Thematic Evaluation Report

SDG localization through SDG Coordination Centres (SDGCCs) in India

Report submitted to UNDP India CO on 12 December 2023

Evaluation commissioner: UNDP India

Abhirup Bhunia, Senior Evaluation Consultant

Abhirup.b1@gmail.com

THEMATIC EVALUATION REPORT

— Name of the evaluation intervention: SDG localization through SDG Coordination Centres (SDGCCs) in India
— Time frame of the evaluation – November 2022 – January 2023
— Date of the report – 12 December 2023
— Countries of the evaluation intervention – India
— Names and organizations of evaluator – Abhirup Bhunia, Senior Evaluation Consultant
— Name of the organization commissioning the evaluation – UNDP India

Acknowledgements

Project Information	
Project title	Establish SDG Coordination Centre for Facilitating Implementation of Haryana SDG Vision 2030
Atlas ID	Award ID: 00110391, Output ID: 00109331
Corporate outcome and output	UNSDCF Outcome 6: By 2027, a strengthened and more coordinated, inclusive and accountable governance system is in place at the national and local levels enabling all people, especially most marginalized and vulnerable, to be protected, empowered, engaged, and enjoy human rights and social justice, and lead their lives with respect and dignity. CPD Output 1.1: Government is better able to plan, implement, monitor and finance to accelerate progress towards the SDGs.
Country	India
Region	North
Date project document signed	01 May 2018
Project dates	Start / Planned end
	06 Aug 2018 / 05 Aug 2024
Project budget	INR 20,17,26,083 (USD 29,37,188)
Project expenditure at the time of	USD 9,28,371
Funding Source	Government of Haryana
Implementing Party[2]	UNDP

Project Information	
Project title	Establish SDG Coordination Centre for facilitating implementation of Punjab SDG Vision 2030
Atlas ID	Award ID: 00110391, Output ID: 00117582
Corporate outcome and output	*Below are from CPD 2019-22 as the project ended before the current CPD cycle. UNSDCF Outcome 3: By 2022, there is improved and more equitable access to, and utilization of,quality affordable health, nutrition, and water and sanitation Services CPD Output 1.1: Institutions strengthened to support implementation and monitoring of the SDGs.
Country	India
Region	North
Date project document signed	01 Dec 2019
Project dates	Start / Planned end
	01 Dec 2019 / 01 Nov 2022

Project budget	INR 9,05,65,703 (USD 1,293,796)
Project expenditure at the time of	USD 805,443.30
Funding Source	Government of Punjab
Implementing Party[3]	UNDP

Project Information	
Project title	Sustainable development Goals Coordination Centre (SDGCC), Karnataka
Atlas ID	Award ID: 00121477, Output ID: 117195
Corporate outcome and output	UNSDCF Outcome 6: By 2027, a strengthened and more coordinated, inclusive and accountable governance system is in place at the national and local levels enabling all people, especially most marginalized and vulnerable, to be protected, empowered, engaged, and enjoy human rights and social justice, and lead their lives with respect and dignity. CPD Output 1.1: Government is better able to plan, implement, monitor and finance to accelerate progress towards the SDGs.
Country	India
Region	South
Date project document signed	15 April 2020

Project dates	Start	Planned end
	15 April 2020	31 Dec 2023

Project budget	INR 7,43,13,473 (USD 984,806)
Project expenditure at the time of	USD 531,227
Funding Source	Government of Karnataka
Implementing Party[4]	UNDP

Project Information	
Project title	SDG Coordination Centre (SDGCC) in Nagaland
Atlas ID	SDG Coordination Centre (SDGCC) in Nagaland
Corporate outcome and output	UNSDCF Outcome 6: By 2027, a strengthened and more coordinated, inclusive and accountable governance system is in place at the national and local levels enabling all people, especially most marginalized and vulnerable, to be protected, empowered, engaged, and enjoy human rights and social justice, and lead their lives with respect and dignity. CPD Output 1.1:

	Government is better able to plan, implement, monitor and finance to accelerate progress towards the SDGs.
Country	India
Region	North East
Date project document signed	16 December 2020
Project dates	Start	Planned end
	28 Oct 2019	27 Oct 2022
Project budget	INR 3,72,47,040 (USD. 520,501)
Project expenditure at the time of	USD 363,268
Funding Source	Government of Nagaland
Implementing Party[5]	UNDP

Project Information	
Project title	Technical Support to Centre for Public Policy & Good Governance in accelerating Economic Growth and Fast -tracking SDGs in Uttarakhand Development Project (phase 1)
Atlas ID	Award ID: 00110393, Output ID: 00117158
Corporate outcome and output	UNSDCF Outcome 6: By 2027, a strengthened and more coordinated, inclusive and accountable governance system is in place at the national and local levels enabling all people, especially most marginalized and vulnerable, to be protected, empowered, engaged, and enjoy human rights and social justice, and lead their lives with respect and dignity. CPD Output 1.1: Government is better able to plan, implement, monitor and finance to accelerate progress towards the SDGs.
Country	India
Region	North
Date project document signed	23 Sept 2019
Project dates	Start	Planned end
	23 Sept 2019	15 Feb 2023
Project budget	INR 5,90,27,842 (USD. 829,859)
Project expenditure at the time of	USD 637,708
Funding Source	Government of Uttarakhand
Implementing Party[6]	UNDP

Project Information	
Project title	Enhancing Outreach and SDG Integration at State Level

Atlas ID	Award ID: 00105286, Output ID: 00106513
Corporate outcome and output	UNSDCF Outcome 6: By 2027, a strengthened and more coordinated, inclusive and accountable governance system is in place at the national and local levels enabling all people, especially most marginalized and vulnerable, to be protected, empowered, engaged, and enjoy human rights and social justice, and lead their lives with respect and dignity. CPD Output 1.1: Government is better able to plan, implement, monitor and finance to accelerate progress towards the SDGs.
Country	India
Region	Delhi, Haryana, Punjab, Uttarakhand, North Eastern Region (NER), Odisha
Date project document signed	1 January 2018

Project dates	Start	Planned end
	1 January 2018	31 Dec 2023

Project budget	USD 3,012,757
Project expenditure at the time of	USD 3,288,399
Funding Source	UNDP TRAC
Implementing Party[7]	UNDP

Project Information	
Project title	Technical Support to Tamil Nadu Government to Establish Sustainable Development Goals Coordination Centre (2022-2027)
Atlas ID	Award ID: 00142712, Output ID: 00130886
Corporate outcome and output	UNSDCF Outcome 6: By 2027, a strengthened and more coordinated, inclusive and accountable governance system is in place at the national and local levels enabling all people, especially most marginalized and vulnerable, to be protected, empowered, engaged, and enjoy human rights and social justice, and lead their lives with respect and dignity. CPD Output 1.1: Government is better able to plan, implement, monitor and finance to accelerate progress towards the SDGs
Country	India
Region	South
Date project document signed	10 Nov 2022

Project dates	Start	Planned end
	28 Nov 2022	27 Nov 2027

Project budget	INR 10,68,14,830 (USD. 13,18,702)
Project expenditure at the time of	USD 57,662.16
Funding Source	Government of Tamil Nadu
Implementing Party[6]	UNDP

EVALUATION INFORMATION		
Evaluation type (project/outcome/thematic/country programme etc)	Thematic	
Final/Mid Term/ Other	Other- Thematic	
Period under evaluation	Start	End
	2018	2023
Evaluators	Abhirup Bhunia	
Evaluator email address	abhirup.b1@gmail.com	
Evaluation dates	Start	End
	7 November 2023	12 December 2023

Contents

List of acronyms and abbreviations

CO	Country Office
CPD	Country Program Document
CPPGG	Centre for Public Policy & Good Governance
CSO	Civil Society Organization
CSR	Corporate Social Responsibility
DAC	Development Assistance Committee
DPI	Digital Public Infrastructure
ESG	Environmental, Social and Governance
GP	Gram Panchayat
KIIs	Key informant interviews
LFPR	labour force participation rate
LNOB	Leave No One Behind
MDONER	Ministry of Development of North Eastern Region
MoSPI	Ministry of Statistics & Programme Implementation
NGO	Non-governmental organisation
OPHI	Oxford Poverty and Human Development Initiative
PM-DevINE	Prime Minister's Development Initiative for North-Eastern Region
PMO	Prime Minister's Office
PPP	Public-Private Partnerships
RA	Research Associate
SDG	Sustainable Development Goals
SDGCCs	SDG Coordination Centres
SJHIFM	Swaran Jayanti Haryana Institute of Fiscal Management
TL	Team Leader
TOC	Theory of Change
UNEG	United Nations Evaluation Guidelines
UNSDCF	United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework
WCD	Women and Child Development

Executive Summary

Evaluation background

UNDP's support to Government of India (NITI Aayog/ MoSPI), and six state governments through the UNDP-instituted SDG Coordinator Centres (collectively referred to hereafter as the 'SDGCC portfolio') was evaluated to support programmatic requirements for strategic learning and evidence-based course-corrections.

Approach, methodology, and limitations

The evaluation adopted a consultative approach with desk review of programmatic documents, contextual secondary review, and key informant interviews (KIIs) with select stakeholders forming the bulk of the methodological base. The complexity of the portfolio directed the use of a qualitative data and analytical technique. The evaluation uses the DAC criteria as overarching evaluative framework and general rubrics, with gender/LNOB as additional assessment criterion. The evaluation followed UNEG principles on evaluation ethics. Major limitations to the evaluation include an unusually tight timeline and limited budget which necessitated a fully virtual approach, and compression of timelines for desk review, data gathering, analysis and drafting of report. The evaluation was completed in ~32 calendar days leading up to the drafting of the evaluation report.

Evaluation Findings

Relevance

UNDP's support through the "SDGCC portfolio" demonstrates fit-for-purpose partnerships that leverage and position UNDP's global expertise in Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) well, and showcase proven ability to mobilize state units leveraging its pan-India presence. Early on, the portfolio was responsive to a rapidly evolving national policy attention on SDGs that produced the need to draw on external technical know-how. The SDGCC portfolio leveraged its international expertise on SDGs, and the credibility and trust the UNDP brand commanded, to build strong relationships with government counterparts – positioning well to jointly deliver on a complex set of systems transformations. UNDP's distinct strengths in 'governance' allowed it to deliver sustained strategic value addition to government partnerships. The portfolio's responsiveness to varying state-specific needs and its role in introducing SDGs as a framework for developmental objectives is evidenced clearly. Overall, the SDGCC portfolio contributes strongly to the national priority of SDG localization, aligning well with the objectives set out in the UNDP Country Program Document for 2023-27.

Efficiency

The SDGCC portfolio has been implemented efficiently on several counts, but areas for improvements remain. Routine coordination with UNDP India CO in Delhi is strong for work plan implementation, but institutional knowledge and resources of the CO, and UNDP globally remain underutilized. There is limited evidence of SDGCCs tapping into UNDP CO's innovative resources, such as the Accelerator Lab and SDG finance teams. Although instances of cross-learning and networking amongst SDGCCs are noted, a need for more frequent and structured interactions through a dedicated platform is articulated. More efficient utilization of UNDP's convening power and broad networks is also possible. Collaboration with other UN agencies is evidenced, and positive feedback on the quality of technical resources provided by UNDP is universally noted by respondents. The embedded approach within state governments is particularly well-suited to deliver the program mandate and the resourcing model is efficient. Progress in UNDP's shift towards a whole-of-society approach, including engagement with the private sector, is starting to emerge, but more emphasis is needed to engage the private sector to its fullest potentials. SDGCCs have done well

to recognize solutions that showcase the importance of collaboration across various stakeholders in solving for SDGs, but this has not led to portfolio-wide fostering of collaborations, barring notable exceptions (e.g., the Karnataka Akanksha portal).

Effectiveness

The UNDP SDGCC portfolio has played a significant role in driving complex systemic changes in state governments and nationally in India. Key outcomes include:

Integrated Approach to Development: The portfolio encouraged a shift from a compartmentalized to an integrated approach to developmental issues, fostering a holistic SDG lens. This resulted in the integration of various sectors and sub-themes to converge at an SDG, facilitating a more comprehensive approach. Support to mapping government schemes to SDGs, orienting state-level annual budgeting to SDGs, and implementing SDG-compliant budgeting processes are important results from a systems transformation standpoint.

Enhancing the SDG Evidence-base and decision support systems: The portfolio strengthened the SDG evidence base, improving the quality and reliability of underlying data through localized processes that encompass the entire data value chain – from SDG indicator framing and data gathering to data use through dashboards and the SDG Index reports. The portfolio has made strong contributions to enhanced monitoring and accountability through routine data-driven localized SDG progress tracking, state rankings, and public communication of results – all of it galvanized through a participatory and consultative approach that enhanced buy-in at all levels. The portfolio's support to advancing evidence-based policymaking is demonstrated well, with noteworthy examples of success.

SDG Acceleration: The SDGCCs contributed to SDG acceleration by supporting states in formulating SDG action plans, measuring progress, and fostering a sense of competitive federalism through state rankings. SDG acceleration is also an indirect contribution of the portfolio, by shedding light on what's working, and what isn't – through a sustained, participatory, and high-quality process of measurement and evidence generation that supports tailored development decisions and policy formulation to achieve SDGs. Some SDGCCs have provided upstream policy support, offering solutions, policy recommendations, and technocratic advice to states. This includes the creation of policy development toolkits, framing policies on various themes, and actively engaging in bottom-up policy development processes. However, others have not. For the portfolio as a whole, there is an increasing realisation that while the SDG index, and the data, capacity building and advocacy pieces were strong starting points, a shift in gears to more upstream support to accelerate SDGs is needed, building off the strong momentum that has successfully been generated. The portfolio suffers from the lack of a ToC which can envision, document and visualize these potential pathways.

Leveraging High-Level Policy Attention: The portfolio benefited from political will and intent at the highest levels in the Government of India, enabling a strategic SDG-oriented approach. External factors, including the commitment from the Prime Minister's Office and NITI Aayog, catalyzed the success of the portfolio. UNDP has done well to capitalize on these external enablers.

SDG Financing: While progress on resource mobilization and financing for SDGs is relatively slower, there are notable examples of success, such as the Akanksha portal in Karnataka matching CSR funding with government programs, and the issuance of green bonds in Haryana and Punjab supported by the SDGCCs. However, SDG financing and private resource mobilization is an area where UNDP's positioning requires more concerted efforts.

In summary, the UNDP SDGCC portfolio has made significant strides in promoting an integrated approach to SDGs, improving data-driven decision-making, and fostering a competitive spirit among states. Beyond

UNDP's interventions, the success is additionally also attributed to political will and government efforts to drive systemic changes at various levels of governance. Challenges remain, but the portfolio shows promise in contributing to national and local governance aligned with SDG priorities.

The above evidences clear and substantial contributions of the portfolio to the CPD linked Output 1.1 ("Government is better able to plan, implement, monitor and finance to accelerate progress towards the SDGs"), and its contribution to the UNSDCF Outcome 6 ("By 2027, a strengthened and more coordinated, inclusive and accountable governance system is in place at the national and local levels…"). The portfolio also has meaningful and ongoing contributions to the National goal ("Achieving SDGs by 2030 aligned with national priorities including NITI Aayog's focus on localization and financing"). On the Strategic Plan Outcome 1: "Structural transformation accelerated, particularly green, inclusive and digital transitions", while there is strong traction towards structural transformation that is inclusive in its approach, evidence suggesting that this has necessarily been either green or digital is limited.

Sustainability

Inherent preconditions of the SDGCCs portfolio signal potential sustainability of its interventions. The presence of SDG cells within crucial government departments and designated SDG nodal officers contributes to an institutional backbone, fostering sustainability. The SDGCCs have gained credibility within the government machinery, with high-level policy attention, and key decision-makers showing interest in progress. The establishment of government-led institutional mechanisms and the inclusion of SDGCCs within government departments or bodies ensure the likelihood of assured funding in the future. However, challenges and potential risks to sustainability remain. Dependence on externally-resourced cells is substantially large – and can persist even after UNDP's exit. Institutional memory may be limited due to a degree of person-dependency in activities and successes that they eventuate. Top-down ownership and high-level buy-in are seen as success factors by all respondents. Gaps in creating knowledge repositories create uncertainties whether this knowledge will endure after UNDP's exit. On a positive note, there are signs of sustainability through scale-up, adoption, ownership, or replicability of models, such as the Akanskha model in Karnataka SDGCCs, which has been replicated in Maharashtra. The overall SDGCC model, incubated by UNDP, has been replicated in multiple states, indicating core replicability. Importantly, the SDG Index, if consistently repeated and used by governments, has the potential to inform policy formulation for years to come. The SDG dashboard also represents a case for sustainability, if its use by departments does not fall through over time.

Gender/ LNOB

The SDGCC portfolio showcases a commitment to hyperlocal and participatory engagement in SDG localization, extending efforts to districts and GPs. While there is limited evidence of strong direct engagement with CSOs or CBOs, their participation in workshops and capacity building has been significant, amplifying traditionally under-represented voices. The SDGCCs focus on SDG 5 (gender equality) is manifest in several initiatives including support to gender policies and gender budgeting initiatives in collaboration with UN Women. However, there is room to mainstream gender equality/LNOB in all activities. Despite limited evidence of the "leave no one behind" principle in routine work, contribution to evidence-based policymaking that can tackle systemic inequalities and 'reach the furthest first' can be traced back to the portfolio's interventions.

Conclusion

The SDGCCs portfolio is relevant, efficiently implemented, and shows potential for sustainability. It adeptly navigated evolving national priorities, leveraging UNDP's international reputation for SDG- knowledge. The portfolio introduced SDG-linked reforms in states (and nationally) effectively, promoted integrated approaches to developmental planning, and supported evidence-based decision-making. It has made

contributions to SDG acceleration, but may need a more intentional gear-shift to more 'problem-solving' type of interventions. Somewhat undermining efficient delivery, UNDP CO offerings and knowledge and global expertise/resources are underutilized. The need for enhanced private sector engagement, and continuing need to move the needle on green and digital transitions are also felt. Positive sustainability aspects include successful replication of models and potential long-term policy impact through the SDG localization efforts on high-quality SDG-linked data and evidence generation. The portfolio commits to hyperlocal SDG localization, engaging with CSOs, and demonstrating contribution to SDG 5, but there is room for improvement in mainstreaming gender equality and the LNOB principle.

