

# **Independent Evaluation of the United Nations Development Programme's Support under the Governance Multi-Year Framework 2020-2023, Bhutan**

## **FINAL EVALUATION REPORT**

10 November, 2024

***Independent Evaluator:*** Mr. Lorenz Metzner

The author of the Final Evaluation Report thanks all the stakeholders who participated in the consultations and generously gave their time and insights to support the evaluation. Particular thanks are extended to the UNDP Governance Team in Bhutan, which coordinated and supported the evaluation and consultation process with professionalism and commitment.

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## List of Acronyms and Abbreviations

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CPD	-	UNDP Country Programme Document
COVID-19	-	Corona Virus 2019
CSO	-	Civil Society Organisation
DEWA	-	Dashboard to Enhance Wellbeing of All
FYP	-	Five Year Plan
GBV	-	Gender-Based Violence
GNH	-	Gross National Happiness
ICTG	-	mobile cardiotocography
LGBTI+	-	Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, and Intersex
LDC	-	Least Developed Country
LNOB	-	Leave No One Behind
MYF	-	Governance Multi-Year Framework 2020-2023
OAG	-	Office of the Attorney General
OECD/DAC	-	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development/ Development Assistance Committee
PwDs	-	Persons with Disabilities

- RENEW - Respect Educate Nurture Empower Women
- RGoB - Royal Government of Bhutan
- SDGs - Sustainable Development Goals
- SDS - Sustainable Development Service on Gender Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Pilot Project
- SOP - Standard Operation Procedure
- NCWC - National Commission for Women and Children
- SES - Social and Environmental Standards
- UN - United Nations
- UN DESA - UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs
- UNCRPD - UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities
- UNICEF - United Nations Children’s Fund
- UNDP - United Nations Development Programme
- UNSDPF - United Nations Sustainable Development Partnership Framework

## Map of the Kingdom of Bhutan<sup>1</sup>



<sup>1</sup> Source: <https://www.un.org/geospatial/content/bhutan-0> (December 2021)

## Basic Assignment Data

<b>Project Title:</b>	<b><i>Bhutan Governance Multi-Year Framework (2020-2023) - Supporting a Just, Harmonious and Sustainable Bhutan</i></b>		
<b>MYF Start Dates:</b>	January 2020	<b>MYF End Date:</b>	December 2023
<b>Extension - Start Date:</b> (Outputs 2 & 4 only)	January 2024	<b>Extension - End Date:</b>	December 2024
<b>Atlas No.:</b>	-	<b>Focal Areas:</b>	Governance
<b>Country:</b>	Kingdom of Bhutan	<b>Region:</b>	South Asia
<b>MYF Management:</b>	UNDP Governance Team	<b>Midterm Review Completion Date:</b>	No MTR Undertaken
<b>Outputs:</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Central and local governments engage with citizens for an equitable, effective and transparent service delivery</li> <li>2. Increased access, inclusion, transparency and accountability in the justice sector</li> <li>3. Parliament drives progress towards fundamental rights protection, sustainable development and Gross National Happiness (GNH)</li> <li>4. Innovation and partnerships are leveraged for efficient, transparent and accountable governance</li> </ol>		
<b>Implementing Partners:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Department of Local Governance</li> <li>• Project Management Unit of the Justice Sector</li> <li>• National Assembly Secretariat</li> <li>• National Commission for Women and Children</li> <li>• Civil Society Organisations</li> </ul>		

### MYF Financing:

<b>Budget as per Revised MYF Design:</b>	
<b>Total Budget:</b>	USD 2,433,000
<b>UNDP TRAC:</b>	USD 600,000
<b>GPCR:</b>	USD 350,000
<b>Government of Japan:</b>	USD 636,000
<b>Unfunded:</b>	USD 847,000
<b>Total Actual Expenditure (as at December 2023):</b>	USD 3,354,905

### Evaluation Details:

<b>Evaluation Type:</b>	Governance Portfolio		
<b>Type of Evaluation:</b>	Final Independent Evaluation		
<b>Period under Evaluation:</b>	<b>Start Date:</b> January 2020	<b>End Date:</b>	June 2024
<b>Evaluator:</b>	Mr. Lorenz Metzner, Independent Evaluation Consultant		
<b>Location of Evaluation:</b>	Thimphu, Paro, and Trongsa District		
<b>Evaluation Dates:</b>	<b>Start Date:</b> 28 August, 2024	<b>Completion Date:</b>	December 2023

# Executive Summary

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## Country and Implementation Context

Bhutan is a small, mountainous, landlocked country in the eastern Himalayas with a population of 763,249.<sup>2</sup> It has adopted Gross National Happiness as a guiding development principle, closely aligned with the UN Sustainable Development Goals. Since establishing its National Assembly in 1953 and adopting a democratic constitutional monarchy in 2008, Bhutan has held four elections and established governance systems with strong checks and balances.

Despite significant socio-economic progress and transitioning from Least Developing Country (LDC) status, Bhutan still faces challenges including: slow economic recovery; limited employment opportunities in the public and private sectors; emigration of highly productive groups; and rural poverty. Urbanisation and youth unemployment are rising. The COVID-19 pandemic further impacted Bhutan's economy, causing a 10.1% contraction in 2020. Government spending remains tightly controlled as economic recovery progresses. Despite these challenges, Bhutan has made notable strides in promoting democratic governance, strengthening the rule of law, and reducing poverty.

## The Governance Multi-Year Framework

It is within this context that the Governance Multi-Year Framework 2020-2023 (MYF) was implemented. The purpose of the MYF was to strengthen the United Nations Development Programme's (UNDP) governance programming to better support the Royal Government of Bhutan, build resilience, and enable Bhutan to transition smoothly from Least Developed Country status. To achieve this purpose, the MYF enhanced the capabilities of ministries, local governments, justice sector institutions, and civil society.

The MYF integrated multiple projects, activities, and funding partners under one conceptual framework to enable more strategic and governance support to be provided more effectively. This support promoted improved public service delivery; more inclusive governance, policy, and planning; and strengthened access to justice, especially for vulnerable groups. The MYF's programming contributed to UNDP strategic outcomes defined in its Country Programme Document (CPD) and UN strategic goals at the international level. It also positively contributed to the Royal Government of Bhutan's defined development priorities and national key results areas.

## Purpose and Scope of the Independent Evaluation of the MYF

The Independent Evaluation of the MYF provides high-level analysis and an impartial assessment of the results achieved by the MYF to stakeholders. It assessed MYF outputs and results against four OECD/DAC criteria - relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, and sustainability; as well as Human Rights-Based Approach and Leaving No One Behind (LNOB) principles.

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<sup>2</sup> Source: [United Nations Population Fund](https://data.un.org/indicators/SDG1701). Accessed, October 2024.

The evaluation covered the full MYF implementation period (January 2020- December 2023), and six months of the 12-month extension period. Furthermore, the evaluation reviewed and assessed:

- all four MYF outputs (summarised above);
- the 15 sub-outputs defined in the revised MYF design; and
- all projects and activities implemented across Bhutan and reported on by the MYF (over 80 in total).

This Evaluation Report presents conclusions based on an analysis of the data collected, and highlights lessons and consequent recommendations to inform UNDP's future governance programming in Bhutan.

## **Approach and Methodology for the Independent Evaluation**

The evaluation adopted an inclusive, participatory methodology grounded in key principles of partnership, respect, cultural relevance, and ethical conduct. A strengths-based approach was adopted to inform the assessment and findings, and to develop constructive and actionable lessons and recommendations.

A comprehensive evaluation matrix, which aligned with the key evaluation questions and the terms of reference, was developed. It guided all data collection and consultations during the evaluation. A mixed-method approach to data collection was adopted so that a range of data types was used. A purposive approach was employed to identify relevant, representative, and informed data sources. Primary data was collected through consultations, a survey, field observations, and small focus group discussions with 'key informants'. Secondary data sources - which included UNDP strategies, MYF-related reports, activity evaluations, and research papers - were used in the document review.

A field data collection mission was conducted between 14-28 September 2024. This engaged with 55 key informants (20 in semi-structured interviews and 35 in small focus group discussions). The evaluation ensured that the key informants were representative of the full cross-section of MYF and included RGoB stakeholders, implementing partners, beneficiaries, and UN counterparts involved in implementing the MYF. Survey responses were very limited, however, the information supplemented other data through triangulation. A field observation visit to Trongsa District offered practical insights into results and challenges faced by MYF beneficiaries.

Gender responsiveness and inclusion considerations were integrated throughout the evaluation and the consultation methodology. This maximised diversity in the selection of key informants and ensured that representatives from vulnerable groups were included in the consultations. This enabled the evaluation to gain vulnerable groups' perspectives - both as MYF beneficiaries and as implementing partners. Furthermore, the evaluation matrix was designed to explicitly include targeted questions on gender and vulnerable groups in all consultations, as did the survey tool.

Data analysis involved thematic analysis of qualitative data to identify and analyse recurring patterns, while quantitative data was analysed using arithmetic methods. Triangulation was

used to validate findings across multiple data sources, to reduce bias and to enhance the credibility of the evaluation's conclusions, findings, and recommendations.

## Key Findings and Conclusions

The MYF aligned effectively with the Royal Government of Bhutan's (RGoB) 12<sup>th</sup> Five-Year Plan, the UNDP Bhutan CPD's (2019-2023) strategic results, and both UN national and global goals. Consequently, the MYF and its activities were seen as **relevant** as they directly targeted national priorities and needs. Integrating human rights, inclusion, and LNOB principles throughout MYF programming positively contributed to UN and UNDP strategic goals at both national and international levels. The MYF also contributed significantly to strengthening **inclusive democratic governance**. By supporting Parliament and justice sector institutions, facilitating inclusive dialogue and citizen participation in policy and decision-making, and fostering government-civil society partnerships, the MYF supported improved service delivery to meet community needs.

MYF activities were **effective** as they achieved significant results aligned with national, UNDP, and UN outcomes. UNDP's close collaboration with international and local stakeholders was crucial to the MYF's success. UNDP is seen as a trusted development partner across government, institutional, and community levels. This recognition gave UNDP a **comparative advantage** by supporting effective engagement and ownership. MYF's advocacy for **inclusion, empowerment, and diversity** led to notable achievements, such as more inclusive policy development; more robust protection of rights; greater awareness of vulnerable groups' rights; and improved attitudes to gender equality. Additionally, close collaboration with the Accelerator Lab facilitated implementation of **innovative and good practice approaches**, including: systems or process analysis; gender and social norms research; programmes to influence attitudes on Persons with Disabilities (PwDs), gender, gendered violence, and gender norms; digital systems, engagement platforms, and hackathon challenges; and strategic foresight and empathy skills development for the public service.

The MYF's approach to implementation was both **efficient and appropriate** for the Bhutanese context, using participatory strategies; actively involving local stakeholders and implementing partners throughout planning and implementation. Adaptive implementation approaches - from systems thinking and capacity building, to inclusive multi-stakeholder policy dialogues - ensured that interventions remained contextualised and efficient. The **portfolio approach** adopted by UNDP was seen as successful as it consolidated small-scale activities under a cohesive framework. It also aligned governance programming closely with UN and UNDP strategic goals at national and international levels, and enhanced UNDP's engagement with key UN sister agencies. MYF's **agility and flexibility** enabled UNDP to respond successfully to the COVID-19 pandemic, addressing emerging priorities like health policy support, vaccination rollout, and continuity of essential services through digital solutions. This adaptability facilitated the mobilisation of funds and enabled the MYF to meet emerging development needs in a rapidly evolving context successfully.

The alignment between MYF objectives and RGoB policy priorities promoted **sustainability of results** beyond the MYF. The MYF achieved sustainable change by institutionalising access to justice, incorporating digital solutions into government platforms, and embedding rights-based support into local institutions. Despite the close alignment with national development priorities, Bhutan's economic constraints impacted on the ability of the RGoB and other



institutional partners to sustain some MYF results independently. Developing action plans to secure short- and medium-term technical and financial support is essential to embedding MYF achievements and enabling longer-term sustainability.

The MYF integrated **cross-cutting themes, human rights, and LNOB** principles throughout its design and implementation, substantially meeting gender marker targets. The design and implementation of interventions were participatory, adopted people-centred approaches, and responded to vulnerable group's needs, including women, PwDs, young people, and the economically disadvantaged. This focus on inclusion and diversity at policy, institutional, and community levels led to mainstreamed gender equality; improved justice access; and the inclusion of vulnerable groups in policy dialogue and decision-making.

## Recommendations

**Recommendation One - Refine the Strategic Framework for Governance Programming:** The alignment of governance programming with RGoB, UN, and CPD (2019-2023) outcomes has proven effective and should continue. Rather than developing another MYF for 2024-2028, UNDP should consider revising its approach to integrate its governance programming directly into the CPD (2024-2028), specifically Outcome 3 and related outputs.

As part of refining the strategic framework for governance programming, strengthening the 'portfolio approach' would also be valuable. However, new strategies to integrate governance activities across all thematic or technical areas are needed for this approach to succeed. Positioning governance as a cross-cutting theme in the Country Office is an option that can further strengthen funding opportunities and integrated support across the UN System. Additionally, improved communication processes and clarification of engagement points with the RGoB will be required.

**Recommendation Two - Refine Targeting and Resourcing of Future Governance Assistance:** Adequate and consistent funding is essential for effective governance programming. Given global funding challenges, UNDP should consider developing a governance resource mobilisation strategy that identifies innovative funding approaches focusing on larger-scale, long-term projects supported by global or regional programmes. UNDP's strategy should consider prioritising areas that attract diverse funding, including from non-traditional sources like multi-lateral donors and philanthropic foundations; as well as targeting support to further develop areas that have been successful under the MYF.

**Recommendation Three - Adopt a Holistic Approach to Developing Digital Solutions:** For digital solutions to be more effective, a 'whole-of-system' approach that focuses both on solutions to specific digital needs *and* on developing the digital enabling environment is needed. While more complex, UNDP should consider adopting a whole-of-system approach when developing digital solutions as this has the potential to address existing and upcoming digital needs, sustainability, and inclusion challenges more effectively. A whole-of-system approach; however, requires a coordinated effort between RGoB, UN agencies, partners, and donors to be successful. UNDP's position of trust as a development partner in governance ideally positions it to coordinate such efforts; thereby maximising the efficacy and potential impact of future digital solutions.

**Recommendation Four - Develop More Rigorous Sustainability Strategies:** UNDP should consider developing a more explicit sustainability strategy for its governance programming. Such a strategy can consider focusing future governance support by:

- Prioritising longer-term programmes or projects to deepen the impact of interventions and build capacity.
- Identifying activities from the MYF that require limited ongoing support to enable them to become self-sustaining, thereby maximising the return on investment for both UNDP and partners.
- Building on the achievements of the MYF to further develop or extend activities that have proven to be effective.
- Ensuring that comprehensive maintenance and replacement planning is developed as a core part of all future digital or technology-focused activities.

**Recommendation Five - Strengthen Programme Management:** To enhance programme management, rigorous internal protocols for reporting, data collection, and document management are essential. Strengthening results frameworks and greater consistency in data recording and analysis will improve reporting coherence across governance projects and align monitoring and evaluation with donors' expectations. Streamlining administrative processes, including quality assurance and document control, will improve efficiency and reduce administrative demands on the Governance Team.

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## 1.0 BACKGROUND

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1. This section presents the purpose and scope of the evaluation, and the approach and methodology applied. It also discusses the development context in Bhutan and summarises UNDP's Governance Multi-Year Framework (MYF) 2020-2023.

### 1.1 Country Context

2. The Kingdom of Bhutan is a small, predominantly mountainous, landlocked country in the eastern Himalayas, bordered by India and China. With a population of 763,249 (female 365,518 and male 397,731) in 2022<sup>3</sup> spread over approximately 38,140 square kilometres,<sup>4</sup> Bhutan has 71% of its land under forest cover.<sup>5</sup> Bhutan has adopted the *Gross National Happiness* philosophy to guide its development, a concept introduced by the 4<sup>th</sup> King in 1972, which aligns closely with the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

3. Bhutan has undergone significant political changes in recent years. In 1953, the Third King Jigme Dorji Wangchuck established the National Assembly (Tshogdu) to establish democratic governance of the country. This transformation culminated in 2008 with the adoption of the Constitution and the establishment of a democratic constitutional monarchy. Since then, Bhutan has held four elections through universal suffrage. The country's governance is characterised by the separation of powers principle between the executive, legislative, and judiciary. Institutions such as the Anti-Corruption Commission and Royal Audit Authority ensure appropriate checks and balances.

4. Despite rapid economic growth and human development, challenges remain. Economic growth has slowed, especially in the small private sector, which limits employment opportunities. Poverty, though reduced, is still significant in rural areas. Urbanisation is increasing, bringing new social issues and unemployment, particularly among young people, is a critical concern. Furthermore, the COVID-19 pandemic severely impacted Bhutan's economy. In 2020, the economy contracted by 10.1%, with the construction, manufacturing, mining, and tourism sectors hardest hit. Although the hydropower sector saw some growth, it could not offset the broader economic decline and a significant rise in inflation.<sup>6</sup>

5. Economic growth has slowly begun to recover, rebounding slightly in 2022 and 2023. Government spending, however, remains tightly controlled and high rates of youth unemployment, the 'exodus of civil servants'<sup>7</sup> and emigration of other productive groups remain a challenge.

6. Despite these challenges, Bhutan has made notable strides in promoting democratic governance, strengthening the rule of law, and reducing poverty.

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<sup>3</sup> Source: [United Nations Population Fund](#). Accessed, October 2024.

<sup>4</sup> World Bank Group Data (2021) - <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/AG.LND.FRST.ZS?locations=BT>

<sup>5</sup> Ibid.

<sup>6</sup> Adapted from the *Final Evaluation Report of the United Nations Sustainable Development Partnership Framework for Bhutan 2019-2023*.

<sup>7</sup> UNDP *Results Oriented Annual Report* (2022).

## 1.2 The Governance Multi-Year Framework 2020-2023

7. It is within the above country context that the MYF 2020-2023 was implemented. The MYF was designed to:

- Leverage UNDP's role as lead agency for Outcome 3 under the United Nations Sustainable Development Partnership Framework (UNSDPF) 2019-2023.<sup>8</sup>
- Contribute to Outcome 1 of the CPD (2019-2023).<sup>9</sup>
- Align with and support the RGoB's vision in its 12<sup>th</sup> Five Year Plan (FYP) 2018-2023<sup>10</sup> and its aim to graduate from Least Developed Country (LDC) status.

8. The MYF's overarching objective was to support Bhutan to make a smooth transition from LDC status, increase its resilience to future shocks and progress on SDGs and GNH. A MYF results framework was developed and corresponding indicators, baselines, and targets were usually, but not always, defined. Four outputs and 15 sub-outputs were designed to achieve this objective, focusing on strengthening the capacity of governance institutions, thereby building public trust. Gender and vulnerable groups were mainstreamed throughout all outputs and sub-outputs, which were:

**Output 1.0: Central and local governments engage with citizens for equitable, effective and transparent service delivery** - supporting decentralisation and local governance which are at the core of Bhutan's governance reform since the objective of the country's 12<sup>th</sup> FYP.

**Sub-Output 1.1:** Evidence-based and informed enabling environment conducive to decentralisation is created.

**Sub-Output 1.2:** Ministries, Dzongkhags and Gewogs (civil servants and local elected representatives) provide cross-institutional capacity building support and ensure gender-responsive planning and budgeting.

**Sub-Output 1.3:** Citizens in selected communities participate in discourse on local governance.

**Sub-Output 1.4:** Inclusive and innovative local governance projects contribute to delivering SDGs at the local level.

**Output 2: Increased access, inclusion, transparency and accountability in the justice sector** - enabling a more strategic and coordinated approach to capacity building, data collection and management, research and policy responses to ensure justice is accessible to all.

**Sub-Output 2.1:** Strengthened capacities on justice sector leadership, governance, and collaboration.

**Sub-Output 2.2:** Strengthened Cross-institutional coordination harmonises justice sector capacity building mechanisms.

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<sup>8</sup> UNSDPF - Outcome 3: *National stakeholders strengthened to provide equal opportunities for all, particularly women and vulnerable groups.*

<sup>9</sup> CPD - Outcome 1: *By 2023, Government institutions provide equal opportunities for all, and women and vulnerable groups hold leaders accountable.*

<sup>10</sup> 12<sup>th</sup> Five Year Plan (2018-2023) - Vision: *A just, harmonious, and sustainable society through enhanced decentralisation.*

**Sub-Output 2.3:** Enhanced Data management ensures justice services are efficient, accountable and gender-responsive.

**Sub-Output 2.4:** Legal needs (including those of marginalised groups) are identified and addressed through research and policy support.

**Sub-Output 2.5:** Justice services are strengthened to respond to gender-based violence and enhance women’s and girls’ access to justice.

**Output 3: Parliament drives progress towards fundamental rights protection, sustainable development and GNH** - Supporting Parliament’s central role in implementing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, achieving Gross National Happiness, the SDGs, and building a just, harmonious and sustainable society in Bhutan as envisaged by the 12<sup>th</sup> FYP.

**Sub-Output 3.1:** Parliament enabled to steer the SDGs, Gross National Happiness, and the 12<sup>th</sup> FYP.

**Sub-Output 3.2:** Parliamentary Committees integrate public input and mainstream gender equality and environmental sustainability perspectives in draft legislation, policies, budgets and reports.

**Sub-Output 3.3:** Strengthened Parliamentary institutional processes, procedures and workflows.

**Sub-Output 3.4:** Participatory, inclusive and gender-balanced governance strengthened.

**Sub-Output 3.5:** Improved engagement between young men and women and the Parliament.

**Output 4: Effective, evidence-based and innovative project management in UNDP** - to facilitate a mechanism to enable the UNDP Country Office to tap into quick experimentation to find innovative solutions to reach the unreached.

**Sub-Output 4.1:** Innovative ways to reach the unreached are explored and implemented

9. The MYF and its development logic was structured around a theory of change incorporating six broad ‘causal statements’ or assumptions leading to the MYF’s overall goal:<sup>11</sup>

**Table 1.** Summary of MYF Contribution to the Defined Theory of Change

Causal Statements	MYF Contribution
<i>If, the capacities of ministries, dzongkhags and gewogs (civil servants and local elected representatives) are strengthened to complement increased fiscal decentralisation and ensure gender responsive planning and budgeting, paving the way for enhanced government/citizen engagement and improved public service delivery;</i>	MYF Output 1 and Sub-outputs 1.1-1.4 contributed to this assumption.
<i>If, the capacities of justice sector institutions are strengthened to enable coherent strategic planning and oversight across the sector which ensures access to justice for all, especially those</i>	MYF Output 2 and Sub-outputs 2.1-2.5

<sup>11</sup> A summary narrative of the MYF’s contributions to each causal statement is found in **Section 3.1** and **Table 10**.

Causal Statements	MYF Contribution
most at risk of being left behind including survivors of Gender Based Violence (GBV) in achieving the SDGs;	contributed to this assumption.
<i>If</i> , the legislative, oversight and representation functions of Parliament are strengthened and exercised in an inclusive manner and with people’s participation to drive progress towards inclusive and equitable decision-making as well as sustainable development and GNH;	MYF Output 3 and Sub-outputs 3.1-3.5 contributed to this assumption.
<i>If</i> , the formal and informal structural barriers to achieving gender equality, including discriminatory social norms and practices are transformed into a conducive eco-system, and existing gender dynamics become equal, and	MYF Output 4 contributed to this assumption.
<i>If</i> , the enabling environment for civil society is improved to help advance opportunities for and increase resilience targeted vulnerable groups, while capacities of vulnerable groups have their voices heard, and acted on also improves,	MYF Output 4 contributed to this assumption.
<i>If</i> , core governance institutions are able to discharge their responsibilities and provide vital services also in times of emergency, including based on digital and other innovative solutions,	MYF Outputs 1-4 (and related sub-outputs) jointly contributed to this assumption.
<i>Then</i> , Bhutan will make a smooth transition from LDC status, increase its resilience to future shocks, and progress on SDGs and GNH.	MYF Outputs 1-4 jointly contributed to this overarching objective.

10. UNDP worked closely with a diverse range of counterparts, implementing partners, and funding partners throughout the MYF, including:

- *RGoB counterparts and implementing partners* - supported activity prioritisation, planning, and implementation of MYF activities. These partners included the: Ministry of Finance; Ministry of Health; National Assembly; National Council; Public Service Delivery Division, Office of the Prime Minister; Royal Civil Service Commission; and Social and Cultural Affairs Committee of the National Council. These partners were particularly active in supporting MYF activities under Outputs 1 and 3, as detailed in **Section 2.0**, below.
- *Justice Sector Implementing Partners* - actively contributed to, facilitated, localised, and lead the implementation of MYF activities. These partners included the: Alternative Dispute Resolution Centre; Bar Council; Bhutan National Legal Institute; JSW Law School; Legal Aid Centre; NCWC; OAG; and Royal Court of Justice. These partners were particularly active in supporting the MYF under Output 2, as detailed in **Section 2.0**, below.
- *Civil Society Partners* - enabled broad-based engagement with community and vulnerable groups. Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) also implemented and provided technical contributions to MYF activities. These partners included the: Disabled People’s Organisation; Youth Development Fund; Loden Foundation; RENEW; and Bhutan Center for Media and Democracy. These partners were active in supporting MYF activities under Outputs 1, 3 and 4, as detailed in **Section 2.0**, below.

## 1.3 Purpose and Scope of the Independent Evaluation

11. The independent evaluation of the *Independent Evaluation of the MYF* serves an important accountability function. It provides a high-level analysis of the MYF's implementation experience to provide stakeholders with an impartial assessment of the United Nations Development Programme's (UNDP) MYF's results.

12. The independent evaluation covered the full MYF implementation period (January 2020-December 2023), and six months of the 12-month extension period (*note*: only Outputs 2 & 4 were extended). Furthermore, the evaluation reviewed and assessed:

- all four MYF outputs (detailed in **Section 1.2**, above);
- the 15 sub-outputs defined in the revised MYF design; and
- all projects and activities implemented across Bhutan and reported on by the MYF (over 80 in total).

13. The evaluation scope and structure was guided by the terms of reference for the assignment and by the evaluation criteria and questions they included (found in **Annex One**). Consequently, the evaluation assessed the MYF against:

- four of the OECD/DAC evaluation criteria (relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, and sustainability)
- Human Rights-based Approach principles; and
- Leaving No One Behind principles.<sup>12</sup>

It also identifies and documents lessons and recommendations based on the implementation experience to inform future governance strategies and initiatives under UNDP's new Country Programme Document for Bhutan (CPD) 2024-2028.

## 1.4 Approach and Methodology for the Independent Evaluation

### Evaluation Approach

14. The evaluator adopted an inclusive and participatory approach. All engagement and interaction during the evaluation was undertaken based on the following key principles:

- **Partnership, dignity, and respect** - to establish collaborative working relationships, enable participation, and maximise the evaluation's outcomes.
- **Recognition of the cultural and social context** - so that evaluation activities and the Evaluation Report are appropriate and relevant to the Bhutanese context.
- **Ethical conduct and behaviour**<sup>13</sup> - to uphold integrity, accountability, respect, and beneficence so that the evaluation is conducted fairly and impartially.
- **Clear communication** - so that all those involved in the evaluation clearly understand the aim, objectives, potential limitations, intended outcomes, and their role.

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<sup>12</sup> These principles focus on vulnerable groups, including economically disadvantaged; persons with disabilities; women; rural communities; elderly; and indigenous groups.

<sup>13</sup> Complying with *UNEG Ethical Guidelines for Evaluation* (2020).

15. A strengths-based approach was adopted to ensure that lessons and recommendations were framed in a useful and constructive manner for UNDP and MYF stakeholders. The *evaluation matrix* was developed (see **Annex Two**) to structure and guide the evaluation. The matrix is based on the evaluation criteria and questions defined in the terms of reference for this assignment.

