



**Name of the Evaluation Intervention:** Quantum Project ID: (00130337, 00130338, 00130339) Monitoring Support to Novel Financing for Sustaining Essential Service Delivery Project (UNDP NFM)

**Time frame of the evaluation:** September 4 to December 15, 2024

**Date of the report:** December 13, 2024

**Countries of the evaluation intervention:** Afghanistan

**Name of evaluator:** Nabhojit Dey

**Name of the organization commissioning the evaluation:** United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Afghanistan

## PROJECT INFORMATION

<b>Project title</b>	SDG Based Monitoring of Novel Financing for Sustaining Essential Service Delivery (NFM)	
<b>Atlas &amp; Quantum ID</b>	ATLAS: 00141905, Quantum: 00130337, 00130338, 00130339	
<b>Corporate outcome and output</b>	<p><b>TCPRF Outcome 1:</b> Provision of Essential Services</p> <p><b>TCPRF Output 1.1.</b> Essential basic services and infrastructure (Health, WASH, Solid Waste Management, Education etc.) including COVID support enabled and supported.</p> <p><b>TCPS Outcome 2:</b> By the end of 2025, more people in Afghanistan will benefit from an increasingly stable, inclusive, and employment-rich economy, with greater equality of economic opportunities and more resilient livelihoods, increased food production, and improved natural resources management.</p> <p><b>TCPS Output 2.4</b> Timely and evidence-based policy analysis and options available to programme implementation partners</p>	
<b>Country</b>	Afghanistan	
<b>Region</b>	Asia-Pacific	
<b>Date project document signed</b>	8 February 2022	
<b>Project dates</b>	<b>Start</b>	<b>Planned end</b>
	04.02.2022	31.12.2024
<b>Total committed budget</b>	\$ 5 million	
<b>Project expenditure at the time of evaluation</b>	\$4,364,841.47 (as on 03.12.2024)	
<b>Funding source</b>	Asian Development Bank (ADB) and UNDP TRAC	
<b>Implementing party<sup>1</sup></b>	UNDP (Direct Implementation Modality)	

<sup>1</sup> This is the entity that has overall responsibility for implementation of the project (award), effective use of resources and delivery of outputs in the signed project document and workplan.

## EVALUATION INFORMATION

<b>Evaluation type (project/ outcome/thematic/country programme, etc.)</b>	Project	
<b>Final/midterm review/ other</b>	Final	
<b>Period under evaluation</b>	<b>Start</b>	<b>End</b>
	04.02.2022	31.12.2024
<b>Evaluator</b>	Nabhojit Dey	
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	04.09.2024	15.12.2024

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## ACRONYMS

ADB	Asian Development Bank
ALC	Accelerated Learning Centers
BPHS	Basic Package of Health Services
CARE	Cooperative for Assistance and Relief Everywhere
CBE	Community Based Education
CFW	Cash for Work
CLA	Collaboration, Learning and Adaptation
DAC	Development Assistance Committee
DFA	De-facto Authority
DMF	Design and Monitoring Framework
EFA	Emergency Food Assistance
EPHS	Essential Package of Health Services
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
FFW	Food for Work
HR	Human Resource
IATF	Inter-Agency Task Force
IDP	Internally Displaced People
INGO	International Non-Government Organization
IRA	Immediate Results Assessment
KII	Key Informant Interview
LNOB	Leaving No One Behind
MEL	Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning
MoU	Memorandum of Understanding
MoV	Means of Verification
NFA	Novel Financing for Sustaining Essential Service Delivery Project
NFM	Monitoring Support to Novel Financing for Sustaining Essential Service Delivery Project
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
PAM	Project Administration Manual
PSCA	Program Steering Committee for Afghanistan
RCEESI	Relevance, Coherence, Efficiency, Effectiveness, Sustainability, Impact
SDG	Sustainable Development Goals
SoP	Standard Operating Procedure
TCPS	Transitional Country Programme Strategy
ToC	Theory of Change
TPM	Third Party Monitoring
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNICEF	United Nations International Children's Fund
VFM	Value for Money
WFP	World Food Programme

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

### Background

The Asian Development Bank (ADB) launched a USD 405 million grant under the “Novel Financing for Sustaining Essential Service Delivery Project” to address Afghanistan's worsening humanitarian crisis in 2022. This initiative aimed to sustain essential public services and food security, alleviating economic disruptions' adverse effects on vulnerable populations. The ADB grant was implemented through separate projects delivered by UNDP, UNICEF, WFP, and FAO as executing agencies. While UNICEF supported health services and education delivery, WFP and FAO addressed food assistance and supply chain stability. The allocation to UNDP was focused on monitoring the grant Programme implemented by UNICEF, WFP, FAO and conducting socio-economic assessments and on-demand research to support Phase 2. The UNDP component, funded with USD 5 million over 35 months (February 2022–December 2024), was structured around three key outputs. First, it monitored the grant's implementation using a robust system, assessing outcomes against Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and validating results via field monitoring with 1,500 local enumerators across 34 provinces, second, it conducted socio-economic analyses, including macroeconomic assessments and evaluations of the ADB program's impact, offering insights for the project's completion and future growth strategies and third, it provided gender-responsive communications and advisory inputs to inform the potential next phase of ADB assistance. UNDP also contributed an additional USD 200,000 to enhance communication and planning for the second phase. The project's Theory of Change posited that effectively monitoring service delivery will improve access to health, education, and food security for Afghan citizens, particularly women, children, and disadvantaged groups. This, in turn, will enhance community resilience, lay the groundwork for socio-economic recovery, and foster trust in public welfare and community services. Given that this project comes to an end in December, 2024, a need to conduct a final evaluation of the project, to critically assess the relevance, coherence, effectiveness, efficiency, impact, sustainability and cross-cutting issues becomes important, particularly in the backdrop of the unprecedented and multifaceted humanitarian crisis in Afghanistan.