Way Forward

- The SDGCCs portfolio should aim for a strategic shift toward tailored 'problem-solving' and advisory support to accelerate SDG achievement, building off strong state relationships and UNDP core expertise delivering 'solutions'.
- There is potential to leverage UNDP's global expertise and CO knowledge and offerings in a more meaningful way, including global knowledge base, and CO expertise/ offerings by way of A-Lab, Policy Unit, and SDG Finance and Gender teams/ advisors.
- Impact can be amplified by creating platforms for frequent cross-learning convenings between SDGCCs. This should include measured participation of external government and non-government stakeholders to foster allied collaboration opportunities. This will in turn serve as groundwork for creating whole-of-society partnerships that solve for SDGs. UNDP's breadth of network can be better leveraged by SDGCCs to design exposure visits.
- Within SDGCCs, establishing systems for institutional memory, including repositories and digitized training modules, are ways to bolster sustainability of outcomes painstakingly achieved in states and in districts/ GPs. The entire gamut of explicit and implicit knowledge emanating from SDGCCs should be documented. Sound knowledge management is a proven means to enhance sustainability of interventions.
- Gender and LNOB principles can benefit from more intentional mainstreaming within SDGCCs, with designated focal persons in states tasked with bringing in an intersectional lens of inclusion and equity to advance the LNOB principle.
- A Theory of Change – built retroactively, and using nested ToCs – can enhance programmatic understanding for a complex portfolio like this. The use of 'Outcome Harvesting' is recommended for ongoing monitoring and documentation of emerging outcomes. These adjustments can optimize the evaluative and learning value of the portfolio.

1. Evaluation Introduction

The evaluation of the SDGCC portfolio assessed the performance of UNDP's effort on SDG localization in India through SDG Coordination Centres (SDGCCs), investigating areas critical to ensuring sustained contribution to development results of the project interventions. The evaluation looked into the degree of contributions of SDGCCs towards SDG localization in India in line with the vision and strategy of central and state governments of India, and how they contributed to the UNDP India's Country Programme Document (CPD) 2023-27. To that end, the evaluation made an assessment of the portfolio's relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, sustainability, and integration of crosscutting elements on Gender Equality, Human Rights, and Leave No One Behind (LNOB).

As key features of the exercise, the evaluation sought to generate evidence at the strategic portfolio level and undertook forward-looking ideation as the portfolio heads into a new phase. Assessing specific and detailed state-level performance is not the express goal of the evaluation. The findings of the evaluation will be utilized to calibrate course corrections of the SDGCC approach (including ongoing SDGCC projects) so that it can maximize its impact in promoting SDG localization in India. The primary audiences for the evaluation are the UNDP India Country Office, and the UNDP State Offices. The evaluation provides evidence-backed findings – and recommendations that emerge from them – as inputs to the strategic decision-making process as the SDGCCs prepare to move to a new phase.

The evaluation report is structured in the following way: Section 2 provides a detailed overview of the portfolio and its package of interventions nationally and across states (i.e., the evaluand). Section 3 and 4 discuss the evaluation scope and evaluation approaches /methods respectively. Section 5 covers ethical considerations, and Section 6 outlines the key limitations of the evaluation, while Section 7 provides a brief on data analysis undertaken. Section 8 contains the key findings grouped into the main evaluation criteria, followed by a conclusion in Section 9. Finally, Section 10 provides evidence-backed recommendations and a way forward.

2. Project/ Program Description and Background Context

This section provides the basis for readers to understand what is being evaluated, the description of the intervention, and the problem/issues addressed by it. It details implementation strategies, goals, key partners, relevant cross-cutting issues, scale of intervention, total resources, geographical landscape covered, and implementation constraints.

SDGCC Haryana

Introduction

In alignment with India's commitment to the 2030 Agenda, Haryana had set ambitious targets for achieving the SDGs within the state. Supported by the UNDP state office in Chandigarh, the Government of Haryana developed the 'Vision Document 2030,' officially launched by Chief Minister Manohar Lal in Chandigarh on June 27, 2017, in the presence of Finance Minister Capt- Abhimanyu and United Nations Resident Coordinator (al) Mr. Diego Palacios. Haryana envisioned an ambitious agenda for 2030, aiming to eradicate extreme poverty, provide housing, ensure 24x7 power and clean drinking water, maintain 100% open defecation-free status, achieve parity in child sex ratio, reduce maternal mortality rate, and eliminate malnutrition among children. Other goals included ensuring 100% net enrollment ratio at the pre-primary level, reducing the unemployment gap between men and women, combating crime against women, diversifying industrial growth, and providing skill development training to persons with disabilities. The government was committed to focusing efforts on combating climate change, protecting forest ecosystems, biodiversity, and natural resources. Goals included eliminating stubble burning, establishing climate-smart villages, and increasing tree cover by 10% by 2030. Haryana aimed to transition into a modern digital state, with information technology at the core, guided by five principles of the new governance approach.

To implement the ambitious Vision 2030, the Government of Haryana decided to establish an SDG Coordination Centre (SDGCC) under Swaran Jayanti Haryana Institute of Fiscal Management (SJHIFM), part of the Finance and Planning Department, in partnership with the United Nations Development Programme. The SDGCC functioned as a capacity-building center, a resource hub, a think tank, knowledge center, and a monitoring post for all supporting departments of the Government of Haryana. The SDGCC took responsibility for initiating action on SDG-related issues, convening meetings, and working toward building awareness and capacity among stakeholders through innovative IEC and digital media campaigns.

Development Challenge

Although Haryana consistently outperformed other states in economic and agricultural growth, it lagged behind in key human development indicators, signaling the need for renewed efforts to realize its full potential. Despite high agricultural productivity, malnutrition and related challenges persisted, especially concerning the health and nutrition of children. Notably, 34% of children under 5 years were stunted, 29.4% underweight, and 21.2% wasted. Neonatal mortality rate (NMR) was 26 per 1,000 live births, slightly lower than the national average, but more than half of infant and under-five deaths occurred within the neonatal 28-day period. Gender integration in Haryana remained a significant challenge, with the lowest child sex ratio in India at 834 girls per 1,000 boys according to the 2011 Census. However, recent estimates from 2016 indicated improvement, with the figure increasing to 900 girls per 1,000 boys. Notably, Haryana reported 26% of convictions related to the Pre-Natal Diagnostic Techniques Act, Regulation, and Prevention of Misuse (PCPNDT) 1994 cases in India by December 31, 2014.

Being a landlocked state, Haryana faced environmental constraints, witnessing a significant decline of 8.56 meters in the water table over the last 15 years. The state contributed nearly 2% of the national greenhouse gas emissions, experiencing an increase in maximum and minimum temperatures by about 1°C to 1.2°C. Implementing the State Plan of Action for Climate Change formulated in 2011 was crucial for the state's environmental sustainability.

To achieve its 2030 Vision targets, the state needed to reassess key governance fundamentals, strengthen capacities, make policy changes, and introduce innovative interventions across all departments. A holistic Whole-of-Government approach, as opposed to a sectoral one, was imperative. The SDG Vision 2030, adopted on June 27, 2017, provided a unique opportunity for the state to pursue comprehensive sustainable development for all residents.

Strategy

The SDG VISION 2030 document outlined strategic imperatives for Haryana to achieve ambitious targets. Haryana aspired to transform into a modern digital state, with a core emphasis on Information Technology across sectors. The state aimed for sustainable development grounded in five principles:

a) Integrated planning, convergence, and decentralized implementation.

b) Focus on equitable development, addressing gender inequality and regional imbalance.

c) Building human capital through educational attainment and skill enhancement.

d) Citizen-centric services promoting the rule of law, human rights, transparency, and accountability.

e) Green growth, considering environmental implications and natural resources depletion.

To execute these imperatives, an SDG Coordination Centre (SDGCC) was proposed. The SDGCC, in collaboration with the Finance and Planning Department of the Government of Haryana, would act as a capacity-building center, a resource hub, a think tank, a knowledge center, and a monitoring post.

Responsibilities included initiating action on SDG-related issues, organizing awareness conclaves at various levels, and fostering goal-wise partnerships, including with the corporate sector.

The SDGCC's focus encompassed internal state capacity building on SDGs, public digital literacy, awareness creation, knowledge management, and partnership development. Key tasks involved developing a communication strategy, coordinating SDG implementation at the grassroots, proposing strategies for accelerating progress, designing monitoring and evaluation systems, introducing sophisticated monitoring tools, establishing institutional mechanisms, facilitating big data analytics, and conducting bottleneck analyses for service delivery improvement.

The proposed program aimed to contribute to CPD Output 11 - "institutions strengthened to support implementation and monitoring of the SDGs" and CPD Output 15 - forging partnerships between government, private sector, multilateral and bilateral agencies, vertical funds, Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR), and foundations. This support was planned for the next three years.

Results and Partnerships

SDGCC Haryana worked towards achieving several key outcomes. It played a pivotal role in enhancing awareness and capacity among internal and external stakeholders regarding the SDG Vision of Haryana. The center executed innovative Information, Education, and Communication (IEC) strategies and digital media campaigns to ensure a broad understanding of the SDG targets. Additionally, targeted awareness meetings and workshops were organized to engage stakeholders effectively.

In pursuit of its objectives, the SDGCC formulated 3-Year Action Plans and 7-Year strategic plans for each SDG. These plans proposed integrated development solutions, innovations, policy changes, and governance strategies to expedite the implementation of SDGs within the state. The center actively contributed to localizing SDGs by adapting the SDG Vision for district-level and Gram Panchayat authorities, integrating these goals into their plans and processes. An integral aspect of the SDGCC's mandate was to establish plans and systems, including the SDGCC-Private Sector Platform. This initiative aimed to mobilize partners and resources effectively, addressing the significant human, financial, and physical resource requirements associated with SDG implementation in Haryana.

The SDGCC focused on monitoring the progress of each SDG through digital solutions, notably the SDG Dashboard. It implemented innovative Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) systems to collect data at the grassroots level, ensuring a comprehensive understanding of progress and areas needing attention. An important function of the SDGCC was to help monitor the progress on SDGs' implementation and the achievement of set targets by each department on a concurrent basis. The center endeavored to develop a framework for SDG monitoring and a data management system for collecting, validating, and analyzing data on progress, including the implementation of a dashboard. The SDGCC also explored innovative technologies and mobile applications to build a robust institutional structure for conducting regular monitoring of SDGs, maintaining close coordination with the Planning and Finance department.

SDGCC Punjab
Introduction

At the sub-national level in India, state governments are aligning with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), and Punjab is taking significant strides in this direction. The Government of Punjab committed to achieving SDGs within the state and initiated the formulation of the Vision 2030 document to propel its development. Recognizing the need for a comprehensive approach, the State Development Goals Coordination Centre (SDGCC) was envisioned to play a pivotal role as a multifaceted hub, serving as a capacity-building center, catalyst, think tank, knowledge center, and monitoring post for various government departments in Punjab.

Development Challenge

Punjab faces a multitude of challenges that impact citizens' well-being, including entrenched issues of poverty, hunger, and shelter. Institutional barriers hinder access to quality education and healthcare, while societal challenges arise from disparities in caste, gender, and geographical regions. Economic hurdles manifest in a sluggish agricultural sector, a skewed industrial base, and fiscal stress. Geopolitical tensions with the neighboring Pakistani province, coupled with challenges such as cross-border terrorism and drug smuggling, add further complexity. Additionally, there are gender disparities in education, and health indicators that, while better than national figures, still require improvement. Challenges also extend to economic diversification, clean energy adoption, and biodiversity conservation.

Strategy

To overcome these multifaceted challenges and achieve sustainable development, Punjab outlined a comprehensive strategy based on five principles: integrated planning, equitable development, human capital building, citizen-centric services, and green growth. The establishment of the SDGCC was central to this strategy, emphasizing coordination with stakeholders, capacity building, and the implementation of innovative solutions. The SDGCC focused on integrated planning, transparency, and a holistic government approach, addressing issues ranging from gender inequality to environmental sustainability.

Results and Partnerships

The SDGCC aimed to achieve specific results over the next three years, including building awareness, formulating action plans, localizing SDGs, and establishing plans for resource mobilization. Collaboration was seen to be key, and the SDGCC planned to forge partnerships with internal and external stakeholders, including the private sector. The expected results were increased awareness, well-defined action plans for departments, localized SDGs, resource mobilization through a Private Sector Platform, and robust monitoring mechanisms using digital solutions like the SDG Dashboard. The program aligned with strengthening institutions for SDG implementation and fostering partnerships with various stakeholders to ensure innovative and effective outcomes. This approach was to ensure that the state of Punjab moved progressively toward sustainable development, impacting the lives of its residents positively and fostering inclusive growth.

SDGCC Karnataka
Introduction

In consonance with the 2030 agenda for Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), the Government of Karnataka undertook the intricate process of SDG implementation. This strategic initiative addresses the state's pressing developmental challenges, necessitating specialized technical expertise. Noteworthy advancements in achieving the Millennium Development Goals underscored Karnataka's commitment. The establishment of the SDG Coordination Centre (SDGCC), in collaboration with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), marked a pivotal step towards a comprehensive, technologically-driven governance paradigm.

Development Challenge

Despite commendable progress in poverty reduction, Karnataka confronts persistent challenges aligned with the SDGs. The global pledge to "leave no one behind" requires nuanced approaches to poverty measurement beyond mere headcount ratios. The Multidimensional Poverty Index (MPI) reveals positive trajectories, yet a targeted, multidimensional strategy is imperative. SDGCC as a vehicle of acceleration identified the exigency for augmented capacities, innovative solutions, and a robust, interoperable data ecosystem. Prevailing challenges, including the lack of coordination mechanisms and fragmented efforts,

posed formidable impediments to SDG attainment. Challenges in the State of Karnataka compounded the complexity of the SDG implementation journey. Lingering issues of poverty and hunger persisted despite notable reductions. The state, while making concerted efforts, grappled with disparities, particularly in remote areas. Socioeconomic inequalities, inadequate infrastructure, and accessibility gaps exacerbate the challenge of ensuring that developmental benefits reach all sections of the population. Additionally, environmental sustainability concerns, urban-rural divides, and gender-related disparities formed intricate layers that demand targeted interventions. A critical assessment of these challenges became imperative for tailoring effective strategies that resonate with the unique socioeconomic landscape of Karnataka.

Strategy

SDGCC's strategic blueprint encompassed multifaceted dimensions, commencing with awareness augmentation, capacity reinforcement, and the facilitation of integrated development solutions. Central tenets included the formulation of comprehensive action plans, the localization of SDGs, and the deployment of cutting-edge technology for real-time monitoring. The focal point was to fortify institutional frameworks, instigate policy-level transformations, and champion transparent, participatory decision-making processes. The strategy extended to the mobilization of resources through dynamic partnerships, with a particular emphasis on private-sector collaboration and multilateral engagements. SDGCC underscored a paradigm shift in governance methodologies in harmony with the SDG mandate in Karnataka.

Results and Partnerships

Over the ensuing triennium, SDGCC envisioned heightened awareness, meticulously defined action plans, and localized SDGs for tangible impact. The strategy entailed the fortification of capacities pertaining to sectoral policies, mobilization, and the empowerment of public institutions. Critical outcomes included proactive engagement with diverse stakeholders, streamlined government operations, and elevated data proficiency. Strategic alliances with government entities, private enterprises, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), academic institutions, and media conglomerates were identified as pivotal. The establishment of a Private Sector Platform, active collaboration with multilateral agencies, and the development of advanced monitoring tools constituted the anticipated results. The success trajectory hinged on unwavering governmental commitment, efficacious partnerships, and the seamless transition of tools and expertise, ensuring the enduring sustainability of the initiative.

SDGCC Nagaland
Introduction

In line with India's unwavering commitment to the 2030 Agenda, Nagaland embarked on a journey, setting ambitious targets to realize the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) within the state. The inaugural workshop in November 2018, organized by the Government of Nagaland in collaboration with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), signaled the state's resolute dedication to the SDGs. A pivotal outcome was the establishment of the Sustainable Development Goals Coordination Centre (SDGCC) under the Planning & Coordination Department, solidifying the foundation for SDG implementation.

Development Challenge

Nagaland, characterized by its challenging hilly terrain, faced unique obstacles in achieving the SDGs. These challenges manifested in limited state-level budgets for capital expenditure, impacting critical areas such as healthcare, education, waste management, infrastructure, and industrial growth. While the state had made commendable progress in certain SDG aspects, as evidenced by NITI Aayog's SDG Index-2 2019, specific weaknesses persisted. Notable among these were health, education, economic growth, infrastructure, and sustainable urban development.

Strategy

To surmount these challenges and realise the ambitious SDG Vision 2030, Nagaland had strategically outlined its approach. Governance principles, including community partnership, integrated planning, equitable development, citizen-centric services, and human capital development, formed the bedrock of the strategy. The SDGCC, established under the Planning & Coordination Department in collaboration with UNDP, was to play a multifaceted role. Its strategic imperatives included aligning schemes with SDGs, developing detailed action plans, instituting internal monitoring systems, finalizing indicator frameworks, and localizing SDGs at the district and village levels. The strategy placed a strong emphasis on leveraging partnerships, effective communication, and resource mobilization to propel the state towards its ambitious targets.

Results and Partnerships

The SDGCC, positioned as a hub for capacity-building, knowledge dissemination, and strategic planning, actively contributed to achieving tangible results. The Centre aligns flagship schemes, state projects, and departments with specific SDG targets through participatory consultations. It facilitates the formulation of comprehensive strategies and action plans for each department, paving the way for integrated development solutions, policy changes, and digital governance innovations. The SDGCC establishes internal monitoring systems, ensuring the creation of review committees, and actively engages in finalizing state and district indicator frameworks for effective monitoring. Moreover, the Centre plays a crucial role in developing a communication strategy, aligning budgets with SDGs, and creating training manuals and knowledge products. It actively seeks partnerships, building awareness through innovative information, education, and communication initiatives. By localizing SDGs at the grassroots level, the SDGCC strives to make the ambitious SDG Vision 2030 a reality for the people of Nagaland.

SDGCC Uttarakhand or CPPGG Uttarakhand

Introduction

Uttarakhand, established in November 2000 by separating from Uttar Pradesh, strategically located on the Northern boundary of India, faces the challenge of achieving Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Diverse in geography, the state aspires for strategic utilization of its resources to emerge as a model for other states. The Department of Planning, designated for SDG implementation, sought technical support for effective resource utilization and goal achievement.

Development Challenge

Uttarakhand, characterized by its rapid economic growth since its inception, confronts a complex array of challenges that require strategic and targeted interventions. Despite registering an impressive growth rate, the state grapples with a persistent challenge of escalating unemployment rates, presenting a paradox in the face of economic prosperity. The increasing disparity in economic opportunities across districts underscores the need for a more inclusive development approach. While Uttarakhand boasts lower overall poverty levels compared to other states, the existence of pockets of acute poverty within its boundaries demands focused efforts. The uneven distribution of economic opportunities, particularly in districts such as Bageshwar, Champawat, Tehri Garhwal, and Almora, where per capita income is nearly half that of Dehradun and Haridwar, highlights the need for targeted policies to bridge these economic divides. Consumption inequality emerges as a pressing concern, revealing stark contrasts in living standards and access to resources. The concentration of economic activities in specific districts has contributed to a skewed pattern of development, requiring a nuanced strategy to ensure that growth is more evenly distributed across the state.