## Data Selection and Collection

16. The evaluation adopted a ‘mixed method’ approach. This approach enabled data and information to be collected from multiple sources, allowing for a comprehensive understanding of both measurable (quantitative) results, and deeper contextual (qualitative) insights to be obtained. Data sources were identified by using a purposive approach, namely they were identified based on their:

- relevance to the MYF and its activities;
- ability to contribute relevant and representative data to inform the evaluation; and/or
- knowledge and experience of the MYF and its activities.

17. Additionally, identification of data sources was informed by the evaluation’s terms of reference; consultations with UNDP; and the evaluator’s additional research. This approach enabled the evaluation to identify relevant:

- Reports, research, information, and data for the document review, including: UNDP global, regional and country strategies; international research; MYF and activity documents; monitoring reports; and selected activity evaluations.
- Key informants for the consultations, who were able to provide informed insights on the MYF, and respond effectively to the evaluation questions.

18. Data was collected via:

- Document review and research**<sup>14</sup> - this drew on secondary data, and was intended to be undertaken early in the evaluation period and completed before commencing the in-country mission. The initial document review provided key information that was used to formulate questions in the *evaluation matrix*. The matrix was then used to guide and structure subsequent data collection and consultations. In reality, a significant portion of documentation only became available at the end of the in-country mission.
- A Field Data Collection Mission** - was conducted between 14-28 September, 2024 to undertake primary data collection - engaging with 55 individuals from six key informant groups (discussed further below). This enabled the evaluator to comprehensively collect data from a full cross-section of MYF stakeholders, implementing partners, beneficiaries, and UN counterparts involved in implementing the MYF.

Consultation and engagement methods were identified based on their ability to positively contribute to the purposive approach adopted. Consequently, the following combination of methods was used during the mission:

- *Semi-structured Interviews* - were framed around semi-standardised questions informed by the approved *evaluation matrix* and the defined *evaluation questions*. This data collection technique was selected to enable the evaluation to engage with

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<sup>14</sup> A list of documents included in the document review is found in **Annex Three**.



key informants to collect credible, reliable, and useful information on the MYF and its interventions. One-on-one interviews were held with 20 key informants. Notably, interviews were conducted in a manner that also enabled interviewees to provide additional relevant information and feedback, if they desired.

- *Focus Group and Small Discussions* - questions were informed by the approved *evaluation matrix* and the related *evaluation questions*; however, engagement was more interactive than in the semi-structured interviews. This data collection technique was selected to enable the evaluator to use more open questioning techniques to elicit more qualitative and contextualised information. A total of 35 key informants were involved in these discussions.
- *Stakeholder Surveys* - This data collection technique was selected to give respondents from all key informant groups an opportunity to provide feedback confidentially. The survey tool was informed by the approved *evaluation matrix* and was targeted for each key stakeholder group. The survey was distributed to all participants in the consultations (55 in total); and their institution/organisations (25 in total) for further distribution.<sup>15</sup> Despite follow-up, only three survey responses were received within the timeframe available for the field data collection process.<sup>16</sup> Consequently, the data collected through the surveys was only used for corroboration or support in triangulation, and not as a stand-alone data set.
- *Observation/Field Visits* - to Trongsa District<sup>17</sup> provided an opportunity to collect information and practical insights on results, challenges, and outcomes for beneficiaries. This data collection technique was selected to enable the evaluation to capture qualitative data that was not evident from other data collection sources. This, in turn, provided the evaluation with a more comprehensive understanding of the MYF's progress, achievements, and lessons.

19. The purposive sampling approach adopted ensured that key informants participating in the consultations were representative of:

- All key MYF counterparts, institutions, and implementation partners (summarised in *paragraph 10*, above).
- Vulnerable groups that were supported by the MYF.
- Available beneficiaries of the MYF's activities.

20. Key informants were identified with UNDP's support using this approach. They represented a comprehensive cross-section of MYF stakeholders, implementing partners, beneficiaries, and UN counterparts involved in implementing the MYF. The evaluation engaged with 55 individuals from six key informant groups as summarised in Table 2:<sup>18</sup>

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<sup>15</sup> The survey template is found in **Annex Four**.

<sup>16</sup> This potential constraint was identified in the Inception Report, but extension of the evaluation's timeframes was not possible.

<sup>17</sup> Trongsa District was identified for the field visit with the assistance of UNDP as it enabled the most representative sample of MYF activities (including activities under Outputs 2 and 3, as well as under the 'health' activities) to be observed within the limited timeframes available during the in-Bhutan mission.

<sup>18</sup> A full list of those consulted during the evaluation is found in **Annex Five**.

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**Table 2.** Summary Ratings of MYF Outputs Against Targets in the Results Framework

Key Informant Group	No. of Interviewees
Justice Sector	15
United Nations Development Programme	13
Royal Government of Bhutan	12
Beneficiaries	6
Civil Society Organisations	6
Other UN Agencies	3
<b>Total:</b>	<b>55</b>

21. Gender, inclusion, and cultural dimensions were also considered and integrated into the evaluation. UNDP provided valuable insights on the local context that assisted with maximising inclusion during the consultations. Explicit consideration was given to ensuring that gender and inclusion considerations were integrated into the evaluation matrix, which directly influenced the subsequent data collection process. Dedicated questions on gender equality and empowerment<sup>19</sup> were included to ensure that data on gender-focused support, challenges, and results were sought in all consultation activities. Furthermore, the survey tool was designed to include questions for all respondents targeted at eliciting data on the MYF's activities specifically relating to gender and vulnerable groups results and challenges.

22. Gender responsiveness and inclusion considerations were further integrated into the evaluation and consultation methodology by maximising diversity in the selection of key informants. Disaggregated data for all those involved in the evaluation's activities was collected (as illustrated in Table 3), demonstrating this inclusive approach:

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**Table 3.** Inclusion and Gender Responsiveness in the Evaluation/Consultation Methodology

Diversity in Key Informants	% of Total
Percentage of Key Informants: Female	47.3%
Percentage of Key Informants: PwD/PwDs CSOs	7.3%
Percentage of Key Informants: Young Persons	16.4%
Percentage of Key Informants: Field Observation Visit (i.e. outside Thimphu/rural)	14.5%
Percentage of Key Informants: Community/CSOs	10.1%

### Data Analysis and Triangulation

23. *Qualitative data* was analysed by:

- i. Undertaking a 'thematic analysis', which collated and analysed data to identify patterns or themes that repeatedly appeared throughout the data.

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<sup>19</sup> For example, the consultation questions in the evaluation matrix under 2.7, 3.7, 5.3, and 5.4.

- ii. Presenting data clearly and concisely (in written, tabular, or graphic form) so that the reader can easily grasp the identified themes.

24. *Quantitative data* was analysed using relevant arithmetic approaches. The method of presentation was selected to facilitate the reader's understanding of the results, and included consideration of: graphic representation of numeric data in charts; use of percentages; tabulation; or weighted distribution.

25. The interview and discussion techniques adopted ensured that the qualitative information obtained was able to be verified to maximise data validity and the credibility of the findings and conclusions based on that data. Verification during consultations was achieved by:

- providing interviewees with a dot-point summary or an oral summation during the engagement; and
- confirming the evaluator's understanding of the information received and assumptions made during discussions to ensure that these align with participants' views.

26. The evaluation's approach to analysing the data and feedback gathered was to then also triangulate the information collected against multiple data sources. Information and opinions elicited from the consultations were cross-checked against available quantitative and qualitative data, enabling the evaluator to corroborate the information received. This methodology reduced uncertainty; mitigated individual biases; and verified and strengthened the evaluation's findings, conclusions, and recommendations.

## 1.5 Evaluation Limitations

27. The lack of a national consultant to support the evaluation significantly impacted the approach to implementation and the resources available to conduct the assignment. This absence of local technical and support resources resulted in significant reliance on the UNDP team,<sup>20</sup> and significantly more drafting time than envisaged in the terms of reference on the part of the evaluator.

28. To ensure that the evaluation's independence was not compromised, the evaluation successfully overcame this limitation by adopting the following strategies:

- Data was collected and triangulate across multiple data sources to promote the certainty, validity, and credibility of the conclusions and findings made.
- Consultations were conducted in the absence of UNDP personnel whenever possible.
- No members of the UNDP Governance Team who implemented the MYF activities participated in consultations with stakeholders or implementing partners. Where needed, a UNDP Results Based Management and Programme Management Team member provided support.
- All those consulted were given the opportunity to decide whether they wished to participate in the consultations/evaluation process.

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<sup>20</sup> This constraint was highlighted in the Evaluation Inception Report, noting that this is contrary to the direction of the *UNDP Evaluation Guidelines* (2021, emphasis in original) that: "...[t]o ensure independence and confidentiality, **UNDP staff should not participate in any stakeholder or beneficiary meetings.**" Furthermore, this challenge placed additional demands on the UNDP Governance Team, resulting in delays in accessing documentation relevant to the evaluation.

- All those consulted were given the opportunity to provide confidential feedback, either as part of the discussions, by email, or through the survey.

29. It became apparent during consultations that the availability of counterparts with experience throughout the MYF's implementation, as well as beneficiaries with direct exposure to the MYF's activities, were limited. For beneficiaries (particularly of COVID-related support), this was mainly due to the laps of time. For the Royal Government of Bhutan (RGoB) and implementing partners, the 'exodus of civil servants'<sup>21</sup> had a significant impact.

30. The evaluation successfully overcame this constraint by adopting the following strategy:

- Consultations with additional respondents from the key informant groups were scheduled to obtain as diverse and detailed information as possible.
- Greater reliance was placed on documentary information (such as activity designs, activity reports, and progress monitoring) to provide additional data to support and validate information gained from the consultations. Unfortunately, the detail and availability of some MYF-related documents were not always sufficient, making assessment of results and achievements difficult at times.

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<sup>21</sup> UNDP *Results Oriented Annual Report (2022)*.

## 2.0 FINDINGS

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31. The following discussions and findings are framed by the evaluation criteria and questions defined in the terms of reference. Related evaluation questions have been addressed together, where this facilitates the discussion and analysis of findings.

### 2.1 Relevance - The extent to which the MYF activities are suited to the priorities and policies of the country at the time of formulation

#### UNDP's Strategic Positioning and Comparative Advantage in Governance<sup>22</sup>

**Finding 1.** UNDP has leveraged its strong reputation and position of trust to build strong relationships and engage at all levels, from RGoB and implementing partners, to CSOs and vulnerable groups. The MYF's approach to develop and test innovative solutions in partnership with the Accelerator Lab also enabled UNDP to positively and successfully differentiate itself from other development partners.

32. UNDP's engagement in governance reflects the strategic concerns and priorities as articulated in the UNSDPF (2019-2023), the CPD (2019-2023), and the RGoB's 12<sup>th</sup> Five Year Plan (2018-2023) (discussed further below). More particularly, as confirmed across multiple interviews with various counterparts and implementing partners, UNDP in its governance portfolio maximised its comparative advantage by building on its:

- Trust-based relations with the RGoB as a long-term partner for sustainable growth.<sup>23</sup>
- Strong reputation and track record in providing policy advice and supporting locally-led policy development.<sup>24</sup>
- Ability to engage effectively across government, institutions, and civil society to develop holistic public service delivery partnerships.<sup>25</sup>
- Position as 'the partner of choice'<sup>26</sup> in supporting the justice sector and related reform programmes.

33. Additionally, UNDP's launch of the Accelerator Lab<sup>27</sup> in 2020, created a platform for piloting and testing innovative solutions. The success of the Accelerator Lab's support of governance-related initiatives under the MYF is a further positive point of differentiation over against other development partners.

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<sup>22</sup> Addressing evaluation question 1.1 in the Evaluation Matrix.

<sup>23</sup> See discussion in *Paragraph 107 ff.*

<sup>24</sup> See discussion in *Paragraphs 41 and 68 ff.*

<sup>25</sup> See discussion in *Paragraphs 107-112.*

<sup>26</sup> Independent Evaluation Office (2023), *Independent Country Programme Evaluation - Bhutan*. Page 26.

<sup>27</sup> Accelerator Labs have been developed to foster innovation by collaborating with local communities to develop and test solutions that enhance resilience and advance UN SDGs.

## Alignment of MYF Outputs to Strategic Objectives and Outcomes<sup>28</sup>

**Finding 2.** The MYF was designed to be closely aligned with the RGoB's national development priorities, as well as to UN Agenda 2030, UNSDPF, and CPD outcomes. This close alignment enabled the MYF to contribute to strategic objectives nationally and globally. Additionally, UNDP swiftly adapted its programming to respond effectively to the shift in RGoB priorities and needs due to the COVID-19 pandemic, thereby maintaining the MYF's relevance.

34. The design of the MYF explicitly aligns UNDP's governance interventions with Bhutan's development priorities. Furthermore, there is close alignment between SDGs and National Key Results Areas. Consequently, the MYF reflects the priorities articulated in the 12<sup>th</sup> Five Year Plan and directly supports several of the priority areas for creating a 'Just Society'.<sup>29</sup> Examples of relevant support included:

- Strengthening democracy and decentralisation<sup>30</sup>
- Improving justice services and institutions<sup>31</sup>
- Promoting gender equality<sup>32</sup>

35. The COVID-19 pandemic necessitated a significant shift in RGoB priorities and resources. UNDP responded quickly, re-designing the MYF and its governance portfolio to align these with emerging demands and funding. This shift in support aligned with the RGoB's revised priorities, which focused on digitalisation in public service delivery and addressing increased demand for health sector governance and service delivery support. Of necessity, re-prioritisation also resulted in a reallocation of resources. This most heavily impacted proposed support to local governance (particularly under MYF Output 1), limiting planned legislative and policy review work.

36. At the country level, the MYF was explicitly aligned with, and contributed to, UN and UNDP strategic objectives and outcomes, including:

- Outcome 3 of the UNSDPF 2019-2023 - *National stakeholders strengthened to provide equal opportunities for all, particularly women and vulnerable groups* (as summarised in Section 3.1, and illustrated in the detailed discussions in **Section 2.2**, below).
- Outcome 1 of the UNDP CPD 2019-2023 - *By 2023, Government institutions provide equal opportunities for all, and women and vulnerable groups hold leaders accountable* (as summarised in Section 3.1, and illustrated in the detailed discussions in **Section 2.2**, below).

The relationship between these strategic outcomes and the MYF's outputs is further illustrated in **Annex Six**.

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<sup>28</sup> Addressing evaluation questions 1.2 and 1.3 in the Evaluation Matrix.

<sup>29</sup> Gross National Happiness Commission (2019), *Twelfth Five Year Plan 2018-2023*. Page 26

<sup>30</sup> See discussion in *Paragraphs 44-51 and 68-79*.

<sup>31</sup> See discussion in *Paragraphs 52-67*.

<sup>32</sup> See discussion in *Paragraph 118 ff*.

37. At the global level, the MYF directly contributed to UNDP’s strategic objectives and outcomes. The MYF’s objective and outputs were directly aligned with:

- UNDP Signature Solutions Two (Governance); Three (Resilience); and Six (gender).
- SDGs 5 and 16. As seen from the graphic on the right, progress against the SDGs to which the MYF has contributed is, however, slow.<sup>33</sup>



### Appropriateness of MYF Delivery for the Bhutanese Context<sup>34</sup>

**Finding 3.** UNDP’s mode of delivery for individual MYF activities was determined by how to achieve the best development results from each activity. This approach was seen as appropriate in the local context. This resulted in a ‘dual approach’, combining both local and direct implementation, which is seen as responsive to implementing partners’ capacity and constraints. Furthermore, it was found that closer alignment between implementing partners’ and UNDP’s systems can simplify activity management, accountability, and reporting processes.

38. As at June 2023, six projects (73.4% of expenditure) were directly implemented by UNDP and five projects (26.6% of expenditure) were nationally implemented under the governance portfolio.<sup>35</sup> The Ministry of Finance informed the evaluation of the perception that there is sufficient capacity and appropriate systems in place for projects to be nationally implemented. Furthermore, national implementation was seen as having the potential to build in-house management capacity. Conversely, consultations with several implementing partners and counterparts highlighted that national implementation (particularly regarding financial management, monitoring, and evaluation) is *often not the preferred implementation modality*. This, the evaluation was informed, was because implementing partner’s resources were limited, and so project/activity management was not considered a priority.

39. Consultations also highlighted that the administrative burden of managing small-scale activities was, at times, onerous. Additionally, while acknowledging that MYF and annual planning aligned with RGoB priorities, several implementing partners and counterparts highlighted that closer alignment or integration with implementing partner’s requirements would be valuable including:

- strengthening ongoing engagement and communication throughout implementation;
- aligning budgeting and related reporting with RGoB financial reporting periods; and
- standardising reporting requirements across activities and donor partners.

40. The approach adopted to determine whether national or direct implementation was used in individual circumstances was not clearly documented. The evaluation was informed that the implementation method was determined based on donor requirements and an assessment of how the best development results from a particular activity can be achieved.

<sup>33</sup> United Nations (2024) *Sustainable Development Report*, [Bhutan County Data](#).

<sup>34</sup> Addressing evaluation question 1.4 in the Evaluation Matrix.

<sup>35</sup> Independent Evaluation Office (2023), *Independent Country Programme Evaluation - Bhutan*. Page 16.

## Contribution to National Dialogue, Debates, and Policy<sup>36</sup>

**Finding 4.** UNDP and the MYF have played a catalytic role in initiating and championing inclusive dialogue and debate to inform participatory policy development and decision-making. The MYF's support contributed significantly to informing and shaping the gender equality and Persons with Disabilities assessments and policies, which have the potential to contribute to transformative change in Bhutan.

41. Through the MYF, UNDP has fostered inclusive dialogue and debate, thereby significantly shaping and informing national policy development and priorities. This success is demonstrated by the technical and financial support<sup>37</sup> provided to:

- Developing the *National Gender Equality Policy*<sup>38</sup> (approved in 2020) and the *National Plan of Action for Gender Equality* in 2021.
- Developing the *National Policy for Persons with Disabilities* (PwDs).
- Designing and developing the online [Citizen Engagement Platform](#) that enabled Parliament to be more agile and systematically seek public input and feedback on policy issues and legislative matters.
- Conducting the *first public hearing session* with the Parliament of Bhutan.
- Developing guidelines and establishing Bhutan's first *legal aid* programme through a multi-stakeholder partnership between government, justice institutions, and civil society.
- Developing an action plan to promote *gender equality in public administration* in partnership with the NCWC and the UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UN DESA). This focused on gender equality in the public sector and was based on an in-depth review of measures to promote women's presence and leadership in public administration.
- Facilitating multi-stakeholder dialogues and consultations between Parliamentarians, women, youth, local government, CSOs, and academia to inform and integrate diverse views into the development of the *10<sup>th</sup> Periodic CEDAW Report* and the *3<sup>rd</sup> Universal Periodic Review* process.
- Supporting the formulation of the *13<sup>th</sup> Five Year Plan* and the *Second Justice Sector Strategic Plan*.

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<sup>36</sup> Addressing evaluation question 1.5 in the Evaluation Matrix.

<sup>37</sup> See also the detailed discussion in *Section 2.2* on the activities listed.

<sup>38</sup> The *National Gender Equality Policy* was later revised with UNDP's support to broaden its focus to include LGBTI+.



## 2.2 Effectiveness - The Extent to Which MYF Activities Attain Defined Objectives

### Achievement of Outputs and Contribution to Outcomes<sup>39</sup>

**Finding 5.** The MYF and UNDP's governance programming is found to have been largely effective. The MYF's interventions have substantially advanced inclusive democratic governance, strengthened governance institutions, promoted access to justice, and supported greater social inclusion in Bhutan.

UNDP's initiatives to digitalise public service delivery aligned with RGoB priorities and have fostered more inclusive, client-centred services. Engagement with the justice sector has built institutional capacity, strengthened access to justice, and promoted inclusiveness through legal aid services and online service delivery. Support for assessments, analyses, and facilitation of participatory policy and decision-making has directly contributed to strengthened and more inclusive democratic governance. Furthermore, the MYF's work with CSOs has raised community awareness of fundamental rights, altered perceptions of social gender norms, and supported inclusion and resilience for vulnerable groups. This work has opened 'civic space' and led to a recognition of the valuable role CSOs play in supporting engagement and grassroots service delivery, particularly for vulnerable groups.

The re-focus of MYF support in response to the COVID-19 pandemic resulted in UNDP supporting health policy and service delivery. While not traditionally a sector UNDP has engaged with, this support was found to be timely, relevant, and appropriate.

Programmatically, there was a disconnect between the MYF's significant achievements and the defined outputs, indicators, and targets. This was found to be mainly due to the MYF results framework not being revised following the re-alignment of MYF support in response to the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic.

42. Each MYF Output and related activities, achievements, and challenges are discussed below. As is illustrated in the following discussions, the MYF *has achieved significant and valuable results* and made substantial contributions to UN and UNDP national-level outcomes that:

*By 2023, Government institutions provide equal opportunities for all, and women and vulnerable groups hold leaders accountable* (CPD Outcome 1; UNSDPF Outcome 3)

43. All outputs and sub-outputs have been assessed and rated<sup>40</sup> against the defined indicators and targets. Additionally, a commentary summarising progress made collectively has been provided under each output discussion.

<sup>39</sup> Addressing evaluation questions 2.1 and 2.2 in the Evaluation Matrix.

<sup>40</sup> The four-point rating scale has been adapted from the one used in the *Independent Country Programme Evaluation, Bhutan (2023)*, Annex 8. It is used to measure the level of achievement against defined targets:

- 4 = *Fully Achieved/Satisfactory*: Target(s) are exceeded/fully met.
- 3 = *Substantially Achieved/Moderately Satisfactory*: Most target(s) are met/only minor shortfalls exist.
- 2 = *Partially Achieved/Moderately Unsatisfactory*: Only some target(s) are met/significant shortfalls exist.
- 1 = *Not Achieved/Unsatisfactory*: Limited or no achievement of target(s).

**Output 1: Central and local governments engage with citizens for an equitable, effective and transparent service delivery:**

**Table 4.** Output 1 - Commentary on Progress against the MYF Results Framework

Outputs	Indicators	Baseline	Target	Progress Towards Defined Targets
1.1: Evidence based & informed enabling environment conducive to decentralisation created	1.1.1: Number of evidence-based policies and programme documents proposed for the implementation of the DLG Action Plan	0	4	The MYF only contributed to two (2) evidence-based areas of support to the enabling environment for decentralisation by providing a preliminary <i>analysis paper on electoral and decentralisation issues</i> ; and through support to the Election Commission of Bhutan to conduct capacity building in <i>election reporting training for media, and a voter education</i> . Consequently, only limited progress towards the target was made. <b>(Rating = 2)</b> <sup>40</sup>
1.2: Ministries, Dzongkhags and Gewogs (civil servants and local elected representatives) provide cross-institutional capacity building support and ensure gender-responsive planning and budgeting	1.2.1: Number of Dzongkhags that have included explicit targets and budget allocations relating to SDGs (including gender equality) in the planning documents	0	20	No (0) dzongkhags integrated explicit targets and budget allocations relating to SDGs. Consequently, no progress towards the target was made. <b>(Rating = 1)</b>
1.3: Citizens in selected communities participate in discourse on local governance	1.3.1: Number of CSOs, women and youth groups and other community groups representing vulnerable groups that have made recommendations and/or proposals for improvements in local public service	0	27	Only three (3) substantive recommendations and/or proposals for improvements in local public service made by community/ vulnerable group CSOs, namely in the: design and construction of a <i>mobility ramp</i> ; <i>process re-engineering activity for three public services</i> collecting and integrating user feedback; and <i>integration of PwDs concerns and need in development of digital solutions</i> (including Bhutan Vaccine System and Gakyid Ride App.) Consequently, no significant progress towards the target was made. <b>(Rating = 1)</b>

Outputs	Indicators	Baseline	Target	Progress Towards Defined Targets
1.4: Inclusive and innovative local governance projects contribute to delivering SDGs at the local level	1.4.1: Number of innovative initiatives from LGs, CSOs, CBOs and/or community members implemented	0	12	Only six (6) inclusive and innovative local governance projects were implemented, including the: <i>Serve Tool</i> ; <i>Gakyid Ride App</i> ; <i>Citizen Engagement Platform</i> ; <i>Bhutan Vaccine System</i> ; <i>Court E-litigation system</i> ; and <i>Naykab Gokab</i> innovator's platform. Consequently, only limited progress towards the target was made. <b>(Rating = 2)</b>

44. UNDP supported the development of a preliminary analysis paper on electoral and decentralisation issues and local government performance that informed the amendment of the *Local Government Act (2009)*. These amendments strengthened citizen participation so that more inclusive local governance and decision-making are now possible. Additionally, support was provided to the Election Commission of Bhutan to conduct election reporting training for media, and a voter education programme. This capacity building is attributed with a:

- 20% increase in women-voter turnout in 2021 over the previous election in 2016.
- 300% increase in female representation - from one female Gup (head of a group of villages) in the 2016 local government election to seven female Gups in the 2021 elections.<sup>41</sup>

45. UNDP's support to promote improved efficiency in public service delivery was also advanced by the *Review of Service Delivery Standards* and process re-engineering activity for three public services.<sup>42</sup> This support resulted in the simplification of these inter-related processes. An earlier assessment identified a 40% reduction in turn-around time for the delivery of services and high levels of satisfaction among service users.<sup>43</sup>

46. UNDP's technical and financial support to enable citizen-government engagement and inclusive dialogue (further discussed in *paragraph 41*, above) also contributed indirectly to this output. Furthermore, to enable an effective response to COVID-19, UNDP focused support on developing a range of digital solutions to address emerging needs.

47. An important intervention was the design and development of a *Serve Tool*, which supported effective and transparent service delivery. This online survey tool enables citizens to provide real-time feedback on their service experience, and on the performance of government personnel they have engaged with. The tool was piloted with seven service areas.<sup>44</sup>

<sup>41</sup> UNDP *Results Oriented Annual Report (2021)*; and Independent Evaluation Office (2023), *Independent Country Programme Evaluation - Bhutan*. Pages 40-41.

<sup>42</sup> These services are issuance of learner license, issuance of driving license, and drivers' license renewal. Notably while closely related services, each aspect was managed separately and was not integrated with the other services areas before this support.

<sup>43</sup> UNDP *Results Oriented Annual Report (2021)*; and Independent Evaluation Office (2023), *Independent Country Programme Evaluation - Bhutan*. Page 20.

<sup>44</sup> The service areas related to land transactions; driving licenses; environmental clearances for business projects or development; hospital services; business licensing and license renewal; school admissions; and commercial farming.

48. The ServE Tool’s utility and perceived value are demonstrated by the Royal Civil Service Commission’s ongoing expansion of the number of services included in the tool. Consultations informed the evaluation that 38 of 118 service areas have now been integrated, with the RGoB planning to add a further 10-15 services annually. Data available to the evaluation shows that feedback from 14,708 service users had been received,<sup>45</sup> facilitating continuous improvement in public service delivery.

49. In support of the ServE Tool, Empathy Skills Training was also provided to 232 public servants to build their capacity to deliver quality services. The combination of the ServE Tool, Empathy Skills Training, and performance assessment was seen by key informants as having led to an attitudinal shift within the public service towards more client-focused service delivery.

50. Another digital solution developed was the *Gakyid Ride App*. The app provides users with up-to-date information on 45 buses across Thimphu Thromde. It aims to promote public transport usage and reduce emissions and congestion.

51. With the advent of the COVID-19 pandemic; however, a significant shift in RGoB priorities and resources occurred. UNDP’s response to align its support with emerging governance demands and funding resulted in the de-prioritising of activities under Output 1.

