	0.70	70
<u>a. Education background</u> - The individual meets the educational requirements	0.10	10
<u>b. Competencies</u> - The individual meets the competencies requirements	0.20	20
<u>c. Technical knowledge and experience</u> - The individual meets the technical knowledge and experience requirements	0.25	25
<u>d. Proposed workplan and methodology</u> - All aspects of the TOR have been addressed in sufficient detail - Implementation schedule (and timing) - Quality assurance measure	0.15	15
Financial Criteria	0.30	30

- Transportation and DSA costs should be factored into the financial proposal		
Total point obtainable	1.00	100

XI. PAYMENT TERMS

Payments will be made based on the delivery of outputs outlined below and actual number of working days certified by the Evaluation Manager.

No.	Deliverable	Due Date	Payment Amount
1	Evaluation Inception Report that includes detailed workplan and timeline for the evaluation process.	15 April 2023	20%
2	Draft Evaluation Report (must be between 40-60 pages) including a debriefing session following the data collection.	20 May 2023	60%
3	Final Evaluation Report including the Evaluation Audit Trail.	10 June 2023	20%

XII. TOR ANNEXES - LINKS TO SUPPORTING BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS AND UNDP EVALUATION GUIDELINES

- ANNEX A: Project's Logical Framework and the Theory of Change
 - [Logical Framework and ToC](#)
- ANNEX B: Key stakeholders and partners
 - Implementing Partner: Lao Women's Union (LWU) – The National Commission for the Advancement of Women, Mothers and Children (NCAWMC)
 - Project beneficiaries: Government officials, LWU and other line ministries.
 - Other line ministries: Subcommittee on the Advancement of Women (Sub-CAW) of the Ministry of Health (MoH), Ministry of Labor and Social Welfare (MSLW), Ministry of Justice (MoJ), Ministry of Public Security (MoPS), Ministry of Planning and Investment (MPI).
 - Lao Statistics Bureau (LSB)
 - Sub-sector Working Group for women's participation of Governance Sector Working Group
 - Civil Society Organizations: Gender and Development Association (GDA), Association for Development of Women and Legal Education (ADWLE), Helvetas, CARE International.
 - United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Lao PDR CO: Head of Governance Unit, Project team.
 - United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA): Project team
 - Donor: Korea International Cooperation Agency (KOICA)
- ANNEX C: Documents to be reviewed and consulted:
 - UNDP Evaluation Guidelines 2021
https://popp.undp.org/UNDP_POPP_DOCUMENT_LIBRARY/Public/AC_Accountability_UNDP_Evaluation_Guidelines.pdf
 - UNDP Strategic Plan (2022 – 2025)
[Strategic Plan 2022–2025 | UNDP](#)
 - [UNDP Strategic Plan \(2018 – 2021\)](#)
[Strategic Plan 2018-2021 | UNDP](#)

- UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (UNSDCF) 2022 – 2026 | Lao PDR
[Lao PDR - United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework 2022-2026 | United Nations in Lao PDR](#)
 - 9th National Socio-Economic Development Plan of Lao PDR
[_eng_9th_nsedp_final_print_12.1.22.pdf \(opendevopmentmekong.net\)](#)
 - Country Programme Document 2022 – 2026 | Lao PDR
[Country Programme Document for Lao PDR \(2022-2026\) | United Nations Development Programme \(undp.org\)](#)
 - Project Document
 - Revision – Project Document
 - Project Progress report (Quarterly, and Annually)
 - Technical reports and other knowledge products
 - Workplans for 2020-2022
 - The National Plan of Action on Elimination of Violence Against Women (EVAW) (2021-2025)
 - The National Guideline for Standard Operational Procedure (SOP) for prevention and responses to GBV/EVAW
 - Case studies and surveys on how to strengthen the governance mechanism and policy framework of GBV/EVAW
 - Other relevant documents, including other donor programmes (KOICA's Gender Equality Mid-Term Strategy 2016-2020)
- ANNEX D: Outline of the evaluation report format
The final evaluation report must include, but not limited to, the sections outlined in the report template in the following link: [Sec 4 Template 6 Standard evaluation report content full details.docx \(live.com\)](#)
 - ANNEX E: Pledge of ethical code of conduct
Member of evaluation team is required to read carefully, understand, and duly sign the Code of Conduct for Evaluation in the UN System. Please attached the duly signed form (p.6) together with the contract agreement.
Please click the following link: <http://www.unevaluation.org/document/detail/100>
 - ANNEX F: Evaluation Matrix
A tool that allows the evaluation team to map out and visualize the evaluation plan, its methods, and key evaluation questions including how to address them. For reference, below can be considered as a template:

Relevant evaluation criteria	Key questions	Specific sub-questions	Data sources	Data collection methods/tools	Indicators /Success standards	Methods for data analysis

- ANNEX G: UNDP Evaluation Guidelines
https://popp.undp.org/UNDP_POPP_DOCUMENT_LIBRARY/Public/AC_Accountability_UNDP_Evaluation_Guidelines.pdf

For reference:

- a. Inception report template (section 4)
- b. Evaluation report template and expected content (section 4)
- c. Quality assessment process (section 6)

Annex 2. Assessing Project Performance: Analyzing Activity Accomplishments within the Logical Framework Parameters