Furthermore, the economic growth, primarily propelled by non-farm sectors, has not translated into commensurate job creation. The state's overall job growth has been negative since 2005, signaling a need for comprehensive policies to stimulate employment opportunities, especially in the non-farm sectors. The phenomenon of people shifting away from farm jobs to other forms of work has implications for the overall employment landscape, necessitating a closer examination of job creation strategies in alignment with the state's economic trajectory. In addition to economic challenges, social disparities persist in Uttarakhand. While progress has been made in reducing poverty rates, certain social groups, notably the Scheduled Castes, face higher levels of open defecation and lower access to drinking water. Gender disparities in the workforce and education, especially in rural areas, further compound the challenge of achieving inclusive development.

The state's health and education sectors also present a mixed picture. While the infant mortality rate is declining, malnutrition remains a prevalent issue. Education indicators, though relatively high, have shown stagnation in recent times, necessitating a reevaluation of strategies to ensure sustained progress. Women in Uttarakhand face barriers to progress, evidenced by a declining child sex ratio and the withdrawal of women from the labor force, particularly in rural areas. In navigating these multifaceted challenges, Uttarakhand sought a comprehensive strategy that addresses economic disparities, unemployment, and social inequalities to foster sustainable and inclusive development across the state.

Strategy

The comprehensive strategy involves providing technical support to the Centre for Public Policy & Good Governance (CPPGG) to boost economic growth. Sectoral experts will be recruited and trained to formulate sector-wise strategy papers and implementable action plans. CPPGG's role spans policies for green growth, health, education, sustainable livelihoods, and infrastructure development.

Policy for Green Growth: This component focused on researching and preparing strategy papers addressing environmental challenges and climate change implications. Action plans were to be devised to achieve renewable energy objectives and maximize the potential of the tourism policy to promote tourism as a major source of employment and revenue generation.

Policy for Ensuring Good Health & Wellbeing: A vision plan, strategy papers, and action plans were to be prepared in consultation with the Health Department to revive the health sector. Emphasis was to be placed on complete health facility coverage in hilly districts and preventive healthcare measures.

Policy for Quality Education and Reduction of Inequalities: A strategy was aimed to be developed to enhance educational attainment and address gender disparities. This included industry-specific training, curriculum revisions, and creating education centers for holistic development.

Policy for Sustainable Livelihoods and Elimination of Poverty: This component was to translate existing policies for Skill Development & Entrepreneurship into action plans. The focus was on increasing employability, competitiveness, and inclusiveness, aiming to reduce unemployment rates and achieve Sustainable Development Goals.

Policy for Improving Connectivity, Infrastructure for Sustainable Rural & Urban Communities: A revamped SDG cell was envisioned to work on building awareness, local-level integration of SDG vision, and propose integrated development solutions. Technological tools were to be developed for monitoring and evaluating SDGs, ensuring progress in target achievement.

Results and Partnerships

The anticipated results encompassed equipping CPPGG and the Planning Department with sector specialists to drive economic growth policies. Vetted policies and sectoral growth boosters were envisioned

to be implemented based on expert advice. Training and workshops were to enhance the efficiency of state and district departments in planning and service delivery. The identification of issues in growth sectors and the formulation of implementable solutions by experts aimed to foster accelerated SDG progress. Improved awareness and ownership among stakeholders would expedite SDG implementation, with districts and Gram Panchayats localizing goals. Institutional mechanisms, policy changes, and concurrent monitoring would contribute to achieving SDG targets as outlined in the strategic plan.

Enhancing Outreach and SDG Integration at State level
Introduction

India witnessed significant economic growth and prosperity, yet pervasive challenges persisted, marked by extreme poverty, inequality, and exclusion, particularly in areas such as under-nutrition, maternal and child health, and food security. Rural areas bore the brunt, hosting 80% of the poor, with seven 'low-income' states, encompassing 45% of the population and home to 62% of the impoverished. In 2015, India's Gini coefficient reached 33.6%, and the 2016 Human Development Index ranked the country 131 out of 188 nations. Responding to rising inequalities and aiming to address unemployment and jobless growth, the Government of India initiated a series of national programs, legislations, and financing endeavors under the banner "together with all, development for all," spanning initiatives like skilling India, housing construction for 10 million poor, Clean India, Make in India, Digital India, and innovation through start-up India. From 2013 to 2017, UNDP's contributions aligned with the government's development vision, resulting in improved access to national programs, enhanced livelihoods, skills-building for women, and innovative partnerships, particularly benefiting women and children through strengthened public service delivery at the 'last mile.'

However, the implementation of these missions and programs encountered challenges. A persistent skill gap and mismatch between skilled labor supply and demand, a lack of systematic analysis on the value chain, and ineffective channels in service delivery created a gap in understanding how to include those at the bottom of the pyramid. Inadequate capacities and policies at the state level delayed program implementation, impacting service delivery, especially at the last mile. Additionally, insufficient policy frameworks and capacities missed opportunities to link natural resources management with sustainable livelihoods.

UNDP's country program theory of change, firmly anchored in mid-term reviews and country program action plan evaluations, identified critical factors. System strengthening within institutions was deemed essential for delivering 'last mile' development impact, and integrated development solutions were recognized for yielding high-quality outcomes interconnected with Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) achievement. The theory highlighted the integral role of innovation for every successful intervention and emphasized the importance of partnerships with the private sector to achieve development goals.

Under the new Country Programme framework (2018-22), UNDP focused on institutional and system strengthening, inclusive growth, and energy, environment, and resilience. Building on the theory of change from the CPAP evaluation, the project aimed to support the government and local institutions by extending assistance in the system strengthening of national institutions, missions, and programs, including enhancing UNDP outreach in the most backward identified states by establishing state offices. The five-year cycle primarily prioritized implementation support for SDGs and expanding outreach for strengthening state capacities.

Building on the observation from the CPAP evaluation that "systems strengthening is the single most important innovation to achieve last mile impact," UNDP leveraged its comparative advantage to expand its systems strengthening expertise into national institutions, missions, and programs. This encompassed planning, budgeting, coordination, and monitoring at all levels, with a focus on implementation and

convergence assistance in districts and panchayats. The strategic partnerships plan with state governments aimed at integrating SDGs into state plans and policies, supporting real-time data gathering for decision-making processes. At the national level, the focus was on integrated planning, SDG communications, localization, M&E (SDG State Index and SDG Dashboard), and partnerships with the private sector and foundations. State-level support included preparing integrated visions, strategies, and action plans, awareness generation, capacity building, SDG localization, M&E tools and manuals, SDG district Index and dashboards, and ensuring partnerships with the private sector and foundations. At the district level, the priority was aligning SDGs with district plans, integrating the GPDP plan, and strengthening data collection and monitoring capacity in collaboration with district collectors.

In a significant organizational shift, UNDP in India underwent internal reorganization, transitioning to an integrated, collaborative business model. Acknowledging the vast population, uneven development, and geographical diversity of the country, coupled with its federal structure, UNDP embraced an empowered and decentralized field office structure. Recognizing the imperative to strengthen state-level programming, UNDP embarked on a staged decentralization effort, initially focusing on five state offices: North-East, Madhya Pradesh, Haryana, Odisha, and Uttarakhand, with Bihar to follow later. The intention was to subsequently expand to additional priority states when deemed appropriate. UNDP continued its highly effective modality of embedding strategic advisors within national and state institutions. This approach aimed to develop and transfer critical capacities in policy analysis, program management, implementation, and monitoring through some of the leading development and social protection missions of the Government. The strategy sought to improve institutional and program responsiveness, enhance synergies, effectiveness, accountability, and targeting, thereby improving access among marginalized and difficult-to-reach populations. This approach was designed to contribute to overall performance and citizen satisfaction, ensuring strong national ownership and sustainability.

Development Challenge

India has played a significant role in shaping global political and economic outcomes, with its national contribution to global economic growth doubling over the past two decades. Its share in world GDP increased to an average of 7% in 2014-2015. During this period, incomes expanded, poverty decreased, and the capabilities of its people improved, lifting 133 million out of poverty from 1994 to 2012. Despite these advancements, around 270 million people still lived in poverty, with rural areas housing 80% of the poor in seven low-income states.

The government remained committed to poverty eradication, emphasizing its importance as "the greatest unfinished business of the 20th century." Addressing poverty, inequality, and jobless growth in India was crucial for the global achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). To accelerate government program implementation, states and local governance institutions received support for systems strengthening, enhancing service delivery, particularly at the last mile. Innovative participatory mechanisms were deemed necessary to engage citizens, especially women and vulnerable groups, in co-creating and collaborating in development.

Recognizing the centrality of the SDGs, the government prioritized their implementation. States and local governance institutions played a crucial role in this effort, receiving support for aligning their plans and policies with SDGs. The focus extended to integrated planning, SDG communications, localization, monitoring and evaluation tools, and fostering partnerships with the private sector and foundations. The approach aimed to strengthen capacities at all levels and ensure the goals' alignment with district plans, emphasizing inclusivity and sustainability.

Strategy

Over the past decade, UNDP leveraged its extensive experience to enhance human development and governance at the state and district levels, serving as a key factor in upcoming efforts towards realizing the SDGs. UNDP played a pivotal role in establishing SDG Coordination Centers in states, aligning SDG goals with state planning, and fostering a real-time monitoring mechanism. This strategic approach aimed at outcomes crucial to the common populace, aligning with the Transforming Aspirational Districts program initiated by the Government of India.

Recognizing the importance of robust monitoring mechanisms, particularly in aspirational districts, UNDP focused on technical support for SDG Coordination Centers, Project Management Units (PMUs) in aspirational districts, and the formation of advisory committees involving various stakeholders. Collaboration with NITI Aayog's PMU for aspirational districts was instrumental in providing technical assistance to state departments and ministries.

Key strategies included drafting state vision plans and SDG-specific strategies, integrating SDG goals into ministries/departments' planning, localizing SDGs through ongoing schemes, and ensuring last-mile delivery by supporting district collectors and block Panchayats. UNDP facilitated the alignment of state budgets and output-outcome budgets with SDGs, while also supporting knowledge management, innovation, behavioral change communications, and capacity development for elected representatives.

In terms of monitoring and evaluation, UNDP launched comprehensive tools at the district level for data collection using ICT tools, ensuring continuous monitoring and data verification. The agency played a vital role in integrating district-level data at the state level, creating SDG indices, and developing a state-level dashboard. To address traditional implementation challenges, UNDP proposed setting up innovation labs in states and forming partnerships with the private sector, civil society, and foundations for resource mobilization. Capacity development initiatives for elected representatives on SDGs were also undertaken.

A notable initiative involved technical support for the creation of a nationalized MPI Index for NITI Aayog in collaboration with the Oxford Poverty and Human Development Initiative (OPHI). In extending its outreach, UNDP engaged with state governments on a demand-based approach. Institutionalizing state offices in five states, UNDP planned to expand its support to a total of ten states in two phases. This involved the recruitment of human resources, identification of needs and capacity gaps in government program delivery, and the development of partnership-based programmatic solutions, all aligned with the principles of the SDGs.

Results and Partnerships

The project, spanning across various states, aimed to provide technical support with a focus on system and institutional strengthening at the state and district levels to support the national programs of the Government of India. The anticipated outcomes included improved target achievements through the provision of technical assistance for the implementation and monitoring of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) at the state/district level. The project aimed to establish critical mass and credibility with state counterparts, augmenting programming through partnerships and funding from state governments and other partners. Concurrently, it sought to strengthen monitoring mechanisms for key flagship programs and schemes and develop innovative tools and strategies to catalyze service delivery. To achieve these goals, the project acted as a catalyst in forging partnerships with the government, private sector, and multilaterals/bilaterals to develop large-scale projects. UNDP provided high-quality technical assistance and implementation support to state governments, expanding its outreach primarily in aspirational districts. Over a six-year period, the project estimated a need for US$3.71 million in UNDP Core Funds. The project leveraged previous work under the CPAP 2013–2017 to strengthen partnerships with ministries/departments at both national and state levels, focusing on aspirational districts. UNDP, in alignment with its mandate to provide technical assistance to the Government of India for monitoring progress toward SDGs by 2030, also

developed partnerships with the private sector, multilateral/bilateral organizations, civil society organizations (CSOs), and community-based organizations (CBOs). Closer collaboration and synergies were fostered with other UN agencies such as UNICEF, WHO, UNFPA, UNAIDS, at both national and state levels, supporting the UN Sustainable Development Framework (UNSDF) outcomes. Potential risks and assumptions, including changes in bureaucracy, retention of high-quality human resources, and lack of interest from the private sector, were addressed in the risk management matrix provided in the document annex. Key stakeholders included state governments, district administrations, NITI Aayog, Ministry of Statistics & Programme Implementation (MoSPI), and other central ministries. The project focused on being demand-driven, responding to the needs of states and aspirational districts identified by the Government of India. South-South and Triangular Cooperation (SSC/TrC) opportunities were recognized, with the project's products considered scalable to other South Asian countries due to shared geographical, cultural, and democratic outlooks. As part of the project, an SDG Planning and Analytics tool was developed to serve as a decision support system for the government in implementing the SDG Agenda. In terms of sustainability and scaling up, the project supported state and district governments in localizing and integrating SDGs into their planning. Initially targeting five states, the project aimed to scale up successful practices to other states in India. The online tool developed under the project was intended to be handed over to the government and concerned departments, ensuring the sustainability of the product created by the project.

Technical Support to Tamil Nadu Government to Establish Sustainable Development Goals Coordination Centre

Introduction

In view of India's commitment to the 2030 Agenda, Tamil Nadu too has set ambitious targets for achieving the SDGs in the state. The state has consistently maintained its high rank (2nd) in the India SDG Index. The state was in the process of designing its Vision 2030 document that would help identify and prioritize areas that require immediate attention, seek out stakeholders and partners from the civil society and private sector, as well as streamline and redistribute resources to achieve results faster and more efficiently. To support the Government of Tamil Nadu in adopting the Vision 2030 document, and to offer technical and knowledge support to arrive at innovative solutions to achieve sustainable development, the state government, in partnership with UNDP, decided to establish an SDG Coordination Centre (SDGCC) under the Planning and Development Department, Government of Tamil Nadu (GoTN). SDGCC Tamil Nadu acts as a think tank, knowledge centre for providing high quality, cutting-edge policy and integrated advisory services to the State departments to accelerate economic, social and environmental goals. The SDGCC supports the government in its efforts to deliver public services in a time-bound manner to the people, focusing on the population groups living in marginalized conditions. The SDGCC is supporting GoTN in its efforts by prioritising specific policy areas and is helping build capacity within the GoTN to monitor and evaluate the delivery of public services in a time-bound manner to its people. The SDGCC has the following focus areas:

i)   Policy Landscape Analysis and Gap Identification
ii)   Data Analytics and embedding OOMF into each line department's ways of functioning
iii)   Engaging with line departments to bring in the necessary revisions
iv)   Monitoring and Evaluation of projects across departments in order to achieve the intended goals, KPI's and SDG metrics.

Development Challenge

Tamil Nadu, according to NITI Aayog's 2020 Sustainable Development Goals 3.0 assessment, holds the second position among Indian states, showcasing commendable socio-economic indicators. Despite this, the state grapples with challenges in gender equality and climate change mitigation. Notably, the prevalence

of anaemia persists among women, with 53.4% affected, and childhood anaemia has increased from 50.7% to 57.4% in children aged 6-59 months. Educational disparities emerge during high school years, with a substantial drop in attendance for both boys and girls. Gender-based violence remains a concern, affecting 41% of women aged 18-49. Additionally, the state faces governance challenges, reflected in the lowest score for Commerce and Industry in the Good Governance Index 2021. Addressing these issues requires targeted interventions, especially in SDG 14 (Life Below Water), where Tamil Nadu ranks lowest among coastal states. While Tamil Nadu excels in various socio-development indicators, challenges persist, emphasizing the need for tailored solutions. Collaboration and coordination among government departments and key stakeholders are vital to address disparities and foster inclusive development, recognizing the diversity of citizen needs. Prioritizing the engagement of women and vulnerable groups, leveraging their knowledge for climate change adaptation, and strengthening governance in critical sectors are key recognized as key imperatives for advancing sustainable development in the state.

Results and Partnerships

As one of the newer SDGCCs and tailor made to the development needs of Tamil Nadu, the centre will focus on the thematic areas of sustainable transport and mobility, skills, labor and employment with an integrated gender approach, across the following pillars:

A. Data analysis, Monitoring and Evaluation

B. Policy Analysis and Capacity Development

C. Knowledge Management

D. Communication

E. Partnerships

3. Evaluation Scope and Objectives

The evaluation scope includes UNDP-established SDGCCs in the six states, as well as UNDP CO's support to NITI Aayog and MoSPI, and the consequent support to state teams. Collectively, the evaluation assesses therefore the UNSDGCC portfolio – running from 2018 and ongoing. Specifically, the programs/ components evaluated include:

- Establish SDG Coordination Centre for Facilitating Implementation of Haryana SDG Vision 2030 (SDGCC Haryana) – Award ID: 00110391
- Establish SDG Coordination Centre for facilitating implementation of Punjab SDG Vision 2030 (SDGCC Punjab) – Award ID: 00110391
- Sustainable Development Goals Coordination Centre (SDGCC), Karnataka – Award ID: 00121477
- SDG Coordination Centre (SDGCC) in Nagaland – Award ID: 00119967
- Technical Support to Centre for Public Policy & Good Governance (CPPGG) in accelerating Economic Growth and Fast-tracking SDGs in Uttarakhand Development project (phase 1) – Award ID: 00110393
- Technical Support to Tamil Nadu Government to Establish Sustainable Development Goals Coordination Centre – Award ID: 00142712
- Enhancing Outreach and SDG Integration at State Level – Award ID: 00105286

The portfolio including its state-level programs have begun at different points in times, meaning they are at different intervention junctures – some completed and going on to the second phase, others nascent. Out of six SDGCC projects to be assessed under this evaluation, two are ongoing, the other two are under extension, and the remaining two were closed. Therefore, the limitation of this evaluation is changeability

and lack of complete information (because they are at mid-term) for the four projects which are either ongoing or under extension.

The evaluation is partly formative, and partly summative, given different components which are at different junctures of intervention, lending themselves to varied nature of evidence type. Notably, the evaluand is the portfolio, and not a given state program or a component. Therefore, it is important to note that the evaluation subject has been the overall UNDP India support to SDG localization (starting 2018--) inclusive of all the components mentioned above, aimed for the primary audience to take away key learnings, and make evidence-based course corrections for the *portfolio as a whole*.