**Output 2 - Increased access, inclusion, transparency and accountability in the justice sector:**

**Table 5.** Output 2 - Commentary on Progress against the MYF Results Framework

Outputs	Indicators	Baseline	Target	Progress Towards Defined Targets
2.1: Strengthened capacities on justice sector leadership, governance, and collaboration	2.1.1: Percentage of the JS implementation plans (that UNDP supported) implemented	0%	100%	All (100%) justice sector implementation plans were supported under the MYF, including the: first <i>Justice Sector Strategic Plan</i> ; <i>Legal Aid Centre Strategic Plan</i> ; <i>Bar Council Strategic Plan</i> ; <i>Legal Aid Dissemination Plan</i> ; <i>Implementation Plan for E-litigation</i> ; <i>Access to Justice Toolkit</i> ; and development of the <i>Second Justice Sector Strategic Plan</i> . Consequently, the target was met. <b>(Rating = 4)</b>
2.2: Strengthened Cross-institutional coordination harmonises justice sector capacity building mechanisms	2.2.1: Strategy for capacity development of Justice sector developed and its implementation is	0	1	No (0) MYF support was provided to this Sub-output as the Austrian Development Agency provided funding and technical assistance in this area. Consequently, MYF progress towards these three indicators and targets could not be assessed.

<sup>45</sup> UNDP *Results Oriented Annual Report* (2023).

Outputs	Indicators	Baseline	Target	Progress Towards Defined Targets
	monitored and evaluated			(Note: the MYF Results Framework was not updated to reflect this change in funding and activities).
2.3: Enhanced Data management ensures justice services are efficient, accountable and gender responsive	2.3.1: Reduction in average turn-around-time for delivery of justice services	-	10%	
	2.3.2: Integrated case management system to track criminal and civil cases, and support data collection and analysis for ADR mechanisms especially grassroots ADR operational.	0	1	
2.4: Legal needs (including those of vulnerable groups) are identified and addressed through research and policy support	2.4.1: 80% of eligible criminal cases receive legal aid support and/or free legal advice using the newly established mechanism (disaggregated by VGs)	0	80%	All (100%) eligible criminal cases (totalling over 100 indigent persons, as defined in the <i>Legal Aid Rules [2022]</i> ) received legal aid support and/or free legal advice. Consequently, the target was exceeded. <b>(Rating = 4)</b>
2.5: Justice services are strengthened to respond to gender-based violence and enhance women's and girls' access to justice	2.5.1: Number of women and girls GBV survivors who utilised GBV support mechanisms  OR  The percentage of trainees reporting increased knowledge on ESP for Women and Girls subjected to violence	-	TBC	As no data on baseline, target, or progress was available, achievement could not be assessed.

52. UNDP has positioned itself as ‘the partner of choice’<sup>46</sup> in supporting the justice sector and related reform programmes. Immediately prior to the commencement of the MYF, UNDP provided programmatic support to articulate and draft the first Justice Sector Strategic Plan

<sup>46</sup> Independent Evaluation Office (2023), *Independent Country Programme Evaluation - Bhutan*. Page 26.

(2019-2023) for Bhutan. This work consolidated the partnership between Justice Sector agencies and UNDP and positioned UNDP as a Justice Sector Working Group member throughout the MYF.

53. Based on this constructive relationship, UNDP has successfully engaged with eleven justice sector institutions under the MYF.<sup>47</sup> This collaboration has enabled UNDP to support key interventions that have strengthened policy, inclusion, transparency, and accountability across the sector. UNDP supported and facilitated the development of the *Second Justice Sector Strategic Plan* to guide and coordinate the sector's ongoing development activities under the 13<sup>th</sup> Five Year Plan. Additional strategy-level support was also provided to the *Bar Council* to operationalise its Strategic Plan, and the *Alternative Dispute Resolution Centre* to finalise its Strategic Plan.

54. One of the key achievements under the MYF was UNDP's support to establish a functioning and inclusive legal aid system. This multi-year activity was initiated through a RGoB-CSO partnership between the Office of the Attorney General (OAG), Respect Educate Nurture Empower Women (RENEW), and the National Commission for Women and Children (NCWC). UNDP initially supported the development of a *Guideline on Legal Aid* and then implemented a pilot programme to provide legal aid support to 10 vulnerable women. These activities were complemented by the development of *Pro-Bono Legal Aid Guidelines* for private lawyers, which were developed in partnership with the OAG.

55. The pilot legal aid programme, implemented in partnership with RENEW, successfully demonstrated an 'effective delivery mechanism'. This provided sufficient evidence for the RGoB to formally introduce a *National Legal Aid System* in 2022. Subsequently, UNDP provided technical, financial, and capacity building to establish and operate a Legal Aid Centre in partnership with the Bhutan National Legal Institute. To further strengthen the provision of legal aid services, a 'hackathon challenge' was held in collaboration with Gyelpozhing College of Information Technology to develop a data management system. The hackathon's objective was for students at the college to design and showcase a data management system that will enable:

- efficient collection of disaggregated legal aid-related data;
- cases to be managed effectively and confidentially; and
- the Legal Aid Centre to analyse case data to improve overall service quality and accessibility.

56. At the time of this evaluation, the Legal Aid Centre is established and functional. It has provided legal aid services and support to over 100 indigent persons (as defined in the *Legal Aid Rules [2022]*), including five PwDs (all male).<sup>48</sup> Consultations during the evaluation confirm this positive result. They also highlighted the critical role that the Legal Aid Centre now plays in

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<sup>47</sup> These institutions are: Royal Court of Justice; Anti-Corruption Committee; OAG; Royal Bhutan Police; Bhutan National Legal Institute; JSW Law School; Bar Council; Legal Aid Centre; Alternative Dispute Resolution Centre; NCWC; and the Pema Secretariat.

<sup>48</sup> UNDP (2024), *Access to Justice for Women and Children with Disabilities in Bhutan - Project Completion Report*. Page 2.

improving access to justice and in protecting the constitutionally enshrined rights<sup>49</sup> of the most vulnerable groups in society.

57. Another example of MYF's support to strengthen the protection of rights and access to justice was the support to develop an e-litigation process. This support was initiated in response to access to court services constraints due to COVID-19 lockdowns. Technical and financial support focused on designing and developing an e-litigation system that enabled online case registration and remote/virtual court hearings to be held. This multi-year activity was initiated by creating a *Manual on E-litigation* and drafting court *Rules and Regulations for E-litigation*. Equipment was procured and installed in 10 courts and the OAG to operationalise the system. Extensive capacity building on the system and use of virtual conference equipment was provided to all judges and court officials, staff of the OAG, and members of the Royal Bhutan Police.

58. Consultations highlighted the importance of the e-litigation system to ensure continued access to justice during the COVID-19 pandemic. In 2021, 308 parties used the e-litigation system, and 12 Courts were able to conduct 13.5% of all hearings virtually.<sup>50</sup> Consultations (both within the courts and the broader justice sector) also highlighted the ongoing benefits of online hearings in enabling more accessible access to justice. As an example, the OAG noted the significant time and financial savings resulting from significantly reduced need to travel to court hearings outside of Thimphu or Paro.<sup>51</sup>

59. At the time of the evaluation; however, the e-litigation system has not realised its full potential. The e-litigation system was integrated with the Royal Courts of Justice's electronic case management system, which was subsequently hacked. Consequently, both systems have been offline for almost 2 years, with a new integrated system planned to become operational in 2025. This constraint starkly highlights a potential vulnerability when transitioning to digital systems if the digital 'enabling environment' lags behind innovation.

60. UNDP also supported the OAG and the Cabinet Office to develop a *Legislative Impact Assessment Handbook* and establish an *International Affairs Division*. Consultations indicated that this has significantly strengthened the capacity of the OAG to fulfil its legislative review and advice function. This has significantly reduced average turn-around-times for providing legal advice from 25 to 11 days.

61. Building capacity, advocating for inclusive justice solutions, and raising awareness of fundamental rights have been central to UNDP's engagement with the justice sector. This is demonstrated by UNDP's and the United Nations Children's Fund's (UNICEF) support to develop a *Toolkit for Access to Justice for Persons with Disabilities*. The toolkit was designed and drafted in close collaboration with PwDs and organisations for PwDs to make it relevant and accessible for individuals with diverse needs. It aims to empower PwDs by providing information, strategies, and tools to navigate the legal system effectively, thereby ensuring improved

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<sup>49</sup> *The Constitution of The Kingdom of Bhutan* (2008) - Article 7, Section 15: *All persons are equal before the law and are entitled to equal and effective protection of the law and shall not be discriminated against on the grounds of race, sex, language, religion, politics or other status.*

<sup>50</sup> UNDP *Results Oriented Annual Report* (2021). No further documented statistics on usage were available to the evaluation.

<sup>51</sup> Anecdotally, there have been savings of approximately 80-90% in the OAG travel budget compared to when all hearings were in person.

protection of this vulnerable group's rights. The Toolkit has now been embedded within the Legal Aid Centre to ensure that it remains an ongoing resource for advocacy and outreach efforts.

62. The benefits of the *Toolkit for Access to Justice for PwDs* were maximised through a *Street Law Programme*. This programme was designed and implemented in partnership with JSW Law School's Human Dignity Clinic. It adopted an innovative training approach through interactive skits and audience participation to raise awareness of rights and the *Toolkit for Access to Justice* for PwDs. Training was provided to the 149 teachers and caregivers (106 males and 43 females) of the Draktsho Vocational Training Centre for Special Children and Youth and the Khaling Muenseling School.<sup>52</sup>

63. Consultations during the evaluation highlighted that the *Street Law Programme* participants benefited greatly from its activities and UNDP's support. By actively developing and conducting the *Street Law Programme*, students of the Human Dignity Clinic significantly:

- Improved their awareness of, and sensitivity to, the needs of PwDs.
- Increased their understanding of the importance of human rights and lawyers' critical role and responsibilities in an inclusive and just society.

64. *Disability Equality Training* for PwD service providers, local government leaders, court officials, private lawyers, and private sector organisations was another important initiative supported by UNDP. PwDs provided the training, and this lived experience was acknowledged in consultations as having been critical to the success of the programmes. The training aimed to foster an understanding of disability as a community concern and provided a platform to share the experiences and challenges of PwDs. The programme reached over 1,000 individuals across 20 districts, significantly increasing participants' awareness and confidence.<sup>53</sup>

65. *Legal Literacy* and *Inclusive, People-centric Justice* workshops were also conducted in partnership with the Bhutan National Legal Institute and the Legal Aid Centre. This capacity building targeted local government leaders, court officials and private lawyers to increase gender sensitivity and introduce fundamental legal principles.<sup>54</sup> The workshops equipped participants with knowledge of gender-responsive, disability-inclusive and people-centric justice systems to enhance understanding and responsiveness to vulnerable groups' justice needs.

66. Beneficiaries consulted indicated high levels of satisfaction with the workshops and that they had provided legal-focused capacity building relevant to their work for the first time. Consultations highlighted that the mediation-related content benefited local government leaders<sup>55</sup> the most. They also highlighted that follow-up and advanced training in this area

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<sup>52</sup> UNDP (2024), *Access to Justice for Women and Children with Disabilities in Bhutan - Project Completion Report*. Page 6.

<sup>53</sup> Confidence levels of the participants in providing services to PwDs, with a 100% increase in participants responding "very confident" in delivering services to wheelchair users; 300%+ jump for hearing impairments; and 177% for blind, 200% for intellectual disability - source: UNDP *Results Oriented Annual Report* (2020).

<sup>54</sup> Participant numbers were as follows: Local Government leaders (41 male and 1 female participants); Court officials (27 male and 19 female participants); and private lawyers (51 male and 8 female participants). UNDP (2024), *Access to Justice for Women and Children with Disabilities in Bhutan - Project Completion Report*. Page 6.

<sup>55</sup> Namely: Gup (head of a block); Mangmi (deputy head of a block); and Tshogpa (village representatives).



would be valuable. The evaluation was informed that mediation-related concepts had a direct and positive impact on the quality of local mediations (*nang khod*). Anecdotally, this has resulted in fewer village-level mediations being referred to Mangmi or Gups for review.<sup>56</sup>

67. Several other engagement, capacity building, and networking activities were supported to develop justice institutions’ technical, institutional, and individual capacity, including:

- Training for establishing and operating a forensic laboratory.
- Implementing an engagement programme between civil society organisations and the Anti-Corruption Commission to promote anti-corruption, justice, and good governance.
- Enabling a Legal Aid Centre official to participate in the 1<sup>st</sup> Asia-Pacific Conference on Legal Aid, held in New Delhi, India.
- Enabling Disabled Persons Organisation officials and a UN Country Office focal person for disability inclusion to participate in the Asia Regional Workshop on Access to Justice for Persons with Disabilities, held in Kathmandu, Nepal.
- Partnering with the Bar Council of Bhutan to conduct its first Annual General Meeting. The meeting’s theme was *Justice for All* and aimed to strengthen the legal community’s capacity and commitment to equitable access to justice for vulnerable groups, including PwDs.

### **Output 3 - Parliament drives progress towards fundamental rights protection, sustainable development and GNH:**

**Table 6.** Output 3 - Commentary on Progress against the MYF Results Framework

<b>Outputs</b>	<b>Indicators</b>	<b>Baseline</b>	<b>Target</b>	<b>Progress Towards Targets/Results</b>
3.1: Parliament is fully enabled to institutionalise engagements with the SDGs, GNH and the 12th FYP	3.1.1: Parliamentary committees use the SDG and GNH indicators to track development progress.	N/A	5	Six (6) parliamentary committees now use the SDG and GNH indicators to track development progress as documented in the minutes of their meetings and deliberations. These include in the <i>National Assembly</i> : Women, Children and Youth Affairs Committee; Social and Cultural Committee; and Environment and Climate Change Committee. In the <i>National Council</i> they include: Social and Cultural Affairs Committee; Natural Resources and Environment Committee; and Legislative Committee. Consequently, the target was exceeded. <b>(Rating = 4)</b>
3.2: Parliamentary Committees’ integrate public input and	3.2.1: Number of public hearings led by parliamentarians	15	4	One (1) public hearing was led by parliamentarians with the MYF’s support on the <i>Mining in Bhutan and the draft Mines and Minerals Bill</i> .

<sup>56</sup> Case data was requested, however, was not able to be made available to the evaluation.

Outputs	Indicators	Baseline	Target	Progress Towards Targets/Results
mainstream gender equality and environmental sustainability perspectives in draft legislation, policies, budgets and reports				Consequently, no significant progress towards the target was made. <b>(Rating = 1)</b>
	3.2.2: Number of draft legislation, policies, budgets and reports where PCs undertake gender equality and environment sustainability screening	N/A	5	No (0) gender equality and environment sustainability screening was undertaken by Parliamentary Committees. Consequently, no progress towards the target was made. <b>(Rating = 1)</b>
3.3: Strengthened Parliamentary institutional processes, procedures and workflows	3.3.1: Number of Parliamentary procedure and processes strengthened/amendments developed and implemented	-	3	Three (3) Parliamentary processes were strengthened, by MYF support to development of: a <i>Public Hearing Manual</i> ; <i>Motions Guidelines</i> ; and <i>Pre-/Post-legislative Scrutiny Guidelines</i> . Consequently, the target was met. <b>(Rating = 4)</b>
3.4: Participatory, inclusive and gender balanced governance strengthened	3.4.1: Number of parliamentary and CSO meetings with Women's caucus (disaggregated)	-	4	Only one (1) Parliamentary-CSO meeting with the Women's caucus was held. Consequently, no significant progress towards the target was made. <b>(Rating = 1)</b>
3.5: MPs' leadership capacities (including on gender equality) are enhanced and links between youth and Parliament are established	3.5.1: Ratio of men and women in the parliament	15.30%	20.00%	The percentage of women in parliament declined over the MYF period from 15.30% to 6.90%, although this regression was not due to the MYF/its activities. Consequently, no progress towards the target was made. <b>(Rating = 1)</b>

68. UNDP has played a catalytic role in supporting Parliament and advancing inclusive democratic governance and protection of fundamental rights in Bhutan. A prime example is the support to Parliament in introducing and conducting public hearings for the first time in Bhutan. UNDP supported the development of a manual to guide hearings and provided technical and financial support to hold the first session. The first hearing session related to the draft Mines and Minerals Bill and provided a platform for citizens to voice their concerns regarding mining in Bhutan. It was broadcast live on television and was disseminated on social media platforms. Despite the acknowledged benefits of public hearings, consultations highlighted that Parliament does not have the technical or financial resources to conduct these sessions independently.<sup>57</sup>

69. The MYF also supported a range of interventions that directly enabled more inclusive, rights-focused policy development and decision-making. Recognising the importance of gender equality and women's empowerment, UNDP supported a review of the *National Plan of Action*

<sup>57</sup> This aligns with feedback provided to the *Independent Country Programme Evaluation - Bhutan*.

to Promote Gender Equality in Elected Offices (2019), development of the *National Gender Equality Policy*<sup>58</sup> (2020), and development of a *National Plan of Action for Gender Equality* (2021). These provide a framework for considering and mainstreaming gender equality and promoting equal rights and opportunities in legislative and policy development, reform programmes, and civil society. Consultations highlighted the critical importance of the Policy and National Plan of Action in advocating for greater awareness and recognition of the needs of vulnerable groups, particularly women. It was also noted that continued technical and financial support will be needed to fully realise the National Plan of Action.

70. Technical and financial support was also provided to develop a *National Policy for Persons with Disabilities*. This process adopted a multi-stakeholder engagement process, significantly increasing dialogue and awareness of PwDs and their needs. An "Ask Me Anything" engagement session was designed for PwDs and CSOs supporting PwDs. This provided a platform for dialogue, enabling participants to raise concerns, seek clarifications, and better understand the provisions and implications of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD) prior to ratification. The discussions, findings, and recommendations were compiled into a comprehensive report provided to the Social and Cultural Affairs Committee of the National Council of Bhutan. Additionally, the UNDP and UNICEF jointly supported the Social and Cultural Affairs Committee to conduct a comprehensive situation analysis of the *State of PwDs in Bhutan*. This enabled the Committee to consult 49 meetings across 10 dzongkhag (districts) to review policy, raise awareness, and obtain insights into the challenges faced by PwDs.

71. Consultations during the evaluation indicated that this support to assessments, policy, and engagement on matters relating to PwDs was invaluable. It was seen as a platform for highlighting the needs and challenges of PwDs to decision-makers, which has led to PwDs considerations becoming a focus area in the 13<sup>th</sup> Five Year Plan. Furthermore, this support is seen as playing a pivotal role in developing awareness and understanding of the UNCRPD before its ratification, and will also inform future policy and legislative development.

72. COVID-19 significantly impacted Parliament's and RGoB's ability to function effectively. In response to this challenge, UNDP supported the development of a Business Continuity Plan for Parliament and related *Standard Operating Procedures*. These were developed to guide Parliament's critical oversight, legislative, and representation functions despite the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic or other emergencies. Technical, financial, and capacity building assistance was also provided to establish *virtual dzomdu* (meeting) facilities and equipment at the gewog level. Consultations highlighted that this support enabled continued government-level interaction and community engagement during COVID-19. Stakeholders also highlighted the ongoing value and utility of the video-conferencing facilities. However, equipment replacement and maintenance were seen as significant challenges during the field observations.

73. To enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of Parliamentary operations, MYF supported an assessment of options for establishing a 'joint support centre' for both Houses of Parliament. Consultations during the evaluation highlighted the need to streamline support in areas including library, technology, and printing. While strategies to improve operational efficiency were identified, these have not been implemented due to resource constraints resulting from COVID-19.

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<sup>58</sup> The *National Gender Equality Policy* has been revised (August 2024) with UNDP's support to broaden its focus to include LGBTI+.

74. The impacts resulting from COVID-19 also highlighted the potential and importance of developing digital solutions. Consequently, UNDP supported the RGoB in drafting its first *Digital Strategy*, which encompasses 30 sub-strategies. The strategy draws on international best practices and aims to strengthen the digital enabling environment in Bhutan.

75. The MYF also supported the design and development of the citizen engagement platform in partnership with the Parliament. This platform supports online engagement between Parliament and citizens to inform policy debate and promote inclusive dialogue in decision-making. The platform has enabled Parliament to be more agile and systematically seek public input and feedback on policy and legislative matters. To date, the citizen engagement platform has enabled engagement with:

- 7,359 individuals on climate change.<sup>59</sup>
- 4,676 individuals on economic development and environmental conservation matters.<sup>60</sup>
- 1,665 individuals on promoting the rights of persons with disabilities (64.5% males, 34.7% female, and 0.8% Others/Non-Binary).<sup>61</sup>

76. The *Dashboard to Enhance Wellbeing of All* ([DEWA](#)) was another digital solution developed with UNDP's financial support in partnership with the GNH Commission and the National Statistics Bureau. The DEWA is an integrated platform to collect, manage and integrate socio-economic data related to Five-Year Plans, GNH and SGDs. The RGoB now manages the platform; however, it has not been able to generate meaningful data to inform planning, policy, and legislation due to persisting capacity constraints.<sup>62</sup> Furthermore, consultations indicated that the platform is currently not operational/online.<sup>63</sup> Notwithstanding these constraints, if the DEWA can become fully operational, its ability to collect, analyse, and visualise data has significant potential to inform RGoB decision-making, planning, and performance assessment.

77. UNDP has also enhanced the Government's capacity to integrate, track, and report on the SDGs in its 13<sup>th</sup> Five Year Plan. Capacity building was provided to over 150 RGoB officials in strategic foresight methods - including horizon scanning and risk analysis. Additional support was provided to formulate the 13<sup>th</sup> Five Year Plan. This process utilised innovative methodologies, and integrated SDG result matrices, indicators, milestones, and targets into the new RGoB Five Year Plan.

78. Consultations during the evaluation (and UNDP reporting) highlight the perceived value of training the strategic foresight methods and tools for public servants as high. This training has been institutionalised through a partnership with the Royal Institute of Management, which has included it in its curriculum over the last two years. This was seen as a valuable strategy to localise the training and ensure sustainability. Concerns were raised, however, that government

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<sup>59</sup> UNDP *Results Oriented Annual Report* (2022). No further documented statistics on usage were available to the evaluation.

<sup>60</sup> Ibid.

<sup>61</sup> Data provided directly by the UNDP Governance Team.

<sup>62</sup> *Note*: DEWA has been used to inform the *Secondary Voluntary National Review*, presented to the UN High Level Political Forum in July 2021. Independent Evaluation Office (2023), *Independent Country Programme Evaluation - Bhutan*. Page 18.

<sup>63</sup> The evaluator was not able to access the platform between September-October 2024. As this constraint was also identified by the *Independent Country Programme Evaluation* (June 2023), it seems that the DEWA platform has potentially been offline for over 12 months.

agencies would not have funding to access the training if the Royal Institute of Management provided this on a fee-for-service basis.

79. Capacity building was an essential strategy under this output. Additional engagement, training, and networking activities were supported to develop the RGoB’s technical, institutional, and personnel’s capacity, including:

- Training for 16 Parliamentarians of the National Council and 40 young civil servants on international conventions, as well as agile and adaptive ‘anticipatory governance’. This intervention was pivotal in building the skills and knowledge necessary for effective and forward-thinking governance practices.
- Training for 20 National Council Parliamentarians and 20 Secretariat staff from the National Council and the National Assembly. This activity focused on promoting and advancing human rights, SDG monitoring and implementation, and gender/disability inclusion in policy and decision-making.
- A three-day *Induction Programme* for 66 members of the National Assembly and its secretariat. The Programme developed a shared understanding of Parliament’s roles and functions including oversight, legislative development, and representation. It also focused on developing capacity to implement and monitor progress towards the SDGs and national development goals.
- A five-day *Social Policy Course* for members of the National Assembly, conducted in collaboration with Sherubtse College, Royal University of Bhutan, and UNICEF. The workshop provided insights into the critical role of social policy, evidence gathering, and the leadership skills necessary for developing and implementing effective social policy.
- Engagement activities and study visits for stakeholders and implementing partners actively participating and engaging in MYF activities, including:
  - Participation of two members of Parliament in a seminar on Parliamentary Engagement on Human Rights.
  - Members of Parliament in the Women and Child Committee.
  - Support to members of Parliament and members of the LGBTQI+ community to participate in the *Salzburg Global LGBT\*<sup>64</sup> Forum*, which directly contributed to the revision of the *Penal Code of Bhutan (2004)*.

**Output 4 - Innovation and partnerships leveraged, for efficient, accountable and transparent Governance:**

**Table 7.** Output 4 - Commentary on Progress against the MYF Results Framework

Outputs	Indicators	Baseline	Target	Progress Towards Targets/Results
4.1: Innovative ways to reach the unreached are	4.1.1: Number of technological solutions developed for LNOB.	0	4	Four (4) innovative technological solutions integrating LNOB principles to improve access to services for all users, including vulnerable groups

<sup>64</sup> [Salzburg Global LGBT\\* Forum](#) definition: *Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender. We are using this term as it is currently widely used in human rights conversations on sexual orientation and gender identity in many parts of the world, and we would wish it to be read as inclusive of other cultural concepts, contemporary or historical, to express sexuality and gender, intersex and gender non-conforming identities.*

Outputs	Indicators	Baseline	Target	Progress Towards Targets/Results
explored and implemented				were developed, including the: procurement of <i>iCTGs</i> to enable pregnant women in rural areas received quality pre-natal health services; <i>Bhutan Vaccine System</i> ; <i>Court E-litigation system</i> ; and the <i>Naykab Gokab</i> innovator's platform. Consequently, the target was met. <b>(Rating = 4)</b>
	4.1.2: Number of monitoring visits and surveys completed to generate citizen and beneficiary feedback		4	A series of nine (9) activity monitoring visits were held including: 2 x as part of Public Service Delivery initiative; 2 x while procuring and disseminating the <i>iCTGs</i> ; 4 x for livelihood projects; and 1 x under the Health Care Waste Management project. Consequently, the target was exceeded. <b>(Rating = 4)</b>
<b>COVID Response &amp; Health Service Delivery: Output 1 - Strengthening the Health System</b>				
1.1: Enhance access to quality healthcare	No. of <i>iCTG</i> devices	0	46	Forty-six (46) <i>iCTG</i> devices were procured and disseminated. Consequently, the target was met. <b>(Rating = 4)</b>
	No. of pregnant women reached	0	5,000	Only 2,177 pregnant women (43.5% of the target) were reached by MYF activities. Consequently, only limited progress towards the target was made. <b>(Rating = 2)</b>
	No. of Health Workers trained	0	130	Two-hundred-and-eight (208) health workers received training to improve access to quality healthcare. Consequently, the target was exceeded. <b>(Rating = 4)</b>
1.2: Support to a safer, more efficient health waste management	No. of incinerators	0	3	Three (3) <i>iCTG</i> devices were procured and disseminated. Consequently, the target was met. <b>(Rating = 4)</b>
	No. of electric waste trucks	0	2	Two (2) electric waste trucks were procured. Consequently, the target was met. <b>(Rating = 4)</b>
	SOP for health waste incinerators	0	1	One (1) SOP for health waste incinerators was developed and disseminated. Consequently, the target was met. <b>(Rating = 4)</b>
	Training of health professionals	-	-	As no data on baseline, target, or progress was available, achievement could not be assessed.