SUB-OUTPUT 1: Support the development and implementation of the 2nd Five-year National Plan of Action on Preventing and Combating Violence Against Women (2021-2025) (EVAW NPA) and the 4th Five-Year National Plan of Action on Gender Equality (2021-2025) (Gender Equality NPA)	
Activity 1.1 Provide technical assistance to formulate and finalize the National Plan of Action on EVAW (2021–2025)	
Responsible	NCAWMC with the support of UNFPA
Indicator 1.1.	5-year National Plan of Action on EVAW developed (baseline: 0; target: 1)
Verification	Draft 5-year National Plan of Action on EVAW (2021–2025)
Implementation status*	Completed
Activity Accomplishment Evaluation	<p>The technical assistance provided for the formulation and finalization of the National Plan of Action on EVAW (2021–2025), referred to as Activity 1.1, was completed. Additionally, Indicator 1.1 was also achieved with the development of the 5-year National Plan of Action on EVAW. One contributing factor to this success was UNFPA's possession of both technical expertise and funding, despite facing delays in receiving funds from the donor.</p> <p>However, there were challenges encountered during the implementation of this activity. One such challenge was the mobilization of authorities to secure the involvement of high-level decision-makers in the process of formulating and finalizing the document. This aspect posed a significant burden to the overall implementation of the activity.</p>
Activity 1.2 Provide technical assistance for the integration of NPA on EVAW in the sectors' plan	
Responsible	NCAWMC with the support of UNFPA
Indicator	National Plan of Action on EVAW integrated into sectors' plans at national and subnational levels (baseline: 0; target: 1)
Verification	National Plan of Action on EVAW integrated into sectors' plans at national and subnational levels
Implementation status	Completed
Activity Accomplishment Evaluation	<p>Activity 1.2, which involved providing technical assistance for integrating the National Plan of Action (NPA) on Elimination of Violence Against Women (EVAW) into sectoral plans, has been completed. Similarly, Indicator 1.2, focusing on the integration of the NPA on EVAW into national and subnational sectoral plans, has also been achieved.</p> <p>The National Plan of Action on EVAW has been integrated into the Governmental Plan 2021-2025, as well as incorporated into sectoral line ministries. However, the level of commitment among authorities to reflect the provisions</p>

	<p>of the Plan varied. Some institutions embraced a greater number of provisions and commitments from the Plan, intending to integrate them into their policies, while others demonstrated a lesser degree of commitment.</p> <p>A similar trend was observed at the provincial level. The cooperation between UNFPA and LWU was a contributing factor in facilitating the integration process.</p> <p>There were several challenges encountered during the integration process. One of the reasons for the hesitation to integrate the Plan was the desire of some ministries and provinces to avoid taking on additional responsibilities, as this would entail subsequent reporting obligations. Insufficient funding posed a significant obstacle for authorities, both at the ministerial and provincial levels, to incorporate more commitments from the Plan into their public policies.</p>
Activity 1.3 Provide technical assistance to formulate and finalize the National Plan of Action on Gender Equality (2021–2025)	
Responsible	NCAWMC with the support of UNFPA
Indicator	5-year National Plan of Action on Gender Equality developed (baseline: 0; target: 1)
Verification	Draft 5-year National Plan of Action on EVAW (2021–2025)
Implementation status	Completed
Activity Accomplishment Evaluation	<p>The objective of Activity 1.3, which involved providing technical assistance to formulate and finalize the National Plan of Action on Gender Equality (2021–2025), has been successfully achieved. This accomplishment is reflected in Indicator 1.3, which entails the development of a comprehensive 5-year National Plan of Action on Gender Equality.</p> <p>Several contributing factors have facilitated the fulfillment of this goal. Firstly, the plan was meticulously prepared and endorsed alongside other essential project policies, ensuring its seamless integration. This collaborative approach streamlined the process and enhanced the overall effectiveness of the plan. Additionally, the endorsement of the Plan greatly facilitated its integration with other policies, simplifying the coordination and implementation efforts.</p> <p>While the challenges faced during this endeavor remain consistent with those mentioned above, they were effectively addressed and overcome.</p>
Activity 1.4 Provide technical assistance for the integration of NAP on Gender Equality in the sectors' plans	
Responsible	NCAWMC with the support of UNFPA
Indicator	National Plan of Action on Gender Equality integrated into sectors' plan at national and subnational levels (baseline: 0; target: 1)
Verification	National Action Plan on Gender Equality integrated into sectors' plans at national and subnational levels

Implementation status	Completed
Activity Accomplishment Evaluation	The process was conducted similarly as described above, being carried out in bulk along with other policies.
Activity 1.5 Implementation of the 2nd Five-year National Plan of Action on Preventing and Combating Violence Against Women (2021-2025) (EVAW NPA) and the 4th Five-Year National Plan of Action on Gender Equality (2021-2025) (Gender Equality NPA)	
Responsible	UNFPA support LWU
Indicators	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Number of population sensitized on GBV prevention through awareness-raising activities and outreach (baseline: N/A; target: 70%) 2) A coordination mechanism for GBV established (baseline: N/A; target: TBD) 3) Number of coordinators from health, social, and justice sectors in 6 provinces trained on SOP coordination and referral pathway (baseline: N/A; target: TBD) 4) Number of women trained in food and clothing businesses (baseline: N/A; target: TBD) 5) Women's leadership training manual developed (baseline: N/A; target: TBD) 6) Number of government officials, LWU, and relevant ministries' staff at central, provincial, and district levels, and women in selected provinces, trained on women's leadership (baseline: N/A; target: Yes) 7) The 10th periodic CEDAW report of Lao PDR approved by the Lao government and submitted to the CEDAW Committee in Geneva (baseline: N/A; target: 180)
Verification	Consultation Survey/report
Implementation status	In Progress
Activity Accomplishment Evaluation	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Ongoing data collection is carried out by the project, the Implementing Partner, UNFPA, and UNDP. The data is primarily collected based on events. 2) Ongoing efforts have been made to establish the mechanism at both central and provincial levels. The goal was to implement the indicator in six provinces, but currently, it has been implemented in only two provinces. 3) In progress. 4) In progress. 5) In progress. 6) In progress. 7) Achieved. The report has been prepared and approved. Furthermore, UNFPA has organized two knowledge exchange sessions to enhance knowledge sharing across the project.