Evidence generation at the strategic portfolio level and forward-looking ideation is one of the key features of the evaluation. Assessing specific and detailed state-level performance is not the express goal of the evaluation.

4. Evaluation Approach and Methods

The evaluation deployed a consultative approach to gather findings, with tiered engagement with key stakeholders at the UNDP CO, UNDP State, GoI /Central, and state government levels.

The key data sources and lines of evidences for the evaluation were:

— Desk review of programmatic documents including Program Documents (ProDocs), Annual Progress Reports (APR), Annual Work Plans (AWPs), and reports brought out through the UNDP supported activities.
— Contextual information through secondary review – to situate findings within the operating context and includes data sources such as NITI Aayog reports, and other GoI SDG decisions referenced in official communique (PIB), and media reports.
— Other secondary review of documents that includes past UNDP evaluations and reports that are relevant to the portfolio.
   o *Detailed list of material desk-reviewed is in Annex 1*
— Primary data gathering by way of key informant interviews (KIIs) with: UNDP CO, UNDP State Units in Nagaland, Haryana, Karnataka, Tamil Nadu, and Uttarakhand, Government of India (NITI Aayog), and State Government counterparts in the states of Nagaland, Haryana, and Uttarakhand. All respondents were senior-level officials, including senior bureaucrats in the case of government counterparts, and State Heads in the case of UNDP.
   o *The detailed list of interviewees is in Annex 2*

The lines of evidences provide distinct strengths to the methodology. Desk review provided not only understanding of the portfolio and its processes, activities, progress, outputs, and potential outcomes, but also acted as information aid during interviews. The document review also provided secondary understanding of the implementation challenges.

KIIs offered in-depth, first-hand know-how on both contextual issues, implementation nuances that are not captured in documents, and perspectives on design and activities of the programme; and barriers and enablers for success. KIIs with government counterparts offered insights on similar issues, from a different perspective. Secondary review of secondary documents provided critical information on the operating context, within which findings were situated, as well as served for external triangulation of information.

The evaluation used the OECD DAC criteria in particular – relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, and sustainability – to make a thematic assessment of the evaluand. These criteria provided an analytical framework and offered measurable evaluation questions that were answered through a combination of data

sources, duly triangulated to enhance reliability of findings. The evaluation questions (EQs) are in the box below, and the _detailed evaluation matrix is in Annex 3_:

Relevance
— To what extent is the SDGCC portfolio responsive to national policies and strategies – and to those of the states – on SDG localization, and more generally SDG achievement?
— To what extent does the SDGCC portfolio contribute to the UNDP India's CPD 2023-27, particularly to the linked CPD Output, Strategic Plan Outcome, UNSDCF Outcome, National Goal?
— What was UNDP strategic and distinct value-add to SDG localization efforts?

Efficiency
— What synergies with GoI, states, development partners, CSOs and private sector were explored through the SDGCC portfolio?
— Was coordination among various (UN) stakeholders in the SDG localization through SDGCCs efficient in project implementation?
— How did the portfolio coordinate internally within UNDP to leverage existing technical resources, knowledge, UNDP presence, and staff?
— How did the portfolio access and leverage available UNDP global expertise on institutional strengthening?

Effectiveness
— What was the extent of contributions of SDGCCs towards advancing SDG localization in India with particular focus on SDG5?
— Did institutional capacity for – and awareness about – tracking and achieving SDGs at the central/ state government level increase due to the SDGCC portfolio? And at the district and community levels? In other words, were institutions strengthened by the portfolio?
— Is there enhanced buy-in and ownership of evidence-backed approach to SDG M&E and implementation within the GoI and state government apparatuses?
— What are examples of success of the portfolio? What are examples of untapped opportunities, challenges, or failures? What can be learnt from these examples?
— What have been the key barriers and challenges to achieving desired outcomes?
— What are the key instances of states moving from (or using) data & advocacy to plan (or implement) action on SDGs – due to the SDGCC portfolio?
— Is there a clear and visible pathway of results linking project activities and its outputs to desired outcomes?

Sustainability
— What is the extent to which SDGCCs can carry on with all its functions (as on date) at national and subnational authorities, local communities, and civil society in improving service delivery – without UNDP support?
— What is the extent to which the portfolio has put in mechanisms or partnerships that can scale the work in the medium to long term?
— To what extent are GoI and State Governments representatives capacitated and sensitised – compared to before – in a way that they can plan to take the work on SDG localisation, and an evidence-backed SDG achievement plan forward?
— What lessons, best practices, and innovations have been generated by the SDGCC portfolio that can be replicated (across states) or institutionalised beyond the immediate mandate of the program?

Gender Equality, Human Rights, and Leave No One Behind (LNOB)
— Do the projects align with the UNDP LNOB principle and Gender Equality Strategy?
— Have the projects successfully demonstrated that SDG 5 is a cross cutting thematic for localization of SDGs?
— Were the projects successfully engaged with communities living in vulnerable conditions including women, persons with disabilities, indigenous populations, transgender, and non-binary persons etc.?
— Were the projects effective in responding to relevant needs of those living in marginalized conditions?
— What are successes and challenges related to GEWE and LNOB from the SDGCCs?

5. Ethical Considerations:

Evaluation commissioners, evaluation managers, and evaluators are joint custodians of evaluation ethics. The below steps identify key ethical considerations followed by the evaluator.

- Informed consent was secured prior to all interviews, and respondents were informed that both participation in the first place, and answering any questions were strictly voluntary – meaning they had the right to not answer any question or exit at any time. Respondents were informed that anonymity will be assured and that quotes will never be attributed, allowing them to freely express themselves.
- Interview notes were secured safely and not discussed with any UNDP staff. With qualitative data, response patterns can often be inherently identifying thereby breaching the confidentiality code. As such, where applicable in the reporting, special care was taken not to divulge even partial identities (such as organization name or geographical coordinates of the respondent).
- UNEG ethical guidelines of integrity, accountability, respect, and beneficence were always followed. Evaluation purpose was truthfully and transparently communicated, and the principle of evaluation independence was adhered to. It is advised that access to the evaluation report is made available to all participating stakeholders irrespective of power, and is preferably published online for transparency.
- According to UNEG, qualifications, expertise and experience of the evaluator are among key factors contributing to ensuring evaluation integrity. *The evaluator background information can be found in Annex 4.* The evaluator also signed the *UNDP Pledge of Ethical Conduct in Evaluation*, *attached as Annex 8.*.

6. Evaluation Limitations

- Timeline and budget:
  - The evaluation report was produced within a very tight schedule / timeline (~32 calendar days), warranting evaluation steps to be compressed and rapid, rather than exhaustive and extensive. The first set of documents were shared on 9 November, the kick-off call was scheduled on 13 November, and the evaluation IC agreement was signed on 20 November. The documents were reviewed quickly within a span of 7 days. The interviews were conducted in rapid succession within a span of another 7 days (covering 13 key informants, including UNDP CO staff). This left about two weeks (measured in calendar days) for the analysis and first draft of the evaluation report to be ready by 12 December, 2023.
  - The evaluation budget availability was also limited, requiring data gathering to be nearly 100% virtual. The same was also necessitated by lack of time. The evaluation still managed to interview all key informants whose perspectives were critical to get to findings, and undertook a thematic qualitative analysis under the overarching DAC framework.
  - In terms of desk review, the volume of documents reviewable in such a short time was much less than ideal, but key documents were prioritised for desk review.
- Nearly 100% virtual:
  - No field visits were possible due to lack of time and budget. Ideally, for a portfolio like this, visits to the SDGCCs and detailed interactions with the entire team would have the potential to unearth richer findings. It would also allow for first-hand observations of the functioning of SDGCCs' embedded within government departments. Only one in-person interview was undertaken in New Delhi, which is the consultant's home base location.
  - The evaluation carries standard limitations that apply to a virtual /remote evaluation schedule.

- Stakeholder selection:
  - The participation of stakeholders /respondents in the KIIs was guided by UNDP. Snowballing was not attempted, given paucity of time. Findings may be subject to respondent 'selection bias' – a stated limitation of the evaluation.
  - Perspectives and voices from civil society and the private sector as well as other UN agencies were not captured directly due to limited time apportioned for data gathering. Roughly approximated, around a quarter of data collection is pending at the time of drafting the evaluation report.
  - Tentatively, this is planned to be undertaken in a second phase where a select set of non-government stakeholders will be additionally consulted, and a final evaluation report will be produced, integrating these perspectives into the findings. As such, some findings that follow may be revised or adjusted in the next version of the report, in light of additional information gathered, as needed.

7. Data Analysis

The analysis was done rapidly within a span of about 5 working days. The bulk of the analytical time was spent trying to answer the important evaluation questions within the DAC framework. Given the complexity of the SDGCC portfolio and the systemic nature of its interventions, the evaluation relied on qualitative data and a qualitative analytical framework.

Deriving from techniques in qualitative content and thematic analysis, interview notes were carefully parsed and combed to let themes emerge from the interviews. However, recurrent themes and patterns, and their variations were both considered important details to craft findings, given the complexity of the portfolio, and the state-wise divergences.

The analysis was driven by a templatized version of the DAC framework within which data was populated, and emergent themes were color-coded to allow for quick identification of groupings of findings. Given the complex and multifaceted nature of the SDGCC programming and the heterogeneity of experiences, ranges of answers to the EQs, rather than consistent concurrence, was a key understandable feature of the analysis. In other words, in addition to thematic saturation during qualitative analysis, due attention was accorded to divergences in perspectives in order for the full range of voices to emerge. This was particularly important since the evaluand was a portfolio of six separate projects, each with their own institutional bearings and operating contexts.

Triangulation of data was operationalized in the following ways: first, methodological triangulation across multiple lines of evidence which includes KIIs, desk review of program documents, and secondary data sources; second, data was triangulated amongst various respondents (i.e., 'within-methods' triangulation) to ensure internal validity. Triangulation ensured depth of finding, while enhancing reliability of the evidence collated.

The timeline did not allow for a findings' validation or ground-truthing session, nor was there sufficient time to get clarifying details from respondents during the course of the analysis.

8. Evaluation Findings

RELEVANCE

UNDP's support to Government of India under the Enhancing Outreach and SDG Integration at State Level supports the NITI Aayog and MoSPI federally and the UNDP state teams. The UNDP State teams meanwhile implement the SDGCCs at the state level in six states, namely: Nagaland, Uttarakhand, Tamil Nadu, Karnataka, Haryana and Punjab. Collectively this UNDP package of intervention is referred to hereafter as the "SDGCC portfolio."

The portfolio in its multi-tiered approach was found well responsive to national and state government priorities, and activity designs were finalized in close consultations with NITI Aayog and state governments. The portfolio was responsive to a rapidly evolving national policy attention on Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and an intent to make progress on SDGs. The changing high-level directive was indicated in 2017 by the Prime Minister's Office (PMO) when it issued two office memorandums designating NITI Aayog as the nodal agency nationally for SDGs – the first time that high-level policy attention to SDGs was clearly discernible in the policy dispensation.

When a distinct need for external technical know-how was felt within NITI Aayog, UNDP was the partner of choice given their global portfolio of work – and reputation in – the area of SDGs and human development. UNDP's nature of work spanning verticals (rather than 'skewed' specialized knowledge in one theme) augured well for the holistic and integrated approach that work on SDGs merited. Further, KIIs reveal that UNDP's international knowledge repositories, its specific focus on 'governance' as an all-encompassing theme, and its presence within India in multiple states all added up to its strengths and overall strategic value proposition. UNDP was quick to be able to mobilize state units in response to activate the SDGCCs.

Given that a key focus initially was for NITI Aayog to produce the SDG index with an explicit intent to rank states based on data on SDG progress (i.e., an as-is assessment) – an effort undertaken for the very first time – the reputation, integrity, and acceptance of UNDP across all tiers of government stakeholders were notable attributes that enabled the portfolio to drive impactful work.

For the state SDGCCs, KIIs confirm that prior relationships with planning departments, deep understanding of the government machinery including budgeting processes, technical expertise, and 'brand' trust were key factors that enabled successful relationships with government counterparts. On the other hand, as the SDGCCs expanded across states, the portfolio was able to leverage a virtuous cycle set in motion by its initial relationship with NITI Aayog (a body known to be closely working with the PMO, thus enhancing both credibility and authority to the 'federal' process). UNDP-NITI Aayog would by then have hosted rounds of workshops with multiple states across India introducing to them the concept of SDGs, the goals, the indicators, and the measurement protocols, ensuring their buy-in at the highest political levels. In many cases, Chief Ministers would take direct interest in the process given the high visibility of the UNDP-NITI Aayog SDG ranking of states.

Similarly, in its state portfolios, SDGCCs have responded well to specific demands for capacity building and awareness generation on SDGs at the state level – right from senior bureaucrats to mid-level officials and staff. In other words, the awareness generation and positive buzz around SDGs and the SDG index culminated in genuine interest within states – one that the SDGCC portfolio in states was able to capitalize on and create responsive state-specific programs and work plans.

Importantly, the SDGCC portfolio in its varying approaches to SDG localization take care of state-specific developmental needs, and recognize the (significant) variances in the development trajectories of the states – responding differently to each state, both in modality and in substantive content of activities.

Finally, the thematic relevance of SDGs was very much implied given that some, most or all of the 17 SDGs – which represent a globally subscribed collection of interlinked and holistic developmental objectives – were already policy priorities for state governments – except that they were not seen through the lens of SDGs. In other words, the thematic relevance of the portfolio was not difficult to establish, but it was the SDG orientation, and the reform in governance style that was newly introduced to the states.

Overall, the SDGCCs portfolio is evidenced to strongly support the national priority of SDG localization by working closely with national and subnational government and GoI institutions – as envisaged in the UNDP Country Program Document (CPD) 2023-27.

EFFICIENCY

Internal coordination, collaborations, and cross-learning: Regular and robust coordination with the UNDP India CO in Delhi has been efficient and has resulted smooth implementation of the SDGCC plans. There is limited evidence however to suggest that SDGCCs have been able to tap efficiently into innovative problem-solving and innovative finance offerings available within UNDP CO through its Accelerator Lab (A-Lab) and SDG Finance Team[1], or the SDG Finance Facility. Likewise, SDGCCs do not report leveraging institutional knowledge potentially available with the UNDP India Policy Unit, which works on a range of SDG-linked themes, as well as on digital disruption and green economy. One respondent said UNDP was not well-equipped to offer expertise on innovative SDG finance and private resource mobilization. There is an opportunity for the SDGCC portfolio to appraise institutional expertise within the UNDP CO and request assistance as needed. A case can also be made for greater outreach by relevant UNDP CO advisors/ teams to states where UNDP operates SDGCCs – to preempt needs. There are efficiency gains to be had through such interactions not just by way of using available technical knowledge 'outputs,' but also by availing practitioner knowledge implicit in these verticals.

Overall, the question of whether an organization-wide enabling mechanism is available for the SDGCCs portfolio to tap into CO knowledge is a separate subject, and outside the scope of this evaluation. However, the UNDP India Independent Country Program Evaluation (ICPE) in 2022 found that "disconnects between CO units as well as national projects and state offices have created a siloed approach, impeding the states from freely accessing knowledge, experience and expertise."

To keep at bay the possibility that state SDGCCs are 'reinventing the wheel' robust mechanisms to promote continual cross-learning and exchange may be helpful. The lack of an institutional platform for SDGCCs (and non-SDGCC states) to convene at an agreed frequency to share learnings and practices may limit collaboration of a kind that the portfolio is otherwise germane to. The need for a dedicated platform, and more networking between SDGCCs, was felt and articulated by interview respondents. However, efforts are being made in this direction, including a quarterly virtual call for SDGCCs that is already instituted, and ongoing attempts to launch an annual SDG conclave.

Cross-learning and networking *between* the SDGCCs is evidenced, but its practice can be strengthened. There have been useful events, visits, and opportunities for SDGCCs to connect, showcase, and learn from each other, although these have been fewer in number than desirable. Ad-hoc communication between SDGCCs have also occurred, allowing for cross-pollination, and networking. For example, Karnataka's model of resource mobilization through the Akanksha CSR matching platform has been shared with other SDGCCs, and meetings have happened to explore ways to replicate the model. Visits have been organized to Haryana/Punjab SDGCC to showcase its work on SDG budgeting. Reports that showcase good practices of other states are also available to state SDGCCs. There is an opportunity to concretize avenues for cross-learning.

UNDP and broader UN coordination and collaboration: Importantly, some respondents felt that the SDGCCs portfolio has not been able to access UNDP's global/ international knowledge base on SDGs. This is a missed opportunity, not only because of underuse of easily obtainable global know-how on SDGs and governance, but also because international SDG reputation and knowledge was in the first place a notable factor driving UNDP's strategic and unique value addition to the India SDGCC portfolio – in both the Centre and states. At the level of the UNDP-NITI Aayog partnership however, the international perspectives on SDGs, the UNDP collaboration with the Oxford Policy and Human Development Initiative (OPHI), and the

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[1] It is worth noting that the India CO SDG Finance team itself is currently under-staffed, and expansion is underway.

global good practice methodological expertise for the National SDG Index – all brought on by UNDP – is viewed as a success.

Some state SDGCCs have coordinated well with other UN agencies /funds who have the specialized subject matter knowledge. For example, SDGCCs have collaborated with UN Women for its work on gender budgeting in two states (Uttarakhand and Haryana, with more states planning the same), and with UNICEF YuWaah to explore collaborations on youth skilling and livelihoods (e.g., Haryana). All SDGCCs report tapping into specialized UN agency knowledge as and when necessary. For purposes of events, the SDGCCs have also been able to connect to other UN agencies such as FAO, UNEP and the UNRC, bringing participation of expert speakers from these agencies, and enabling knowledge sharing.

Resourcing, partnerships, program management, and M&E: UNDP's model of resourcing within SDGCCs has also been efficient. The use of core technical resources in the state (a TL, experts, Ras) which operates as the 'hub' – connecting to 'spokes' (that might include making connections with other organizations, or using individuals' expertise as independent contractors, as needed) is fit-for-purpose and efficient for a portfolio that is interdisciplinary and covers the entire gamut of SDGs.

Feedback on quality of technical resources provided by UNDP both at the SDGCC level in states, as well as those seconded within NITI Aayog, as part of the partnerships is very positive across the board. This lends credibility and allows efficient functioning within legacy bureaucratic systems where both relationships and technical capabilities count.

In a similar vein, the embedded approach of the portfolio has also proven efficient for delivery of complex reforms. The co-location of SDGCCs within state government's planning departments as a carved-out entity or even as a unit or cell helps develop rapport and relationships with critical government counterpart stakeholders at various levels which allow a coordinated approach to tasks within the ambit of the SDGCC portfolio. The combination of UNDP state units' close working relationships with state government counterparts, and high-quality technical resources deployed in states together represent a potent combination of factors leading to efficient functioning of the SDGCC portfolio. The embedded partnerships with government at various levels are also in alignment with the CPD 2023-37 which outlines government partnerships as a core strategy intent.