### Evaluation Purpose, Objectives, Approach and Methodology

The main purpose of the final evaluation is to inform UNDP Afghanistan, its partners and ADB of lessons learned, results achieved (the final evaluation assessed the UNDP NFM project progress against the Project Document, targets stipulated in the Project Results and Resource Framework) and areas of improvement from 4 February 2022 to 31 December, 2024. The specific objectives of the evaluation included assessment of project performance and progress against the expected outputs targets including indicators presented in Results and Resource Framework (RRF) and contribution to expected outcome (including contribution to corporate outputs and outcomes), review and document project success, draw out lessons, assess the effectiveness of the project's engagement with UNDP NFM project and other UN agencies, identify challenges and the effectiveness of the strategic approaches that project adopted for addressing those challenges, determine the relevance, coherence, effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability, and impact of the project interventions as well as gender equality/women's empowerment, human rights and leave no one behind, provide actionable, forward looking recommendations, report on the achievements or success stories and highlight the project's overall accountability within the corporate framework.

Based on the requirement of the evaluation , approach used for evaluation was a results-based approach. Further, the evaluation was conducted in compliance with the key principles of the UNDP Evaluation Policy and was guided by the UNDEG's Norms and Standards for Evaluation and OECD-DA criteria. A mixed methods approach was used for data collection. At the outset, secondary review of all project and related documents was undertaken based on the evaluation questions. Findings from the secondary review were substantiated with qualitative information collected using key informant interviews. From a list of 31 respondents, shared by UNDP, 18 interviews (20 respondents) were conducted (ref. Annex.3) and seven online questionnaires were filled between September to



November, 2024. In addition, quantitative data was collected through an online questionnaire. The evaluation findings are based on solid data sources, (reference to all secondary sources has been provided) and all relevant stakeholders were consulted. Ethical considerations were rigorously maintained, including informed consent, confidentiality, and respect for respondent time. Challenges included scheduling difficulties and non-responses from some organizations, but data saturation was achieved. Data analysis combined thematic analysis of qualitative data and descriptive statistics for quantitative responses. Insights were grouped under themes aligned with evaluation questions to provide a comprehensive understanding of project achievements, challenges, and lessons. Stakeholder participation throughout ensured diverse perspectives and actionable findings, enhancing accountability and utility for future programming. Despite minor limitations, the evaluation adhered to ethical standards and provided robust, evidence-based recommendations to guide decision-making and strengthen future initiatives.

## Evaluation Findings

### Relevance

The NFM project exhibited a high degree of alignment with UNDP Strategic Plan 2022-25, particularly Outcome 1.1, which focuses on essential service delivery and resilience-building, United Nations Strategic Framework for Afghanistan (2023-25) which prioritizes sustained essential services, economic opportunities and resilient livelihoods & social cohesion, inclusion, gender equality human rights and law, Transitional Country Programme Strategy (TCPS), 2022-25<sup>2</sup>, UN Transitional Engagement Framework (2022-24), which prioritizes humanitarian needs and resilience-building in Afghanistan, and ADB Operational Priorities (2019–2030), specifically Priority 1 (Poverty Reduction) and Priority 5 (Rural Development and Food Security) and Sustainable Development Goals<sup>34</sup>. The project effectively addressed Afghanistan's socio-economic and humanitarian needs, making it a critical intervention in the country's fragile political and economic context<sup>5</sup>. Further, the NFM project demonstrated a high degree of alignment between its design and objectives, effectively addressing Afghanistan's development needs in food security, health, and education through robust monitoring systems, socio-economic analyses, and knowledge-sharing mechanisms. Its multi-sectoral engagement ensured relevance to stakeholders across various sectors, but challenges in inter-agency cooperation and data sharing limited its operational effectiveness. Review of project literature shows that the project was set up with a clear purpose<sup>6</sup> and well-defined objectives<sup>7</sup>. Another critical aspect of the NFM project's relevance was its ability to engage multiple stakeholders across sectors. The project's design incorporated input from UNDP, ADB, FAO, WFP, UNICEF, and local NGOs, reflecting a multi-sectoral approach to addressing Afghanistan's development needs.

### Coherence

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<sup>2</sup> TCPS Outcome 2: By the end of 2025, more people in Afghanistan will benefit from an increasingly stable, inclusive, and employment-rich economy, with greater equality of economic opportunities and more resilient livelihoods, increased food production, and improved natural resources management.

TCPS Output 2.4 Timely and evidence-based policy analysis and options available to programme implementation partners

<sup>3</sup>It contributed to Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), including SDG 1 (No Poverty), SDG 2 (Zero Hunger), SDG 3 (Good Health and Well-being), and SDG 4 (Quality Education).

<sup>4</sup> The UNDP Strategic Plan (2022–2025), particularly Outcome 1.1, which focuses on essential service delivery and resilience-building, the UN Transitional Engagement Framework (2022–2024), which prioritizes humanitarian needs and resilience-building in Afghanistan, and ADB Operational Priorities (2019–2030), specifically Priority 1 (Poverty Reduction) and Priority 5 (Rural Development and Food Security).

<sup>5</sup> Across multiple interviews respondents shared that NFM project was designed to monitor implementation of NFA project and to feed into pipeline development in majority in the energy sector.

<sup>6</sup> The project's primary goal was to monitor and ensure the delivery of essential services in Afghanistan, focusing on food security, health, and education (Final Prodoc NFM, p. 47)

<sup>7</sup> The project aimed to achieve three key outputs: tracking service delivery, conducting socio-economic analyses, and sharing knowledge to support future programming. The monitoring mechanisms, impact assessments, and knowledge-sharing activities were closely aligned with these objectives (Draft-NFA 6-Month Update, p. 19)

The NFM project successfully established collaborative mechanisms to ensure alignment with donor and stakeholder objectives. However, challenges in inter-agency data sharing, and limited inclusivity in decision-making reduced its potential to fully meet its participatory goals. As noted in the NFM Project Q3 Report (p. 8), the project made extensive use of evidence-based decision making, adjusting monitoring approaches based on impact assessments, socio-economic analyses, and results validation processes. This approach allowed the project to adjust to evolving ground conditions while ensuring that complementary services were provided. The project's ability to adjust based on external challenges such as security concerns was also reflected in the IRA-3 Report (p. 12). The use of adaptive management further solidified the coherence and interdependence of services despite a fluid political and operational context. Additionally, the formation of the Inter-Agency Task Force (IATF) in 2022, which later evolved into the Program Steering Committee for Afghanistan (PSCA), was crucial for providing oversight and ensuring coordination between ADB, UN agencies, and donor partners such as the World Bank and European Union. Further, coherence between UN agencies was a recurring theme in the interviews. However, there were challenges to maintaining coherence at the field level. The respondents pointed out that some UN organization were unable to share their beneficiary data due to their data protection rules and procedures. In this situation UNDP negotiated an innovative solution with the UN agencies to ensure results validation and impact assessment. This included an agreement with UN organizations to share their own monitoring data instead of beneficiary data which provided an indication of the beneficiaries that they were reaching.