Activity 1.6 Organize an international exchange to strengthen the institutional capacity of the LWU, NCAWMC, and MOH to effectively address VAW/GBV. The international exchange will promote triangular/south-south cooperation potentially including ROK partners.	
Responsible	UNFPA in cooperation with LWU
Indicator	Number of international knowledge and experience exchange programs promoting T/SSC (baseline: 0; target: 3)
Verification	Press release
Implementation status	In Progress
Activity Accomplishment Evaluation	Both the UNFPA and UNDP have one event each remaining to organize. To enhance efficiency and facilitate knowledge transfer among the teams, it is suggested that the study visit be conducted jointly.
SUB-OUTPUT 2: The Implementation guideline & M&E Plan of the 5-year National Plan of Action on EAW (2021–2025) developed	
Activity 2.1 Support NCAWMC to develop EAW and GE NAP M&E framework	
Responsible	UNFPA in collaboration with NCAWMC
Indicator	M&E framework for implementation of EAW and GE NPAs developed (baseline: 0; target: 1)
Verification	Implementation guideline and M&E Plan
Implementation status	In Progress
Activity Accomplishment Evaluation	- The Terms of Reference have been endorsed and advertised, and as a result, a consultant has been recruited. At the time of this evaluation, the consultant was undergoing the onboarding process.
Activity 2.2 Improve the monitoring and reporting system for gender and EAW/GBV data (including reporting on human rights international commitments) from district provincial and central levels	
Responsible	UNFPA in collaboration with NCAWMC and LWU
Indicator	Monitoring and reporting system set up (baseline: 0; target: 1)
Verification	Monitoring and reporting system in place
Implementation status	Pending

Activity Accomplishment Evaluation	The activity has not yet commenced, as its initiation is contingent upon the completion of Activity 2.1.
Activity 2.3 Support the development of the implementation of Social and Health Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) for the provision of essential social and health services for GBV survivors	
Responsible	UNFPA in collaboration with NCAWMC and LWU
Indicators	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) The Social and Health Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) for the provision of essential social and health services for GBV survivors developed and implemented (baseline: 0; target: 1) 2) Number of health professionals trained in the provision of health services (baseline: N/A; target: N/A) 3) Number of survivors who received essential health services (baseline: N/A; target: N/A) 4) Number of social service providers trained in the provision of health services (baseline: N/A; target: N/A) 5) Number of survivors who received essential social services (baseline: N/A; target: N/A)
Verification	The developed National Guideline for SOP to prevent and respond to EAW/GBV
Implementation status	In Progress
Activity Accomplishment Evaluation	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Target achieved. Both the Social and Health Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) have been officially endorsed and implemented. 2) Target achieved. Training has been successfully provided. 3) Work in progress. The implementation of the health service based on the SOP is still in progress. 4) Work in progress. 5) Work in progress.
Activity 2.4 Support monitoring and evaluation of the implementation of the national action plan on prevention and elimination of violence against women and children (2021-2025)	
Responsible	UNFPA in collaboration with NCAWMC and LWU
Indicator	Annual monitoring and evaluation of the implementation of the national action plan on prevention and elimination of violence against women and children (2021-2025) conducted (baseline: 0; target: 3 monitoring; 1 mid-term review)
Verification	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3 Monitoring 1 mid-term review conducted
Implementation status	In Progress

Activity Accomplishment Evaluation	The ongoing monitoring and evaluation of the national action plan for the prevention and elimination of violence against women and children (2021-2025) is currently underway. Furthermore, a mid-term review is currently in progress to assess the plan's effectiveness and make any necessary adjustments.
SUB-OUTPUT 3: Strengthened capacity of the justice sector for GBV response and prevention through the implementation of the NAPEVAW	
Activity 3.1 Conduct capacity/needs assessment of the justice sector to deliver on the NAPEVAW	
Responsible	UNDP in cooperation with LWU
Indicator	Development of a capacity needs assessment report (baseline: 0; target: 1)
Verification	Government endorsement
Implementation status	Completed
Activity Accomplishment Evaluation	The target has been achieved. The assessment of capacity needs has been completed and has already been endorsed.
Activity 3.2 Support the development of the justice sector SOP for GBV response and prevention, ensuring integration with SOPs in social and health sectors, and developing the capacity of the justice sector to implement SOP	
Responsible	UNDP in cooperation with LWU
Indicators	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Increase in understanding of gender equality and VAW by justice sector trainees (baseline: TBD; target: 30%) 2) Number of multistakeholder consultation workshops (baseline: 0; target: 3) 3) SOP approved (baseline: 0; target: 1) 4) Score of assessment reports conducted by UNDP and justice sector task force on SOP implementation in 3 pilot provinces (baseline: 0; target: criteria for scoring TBD)
Verification	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> i) Pre- and post-test results ii) Quarterly report iii) Government endorsement iv) Assessments
Implementation status	In Progress