The program's monitoring and evaluation (M&E) is adequate to capture routine progress on outputs as envisaged in the Results Framework, as well as contributions to planned outcomes. The annual progress reports (APRs) are comprehensive in their reporting processes, both in terms of numbers and narrative at the state level in each of the six SDGCC projects. The annual work planning (AWPs) also demonstrates significant attention to detail, and is well planned, against available yearly financial budgets. However, given the complexity of the portfolio and the varied systemic changes that it seeks to effect, there is limited use of innovative M&E methods (such as outcome harvesting) to fully capture the breadth and depth of potential outcomes that the portfolio might be contributing to. As such, the M&E while it is compliant to standard needs of UNDP programming, may be improved to account for portfolio complexity. The portfolio is germane to the adoption of complexity-aware monitoring techniques, and a related recommendation is made at the end of the report.

External partnerships, including private sector partnerships, and multi-stakeholder approaches: UNDP's approach to move from a whole-of-government to whole-of-society approach is also evidenced, and starting to bear fruits – albeit more needs to be done to pronounce success. Its work with the private sector includes convening-related events, as well as more advanced models of tangible collaboration. For example, almost all SDGCCs have organized SDG events inviting the participation of CSOs (more commonly), but also the private sector. However, it has yet to leverage fully the range of technical, technological, and infrastructural capabilities available within the private sector to move the needle on PPPs for SDGs. There is near-

consensus view that this is one area where SDGCCs will need to accord more importance to going forward. While there have been dialogues initiated in that direction, it is only Karnataka SDGCC which has a working model in place to show for collaboration with the private sector through the Aknaksha portal, which matches CSR funds with areas of program support envisaged by the government. At the same time, the role of private sector and their contribution to SDGs needs to be seen from beyond the lens of 'funding' alone to encompass complementary capabilities that can be harnessed. The CPD 2023-27 rightly points out UNDP's comparative advantages in mobilizing whole-of-society partnerships including private sector to identify innovative solutions. As on date, this is an area that the SDGCCs portfolio has achieved limited progress on.

Related, government counterparts both centrally and in states, point out that UNDP's convening power, and breadth of networks are to a certain degree underutilized under the SDGCC portfolio. There is an appetite for more linkages with experts, organizations, and networks (national and international) as well as for exposure visits to serve as avenues for practical learning and knowledge sharing on SDGs, and to explore collaboration opportunities as appropriate. In other words, the unique convening power that a UNDP-run SDGCC portfolio can leverage to provide platforms and exposure is not exploited to its full efficiency.

SDGCCs have done well to showcase solutions to SDGs cutting across all tiers of society (from individuals to private sector to CSOs/NGOs) thus bringing to the fore the importance of multiple actors coming together to make progress on SDGs. This is christened differently in different states – ranging from SDG Goalkeepers to SDG Action Awards. One SDGCC (Nagaland) has taken it further along impressively by launching a call for innovative solutions, and funding scale-up of 'action research' projects. Further, it will recommend states and district authorities to scale up other projects which demonstrate value and innovation. More SDGCCs will need to step up to create wider multi-stakeholder/ collaborative impact of the kinds that an initiative like this can set off.

EFFECTIVENESS

The UNDP SDGCC portfolio has successfully contributed to a set of complex systemic changes in state governments where it has partnered to establish SDGCCs as well as nationally through its NITI Aayog/MoSPI partnership which is pan-India in its intent and outcomes.

The changes include a) application of an SDG lens and an 'integrated' approach to developmental issues that were earlier siloed or compartmentalized ('departmentalized'); b) Strengthening the SDG evidence-base, and improving quality and reliability of underlying data through localized processes; c) direct and indirect support to SDG acceleration and progress achievement in states; and d) leveraging national policy momentum to fast-track SDGs and cement SDG oriented reforms pan-India. These inter-related strands of results – which evinces significant contribution to the UNDP Country Program Development (CPD) linked Output 1.1 ("Government is better able to plan, implement, monitor and finance to accelerate progress towards the SDGs") – are discussed below in greater detail.

The portfolio contributed to systemic change by unlocking an integrated / whole-of-government approach that enabled cross-departmental synergizing for SDG achievement

Mindset changes amongst government officials to approach developmental issues from a holistic *SDG lens*, replacing the erstwhile departmentalized approach to issues – which was suboptimal in solving for inherently interconnected problems such as poverty alleviation or gender equality, among others – has been a transformative change. The SDGCC portfolio led to integration of seemingly disparate sub-themes and sectors to converge at an SDG. For example, SDG5 (gender equality) used to be largely a Women and Child Development Department (WCD)-led process, but now is seen from a holistic lens where multiple levers of change converge (e.g., labour department for improved women labour force participation rate, or

home department for reduced crimes against women, or education department for improved educational outcomes for girls).

The integrated, inter-departmental approach has been driven by a set of key activities, including mapping of existing government schemes to SDGs, and articulating how each of those schemes contribute to SDGs; and in some cases, orienting the state-level annual budgeting process itself to SDGs. The SDG-linked or SDG-compliant budgeting process is a significant step to institutionalize change since it institutes change where it matters most: i.e., how funding is allocated for development.

This change is seen particularly at the state government level, but equally important is the enablement of vertical integration entailing improved coordination between states and districts, following district-level SDG localization efforts. KIIs revealed that the SDG localization process at the district and GP levels (where SDGs is a novel concept) is a work in progress. Awareness levels on SDGs are fast-growing but still limited. Since district level and GP level changes from an administrative standpoint often flow down from the states, progress on SDG localization is likely to percolate, even with moderate direct support by the SDGCCs to districts and panchayats (which is available through capacity building on indicators, index development, and handholding on data gathering).

The strategic positioning of UNDP within the planning and finance departments (which have the maximum interface with other departments) of the state governments was helpful in initiating the integrated approach, and moving the needle on a whole-of-government approach – a significant reform in style of governance and functioning – that enabled systemic problems such as poverty alleviation, gender equality, resource mobilization or climate change to be viewed from the SDG lens.

It was also UNDP's influence that led state governments to institute the practice of appointing SDG focal points in each of the departments to coordinate with SDGCC SDG focal point. In some ways, the UNDP-implemented SDGCCs (within the planning departments) serve as de facto link between departments.

UNDP technical expertise, capacity building, awareness and sensitization have played instrumental roles in successfully advancing the systemic rejigging of approach/ strategy to orient policymakers and officials to SDGs.

Budgeting is the lifeblood of developmental planning, and is often seen as the most tangible way in which to ascertain policy prioritization (the 'follow the money' principle). To that end, Haryana SDGCC's success in streamlining the budgeting system and making it SDG aligned / compliant is a transformative reform. The annual budgeting process now – with support from the SDGCC – has been rejigged bringing down the total of 40 separate finance demands (from disparate departments) to 8 thematic budgets (and 20 demands) aligned to SDGs. This allowed systemic thinking and group-thinking along the lines of SDGs. Similar efforts have been undertaken (e.g., Karnataka) or planned in other SDGCCs – including in Nagaland.

Strengthening the evidence-base for development policy & decisions, and improving quality and reliability of underlying data has been a cornerstone of the portfolio's success

Improved SDG-linked localized monitoring and analytics to track progress along SDG lines has been a key result of the portfolio. Indeed, the SDG localization effort hinged significantly on the data piece from the outset. There is marked improvement in the entire SDG-data value chain – ranging from improved grasp over SDG indicators in states (flowing down from the UNDP-NITI Aayog indicator framing exercise), to better data gathering processes, improved data quality, enhanced routine monitoring on SDG progress (tracking), and availability of systems for data use and decision support – through a dashboard.

The installation of a SDG dashboard in SDGCCs for use across the state machinery meant that the practice of utilizing available data, information and insights has been institutionalized, at least in intent and process.

Whether the dashboard is in use as intended is subject to further independent verification. While it is an automated process (data once available and inputted would be seen in dashboard in visualizations as desired, to aid decision-making), the input itself faces a time lag of about a year. There may be data that are more amenable to high-frequency, if not closer to real-time, monitoring, but this is unexplored at this stage.

At a deeper level, the availability of reliable/credible and high-quality data on SDGs has been an important decision-support system for governments, helping it to prioritize action items and strategizing development plans. For example, in Nagaland where the SDGCC has been operational since December 2020, the NER district index and the underlying data has been an "eye-opener" for both the state planning department and district authorities. The availability of data and insights encompassing all SDGs in one place offered the state for the first time an effective evidence architecture that it can utilize to devise policies – for both states and districts. Similarly, for Uttarakhand, better "information, data and documentation" has helped the state to actively pursue targeted and customized acceleration efforts – helping it move from 10th to 4th position in the national SDG Index over time. At a national level, the NER District Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) Index 2021-22 prepared by the UNDP SDGCC portfolio in partnership with NITI Aayog and MDoNER was the basis for the flagship Prime Minister's Development Initiative for North-Eastern Region (PM-DevINE) scheme in 2022-23 – an impressive achievement for the portfolio.

The improvement in the SDG data ecosystem would not have been possible without concerted efforts by UNDP to capacitate government officials at all levels; routine engagement, help-desk style query resolution, and handholding for state government officials and increasingly for those in districts and GPs; and consultative workshops with states including high-level representatives of government. UNDP's technical know-how and expertise in fact also lent significant capacities on SDG indicator framing to NITI Aayog itself, the national think-tank, tasked by the GoI as the nodal agency for SDGs.

Finally, the data-driven SDG progress tracking on a routine basis indirectly contributes to enhanced government accountability to citizens, particularly considering the ranking of states put out in the public domain every year in the form of the National SDG Index, and widely reported by the national and sub-national media.

Direct and indirect contributions to SDG acceleration and progress achievement are clearly evinced

The SDGCCs contribution to *SDG acceleration* is evidenced in two major ways: a) in states where SDG localization has logically progressed to supporting SDG 'action' including formulation of state SDG action plans and undertaking critical upstream policy work, and b) more implicitly by 'measuring' progress on SDGs (or lack thereof) and shedding light on 'what's working, and what isn't' – thereby offering an evidence base that supports policy and strategy development to accelerate SDG progress (the assumption being: *'what is measured, improves'*).

UNDP's efforts at statistically ranking states on SDG progress (through its support to NITI Aayog) also unwittingly set in motion a form of 'competitive federalism' where states were genuinely eager to perform better and climb up the ranked table of states. The fact that there have been steady improvements in the rankings amongst many states in the UNDP-NITI Aayog ranking stands testament to this hypothesis. Arguably, rapid strides in SDGs in absence of a mechanism that transparently ranked states, and publicly communicated these rankings, would not be possible. Therefore, successes in the communication and advocacy pieces are also reasonably implied.

UNDP in partnership with NITI Aayog also successfully navigated pushback from states resistant to change by combining the following approaches: a) transparent formulation of indices in an iterative fashion with clear communication on how the indices were computed, and what underlying datapoints were captured for

the ranking, b) multiple rounds of participatory consultations with state actors, actively taking inputs and feedback to improve the foundational indicators and data sources, and c) working closely with states to help them gather and capture the requisite raw data that would feed into the indices.

This participatory and consultative approach combined with transparency in communication and handholding/ capacity sharing lent substantive credibility to the entire process, and ensured appropriate buy-ins from the highest levels in states.

The portfolio leveraged high-level policy attention to cement systems reforms geared to meet SDGs

It is important to note that UNDP's SDG efforts through its partnership with Niti, MOSPI, and states (SDGCCs) substantially benefited from external contextual factors that served as crucial catalyzers – if not enablers – of the portfolio success. One, there was intent and political will at the highest levels in the Government of India (led by the PMO, and the influential think-tank, NITI Aayog) for the country's developmental ecosystem to move into strategic SDG-oriented thinking. In a context where rapid policy and institutional changes have been efficacious through a top-down/ instructional approach– rather than the relatively slower, bottom-up/grassroots advocacy model – the high-level political intent and direction has been a boon for the SDG portfolio – enabling the achievement of effective results on a complex subject in a relatively short time.

Upstream policy support and 'problem-solving' efforts to fast-track SDG achievement has been a feature in some SDGCCs, but not in others. For the portfolio as a whole, there is a recognition that this is the logical progression that it should prepare to navigate.

Overall, evidence suggests that the portfolio as a whole – despite some redirection and progression to that end – has yet to make strong dents on the 'data-to-action' piece or the 'problem-solving' piece. It is important to note that some SDGCCs are operating differently than others creating state-wise divergences in outcomes. Some have arguably begun at a higher end of the value chain (e.g., Tamil Nadu/ Karnataka with upstream policy work and technocratic advice), or have been providing support in both SDG localization and upstream work concurrently as a registered 'think-tank' right from inception (e.g., Uttarakhand).

Primarily the SDGCCs package of intervention was aimed to improve data-driven/evidence-based decision-making; awareness generation through communication/ advocacy; capacity building; coalition building through partnerships; and to some extent resource mobilization. But while some state SDGCCs have provided upstream policy work (offering problem-solving type of support such as policy recommendations), others are yet to logically progress in that direction. From a forward-looking vantage point, it is important for UNDP to preempt and respond to these demands, since government counterpart KIIs reveal that such a demand indeed exists.

In some SDGCCs, it was felt that once the SDG progress markers were available, there was no offering of a 'solution' to the problem. The portfolio is moving in that direction positioning itself to respond to government demand for solutions on SDG acceleration – but as a portfolio, this movement is variable/skewed (rather than uniformly spread) with some states leading this type of work. In Haryana and Punjab, this is now nascently being attempted in the form of upstream work that could range from policy analysis and synthesis of replicable best practices to forging connections with – and convening of – network actors (including private sector, innovators, academia, and CSOs).

Uttarakhand SDGCC in the form of the CPPGG performs as de facto state policy think-tank, offering a range of policy support to various departments of the state, even as SDG localization from the indicator framing and progress tracking perspective continues -at state, district and GP levels. CPPGG has supported framing of policies on women empowerment, nutrition, and the labour market, amongst others. Conducting ground-level consultations to gather inputs for some of these policies has been a defining

feature of the process (a bottom-up process). CPPGG has also developed a policy development toolkit and sensitized government counterparts on it – which enables them to adopt this process while developing policies going forward, thereby lending an institutional legacy to the policy development process itself.

The use case of the Tamil Nadu SDGCC is akin to the Uttarakhand CPPGG, as it works like the 'technocratic brain' behind administrative decisions. The Tamil Nadu SDGCC offers evidence-backed solutions, recommendations and policy analysis based on available data as well as reviewing good practices elsewhere. In other words, it tackles specific SDGs, but does not necessarily only from the angles of indicator localization or awareness generation. TN SDGCC's support includes recommendations on policy changes, rule tweaks, ideation, and compilation of best practices, on a wide range of themes including women's labour force participation rate (LFPR), the impact of Artificial Intelligence (AI) on labour market, public transportation, and nutrition, among others. Somewhat like Tamil Nadu, Karnataka SDGCC has been providing cutting-edge advisory support – ranging from policy recommendations on launching green bonds to AI-based predictive modelling to anticipate societal change.

SDGCCs in Haryana and Punjab are mulling ideas of 'what next' inching close to delivering on the promises of improved monitoring /progress tracking of SDGs, and sensitization /capacitation of government officials. UNDP is considering demonstration projects on 'what works' responding to an appetite within government to envision how progress can be achieved, once analytics/ evidence-based insights already point to problems in a given SDG. There is a growing realization that while SDG-linked monitoring and the SDG index – coupled with related capacity building and advocacy efforts – were good starting points, there is a strong case for logical progression building off this momentum, and moving towards action to fast-track SDG achievement.

SDG financing and private resource mobilization is a work in progress, with UNDP positioning unclear

On resource mobilization and support on financing to achieve SDGs, progress is relatively slower, but there are a few robust examples of success, including: a) The Karnataka SDGCC Akanksha portal which matches CSR funding with government programs (with 50 companies already having committed funding), one that has been promoted by the GoK in various forums, and has also been replicated in the state of Maharashtra; b) The Karnataka SDGCC policy recommendation which led to the launch of green bonds worth Rs 1,000 crores; and c) The Haryana/Punjab SDGCC recommendations which has now created the necessary momentum for the Haryana government to float bonds, and helped raise Rs. 3,500 crores through green bonds. The Haryana government will however rely on niche expertise on innovative financing /bonds for them to formulate the exact modalities of the bond issuance exercise, given RBI rules and regulations that must be adhered to. This is a running thread across SDGCCs. In Nagaland, the government has asked UNDP to pause work on CSR and resource mobilization, with another agency tasked with work on that front. Likewise, in another SDGCC, a respondent said UNDP is not equipped to support on private resource

Figure 1: Representation of how SDGCCs interventions add up at the 'portfolio' level
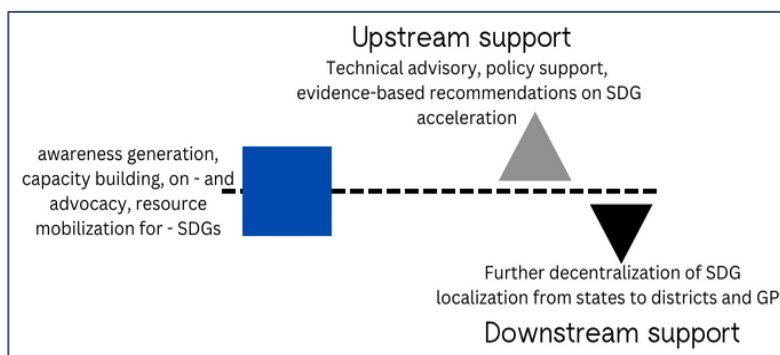
Source: Evaluator's representation

mobilization. In Haryana, SDGCCs attempts at CSR and private resource mobilization type of work was "not entertained" and carried out by a separate department. These findings resonate with the ICPE, 2022

wherein key partner interviews said that "UNDP operations lacked the required expertise to negotiate, report and work with the private sector." Another factor that hinders SDGCCs influence on SDG finance is its primary relationship with the planning departments within governments, whereas innovative financing is often looked at as outside its purview and more of a finance department mandate.

At a portfolio level, the program lacks a Theory of Change (ToC) and represents a missing *guiding principle* or even a precise way to *define end-of-program outcome*. More importantly, a lack of *hypothesis* regarding intended change and its pathways means that there is limited documented visibility on what change is sought through what mechanisms, and what intermediate results are meant to precede eventual outcomes that are desired. State-wise variations in approaches – while they may be contextually relevant – do not accord a clearly documented visualization of how they are adding up at the portfolio level in the absence of a ToC. But, viewed evaluatively the progress when seen at the portfolio level can be envisaged at two levels, to some extent reinforcing each other: a) *a downstream effort* to further decentralize SDGs at district and GP levels mainly from the SDG indicator framework angle, building off the success in states; and b) *an upstream effort* to provide solutions and technocratic advice on achievement/ fast-tracking of SDG progress – straddled by capacity building, awareness generation and resource mobilization efforts, as visualized in Figure 1 above.