### Effectiveness

The NFM project demonstrated resilience and adaptability in navigating Afghanistan's complex political, economic, and cultural landscape, leveraging local partnerships and innovative strategies in its monitoring efforts and achieve its intended objectives. Analysis of data collected from interviews show that the NFM project was effective in fulfilling its objectives, particularly in the areas of monitoring, reporting, and thematic studies. It was noted that key deliverables, such as results validation and thematic studies, were successfully completed, providing ADB with critical data and insights for future programming in Afghanistan. These achievements demonstrate that the NFM project was able to meet its fundamental goals of providing oversight and accountability for donor-funded projects in a complex and politically unstable environment<sup>8</sup>.

### Efficiency

The NFM project demonstrated effective utilization of resources and innovative financial management, achieving its primary goals despite challenges such as understaffing<sup>9</sup>, delay in data sharing by UN organizations, and logistical constraints. However, UNDP leveraged upon a web-based unified monitoring platform which significantly enhanced data collection, verification, and analysis, enabling informed decision-making and progress tracking against SDG targets and operational priorities. One of the critical findings is the project's adaptive allocation of funds to emerging priorities, such as transitioning to digital data collection, exemplifies responsive financial management. The streamlined processes in later phases and the integration of the monitoring platform into UNDP's system reflect a promising foundation for future programming and investments by ADB.

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<sup>8</sup> The NFM project had three outputs – 1. The delivery of essential public services through ADB Grant Programme is monitored through a robust monitoring system; 2) Socio-economic analysis in the areas of health, education, nutrition and impact assessment of ADB Grant Programme in Afghanistan is conducted in an effective and efficient manner; and 3) Effective communication and a well-informed pipeline for the next stage of ADB assistance supported. Findings from secondary review of literature and primary key informant interviews show that as the NFM project comes to closure in December 2024, it has already completed three waves of results validation of the project (addressing Output 1), several sector assessment reports, and three rounds of impact assessment (addressing Output 2) and completing two energy sector assessment reports (Output 3) This indicates that at the end stage of the NFM projects it was able to complete its set outputs and objectives.

<sup>9</sup> Efficiency was impacted by unfilled positions, which hampered data quality monitoring, and higher management costs driven by post-2021 market conditions for skilled personnel. - KII

## Impact

The NFM project achieved significant impacts in monitoring and assessment, contributing to improvements in service delivery under the NFA framework<sup>10</sup>. Impact assessment relied on qualitative and quantitative evidence, including KIIs, FGDs, monitoring reports, and service delivery validation exercises. Evidence from the 1st Immediate Results Assessment (IRA) report indicates high levels of beneficiary satisfaction, particularly in the education sector, where access to education was improved, learning environments were enhanced, and student performance showed positive trends<sup>11</sup>. The project also made notable contributions to food security, with beneficiary feedback indicating improved food quality and increased quantities of food available, contributing to socioeconomic well-being<sup>12</sup>. Moreover, the project supported the Agriculture and Livelihoods Strategic Thematic Working Group (AL-STWG) through placement of an international consultant in the UN Resident Coordinator Office for coordination of AL-STWG activities<sup>13</sup>. Another important contribution of the project was report on the country's economic prospects and possible paths toward future sustainable growth which included data from economic modelling and simulation<sup>14</sup> which provided ADB with economic context and simulation of economic recovery of the country. Additionally, evidence confirmed that the NFM project supported SDGs, including those related to poverty reduction (SDG 1), quality education (SDG 4), and gender equality (SDG 5). However, despite these successes, the absence of a clear, overarching impact summary in the reports leaves room for interpretation regarding the full realization of long-term impacts. Most sources focus on short-term outcomes rather than sustained, long-term effects, suggesting that further research or follow-up assessments would be needed to confirm the long-term impact.

## Sustainability

The NFM project created valuable knowledge products, monitoring frameworks, and a centralized database system that will inform future programming and policy decisions<sup>15</sup>. However, the absence of a formal sustainability plan and reliance on donor funding limit the long-term sustainability of its outcomes<sup>16</sup>. While the project's robust MEL strategy enabled adaptive management and improved decision-making through learning documents<sup>17</sup>, gaps in inclusive dissemination and stakeholder engagement at the field level reduced the immediate application of findings and feedback integration<sup>18</sup>.

## Gender equality/women's empowerment, human rights, leave no one behind

The NFM project made significant strides in addressing cross-cutting issues of gender and inclusion, effectively promoting the participation of marginalized groups, particularly women, in monitoring and data collection processes despite Afghanistan's restrictive socio-cultural and political context. By employing gender-sensitive data collection methods, such as hiring female enumerators to ensure women's voices were captured, and integrating gender and diversity as core themes across assessments, the project demonstrated a strong commitment to inclusivity. Further, by capturing

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<sup>10</sup> The NFM project was not explicitly designed to directly address the operational needs of other UN agencies. Instead, its role was to generate monitoring outputs, such as socio-economic assessments and validation reports, which provided evidence-based recommendations to inform and enhance the service delivery activities implemented by other UN agencies under the broader NFA framework. These outputs were instrumental in identifying service delivery gaps and offering actionable insights that could support the planning and execution of programs by agencies such as WFP, FAO, and UNICEF.

<sup>11</sup> IRA Report Cleaned Version 6 March 2024, pp. 195-228

<sup>12</sup> Draft-NFA 6-Month Update, p. 18; NFM Project APR 2023, p.14

<sup>13</sup> NFM Quarterly Progress Report (Q3), 2023, p.15

<sup>14</sup> Half-yearly NFM progress report, 1 January to 30 June, 2024, p.17

<sup>15</sup> Thematic studies, assessments, and a centralized database system have enduring value, guiding initiatives like ADB's continuation of the NFA framework and new energy sector projects.

<sup>16</sup> The lack of a sustainability plan and reliance on external donors, particularly ADB, left the project vulnerable to funding discontinuities, with no feasible transition to domestic ownership due to political and operational constraints.