Activity Accomplishment Evaluation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1) In Progress. 2) Achieved. The target for the indicator was surpassed as over 7 consultations were conducted. 3) In progress. The Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) has been prepared and is currently undergoing the endorsement process. 4) Pending. The activity's implementation will commence once the SOP is approved.
Activity 3.3 Research and Surveys on how to strengthen the governance mechanism and policy framework of GBV/EVAW	
Responsible	UNDP in cooperation with LWU
Indicators	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Number of women participating in research on barriers (baseline: 0; target: 150) 2) Number of men sharing perceptions on GBV (baseline: 0; target: 150) 3) Number of survivors engaged in research on the meaning of justice (baseline: 0; target: 10) 4) Number of men engaged in research on the experiences of abusers (baseline: 0; target: 10)
Verification	Research/survey reports
Implementation status	In Progress
Activity Accomplishment Evaluation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Achieved. The research study successfully included a total of 259 women, surpassing the initial target. 2) Achieved. A significant number of 236 men participated in the study. 3) Pending. This activity is scheduled to commence once the SOP receives approval. 4) Pending. This activity is also awaiting the approval of the SOP before it can begin.
Activity 3.4 Organise an International Conference combined with an exchange program with ROK and other neighboring countries and policy dialogues to strengthen the institutional capacity of the LWU to effectively address the Gender/EVAW issues (incl. Launch)	
Responsible	UNDP in cooperation with LWU
Indicators	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Number of discussions through a platform for policy dialogue on gender & VAW (baseline: 0; target: 1/year) 2) Number of participants disaggregated by gender (baseline: 0; target: 150) 3) Number of international best practices shared (baseline: 0; target: 3) 4) Number of international best practices integrated into the justice response (baseline: 0; target: 3)
Verification	Press release
Implementation status	In Progress
Activity Accomplishment Evaluation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1) In progress. There are currently ongoing activities, including an upcoming international conference in 2022. Additionally, a study visit to Korea is planned for this year. 2) In progress. As of now, 81 individuals have participated in the international exchange program. 3) The activity has successfully achieved and surpassed the target by sharing a total of 8 international best practices.

	4) The activity has successfully achieved the integration of 2 best practices into the SOP, with the caveat that no further integration will take place as the SOP has been finalized. However, as the process continues to be improved, further enhancements are anticipated in the future.
Activity 3.5 Develop strategy and practical guidance/tools for LWU on communications and community outreach based on the models of Communications for Development (C4D) and social and behavioral change communications (SBCC) to raise awareness on GBV and access to justice	
Responsible	UNDP in cooperation with LWU
Indicators	1) Outreach strategy delivered (baseline: 0; target: 1) 2) Number of master trainers trained on new community outreach practice (baseline: 0; target: 1)
Verification	Government endorsement
Implementation status	Completed
Activity Accomplishment Evaluation	1) Target achieved. 2) Target achieved. There are prospects for surpassing the target as additional activities are planned in the pipeline.
<p>*Status Interpretation Guide:</p> <p>Completed: This status indicates that the activity is entirely fulfilled. All the assigned tasks have been executed, and the outcomes have been achieved as per the defined indicators. Furthermore, any reports, assessments, or evaluations related to the activity have been submitted and approved. This status signifies the successful completion of the activity and it no longer requires additional input or resources.</p> <p>In Progress: This status represents that the activity is currently being implemented and has not yet reached its completion. The assigned tasks are underway, with some degree of achievement, but full outcomes, as per the indicators, are yet to be realized. Activities under this status are actively receiving resources and efforts for their successful execution. Regular updates and reports for these activities should be made available to track their progress toward completion.</p> <p>Pending: The 'Pending' status implies that the activity's implementation has not started yet. It is still in the planning stage, awaiting resources, approvals, or other prerequisites to kick-start. Activities under this status need to be carefully monitored to ensure timely commencement and prevent any possible delays in the project timeline.</p>	

Annex 3. Evaluation Matrix

Criteria	Key evaluation questions	Specific sub-questions	Desired knowledge acquisition	Data sources	Data collection methods/tools	Indicators/Success standards	Methods for data analysis
Relevance	1. To what extent is the project relevant to the national development priorities of Lao PDR as reflected in the 9th NSEDP (and 8th NSEDP), UNDP CPD 2022-2026, UNDP Strategic Plan, and UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - How are the objectives of the project aligned with the strategic goals of the 9th NSEDP and 8th NSEDP? - How does the project reflect the priorities outlined in the UNDP CPD 2022-2026 and UNDP Strategic Plan? - In what ways does the project contribute to the UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework? 	Detailed understanding of how the project aligns and contributes to various strategic plans and frameworks.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Project documents; - Reports from Lao PDR government and UNDP; - Strategic documents (9th NSEDP, 8th NSEDP, UNDP CPD 2022-2026, UNDP Strategic Plan, UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Document analysis; - Interviews with the project team and stakeholders; - Focus group discussions. 	A high level of alignment between project objectives and the objectives of the mentioned strategies and frameworks.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Thematic content analysis, - Comparative analysis
	2. To what extent is the project in line with the government's gender equality priority in general and the elimination of violence against women (EVAW) in particular?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - How does the project align with the government's gender equality priorities? - What are the specific initiatives in the project that target EVAW? 	Information on the project's alignment with gender equality policies and EVAW initiatives.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Government policy documents on gender equality and EVAW, - Project documents, - Interviews with project stakeholders 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Document analysis; - Interviews. 	Project strategies and actions that are specifically designed to promote gender equality and EVAW.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Gender-focused content analysis, - Comparative analysis.
	3. To what extent does the project incorporate gender analysis into its design? Does the project appropriately use the analysis to create measures to address gender equality issues?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - What methods were used to incorporate gender analysis into the project design? - How were the findings from the gender analysis used in designing 	Understanding of the methods used for gender analysis and how its results were used to address gender issues.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Project design documents, - Project M&E reports, - Interviews with the project design team. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Document analysis; - Interviews. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Evidence of gender analysis in project design; - Measures specifically designed based on 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Content analysis - Thematic analysis.