Outputs	Indicators	Baseline	Target	Progress Towards Targets/Results
<b>COVID Response &amp; Health Service Delivery: Output 2 - Addressing the Human Rights and Socio-Economic Impacts of COVID-19</b>				
2.1: Technical support to improve the macroeconomic framework and transforming value chains of the cottage and small industries	Macro-econometric forecasting model for Bhutan	no	yes	Macro-econometric forecasting and SAM models for Bhutan were developed. Consequently, the target was met. <b>(Rating = 4)</b>
	Social Accounting Matrix (SAM) model for Bhutan	no	yes	
	EViews - a statistical software for macro-econometric models - and its distribution to project beneficiaries and its utilisation	0	10	Statistical software was procured and disseminated to beneficiaries. Consequently, the target was met. <b>(Rating = 4)</b>
	No. of officials trained in using macro-econometric and SAM models disaggregated by gender	0	-	Some progress was made under this sub-output (27 officials were trained in using macro-econometric and SAM models). However, as no target was defined, overall achievement could not be assessed.
	No. of food processing start-ups benefit from the new equipment at the CFC by the end of the project.	0	13	Twelve (12) food processing start-ups benefitted from the new equipment at the <i>Common Facility Centre</i> . Consequently, only a minor shortfall in achieving the target existed. <b>(Rating = 3)</b>
	No. of suppliers of food products benefiting from the equipment by the end of the project	0	188	Two hundred (200) food suppliers benefitted from equipment procured under the MYF. Consequently, the target was exceeded. <b>(Rating = 4)</b>
	No. of food aggregators benefiting from the new equipment by the end of the project.	33	65	Sixty-five (65) food aggregators benefitted from equipment procured under the MYF. Consequently, the target was met. <b>(Rating = 4)</b>
	No. of food producers benefiting from the new equipment by the end of the project	218	514	Five-hundred-and-fourteen (514) food producers benefitted from equipment procured under the MYF. Consequently, the target was met. <b>(Rating = 4)</b>
2.2: Provide livelihood and upskilling/ reskilling opportunities for those negatively impacted by COVID-19 including	No. of beneficiaries	0	200	Three-hundred-and-fifty-six (356) individuals negatively impacted by COVID-19 benefitted from livelihood and upskilling/reskilling under the MYF. Consequently, the target was exceeded. <b>(Rating = 4)</b>

Outputs	Indicators	Baseline	Target	Progress Towards Targets/Results
vulnerable populations				
2.3: Support Bhutan Innovation Hub build an inclusive innovation eco-system	No. of people trained/skilled	0	100	Ninety (90) people participated in the <i>Innovation Hub</i> training. Consequently, only a minor shortfall in achieving the target existed. <b>(Rating = 3)</b>
	Strategy document developed	No	Yes	One (1) <i>Innovation Hub Strategy</i> was developed and disseminated. Consequently, the target was met. <b>(Rating = 4)</b>

80. This output was identified in consultations as the *Youth, Gender, and Innovation Project* during the latter part of implementation.<sup>65</sup> Following the COVID-19 re-design, support under this output focused on gender, inclusion, resilience, livelihood, and health-related activities.

81. As previously discussed, UNDP's support of the *National Gender Equality Policy* and *National Plan of Action for Gender Equality* provided a framework for mainstreaming gender equality. This work was further supported by an in-depth, participatory review of measures for promoting women's presence and leadership in public administration, undertaken in partnership with the NCWC and UN DESA. The assessment was conducted within the global *Gender Equality in Public Administration Framework*. It was based on a series of interviews with senior managers from eight agencies at the national level, five agencies at the sub-national level, and five focus group discussions. It developed concrete steps to promote gender equality within the public sector and led to a revision of the *Bhutan Civil Servant Rules and Regulations*.

82. The MYF also supported the development of a *National Action Plan to Promote Women's Presence and Leadership in the Bhutanese Civil Service*. This built capacity and awareness of gender equality issues and promoted women's career progression in leadership within the public sector. This National Action Plan was developed through an inclusive process incorporating:

- Lessons and findings from the *Assessment of Gender Equality in the Public Sector*.
- Recommendations from the four-day national capacity-building workshop with 25 senior and mid-level government officials.
- Guidance from the global *Gender Equality in Public Administration Framework* and the addendum developed by UN DESA.<sup>66</sup>

83. Women's safety, access, and inclusion in the workplace are significant social challenges and important in maximising productivity. Consequently, UNDP also worked to promote gender equality in the private sector. The *Sustainable Development Service on Gender Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (SDS) Pilot Project* supported four companies to undertake comprehensive assessment and action planning to address their inclusive practices. The engagement and support resulted in significant changes, including:

<sup>65</sup> This changed focus was, however, not reflected in the MYF and results framework.

<sup>66</sup> The Royal Civil Service Commission endorsed the National Action Plan in July 2024. UNDP (2024), *Project Progress Report: Enhancing Women's Presence and Leadership in Public Administration*.



- Development of zero-tolerance sexual harassment policies.
- Implementation of equal pay policies
- Increases in maternity leave entitlements and greater work flexibility for female employees and single parents.
- Improved training and career progression strategies for female employees.

84. Support under the SDS Pilot Project also included awareness training on sexual harassment, the LGBTQI+ community, and disability awareness for the private sector across Bhutan. The Pilot Project will now also serve as a model for rolling out the SDS program elsewhere in Asia and the Pacific.

85. During the COVID-19 pandemic, UNDP's role in addressing gender-based violence (GBV) grew rapidly. In collaboration with UNFPA and UNICEF, UNDP initiated the development and implementation of Bhutan's *GBV Contingency Plan*. The GBV Contingency Plan aimed to tackle the rise in GBV and introduced the first-ever *Standard Operating Procedure* to integrate survivor services and capacity building for frontline workers.<sup>67</sup> Advocacy efforts, online resources, and materials were developed, and traditional and social media were used to raise awareness of violence against women and children. Consultations highlighted the value of these resources and materials, and indicated that they were still being used.

86. In December 2020, during the second lockdown, implementation of the *GBV Contingency Plan* escalated when Her Majesty the Queen established a safe shelter and 24-hour hotline for GBV survivors. UNDP supported RENEW and the shelter, including hardware for 29 children to participate in online schooling during lockdowns. Immediately following establishment, a 37% increase in calls for assistance was experienced. Key informants attribute this increase to a heightened sense of trust and confidence among survivors (both female and male) due to this initiative.<sup>68</sup> RENEW and UNDP also jointly developed a *Community Based Support System of Volunteers* for complex cases. This initiative drafted a consensus-building manual and provided capacity building for local leaders and police.

87. Related technical and financial assistance provided by UNDP included:

- Developing a *National Strategy to Eliminate Gender-Based Violence*.
- Supporting a *Women's Executive Dialogue* to explore opportunities to increase women's representation in decision-making.
- Conducting a nationwide survey on the *Harmful Social Norms that Impede Gender Equality*.
- Developing an *Action Plan to Implement Concluding Comments* from Bhutan's 10<sup>th</sup> CEDAW periodic report.

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<sup>67</sup> 'Frontline workers' included police, health workers, local government officials and teachers.

<sup>68</sup> To enable access to protection and justice services during the pandemic, UNDP linked its GBV Contingency Plan support with the Courts' e-litigation pilot project to ensure continuity in justice services (see Output 2 Discussion, above).

88. While the COVID-19 pandemic undoubtedly exacerbated the incidence of GBV, pre-COVID data shows that GBV was (and remains) a significant social concern in Bhutan.<sup>69</sup> In partnership with the NCWC, UNDP supported an innovative approach under its KOICA-funded *Gakey Lamtoen Pilot Project*. The Pilot Project aimed to positively influence attitudes regarding gender, gendered violence, and gender norms in society. It engaged with year seven students (young people 13 to 14 years old) in three pilot schools; and, separately, with their caregivers. The Pilot Project adopted a dialogue-based, participatory approach to address the root causes of problematic social norms that lead to gendered violence.

89. Consultations re-confirmed the positive assessment of the Pilot Project's independent evaluation that "...*Gakey Lamtoen has [achieved] significant impact in promoting gender equality attitudes and gender roles, and change stereotypes...*".<sup>70</sup> Consultations also highlighted that the Ministry of Education and Skills Development has integrated key components of this training into the nationwide 'Scout Programme'. It is also planning to include elements of the counselling component; however, this process has taken more time than initially anticipated.

90. With over 41% of the population under the age of 24,<sup>71</sup> youth welfare and unemployment<sup>72</sup> are issues of critical national importance. UNDP supported an assessment<sup>73</sup> and development of a report on a *Systems Approach to Youth Unemployment in Bhutan 2020* to identify and develop strategies to overcome structural barriers to youth employment and inclusion. Building on this assessment, UNDP supported a joint UN-Government platform together with UNICEF, the World Food Programme, and key stakeholders to jointly design a portfolio of solutions to address youth unemployment. Subsequently, UNDP's support helped promote economic opportunities for 1,142 young people - 17% of the total unemployed youth population (53.3% of which were female).

91. The MYF's response to COVID-19 also focused on building resilience and livelihoods with young people as a particularly vulnerable group. In collaboration with UNFPA, UNDP partnered with CSOs (RENEW, Youth Development Fund, and Loden Foundation) to provide livelihood support and training to 'future-proof' livelihood skills and income generation capacity. The MYF's support enabled CSOs to advance opportunities for, and increase the resilience of, targeted vulnerable groups. Participants included survivors of GBV; women working in entertainment centres displaced by the pandemic; young people with substance use disorder; people living with HIV; and commercial sex workers. Importantly, CSO implementing partners also integrated awareness of sexual and reproductive health; understanding of vulnerable groups' rights; GBV issues; and support services into the livelihoods training. Out of 154 participants, five started a home-based baking business, 11 women from the weaving group started a home-based business, and 12 women from the tailoring group are taking up additional

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<sup>69</sup> "Two in five women (44.6%) and girls experienced one or more forms of partner violence in their lifetime and almost one in three (30.0%) in the last 12 months." Source: NCWC (2017), *A Study on Violence Against Women and Girls in Bhutan National Survey on Women's Health and Life Experiences*. Royal Government of Bhutan. Page 98.

<sup>70</sup> Dorji, C. (2023), *Impact Assessment of Gakey Lamtoen - Bhutan Pilot Project*. UNDP. Page 38.

<sup>71</sup> Source: [United Nations Population Fund](#). Accessed, October 2024.

<sup>72</sup> Youth unemployment levels have increased by 7.7% since 2021 to reach 28.6% in 2022. Source: National Statistical Bureau (2022), *2022 Labour Force Survey Report Bhutan*. Royal Government of Bhutan.

<sup>73</sup> The assessment involved a *Rapid Assessment Survey* of over 2,000 young people, undertaken with the support of the Accelerator Lab.

skills on textile recycling training via online training by RENEW. Three participants received Loden Foundation-UNDP grants and have successfully established businesses.<sup>74</sup>

92. In partnership with local CSOs, UNDP supported a range of livelihoods and resilience programmes for young people. This included:

- Support provided in partnership with RENEW to:
  - 30 young people with substance use disorder through a holistic three-month program to rehabilitate, reintegrate, and reskill these individuals so that they could effectively re-enter the workforce.
  - 100 young people unemployed due to the impact of COVID-19 received re-skilling support and became certified trekking guides.
  - 120 young Bhutanese who were repatriated during the pandemic to provide mental health support to assist them with reintegration.
- Support provided in partnership with Youth Development Fund to 293 young participants. Sixty-four of the participants received online counselling. Two of those who attended the re-skilling programme subsequently received funds for their projects from the Loden Foundation. Consultations indicated that the Youth Development Fund (online) counselling established during COVID-19 continues to be available to young people and the community.
- Support provided in partnership with the Loden Foundation, which provided grants and interest/collateral-free loans to 10 social enterprises. This support assisted with developing agri-business, facemask production, and health waste management enterprises.
- Support provided in partnership with the Disabled People's Organisation to create four small businesses that supported employment for 30 PwDs.

93. Additionally, UNDP collaborated with CSOs at the *Druk Tshongrig Gatoen* event to enhance opportunities for young Bhutanese entrepreneurs, foster the exchange of ideas, and access business intelligence. MYF support was also provided to pilot the online *Naykab Gokab* platform, which connects innovators, policy-makers, and investors. This inclusive platform allows all community members to share and record innovative ideas that address local challenges. Its objective is to provide innovators with a place to showcase their ideas, help attract investments and public-private partnerships, and ultimately facilitate innovation-driven growth.<sup>75</sup>

94. The MYF also provided broader livelihood-focused support to women and other vulnerable groups that the pandemic had disproportionately impacted. These programmes were developed based on learning gained from a 2021 *Tracer Study* on the results of the *Livelihood Programme*. They engaged with 617 vulnerable women to enhance their income-generation capacity. Five-hundred-and-nine participants received career mentoring support, and 71 received targeted up-skilling in weaving, tailoring, and baking. Additionally, 19,342 women farmers benefitted from climate-resilient agricultural practices and technologies. This enabled them to enhance their income by increasing crop yields by 40%. Support was also provided to

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<sup>74</sup> UNDP (2021), *Innovation for a Smarter, Greener and More Resilient 21<sup>st</sup> Century Bhutan Project - Final Report*. Page 5.

<sup>75</sup> [Ministry of Industry, Commerce, and Employment](#), *Joint Press Release* (May 2023).

12 women taxi drivers to improve their income generation capacity by replacing fossil fuel taxis with electric vehicles, reducing operation and maintenance costs.<sup>76</sup>

95. Cottage and Small Industries constitute more than 95% of all industries in Bhutan. Business development support was provided, and a value chain analysis of three potential products was conducted to strengthen resilience post-COVID. A *Common Facility Centre* was developed to provide business support to cottage and small industries. The facility also acts as a platform for familiarisation with mechanisation for these industries. Additionally, 12 start-up businesses received support (four led by females), and a further 200 food suppliers (31.5% female) benefitted.

96. Building on insights from a *2022 Future Workforce Study*, UNDP empowered 120 individuals (50.8% of which were female) from cottage and small industries. A key aspect of this support was the comprehensive training of 33 youth entrepreneurs. The programme was conducted over six months and included online modules, mentoring, soft skills training, pitch events, and networking. This aimed to develop a 'future-ready' workforce and resulted in "...positive outcomes in skill development and entrepreneurial acumen."<sup>77</sup> Qualitative evidence on the programmes (feedback from the participating youth) was positive.<sup>78</sup>

97. As a direct response to COVID-19 and disruptions to the RGoB<sup>79</sup> and society, UNDP quickly re-designed the MYF to respond to pandemic-driven needs and priorities. As part of this re-alignment, UNDP implemented the *Innovation for a Smarter, Greener and More Resilient 21<sup>st</sup> Century Bhutan Project* with the financial support of the Government of Japan. UNDP's support, summarised below, focused on a diverse range of pandemic-driven needs from macro-econometric modelling and livelihoods development, to health sector support.

98. UNDP, in partnership with the Asian Development Bank, supported the RGoB to develop its capacity to undertake macroeconomic modelling and forecasting. Two forecasting models were developed: a macro-econometric forecasting model and a Social Accounting Matrix model. The models will allow for the multi-dimensional effects of economy-wide impacts of shocks (such as COVID-19), policy actions, and economic assumptions to be assessed. This assistance has enabled the RGoB to make more informed decisions regarding budget projections, macro-economic conditions, and fiscal sustainability. A total of 27 officials (12 of whom were female) from the Ministry of Finance, the GNH Commission, and the National Statistics Bureau were trained in the use of the modelling tools.

99. Support was also provided under the MYF to the Technical and Vocational Education and Training Reform Office. This assistance had a dual focus: firstly, to support short-term needs resulting from COVID-19; and secondly, to strengthen long-term planning capacity. Ninety stakeholders received training on supply chain logistics and design thinking for technical training institutions. Additionally, UNDP supported the development of a *Digital Jobs in Bhutan: Demand Creation and Future Skilling Report*. The paper identified the benefits of developing digital jobs and focus areas for creating digital jobs. As part of the report's dissemination, UNDP

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<sup>76</sup> UNDP *Results Oriented Annual Report* (2022).

<sup>77</sup> UNDP *Results Oriented Annual Report* (2023).

<sup>78</sup> Made available to the *2023 Independent Country Programme Evaluation - Bhutan*. Page 23.

<sup>79</sup> As highlighted in the revised MYF, local governments, for example, had to forgo 50% of their recurring budget to support the national response to the pandemic.

conducted advocacy and digital job-related awareness raising with the government and private sectors.

100. One of the most significant refinements in the focus of the MYF resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic was the shift in assistance to the health sector and health service delivery. While not traditionally a sector that UNDP has engaged with, the support provided by the MYF was timely, relevant, and appropriate. A key intervention was to provide technical and financial support to establish the digital Bhutan Vaccine System. This system provides:

- Real-time information on vaccine inventory.
- Pre-registration, onsite registration, and screening management.
- Recording of vaccinations - type of vaccine and dose number.
- Reporting of 'adverse events following immunisation'.
- Management of adverse events following immunisation.
- Generation of certificates of vaccination.

101. The Bhutan Vaccine System's data collection is disaggregated by vulnerability profile and allows for data visualisation and reporting. The roll-out of the vaccination programme was undertaken in partnership with the Ministry of Health, UNICEF, and the World Health Organisation. An assessment of this support showed that:<sup>80</sup>

- The development of the Bhutan Vaccine System supported the efficient roll-out of the vaccination campaign.
- 94.8% of the eligible population<sup>81</sup> was vaccinated within three weeks.

102. More recently, UNDP has supported the Ministry of Health in further expanding the Bhutan Vaccine System to integrate flu and human papillomavirus vaccinations. This upgraded system facilitated the successful roll-out of flu vaccinations (95% coverage of the eligible population) and human papillomavirus vaccinations (67.3% coverage of the eligible population).

103. UNDP also supported digitisation efforts in health service delivery. A pilot project provided 54 mobile cardiotocography (iCTG) devices to select hospitals across Bhutan and trained 208 health professionals (47.6% of whom were female) on their use. The iCTG devices remotely provide real-time pregnancy-related data to specialists in tertiary health facilities so that they can inform the healthcare provided at the local level.

104. Access to this technology has significantly enhanced the ability of pregnant mothers in rural areas to access specialist gynaecological services without having to travel to tertiary hospitals. In 2021, an estimated 2,177 pregnant women (approximately 20% of all pregnant women) benefited from this technology.<sup>82</sup> Consultations confirmed these devices' significant value in providing quality pre-natal care. However, during the field observations maintenance and replacement of iCTGs and equipment were highlighted as significant challenges.<sup>83</sup> Additionally,

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<sup>80</sup> UNDP (2021), *Support to HHS Bhutan Vaccine System for COVID-19 Vaccination Report*.

<sup>81</sup> Amounting to 63.3% of the total population.

<sup>82</sup> UNDP (2021), *Innovation for a Smarter, Greener and More Resilient 21<sup>st</sup> Century Bhutan Project - Final Report*. Page 4.

<sup>83</sup> One example shown to the evaluator was that the iCTG's email function did not work. Consequently, a photograph of relevant readouts must be taken on a hospital staff member's mobile phone and forwarded

local stakeholders at various levels indicated that while UNDP's activities met priority needs, earlier coordination and more detailed planning at the local level would assist counterparts in supporting implementation more effectively.

105. Support in developing a *Health Technology Assessment Framework* provided important policy advice and support to the Ministry of Health. The framework optimised decision-making regarding the introduction of new health-related technologies. Furthermore, a range of equipment and procurement has supported 60% of healthcare centres across 15 districts.<sup>84</sup> This support has included:

- Procuring clean, energy-efficient healthcare waste management equipment, including autoclaves, shredders, weighing scales, and stabilisers. Protocols were also developed, and staff capacity was built on using and maintaining the autoclaves.
- Procuring five medical waste trucks and one mobile clinic truck for the Ministry of Health.
- Developing and integrating a medical waste tracking system into the *Electronic Bhutan Medical Supply Inventory System*.
- Procuring personal protective equipment for 152 healthcare centres in four municipalities.

106. To support this procurement, UNDP trained 321 waste handlers in all health centres and local government representatives on safe handling practices and managing healthcare waste.

## Partnership and Collaboration in Implementing the MYF<sup>85</sup>

**Finding 6.** The MYF's approach was based on partnership and collaboration at all levels, resulting in UNDP being seen as a partner of choice in governance. The high levels of trust and confidence in UNDP as a development partner have translated into substantive contributions to national development priorities and advancing inclusive democratic governance in Bhutan.

107. UNDP's engagement with international partners was effective. The MYF coordinated closely with the Austrian Development Agency in the justice sector. While no direct funding or joint activities were implemented, UNDP and the Austrian Development Agency coordinated closely to support justice sector institutions effectively and avoid duplication of efforts. UNDP's participation in the Justice Sector Working Committee assisted in this coordination. Consultations indicated that while the Working Committee mechanism was effective, coordination can still be strengthened by more consistent engagement and communication.

108. In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the MYF engaged in a funding partnership with Government of Japan. This engagement demonstrated UNDP's capacity to facilitate solutions by effectively aligning bi-lateral donor priorities with those of the RGoB. Government of Japan's support through the *Innovation for a Smarter, Greener and More Resilient 21<sup>st</sup> Century Bhutan Project* was also the largest single project under the MYF. COVID-19-related support also

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to the gynaecologist. This issue has persisted for a significant time; however, technical support or resources are unavailable to remedy this matter or replace the faulty equipment.

<sup>84</sup> UNDP *Results Oriented Annual Report* (2023).

<sup>85</sup> Addressing evaluation questions 2.3, 2.4, and 2.8 in the Evaluation Matrix.

enabled UNDP to co-implement assistance in developing macroeconomic modelling for the RGoB with the Asian Development Bank. This was a unique collaboration between UNDP Bhutan and a major multi-lateral financial institution.

109. UNDP also established effective partnerships within the UN System, working closely with UNICEF; UN DESA; WHO; UNFPA; and World Food Programme. These relations enabled a broadening in UNDP's traditional areas of engagement and support - particularly in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Consultations indicated that these relationships were valuable and effective. If a portfolio approach to governance support is to be expanded, maintaining and growing these relationships will be critical. Opportunities to strengthen ongoing communication and collaboration will need to be identified and integrated throughout tendering, programme design, implementation, and reporting processes.

110. Consultations with RGoB counterparts and implementing partners repeatedly highlighted the high levels of trust in UNDP as a development partner.<sup>86</sup> The MYF has played a leading role in responding to the COVID-19 pandemic, initiating closer Parliament-citizen engagement, establishing inclusive policy and decision-making processes, and enabling government-CSO partnerships. This assistance has positively contributed to advancing inclusive democratic governance and protection of fundamental rights in Bhutan.

111. UNDP's strong relationships extend to the MYF's work with implementing partners. UNDP engaged with various institutions and organisations to actively contribute to, facilitate, and lead activities under the MYF. These implementing partners and key counterparts include:

- *Justice Sector Partners:* Alternative Dispute Resolution Centre; Bar Council; Bhutan National Legal Institute; JSW Law School; Legal Aid Centre; NCWC; OAG; and Royal Court of Justice.
- *RGoB:* Ministry of Finance; Ministry of Health; National Assembly; National Council; Public Service Delivery Division, Office of the Prime Minister; Royal Civil Service Commission; and Social and Cultural Affairs Committee of the National Council.
- *Civil Society Partners:* Disabled People's Organisation; Youth Development Fund; Loden Foundation; RENEW; and Bhutan Center for Media and Democracy.

112. UNDP's success is based on its willingness to collaborate closely with partners across all MYF outputs. This approach has resulted in increased ownership of activities by counterparts, strengthened institutional and individual capacity, and more open engagement and participation in the MYF's activities.

## Localisation of Key Regional Frameworks<sup>87</sup>

**Finding 7.** Through the MYF, UNDP has actively supported localising international and regional frameworks and best practices. MYF support has enabled policy and action planning in gender, PwDs, and the right to a fair trial to be prioritised and integrated into national policies.

<sup>86</sup> This re-confirms the findings of the *Independent Country Programme Evaluation - Bhutan* (Page 60) that in the area of governance and civil society organisations "...UNDP has maintained a strong value proposition and positioned itself as a partner of choice for the Government of Bhutan...".

<sup>87</sup> Addressing evaluation question 2.5 in the Evaluation Matrix.

113. UNDP's work under the MYF has significantly contributed to the domestication of key regional frameworks, experiences and international best practices. In summary, relevant support included:

- Approval of the *Gender Equality Policy* and developing a *National Plan of Action*. These directly contribute to localising the objectives of the 2030 Agenda; the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women; the Beijing Platform for Action; and the United Nations Declaration on Human Rights.
- Developing the *National Policy for Persons with Disabilities* and support to conducting a comprehensive situation analysis of the *State of Persons with Disabilities in Bhutan*. This led to the prioritisation of PwD considerations in government decision-making, and paved the way for the ratification of UNCRPD in early 2024.
- Developing guidelines for, and supporting the establishment of, Bhutan's first *Legal Aid Programme* and *Legal Aid Centre*. This supported inclusive access to justice and institutionalised the protection of human rights enshrined in Article 14 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights; and Article 7 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.
- Implementing the *Sustainable Development Service on Gender Equality, Diversity and Inclusion* framework, integrating and promoting International Labour Organisation conventions.
- Supporting enhanced presence and leadership of women in public administration and developing the *National Action Plan to Promote Women's Presence and Leadership in the Bhutanese Civil Service*. This integrated the global frameworks for Gender Equality in Public Administration and the addendum developed by UN DESA.
- Empowering and supporting the *Electoral Commission of Bhutan* on election reporting and voter education. This support integrated global capacity and knowledge from the UN Electoral Assistance Division to create an enabling environment for women's participation in the election.
- Supporting the *Gakey Lamtoen Pilot Project*, which influenced attitudes regarding gender, gendered violence, and gender norms in society. This localised support from the global *Ending Gender-based Violence to Achieve the Sustainable Development Goals Project*.
- Facilitating multi-stakeholder dialogues between Parliamentarians, women, youth, local government and academia to inform and integrate diverse views into the development of the *10<sup>th</sup> Periodic CEDAW Report* and the *3<sup>rd</sup> Universal Periodic Review* process.

## Innovation and Good Practice<sup>88</sup>

**Finding 8.** The MYF has fostered innovative practices and digital solutions, enabling small-scale testing and piloting before investing in larger-scale support. UNDP's Accelerator Lab's adaptive and collaborative approach resulted in identifying, adapting, and implementing a range of innovative techniques and best practices that contributed significantly to the MYF's activities and success.

<sup>88</sup> Addressing evaluation question 2.6 in the Evaluation Matrix.



114. The Accelerator Lab (established in Bhutan in 2020) significantly supported the MYF's implementation. Its approach of piloting and testing innovative solutions on a small scale before expanding them, if they proved effective, was successful. Consultations indicated close and effective collaboration, and that the skill sets between the Governance and Accelerator Lab Teams were complementary. Two constraints were, however, identified:

- i. The necessity to react to ad hoc RGoB requests for support made planning and allocating Accelerator Lab resources to pilot activities, at times, challenging.
- ii. Accelerator Lab support and involvement is generally only during a pilot activity. As a result, when interventions are scaled up, there is the tendency to replicate a process or approach rather than to refine interventions in response to learning and change over time.<sup>89</sup> Consequently, ensuring *some* ongoing support and involvement by the Accelerator Lab while implementing longer-term initiatives is considered valuable.

115. More specifically, the MYF successfully developed and implemented a number of innovative interventions and good practice approaches as part of its programming, including support to:

- Systems or process analysis to map public service delivery and identify service gaps and 'bottlenecks' which significantly increased efficiency.
- *Gender and social norms research* to inform follow-on activities under the MYF.
- A rapid assessment survey to inform the development of the *Systems Approach to Youth Unemployment in Bhutan 2020 Report*.
- The *Gakey Lamtoen Pilot Project* to influence attitudes on gender, gendered violence, and gender norms in society in three pilot schools.
- A *hackathon challenge* to develop a data management system for the Legal Aid Centre.
- Developing *Disability Equality Training*, led by PwDs with lived experience.
- Capacity building on *strategic foresight* and *empathy skills* to strengthen public service planning and service delivery.