<sup>17</sup> The MEL strategy, including logical frameworks, third-party monitoring, and digital tools, enabled real-time adjustments and resource optimization.

<sup>18</sup> Reports and findings were not consistently shared with field-level stakeholders, highlighting the need for a more inclusive dissemination plan to enhance usability and impact.

gender-disaggregated data and focusing on marginalized groups, the NFM project ensured that its activities reflected the needs of all segments of the population, particularly those most at risk of being excluded from services.

## Conclusion

The NFM project stands as a vital intervention within Afghanistan's fragile socio-economic and political context. Its alignment with strategic frameworks, including the UNDP Strategic Plan (2022–25), United Nations Strategic Framework for Afghanistan (2023–25), and Sustainable Development Goals, highlights its thoughtful design and intent. This alignment, coupled with a robust monitoring system, ensured that the project was able to deliver on its theory of change effectively. The project's contributions to oversight, accountability, and service delivery in a politically unstable environment are commendable, reinforcing its significance.

The project's emphasis on inclusivity, particularly gender equality and disability inclusion, was a cornerstone of its implementation. It prioritized the needs of women, girls, and people with disabilities—groups often overlooked in Afghanistan's socio-political context. Through comprehensive gender and food security studies, it illuminated barriers and opportunities for enhancing gender equality across health, education, and livelihoods. Importantly, it also ensured that the voices of marginalized groups were heard, despite challenges imposed by restrictive DFA policies.

The NFM project also demonstrated resilience in navigating financial and operational challenges through innovative resource management, the use of technology like a web-based M&E platform, and proactive negotiations with stakeholders. These efforts allowed the project to achieve significant milestones, such as results validation, impact surveys, and knowledge product development. The centralized database system created under the project is expected to have lasting value, enabling future programming by UN agencies and donors. However, concerns about the sustainability of project outputs remain, given the absence of financial commitments for its continuation post-completion.

Despite its successes, the NFM project encountered challenges that tempered its impact. Limited inclusivity during the design stage meant that key stakeholders were only fully engaged during implementation, which hindered the project's seamless execution. Additionally, logistical constraints, delays in data sharing, and restricted decision-making inclusivity among stakeholders revealed gaps in inter-agency coordination. These issues underscore the need for improved collaboration and streamlined processes in future initiatives.

In many ways, the NFM project was a trailblazer, addressing cross-cutting issues in a context where one UN agency typically does not monitor another. Its knowledge-sharing mechanisms, collaborative frameworks, and contributions to SDG monitoring set a precedent for future projects. Yet, its unique nature also highlights its limitations as a one-off initiative without a clear path for continuity.

Ultimately, the NFM project exemplified the power of partnerships and inclusivity in achieving its goals. While it celebrated significant achievements, it also revealed areas for growth. Building on its lessons learned, future efforts must deepen stakeholder engagement, institutionalize inclusivity, and secure long-term financial and institutional support to amplify and sustain its impact. In doing so, they can build on the foundation laid by the NFM project, ensuring that its vision for a more inclusive and resilient Afghanistan is carried forward.

## Recommendations

### Recommendation 1:

To prevent operational delays and enhance efficiency, it is essential to strengthen coordination structures, formalize inter-agency agreements on data sharing and cooperation before project initiation. These agreements should establish clear protocols for beneficiary-level data sharing among UN agencies and external partners, addressing ethical guidelines, privacy standards, and technical interoperability.

Recommendation 2:

For future projects, it is crucial to incorporate a formal sustainability plan from the inception phase to ensure the project's long-term impact. This plan should define how key components, such as monitoring mechanisms, data collection processes, and knowledge-sharing initiatives, will be maintained and transitioned to relevant stakeholders after project completion.

Recommendation 3:

Documenting lessons learned from the projects is essential to inform future interventions and enhance their effectiveness. These lessons should be systematically integrated into project planning and training materials, ensuring that stakeholders can build on past successes and avoid repeating challenges.

Recommendation 4:

Community-based results validation is a critical and innovative approach to ensure meaningful community engagement in the monitoring and evaluation of projects. By involving community members directly, this approach not only fosters local ownership but also enhances the credibility and relevance of the findings.

## I. INTRODUCTION

Afghanistan is facing an unprecedented and multifaceted humanitarian crisis, driven by a combination of ongoing conflict, political instability, economic collapse, and widespread food insecurity. The situation has worsened following the Taliban takeover in August 2021, which caused a sudden shift in governance and policy frameworks, leading to an economic downturn that further exacerbated the country's ability to deliver critical public services. The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) projected that by mid-2022, 97% of the Afghan population would be living below the international poverty line of \$1.90 per day, a level of extreme poverty that is almost universal. Afghanistan's per capita income saw a sharp decline, resulting in millions of people facing severe food insecurity and limited access to essential services. The country's healthcare, education, and food systems were already fragile, and this economic collapse further strained service delivery, making external support a critical lifeline for the population<sup>19</sup>.

In response to this dire situation, the Asian Development Bank (ADB) provided a \$405 million grant to fund the Novel Financing for Sustaining Essential Service Delivery (NFM) Project, which was implemented from February 2022 to December 2024<sup>20</sup>. The ADB grant was implemented through separate projects delivered by UNDP, UNICEF, WFP and FAO as executing agencies. While the grant allocation to UNICEF focused on strengthening core public health services, and support to the delivery of primary and secondary education, the grant allocations to WFP and FAO supported the provision of emergency food assistance and sustaining local staple food production and supply chains. Considering the need to monitor the grant programme to ensure evidence-based decision making, a grant of USD 5 million was allocated to UNDP by ADB to undertake monitoring, research and socio-economic assessments. This project was termed as "Monitoring Support to Novel Financing for Sustaining Essential Service Delivery Project (NFM)".

The UNDP NFM project under evaluation had three outputs. The first output focused on monitoring the implementation of the grant by WFP, UNICEF, and FAO through (i) establishment of an integrated system for monitoring of achievements of results (outcomes and outputs); (ii) analysis and monitoring of the project's contribution to Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs); and (iii) field monitoring to validate results using 1,500 trained local enumerators across 34 provinces. The second output focused on socio-economic analysis and assessments of the country situation and included (i) macroeconomic and social assessments of the situation in Afghanistan and the impact of the ADB assistance (which could also be used as inputs for Project Completion Report); and (ii) analysis on the economic prospects of the country and possible paths towards future sustainable growth. The third output covered other support for the implementation of the project such as (i) Gender-responsive communications; and (ii) analytical and advisory inputs for possible phase 2 of the project. The project period was 35 months (February 2022 to December 2024).