Criteria	Key evaluation questions	Specific sub-questions	Desired knowledge acquisition	Data sources	Data collection methods/tools	Indicators/Success standards	Methods for data analysis
		measures to address gender equality issues?				the findings of gender analysis.	
Coherence	1. To what extent does the project contribute to achieving SDGs in Lao PDR, especially Goal 5 of Gender Equality?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - What are the specific outcomes of the project related to gender equality? - How does the project integrate SDG 5 into its actions and activities? 	Detailed understanding of the project's role in promoting gender equality and contributing to SDG 5 in the Lao PDR	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Project documents, - Progress reports, - Stakeholder interviews, - Beneficiary interviews 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Document analysis, - Interviews, - Focus group discussions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Improved gender equality metrics, - Project alignment with SDG 5, - Number of activities addressing gender equality 	Thematic content analysis
	2. Does the project fill in the gaps of the current similar interventions by the government, other UN agencies, and other development partners?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - What gaps exist in current (similar) interventions? - How does the project address these gaps? 	Identification of the unique contributions of the project and how it complements and improves upon existing interventions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Interviews, - Review of similar interventions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Document analysis, - Interviews, - Comparative analysis 	Evidence of filling gaps in existing interventions, unique outcomes/impacts resulting from the project	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Gap analysis, - Comparative analysis
	3. To what extent does this project leverage the comparative advantage and expertise of the participating UN agencies, UNDP, and UNFPA, vis-à-vis relevant stakeholders to achieve the development results of the project?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - What are the specific areas of expertise that UNDP and UNFPA bring to the project? - How are these leveraged to achieve project outcomes? - How can the utilization of the comparative advantage and expertise of the UNDP and UNFPA be enhanced in the future to maximize the project's developmental results? 	Understanding of how the project makes use of UNDP and UNFPA's expertise and resources for better project outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Project documents, - Interviews. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Document analysis, - Interviews 	Evidence of leveraging UN agency expertise, the correlation between agency input and project outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Correlation analysis, - Content analysis
Effectiveness	1. Is the project on track to achieve its intended results within the agreed period? Which specific	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - What are the milestones of the project? - What activities have been completed? 	Understanding the project's progress, the contribution of each activity, and their	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Project implementation plan, - Progress reports, 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Interviews, - Document review 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Achievement of milestones on time, - Positive feedback from the Project 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Correlation analysis, - Content analysis,

Criteria	Key evaluation questions	Specific sub-questions	Desired knowledge acquisition	Data sources	Data collection methods/tools	Indicators/Success standards	Methods for data analysis
	activities/outputs contribute to the achieved results?	- How do these activities/outputs correlate with the results?	correlation with the results.	- Project team feedback, - Beneficiary feedback		- Team and beneficiaries, - Observable positive results linked to specific activities.	- Thematic analysis
	2. What are the contributing factors to the results that are achieved? What are the challenges that hinder the achievement of results and how to overcome them?	- What resources have contributed to the results? - What obstacles have been faced? - What strategies have been used to overcome these challenges?	Understanding the enabling factors and challenges for project implementation and strategies for overcoming obstacles.	- Project reports, Project Team feedback, - Beneficiary feedback, Stakeholder interviews	- Interviews, Focus groups - Document Review	- Identified contributing factors, - Identified challenges, - Effective strategies for overcoming challenges.	- Content analysis, - Thematic analysis.
	3. To what extent does the project instigate change in social norms that promote gender equality?	- What policies, community initiatives, and norms have been influenced by the project? - How significant is the project's contribution to these areas?	Understanding the project's impact on social norms and policy/community initiatives related to gender equality and GBV elimination.	- Policy documents, - Beneficiary feedback - Stakeholder interviews	- Interviews, - Focus groups, - Policy Analysis	- Observable change in social norms, - Policies or initiatives influenced by the project, - Significant project contribution to these areas.	- Content analysis, - Thematic analysis, - Discourse analysis
	4. To what extent does the project contribute to the overall effort at the policy and community level to eliminate GBV in the country?	- How has the project contributed to changes in policy related to GBV? - What barriers or facilitators have influenced the project's contribution?	Understanding of the project's role in policy advocacy and community mobilization for GBV elimination. Insights into barriers or facilitators of project effectiveness.	- Policy documents, - Project reports, - Stakeholder interviews	- Document analysis, - Interviews	- Changes in policy related to GBV, - Documentation of barriers and facilitators	- Thematic analysis, - Content analysis
Efficiency	1. To what extent have the project's strategy and implementation activities been cost-effective and time-efficient?	- What were the estimated vs. actual costs and timelines? - How does the cost efficiency compare with similar projects?	Understanding the effectiveness of resources allocation and the value for money	- Financial records, - Project documents, - Comparison of projects	- Review of financial reports, - Comparison analysis, - Project progress reports	- Budget and timeline adherence, - Cost-efficiency as compared to similar projects	- Comparative analysis, - Cost-benefit analysis

Criteria	Key evaluation questions	Specific sub-questions	Desired knowledge acquisition	Data sources	Data collection methods/tools	Indicators/Success standards	Methods for data analysis
	2. Were resources, human, financial, and time, used as planned and appropriately? Did the project underspend or overspend resources?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - What were the planned vs. actual uses of resources? - Were there instances of under or overspending? 	Insight into how resources were utilized and if there were significant deviations from the plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Financial records, - HR records, - Project management records - Information provided by the HR and Financial Units 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Review of financial and HR reports - Interviews 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Adherence to budget, time, and staff allocation plans 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Descriptive statistics, - Variance analysis
	3. Were the project's activities conducted and completed within the approved project's work plan?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Were there deviations from the planned project schedule? - What were the causes of any delays? 	Understanding if the project was implemented as per the planned schedule	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Project plans, - Progress reports 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Review of project plans and progress reports, - Interviews with the project staff 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Adherence to the project schedule, - Completion of planned activities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Gantt chart analysis
	4. To what extent were the resources mobilized/available enough to achieve its intended results?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Was the resource allocation sufficient for the project's needs? - Were additional resources required during the project? 	Knowledge of whether the resource allocation was sufficient and if additional resources were needed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Financial records, - HR records, - Project documents 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Review of financial reports, - HR reports, - Interviews with project staff 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Achievement of project goals within the allocated resources 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Resource utilization analysis, - Gap analysis
Sustainability	1. To what extent does the project enhance capacities (human, institution, system) to create a sustained impact of the project, and what could be done to strengthen sustainability?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - What measures were taken to enhance capacities (human, institution, system) at various levels? - How can these measures be improved for sustainability? 	Understanding of the specific strategies and interventions implemented to enhance capacity and recommendations for strengthening these.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Project reports, - Personnel interviews, - Training documents. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Document review, - Interviews 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Increase in capacity levels post-project, - Longevity of project impacts. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Thematic analysis, - Comparative analysis.
	2. Was the project able to forge new partnerships with relevant stakeholders? Or strengthen the existing ones?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Who were the new partners involved? - How were existing relationships with stakeholders strengthened? 	Identification of the new partnerships formed and understanding of how existing relationships were improved.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Partnership agreements, - Meeting minutes, - Stakeholder interviews. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Document review, - Interviews. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Number of new partnerships, - Improvement in existing relationships. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Network analysis, - Content analysis.