116. Additionally, innovative digital solutions were also implemented as part of the MYF's programming, including support to:

- Digitising health service delivery by supporting the development of the *Bhutan Vaccine System* to support Bhutan's COVID-19 response and seasonal flu and human papillomavirus vaccinations.
- Developing the *DEWA Platform* to collect, manage and integrate socio-economic data related to Five-Year Plans, GNH and SGDs.
- Developing an *e-litigation system* and capacity to conduct *online court hearings* to enable continued access to justice during the pandemic.
- Developing the *Gakyid Ride App* to provide information on 45 buses in Thimphu Thromde.
- Developing the digital *ServE Tool* to enable citizens' feedback on public services to be gathered online.
- Developing the citizen engagement platform, helping Parliament to enhance citizen engagement in decision-making processes.

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<sup>89</sup> This is sometimes referred to as a 'cookie-cutter approach'.

- Piloting the *Naykab Gokab* platform as a nexus in connecting innovators, policymakers, and investors to cultivate opportunities for collaboration and investment.

117. Digital innovation and solutions have played an important part in UNDP’s agile response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Furthermore, they have the potential for future transformative change in the public and private sectors. Consultations, however, highlighted that some challenges have not, to date, been effectively addressed, including:

- Constraints on inclusion in digital and online platforms - particularly for PwDs and people living in rural areas - especially vulnerable women.
- Low IT literacy levels and resistance to accessing digital services - particularly by older people.<sup>90</sup>
- The digital enabling environment - including comprehensive policy and data ethics frameworks, cyber-security, and technical support to government service providers.<sup>91</sup>
- Quality of internet access, particularly in remote areas.

## Inclusion and Empowerment<sup>92</sup>

**Finding 9.** The MYF focused extensively on advancing inclusive policies that empowered vulnerable groups. UNDP’s support increased recognition of gender and minority issues, facilitated inclusive dialogue and debate, contributed to shifts in attitudes to gender norms, empowered women, and promoted the rights of vulnerable groups. Assistance directly contributed to the development of national gender and PwDs policies and action plans, which have the potential to contribute to transformative change in Bhutan.

118. As detailed in the above discussions, UNDP’s work under the MYF has focused *significantly* on advocating and promoting inclusion, empowerment, and diversity. Documented change attributable to the MYF that has improved women’s empowerment, promoted the rights of vulnerable groups and has the potential to lead to transformational change includes:

- The *Gender Equality Policy* and development of the *National Plan of Action*, which directly contribute to protecting women’s rights and informing government policy and decision-making.
- Developing the *National Policy for PwDs*, supporting multi-stakeholder consultations on the UNCRPD, and conducting a comprehensive situation analysis of the *State of PwDs in Bhutan*. This support has contributed to the prioritisation of PwDs’ considerations in government decision-making and the 13<sup>th</sup> Five Year Plan.
- Support to women’s political empowerment, training on election-related reporting, and voter education programmes. This support is attributed with a 20% increase in women-

<sup>90</sup> Consultations further highlighted that digital, online, and social media-based strategies were most effective when targeted at young people.

<sup>91</sup> Consultations indicated that technical support for current information and communications technology is generally sufficient for government service providers’ current needs. If reliance on digital solutions and technology continues to grow, technical support capacity will become increasingly important and may develop into a significant constraint on digital development.

<sup>92</sup> Addressing evaluation question 2.7 in the Evaluation Matrix.

voter turnout; and a 300% increase in female representation in local government leadership roles.

- Development of the *GBV Contingency Plan* and *SOP* to integrate survivor services and improve awareness of violence against women and children and their rights.
- The *Gakey Lamtoen Pilot Project*, whose innovative approaches resulted in a positive change in the gender-equitable attitudes of students as documented in that activity's evaluation: "*The magnitude of the impact in gender equitable attitude is estimated at ... 10.6 percent improvement in their attitude.*"<sup>93</sup>
- The *SDS Pilot Project*, which engaged with the private sector to improve women's safety, access and inclusion in the workplace. The pilot resulted in significant changes, including the development of sexual harassment policies; equal pay policies; improved maternity leave entitlements; and career progression strategies for female employees.
- Supporting enhanced women's presence and leadership in public administration, resulting in the development of the *National Action Plan to Promote Women's Presence and Leadership in the Bhutanese Civil Service* and updates to the *Bhutan Civil Servant Rules and Regulations* in 2023.
- Provision of *iCTG devices*, which empowered over 2,177 pregnant women in 2021 to partake in the healthcare decision-making process for the benefit of mother and baby.
- Engaging and supporting young people by developing a *systems approach to youth unemployment* and supporting capacity building for 33 young entrepreneurs.

## 2.3 Efficiency - Measurement of the outputs in relation to the inputs

### Appropriateness of the Approach to Implementation<sup>94</sup>

**Finding 10.** The MYF adopted a range of implementation approaches that were successful and appropriate to the local context.

Strategically, UNDP adopted a 'portfolio approach' for its governance programming, which was seen as successful overall. The development of a MYF structure was, however, found to have added complexity. This can potentially be streamlined by integrating governance programming directly into UNDP country-level programming. Some internal institutional and structural factors can also be strengthened to maximise the benefits of UNDP's portfolio approach and governance programming.

119. At the strategic level, UNDP adopted a 'portfolio approach' whereby UNDP governance support was integrated into substantive or thematic areas, including environment, energy, justice, and health. While still nascent, consultations indicate that, overall, the portfolio approach was seen as successful, particularly during the response to the COVID-19 pandemic. The approach also resulted in the UNDP Governance Team strengthening its engagement across key UN counterpart agencies in Bhutan, as well as with the Bangkok Regional Hub. The recent development of several joint funding applications between the UNDP Governance Team and other UNDP thematic areas also illustrates the approach's perceived value.

<sup>93</sup> Dorji, C. (2023), *Impact Assessment of Gakey Lamtoen - Bhutan Pilot Project*. UNDP. Page 21.

<sup>94</sup> Addressing evaluation questions 3.1 and 3.2 in the Evaluation Matrix.

120. In support of the portfolio approach, the *Governance Multi-Year Framework* was developed. The operational purpose of the MYF was to integrate multiple (often small) projects under one conceptual framework. It intended to enable more strategic and efficient governance support to be provided that contributed to a unified governance-focused theory of change.

121. Based on the consultations and document review, the utility of the MYF's 'strategic architecture' may be questioned. Developing additional strategic architecture through a MYF added complexity, without significant benefits in managing or implementing activities.

Substantial pre-existing strategic priorities and objectives existed in the:

- UNSDPF (the current MYF was aligned with Outcome 3).
- CPD (the current MYF was aligned with Outcome 1).
- RGoB's Five Year Plans (the current MYF was aligned with the 12<sup>th</sup> Five Year Plan).

Developing the MYF was, therefore, somewhat duplicative. Instead, governance programming could have been directly integrated with the CPD (2019-2023) outcomes, outputs, and targets, which would have simplified monitoring and evaluation and integrated governance reporting fully into the Results Oriented Annual Reporting process.

122. Consultations also highlight some practical challenges with the portfolio approach.

Primarily that operational structures were not necessarily aligned with this approach, including:

- A lack of clarity and understanding on how Governance Team personnel and resources could be accessed and integrated into non-traditional thematic areas.
- Limitations of internal and external communications, resulting in partners at times being unaware of progress and expectations. Consultations within the UN system indicated that existing outcome or thematic working groups were not always effective at ensuring clear communication and coordination.
- Uncertainty regarding lines of engagement between RGoB, UNDP, and UN sister agencies. Both UN and external counterparts highlighted this uncertainty, particularly in areas where UN sister agencies were active or hold longstanding responsibilities.

123. At the practical level, the MYF adopted various implementation approaches, including consultations, assessments, capacity building, and procurement. Several successful approaches worth highlighting include:

- Combining policy/strategy development with action planning or SOP development to provide a framework for achieving change (for example, the *National Gender Equality Policy* and the *National Plan of Action for Gender Equality*).
- Promoting multi-stakeholder engagement and dialogue to maximise inclusion and participation; as well as to facilitate changes in perceptions and attitudes (for example, development of the *National Policy for PwDs*; and facilitating the participation of PwDs in Parliamentary consultations on the ratification of the UNCRPD).
- Adopting a pilot project approach to test and validate interventions before upscaling (for example, the *Gakey Lamtoen Pilot Project*; and the *SDS Pilot Project*).
- Systems thinking and process engineering to identify and address root causes of issues so holistic and integrated responses can be developed (for example, the *Review of Service Delivery Standards*, and development of the *Systems Approach to Youth Unemployment in Bhutan 2020*).

- South-south engagement through technical visits to regional conferences, for example, on legal aid and access to justice for PwDs. From the information available, this type of engagement was limited. Consultations indicated, however, that there was significant perceived value as these activities provided opportunities to gain exposure to the international context and good practice.

124. Therefore, the MYF's approach to implementation is seen as effective and appropriate to the local context, as were the strategies used to develop and implement activities. Consultations highlighted that counterparts felt they had been consulted and included in the activity design and planning processes. Counterparts also indicated that UNDP provided valuable support to activities without being directive or interfering in counterpart-led activities.

### Responsiveness and Agility in Implementation<sup>95</sup>

**Finding 11.** UNDP swiftly and effectively adapted its MYF and governance programming to respond to COVID-19 and emerging RGoB priorities. Despite UNDP engaging in some non-traditional support areas - notably within the health sector - the re-designed MYF successfully mobilised funds and addressed immediate development priorities and needs. Consequently, the MYF's response to the COVID-19 pandemic was found to be timely, appropriate, and necessary.

125. As previously discussed, UNDP quickly and effectively re-designed MYF activities to respond to pandemic-driven needs and revised RGoB priorities. Examples of COVID-19-specific interventions that illustrate this significant shift in support are:

- Providing iCTGs and capacity building for medical staff.
- Capacity building and procurement of equipment to support the safe and efficient management of medical waste.
- Developing the RGoB's capacity in macroeconomic modelling capacity.
- Support to survivors of GBV, young people, and cottage and small industries to increase resilience during COVID-19 and capacity to recover from the impacts of the pandemic.
- Digitisation of public services, including the Bhutan Vaccine System; ServE Tool; and e-litigation.

126. UNDP's response to the COVID-19 pandemic was timely, appropriate, and necessary. The MYF was partially re-designed following this shift in priorities; however, the results framework was not revised (either at the time or subsequently). Consequently, when the MYF was assessed, interventions did not align with the MYF's defined objectives, indicators, and targets (**Sections 2.2 and 2.3**).

### Cost-effectiveness and Mobilisation of Resources<sup>96</sup>

**Finding 12.** UNDP mobilised a variety of funding sources, though core funding was nonetheless relied on to a significant extent. COVID-19 opened new funding

<sup>95</sup> Addressing evaluation question 3.3 in the Evaluation Matrix.

<sup>96</sup> Addressing evaluation questions 3.4, 3.5, and 3.6 in the Evaluation Matrix.

opportunities, most notably from Government of Japan; however, these were largely transient.

Bhutan’s transition from LDC status will also impact future governance funding, as bilateral and vertical funding may become more limited. Despite funding-related challenges, the MYF achieved positive results in collaboration with its implementation partners and regional expertise.

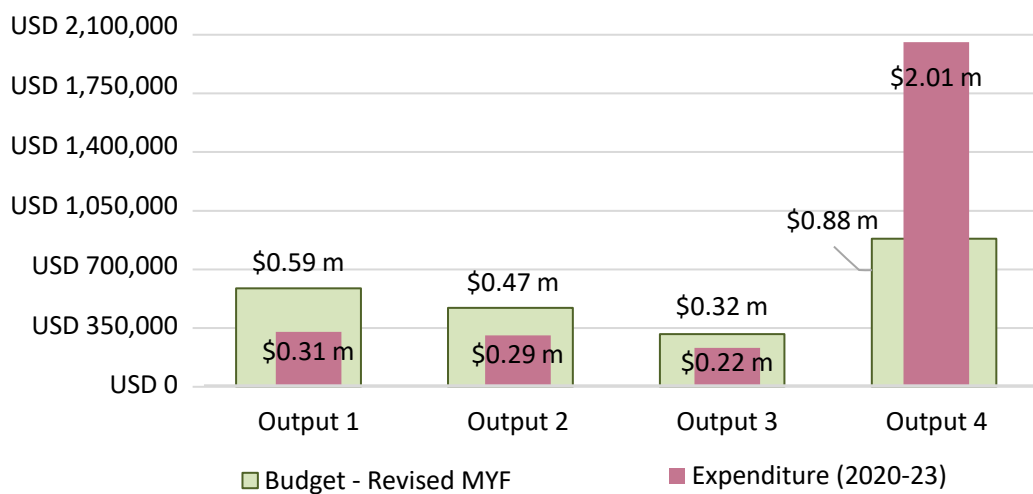
127. Throughout implementation, a variety of funding sources were identified to support the implementation of the MYF. A principal source was UNDP internal funding (TRAC I), and this originally was the only identified funding source for the MYF, accounting for 30% of the original anticipated budget.

128. The COVID-19 pandemic dramatically shifted RGoB priorities and access to funding sources (see *Chart 1 - Output 4*, below). UNDP received significant support from Government of Japan, totalling approximately 60% of the MYF’s budget.<sup>97</sup> In addition, various smaller funding sources were also identified, including the *Global Project for Ending Gender-based Violence to Achieve the Sustainable Development Goals and GPCR*.

129. As the Independent Country Programme Evaluation noted, “...Government cost sharing still represent[s] a very small share of the UNDP financing sources.”<sup>98</sup> The only evidence of direct cost sharing available to the evaluation was by the Royal Courts of Justice, which contributed USD 64,000 to procure equipment to support virtual court hearings (equivalent to approximately 1.9% of the total MYF budget).<sup>99</sup>

130. The total budget for the revised MYF was USD 2,433,000. Based on the data made available to the evaluation, expenditure under the MYF totalled USD 3,354,905. Consequently, expenditure was 37.9% over the anticipated budget. This is illustrated in *Chart 1*, below, which compares the updated MYF’s budget (green bars) against actual expenditure (red bars).

**Chart 1. MYF Budget (as per revised MYF) and Actual Expenditure 2020-2023**



<sup>97</sup> Based on data in the *MYF Annotated Budget and Expenditure Summary (2024)* provided to the evaluation.

<sup>98</sup> At page 47.

<sup>99</sup> UNDP *Results Oriented Annual Report (2021)*

131. As can be seen, the most significant difference between budgeting and expenditure was under Output 4. The evaluation was informed in consultations, that this difference reflects health-related funding (and hence expenditure), which significantly exceeded budgeted levels due to the magnitude of the COVID-19 pandemic response. Despite the disconnects between budget figures and actual expenditure, the evaluation was also informed that the MYF finances were reviewed as part of the UNDP audit in late 2023, which identified no financial management concerns.

132. During consultations, RGoB counterparts, implementing partners, and UN counterparts repeatedly highlighted the difficulty of accessing funding for governance activities. This practical resourcing reality resulted in a large number of small activities or ‘one-off’ activities (in particular during the COVID-19 pandemic). This impacted on the nature of MYF support and the management of activities by implementing partners and UNDP. Furthermore, consultations highlighted that development results could be improved if ongoing or longer-term assistance was made available to *deepen and embed* technical, capacity building, and systemic support activities.

133. UNDP’s implementation focused on close collaboration with local implementing partners and used local or regionally based expertise from within the Country Office or the Bangkok Regional Hub. This resulted in an efficient and appropriate use of resources that (as previously noted) achieved positive development results.

### MYF Results Framework and Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E)<sup>100</sup>

**Finding 13.** Weaknesses in the M&E system identified in the Independent Country Programme Evaluation were re-confirmed in this evaluation. Reporting and project documentation was at times inconsistent, gaps in the results framework existed, and defined indicators and targets were activity-based rather than results-focused. Additionally, shifts in programming due to COVID-19 were not fully integrated into the results framework. Risk management was somewhat limited and would have benefited from more rigorous analysis of risks and the development of mitigation strategies. Going forward, UNDP should focus on resourcing, developing, and undertaking more rigorous M&E with an increased focus on demonstrating results and change.

134. No mid-term evaluation was held for the MYF, which limited the ability of the governance programme to receive progressive feedback to facilitate ongoing improvement. Consultations indicated that one reason for this may have been that the Independent Country Programme Evaluation was conducted at about the mid-point in MYF implementation. Consequently, it is relevant to highlight that evaluation’s assessment that “...the M&E system has improved during the programme cycle but still presents significant weaknesses, especially in the governance portfolio.”<sup>101</sup> Reference was also made of the need for the governance portfolio to “...ensure consistency of reporting across projects...”<sup>102</sup> This matter was also noted by this evaluation (see also discussion in **Section 1.5**, above), as the detail, availability, and clarity of some MYF-related

<sup>100</sup> Addressing evaluation question 3.7 in the Evaluation Matrix.

<sup>101</sup> At page 59.

<sup>102</sup> Ibid, at page 68.

documents were not always sufficient, making assessment of results and achievements, at times, difficult.

135. A results framework was developed for the MYF and included four outputs and 15 sub-outputs. A commentary on progress against the results framework is found in **Section 2.2** under each output heading. An assessment of the results framework also highlighted that:

- The results framework was not consistently updated to reflect changes in the MYF due to COVID-19. At times ‘obsolete’ activities were retained, while new areas of activity were not incorporated.
- Indicators and targets were usually, but not always, defined in the results framework.<sup>103</sup>
- Indicators and targets were largely numerical and so generally met SMART criteria;<sup>104</sup> however, they were
  - principally activity-based, that is focusing on numbers of participants/documents produced); and
  - did not include results-focused targets, that is targets focusing on systemic or behavioural change. This limited their utility and the ability to track and report on change and results.
- Some indicators and targets, however, did not align with the related output’s purpose or the result able to be achieved by the MYF’s interventions (and so did not meet the ‘relevance’ criteria of SMART indicators). One example is Sub-output 3.5. This indicator:
  - Focused on enhancing Members of Parliament’s leadership capacities and establishing links between youth and Parliament.
  - Conversely, the measure of success (target) was the outcome of the national elections, namely the ratio of men and women in parliament. Activities under the Sub-output, however, did not intend, nor were able to influence the target, and so actual results could not be measured.

136. From the documentation available to the evaluation, activity and progress reporting occurred. Gender-disaggregated data was collected and reported on in internal *Results Oriented Annual Reports*, this data primarily focused on participation numbers and not on change achieved. Furthermore, Results Oriented Annual Reporting reported progress and results against UNDP’s CPD (to which the MYF contributes), whose outcomes, outputs, and indicators differed from those of the MYF. Additionally, reporting of disaggregated data against defined MYF indicators and targets did not seem to be undertaken consistently. This made it difficult for the evaluation to track and document MYF-specific activities and results.<sup>105</sup>

137. A risk log or register was also developed as part of the MYF’s design to identify key programmatic risks. The risk register available to the evaluation is summarised in Table 8:<sup>106</sup>

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<sup>103</sup> This refers to the Results Frameworks for both the revised MYF; and the Innovation for a Smarter, Greener and More Resilient 21<sup>st</sup> Century Bhutan Project.

<sup>104</sup> SMART: Specific; Measurable; Achievable; Relevant; and Time-bound.

<sup>105</sup> This highlights an additional benefit of aligning governance activities directly with the Country Program Document and its results framework.

<sup>106</sup> The full risk matrix registered in quantum for MYF is found in **Annex Seven**.



**Table 8.** Assessment of Identified Risks and Documented Risk Mitigation Strategies

Event	Causes	Impacts	Risk Significance	Evaluation Assessment
1. Increased internal conflict between the affected groups (PWDs) and communities/ household members with strong cultural and religious beliefs (e.g., disabilities are a result of past life deeds and beliefs, one's work capacity and wellbeing are permanently reduced due to disability, etc.), particularly those who have benefitted from weak justice systems, and household power dynamics.	Limited advocacy and awareness on access for women and children	This could lead to (1) reduced or limited participation of PWDs due to fear of increased conflict, and (2) grievances or objections from potentially affected stakeholders.	Moderate	While a valid risk, this risk may have been strengthened if reference was also made to gender issues and issues faced by other vulnerable groups' as socio-cultural beliefs also underpin and perpetuated these disparities.  No risk mitigation strategy was defined, which would have assisted the Governance Team to proactively address potential risks situations, and enhance its ability to minimise the potential impact if the risk event occurred.
2. Delay in provision of Legal Aid Services	Limited capacities of service providers	Target population not getting benefited...	Moderate	Risk definition is somewhat superficial - clearer definition of the risk event, causes, and impacts would have assisted the Governance Team with proactively managing these risks.
3. Inadequate Capacity of IP (human resources)	Inadequate capacity of IP (human resources)	Limited adoption of action plan by the government (RCSC, NCWC)	Low	Again, no risk mitigation strategies were defined (see above comment).
4. Poor quality of training material and training facilitation	Limited national consultants with adequate capacity	Participants unlikely to get adequate technical capacity	Moderate	

138. The evaluation was informed in consultations that the risk register was reviewed and updated periodically, though infrequently. As an adjunct to the risk matrix process, Social and Environmental Standards (SES) underpin UNDP's commitment to mainstream social and environmental sustainability across its programmes. Consultations indicated that there was uncertainty regarding whether the MYF needed to use the SES procedure. While some SES-related documentation may have been developed, none was made available for the evaluation to review and assess.

139. Overall, the utility of the risk register and SES procedure could have been strengthened if:

- Clearer and more comprehensive risk identification and definition had been undertaken so that potentially significant risks could have been identified and addressed in the register.<sup>107</sup>
- Rigorous risk minimisation or mitigation strategies to respond to identified risks had been developed.
- Risk assessment and review had been undertaken more regularly.
- Clarity regarding the SES procedure was created, and relevant processes integrated into the governance portfolio's quality assurance and risk management approach.

## 2.4 Sustainability - Are the benefits of the MYF and its activities likely to continue after funds have been exhausted

### Sustainability of Interventions - Successes and Challenges<sup>108</sup>

**Finding 14.** Alignment with national priorities has promoted ownership and led to sustained results from selected institutional support initiatives. Successes include support to enhanced access to justice and legal aid, attitudinal shifts in the public service, and strengthened CSO capability. However, Bhutan's economic environment has significantly affected the RGoB's ability to share costs, which has impacted the capacity of institutions and organisations to sustain certain changes.

140. The current economic environment in Bhutan has directly impacted the RGoB's ability to lead or share costs of development activities despite the graduation from LDC status. This has also impacted the capacity of government agencies and institutions to sustain changes. Consultations indicated that several agencies or organisations (at national, local, and community levels) only had sufficient funds to meet core operational costs. Consequently, there is currently only limited capacity to self-fund ongoing capacity building, engagement, or development activities after the end of the MYF.

141. Consultations highlighted concerns with the capacity of institutions to maintain and ultimately replace equipment procured under the MYF. Additionally, some of the digitisation solutions developed under the MYF are not currently operational (for example, DEWA and e-litigation). These constraints highlight a likely need for action planning to ensure sufficient support is available in the short- to medium-term to re-operationalise and embed these valuable digital resources.

142. Economic difficulties aside, the MYF has facilitated significant sustainable change. Close alignment with national priorities and the 12<sup>th</sup> Five Year Plan, policy-level support, and

<sup>107</sup> This includes a significant risk identified in the revised MYF (but not addressed in the risk register), namely that: declining funding from traditional sources may result in a shift in RGoB's perception of UNDP towards becoming a donor, undermining its standing as a technical development partner and thought leader (*Revised MYF*, page 17). Selected examples of other potentially significant risks that may have been considered are:

- The impact of the 'exodus' of civil servants on MYF partnerships and implementation.
- Potential disengagement by RGoB in the MYF due to changed development priorities.
- That digital solutions can limit access for some vulnerable groups/those with limited 'IT literacy'.

<sup>108</sup> Addressing evaluation questions 4.1, 4.2, and 4.3 in the Evaluation Matrix.

investment in strategic and action planning were catalysts for sustainable long-term change. Within the scope of the MYF's activities, there is evidence of sustainability, particularly in the:

- Establishment of the Bar Council and Legal Aid Centre, which has institutionalised the organisations and facilitated a systemic approach to strengthening access to justice.
- *Gakey Lamtoen Pilot Project* to influence attitudes regarding gender norms and its integration into the nationwide school-based 'Scout Programme'.
- Citizen engagement platform, which is currently being integrated into Parliament's website.
- Combination of the *Serve Tool* and the *Empathy Skills Training*, which has led to an attitudinal shift within the public service towards more client-focused service delivery. The *Serve Tool* also continues to be expanded by the Royal Civil Service Commission.
- *GBV Contingency Plan*, the *Standard Operating Procedure*, and related online resources and awareness materials, which continue to be used by NCWC.
- Support to the Human Dignity Clinic, which has influenced students to become more aware and inclusive in their approach to the administration of justice.
- Investment in supporting and building capacity of CSOs. Consultations highlighted that CSOs have continued implementing selected services. MYF support is also seen as having enabled CSOs to fulfil their role more effectively; and given them credibility as service providers, thereby enabling them to access funding from other sources.

143. The current economic challenges in Bhutan have undoubtedly impacted the RGoB's capacity to sustain development initiatives independently. As seen above, however, the MYF has achieved sustainable change.

## 2.5 Cross-cutting Themes, Human Rights, and Leave No One Behind

### Embedding of Human Rights and Leave No One Behind (LNOB) in the MYF<sup>109</sup>

**Finding 15.** The MYF embedded human rights and LNOB principles throughout its activities. It promoted gender equality and inclusion of vulnerable groups, including PwDs, young people, and women, across policy, livelihood, and capacity-building interventions. Furthermore, human-rights-based approach principles were integrated through governance planning and activity implementation. The MYF's inclusive, people-centred approach has, therefore, advanced participation, empowerment, and social equity in Bhutan.

144. The MYF and the projects and activities under the MYF adopted participatory and people-centred approaches from design to implementation. This promoted inclusion and the integration of human-rights-based approach principles. Furthermore, alignment with the CPD (Outcome 1) and UNSDPF (Outcome 3) ensured that inclusion, human rights, and LNOB were a strategic focus in all MYF interventions.

145. Gender, GBV, and women's empowerment were mainstreamed and embedded at all levels of MYF support. Selected examples include:

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<sup>109</sup> Addressing evaluation questions 5.1 and 5.2 in the Evaluation Matrix.

- At the policy level: the *National Gender Equality Policy* and *National Plan of Action for Gender Equality*; and supporting *women in leadership* in Parliament and across the public service.
- Developing *livelihoods and building resilience*: through skills training and business development support for rural women and those involved in cottage industries.
- Awareness and capacity building: through the *Gakey Lamtoen Pilot Project* to influence attitudes regarding gender norms.
- In the private sector: where the *SDS Pilot Project* engaged with private companies to improve women's safety, access and inclusion in the workplace.
- Health service provision: through procurement of *iCTG devices*, which empowered women to be more active in their healthcare decision process.

146. Human rights and LNOB principles were integrated into MYF support, which included and empowered vulnerable groups. Selected examples include:

- At the policy level: the *National Policy for PwDs*, conducting a comprehensive situation analysis of the *State of PwDs in Bhutan*, and facilitation of the engagement and discussion process for the ratification of the UNCRPD.
- Developing *livelihoods and building resilience*: working with the Disabled People's Organisation to establish four small businesses supporting employment for 30 PwDs.
- Awareness and capacity building: through the *Disability Equality Training*, which was led by PwDs and lived experience and increased awareness and understanding.
- Protection of fundamental rights: with the establishment of *legal aid* and the *Legal Aid Centre*, which has provided legal aid services and support to over 100 vulnerable persons. Additionally, the *Toolkit for Access to Justice for PwDs* to increase awareness of rights and responsibilities.
- Awareness around and inclusion of LGBTQI+ community: through engagement activities, most notably involvement in the Salzburg Forum, which directly contributed to the revision of the *Penal Code of Bhutan*.