Based on the the aforementioned background and context, the final evaluation of the NFM Project is critical for assessing the relevance, coherence, effectiveness, efficiency, impact, sustainability and cross-cutting issues of this significant intervention, particularly given the unprecedented and multifaceted humanitarian crisis in Afghanistan. A comprehensive evaluation is necessary to examine the achievement of the project's aforementioned three outputs. The project's relevance, effectiveness, efficiency and impact must be assessed, especially in terms of its contributions to the 2030 agenda and Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), the economic stability of Afghanistan, and its potential for

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<sup>19</sup> Alemi Q, Panter-Brick C, Oriya S, Ahmady M, Alimi AQ, Faiz H, Hakim N, Sami Hashemi SA, Manaly MA, Naseri R, Parwiz K, Sadat SJ, Sharifi MZ, Shinwari Z, Ahmadi SJ, Amin R, Azimi S, Hewad A, Musavi Z, Siddiqi AM, Bragin M, Kashino W, Lavdas M, Miller KE, Missmahl I, Omidian PA, Trani JF, van der Walt SK, Silove D, Ventevogel P. Afghan mental health and psychosocial well-being: thematic review of four decades of research and interventions. *BJPsych Open*. 2023 Jul 10;9(4):e125. doi: 10.1192/bjo.2023.502. PMID: 37424447; PMCID: PMC10375890.

<sup>20</sup> The NFM project commenced in February 2022, and its implementation took place entirely after the operational and contextual changes referenced in this report

scalability. Evaluating the project's implementation will also provide critical insights for future humanitarian and development programming in Afghanistan and inform the design of a possible second phase, ensuring that lessons learned are captured and applied to enhance future interventions.

## 2. DESCRIPTION OF THE INTERVENTION

This evaluation focuses on the Novel Financing Mechanism (NFM) project, which is a component of the broader Novel Financing Approach (NFA). While the NFA sets the strategic framework for essential service delivery, the NFM project focuses on monitoring, socio-economic assessments, and pipeline development.

The Monitoring of Novel Financing for Sustaining Essential Service Delivery (NFM) Project was a critical initiative funded by the Asian Development Bank (ADB) and implemented by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). The central component of the project was the establishment of a robust monitoring system to track the delivery of services funded by the ADB grant<sup>21</sup>. This involved deploying an integrated monitoring system leveraging 1,500 trained local enumerators across Afghanistan's 34 provinces, supported by partnerships with Integrity Watch Afghanistan (IWA) and Voxmap. Field monitoring was conducted through regional sub-offices in key cities such as Kabul, Herat, Kandahar, and Jalalabad, supplemented by third-party monitoring in insecure areas. Data collection and reporting were facilitated by a web-based Information Management and Reporting Platform (IMRP) that provided real-time analytics and visualization for evidence-based decision-making. Additionally, the monitoring system incorporated community-based surveys and perception studies to gather bi-annual qualitative and quantitative data, enabling program adaptations based on insights. The project also focused on conducting comprehensive socio-economic assessments to inform adaptive programming and future interventions. These assessments included macroeconomic and social assessments using randomized controlled trials (RCTs) and data aggregation to generate actionable insights, especially for marginalized groups and women, ensuring inclusive development outcomes. Another significant component involved sector-specific assessments and the documentation of best practices to guide the strategic planning of a potential Phase II. The project emphasized the use of innovative technologies such as Geographic Information System (GIS), real-time data visualization, and mobile-based monitoring tools, ensuring efficiency and adaptability to Afghanistan's evolving context. Guided by the principle of "Leaving No One Behind," the project ensured the representation and participation of vulnerable groups, including women, children, and persons with disabilities. Collaboration and coordination among UNDP, WFP, UNICEF, and FAO were integral to the project's success, with an Inter-Agency Task Force established to align roles, responsibilities, and progress reporting. By leveraging existing resources and partnerships, the project maintained cost efficiency and sustainability while building community-level systems for long-term impact.

### 2.1. DESCRIPTION, ROLE AND INVOLVEMENT OF NFM STAKEHOLDERS

The major or key stakeholders in the NFM project were ADB, UNDP, WFP and FAO<sup>22</sup>. While ADB funded the project, UNDP provided the technical assistance to ensure effective monitoring of the outcomes of the ADB programme "Sustaining the delivery of essential public services and food security to ease the adverse impact of economic disruptions on the welfare and livelihoods of vulnerable Afghan people" and provide socio-economic and impact analysis of the country. The other UN agencies (UNICEF, FAO, WFP) were involved in service delivery under the "Novel Financing for Sustaining Essential Service Delivery Project". While UNICEF delivered core public health services (including COVID-19 vaccines) and primary and secondary education (particularly for girls and women), WFP and FAO provided emergency food assistance and food production support. UNDP in order to deliver the outputs of the NFM project, worked with several other stakeholders. UNDP collaborated with

<sup>21</sup> NFM project was designed to monitor service provision and support evidence-based programming. Direct service delivery was outside the project's scope.

<sup>22</sup> Final ProDoc, p.14

Integrity Watch and Voxmapp to develop an ICT and people-based monitoring system. Voxmapp also developed three results validation report based on the primary data collection it undertook in the field. In addition, Mgtwell Consulting Services conducted three rounds of impact assessment for the NFM project. Moreover, UNDP worked with several national and international consultants, both individual and consulting agencies, to undertake sectoral assessments.