Criteria	Key evaluation questions	Specific sub-questions	Desired knowledge acquisition	Data sources	Data collection methods/tools	Indicators/Success standards	Methods for data analysis
	3. To what extent has the project actively engaged and involved the relevant stakeholders in the project design and implementation?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - How were stakeholders involved in the project design and implementation? - Was their input valued and incorporated? 	Insight into the level of stakeholder engagement and the mechanisms for their inclusion in the project design and implementation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Meeting records, - Communication logs, - Project documents - Interviews 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Document review, - Interviews 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Level of stakeholder engagement, - Feedback from stakeholders on their involvement. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Thematic analysis, - Perception analysis.
	4. To what extent is the ownership of the national partner (LWU) able to sustain the positive impact of the project?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - How is the LWU positioned to continue the work of the project? - What resources/support does the LWU have to continue this work? 	Understanding of the LWU's capabilities and resources for sustaining the project's impact.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - LWU strategic plans, - Project reports, - Interviews with LWU representatives. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Document review, - Interviews. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - LWU's strategic alignment with the project, - Resources available/ planned to LWU to sustain the positive impact of the project 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Content analysis, - SWOT analysis.
	5. Is there an exit strategy put in place to ensure the sustainability of the project's impact?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - What does the exit strategy look like, if any? - How will it support continued impact? 	Knowledge of the exit strategy and its potential effectiveness for sustained impact.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Project document, - Exit strategy document (if any), - Interviews. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Document review, - Interviews. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Existence and quality of an exit strategy, - Stakeholder acceptance of the strategy. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Content analysis, - SWOT analysis.
Management and Monitoring	1. Is there a monitoring system put in place to track the progress and delivery of the project?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - What system is being used for monitoring? - How often is the monitoring conducted? - Who is responsible for the monitoring process? 	Understanding of the project's tracking and monitoring mechanism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Project documents, - Interviews 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Review of project documents - Interviews 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Existence of a monitoring system - Frequency of monitoring reports - Defined roles and responsibilities for monitoring 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Document review - Content analysis,
	2. To what extent is the gender-responsive M&E system used to ensure effective and efficient project management?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Does the M&E system account for gender differences in its metrics? - How does the system ensure gender equity in its project management practices? 	Understanding of how gender-responsive the project management is	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - M&E system documentation - Interviews with M&E staff 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Review of M&E system documentation - Interviews with M&E staff 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Existence of gender-responsive indicators in the M&E system, - Implementation of gender-equitable practices 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Document review - Content analysis,

Criteria	Key evaluation questions	Specific sub-questions	Desired knowledge acquisition	Data sources	Data collection methods/tools	Indicators/Success standards	Methods for data analysis
	3. To what extent is the project's M&E used to measure impact for women and other most vulnerable groups?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - What metrics are used to measure the impact for these groups? - How is the data on these groups collected and interpreted? 	Understanding of how the project's impact is measured for women and vulnerable groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - M&E system documentation - Impact reports - Interviews with M&E staff 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Review of M&E system documentation and reports - Interviews 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Existence of specific metrics for these groups - Evidence of data collection and interpretation for these groups 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Document review - Content analysis
Leave No One Behind (LNOB), Human Rights, and Gender Equity	1. To what extent does the project address the needs of the most vulnerable groups and people that are left behind (poor, PwD, youths, women, ethnic minorities, and other disadvantaged groups) in the issue of GBV?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - How are the needs of each group specifically addressed in project planning and implementation? - What measures are taken to ensure their needs are met? 	Understanding the inclusivity and effectiveness of the project in addressing the needs of disadvantaged groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Project documents, - Interviews with the project team - Interview with project beneficiaries 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Interviews, - Project documentation review 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Increase in access to GBV services and other relevant measures tailored for each group; - Evidence of active participation and benefit from the project among the most vulnerable groups 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Document review - Content analysis
	2. Is the gender marker assessment assigned to the project accurate?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - How was the gender marker assessment conducted? - Was gender consideration fully integrated into all stages of the project? 	To assess the degree to which gender considerations were integrated into the project	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Project documents, - Interviews with the project team 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Interviews, - Project documentation review 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Gender marker accurately reflects the level of gender consideration in the project 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Comparison of gender marker assessment with project outcomes and strategies
	3. What proportion of the beneficiaries, both primary and beneficiary, of the project, are persons with disabilities (PwD)?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - How were PwDs identified and involved in the project? - What barriers did PwDs face in accessing the project benefits? 	To ascertain the inclusivity of PwDs in the project	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Project documents, - Interviews with the project team and beneficiaries 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Interviews, - Project documentation review 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Evidence of targeted measures to include PwDs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Descriptive statistics, - Comparative analysis
	4. To what extent does the project apply a human rights-based approach?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - How are human rights principles applied in the project? 	To understand the respect, protection, and fulfillment of	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Project documents, - Human rights documents, 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Interviews, - Project documentation review 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Evidence of human rights-based approach in all 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Human rights framework analysis