The above discussion demonstrates how the SDGCC portfolio has contributed to the UNSDCF Outcome 6 ("By 2027, a strengthened and more coordinated, inclusive and accountable governance system is in place at the national and local levels…") and National goal ("Achieving SDGs by 2030 aligned with national priorities including NITI Aayog's focus on localization and financing"). There is significant evidence pointing towards improvements in coordination, accountability, and governance nationally and locally, and a momentum to achieving SDGs aligned with national priorities. Evidence on progress on SDG financing is also promising.

On the Strategic Plan Outcome 1: "Structural transformation accelerated, particularly green, inclusive and digital transitions", while there is significant traction towards a subsequent contribution to structural transformation that is inclusive in its approach, there is limited evidence to suggest that this has necessarily been either green or digital. But there are examples of success on these fronts too: whether it is data and analytics on SDGs (right from digitally-enabled data gathering to the use of a dashboard) or the *Akanskha* portal for SDG financing, the portfolio has tapped into incremental digital levers of change. But conclusive evidence on the use of transformative digital potentials in its upstream policy work is missing, and so is clear evidence of using digital technologies to improve service delivery. For example, the use of digital public goods or the digital public infrastructure (DPI) to solve for SDGs have not been contextually explored and offered as policy recommendations by the SDGCCs to the state governments, nor innovative solutions to improve service delivery piloted directly. The *mainstreaming* of greening is also not a visible feature but standalone efforts are seen whether it is through SDGCC support in the launch of green bonds (a noteworthy success), or organizing sustainability and conclaves on the role of Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG).

SUSTAINABILITY

The SDGCCs portfolio have inherent preconditions that signals the likelihood of sustainability of its interventions. The SDG cells – working within the crucial departments of planning and finance departments – with designated SDG nodal officers (who are government staff) accords an institutional backbone that makes sustainability eminently achievable. Now, a government-led institutional mechanism is in place to coordinate SDG-related tasks, arguably a success of the SDGCCs portfolio on the sustainability front.

SDGCCs have also over time gained credibility and trust within the entrenched government machinery, with high-level policy attention, with even the Chief Secretary and Chief Minister often taking interest in progress. The cells also have parked funding from states, and firmly ensconced within government bodies (e.g.,

CPPGG in Uttarakhand or SJHIFM in Haryana) or directly under finance/planning departments – which signals likelihood of assured funding in the future. UNDP resourced staff in SDGCC often also sit on government committees allowing unique influence on decisions.

While the close working relationships developed by UNDP state units with state government counterparts – lending almost to a horizontal, equal partnership – has been instrumental in driving impactful work, and ensuring government buy-in and trust, the flip side is likely manifesting in sheer dependence on the externally-resourced cells. Even though it can be reasonably claimed that systems have been strengthened, and significant capacities painstakingly built, there are extant gaps in institutional transfer of knowledge and capacity and SDGCCs are not ready just yet to function (even partially) independent of UNDP support. Interviews suggest that it will be difficult to continue the work on UNDP exit, and even if they did, it will bear neither the same quality nor the speed. Another crucial factor hindering institutional memory is the frequent bureaucratic turnover – an external variable which the portfolio has no control over.

There is limited evidence on sustainable transfer of institutional capacity despite close and day-to-day interfacing by UNDP resourced SDGCC staff with government counterparts. The quality of people often determines the stay power of institutions. The government counterparts depend on UNDP-resourced personnel within SDGCCs for their capacity, talent, and commitment. It is unclear whether the governments – on UNDP exit – will be able to resource themselves adequately, both quantitatively and qualitatively, to be able to continue with the same speed and quality with which UNDP has managed to deliver the SDG mandate so far. Government counterparts interviewed confirmed this.

There are reported gaps in creating knowledge repositories too. Respondents said much more has been done and achieved in states than has been possible to document, indicating a lack of searchable knowledge – with distinct implications for states with upstream policy work, that bear potential replicability or adoptability. Similarly, it is not clear whether knowledge imparted and capacities built on SDGs will institutionally percolate where person-dependency is writ large – and staff turnover is more norm than exception. Similar apprehensions apply to the NITI Aayog partnership as well, where persistent knowledge and capacity gaps coupled with outsized dependency on UNDP resources indicates that the portfolio needs strategize on a sustainability or exit plan.

On the other hand, there are very encouraging signs of sustainability, manifested through scale-up, adoption/ ownership or replicability. For example, the Akanskha model in Karnataka SDGCCs has been replicated in Maharashtra, a non-UNDP SDG cell. The same model has in fact been promoted by the Government of Karnataka itself, indicating that the platform will now likely endure well beyond the life of the program. Likewise, the overall SDGCC model itself – while it started in Haryana – has been replicated in 8-9 states, meaning that the core model first incubated by UNDP is now replicable widely. UNDP is currently in discussion in other states where it is likely to launch new SDGCCs. It is worth noting that SDGCCs are also run in few other states by non-UNDP entities, in a way indicating core replicability of the very model itself. Likewise, UNDP-SDGCC's work on District/ Panchayat level SDG index has significantly informed the Ministry of Panchayti Raj's efforts on similar lines.

There is another aspect to the portfolio's sustainability – which is the likely potential for the UNDP-led SDG Index (state-wise, or district-wise, which will be repeated every year) to inform – for years to come – the formulation of GoI or state government policies, similar to how the NER District SDG Index served as the basis for the flagship PM-DevINE scheme in 2022-23. In that sense, the SDGCC portfolio has paved the way for lasting policy impact that can sustain over the long-time horizon. The need-based and sustained use by the state government of the SDG dashboards (set up by SDGCCs) also raises prospects for sustainability of the SDGCC portfolio. However, such sustained use cannot be confirmed by the evaluation in absence of field visits.

Finally, there are two distinct external challenges to the sustainability to the SDGCC portfolio. One, how the government takes up the work, and builds off initial success, will be contingent on the degree to which states continue to prioritize SDG localization and related efforts. On the positive side, there is a strong feeling the SDG prioritization is here to stay – both nationally, and by implication, in states. Second, given that the portfolio has been leveraging a strong momentum created by high-level policy support for SDGs, there is a political implication for the continued legacy of the SDGCC portfolio. States run by an opposition-led political party are likely to be less enthusiastic to carry forward the SDG mandate, given that this is viewed as a NITI Aayog led top-down effort. While the SDG index will carry on annually and there may be intermittent interest from all states in ensuring a respectable score on the index, continued efforts at the level of states and districts is not a given. This is particularly important since all respondents in UNDP and government counterparts identify strong political-bureaucratic ownership in the states as a key success factor for the SDGCC portfolio.

The visualization in Figure 2 captures the sustainability factors including those that might enable sustainability of the SDGCC portfolio, and those that might hinder it or act as barriers.

Figure 2: Sustainability Factors - enablers and barriers
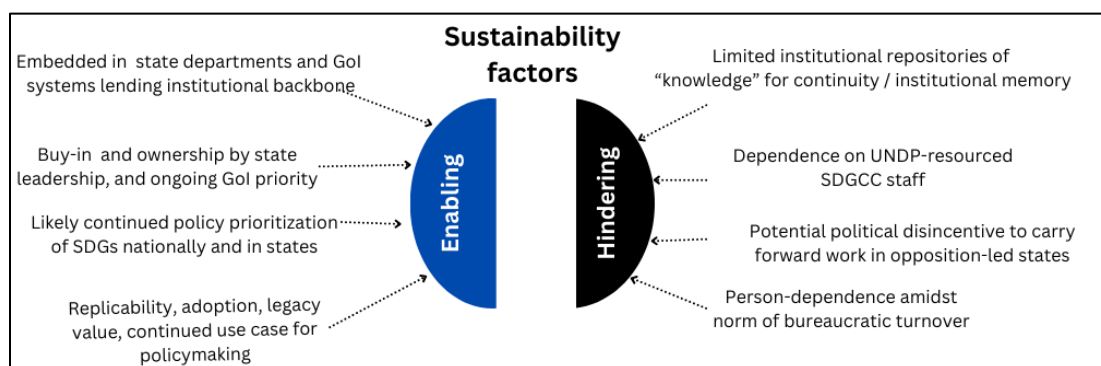
Source: Evaluator's representation

Gender Equality, Human Rights, and Leave No One Behind (LNOB)

By virtue of its work in SDG localization, particularly the strand on localizing beyond states to districts and GPs (still early days), the SDGCC portfolio demonstrates commitment to hyperlocal and participatory engagement. It is not fully evidenced that the portfolio has meaningfully engaged CSOs or CBOs for SDG acceleration, but CSO participation in SDG-related workshops, capacity building, and awareness generation has been a significant feature of the portfolio. Their involvement enhances the inclusion of voices that are traditionally under-represented, while also enhancing their capacities in monitoring and fast-tracking SDGs. Some states have acknowledged the good work done by CSOs in solving for SDGs by way of awards or compendiums of good practices that includes CSO activities. The call for solutions directly reaches out to individuals too.

The portfolio's SDG localization efforts always had distinct focus on SDG 5 (gender equality) but gender equality/LNOB is not necessarily mainstreamed in all its work. Evidence of direct engagement with people with disabilities, transgenders, and non-binary persons was not found However, SDGCCs have supported policies on women empowerment in Uttarakhand (following extensive ground-level consultations, representing a key LNOB principle), and provided recommendations to policy formulation on women's LFPR in Tamil Nadu. The SDGCC in Uttarakhand also developed a toolkit on policy development which includes guidance on bottom-up consultations as policymaking inputs, again demonstrating contribution to the application and adoption of the LNOB principle.

A core LNOB principle is to reach the furthest behind first – there is limited evidence that this principle was followed by the SDGCCs portfolio in its routine work. However, the portfolio therefore demonstrates second-order contribution to the specific needs of the marginalized populations by way of strong contributions in evidence-based, transparent, and inclusive policymaking that is targeted at population vulnerabilities. The transformation of the way developmental problems are perceived – from an integrated SDG lens, and following the evidence – can contribute to policymaking that is much better equipped to tackle systemic inequalities using an inter-disciplinary approach. States can devise strategies to tackle inequalities that are now brought to fore with high quality SDG data – a contribution of the SDGCCs portfolio. Similarly, the Indian government's PM-DevINE scheme for the NER is a good example of this at the national level wherein the SDGCCs work on the NER District SDG Index served as the basis for new policy formulation targeted at reaching the furthest behind (a LNOB principle) in the country's north-eastern region. Similarly, UNDP's engagement with the Government of India's Aspirational Districts (AD) program is an illustration of applying the LNOB principle, given that the AD program explicitly focuses on districts that are most under-developed measured by way of a comprehensive ranking that uses 49 KPIs across 5 domains.

The SDGCCs portfolio demonstrates contribution to UNDP Global Gender Equality Strategy, 2022-2025 by supporting "effective, inclusive and accountable governance [that] keeps development focused on meeting people's needs". The GES 2022-25 points out multiple benefits for gender equality resulting from improved governance. Similarly, the SDGCCs portfolio contributes to the GES' focus area of advancing "gender-responsive public policies and services." Through its work on evidence-based policies, and SDG-related capacity building (including SDG 5), SDGCCs' contribution to this focus area is also reasonably well demonstrated. Specific examples of such work include the SDGCCs support in bringing out women empowerment policies and strategies to improve women LPFR; generating high-quality, targeted evidence on progress on SDG 5; and gender budgeting exercises in collaboration with UN Women. As a result, the portfolio also demonstrates contribution to the UNDP India COGES 2023-2027 which envisions addressing structural barriers through "gender responsive SDG planning, implementation, budgeting & monitoring at central and state levels."

9. Conclusion

The SDGCCs portfolio demonstrates relevance, having adeptly navigated evolving national policy priorities on SDG localization, and leveraging UNDP's international SDG-knowledge and brand credibility to build strong relationships with government counterparts in Centre and States. The SDGCC portfolio is efficiently implemented, but improvements are possible. There is untapped potential in utilizing CO's institutional knowledge and global resources, and while cross-learning between SDGCCs occurs, more structured interactions as well as efficient use of UNDP's convening power can be beneficial. Positive collaboration with other UN agencies is noted, and the embedded approach of SDGCCs within government systems is highly efficient. Increased emphasis on engaging the private sector, and portfolio-wide fostering of collaborations is a reported need as it moves to a new phase of intervention. UNDP's partnership allowed the SDGCC portfolio to play a crucial role in introducing SDGs as a developmental framework. By capitalizing on high-level policy attention, the portfolio significantly drove systemic changes in India, promoting integrated SDG approaches, enhancing evidence-based decision-making, supporting SDG acceleration, and even fostering state competition. On SDG financing, more efforts are needed, with better interface with the private sector, and an orientation to harness its capabilities and offerings. The portfolio's contribution to CPD Output 1.1 and UNSDCF Outcome 6 are demonstrated, with even though challenges persist in achieving green and digital transitions as envisaged in Strategic Plan Outcome 1. The SDGCCs portfolio exhibits potential sustainability through inherent preconditions, including the presence of SDG cells, designated nodal officers, and government-led mechanisms. Credibility and high-level policy attention contribute to assured funding, but challenges persist, such as dependence on externally-resourced cells. Limited institutional memory and gaps in knowledge repositories pose risks to sustainability. Positive signs

include successful model replication and the potential long-term impact of the SDG Index, the dashboard, and underlying data on policy formulation. The SDGCC portfolio demonstrates a commitment to hyperlocal and participatory SDG localization, engaging with CSOs and amplifying under-represented voices. Contributions to SDG 5 are evidenced through its work on gender policies and gender budgeting with UN Women. However, limited evidence is seen on mainstreaming gender equality/LNOB in all activities. The "leave no one behind" principle is not strongly evidenced, but the portfolio contributes to evidence-based policymaking that can address systemic inequalities while prioritizing the most vulnerable.

10. Way Forward / Recommendations

a. *Going forward, the portfolio should consider a deliberate strategic redirection towards providing specific, tailored and context-specific 'problem-solving' type of support to accelerate the achievement of SDGs*

The SDGCCs portfolio has the necessary preconditions to be able to make this shift in terms of available expertise, strong relationship with states, and robust appetite within both states and NITI Aayog for such a course-correction. What exact form and shape this type of support will take is contingent on the specific operating context of the states, but examples include evidence-based pilot demonstrations, experiments to test solutions, innovations, support in policy development, and showcasing replicable good practices, among others. Given the largely positive trajectory of the program so far, the portfolio is advised to consider an expanded team of UNDP-resourced experts in state units to undertake this transition – particularly for the states where upstream policy work is already underway, subject to availability of funds. If needed, UNDP should work out a value for money (VfM) proposition that posits the kind of transformative and catalytic impact that expanded SDGCCs can deliver against a relatively moderate increase in resources.

b. *Opportunities to leverage UNDP's international expertise on SDGs, as well as to create improved cross-learning mechanisms within SDGCCs in India should be explored in a more systematic manner.*

There is untapped potential for the SDGCCs portfolio to tap into technical know-how – in the form of tools, models, strategies, and good practices of 'what works' globally – available with UNDP as an entity that operates across the globe, with specific expertise in SDGs, governance, and systems change. In a similar vein, there is also an opportunity for UNDP CO to create for SDGCCs (states and GoI/NITI Aayog) an institutional platform to convene at a pre-fixed frequency to harness the power of cross-learning for improved programming for the portfolio as a whole. While exchange of ideas has been happening, this can be more concretized. Convenings of the kind should explore bringing in outside experts from private sector, CSOs, and other government stakeholders working on SDGs to enable organic connections and collaborations, leveraging UNDP's influence and network – something which all stakeholders reported would help their work. Finally, SDGCCs should explore more active collaboration with units within UNDP India CO such as A-Lab, the Policy Unit, private sector experts, SDG Finance team, or gender advisors to ensure SDGCCs are not having to reinvent the wheel when tried and tested models are available – and also more generally to leverage specific types of expertise.

c. *Systems that create institutional memory need to be established to ensure that the sum-total of all knowledge explicitly and implicitly produced by the entire gamut of SDGCC interventions do not fade away over time.*

It is recommended that the portfolio creates institutional repositories – shareable, and accessible to all portfolio stakeholders – that encompasses all knowledge created within the ambit of the SDGCCs portfolio, including indicator frameworks, data gathering protocols, training modules (for states, districts, and GPs) good practice compendiums, policy recommendations, reports, and the like. This should also include documentation of implicit knowledge that bear learning value. Further, specifically on capacity building,

UNDP should think of ways to ensure institutional percolation of SDGs knowledge to avoid the prospect of capacities imparted getting wiped out with the transfer of officials – a bureaucratic reality. This is particularly true given that strong high-level bureaucratic (and political) buy-in and leadership is cited as a success factor, and this runs the risk of getting reduced to being disproportionately person-specific or person-driven. Training modules can potentially also be digitized and launched as self-paced online courses designed for governments. At all levels of the system wherein SDGCCs have intervened to create awareness and build capacities on SDG localization, attempts should be made to appraise the likelihood that these will 'stick' and gains will not be undone with time.

> d. *Mainstreaming of the gender and LNOB principles warrants sensitization, appointment of gender/ LNOB focal points in SDGCCs, and a leadership-level reiteration of their importance.*

To create more impactful results in the strand on SDG localization in districts and GPs, SDGCCs direct outreach to community level stakeholders should be ramped up. Perspectives and voices of under-represented groups need to be better captured and accounted for in formulating SDG solutions, SDG monitoring, and capacity building on SDGs. A more intentional gender and LNOB focus is recommended, as well as the appointment of a focal person responsible for gender/LNOB in all state SDGCCs to drive this effort and mainstream it within all intervention pillars. Currently, interviews suggest that the focus on gender is somewhat limited to having merely including SDG 5 in SDGCCs activities, rather than viewing it from a cross-cutting lens. Finally, the LNOB framework should be fully integrated with due attention on intersectional factors that include other markets of discrimination and marginalization such as disability, sexual orientation, ethnicity, among others. The formative evaluation of integration of LNOB principles within UNDP (globally) found that "leadership support and strong government and CSO engagement were the key contributing factors to more successful integration of LNOB principles into UNDP programmatic work." It is advisable that the case for integration of LNOB principle within SDGCCs is reiterated at the CO and state leadership levels.