## 2.2. DESCRIPTION OF PROJECT AND ANALYSIS OF THE FEASIBILITY OF THE PROJECT'S TOC

The Theory of Change (ToC) for the project states that - If the delivery of essential services through the ADB Grant Programme is monitored in an effective and efficient manner; Then Afghan citizens including women, children, and disadvantaged groups will have improved access to quality services in the areas of health, education, and capacities to address food insecurity and malnutrition, Resulting in increased community resilience to the current shocks and crisis and building the foundation for socio-economic recovery in the long-term; This will in turn contribute to building the foundation for increased public social welfare and trust in community services. This ToC was based on the assumptions that there would be effective cooperation and coordination among relevant UN agencies (UNICEF, WFP, and FAO), the security situation will not deteriorate, especially at the remote areas, to limit data collection from community level, there will be consensus at the national and sub – national level to sustain provision of essential services and the communities will strongly support the implementation of project activities to have improved access to essential services in their communities. Based on the analysis it is found that the Theory of Change (ToC)<sup>23</sup> for the NFM project was achieved due to its relevant design, robust implementation practices, that prioritized inclusivity, and gender equity during execution. At the outset, the Project Design Document outlined core activities, objectives, and timelines for implementation, while Project Administration Manuals (PAMs) from each UN agency detailed the specific roles, procurement, and financial management procedures<sup>24</sup>. The project's planning involved coordination among UN agencies, needs assessments, and alignment with national priorities, as aforementioned. A Multi-Year Work Plan provided an operational roadmap for the project's execution<sup>25</sup>. The planning process was methodical, though specific step-by-step details are not fully described in the sources. The interventions were implemented through collaboration between UNDP and partner UN agencies, leveraging local NGOs for on-ground activities. Data was collected using household surveys<sup>26</sup>, key informant interviews (KIIs), focus group discussions<sup>27</sup> (FGDs), and digital platforms like Kobo Toolbox<sup>28</sup>. Challenges such as security concerns and data collection restrictions were mitigated through remote monitoring technologies<sup>29</sup>.

## 2.3. PROJECT EVALUABILITY ASSESSMENT

The evaluability of NFM project was found feasible due to its well-defined objectives, clear Theory of Change (ToC), established monitoring framework, and alignment with OECD/DAC evaluation criteria. The project has robust documentation, including a Results Framework, monitoring data, result validation reports, progress reports, and socio-economic assessment reports, which provide a solid

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<sup>23</sup> If the delivery of essential services through the ADB Grant Programme is monitored in an effective and efficient manner. Then Afghan citizens including women, children, and disadvantaged groups will have improved access to quality services in the areas of health, education, and capacities to address food insecurity and malnutrition; Resulting in increased community resilience to the current shocks and crisis and building the foundation for socio-economic recovery in the long-term This will in turn contribute to building the foundation for increased public social welfare and trust in community services

<sup>24</sup> Final Prodoc NFM; LD08 PAM FAO, p. 1

<sup>25</sup> Final Prodoc NFM, p. 89

<sup>26</sup> Beneficiaries were surveyed about the quality, quantity, and timeliness of assistance, including food packages, agricultural inputs, and cash disbursements (Result Validation Wave 2 Report, p. 4).

<sup>27</sup> These were used to gather more detailed insights into beneficiary experiences and satisfaction (IRA-3 Report, p. 167). 3. Key informant interviews (KIIs): These interviews gathered feedback from community leaders and project staff on the project's impact and challenges (IRA-3 Report, p. 165).

<sup>28</sup> IRA-3 Report

<sup>29</sup> NFM Project APR 2023, p. 43



basis for evaluating its relevance, effectiveness, and impact. Key stakeholders, including UNDP, WFP, UNICEF, FAO, and consultants, were engaged in the process, though potential challenges such as data gaps, and stakeholder availability affected the evaluation's scope. Mitigating these risks through early stakeholder engagement and preparing for remote data collection helped ensure a thorough evaluation of the project's outcomes and lessons learned. In addition, The initial project design was structured to align with the principles of Do No Harm, Leaving No One Behind (LNOB), and the Human Rights-Based Approach (RBA). A review of the project documents highlighted a deliberate focus on addressing the needs of the most vulnerable groups. This was achieved through the integration of robust monitoring indicators, community engagement and a flexible, adaptive framework. The planned activities emphasized community-centered approaches and locally driven interventions to ensure the effective delivery of services, particularly in remote regions. These approaches sought to actively engage marginalized populations, ensuring their inclusion and meaningful participation in the project's outcomes. However, while the design shows promise, a critical analysis of the extent to which these principles were operationalized in practice—especially in balancing flexibility with accountability—may further strengthen the overall impact.

### 3. EVALUATION SCOPE AND OBJECTIVES

#### 3.1. SCOPE

Thematic scope: The Final Evaluation assessed the UNDP/NFM project progress against the Project Document, targets stipulated in the Project's Results Framework and the achieved results proposing recommendations, to inform and help improve the design of any future projects. The Final Evaluation was based on a desk review of project related documents and in-depth virtual interviews and surveys<sup>30</sup>. The Final Evaluation also documented achievements, good practices, success stories, lessons learned or transferable examples.

Temporal Scope: The project duration from its start on February 4, 2022 until the time of evaluation (the project's end date is 31 December 2024)

#### 3.2. EVALUATION OBJECTIVES

The Final Evaluation aimed to provide UNDP Afghanistan, its partners, and the Asian Development Bank (ADB) with evidence-based insights to guide decision-making on future programming and policy development. By assessing project performance against expected outputs, indicators, and outcomes outlined in the Results and Resources Framework (RRF)<sup>31</sup>, the evaluation offered a comprehensive understanding of the project's achievements, challenges, and lessons learned. This evaluation is expected to inform decisions on scaling effective strategies, refining programmatic approaches, and ensuring alignment with UNDP's Strategic Plan (2022-25), Transitional Country Programme Results Framework (TCPRF) and Transitional Country Programme Strategy<sup>32</sup>. Key issues for consideration include the project's relevance to the local context, coherence with broader development efforts, efficiency in resource utilization, sustainability of impacts, and effectiveness in addressing cross-cutting priorities such as gender equality, human rights, and the "leave no one behind" principle. The evaluation also highlights success stories, demonstrating the project's contribution to development goals and stakeholder engagement, which will be shared via the UNDP website for wider learning and dissemination. To support informed decision-making, the evaluation identified actionable recommendations for addressing challenges, maximizing the project's impact, and fostering synergies

<sup>30</sup> Virtual interviews were conducted between September and November, 2024 with 18 respondents.

<sup>31</sup> Final ProDoc, p.17-19

<sup>32</sup> TCPS Outcome 2: By the end of 2025, more people in Afghanistan will benefit from an increasingly stable, inclusive, and employment-rich economy, with greater equality of economic opportunities and more resilient livelihoods, increased food production, and improved natural resources management.