Criteria	Key evaluation questions	Specific sub-questions	Desired knowledge acquisition	Data sources	Data collection methods/tools	Indicators/Success standards	Methods for data analysis
		- Are there any instances where human rights were infringed upon during the project?	human rights in the project	- Interviews with the project team and beneficiaries		- stages of the project; No recorded human rights violations linked to the project	

Annex 4. Quality Self-Assessment Table⁷

Quality assessment criteria indicators	Self-checked (Y-Yes; N- No)
EVALUATION REPORT STRUCTURE, METHODOLOGY AND DATA SOURCES	
Are the evaluation objectives, criteria, methodology and data sources fully described and are they appropriate given the subject being evaluated and the reasons for carrying out the evaluation?	Y
STRUCTURE	
Is the evaluation report well-balanced and structured? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Follows the proposed evaluation report structure detailed in the UNDP Evaluation guidelines (section 4, 4.4.5 and annex 4) If not followed, does the report structure used allow for a well-balanced report? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The report includes sufficient and comprehensible background information - The report is a reasonable length - The required annexes are provided 	Y
Does the evaluation report clearly address the objectives of the evaluation as outlined in the TOR?	Y
METHODOLOGY	
Is the evaluation methodological approach clearly outlined? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Any changes from the proposed approach are detailed with reasons why 	Y
Is the nature and extent of stakeholder roles and involvement explained adequately?	Y
Does the evaluation clearly assess the project/ programme's level of relevance/ coherence?	Y
Does the evaluation clearly assess the project/ programme's level of effectiveness?	Y
Does the evaluation clearly assess the project/ programme's level of efficiency?	Y
Does the evaluation clearly assess the project/ programme's level of sustainability?	Y
DATA COLLECTION	
Are data collection methods and analysis clearly outlined? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Data sources are clearly outlined (including triangulation methods) - Data analysis approaches are detailed - Data collection methods and tools are explained 	Y
Is the data collection approach and analysis adequate for the scope of the evaluation? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A comprehensive set of data sources (especially for triangulation) is included where appropriate - A comprehensive set of quantitative and qualitative surveys, and analysis approaches is included where appropriate - Clear presentation of data analysis and citation within the report - Meetings and surveys with stakeholders and beneficiary groups are documented, where appropriate 	Y

⁷ UNDP Evaluation Quality Assessment, <http://web.undp.org/evaluation/guideline/section-6.shtml>

Are any changes to the evaluation approach or limitations in implementation clearly explained? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Issues with access to data or verification of data sources - Issues in the availability of interviewees - Outline of how these constraints were addressed 	Y
REPORT CONTENT	
Does the evaluation draw linkages to the UNDP country programme strategy and/ or UNDAF/ UNSDCF? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - It evaluates the programme/ project theory of change and its relevance - It analyses the linkage of the project/ programme being evaluated to the UNDP country programme strategy - It makes linkages to the United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (UNSDCF) 	Y
Does the evaluation draw linkages to related national government strategies and plans in the sector/area of support? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The evaluation discusses how capacity development, or the strengthening of national capacities, can be addressed 	Y
Does the evaluation detail project funding and provide funding data? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Variances between planned and actual expenditures are assessed and explained - Observations from financial audits completed for the project are considered 	Y
Does the evaluation include an assessment of the project/ programme's initial results framework, M&E design, implementation, and its overall quality? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Monitoring data presented and sufficiently detailed to enable analysis for the evaluation - Data was disaggregated by sex and vulnerable groups 	Y
Are all indicators in the logical framework assessed individually, with final achievements noted?	Y
CROSS-CUTTING ISSUES	
DOES THE EVALUATION REPORT ADDRESS GENDER AND OTHER KEY CROSS-CUTTING ISSUES?	
Where relevant, does the evaluation adequately include and analyse the intervention's impact on gender, human rights, disabilities and vulnerable groups?	Y
Does the report analyse the poverty and environment nexus or sustainable livelihood issues, as relevant?	N/A
Does the report discuss disaster risk reduction and climate change mitigation and adaptation issues where relevant?	N/A
Does the report discuss crisis prevention and recovery issues, as relevant?	N/A
Are gender equality and empowerment of women integrated in the evaluation scope, and are the evaluation criteria and questions designed in a way that ensures data related to gender equality and empowerment of women will be collected? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The evaluation includes an objective specifically addressing gender equality and/or human rights issues and/or gender was mainstreamed in other objectives - A stand-alone evaluation criterion on gender and/or human rights was included in the evaluation framework or mainstreamed into other evaluation criteria - One or several dedicated gender equality and empowerment of women evaluation questions were integrated into the evaluation 	Y
Were gender-responsive methodology, methods and tools, and data analysis techniques selected? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The evaluation specifies how gender issues are addressed in the methodology, including how data collection and analysis methods integrate gender considerations and ensure data collected is disaggregated by sex 	Y