> e. *It is recommended that the SDGCCs portfolio put in place a Theory of Change (ToC) retroactively to represent and visualize 'how change happens' (or is intended / hypothesized to happen) as well as institute an "outcome harvesting" exercise.*

The portfolio represents complexity of a kind that is amenable to the use of "nested" ToCs wherein segments (in this case, specific SDGCCs) can have their own smaller ToCs – but importantly, without losing sight of the interactions between these sub-systems and between the system and the broader operating /contextual environment. The importance of having a ToC cannot be overstated, not only for evaluative practice, but also for programmatic thrust. Related, the SDGCCs portfolio – due to the kind of complexity it manifests, and the rigidity of a pre-fixed MEL framework that it will not sit well with – is ripe for the use of innovative MEL techniques such as 'Outcome Harvesting' which is also relatively simple to use. SDGCCs can on an ongoing basis draft up a set of 'outcome statements' (intended or unintended) that the portfolio is experiencing or seeing emerge, so that the 'harvests' can be later used to evaluate the portfolio to its fullest. This can be done using a template shared uniformly by all states. The risk of not having either a ToC or an ongoing outcome monitoring exercise is that the full gains of an accomplished portfolio like this will remain under-documented – undermining its learning value and future use case.

11. Annexes

<u>Annex 1: Documents reviewed</u>

A rapid desk review phase entailed review of the following documents:

- ProDocs of SDGCCs
- UNDP India Independent Country Program Evaluation (ICPE), 2022
- UNDP India Country Program Document 2023-27
- UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework
- Annual Workplans of the SDGCCs
- Reports brought out under the program – including:
    - SDG India Index
    - Baseline Report NER 2021
    - Appraisal of Aspiration Districts Program
    - Indian Model of SDG Localization
    - Others
- Other desk review (UNDP):
    - Report: Formative Evaluation of the Integration by UNDP of LNOB Principles, 2022
    - UNDP Global Gender Equality Strategy 2022-2025, 2022
    - UNDP India Gender Equality Strategy 2023-2027
- Secondary review of operating context:
    - Reports by NITI Aayog
    - Media reports
    - Official news releases by PIB related to SDGs in general and the UNDP-NITI Aayog partnership

Annex 2: List of interview respondents

Name	Organisation & Title	Role in SDGCCs	Date	Engagement type	Mode
Meenakshi Kathel, Jaimon Uthup and Soumya Guha	UNDP Country Office, New Delhi	Team in UNDP CO managing the six SDGCC projects	13 Nov. 23	Intervention Briefing with QA	Virtual
Vikas Verma	UNDP Regional Head, North Region	Leading UNDP's SDGCC in Haryana/ Punjab	21 Nov. 23	KII	Virtual
Sanyukta Samaddar	Former Adviser (SDGs), NITI Aayog (presently Commissioner NCR, Government of Uttar Pradesh)	Led the SDG localization /state support workstream during her time in Niti Aayog	21 Nov. 23	KII	Virtual
Pradeep Mehta	UNDP State Head, Uttarakhand	Leading UNDP's SDGCC in Uttarakhand	22 Nov. 23	KII	Virtual
Dr. Manoj Pant	Government of Uttarakhand Additional CEO- Centre for Public Policy and Good Governance (CPPGG)	Senior bureaucrat from counterpart government in Uttarakhand, where the SDGCC sits in CPPGG, of which the respondent is Additional CEO	22 Nov. 23	KII	Virtual
Raj Cherubal	UNDP SDGCC Head, Tamil Nadu	Leading UNDP's SDGCC in Tamil Nadu	23 Nov. 23	KII	Virtual
Nayantara Sasikumar	Government of Nagaland OSD-Planning Department, SDG State Nodal Officer	Senior bureaucrat (SDG nodal officer) from counterpart government in Nagaland's planning department	23 Nov. 23	KII	Virtual
John Borgoyary	UNDP State Head, Nagaland, Regional Head, North Eastern Region	Leading UNDP's SDGCC in Nagaland and in NER	27 Nov. 23	KII	Virtual
Mukund Raj	UNDP SDGCC Head, Karnataka	Leading UNDP's SDGCC in Karnataka	27 Nov. 23	KII	Virtual
Shri Pankaj	Government of Haryana, Director – Finance & Planning Department	Senior bureaucrat from counterpart government in Haryana's finance & planning department, where the respondent is a Director		KII	Virtual
Dr. Yogesh Suri	Senior Adviser (SDGs), NITI Aayog	Senior representative of GoI – UNDP's counterpart, where the respondent is Senior Adviser with NITI Aayog	28 Nov. 23	KII	In-person

Relevance	Data Gathering Methods
1. To what extent is the SDGCC portfolio responsive to national policies and strategies – and to those of the states – on SDG localization, and more generally SDG achievement?	• KIIs with Niti, MOSPI, State Governments, UNDP State, UNDP CO • Desk review of programmatic documents Secondary review of operating context
2. To what extent does the SDGCC portfolio contribute to the UNDP India's CPD 2023-27, particularly to the linked CPD Output, Strategic Plan Outcome, UNSDCF Outcome, National Goal, and alignment with Country Office Gender Equality Strategy (COGES), Global Gender Equality Strategy?	• KIIs with UNDP State, UNDP CO, other UN agencies • Desk review of programmatic documents Secondary review of operating context
3. What was UNDP strategic and distinct value-add to SDG localization efforts?	• KIIs with Niti, MOSPI, State Governments, UNDP State, UNDP CO
Efficiency	
4. What synergies with GoI, states, development partners, CSOs and private sector were explored through the SDGCC portfolio? Were there any overlaps and duplications?	• KIIs with Niti, MOSPI, State Governments, UNDP State, UNDP CO
5. Was coordination among various (UN) stakeholders in the SDG localization through SDGCCs efficient in project implementation?	• KIIs with UNDP State, UNDP CO, other UN agencies
6. How did the portfolio coordinate internally within UNDP to leverage existing technical resources, knowledge, UNDP presence, and staff? Were there overlaps and duplications?	• KIIs with UNDP State, UNDP CO
7. How did the portfolio access and leverage available UNDP global expertise on institutional strengthening?	• KIIs with UNDP CO
Effectiveness	
8. How did the program prioritise work in the absence of a formal ToC for the entire portfolio? How did UNDP define success for its work with GOI and States?	• KIIs with UNDP CO, UNDP State
9. What was the extent of contributions of SDGCCs towards advancing SDG localization in India with particular focus on SDG5?	• KIIs with Niti, MOSPI, State Governments, UNDP State, UNDP CO • Desk review of programmatic documents Secondary review of operating context
10. Did institutional capacity for – and awareness about – tracking and achieving SDGs at the central/ state government level increase due to the SDGCC portfolio? And at the district and community levels? In other words, were institutions strengthened by the portfolio?	• KIIs with Niti, MOSPI, State Governments, UNDP State, UNDP CO
11. Is there enhanced buy-in and ownership of evidence-backed approach to SDG M&E and implementation within the GoI and state government apparatuses?	• KIIs with Niti, MOSPI, State Governments, UNDP State, UNDP CO
12. What are examples of success of the portfolio? What are examples of untapped opportunities, challenges, or failures? What can be learnt from these examples?	• KIIs with Niti, MOSPI, State Governments, UNDP State, UNDP CO
13. What have been the key barriers and challenges to achieving desired outcomes?	• KIIs with Niti, MOSPI, State Governments, UNDP State, UNDP CO
14. What are the key instances of states moving from (or using) data & advocacy to plan (or implement) action on SDGs – due to the SDGCC portfolio?	• KIIs with State Governments, UNDP State, UNDP CO
15. Is there a clear and visible pathway of results linking project activities and its outputs to desired outcomes?	• KIIs with UNDP CO, UNDP States
Sustainability	

16. What is the extent to which SDGCCs can carry on with all its functions (as on date) at national and subnational authorities, local communities, and civil society in improving service delivery – without UNDP support?	• KIIs with State Governments, UNDP State
17. What is the extent to which the portfolio has put in mechanisms or partnerships that can scale the work in the medium to long term?	• KIIs with State Governments, UNDP State, UNDP CO
18. To what extent are GoI and State Governments representatives capacitated and sensitised – compared to before – in a way that they can plan to take the work on SDG localisation, and an evidence-backed SDG achievement plan forward?	• KIIs with Niti, MOSPI, State Governments, UNDP State, UNDP CO
19. What lessons, best practices, and innovations have been generated by the SDGCC portfolio that can be replicated (across states) or institutionalised beyond the immediate mandate of the program?	• KIIs with UNDP CO, UNDP State
Gender Equality, Human Rights, and Leave No One Behind (LNOB)	
20. Have the projects successfully demonstrated that SDG 5 is a cross cutting thematic for localization of SDGs?	• KIIs with UNDP CO, UNDP State • Desk review of programmatic documents Secondary review of operating context
21. Were the projects successfully engaged with communities living in vulnerable conditions including women, persons with disabilities, indigenous populations, transgender and non-binary persons etc..? Were the projects effective in responding to relevant needs of those living in marginalized conditions?	• KIIs with UNDP CO, UNDP state • Desk review of programmatic documents Secondary review of operating context
22. Are there best practices and challenges related to GEWE and LNOB from the SDGCCs, communities that can be scaled up?	• KIIs with UNDP CO, UNDP state • Desk review of programmatic documents Secondary review of operating context

- 10+ years of relevant international development MEL experience
- Strong experience with the global ecosystem of multilateral and bilateral international development actors. Directly contracted by UNDP, ILO (Geneva HQ), OECD (Paris HQ), DEval (Bonn HQ) for MEL technical expertise.
- Led MEL mandates for large, regional/ multi-country programs and portfolios funded by USAID, DFID/ FCDO, and DFAT among others.
- MEL experience across sectors encompassing multiple SDGs, and strong experience in cross-cutting areas of digitalization, innovation, and gender equality (GEWE, GESI, WEE)
- Experience with the UN system at large, with clients including UNDP, UNCDF, UNICEF, and ILO
- Key recent MEL experiences relevant to the evaluation:
  - Member, Evaluation Reference Group (ERG), Oxfam Novib's Fair for All (F4A, €70 mn)
  - Technical Expert -Strategic Joint Evaluation of the OECD-led COVID-19 Global Evaluation Coalition
  - Senior Evaluation Expert- USAID Global COVID-19 Response Activity ($3 bn)
  - KM Consultancy for ILO Gender-Responsive Business Environment Reforms for Women's Entrepreneurship in South East Asia
  - Monitoring & Evaluation Advisor for DFAT SARIC ($10 mn)
  - Evaluation Expert for DEval Evaluation of BMZ' Private Sector Development (PSD) Portfolio in India
  - Technical Expert for USAID Evidence Synthesis- Responsible & Inclusive Digital Development
  - Senior Evaluation Specialist- USAID Development Innovation Ventures (DIV) Portfolio
  - Evaluation Specialist- USAID Portfolio Evaluation -Women's Global Development & Prosperity (W-GDP)
  - Mid-term Evaluation of UNCDF's Shaping Inclusive Finance Transformation Project (SHIFT) – ASEAN
  - UNICEF- Monitoring & Evaluation of SABLA Strengthening Demonstration Project

Establish SDG Coordination Centre for facilitating implementation of Punjab SDG Vision 2030

Intended Outcome as stated in the UNSDF/CPD Results and Resource Framework:
UNSDF Outcome 3: By 2022, there is improved and more equitable access to, and utilization of, quality affordable health, nutrition, and water and sanitation services.
Outcome indicators as stated in the Country Programme [or Global/Regional] Results and Resources Framework, including baseline and targets:
1.4. Number of states in which gram panchayat prepare integrated development plans oriented to SDGs.
Baseline: 0; Target: 10
Applicable Output(s) from the UNDP Strategic Plan: Countries have strengthened institutions to progressively deliver universal access to basic services.
Project title and Atlas Project Number:

EXPECTED OUTPUTS	OUTPUT INDICATORS[2]	DATA SOURCE	BASELINE		TARGETS (by frequency of data collection)						DATA COLLECTION METHODS & RISKS
			Value	Year	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year …	FINAL	
Output 1.1 Institutions strengthened to support implementation and monitoring of the SDGs	1.1 Number of states in which Gram Panchayats prepare integrated plans focussing on SDGs.	Planning departme nt reports	To be establi shed	2020	1	1	1			1	Secondary database assessment through Government records and reports of National and State Government and UNDP. Risk: Delays in updation of Government records
Output 2 Partnerships forged between government, private sector, multilateral and bilateral agencies, vertical funds, Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) and foundations that provide innovative and effective new development solutions that harness South-South	2.1 Number of new partnerships and/or South-South innovations.	Planning departme nt reports	To be establi shed	2020	1	1	1			1	Assessment of reports, meeting minutes and process documents/bluepri nts of developing multi-stakeholder models. Risk: Inadequate documentation by partners of collaborative engagements

Establish SDG Coordination Centre for Facilitating Implementation of Haryana SDG Vision 2030 (SDGCC Haryana)

Intended Outcome as stated in the UNSDF/CPD Results and Resource Framework:

UNSDF Outcome 3 By 2022, there is improved and more equitable access to, and utilization of, quality affordable health nutrition, and water and sanitation services

Outcome indicators as stated in the Country Programme Document Results and Resources Framework, including baselin and targets:

1 4 Number of states in which gram panchayat prepare integrated development plans oriented to SDGs.

Baseline 0; Target: 10

Applicable Output(s) from the UNDP Strategic Plan: 3. Countries have strengthened institutions to progressively delive universal access to basic services.

Project title and Atlas Project Number: Strengthening Rural Local Governance and Rural Livelihoods in Haryana

EXPECTED OUTPUTS	OUTPUT INDICATOR S[20]	DATA SOURCE	BASELINE		TARGETS (by frequency of data collection)				DATA COLLECTION METHODS & RISKS
			Value	Year	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	FINAL	
Output 1.1 Institutions strengthened to support implementation and monitoring of the SDGs	1.1.1 Number of Gram Panchayats prepare integrated plans focussing on SDGs.	Planning departme nt reports	To be establi shed	2018	1	1	1	1	Secondary database assessment through Government records and reports of National and State Government and UNDP Risk: Delays in updation of Government records
Output 1.5 Partnerships forged between government, private sector, multilateral and bilateral agencies, vertical funds, Corporate Social Responsibility(CS R) and foundations that provide innovative and effective new development solutions that harness South-South opportunities	Indicator 1.5.1. Number of new partnership s and/or South-South innovations	Planning departme nt reports	To be establi shed	2018	1	1	1	1	Assessment of reports, meeting minutes and process documents/blueprints of developing multi-stakeholder models Risk Inadequate documentation by partners of collaborative engagements

Sustainable development Goals Coordination Centre (SDGCC), Karnataka

Intended Outcome as stated in the UNSDF/CPD Results and Resource Framework:
UNSDCF Outcome 6: By ,2027 a strengthened and more coordinated, inclusive and accountable governance system is in place at the national and local levels enabling all people, especially most marginalized and vulnerable, to be protected, empowered, engaged, and enjoy human rights and social justice, and lead their lives with respect and dignity.

Outcome indicators as stated in the Country Programme Document Results and Resources Framework, including baseline and targets:

CPD Output 1.1: Government is better able to plan, implement, monitor and finance to accelerate progress towards the SDGs.
Indicator 1.1.3: Number of states where quality instruments on SDG localization and sustainable finance are in place and functioning [SP IRRF: E.3.2]

SDG Coordination Centres launched Baseline (2021): 5 states
Target (2027): 10 state

Applicable Output(s) from the UNDP Strategic Plan as mentioned in the CPD:

UNSDCF Outcome 6: By 2027, a strengthened and more coordinated, inclusive and accountable governance system is in place at the national and local levels enabling all people, especially most marginalized and vulnerable, to be protected, empowered, engaged, and enjoy human rights and social justice, and lead their lives with respect and dignity.

Output 1.1: Government is better able to plan, implement, monitor and finance to accelerate progress towards the SDGs.
Baseline (2022): 15
Target (2027): All states and union territories (UTs)

Indicator 1.1.3: Number of states where quality instruments on SDG localization and sustainable finance are in place and functioning [SP IRRF: E.3.2]
SDG Coordination Centers launched
Baseline (2021): 5 states
Target (2027): 10 states

Project title and Quantum Project Number: Sustainable Development Coordination Centre (SDGCC), Karnataka, 00121477

EXPECTED OUTPUTS	OUTPUT INDICATORS	DATA SOURCE	BASELINE		TARGETS (by frequency of data collection)					DATA COLLECTION METHODS & RISKS
			Value	Year	Year 1 (2020)	Year 2 (2021)	Year 3 (2022)	Year 4 (2023)	FINAL	
Output 1 (Programme Management Unit): SDGCC Project Management Unit strengthened to support SDG Planning, Budgeting, Localization and implementation of State's SDG Vision 2030	Number of established SDGCC Project Management Unit with 8 member team (with atleast 50% females) operational in Department of Planning, Government of Karnataka that supports implementation of State's SDG Vision 2030	*UNDP HO and SDGCC*	0	2020	*3*	*3*	*3*	*3*	*3*	*UNDP Annual Project Report*
Gender Marker: GEN 2		*UNDP HO and SDGCC*	0	2020	*5*	*5*	*5*	*5*	*5*	*UNDP Annual Project Report*

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	Indicator		Baseline	Year						Data Source
Output 2 (Awareness & Capacity Building): Build Awareness and capacity of all stakeholders around SDG VISION of Karnataka and its targets to promote SDG localization **Gender Marker**: GEN 2	**Indicator**: Number of SDG Awareness Workshop with component on gender sensitization conducted for Academic Institute, NGOs, Community Radios and Priority Departments	*UNDP HO and SDGCC*	0	2020	0	15	18	18	51	*UNDP Annual Project Report*
Output 3 (Integrated Planning & Implementation): Integrated development solutions and innovations in place to accelerate planned SDG Implementation **Gender Marker**: GEN 2	Indicator 1: Number of meetings and SDG planning workshop conducted with NITI Aayog and respective Departments for SDG Vision 2030 implementation	*UNDP HO and SDGCC*	0	2020	1	2	5	5	5	*UNDP Annual Project Report*

	Indicator	Data Source	Baseline	Year					Final Target
	Indicator 2: Number of AI based apps/ dashboard		0	2020	*0*	*0*	*1*	*1*	*1*
Output 4 (SDG Localisation): Adapt SDG VISION for State level, district level and block level authorities in their plans and processes in coordination with National Social Service (NSS) to promote SDG localisation **Gender Marker**: GEN 2	**Indicator** 1: Number of blocks that localize SDG indicators **Indicator** 2: Number of districts that localize SDG indicators	*UNDP HO and SDGCC*	0	2020	31 districts /277 blocks	31 districts/2 77 blocks	31 districts/ 277 blocks	31 districts /277 blocks	31 districts /277 blocks

Output 5 (Resource Mobilisation and Partnership): Mobilize private sector partners and resources to meet the estimated needs for human, financial and physical resources in localizing SDGs. **Gender** Marker: GEN 2	Number of CSR meet and workshop conducted with dedicated sessions on SDG 5 and 10 for participation of agencies/organizations with established mandate on Gender Equality and Women Empowerment (GEWE).	*SDGCC*	0	2020	*1*	*2*	*2*	*1*	*6*	
Output 6 (Monitoring and Evaluation): Technology-based tools operational for creating online community such as NGOs Innovators, MSMEs etc. to localize and monitor SDG to achieve the State SDG VISION 2030 document **Gender Marker:** GEN 2	Number of online platform created to localize and monitor SDG to achieve the State SDG VISION 2030 document	*SDGCC*	0	2020	*0*	*0*	*0*	*1*	*1*	

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SDG Coordination Centre (SDGCC) in Nagaland

Intended Outcome as stated in the UNSDF/CPD Results and Resource Framework:
UNSDF Outcome 3: By 2022, there is improved and more equitable access to, and utilization of, quality affordable health, nutrition, and water and sanitation services.
Outcome indicators as stated in the Country Programme Document Results and Resources Framework, including baseline and targets:
1.4. Number of states in which village council prepare integrated development plans oriented to SDGs.
Baseline: 0; Target: 10
Applicable Output(s) from the UNDP Strategic Plan: 3:: Countries have strengthened institutions to progressively deliver universal access to basic services.