147. Another key cross-cutting theme integrated across the MYF was that of young people and youth unemployment. Selected examples include:

- At the policy level: facilitating *inclusion and engagement* with young people in multi-stakeholder dialogues with Parliamentarians to inform and integrate diverse views into CEDAW Reporting and the Universal Periodic Review process.
- Developing *livelihoods and building resilience*: supporting re-skilling and reintegration programmes for young people affected by COVID-19 and developing a 'future-ready' workforce and entrepreneurship.
- *Mental health* support: supporting the treatment and rehabilitation of young people with substance use disorder, and providing online counselling for those needing support.
- Addressing youth unemployment: supporting the *Systems Approach to Youth Unemployment in Bhutan Report 2020* to identify root causes of unemployment and to develop strategies to overcome barriers to employment and inclusion.

148. As the above discussion demonstrates, the MYF has focused *significantly* on integrating key cross-cutting themes and advocated and facilitated inclusion, empowerment, and diversity.

## Gender Marker and Gender Results Effectiveness Scale Assessment<sup>110</sup>

**Finding 16.** The MYF integrated gender considerations effectively, with over three-quarters of its activities assessed as GEN2 or GEN3. The assessment against the Gender Results Effectiveness Scale further confirmed the finding that the majority of activities addressed or integrated gender equality to a significant extent.

149. As noted in the previous section, gender-related issues have been considered and integrated at all levels of MYF support. Activities enabled equal access to participation by both females and males. Where appropriate, targeted support was provided only to women, for example, when piloting the provision of legal aid and providing locally contextualised emergency livelihood support. From activity reporting available to the evaluation, gender-disaggregated data was collected and reported on.

150. In the design of the MYF, all outputs were identified as being 'GEN2', or:

*Gender equality is not the main objective of the expected output, but the output promotes gender equality in a significant and consistent way.<sup>111</sup>*

All activities implemented under the MYF were assessed against the gender marker criteria.<sup>112</sup> The results of this analysis are summarised in *Table 9*:

**Table 9.** Analysis of the MYF Against Gender Markers (by Output)

	GEN0	GEN1	GEN2	GEN3
<b>Output 1</b>	0%	38%	63%	0%
<b>Output 2</b>	7%	7%	60%	27%
<b>Output 3</b>	7%	7%	86%	0%
<b>Output 4</b>	0%	4%	29%	67%
<b>Health</b>	29%	35%	29%	6%

151. More specifically:

- Output 1 was only partially implemented due to the re-programming of MYF activities to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic. Of the activities implemented, 63% of activities were assessed as GEN2, none assessed as GEN3.
- Output 2 had 60% of activities assessed at GEN2 and 27% assessed as GEN3.
- Output 3 had 86% of activities assessed at GEN2, none assessed as GEN3.
- Output 4 had 29% of activities assessed at as GEN2 and 67% assessed as GEN3.

<sup>110</sup> Addressing evaluation questions 5.3 and 5.4 in the Evaluation Matrix.

<sup>111</sup> UNDP, [Gender Markers - Annex 9](#).

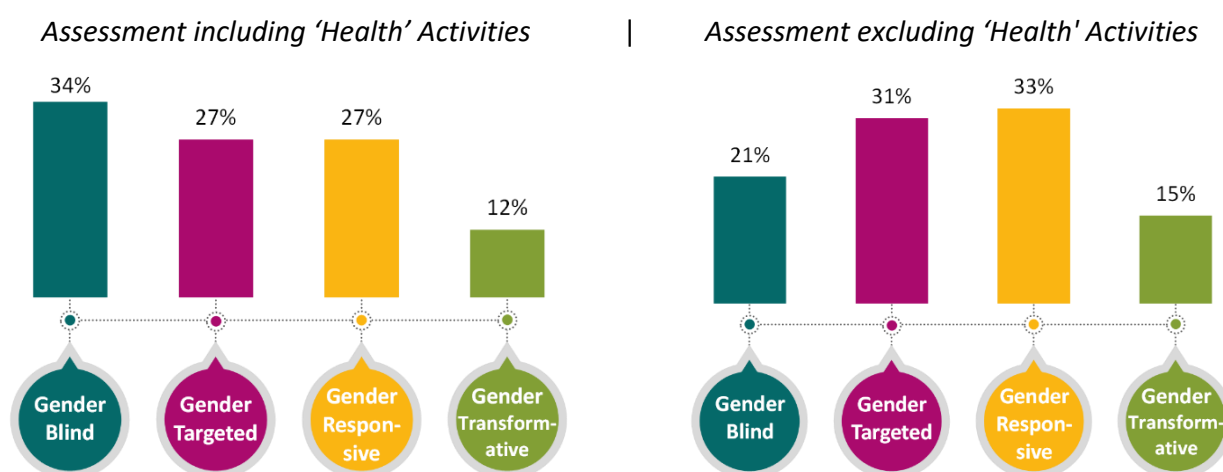
<sup>112</sup> The analysis was undertaken with the assistance of the UNDP Gender and Inclusion Analyst.

- ‘Health’ related activities - given the general nature or non-gender specific nature of the support required in response to the pandemic<sup>113</sup> - 29% of activities were assessed as GEN2 and 6% assessed as GEN3.

152. As seen from this analysis, not all outputs were exclusively GEN2; quite a number exceeded this target and were rated as GEN3.

153. The MYF was also assessed using the Gender Results Effectiveness Scale.<sup>114</sup> *Chart 2* illustrates the results of this assessment:

**Chart 2.** Analysis of the MYF Against the Gender Results Effectiveness Scale



154. As can once again be seen from this analysis, the ‘health’ related activities, given their nature, significantly impacted the assessment. When excluded, however, the assessment shows that over 79% of activities were gender targeted, gender responsive, or gender transformative.

<sup>113</sup> For example, procurement, equipment maintenance, and technology assessment.

<sup>114</sup> The assessment was undertaken in line with the UNDP [The Gender Results Effectiveness Scale \(GRES\): A Methodology Guidance Note](#). The criteria assess activities based on whether they are:

- 1 = Gender Blind
- 2 = Gender Targeted
- 3 = Gender Responsive
- 4 = Gender Transformative

*Note:* the fifth criterion ‘Gender Negative’ (rating of 0) was not used as no activities were assessed as having a negative impact on gender.

## 3.0 CONCLUSIONS, LESSONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

### 3.1 Overall Performance of the MYF - Analysis of the Theory of Change

155. The theory of change for the MYF is quite complex. The defined ‘causal statements’ or assumptions may have been strengthened in two ways:

- i. *Ensuring consistency in the nature of each statement* - five of the six assumptions relate to institutional performance and capacity; conversely, one assumption refers to norms and practices. Ensuring consistency in each causal statement/assumption would increase clarity and coherency.
- ii. *Ensuring consistency in targeting and focus of the theory of change* - on either specific institutions (i.e. local government, justice sector institutions, parliament); or on a thematic basis (i.e. governance institutions), and not both. Once again, ensuring consistency in each causal statement/assumption would increase clarity and coherency.

Addressing the above considerations would ‘tighten’ the development logic and strengthen the chain of causality in the MYF design. Furthermore, as discussed in **Section 2.3**, governance programming can be directly integrated with the UNDP CPD - including its defined theory of change. In the future, therefore, UNDP should consider ensuring that governance programming - and related assumptions, outcomes, outputs, indicators, and targets - mirror the UNDP CPD (2024-2028).

156. The ratings in *Table 3* summarise the discussions, analysis, and findings presented in the preceding sections. A four-point rating scale is used, with 4 being the highest rating and 1 the lowest,<sup>115</sup> to assess the contributions made to the MYFs theory of change:

**Table 10.** Review of MYF Contributions to the Theory of Change

Causal Statements	Overall Rating	Analysis of MYF Contribution
<p><i>If</i>, the capacities of ministries, dzongkhags and gewogs (civil servants and local elected representatives) are strengthened to complement increased fiscal decentralisation and ensure gender responsive planning and budgeting, paving the way for enhanced government/citizen engagement and improved public service delivery;</p>	<p>2</p>	<p>The review of MYF documentation and consultation feedback shows that the MYF made only a <b>limited contribution to</b> gender-responsive planning and budgeting at the local (gewog) level, principally due to a re-focus of priorities (and related re-allocation of resources) resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic.</p>

<sup>115</sup> A four-point scale has been used (as detailed in the approved Evaluation Inception Report) to assess the alignment and potential contributions of MYF interventions to the theory of change:

- 1 = No alignment/contribution.
- 2 = Limited alignment/contribution.
- 3 = Strong alignment/contribution.
- 4 = Direct alignment/significant contribution.

Causal Statements	Overall Rating	Analysis of MYF Contribution
<p><i>If</i>, the capacities of justice sector institutions are strengthened to enable coherent strategic planning and oversight across the sector which ensures access to justice for all, especially those most at risk of being left behind including survivors of Gender Based Violence (GBV) in achieving the SDGs;</p>	3	<p>The review of MYF documentation and consultation feedback shows that the MYF <b>appreciably contributed to</b> improvements in access to justice for all, including survivors of Gender Based Violence and PwDs, through support to e-litigation; online justice services; legal aid for vulnerable groups; and GBV contingency planning.</p>
<p><i>If</i>, the legislative, oversight and representation functions of Parliament are strengthened and exercised in an inclusive manner and with people’s participation to drive progress towards inclusive and equitable decision-making as well as sustainable development and GNH;</p>	3	<p>The review of MYF documentation and consultation feedback shows that the MYF <b>appreciably contributed to</b> strengthening inclusive governance, and more inclusive and equitable decision-making through research/assessments; facilitating engagement and inclusion in policy and decision-making; systems development; awareness raising; and ongoing capacity building.</p>
<p><i>If</i>, the formal and informal structural barriers to achieving gender equality, including discriminatory social norms and practices are transformed into a conducive eco-system, and existing gender dynamics become equal, and</p>	3	<p>The review of MYF documentation and consultation feedback shows that the MYF <b>appreciably contributed to</b> addressing barriers and discriminatory social norms and practices regarding gender equality through advocacy; capacity building; policy dialogue; and facilitating participation and inclusion in policy development and decision-making.</p>
<p><i>If</i>, the enabling environment for civil society is improved to help advance opportunities for and increase resilience targeted vulnerable groups, while capacities of vulnerable groups have their voices heard, and acted on also improves,</p>	3	<p>The review of MYF documentation and consultation feedback shows that the MYF <b>appreciably contributed to</b> creating an enabling environment for civil society through effective engagement and partnership with CSOs; undertaking CSO capacity building; supporting advocacy on issues and needs of vulnerable groups; and support to responsive and targeted programmes implemented by CSO partners.</p>
<p><i>If</i>, core governance institutions are able to discharge their responsibilities and provide vital services also in times of emergency, including based on digital and other innovative solutions,</p>	2	<p>The review of MYF documentation and consultation feedback shows that the MYF <b>contributed to</b> strengthening core governance institutions to discharge their responsibilities more effectively by undertaking targeted systemic and process assessments; development of digital and online systems and tools; and capacity building to support implementing partners’ service delivery - including responsive and targeted assistance during COVID-19.</p> <p>Support was, however, seen as somewhat ‘shallow’ and would have benefitted from ongoing support to embed change and promote sustainability.</p>



Causal Statements	Overall Rating	Analysis of MYF Contribution
<p><i>Then</i>, Bhutan will make a smooth transition from LDC status, increase its resilience to future shocks, and progress on SDGs and GNH.</p>	3	<p>The review of MYF documentation and consultation feedback shows that the MYF aligned closely with UNDP CPD outcomes and global development objectives and <b>appreciably contributed to</b> addressing SDG 5 and SDG 16; and National Key Results Areas 10, 12, and 16.</p>
	2	<p>The MYF also <b>contributed to initiating</b> more resilient governance institutions and civil society; however, change is still nascent, and initiatives are not institutionalised or independently sustainable. Furthermore, the MYF <b>only indirectly contributed to</b> a smooth transition by supporting the development of a more <i>robust (governance) enabling environment</i> in Bhutan. However, the MYF did <i>not directly contribute</i> to Bhutan achieving the three defined ‘transition criteria’ (i.e. Income, Human Assets, and Economic and Environmental Vulnerability<sup>116</sup>).</p>

## 3.2 Conclusions

157. By aligning the MYF with the RGoB’s 12<sup>th</sup> Five Year Plan, the UNDP CPD (2019-2023), as well as UN national and global objectives, the MYF and activities have been **relevant and appropriate** and address national priorities and needs. Furthermore, integrating human rights, inclusion, and LNOB principles through its programming resulted in the MYF contributing to UN and UNDP national and international strategic objectives and goals.

158. The MYF also made substantial contributions to strengthening **inclusive democratic governance** in Bhutan. The focus on strengthening Parliament and justice sector institutions, as well as efforts to facilitate citizen participation in policy and decision-making, significantly contributed to this achievement. These interventions not only promoted transparency and accountability, but also initiated more inclusive, people-centred governance in Bhutan. Support to CSOs and the facilitation of government-CSO partnerships to respond to community needs also contributed positively to the MYF’s achievements. This collaboration enhanced the recognition of CSOs’ role in providing targeted and responsive services, and also opened ‘civic space’ whereby more open dialogue and participation was enabled.

<sup>116</sup> LDC Criteria as defined by the [UN DESA, Department of Economic and Social Affairs Economic Analysis](#):

- **Income** - gross national income per capita GNI per capita, providing information on the income status and the overall level of resources available to a country
- **Human assets** - is a measure of the level of human capital, and includes indicators relating to nutrition, health, school enrolment, and literacy;
- **Economic and environmental vulnerability** - is a measure of structural vulnerability to economic and environmental shocks, and includes indicators relating to natural and trade-related shocks, physical and economic exposure to shocks, and smallness and remoteness.

159. The MYF and its activities are seen as **effective** as they achieved significant results, and contributed to defined national, UNDP, and UN outcomes. A key to the success of the MYF was UNDP's ability to collaborate closely and effectively with both international and local counterparts and organisations. Furthermore, government, institutional, and community partners see UNDP as a trusted development partner. This recognition and ability to engage effectively at all stakeholder levels has enabled UNDP, through the MYF, to position itself as a partner of choice in governance. It is also a significant **comparative advantage** over other development partners, enabling multiple points of engagement to address complex social and development challenges more effectively.

160. UNDP's work under the MYF also focused significantly on **advocating and promoting inclusion, empowerment, and diversity**. Results attributable to the MYF include strengthened and more inclusive government policy and decision-making; improved awareness and protection of the rights of vulnerable groups; and shifts in attitudes regarding gender norms and community perceptions. While these achievements are still nascent, with ongoing support, they have the potential to lead to transformational and sustainable change.

161. A significant asset to the MYF was its collaboration with Accelerator Lab to pilot and test **innovative and good practice approaches** on a small scale before expanding support, if pilot activities proved successful. This enabled the MYF to successfully implement a range of innovative solutions in public service delivery, digitisation, and addressing community services and needs.

162. The MYF's approach to implementation is seen as **efficient and appropriate** to the local context, as were the strategies used to develop and implement activities. Activity design and implementation were participatory and included appropriate counterparts and institutions. Additionally, the MYF adopted various implementation approaches, from systems thinking and process engineering, to inclusive policy dialogues and capacity building. This adaptive approach ensured that interventions were appropriate, contextualised, and efficient.

163. To structure its governance programming, UNDP adopted a **'portfolio approach'**. Consultations indicated that it largely succeeded in consolidating multiple small-scale projects under one conceptual framework and strengthening UNDP's engagement with UN sister agencies. However, value of an additional layer of strategic architecture, complexity, and monitoring and evaluation through a Governance Multi-Year Framework (in addition to the CPD and UNSDPF), is questioned.

164. UNDP's **agility and flexibility** in responding to the COVID-19 pandemic and the resultant shift in national priorities was effective. The MYF not only strengthened RGoB's capacity to undertake responsive macroeconomic planning, but also supported the continuity of Parliament and public service delivery through strategy development and digital solutions. COVID-19 also resulted in UNDP engaging in non-traditional support areas - notably health policy and health service delivery. This addressed the immediate needs of the RGoB to manage and roll-out vaccinations and health services. Given the need to adapt to a fluid and uncertain implementation environment, UNDP successfully mobilised funds to address identified development priorities. Furthermore, the MYF successfully accounted for its expenditure to the satisfaction of internal and external client audit requirements.

165. Alignment between the MYF and the RGoB's policy and development priorities was critical in promoting the **sustainability of results** beyond the MYF. The MYF has achieved sustainable change by institutionalising access to justice support; integrating selected digital solutions into government online platforms; and embedding awareness and rights-based support into local institutions. Despite a close alignment between the MYF and the RGoB's priorities, Bhutan's current economic environment has impacted the RGoB's and institutions' ability to sustain some results independently. Action planning is needed to ensure sufficient support is available in the short- to medium-term to embed some MYF achievements and to develop strategies for the RGoB to provide long-term resourcing.

166. The MYF focused significantly on integrating **key cross-cutting themes, human rights, and LNOB principles** throughout activity design and implementation. It substantially met or exceeded its gender maker targets, and adopted participatory and people-centred approaches from design to implementation. The MYF's focus on inclusion and diversity - at policy, institutional, and community levels - mainstreamed gender equality; access to justice; and inclusion of vulnerable groups including PwDs, young people, and women and children.

### 3.3 Lessons

167. *The value of investing in relationships* is seen as a critical lesson from the MYF implementation experience. The ability of UNDP to engage in and influence policy development (for example, relating to gender equity and inclusion of PwDs) demonstrates the value of UNDP's relationship with the RGoB. This lesson extends to highlighting *the importance of fostering engagement and inclusion*. UNDP's ability to promote inclusion is based on its trusted relationship with the RGoB, implementing partners, and civil society. The willingness of partners and counterparts to work with UNDP and collaborate was due to the significant investment made by the Governance Team to develop and maintain these relationships.

168. *Agility and responsiveness were critical* for UNDP to engage and ensure the relevance and success of MYF interventions. UNDP's response to COVID-19 and willingness to support other RGoB requests for assistance under the MYF demonstrate the benefit of ensuring responsive and flexible governance programming. Equally, it is essential also to ensure rigorous review, design, and planning of potential activities to maximise results and ensure positive contributions to defined programmatic objectives and strategic outcomes.

169. *The benefits and risks of digitisation and digital solutions* must be considered in programming. Investing in digital solutions enabled UNDP to support the RGoB, respond to the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic and support the continuation of public service delivery. The MYF's experience also shows the potential that digital solutions have in supporting inclusive dialogue and participation. Conversely, a strong digital enabling environment; sufficient technical support capacity; and allocation of resources for maintenance and replacement are all critical if digital solutions are to be sustainable.

170. *The importance of effective and relevant results frameworks and a focus on results* is also seen as an important lesson. Despite redesigning the MYF, the results framework was not updated, which meant that activities and results did not align with indicators and defined targets. The definition of realistic results-focused indicators and targets would enable more

rigorous reporting, promote transparency, and support more effective communication of achievements.

### 3.4 Recommendations

171. The recommendations of the Independent Country Programme Evaluation - Bhutan and Management Responses have been reviewed. As far as they relate to the MYF and UNDP's governance portfolio, the evaluation endorses both. Additionally:

#### **Recommendation One - Refine the Strategic Framework for Governance Programming**

172. The approach to align governance programming directly with RGoB, UN, and CPD outcomes and priorities has proven successful. This approach should continue and be strengthened. To do this, UNDP should critically review the utility of a MYF (i.e. another layer of 'strategic architecture'). It should consider how best to simplify and integrate governance programming directly into existing strategic frameworks, particularly the CPD (2024-2028). The governance portfolio and programming can directly be aligned with the new CPD's:

- Outcome 3 - *By 2028, Bhutan has more inclusive, transparent and accountable governance and rule of law;*<sup>117</sup> and
- Outputs 3.1-3.3 - would provide the thematic and results framework to group and target future governance support.

173. Furthermore, should UNDP wish to continue developing and strengthening its governance portfolio approach, consideration should also be given to:

- Developing strategies to strengthen the integration of fully costed governance activities across all substantive or thematic areas (environment, energy, digitisation, health, etc.). This can be done informally at the Country Office management level; or more formally by establishing 'governance' as a cross-cutting issue to be integrated in all programmes.
- Reviewing and strengthening existing outcome and thematic groups. Communication approaches may need to be streamlined to improve their ability to meet the needs of internal (within the UN System) and external (with implementing partners) clients.
- Clarifying entry points and lines of engagement between the UNDP, UN sister agencies, and the RGoB, particularly where non-UNDP agencies are active or have longstanding technical engagement with the RGoB.

#### **Recommendation Two - Refine Targeting and Resourcing of Future Governance Assistance**

174. Access to adequate and consistent funding is critical for effective governance programming. Availability of development funding (particularly for governance) is a global challenge, as evidenced by the ever-increasing SDG investment gap.<sup>118</sup> Consequently, UNDP should consider developing a governance resource mobilisation strategy that identifies new or

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<sup>117</sup> This would concurrently align all proposed governance interventions with national priorities in the Draft 13th FYP Framework (*Bhutan has a transformed and trusted governance ecosystem that drives accelerated economic growth and improves people's lives*); SDGs 5, 16, 17; and UNSDCF Outcome 4.

<sup>118</sup> [SDG Investment Trends Monitor - Issue 4](#) (UNCTAD/DIAE/MISC/2023/6) : The annual investment gap now stands at \$4 trillion, up from \$2.5 in 2015.

innovative approaches to mobilising funding for its governance programme. Such a strategy should consider:

- Prioritising larger-scale, longer-term projects and funding through global or regional programmes in recognition that challenges in governance financing are not unique to Bhutan.<sup>119</sup>
- Adopting a pragmatic approach to prioritise governance support in areas that attract global or bi-lateral funding. This may include mapping potential donors or identifying non-traditional funding sources. Non-traditional sources may include philanthropic foundations, multi-lateral donors, new donors to Bhutan with funding priorities that align with UNDP’s governance portfolio, and private sector support.<sup>120</sup>
- Explicitly targeting governance programming in sectors or thematic areas where other development partners are not active (for example, the justice sector) so that UNDP positions itself as the principal development partner for funding opportunities.
- Targeting future programming on areas that have demonstrated success under the MYF. This will provide a strong foundation for expanding, adapting, or embedding successful activities or strategies that potential funding partners can see as a low-risk/high-return investment.

### **Recommendation Three - Adopt a Holistic Approach to Developing Digital Solutions**

175. For digital solutions to be more effective, UNDP should consider adopting a ‘whole-of-system’ approach so that support focuses both on solutions to specific digital needs, *and* on developing the digital enabling environment including:

- digital policies<sup>121</sup> and data ethics frameworks;
- cyber-security strategies;
- inclusion strategies; and
- local technical and digital support capacity.

176. Although more complex and costly, a whole-of-system approach will make digital solutions more effective, and better address the constraints to sustainability and inclusion identified in the evaluation. For such an approach to be successful, significant coordination and engagement between RGoB, UN agencies, development partners, and donors is needed. While it is recognised that such coordination is challenging, UNDP’s trusted position as a development partner in governance makes it ideally suited to lead such a process.

### **Recommendation Four - Develop a More Explicit and Rigorous Governance Sustainability Strategy**

177. To strengthen the sustainability of results, UNDP should consider developing a more explicit sustainability strategy for its governance programming. The strategy can develop

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<sup>119</sup> Noting that some resources from global/vertical funds is already being sought.

<sup>120</sup> Private sectors support may be through corporate foundations (one example is the [The Global Alliance for YOUTH initiative](#) funded by Nestlé). An alternative example is that some large organisations (one example is the international law firm [Ashurst](#)) have pro bono or other support programmes that can provide targeted assistance.

<sup>121</sup> Building on earlier support to develop the RGoB’s first *Digital Strategy*.

approaches for *progressively* devolving responsibility for ongoing implementation and resourcing to RGoB and institutional partners. This would promote reduced reliance on ongoing donor funding support and strengthen the resilience of governance institutions.

178. Programmatically, a sustainability strategy also has the potential to support UNDP when designing future governance activities by:

- Prioritising longer-term programmes or projects to deepen the impact of interventions and build capacity. Longer-term investment in fewer activities/technical areas will assist with embedding and reinforcing capacity and change over time so that interventions become more sustainable.
- Identifying activities from the MYF that require limited ongoing support to enable them to become self-sustaining. Such an approach can maximise the potential ‘return on investment’ in time, resources, and commitment made by UNDP and implementing partners during the MYF.
- Building on the ‘foundations’ created during the MYF to further develop or extend activities that have proven to be effective.<sup>122</sup> Building on the MYF’s achievements will maximise continuity; extent the ‘reach’ of UNDP’s support; promote ongoing capacity development; and maximise local ownership.
- Ensuring that comprehensive maintenance and replacement plans for essential systems, processes, and equipment are developed as a core part of all future digital or technology-focused activities. This would promote long-term functionality and support the sustainability of interventions.

### **Recommendation Five - Strengthen Programme Management**

179. To strengthen programme management and administration, UNDP should consider establishing more rigorous internal reporting, data collection, risk management, and document management protocols. Internal programme management protocols must also be established to collect, analyse, and record activity/project data uniformly, consistently, and comprehensively. Furthermore, when designing results frameworks, all indicators should be defined during the design process; use SMART criteria; and provide targets relating to both activities and results. This will not only allow for more coherent and comprehensive reporting across governance projects and against results frameworks, but it will also better meet the needs of funding agencies. Concurrently, a somewhat greater investment in programmatic M&E may also benefit UNDP and assist in demonstrating results.

180. Furthermore, improving project-related administrative processes (including quality assurance; use of templates; document control protocols; and standardised, resourced, and robust data analysis/M&E processes<sup>123</sup>) will help improve efficiency and reduce the administrative burden on the UNDP Governance Team.

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<sup>122</sup> These ‘foundations’ should ensure that inclusion, human rights, and LNOB are prioritised and could include support to: RGoB policy and action plans; the justice sector; and ongoing engagement with civil society and CSOs.

<sup>123</sup> Each of these elements has become apparent during the course of this evaluation.

## ANNEXES

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# Annex One - Terms of Reference for the Evaluation of the Governance Multi-Year Framework 2020-2023

## I. BACKGROUND

Good governance was at the heart of Bhutan's 12<sup>th</sup> Five Year Plan (FYP) 2018-2023 vision of a "just, harmonious and sustainable society through enhanced decentralisation", and was critical to supporting Bhutan's graduation from LDC status. Realising the vision required capacity-strengthening to manage the implementation of decentralised resources and mainstream crosscutting issues into local plans and budgets, with the active participation and inclusion of citizens at local levels. This holistic approach was crucial for achieving equitable access to justice for all through the new Justice Sector Strategy Implementation Plan. In addition, the Parliament, as the key institution of democracy played a pivotal role in helping to address these challenges and driving progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), Gross National Happiness (GNH) and the just, harmonious and sustainable society as envisaged in the 12<sup>th</sup> FYP. To Support this, UNDP Bhutan's Governance Multi-Year Framework (henceforth referred to as the MYF) leveraged UNDP's role as lead agency for Outcome 3 under the UNSDPF 2019-2023. This aligned with UNDP's Country Programme Document 2019-2023, allowing UNDP to offer sustainable and predictable multi-year support throughout the 12<sup>th</sup> FYP. The financial outlay for the framework is USD 2.0 m.

The overall goal of the MYF was to support Bhutan's smooth transition from Least Developed Country status by strengthening effective, inclusive, and accountable governance systems and institutions that helps Bhutan to make a progress on SDGs and GNH. The **strategic outcome** envisaged, in line with the CPD Outcome 1 (UNSDPF Outcome 3), was that by 2023, Government institutions provide equal opportunities for all, and women and vulnerable groups hold leaders accountable. To achieve the above outcome, the Multi-Year Framework had proposed **four outputs**:

1. Central and local governments engage with citizens for an equitable, effective and transparent service delivery;
2. Increased access, inclusion, transparency and accountability in the justice sector;
3. Parliament drives progress towards human rights protection, sustainable development and GNH; and
4. Effective, evidence-based and innovative project management in UNDP.