TCPS Output 2.4 Timely and evidence-based policy analysis and options available to programme implementation partners

across UNDP initiatives in Afghanistan and other Country Offices. These findings are expected to guide stakeholders in strengthening future interventions, ensuring that lessons from this evaluation translate into enhanced program design, implementation, and policy influence.

### 3.3. EVALUATION CRITERIA

The evaluation was conducted in compliance with the key principles<sup>33</sup> of the revised UNDP Evaluation Policy and guided by the United Nations Development Evaluation Group’s Norms and Standards for Evaluation and the Organization of the Economic Cooperation Development/Development Assistance Committee (OECD/DAC)’s Evaluation Criteria for Development Assistance. The evaluation was independent, impartial, transparent, ethical, and credible based on data and evidence. The evaluation was based on the criteria of 1) Relevance; 2) Coherence; 3) Effectiveness; 4) Efficiency; 5) Impact; and 6) Sustainability as well as gender equality/women’s empowerment, human rights and leave no one behind (GEWE/HR/LNOB) as recommended by the UNDP Evaluation Policy. These criteria led to the guiding questions, which were further reviewed/elaborated to develop a detailed Evaluation Matrix for this Final Evaluation<sup>34</sup>.

### 3.4. EVALUATION QUESTIONS

Criteria	Key Questions
<b>Relevance</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To what extent was the NFM project in line with national development priorities, Country Programme outputs and outcomes (as listed in the project document), the UNDP Strategic Plan, national development priorities, and the SDGs</li> <li>To what extent did the project approaches contribute to the theory of change for the project? Did the project remain relevant throughout?</li> <li>To what extent were the methods, activities, and outputs aligned with the overall objectives and goals of the project?</li> </ul>
<b>Coherence</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To what extent did the project complement interventions by different entities, including UNDP and other UN actors, as well as other international partners and donors?</li> <li>To what extent were relevant stakeholders involved in the project’s design and implementation?</li> </ul>
<b>Effectiveness</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To what extent did the project achieve its intended objectives and contribute to the project’s strategic vision?</li> <li>What are the key internal and external factors (success &amp; failure factors) that have contributed, affected, or impeded the achievements, and how UNDP and the partners manage these?</li> <li>In which areas does the NFM project have the greatest and fewest achievements? Why and what have been the supporting factors? How can the NFM or relevant projects build on or expand these achievements?</li> </ul>
<b>Efficiency</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To what extent was the project management structure, including the project board, as outlined in the project document efficient in generating the expected results?</li> <li>To what extent have the project implementation strategy and execution been efficient and cost-effective?</li> </ul>

<sup>33</sup> High ethical standards and norms must be held, Evaluations must be independent, impartial and credible, planning and implementation of the evaluations must be rule-bound, evaluations must be carried out with high technical competence and rigour, evaluation process should be transparent and fully engaged with stakeholders. The revised UNDP evaluation policy. Second regular session, 2019, p. 3-4

<sup>34</sup> The detailed Evaluation Matrix has been provided in the Annexure.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To what extent has there been an economical use of financial and human resources? Have resources (funds, human resources, time, expertise, etc.) been allocated strategically to achieve outcomes?</li> <li>• To what extent have the M&amp;E systems utilized by the project enabled effective and efficient project management?</li> </ul>
<b>Sustainability</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To what extent are the project's results sustainable going forward? Are there any social or political risks that may jeopardize sustainability of project outputs and the project's contributions to country programme outputs and outcomes?</li> <li>• To what extent will financial and economic resources be available to sustain the benefits achieved by the project?</li> <li>• To what extent are lessons learned being documented by the project team on a continual basis and shared with appropriate parties who could learn from the project?</li> </ul>
<b>Impact</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To what extent has the project generated or is expected to generate significant positive or negative, intended, or unintended, higher-level effects?</li> </ul>
<b>Gender equality/women's empowerment, human rights, leave no one behind</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To what extent does the project adopt gender-sensitive, human rights-based and conflict sensitive approaches, in compliance with the principle of Leaving No One Behind (LNOB)?</li> <li>• How adequately were cross-cutting themes such as human rights, gender equality, age and environment considered in the NFM project?</li> <li>• To what extent have gender equality and the empowerment of women been addressed in the design, implementation, monitoring, and communication?</li> <li>• To what extent has the NFM project promoted positive changes in gender equality and the empowerment of women? Were there any unintended effects? How can the NFM project further broaden in a future phase its contribution to enhancing diversity and inclusion?</li> <li>• To what extent have local communities, women, youth, people with disabilities and other disadvantaged groups benefited from the NFM project? Has the project applied UNDP Social and Environmental Safeguards?</li> </ul>

Table 1. Evaluation questions

The evaluation questions were designed to comprehensively address the information needs of stakeholders. By assessing the project's alignment with its outputs and outcome, the evaluation ensures that stakeholders understand whether the project remained relevant to its objectives throughout its lifecycle. This also includes evaluating how the project's approaches contributed to the theory of change, ensuring its strategies were well-targeted and effective. The questions also focus on the project's coherence, examining its ability to complement other initiatives by UNDP, UN agencies, and international partners while ensuring stakeholder involvement in design and implementation. This provides critical insights into the effectiveness of collaboration and inclusivity, which are vital for enhancing partnership-based programming. Effectiveness is another key area, where the questions probe the extent to which the project achieved its objectives and identify factors that supported or impeded success. This allows stakeholders to pinpoint strengths, weaknesses, and actionable lessons for improving future interventions. Efficiency is evaluated through the lens of project management, resource allocation, and cost-effectiveness, ensuring the use of resources was strategic and generated optimal outcomes while also highlighting areas for operational improvement. Sustainability is addressed by exploring whether the project's results are likely to endure over time and assessing risks that could jeopardize long-term benefits. This includes evaluating the availability of financial and economic resources and the project team's efforts to document and share lessons learned, ensuring that insights are preserved and disseminated for future use. The evaluation further considers the project's impact, examining the higher-level effects—both intended and unintended—on beneficiaries and stakeholders.