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The evaluation methodology employs a mixed-methods approach, appropriate to evaluating gender equality and empowerment of women considerations - A diverse range of data sources and processes are employed (i.e. triangulation, validation) to guarantee inclusion, accuracy and credibility - The evaluation methods and sampling frame address the diversity of stakeholders affected by the intervention, particularly the most vulnerable, where appropriate 	
<p>Do the evaluation findings, conclusions and recommendation reflect a gender analysis?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The evaluation has a background section that includes analysis of specific social groups affected and/ or spelling out the relevant instruments or policies related to gender equality and human rights - The findings include data analysis that explicitly and transparently triangulates the voices of different social role groups, and/ or disaggregates quantitative data by sex, where applicable - Unanticipated effects of the intervention on gender equality and human rights are described - The evaluation report provides specific recommendations addressing issues of gender equality and empowerment of women, and priorities for action to improve gender equality and empowerment of women or the intervention or future initiatives in this area 	Y
<p>Does the evaluation consider disability issues?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Evaluation questions cover different aspects of disability inclusion - Evaluation findings and analysis provide data and evidence on disability inclusion - Evaluation conclusions and/ or recommendations reflect the findings on disability inclusion 	Y
<p>Does the evaluation draw linkages to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and relevant targets and indicators for the area being evaluated?</p>	Y
EVALUATION FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS	
FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS	
<p>Does the evaluation report contain a concise and logically articulated set of findings?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The findings are structured around the evaluation criteria and evaluation questions - The findings are detailed and supported by evidence - The findings go beyond an analysis of activity implementation 	Y
<p>Does the evaluation report contain a concise and logically articulated set of conclusions which are stand-alone in nature?</p>	Y
<p>Does the evaluation report contain a concise and logically articulated set of lessons learned?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The lessons learned are substantive - The lessons learned are appropriately targeted at different implementation and organizational levels 	Y
<p>Do the findings and conclusions relate directly to the objectives of the project /programme and the evaluation?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - They relate directly to the objectives of the project/ programme - They relate to the objectives of the evaluation as outlined in the TOR for the evaluation 	Y
<p>Are the findings and conclusions supported with data and interview sources?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Constraints in access to data and interview sources are detailed 	Y
<p>Do the conclusions build on the findings of the evaluation?</p>	Y

- The conclusions go beyond the findings and present a balanced picture of the strengths and limitations of the intervention	
Are risks discussed in the evaluation report?	Y
RECOMMENDATIONS	
Are the evaluation recommendations clear, concise, realistic and actionable?	Y
- They are reasonable given the size and scope of the project/ programme	
Are recommendations linked to country programme outcomes and strategies and actionable by the country office?	Y
- Guidance is given for implementation of the recommendations	
- Recommendations identify implementing roles (UNDP, government, programme, stakeholder, other)	
LESSONS LEARNED	
Overall thoughts and lessons from the evaluation report for future projects and programmes.	Y
- Detail positive and innovative aspects of the project or programme if any	
- Detail lessons for other projects or programmes	
- What could have been done differently to strengthen the project or programme?	
- What key project or programme lessons can be drawn from the report?	

Annex 5. Sources of information used for the evaluation/ List of supporting documents reviewed.

- 2nd National Plan of Action on Preventing and Elimination of Violence Against Women and Violence against Children (2021-2025)
- 2nd National Strategy for the Advancement of Women (2016-2025)
- 5th National Plan of Action for Gender Equality (2021-2025)
- 8th National Socio-Economic Development Plan (2016-2020)
- 9th Five-Year National Socio-Economic Development Plan (2021-2025)
- Case studies and surveys on how to strengthen the governance mechanism and policy framework of GBV/EVAW
- Country Analysis Report: Lao PDR Analysis to inform the Lao People's Democratic Republic– United Nations Partnership Framework (2017-2021)
- Country programme document for the Lao People's Democratic Republic (2022-2026)
- Labor Law No.43 (2013) and Law No. 54 on Social Security (2018)
- Lao PDR - United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework 2022-2026
- Lao PDR – United Nations Partnership Framework 2017-2021
- Lao PDR's Constitution (2015)
- Law No.08 on the Development and Protection of Women (2004)
- Law No.105 on the Election of Members of the National Assembly (2020)
- Law No.56 on Preventing and Combatting Violence against Women and Children (2014)
- Law No.71 on Disaster Management (2019)
- Law No.77 on Gender Equality (2019)
- KOICA's Gender Equality Mid-Term Strategy 2016-2020
- Penal Code No.26 (2017)
- Project Document
- Project Progress reports (Quarterly and Annually)
- Project Workplans for 2020-2022
- Ratification document of CEDAW
- Revision – Project Document
- Statistics Law No.24 (2017)
- Strategic Plan 2018-2021, UNDP
- Strategic Plan 2022–2025, UNDP
- Technical reports and other knowledge products
- The National Guideline for Standard Operational Procedure (SOP) for Prevention and Responses to GBV/EVAW
- The National Plan of Action on Elimination of Violence Against Women (EVAW) (2021-2025)
- UNDP Evaluation Guidelines 2021
- UNDP Lao PDR Gender Equality Strategy 2022-2026
- UNDP Strategic Plan (2018 – 2021)
- UNDP Strategic Plan (2022 – 2025)

Annex 6. List of individuals/ groups interviewed

- Care International - KII
- Gender and Development Association - FGD
- KOICA - KII
- Lao Women's Union project team: the Cabinet Office, Director General, Permanent Secretary, Secretary Cabinet Office - FGD
- Lao Women's Union Savannakhet province, Central, and a representative from Provincial LWU - FGD
- Lao Women's Union, Division of Protection of Women, including the provincial focal points - FGD
- Lao Women's Union, Media Department, Director, and Chief of Division - FGD
- Ministry of Justice - KII
- Ministry of Public Security - KII
- NCAWMC, Deputy Director, Division of Gender Equality and Division of CEDAW - KII
- NCAWMC, Deputy Director, Division on Children Rights and Child Promotion and Protection - KII
- Office of the Supreme People's Prosecutor - KII
- People's Supreme Court - KII
- Subcommittee on the Advancement of Women (Sub-CAW) of the Ministry of Health (MoH) - FGD
- UNDP Finance Officer - KII
- UNDP Governance unit, including the former head of the unit - FGD
- UNDP project team, including former employees - FGD
- UNFPA Finance Officer - KII
- UNFPA project team - FGD

Annex 7. Pledge of Commitment to Ethical Conduct in Evaluation



ETHICAL GUIDELINES FOR EVALUATION

PLEDGE OF ETHICAL CONDUCT IN EVALUATION



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



INTEGRITY

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

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



ACCOUNTABILITY

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

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



RESPECT

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

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



BENEFICENCE

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

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

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

17th of May 2023

(Signature and Date)



PLEDGE OF ETHICAL CONDUCT IN EVALUATION

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ACCOUNTABILITY

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(Signature and Date)