EXPECTED OUTPUTS	OUTPUT INDICATORS[4]	DATA SOURCE	BASELINE		TARGETS (by frequency of data collection)				DATA COLLECTION METHODS & RISKS
			Value	Year	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	FINAL	
Output 1.1 Institutions strengthened to support implementation and monitoring of the SDGs.	*1.1.1*Number of Village Council prepare integrated plans focussing on SDGs.	*Planning department reports*	To be establishe d	2020	*1*	*1*	*1*	*1*	*Secondary database assessment through Government records and reports of National and State Government and UNDP.* *Risk: Delays in updation of Government records*
Output 1.5: Partnerships forged between government, private sector, multilateral and bilateral agencies, vertical funds, Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) and foundations that provide innovative and effective new development solutions that harness South-South opportunities.	**Indicator 1.5.1**: Number of new partnerships and/or South-South innovations.	*Planning department reports*	To be establishe d	2020	*1*	*1*	*1*	*1*	*Assessment of reports, meeting minutes and process documents/blueprin ts of developing multi-stakeholder models.* *Risk: Inadequate documentation by partners of collaborative engagements*

Technical Support to Centre for Public Policy & Good Governance in accelerating Economic Growth and Fast -tracking SDGs in Uttarakhand Development Project (phase 1)

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Intended Outcome as stated in the UNSDF Country Programme Results and Resource Framework:
UNSDF Outcome 3 By 2022, there is improved and more equitable access to, and utilization of quality affordable health, nutrition and water sanitation services
Outcome indicators as stated in the Country Programme Document Results and Resources Framework, including baseline and targets:
14 Number of states in which gram panchayat prepare integrated development plans oriented to SDGs
Applicable Output(s) from the UNDP Strategic Plan as mentioned in the CPD: 3. Countries have strengthened institutions to progressively deliver universal access to basic services
Project title and Atlas Project Number: Technical Support to Centre for Public Policy & Good Governance in accelerating Economic Growth and Fast-tracking SDGs in Uttarakhand

EXPECTED OUTPUTS	OUTPUT INDICATORS[4]	DATA SOURCE	BASELINE		TARGETS (by frequency of data collection)				DATA COLLECTION METHODS & RISKS
			Value	Year	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	FINAL	
Output 1.1 *Institutions strengthened to support implementation and monitoring of the SDGs*	**Indicator 1.1.1** Number of Gram Panchayats prepared integrated plans focussing on SDGs	*Planning Department reports*	To be establi shed	2019	*1*	*1*	*1*	*1*	*Secondary database assessment through Government records and reports of National and State Government and UNDP.* *Risk: Delay in updation of Government Records*

Enhancing Outreach and SDG Integration at State Level

Intended Outcome as stated in the UNSDF Country Programme Results and Resource Framework:
UNSDCF Outcome 6: By 2027, a strengthened and more coordinated, inclusive and accountable governance system is in place at the national and local levels enabling all people, especially most marginalized and vulnerable, to be protected, empowered, engaged, and enjoy human rights and social justice, and lead their lives with respect and dignity.

Outcome indicators as stated in the Country Programme Document Results and Resources Framework, including baseline and targets:
Number of states that mainstream and institutionalize SDGs into: a. State budgets and union territories b. Gender Budget c. Child budget Baseline (year) 15 states for 'a', 8 states for 'b', 8 states 'c' Target (2027): 28 states 'a', 12 states 'b', 12 states 'c' National Reforms Action Plan on SDGs developed and implemented Baseline: 0 Target (2027): 1

Applicable Output(s) from the UNDP Strategic Plan as mentioned in the CPD:
Output 1.1: Government is better able to plan, implement, monitor and finance to accelerate progress towards the SDGs.

Project title: Enhancing Outreach and SDG Integration at State Level   Quantum Project Number: 105286 (Output ID: 106513)

EXPECTED OUTPUTS	OUTPUT INDICATORS[7]	DATA SOURCE	BASELINE		TARGETS (by frequency of data collection)						DATA COLLECTION METHODS & RISKS
			Value	Year	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6	
Output 1.1: Institutions strengthened to support implementation and monitoring of the SDGs.	Indicator 1.1.1: Number of states in which Gram Panchayats prepare integrated plans focusing on SDGs.	State Governments/ Ministry Annual Report	0	2017	1	2	3	3	3	2	Secondary database assessment through Government records and reports of National and State Government and UNDP. Risk: Delays in updation of Government records

SDGCC Tamil Nadu

Intended Outcome as stated in the UNSDCF/Country [or Regional] Programme Results and Resource Framework:
UNSDCF Outcome 6: By 2027, a strengthened and more coordinated, inclusive and accountable governance system is in place at the national and local levels enabling all people, especially most marginalized and vulnerable, to be protected, empowered, engaged, and enjoy human rights and social justice, and lead their lives with respect and dignity.
Outcome indicators as stated in the Country Programme [or Regional] Results and Resources Framework, including baseline and targets:
1.1: Government is better able to plan, implement, monitor and finance to accelerate progress towards the SDGs.
Applicable Output(s) from the UNDP Strategic Plan: #1: Structural transformation accelerated, particularly green, inclusive and digital transitions
Project title and Quantum Project Number: Technical Support to Tamil Nadu Government to Establish Sustainable Development Goals Coordination Centre (2022-2027)
Project Number: 00130886   Project Number (Award ID): 00142712

EXPECTED OUTPUTS	OUTPUT INDICATORS[22]	DATA SOURCE	BASELINE		TARGETS (by frequency of data collection)						DATA COLLECTION METHODS & RISKS
			Value	Year	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	FINAL	
Output 1: **Strengthening institutional capacity of the Planning and Development Department, Government of Tamil Nadu to effectively monitor the achievement of the SDGs through the SDGCC.**	*1.1 Number of departments provided with the technical support for SDG localization to achieve the select Goals, KPIs and SDG metrics*	*Performance of the state in national indices, reports,*	0	2023	5	8	10	11	*12*	*12*	*Number of government departments attending trainings on localisation of SDGs as well as improved performance of the state in national indices.*
Output 2: **Mainstreaming of SDGs through effective communication**	*2.1 Number of communication tools including a best practices knowledge*	*SDGCC TN*	0	2023	4	2	1	1	*1*	9	*Survey, Secondary Research, Consultation Meetings, Review of Data..*
	product developed and shared at the state level										

Audit Trail: Thematic Evaluation Report for 'SDG localization through SDG Coordination Centres (SDGCCs) in India'

The following comments were provided by UNDP CO, India on the draft Thematic Evaluation Report on 19 December 2023. The comments are referenced by institution ("Author" column) and the comment number ("#" column). Based on these comments and suggestions the evaluation report was updated by the Evaluation consultant. The table below provides how the comments/suggestions were addressed in the final version of the Thematic Evaluation Report.

Author	#	Para No./ comment location	Comment/Feedback on the draft report	Evaluator response and actions taken
Programme Support Unit (PSU), UNDP CO	1	Executive Summary	Please add an Executive Summary, highlighting the purpose, methodology, findings, conclusion and recommendations in a concise manner.	Thank you, an ES has already been provided – separately with the main evaluation report, which can now be attached to the report.
Programme Support Unit (PSU), UNDP CO	2	Introduction	Please add an 'Introduction' section highlighting the purpose of the evaluation, why is it being evaluated at this point in time, identify the primary audiences/users of this evaluation, what they want to learn from the evaluation and why and how they are expected to use the evaluation results. The section should also provide information on the structure and contents of the report- how the info meets the purpose of the evaluation	Thank you, elements listed in the adjoining column are pre-existing in the report. New text is now additionally included on the structure of the report to aid readers. Additionally, language on evaluation objectives, audience and its use in the introduction section is strengthened. The section on Evaluation Scope & Objectives also includes useful content and may be referred.
Programme Support Unit (PSU), UNDP CO	3	Evaluation Scope and Objectives	Please provide clear objectives. This section should spell out the types of decisions the evaluation will feed into, the issues to be considered in making those decisions and what the evaluation will need to achieve to contribute to those decisions.	Thank you, no further information to add from evaluator perspective. If needed, project team is welcome to include information on decision-making considerations from their standpoint.
Programme Support Unit (PSU), Gender UNDP CO	4	Conclusion	Please add a 'Conclusion' section which should be comprehensive and balanced, and highlight the strengths, weaknesses and outcomes of the intervention. This section should be well substantiated by the evidence and logically connected to evaluation findings. The conclusion	Thank you, section added.

			should respond to key evaluation questions and provide insights into the identification of and/or solutions to important problems or issues pertinent to the decision-making of intended users, including issues in relation to gender equality and women's empowerment as well as to disability and other cross-cutting issues.	
Programme Support Unit (PSU), Gender UNDP CO	5	Lessons Learnt	As appropriate and/or if requested in the TOR, the report should include discussion of lessons learned from the evaluation, that is, new knowledge gained from the particular circumstance (intervention, context, outcomes, even evaluation methods) that are applicable to a similar context. Lessons should be concise and based on specific evidence presented in the report. Gender equality and women's empowerment, disability and other cross-cutting issues should also be considered.	Thank you. Due to the nature of the evaluand, programmatic lessons have been identified throughout, and often weaved into findings. A separate lessons learnt section was not intended during the drafting. The way that evidence is presented now is designed to allow the reader to take away learnings throughout as they go along.
Gender Team	6	Evaluation Findings

In particular 6.e | Evaluation findings aren't captured from the perspective of gender or LNOB. It seems as an add on.

The section should be substantiated with greater focus on diversity and needs of different states and how the SDGCCs have responded to it. | Not addressed |
| RBAP Peer-to-Peer Support Initiative team member | 7 | Structure | The evaluation report did not generally follow most of the proposed evaluation report structured in the UNDP evaluation guidelines. Some structure examples that were not followed included the sections on Methodology, Data Collection and Analysis, Relevance, Effectiveness, Efficiency, Sustainability, M&E, Project Finance, Conclusions and Lessons Learned. Required | Thank you. The report structure has the following sections: methodology, data collection & analysis, relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability, (additionally, gender/LNOB), conclusions and recommendations - adherent to the UNDP evaluation report structure. Please refer ToC |

			annexes were sighted in the evaluation report. The report is a little short at 33 pages (excluding annexes).	
RBAP Peer-to-Peer Support Initiative team member	8	Structure	Does the Evaluation report clearly address the objectives of the evaluation as outlined in the ToR?	As mentioned above, no further information to add from evaluator perspective.
RBAP Peer-to-Peer Support Initiative team member	9	Methodology	The methodology section lacked substantive details on the methodological approach adopted and also the actual data analysis techniques applied. The proposed "Consultative Approach" is not a known evaluation methodology. The proposed data analysis technique stated qualitative data and a qualitative analytical framework but no details on what this data analytical framework is. Although data sources are clear, there appear to be too few stakeholder interviewees to be able to validate the results and perform the triangulation of data. There were no details on data analysis approaches.	Thank you, this is helpful. The Methodology section is now expanded along suggested lines. Limitations section constitutes a key sub-section of the methodology section and to be read together. Please note consultative approach is an approach as the name suggests, and not a methodology. Data analysis section is also expanded now to describe the process.
RBAP Peer-to-Peer Support Initiative team member	10	Methodology	The evaluation did not clearly identify all the stakeholders (specifically the Government) and tabulating them. The evaluation did not clearly detail the extent to which these stakeholders have been involved in project implementation.	Thank you, it's a useful suggestion. Table in annex on stakeholders is expanded to align with suggestion.
RBAP Peer-to-Peer Support Initiative team member	11	Methodology	The evaluation did not provide any detailed analysis on project alignment and its relevance with national priorities and UNDP strategic priorities, and stakeholder engagement. The evaluation also did not specify which of the SDGs the project is aligned to.	Already addressed in the report.
RBAP Peer-to-Peer Support Initiative team member	12	Methodology	The evaluation highlighted positive contributions on the use of resources at the SDGCC level in states. However there is a lack of substantive discussion on	Thank you. The Efficiency section is now edited to better categorise the existing evaluative evidence presented- into key elements of efficiency, including resourcing, program management, partnerships, collaborations. Additionally,

			efficiency of project management and implementation. There is also lack of bringing together of observations and assessments on project personnel, M&E, financial management, time management etc. There is no discussion on the achievement of the project component target outputs	more evaluative analysis is added on M&E. Refer 'efficiency' under 'findings' chapter for revisions.
RBAP Peer-to-Peer Support Initiative team member	13	Data analysis	The methodology section is essentially less than 1/2 a page, lacking substantive details on the theoretical methodological approach adopted and also the actual method/tools/data analysis applied. Although data sources are clear, the evaluation did not detailed the triangulation methods. While data collection methods and tools are mentioned, they are not detailed on the rationale. There were no details on data analysis techniques utilised.	Thank you, this is useful feedback. Addressing this, triangulation and analysis approaches are now further expanded upon to align with suggestion. Refer pgs 17-20 for full picture of evaluation approach and methodology.
RBAP Peer-to-Peer Support Initiative team member	14	Report content	The evaluation did not specify which National or State strategies/plans the project is linked with	Already addressed in the report
RBAP Peer-to-Peer Support Initiative team member	15	Report content	The evaluation did not detail project funding and did not provide the funding data.	Already addressed in the report
RBAP Peer-to-Peer Support Initiative team member	16	Report content	The evaluation did not assess the projects initial results framework and M&E design, implementation and its overall quality.	More evaluative analysis is added on M&E. Refer 'efficiency' under 'findings' chapter for revisions.
RBAP Peer-to-Peer Support Initiative team member	17	Report content	The evaluation did not clearly assess each of the indicators and their targets with final numbers to note their final level of achievement as per stated in the project Results and Resources Framework	The 'evaluand' is a portfolio of six separate projects - each with their own Prodocs and RFs. Since this is a "portfolio thematic evaluation", it is responsive to distinct needs of this evaluation as opposed to standard checklists items covered usually in a "project performance evaluation". Detailed output performance in states is not the requirement of the primary evaluation audiences. This is also not a standard expectation for a thematic evaluation.
RBAP Peer-to-Peer Support Initiative team member	18	Cross-cutting	The evaluation briefly mentioned how the project supported policies on women empowerment and provided recommendations to policy formulation on	Thanks. Pls refer section on gender/LNOB that discusses this, and now with some more analytical additions.

			gender. However there is lack of substantive discussion without detailing exactly how the project responded to gender needs. The evaluation did not provide clear answers to the TOR questions on gender	
RBAP Peer-to-Peer Support Initiative team member	19	Cross-cutting	Gender-responsiveness was not clearly selected for the methodology, methods and tools, and data analysis techniques. and analysed. It is not clear if gender related questions form part of the evaluation questions	Already addressed in the report.
RBAP Peer-to-Peer Support Initiative team member	20	Cross-cutting	The evaluation briefly mentioned how the project supported policies on women empowerment and provided recommendations to policy formulation on gender. Conclusions did not reflect gender analysis. There is one recommendation that reflect gender analysis but could be better linked with the findings which did not have any gender aspects	The recommendation on gender encompasses and follows from the findings on gender/LNOB.
RBAP Peer-to-Peer Support Initiative team member	21	Cross-cutting	The evaluation did not comprehensively drew linkages to the SDGs and relevant targets and indicators	Addressed in the report
RBAP Peer-to-Peer Support Initiative team member	22	Evaluation findings, Conclusion	The evaluation findings are not clear and complete in terms of Relevance, Effectiveness, Efficiency, Sustainability. The assessment of the project's M&E performance, project management performance, and project funding utilisation are not cleary stated. The conclusions are not logically articulated and standalone in nature. The evaluation could have produced better conclusive insights that could address important problems or issues pertinent to project beneficiaries and UNDP. There are no clear Lessons Learned on what important pointers can be applied to future UNDP-supported interventions	Addressed in the report. Additionally, as mentioned already, due to the nature of the evaluand, programmatic lessons have been identified throughout, and often weaved into findings. A separate lessons learnt section was not intended during the drafting. The way that evidence is presented now is designed to allow the reader to take away learnings throughout as they go along.
RBAP Peer-to-Peer Support	23	Evaluation findings, Conclusion	The findings and conclusions partially relate	Addressed in the report

			to the objectives of the project. The evaluation had limited support of interview sources without justifying how the data evidences can be validated by an appropriate triangulation method	
RBAP Peer-to-Peer Support Initiative team member	24	Evaluation findings, Conclusion	The conclusions are not logically articulated that built on the evaluation findings The conclusions are not standalone in nature.	Done. Refer response on earlier comment.
RBAP Peer-to-Peer Support Initiative team member	25	Evaluation findings, Conclusion	The evaluation did not provide comprehensive discussion on the project risks	Addressed in the report.
RBAP Peer-to-Peer Support Initiative team member	26	Recommendations	The recommendations did not appear to be clear, concise, realistic and actionable by the CO. The recommendations also did had partial linkages to addressing the evaluation findings. The recommendations in the main section are not the same as the recommendations in the Executive Summary section.	Thanks. Recommendations numbered now. The recommendations appear clear and concise, and minor edits are made for further clarity and actionability.

Annex 7- UNEG Ethical Conduct in Evaluation Pledge- Signed by Evaluator

ETHICAL GUIDELINES FOR EVALUATION
PLEDGE OF ETHICAL CONDUCT IN EVALUATION

UNEG
United Nations Evaluation Group

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.

Abhirup Bhunia, Senior Evaluation Consultant

Abhirup Bhunia:

07 Dec 23   (Signature and Date)