In addition, the MYF aimed to systematically mainstream gender-responsive and inclusive measures in all four outputs, including gender-parity in all capacity building initiatives and promote new and innovative ways of approaching solutions and experimenting them across outputs as the two cross cutting themes.

Key partners in the implementation included line ministries at national level (Ministry of Finance, Ministry of Industry, Commerce and Employment, Ministry of Home Affairs and Ministry of Health), local government authorities in respective locales, the Parliament, Royal Civil Service Commission, Justice sector institutions, the NCWC, and civil society organisations. Other partners included UN sister agencies (UNICEF, UNFPA, UNODC and WHO) and development partners who directly or indirectly contributed to the achievement of the MYF. Their work or resources has complemented and/or supported UNDPs work in these areas. Therefore, this evaluation fits within the context of measuring and tracking the progress made



by UNDP towards achieving its desired contribution. The outcome evaluations will identify evidence of UNDP contributions to UNSDCF outcomes through the following projects:

- Gender youth and innovation.
- Enhancing access to justice; Parliament; local government and decentralisation and health governance projects
- Enhancing capacities of Parliament
- Strengthen local government and decentralisation, and
- Enhancing health governance

The evaluation will also identify lessons and learnings that will guide the improvement of performance in next UNSDCF and CPD (2024-28) by identifying areas of strength, weaknesses, and gaps, especially in respect to the appropriateness of the UNDP partnership strategy and obstacles to achievement of outcomes.

## **II. EVALUATION PURPOSE**

UNDP conducts outcome evaluations to capture and demonstrate evaluative evidence of UNDP's contributions to development results at the country level as articulated in the Country Programme Document and in the United Nations Development Strategic Framework. The evaluation aims to capture evaluative evidence of the relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, and sustainability of current programming, which can be used to strengthen existing programmes and to set the stage for new initiatives. The evaluation serves as an important accountability function, providing stakeholders and partners with an impartial assessment of the results of the UNDP programme of support, in this case, within the Governance and Advocacy portfolio.

This is an independent evaluation to be carried out within the overall provisions contained in the UNDP Evaluation Policy and aim to specifically undertake the following:

- Provide evidence to support accountability of programmes and for UNDP to use in its accountability requirements to its donors and development partners;
- Provide evidence of the UNDP contribution to outcome and guide performance improvement by identifying current areas of strengths, weaknesses and gaps;
- Provide evidence and inform higher-level evaluations and subsequent planning based on the evaluations.

In doing so, evaluation aims to identify which UNDP approaches have worked well and which have faced challenges, and to use lessons learned to improve future initiatives and generate knowledge for wider use. Evaluating the MYF therefore involves ascertaining whether and how UNDP has assisted in improving human development conditions in the country, including for individuals, institutions and systems. Evaluation also helps to clarify underlying factors affecting development, to identify unintended consequences (positive and negative), to generate lessons learned and to recommend actions to improve the performance of current and future programmes.

## **III. EVALUATION SCOPE AND OBJECTIVES**

UNDP intends to undertake an independent evaluation to assess MYF Programme at the macro level covering the period 2020-2023. The evaluation must provide evidence-based information that is credible, reliable, and useful. The evaluator is expected to follow a participatory and consultative approach ensuring close engagement with relevant national counterparts including ministries, agencies, CSOs, private sectors. The evaluation should result in concrete and actionable recommendations for the proposed future programming.

The evaluation will be conducted during the months of July to August with a view to assess the impact of UNDP Governance Multi-Year Framework towards improved governance processes and outcomes and provide strategic direction and inputs to the formulation of the new Governance Multi-Year Framework (2025-2028). Specifically, the evaluation will assess:

- a. The relevance and strategic positioning of UNDP support to Bhutan on strengthening Governance.
- b. The frameworks and strategies that UNDP has devised for its support on Governance, including partnership and programmatic strategies, and whether they are well conceived for achieving planned objectives.
- c. The progress made towards achieving Governance outcome through specific projects and advisory services and including contributing factors and constraints.
- d. The progress to date under the MYF and what can be derived in terms of lessons learned for future UNDP Governance support to the country.

The evaluation will consider pertinent outputs focused on Governance, as stated in the CPD. The specific MYF outputs to be assessed include:

1. National and local government capacity to integrate, monitor and report on the SDGs and other international agreements is improved.
2. The enabling environment for civil society to advance opportunities for, and increase resilience of, targeted vulnerable groups is improved.
3. Parliament and justice sector capacities and approaches are strengthened with increased inclusion, transparency and accountability.

The evaluation will analyse contributions made by the MYF towards the CPD and UNSDCF from 2019 till June 2024, previous programme period and UNDPs strategic position within the country. It will also identify factors affecting the development situation and the results observed, generate lessons learned and recommend actions to improve performance in the implementation of next CPD. The evaluation will assess how UNDP's programme results contributed, together with the assistance of partners, to a change in development conditions within that sector. Additionally, it will also assess the impact of programme on the marginalised groups including women, economically disadvantaged groups, those with diverse gender identity, sexual orientation and expression and persons with disabilities as well as on promoting gender equality. The evaluation will also guide future work by providing recommendations on the most optimal pillar balance and project formulation structure in the new MYF, that will guide the implementation of the CPD 2024-2028.

The evaluation will use the OECD/DAC evaluation criteria of relevance, effectiveness, efficiency and sustainability<sup>124</sup>, as defined and explained in the UNDP Handbook on Planning, Monitoring and Evaluating for Development Results. The final report should comply with the UNDP Evaluation Guideline which will be quality assessed based on UNDP IEO's quality criteria per the UNDP Evaluation guidelines. Reports as per the UNDP Evaluation Guideline.

#### **IV. EVALUATION CRITERIA AND QUESTIONS**

The Outcome evaluation seeks to answer the key questions according to the criteria against which the subject to be evaluated. The questions should cover the following key areas of evaluation criteria:

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<sup>124</sup> Further details, including outputs and output indicators, means of verification in the CPD for Bhutan 2019-2023

**a) Relevance:** the extent to which the MYF activities are suited to the priorities and policies of the country at the time of formulation:

- To what extent is UNDPs engagement in Governance support a reflection of strategic considerations, including UNDPs role in the development context in the country and its comparative advantage vis-a-vis other partners?
- Are the intended outputs and outcome aligned with the key development strategies of the country? Are they consistent with human development needs of the country and the intended beneficiaries? Do the outputs and outcome address the specific development challenges of the country and the intended beneficiaries? Were there any unintended consequences (positive or negative) that have implications to the development goals of the country?
- Are the results and/or progress towards results aligned and contributing to the respective. global goals as outlined in the Agenda 2030 and its targets? If not, what should be done to ensure this is achieved?
- To what extent has UNDP selected method of delivery been appropriate to the development context?  
Has UNDP been influential in country policy debates and dialogues on Governance and has it influenced country policies on governance reforms and human rights protection?

**b) Efficiency:** measurement of the outputs in relation to the inputs.

- Are the UNDP approaches, resources, models, conceptual framework relevant to achieve the planned outcome? Are they sufficiently sensitive to the political and development constraints of the country?
- Has UNDPs Governance Strategy and execution been efficient and cost effective?
- Has there been an economical use of financial and human resources?
- Are the monitoring and evaluation systems that UNDP has in place helping to ensure that programmes are managed efficiently and effectively for proper accountability of results?
- Were alternative approaches considered in designing the MYF?
- Are adequate resources mobilised to achieve the desired result? What strategies were put in place to close the resource gap? To what extent have these strategies been implemented?

**c) Effectiveness:** The extent to which MYF activities attain its objectives

- Have the outputs been achieved, and did they contribute to the stated outcome Irk?
- What evidence is there that UNDP support has contributed towards an strengthening governance mechanism and institutional capacities of governance institutions? Has UNDP worked effectively with other international partners to deliver Inclusive Democratic Governance initiatives and services?
- How effective was the partnerships aspect of programming implemented to ensure achievement of this outcome?
- To what extent has the project supported domestication of key regional frameworks, experiences and international best practices through national development plans and strategies?
- Has UNDP utilised innovative techniques and best practices in its Inclusive Democratic Governance programming?

- To what extent the programme contributed to gender equality (including shift in harmful traditional practices and norms), women's empowerment and promoting rights of marginalised groups?
- Is UNDP perceived by stakeholders as a strong advocate and partner of choice for improving Inclusive Democratic Governance in the country?

**d) Sustainability:** the benefits of the Programme related activities that are likely to continue after the Programme funds have been exhausted

- What indications and likelihoods are there that the outcomes will be sustained, for instance, through requisite institutional capacities (e.g. systems, structures and staff)
- What mechanisms have been set in place by UNDP to support the government/ institutional partners to sustain improvements made through the Governance interventions?
- What markers or evidence is there to show that the results achieved so far will be sustained beyond the programme period/ into the next programme?
- Are there national plans/ reforms to promote inclusive democratic governance in place or likely to be developed, approved and implemented in the next few years? And beyond the programme period?
- What changes should be made in the current set of governance partnerships to promote long term sustainability?
- Has follow up support after the end of the MYF activities been discussed and formalised? Is there a clear exit strategy?

The evaluation should also include an assessment of the extent to which programme design, implementation and monitoring have taken the following cross cutting issues into consideration:

**e) Human rights and LNOB**

- To what extent the principles of human rights and LNOB embedded throughout the programme?
- To what extent the marginalised groups including economically disadvantaged, persons with disabilities, women, rural communities, elderly, and indigenous groups benefited from UNDP's work under the governance programme?
- To what extent gender issues been addressed in the design, implementation and monitoring of different projects under the programme?
- Is gender marker data assigned to projects representative of reality (focus should be placed on gender marker 2 and 3 projects)?
- To what extent has the MYF promoted positive changes in gender equality? Were there any unintended effects?

Based on the above analysis, the consultant should provide recommendations on how UNDP in Bhutan should adjust its programming, partnership arrangements, resource mobilisation strategies, working methods and/or management structures to ensure that implementation is further improved in the new CPD and UNSDCF cycles (2024-2028). Recommendations to further strengthen integration of gender equality, diversity, inclusion and human rights approach across different areas in new governance programming should also be made.

## **V. METHODOLOGY**

The evaluation will be carried out by an International Consultant (see section 7 for Required Competencies) and will engage a wide range of stakeholders and beneficiaries, including

national and local government officials, donors, civil society organisations, academicians and subject experts, private sector representatives and community members.

The MYF evaluation is expected to take a "theory of change" (TOC) approach to determine causal links between the development challenges, the interventions that UNDP has supported and observe progress in governance at national and local levels in Bhutan. The consultant will develop a logical framework model of how UNDP interventions are expected to lead governance, which is more effective, transparent, accountable and inclusive. The consultant is expected to analyse the previous TOC given below and explain whether these are aligned and correspond to the CPD, and where there were deviations, note them especially these affected the attainment of the outcomes planned in the CPD.:

*If* the capacities of justice sector institutions are strengthened to enable coherent strategic planning and oversight across the sector which ensures access to justice for all, especially those most at risk of being left behind including survivors of Gender Based Violence (GBV) in achieving the SDGs;

*If*, the legislative, oversight and representation functions of Parliament are strengthened and exercised in an inclusive manner and with people's participation to drive progress towards inclusive and equitable decision-making as well as sustainable development and GNH;

*If*, the capacities of ministries, dzongkhags and gewogs (civil servants and local elected representatives) are strengthened to complement increased fiscal decentralisation and ensure gender responsive planning and budgeting, paving the way for enhanced government/citizen engagement and improved public service delivery;

*If*, the formal and informal structural barriers to achieving gender equality, including discriminatory social norms and practices are transformed into a conducive eco-system, and existing gender dynamics become equal, and

*If*, the enabling environment for civil society is improved to help advance opportunities for and increase resilience targeted vulnerable groups, while capacities of vulnerable groups have their voices heard, and acted on also improves,

*Then*, Bhutan will make a smooth transition from LDC status and progress on SDGs and GNH.

Evidence obtained and used to assess the results of UNDP support should be triangulated from a variety of sources, including verifiable data on indicator baseline, milestones and target achievement, existing reports, previous evaluations and technical papers, stakeholder interviews, focus groups, surveys and site visits.

The following steps in data collection are anticipated:

**a) Desk Review:**

A desk review should be carried out of the key strategies and documents underpinning the governance pillar of UNDP in Bhutan: This includes reviewing the following but not limited to:

- Country Programme Document 2019-2023,
- Common Country Analysis document for UNSDPF 2019-2023
- Independent Country Programme Evaluation of the CPD (2029-23)
- Project documents and related monitoring and evaluation reports undertaken during the period under review

- Relevant knowledge products and reports produced through various projects under the MYF
- Relevant strategies, guidelines, and action plan documents of the government
- The review should include all the Governance Pillar projects implemented by the CO.

The consultant is also expected to review relevant strategies and reports developed by the Government of Bhutan that are relevant to UNDPs governance support.

#### **b) Field Data Collection:**

The evaluation team will visit select project sites to observe first-hand progress and achievements made to date and to collect best practices/ lessons learned. The consultant will build on the documented evidence through an agreed set of field and interview methodologies, including:

- Interviews with key partners and stakeholders (including face-to-face and/or telephonic interviews)
- Survey questionnaires where appropriate
- Participant observation, focus groups, rapid appraisal techniques

The consultant will consider following key beneficiary groups for focused group discussions:

- Youth Entrepreneurs
- Persons with disabilities
- Women and entrepreneurs' groups
- Men and women from rural communities

To ensure maximum participation in decisions, the consultant may organise separate discussions with different groups.

## **VI. DELIVERABLES**

The consultant will prepare reports which triangulate findings to address the questions of the final evaluation, highlight key significant changes in regard to the key thematic policy documents, draw out lessons learned, present findings and recommendations, reflecting comments and feedback received from selected staff. The structure of the reports should be used to guide the reader to the main areas. The language of the reports should be simple, free from jargon and with specialist terms explained.

The principal evaluation products the consultant needs to submit are:

- 1. Evaluation inception report** (prepared after Briefing the consultant before going into the full-fledged data collection exercise) - to clarify the consultant's understanding of what is being evaluated and why, showing how each evaluation question will be answered by way of: proposed methods, proposed sources of data and data collection procedures and the TOC. The inception report should detail the specific timing for evaluation activities and deliverables and propose specific site visits and stakeholders to be interviewed. Protocols for different stakeholders should be developed. The inception report should be discussed and agreed with Senior Management before the consultant proceeds with site visits.
- 2. Draft evaluation report:** to be reviewed by UNDP and other respective stakeholders and presented in a validation workshop (if applicable), that the team will organise. Feedback received from these sessions should be considered when preparing the final report. The consultant will have to produce an 'audit trail' indicating whether and how each comment received was addressed in revisions to the final report. The evaluation report should

include recommendations and a structured framework that will provide a skeleton document for future Governance Programmes.

- 3. Final Evaluation report** - the consultant will prepare a final Evaluation report that is acceptable to standards of UNDP. Evaluation summary is required.

The evaluation team should refer to the [UNDP Evaluation Guidelines.pdf](#) for the evaluation report template and quality standards.

## VII. REQUIRED COMPETENCIES

- Minimum Master's degree in democratic governance, access to justice, rule of law, constitutional or parliamentary studies; human rights, development studies, social science, statistics or any related field;
- Minimum 10-15 years of professional experience working in the areas of democratic governance;
- At least 5 years of experience in conducting governance-related evaluations of government and international aid organisations;
- Strong working knowledge of the UN and its mandate in Bhutan, and more specifically the work of UNDP in support of government and civil society in Bhutan;
- Sound knowledge of results-based management systems, and monitoring and evaluation methodologies; including experience in applying SMART (Specific; Measurable; Achievable; Relevant; Time-bound) indicators;
- Excellent reporting and communication skills;
- Criteria for Evaluation of Proposal will be weighted at 70% as follows; Methodology - 35%,
- Experience in the related field - 25% and educational background - 10%. The applicant receiving the Highest Combined Score that has also accepted UNDPs' General Terms and Conditions will be awarded the contract.

The Consultant/evaluator will have overall responsibility for the quality and timely submission of the inception report, draft and final evaluation report and will perform the following tasks:

- Draft and present the draft and final evaluation reports;
- Lead the presentation of draft findings in the stakeholder workshop;
- Lead and manage the evaluation mission, liaise with UNDP on travel, and interview schedules ;
- Develop the inception report, detailing the evaluation scope, methodology and approach;
- Conduct the project evaluation in accordance with the proposed objective and scope of the evaluation and UNDP evaluation guidelines;
- Draft and Present the Draft and final evaluation reports;
- Lead the presentation of draft findings in the stakeholder workshop and
- Finalise the evaluation report and submit it to UNDP.

## VIII. DURATION AND TIMEFRAME OF THE WORK

The duration of the contract shall be for 35 working days<sup>125</sup> spread over 5<sup>th</sup> July to 31<sup>st</sup> August 2024.

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<sup>125</sup> Note: The Contract for the Independent Evaluation was undertaken on a lump-sum, not input-day, basis.

## IX. INSTITUTIONAL ARRANGEMENTS/ REPORTING RELATIONSHIPS

The contact point for this assignment in UNDP will be the Portfolio Manager of the Governance and Advocacy Portfolio. The selected consultant will work closely with the evaluation manager and the team from UNDP. The payments will be certified by UNDP upon successful completion of the assignment. All the deliverables under the project shall be verified by the governance team and certified for payment by UNDP. The frequency of regular touchpoints will be discussed and agreed upon at the kick-off meeting.

## X. PAYMENT MILESTONES AND AUTHORITY

Bidders should indicate the cost of services for each deliverable in local currency (BTN) when applying for this consultancy, with the cost breakdown of each cost element. In accordance with UNDP rules, the lump sum contract amount to be offered should be all-inclusive, covering the professional fees, communications, mission travel within Bhutan, meeting/workshop logistics, out-of-pocket expenses, and other ancillary costs.

Payment will be made as per the following payment schedule upon satisfactory completion of the below-listed deliverables and certified and acceptance by UNDP:

Activities/Deliverables	Target Due Dates
30% - Submission of Inception Report.	6 September, 2024
40% - Submission of Draft Evaluation Report.	27 October, 2024
30% - Submission of Final Evaluation Report.	10 November, 2024

## XI. PROPOSAL

The potential bidder should submit one **Technical Proposal** and a separate financial proposal with an itemised cost breakdown.

### Technical proposal

- A brief background of the company profile and legal status.
- Evidence of experience in undertaking at least two similar works (provide examples and referees).
- Technical proposal: detailed methodology and timelines for ensuring completion of work by the required time (no more than five pages).
- CV

### Financial Proposal

“All Inclusive Lump Sum Fee/Daily fee” financial proposal including consultancy and professional fee, DSA for field visits, communication cost such as telephone/internet usage, printing cost, transportation, ad-hoc costs, stationery costs, and any other foreseeable costs in this exercise. Bidders shall submit the financial offer in the format given in Request for Proposal (RFP).

**Interested firm is requested to submit a proposal in electronic format through Quantum. All submissions should be through the quantum, if not registered, please use the supplier link - <http://supplier.quantum.partneragencies.org> before midnight of 28<sup>th</sup> June Bhutan Standard Time.**



## XII. CRITERIA FOR THE SELECTION OF THE BEST OFFER

The selection of the best offer will be based on the Combined Scoring method - where the technical ratings (qualifications and methodology) will be weighted a maximum of 70% and combined with the price offer which will be weighted a maximum of 30% as per the following table:

Criteria	Weight	Maximum Point
<b>Technical (A)</b> The technical assessment will be based on the following criteria:	<b>70</b>	<b>70</b>
<p><b>A. Service provider's capacity (Maximum 12.5*2)</b></p> <p>a. Consultant with 10-15 years of national experience in the field conducting evaluations:</p> <p><u>Points allocation:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 10 years of experience = 10 points</li> <li>- More than 10 years of experience = 12.5 points</li> </ul> <p>b. Consultant completing similar projects in the past</p> <p><u>Points allocation:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 2 similar types of projects implemented = 10 points</li> <li>- More than 2 similar types of projects = 12.5 points</li> </ul>	<p><b>a.10-12.5</b></p> <p><b>b.10-12.5</b></p>	<b>25</b>
<p><b>B. Key personnel/ Training Members (Maximum 10*3=30)</b></p> <p><b>1. Team leader with a minimum of 10 years experience and masters degree - 5 points.</b></p> <p><b>2. Evaluator - Min. Masters degree with 10-15 years experience.<sup>126</sup></b></p> <p><u>Points allocation:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Masters degree with 10 years = 5 points</li> <li>- More than above criteria = 10 points</li> </ul>	<b>5-10*3</b>	<b>30</b>
<p><b>C. Approach and methodology</b></p> <p><b>a. Understanding of requirements (Maximum points 6)</b></p> <p><u>Points allocation:</u></p> <p><i>Fully addresses all aspects of TOR and demonstrates no weaknesses- 6 points.</i></p> <p><i>Fully addresses all aspects of the TOR and demonstrates only a few minor weaknesses - 4 points.</i></p> <p><i>Addresses all aspects of the TOR but the proposed methodology and strategy may contain significant weaknesses and/or a number of minor weaknesses - 2 points.</i></p> <p><i>Does not address all aspects of the TOR. Significant weaknesses are demonstrated and clearly outweigh any strengths presented - 0 points.</i></p>	<b>a.0-6</b>	<b>15</b>

<sup>126</sup> Note: No second Evaluator/National Consultant was identified to support the independent evaluation. UNDP will, therefore, need to provide extensive logistical and practical support. To ensure the independence of the evaluation, however, UNDP will not directly contribute to the drafting process.

Criteria	Weight	Maximum Point
<p><b>d. Appropriateness and feasibility of the proposed approach and methodology (Maximum points 6)</b></p> <p><u>Points allocation:</u></p> <p><i>Fully addresses all aspects of TOR and demonstrates no weaknesses - 6 points.</i></p> <p><i>Fully addresses all aspects of the TOR and demonstrates only a few minor weaknesses - 4 points.</i></p> <p><i>Addresses all aspects of the TOR but the proposed methodology and strategy may contain significant weaknesses and/or a number of minor weaknesses- 2 points.</i></p> <p><i>Does not address all aspects of the TOR. Significant weaknesses are demonstrated and clearly outweigh any strengths presented - 0 points.</i></p>	b.0-6	
<p><b>e. Appropriateness and feasibility of the proposed timeline (Maximum points 3)</b></p> <p><u>Points allocation:</u></p> <p><i>Proposed timeline is in line with the TOR timelines and supported by clear evidence to demonstrate the feasibility - 3 points</i></p> <p><i>Proposed timeline is slightly deviating from the TOR timeline and demonstrated minor weaknesses - 1 point</i></p>	c.0-3	
<b>Sub-total A. (Technical)</b>		<b>70</b>
<b>Financial (B)</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>30</b>
Financial Proposal		30
<b>Sub-Total B. (Financial)</b>		<b>30</b>
<b>Total (A+B)</b>		<b>100</b>

## Annex Two - Evaluation Matrix

Counterparts, stakeholders and partners likely to be involved in the data collection process (consultations, interviews, observational visits, and focus group discussions) include:

- **Government Stakeholders and Implementation Partners:** Ministry of Finance; Royal Civil Service Commission; Office of the Prime Minister; National Assembly; National Council; National Commission for Women and Children; Local Government Representatives (Gups and Mangmis); National Council, Social and Cultural Affairs Committee.
- **Institutional Partners/Stakeholders:** Justice Sector Working Committee; Office of the Attorney General; Judiciary; Anti-Corruption Commission; Bar Council; Alternative Dispute Resolution Centre; JSW Law School; Royal Bhutan Police.
- **CSO Partners & Vulnerable Groups/Beneficiaries:** RENEW; Youth Development Fund; Loden Foundation; Bhutan Centre for Media and Democracy; Disabled Persons Organisation.
- **UN Sister Agencies:** UNICEF and WHO.
- **UNDP Counterparts:** UNDP Management; Governance Team; and activity/project managers.

Key Questions	Consultation / Sub-questions	Indicators/ Success	Data Collection Methods/Tools	Data Sources
<b>1.0 Relevance</b> - The extent to which the MYF activities are suited to the priorities and policies of the country at the time of formulation:				
1.1 To what extent is UNDP's engagement in governance support a reflection of strategic considerations, including UNDP's role in the development context in the country and its comparative advantage vis-a-vis other partners?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Are the outputs consistent with the human development needs of the country and the intended beneficiaries?</li> <li>• What is seen as UNDP's 'comparative advantage' over other international development partners? Did it maximise this advantage under the MYF?</li> <li>• Were engagement, coordination, and interaction levels between the MYF and internal and external partners appropriate and successful?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Evidence of alignment between the MYF and 12<sup>th</sup> FYP.</li> <li>• Perceptions of the level and quality of coordination and communication.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review and analysis of strategic and MYF-related documentation.</li> <li>• Consultations/ interviews.</li> <li>• Focus Group Discussions.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Document Review.</li> <li>• Government stakeholders.</li> <li>• Implementation partners.</li> <li>• UNDP/UN Sister Agency counterparts.</li> <li>• Donor/ development</li> </ul>
1.2 Are the intended outputs and outcomes aligned with the country's key development strategies?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Do the outputs and outcomes address the specific development challenges of Bhutan and intended beneficiaries?</li> </ul>	The extent to which MYF outputs and interventions aligned with the:		

Key Questions	Consultation / Sub-questions	Indicators/ Success	Data Collection Methods/Tools	Data Sources
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Were there any unintended consequences (positive or negative) that have implications for Bhutan's development goals?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>CPD (Outcome 1)</li> <li>UNSDPF (Outcome 3).</li> <li>RGoB 12<sup>th</sup> FYP.</li> <li>Relevant SDGs and transition from LDC status.</li> </ul>		organisation representatives.
1.3 Are the results and/or progress towards results aligned and contributing to the respective global goals outlined in the Agenda 2030 and its targets? If not, what should be done to ensure this is achieved?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Have MYF outputs and interventions supported the achievement of UN Strategic objectives, targets, and LDC transition criteria?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Evidence of risk assessment and consideration/response to identified risks as part of MYF reviews and reporting.</li> </ul>		
1.4 To what extent has UNDP's selected method of delivery been appropriate to the development context?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Were MYF support and activities relevant and responsive to Government and Implementing Partners' needs?</li> <li>Were MYF support and outputs of a high quality?</li> <li>Has the MYF implementation approach been adapted to respond successfully to changes in needs or the implementation context?</li> </ul>			
1.5 Has UNDP been influential in country policy debates and dialogues on Governance, and has it influenced country policies on governance reforms and human rights protection?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>What support did the MYF and its activities provide to Implementing Partners and RGoB counterparts to develop, articulate, and conduct policy-level debates and dialogues?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Evidence of policy development, debates, and dialogues supported by MYF activities.</li> </ul>		
<b>2.0 Effectiveness</b> - The extent to which MYF activities attain its objectives:				
2.1 Have the outputs been achieved, and did they contribute to the stated outcomes?	<p>Were the outputs and activities defined in the MYF design:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Implemented?</li> <li>Did they achieve their defined activity objective?</li> <li>Did they contribute to the defined MYF output?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Evidence of (partial or full) achievement of MYF objectives and indicators defined in the MYF's Results Framework.</li> <li>Perceptions of MYF contributions to CPD</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review and analysis of strategic and MYF-related documentation.</li> <li>Consultations/ interviews.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Document Review.</li> <li>Government stakeholders.</li> <li>Implementation partners.</li> </ul>

Key Questions	Consultation / Sub-questions	Indicators/ Success	Data Collection Methods/Tools	Data Sources
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>In what way did the defined MYF outputs contribute to the CPD (Outcome 1) and UNSDPF (Outcome 3)?</li> </ul>	(Outcome 1) and UNSDPF (Outcome 3).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Focus Group Discussions.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>CSO partners.</li> </ul>
2.2 What evidence is there that UNDP support has contributed towards strengthening governance mechanisms and institutional capacities of governance institutions?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Did the MYF support and strengthen governance mechanisms and institutional capacity?</li> <li>If 'yes', identify examples of what was done. Why was it successful, and what has changed due to the support?</li> <li>If 'no', why was the support not successful, and what was needed to enable success?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Examples of successful policy, capacity development, behavioural, and/or institutional change supported by MYF activities.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Observational visits.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Beneficiaries.</li> <li>UNDP/UN Sister Agency counterparts.</li> </ul>
2.3 Has UNDP worked effectively with other international partners to deliver Inclusive Democratic Governance initiatives and services?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Were levels of engagement and interaction between the MYF and other international development partners' governance-related activities sufficient, and did they allow for effective coordination of efforts?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Evidence that UNDP promoted effective partnerships and strategic alliances.</li> <li>Perceptions of the level and quality of coordination and communication.</li> </ul>		
2.4 How effective was the partnerships aspect of programming implemented to ensure the achievement of this outcome?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Were levels of engagement and interaction between the MYF and UN Sister Agencies sufficient, and did they allow for effective partnership?</li> <li>What joint outcomes were achieved as a result of this partnership?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Level of coordination between MYF and UN Sister Agencies.</li> <li>Perceptions of the quality of interaction, engagement and communication by the MYF.</li> </ul>		
2.5 To what extent has the project supported the domestication of key regional frameworks, experiences and international best practices through national development plans and strategies?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Which regional frameworks, experiences, or international good practices has the MYF helped adapt to the Bhutanese context?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Examples of adopting relevant good practices in RGoB policies and/or institutional strategies.</li> </ul>		
2.6 Has UNDP utilised innovative techniques and best practices in	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Have 'innovative techniques' and/or 'good practices' been used by the MYF to achieve its objectives and</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Evidence of 'innovative techniques' and/or 'good</li> </ul>		

Key Questions	Consultation / Sub-questions	Indicators/ Success	Data Collection Methods/Tools	Data Sources
its Inclusive Democratic Governance programming?	<p>ensure Inclusive Democratic Governance programming?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identify examples of what was done. Why was it successful?</li> </ul>	<p>practices' being used in MYF programming.</p>		
2.7 To what extent did the programme contribute to gender equality (including a shift in harmful traditional practices and norms), women's empowerment and promoting rights of vulnerable groups?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To what extent were gender equality, women's empowerment, and promoting rights of vulnerable groups incorporated into the MYF design?</li> <li>Were intended MYF initiatives supporting gender equality, women's empowerment, and vulnerable groups fully implemented? What challenges were faced?</li> <li>Identify examples of what was done. Why was it successful, and what has changed due to this support?</li> </ul>	<p>Evidence of gender mainstreaming, empowerment, and promotion of vulnerable groups' rights:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>In the MYF's design and programming.</li> <li>MYF activities that result in an identifiable change or contribution to outputs.</li> <li>Against related indicators in the MYF's Results Framework.</li> <li>Evidence of disaggregated data collection against key MYF indicators/relevant RGoB National Key Results Areas?</li> </ul>		
2.8 Is UNDP perceived by stakeholders as a strong advocate and partner of choice for improving Inclusive Democratic Governance in the country?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Is UNDP seen as a strong advocate and partner of choice for supporting Inclusive Democratic Governance initiatives in Bhutan? Why/why not?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Perceptions of UNDP's role and success in advocating for inclusive democratic governance in Bhutan.</li> <li>Level of engagement by RGoB and Implementing Partners in MYF activities.</li> </ul>		

Key Questions	Consultation / Sub-questions	Indicators/ Success	Data Collection Methods/Tools	Data Sources
<b>3.0 Efficiency - Measurement of the outputs in relation to the inputs:</b>				
3.1 Were the UNDP approaches, resources, models, and conceptual framework relevant to achieving the planned outcome? Are they sufficiently sensitive to the political and development constraints of the country?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What strategies were used to develop the approach, resources, implementation models, and theory of change during the MYF design?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Evidence of a participatory and responsive approach to the design of the MYF.</li> <li>• Evidence of adaption of strategies and approaches to the Bhutanese context.</li> <li>• Evidence of alignment between the MYF and 12<sup>th</sup> FYP.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review and analysis of strategic and MYF-related documentation.</li> <li>• Consultations/ interviews.</li> <li>• Focus Group Discussions.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Document Review.</li> <li>• Government stakeholders.</li> <li>• Implementation partners.</li> <li>• UNDP/UN Sister Agency counterparts.</li> </ul>
3.2 Were alternative approaches considered in designing the MYF?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What 'alternative approaches' were considered in designing the MYF?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Evidence of alignment between the MYF and 12<sup>th</sup> FYP.</li> </ul>		
3.3 To what extent were interventions and resources used and adapted to the COVID-19 context?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What strategies were used to ensure that the MYF was appropriate to the Bhutanese/ COVID-19 context?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Evidence against MYF Output 4 indicators in the MYF's Results Framework.</li> <li>• Evidence of adaptations to the MYF implementation plan in response to new or emerging development needs.</li> </ul>		
3.4 Has UNDP's Governance Strategy and execution been efficient and cost-effective?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How was efficiency in the implementation of the MYF maximised? What strategies were adopted to maximise efficient implementation?</li> <li>• How has the MYF leveraged its partnerships with UN Sister Agencies to enable more efficient and cost-effective implementation?</li> <li>• Were activities and timelines clearly defined and responsively planned during implementation?</li> <li>• Have all activities and outputs been achieved? Were they implemented within the timeframes set in the MYF?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identifiable benefits (cost savings, responsiveness/ speed of implementation, reduced duplication of efforts) resulting from: the implementation strategies adopted; and partnering with UN Sister Agencies.</li> <li>• Percentage of designed activities successfully implemented.</li> <li>• Percentage of activities implemented within defined timeframes/plans.</li> </ul>		

Key Questions	Consultation / Sub-questions	Indicators/ Success	Data Collection Methods/Tools	Data Sources
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Perceptions of the quality and timeliness of MYF activities and outputs.</li> </ul>		
<p>3.5 Has there been an economical use of financial and human resources?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Were activities, budgets, and resources identified and defined in sufficient detail in the design?</li> <li>• How accurate were defined budgets and resourcing against actual expenditure and personnel resources required to implement the MYF?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Percentage of activities implemented within +/-5% of defined budget.</li> <li>• Overall MYF expenditure within -5% of budget.</li> <li>• Evidence of pro bono/in-kind support and/or south-south cooperation for MYF implementation.</li> <li>• Percentage of total MYF expenditure allocated to UNDP (UNDP technical staff and management costs, excl. independent consultants).</li> </ul>		
<p>3.6 Are adequate resources mobilised to achieve the desired result?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Were sufficient resources available to achieve the MYF's outputs and demonstrably contribute to the CPD and UNSDPF outcomes?</li> <li>• What strategies were put in place to close resource gaps if they occurred?</li> <li>• To what extent were these strategies successful?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Evidence that all planned activities were implemented without delay due to insufficient funds/resources.</li> <li>• Evidence of timely implementation of resource mobilisation strategies.</li> </ul>		
<p>3.7 Are the monitoring and evaluation systems that UNDP has in place helping to ensure that programmes are managed efficiently and effectively for proper accountability of results?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What reporting (activity, progress, risks, and results) was undertaken, and how frequently was it undertaken?</li> <li>• What data sources were used to inform monitoring and evaluation reporting? Was this data disaggregated (gender, age, income, location, etc.)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Frequency and detail of MYF activity, programmatic, and results reporting.</li> <li>• Evidence of disaggregated data collection against key MYF indicators/RGoB National Key Results Areas?</li> </ul>		



Key Questions	Consultation / Sub-questions	Indicators/ Success	Data Collection Methods/Tools	Data Sources
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What challenges were experienced in ensuring effective monitoring and evaluation for the MYF?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Perceptions of the quality and timeliness of MYF reporting.</li> </ul>		
<b>4.0 Sustainability</b> - The benefits of the Programme related activities that are likely to continue after the Programme funds have been exhausted:				
4.1 What indications and likelihood are there that the outcomes will be sustained, for instance, through requisite institutional capacities (e.g. systems, structures and staff)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What examples exist of MYF activities being independently undertaken by implementing partners/RGoB/institutional counterparts?</li> <li>• Are there any areas of MYF support that are not yet sustainable?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Evidence that MYF activities are being independently undertaken by implementing partners/RGoB/institutional counterparts.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review and analysis of strategic and MYF-related documentation.</li> <li>• Consultations/ interviews.</li> <li>• Focus Group Discussions.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Document Review.</li> <li>• Government stakeholders.</li> <li>• Implementation partners.</li> <li>• UNDP counterparts.</li> </ul>
4.2 What mechanisms have been established by UNDP to support RGoB/institutional partners in sustaining improvements made through the governance interventions?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What strategies were implemented to enable change to be maintained after the end of the MYF?</li> <li>• To what extent have these strategies been implemented?</li> <li>• What changes should be made to the current governance partnerships to promote long-term sustainability?</li> <li>• Are there actions that can/should be implemented to maximise the likelihood of MYF-supported change being sustainable?</li> <li>• Has follow-up support after the end of the MYF activities been discussed and formalised?</li> <li>• Is there an exit strategy?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Evidence of articulated sustainability strategies integrated into the MYF implementation approach.</li> <li>• Evidence of adopting and integrating selected MYF activities and results by implementing partners/ RGoB/institutional counterparts.</li> <li>• Perceptions of the sustainability of MYF activities and results.</li> <li>• Evidence of an articulated exit strategy.</li> </ul>		
4.3 What markers or evidence is there to show that the results achieved so far will be sustained beyond the programme period/into the next programme?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Do national plans/reforms to promote inclusive democratic governance exist; or are plans/ reforms likely to be developed or approved in the near future?</li> <li>• What other sustainable changes/results exist from MYF-supported activities (at the policy, institutional, and/or individual levels)?</li> </ul>			

Key Questions	Consultation / Sub-questions	Indicators/ Success	Data Collection Methods/Tools	Data Sources
<b>5.0 Human Rights and LNOB:</b>				
5.1 To what extent were human rights and LNOB principles embedded throughout the programme?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What approach was used to embed Human Rights and LNOB principles into the MYF design?</li> <li>• What strategies were used to ensure that human rights and LNOB approaches embedded were appropriate to the Bhutanese context?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Evidence of integration of human rights and LNOB integrated into MYF design and outputs.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review and analysis of strategic and MYF-related documentation.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Document Review.</li> <li>• Implementation partners.</li> <li>• UNDP/UN Sister Agency counterparts.</li> </ul>
5.2 To what extent the vulnerable groups, including economically disadvantaged persons with disabilities, women, rural communities, elderly, and Indigenous groups, benefited from UNDP’s work under the governance programme?  5.3 To what extent have gender issues been addressed in the design, implementation and monitoring of different projects under the programme?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What strategies or approaches were used to ensure that the needs of vulnerable groups were integrated into the MYF design and its activities?</li> <li>• Which marginalised groups received support under the MYF? What was the nature of this support?</li> <li>• How have vulnerable groups benefited from the MYF’s support? What has changed?</li> <li>• To what extent has the MYF promoted positive changes in gender equality? Were there any unintended effects?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Evidence against relevant indicators in the MYF’s Results Framework.</li> <li>• Evidence against the ‘measures’ relating to <i>enhanced gender mainstreaming</i> in the MYF design.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consultations/ interviews.</li> <li>• Focus Group Discussions.</li> <li>• Observational visits.</li> </ul>	
5.4 Is gender marker data assigned to projects representative of reality (focus should be placed on gender marker 2 and 3 projects)?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Have any gaps or disconnects occurred between the ‘gender marker’ assigned in the MYF design and the reality of MYF implementation?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number of substantive MYF outputs aligned with the defined ‘Gender Marker’ target (MYF target: ‘All outputs are GEN2’).</li> </ul>		

## Annex Three - List of Documents included in the Document Review

- Bajraktari, E. and Lham, U. (2023), *Final Evaluation Report of the United Nations Sustainable Development Partnership Framework for Bhutan 2019-2023*. UN Resident Coordinator Office, Bhutan.
- Choden, T. (2018), *Common Country Analysis (Bhutan)*. United Nations
- Dorji, C. (2023), *Impact Assessment of Gakey Lamtoen - Bhutan Pilot Project*. United Nations Development Programme.
- Ernst & Young (September 2024), *Inclusive Innovation: An inside look at AI's potential to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals*. DevEx.
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## Annex Four - Evaluation Survey Template

This Focus Group Discussion aims to support the independent evaluation of UNDP’s *Governance Multi-Year Framework (MYF) 2019-2023*. The evaluation is an important accountability function. It will undertake a high-level analysis of the MYF and its activities to provide all stakeholders in Bhutan with an impartial assessment of the results that have been achieved.

This *Focus Group Discussion* will be primarily discussion-based. However, we ask that you also complete this brief survey to enable you to provide your views and feedback *confidentially*.

Please ✓ **ONE** square per question only:

1. In your view, has the MYF positively contributed to Bhutan’s development goals?

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
No Contribution	Limited Contribution	Some Contribution	Significant Contribution	Don't know/ Not my area

2. In your view, has the MYF successfully supported improvements in access to justice for all and protection of human rights, especially those most at risk of being left behind?

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
No Improvement	Limited Improvement	Some Improvement	Significant Improvements	Don't know/ Not my area

3. In your view, has the MYF successfully supported inclusive democratic governance and improvements in participatory and equitable government decision-making?

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
No Improvement	Limited Improvement	Some Improvement	Significant Improvements	Don't know/ Not my area

4. In your view, has the MYF successfully supported improved capacity and decentralisation to enhance government/citizen engagement and improve public service delivery?

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
No Improvement	Limited Improvement	Some Improvement	Significant Improvements	Don't know/ Not my area

5. In your view, has the MYF successfully supported a reduction of formal and informal structural and policy barriers to achieving gender equality/non-discrimination?

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
No Change	Limited Change	Some Change	Significant Change	Don't know/ Not my area

6. In your view, has the MYF successfully supported the development of an enabling environment that allows for active and engaged civil society?

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
No Change	Limited Change	Some Change	Significant Change	Don't know/ Not my area

7. In your view, has the MYF addressed the needs of marginalised groups in Bhutan (women, those living with disability, youth, economically disadvantaged, those with diverse gender identity, etc.) and have they benefited from MYF activities?

No  
Benefit

Limited  
Benefit

Some  
Benefit

Significant  
Benefit

Don't know/  
Not my area

8. Please give an example(s) of what you see as the greatest success of the MYF - describe what has been achieved or what has changed because of the MYF's support:

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9. What has been your biggest challenge with implementing the MYF and its activities?

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10. What continued support or new activities would be most beneficial if UNDP can provide further governance-related support in the future?

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11. Are there any other comments or feedback on the MYF or its implementation that you would like to provide the evaluation?

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*Thank you for your time and contribution to the independent evaluation of UNDP's MYF!*

## Annex Five - List of Those Consulted During the Evaluation

Organisation	No. of Key Informants
Justice Sector	15
United Nations Development Programme	13
Royal Government of Bhutan	12
Beneficiary	6
Civil Society Organisations	6
Other UN Agency	3
<b>Total:</b>	<b>55</b>

Of the 55 key informants involved in the consultations, a total of 26 (47.3%) were female.

Person Consulted & Organisation	Gender
1. Kuenzang N TSHERING - Executive Director, Ability Bhutan Society	Male
2. Chador WANGDI - ADM & Finance Officer, ADR Center, Alternative Dispute Resolution	Male
3. Chimi DORJI - Registrar, Bar Council	Male
4. Tandin WANGMO - Executive Director, Bhutan Center for Media and Democracy	Female
5. Tshering CHODEN - Asst. Planning Officer, Department of Macro Fiscal and Development Finance, Ministry of Finance	Female
6. Dorji PHUNTSHO - IT & Media Officer, Disabled Persons Organisation	Male
7. Dr. Sanga DORJI - Chairman, Disabled Persons Organisation	Male
8. Dubala - Drakteng Gup, Drakteng Gewog	Male
9. Rinzin - Taktse Tshogpa, Drakteng Gewog	Male
10. Jigme CHODEN - Student, Human Dignity Clinic, JSW Law School	Female
11. Karma WANGMO - Student, Human Dignity Clinic, JSW Law School	Female
12. Karma Yeshe SHERAB - Student, Human Dignity Clinic, JSW Law School	Male
13. Kuenzang DOLMA - Student, Human Dignity Clinic, JSW Law School	Female
14. Phelden YOEZER - Student, Human Dignity Clinic, JSW Law School	Male
15. Rinchen CHODEN - Student, Human Dignity Clinic, JSW Law School	Female
16. Tenzin EUDEN - Student, Human Dignity Clinic, JSW Law School	Female
17. Yangchen Tshomo GYELTSHEN - Student, Human Dignity Clinic, JSW Law School	Female
18. Sangay DORJEE - Dean, JSW Law School	Male
19. Tshering PEM - Deputy Chief Legal Officer, Legal Aid Center	Female
20. Ugyen WANGDI - Chief Attorney, Legal Service Division, Legal Service Division	Male
21. Sangay CHOGAY - Planning Officer, Ministry of Health	Male
22. Tashi PELGA - Assistant Planning Officer, Ministry of Health	Female
23. Dasho DUBA - Secretary General, National Assembly	Male



Person Consulted & Organisation	Gender
24. Hon'ble Sangay KHADHU - NA Speaker, National Assembly	Male
25. Sonam DEMA - Assistant Researcher, National Assembly	female
26. Sonam LHAMO - Chief Information and Media Officer, National Assembly	Female
27. Dasho Tenzin THINLEY - Secretary General, National Council	Male
28. Ugyen TSHOMO - Chief Program Officer, National Commission for Women and Children	Female
29. Choki DRAKPA - Chief Legal Officer, Office of the Attorney General	Male
30. Tshering PALDEN - Assistant Judge, Office of the Attorney General	Female
31. Karma WANGDI - Dy. Chief HR Officer, Royal Civil Service Commission	Male
32. Dr. Meenakshi RAI - Community Outreach Director, RENEW	Female
33. Jigme NAMGYEL - Tangsibji Gup, Tangsibji Gewog	Male
34. Wangdi GYELTSHEN - Governor, Trongsa District	Male
35. Dasho Lhendrup ZANGPO - Judge, Trongsa District Court	Male
36. Dr. Suresh MOTHEY - Doctor, Trongsa Hospital	Male
37. Khurshid ALAM - Deputy Resident Representative, United Nations Development Programme	Male
38. Mohammad YOUNUS - Resident Representative, United Nations Development Programme	Male
39. Namgay CHODEN - Programme Analyst, United Nations Development Programme	Female
40. Nawaraj CHHETRI - Portfolio Manager, United Nations Development Programme	Male
41. Phurpa WANGCHUK - Governance Associate, United Nations Development Programme	Male
42. Sangay WANGMO - National Program Officer, United Nations Development Programme	Female
43. Sonam CHOKI - RBM Programme Associate, United Nations Development Programme	Female
44. Sonam RABGYE - Program Analyst, , United Nations Development Programme	Female
45. Tashi CHODEN - Program Specialist, United Nations Development Programme	Female
46. Tshering CHODEN - Program Analyst, , United Nations Development Programme	Female
47. Tshering WANGMO - Program Analyst, , United Nations Development Programme	Male
48. Tshewang LHAMO - Program Analyst, Gender and Inclusion, United Nations Development Programme	Female
49. Ugyen WANGMO - Governance Consultant, United Nations Development Programme	Female
50. Bishnu MISHRA - Education Officer, United Nations Children's Fund	Male
51. Jigme DORJI - Social Policy Specialist, United Nations Children's Fund	Male
52. Ugyen WANGCHUK - NPO, World Health Organisation	Male
53. Roma PRADHAN - Senior Programme Coordinator, Youth Development Fund	Female
54. Hemanta KHANAL - Committee Secretary, Social and Cultural Affairs Committee, National Council	Female
55. Hon'ble Kesang Chuki DORJEE - Deputy Chairperson & Speaker, Social and Cultural Affairs Committee, National Council	Female

## Annex Six - Alignment in Outcomes and Outputs Across UNSDPF, CPD, and MYF

CPD & UNSDPF Outcome	MYF Output	MYF Sub-output	Indicators	CPD/UNSDPF Output	Indicators	IRRF
Outcome 1: (UNSDPF Outcome 3): By 2023, Government institutions provide equal opportunities for all, and women and vulnerable groups hold leaders accountable.	Output 1: Central and local governments engage with citizens for an equitable, effective and transparent service delivery Indicators	1.1: Evidence based & informed enabling environment conducive to decentralisation created	1.1.1: Number of evidence-based policies and programme documents proposed for the implementation of the DLG Action Plan	Output 3.1: National and local government capacity to integrate, monitor and report on the Sustainable Development Goals and other international agreements is improved.	3.1.1: Number of national, local governments plans and budgets with the Goals integrated, and disaggregated data in place for monitoring.	(IRRF 1.1.1.1/ 3.1.2.1.1)
					3.1.2: Policies/strategies on decentralisation and urbanisation in place, including gender and disability analysis.	(IRRF 1.2.1)
		1.2: Ministries, Dzongkhags and Gewogs (civil servants and local elected representatives) provide cross-institutional capacity building support and ensure gender-responsive planning and budgeting	1.2.1: Number of Dzongkhags that have included explicit targets and budget allocations relating to SDGs (including gender equality) in the planning documents	Output 3.2: Improved enabling environment for civil society to advance opportunities for, and increase resilience of targeted vulnerable groups	3.2.1: Number of civil society organisations enabled to advance opportunities for target groups, and increase resilience of women, youth, vulnerable groups. (UNSDPF indicator 3.1.2)	3.2.2: Evidence-based integrated framework in place to prevent and respond to gender-based violence. Baseline: Some policy and legislation in place
1.3: Citizens in selected communities participate in discourse on local governance	1.3.1: Number of CSOs, women and youth groups and other community groups representing vulnerable groups that have made recommendations and/or					

CPD & UNSDPF Outcome	MYF Output	MYF Sub-output	Indicators	CPD/UNSDPF Output	Indicators	IRRF
			proposals for improvements in local public service		Target: Integrated framework in place and being implemented	
		1.4: Inclusive and innovative local governance projects contribute to delivering SDGs at the local level	1.4.1: Number of innovative initiatives from LGs, CSOs, CBOs and/or community members implemented		3.2.1: Number of gender-responsive policies and legislation in place	
	Output 2: Increased access, inclusion, transparency and accountability in the justice sector Indicators	2.1: Strengthened capacities on justice sector leadership, governance, and collaboration	2.1.1: Percentage of the JS implementation plans (that UNDP supported) implemented	Output 3.3: Parliament and justice sector capacities and approaches are strengthened with increased inclusion, transparency and accountability.	3.3.1: Parliament's capacity to undertake inclusive, effective, accountable law-making, oversight and representation is improved. Baseline: Basic capacities Target: Improved capacities Source: Parliament annual reports	(IRRF 2.2.2.3)
2.2: Strengthened Cross-institutional coordination harmonises justice sector capacity building mechanisms		2.2.1: Strategy for capacity development of Justice sector developed and its implementation is monitored and evaluated	3.3.2: Rule of law and justice system strengthened supporting fulfilment of nationally and internationally ratified human rights obligations.		(IRRF 2.2.2.3)	
2.3: Enhanced Data management ensures justice services are		2.3.1: Reduction in average turn-around-time for delivery of justice services	3.2.1: Number of multi-stakeholder dialogues with engagement of			

CPD & UNSDPF Outcome	MYF Output	MYF Sub-output	Indicators	CPD/UNSDPF Output	Indicators	IRRF
		efficient, accountable and gender responsive	2.3.2: Integrated case management system to track criminal and civil cases, and support data collection and analysis for ADR mechanisms especially grassroots ADR operational		Parliamentarians and representatives of women, youth, vulnerable groups	
		2.4: Legal needs (including those of marginalised groups) are identified and addressed through research and policy support	2.4.1: 80% of eligible criminal cases receive legal aid support and / or free legal advice using the newly established mechanism (disaggregated by VGs)		3.2.2: Number of formal interactions between the justice sector, communities, and representative of target groups per year	
		2.5: Justice services are strengthened to respond to gender-based violence and enhance women's and girls' access to justice	2.5.1: Number of women and girls GBV survivors who utilised GBV support mechanisms OR The percentage of trainees reporting increased knowledge on ESP for Women and Girls subjected to violence		3.3.3: Number of laws reviewed and proposed for harmonisation with new International. Conventions, covenants, treaties, protocols, agreements entered into by Bhutan.	(IRRF 2.2.3.1)
	Output 3: Parliament drives progress towards fundamental rights protection, sustainable development and GNH	3.1: Parliament is fully enabled to institutionalise engagements with the SDGs, GNH and the 12th FYP	3.1.1: Parliamentary committees use the SDG and GNH indicators to track development progress.		3.3.4: A policy/legal framework/strategy on legal aid in place and implemented.	
		3.2: Parliamentary Committees' integrate public input and	3.2.1: Number of public hearings led by parliamentarians			

CPD & UNSDPF Outcome	MYF Output	MYF Sub-output	Indicators	CPD/UNSDPF Output	Indicators	IRRF
		mainstream gender equality and environmental sustainability perspectives in draft legislation, policies, budgets and reports	3.2.2: Number of draft legislation, policies, budgets and reports where PCs undertake gender equality and environment sustainability screening			
		3.3: Strengthened Parliamentary institutional processes, procedures and workflows	3.3.1: Number of Parliamentary procedure and processes strengthened/amendments developed and implemented			
		3.4: Participatory, inclusive and gender balanced governance strengthened	3.4.1: Number of parliamentary and CSO meetings with Women's caucus (disaggregated)			
		3.5: MPs' leadership capacities (including on gender equality) are enhanced and links between youth and Parliament are established	3.5.1: Ratio of men and women in the parliament			
	Output 4: Innovation and partnerships leveraged, for efficient, accountable and transparent Governance	4.1: Innovative ways to reach the unreached are explored and implemented	4.1.1: Number of technological solutions developed for LNOB. 4.1.2: Number of monitoring visits and surveys completed to generate citizen and beneficiary feedback			

## Annex Seven - Full Risks Matrix in Quantum for the MYF

Sl. No	Risk Category	Risk Sub-category	Event	Causes	Impacts	Impact	likelihood	Risk Significance
1	Social and Environmental	Human Rights	Increased internal conflict between the affected groups (PWDs) and communities/household members with strong cultural and religious beliefs (e.g., disabilities are a result of past life deeds and beliefs, one's work capacity and wellbeing are permanently reduced due to disability, etc.), particularly those who have benefitted from weak justice systems, and household power dynamics.	Limited advocacy and awareness on access for women and children	This could lead to (1) reduced or limited participation of PWDs due to fear of increased conflict, and (2) grievances or objections from potentially affected stakeholders.	3	2	Moderate
2	Operational	Capacities of the Partners	Delay in provision of Legal Aid Services	Limited capacities of service providers	Target population not getting benefited...	3	3	Moderate
3	Operational	Transition and Exit Strategy	Inadequate capacity of IP (human resources)	Inadequate capacity of IP (human resources)	Limited adoption of action plan by the government (RCSC, NCWC)	1	1	low
4	Operational	Capacities of the Partners	Poor quality of training material and training facilitation	Limited national consultants with adequate capacity	Participants unlikely to get adequate technical capacity	3	2	Moderate

### Risk Significance/Level:

#### Impact

- 1 - negligible
- 2- minor
- 3- intermediate
- 4-extensive
- 5- Extreme

#### Likelihood

- 1- not likely
- 2- low likelihood
- 3- moderately likely
- 4- highly likely
- 5-expected