This provides a broader understanding of the project's contributions to development goals and its implications for similar initiatives. Finally, the questions ensure a thorough analysis of cross-cutting themes such as gender equality, women's empowerment, human rights, and the principle of leaving no one behind. This includes evaluating the project's inclusivity and its impact on marginalized groups, as well as identifying opportunities to enhance diversity, equity, and inclusion in future phases. Overall, the evaluation is structured to provide a clear and evidence-based understanding of the project's achievements, challenges, and lessons learned. It offers actionable recommendations to inform decision-making, refine programming approaches, and strengthen future initiatives while ensuring alignment with UNDP's broader strategic goals. This comprehensive analysis will enable UNDP Afghanistan, ADB, and other stakeholders to scale successes, address gaps, and enhance the impact of future programming.

## 4. EVALUATION APPROACH AND METHODS

### 4.1. EVALUATION APPROACH

A result-oriented approach to this evaluation was used. Such an approach measures the extent to which the original project objectives and subsequent interventions were achieved. In other words: what are the main results? The research methods in this approach were based on assumptions and expectations of causality and linearity, such as 'If we do this in the project, then this will happen, and this or that change will take place; to put it another way, the project can plan for change and then measure it.' The proposed approach is explained in terms of Input (resources applied for the project), Activities (coordinating all tasks undertaken to reach the proposed project goal), Output (any intended change during the course of the project), Outcome (intended change) and Impact (the intended and desired result). For data collection, a mixed-methods approach was used. Additionally, the evaluation approach, and methodology is gender responsive as the voices of female respondents were captured on a priority basis.

### 4.2. DATA SOURCES

Initially, a secondary review of all project documents was undertaken. These documents included, board meeting minutes, financial documents, impact assessment reports, field monitoring reports, project administration manuals, project document, progress reports, quality assurance report, results validation reports and sector assessment reports. The questions for the desk review were informed by the OECD-DAC framework and the Evaluation Matrix. The questions and sub-questions in the evaluation matrix guided the review of project. Information from various reviewed documents informed the evaluation questions and sub-questions. For primary data collection through key informant interviews (KIIs), a key informant schedule was developed for each of the categories of stakeholders, identified in consultation with UNDP. These stakeholder groups comprised UNDP staff, other UN organizations (WFP, FAO, UNICEF), non-UN organizations and consultants contracted under NFM and ADB representative. The evaluation matrix also guided the questions in the KII schedules. Key informant interviews and online questionnaire based survey ensured data which supported findings from secondary review of literature. Additionally, use of mixed methods ensured data triangulation and validation. Further, these methods were the suggested methods as per the terms of reference for this evaluation.

### 4.3. SAMPLE AND SAMPLE FRAME

Based on consultation with UNDP, a stakeholder list of 31 respondents was prepared. This list of 31 stakeholders can be considered as the sample frame. A combination of random and purposive sampling

was undertaken to develop a final sample list of 20 respondents<sup>35</sup>. Initially, all the female respondents were selected from the preliminary list of stakeholders. From the list of male respondents, a systematic random sampling was used to select every second respondent. However, it was also ensured that all the stakeholder categories were represented in the sample. Mail from UNDP was sent to all the 20 stakeholders with a Google Form link to schedule interviews between September 25 to November 24, 2024. A total of 20 respondents scheduled their interview and finally 18 interviews were completed<sup>36</sup>. In addition to KIIs, quantitative data was also collected using Google Form. Out of 20 respondents who participated in KIIs, 7 respondents filled the questionnaire. Additionally, 25% of the respondents were female.

#### 4.4. DATA COLLECTION PROCEDURES AND INSTRUMENTS

The primary data collection tool was the key informant interview schedule. All the interviews were recorded and the recordings were transcribed using Transcribe software. The transcripts were used to develop detailed notes to respond to the evaluation questions. In addition to the KII schedule, a questionnaire was used to collect quantitative responses for mainly perception-based questions using a 5-point Likert Scale. Both the tools were developed initially as a draft and pilot tested. After pilot testing and fine tuning, the tool was shared with UNDP for review and approval. After approval, the tools were used for actual data collection.

#### 4.5 TRIANGULATION AND DATA VALIDATION

Data triangulation and validation were critical components of the final evaluation of the NFM project to ensure the reliability and accuracy of findings. Triangulation involved using multiple data sources, methodologies, and perspectives to cross-verify information and minimize biases. This approach combined qualitative and quantitative data, including secondary review of data and literature, interviews, and surveys, to provide a comprehensive understanding of project outcomes. Validation processes involve rigorous checks for data consistency, including cross-referencing secondary data with primary data. Together, triangulation and validation enhance the credibility of this evaluation, ensuring that conclusions and recommendations are well-founded and actionable.

#### 4.6. STAKEHOLDER PARTICIPATION

Stakeholder participation is a critical component of the evaluation process, ensuring that diverse perspectives are captured and the evaluation findings are both relevant and actionable. For the NFM project, stakeholder engagement was ensured through UNDP support. At the outset, UNDP sent a mail to all the stakeholders introducing the evaluator, the scope of evaluation, objectives and questions. Subsequent to this mail, the evaluator sent Google Form link to all the stakeholders in the list to schedule an appointment with them. Based on the date and time confirmed by the stakeholders, interviews were scheduled and conducted. The average time for an interview was 30 minutes from start to end. The stakeholders included representatives from UNDP Afghanistan, ADB, UNDP implementing partners (Vox Mapp, MgtWell, Apama), and UN organizations (WFP, UNICEF, FAO). The involvement of the stakeholders at the inception stage ensured that the evaluation captured the full spectrum of impacts, both intended and unintended. They also contributed to shaping the evaluation framework by providing inputs on the evaluation framework, including evaluation sub-questions and inclusion for respondents not in the list of stakeholders. Further, during the interviews,

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<sup>35</sup> Hennik and Kaiser (2022) based on a systematic review of literature of 23 studies argue that saturation can be achieved in a 9 to 17 interviews. Therefore, a sample of 20 interviews conducted within the data collection timeline is regarded as appropriate for this evaluation. (Ref. Monique Hennink, Bonnie N. Kaiser, Sample sizes for saturation in qualitative research: A systematic review of empirical tests, *Social Science & Medicine*, Volume 292, 2022, 114523, ISSN 0277-9536, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.socscimed.2021.114523>. (<https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0277953621008558>))

<sup>36</sup> One interview could not be undertaken due to changes in schedule of a respondent.

the stakeholder wholeheartedly responded to the questions to ensure richness of the data being collected. Therefore, participatory approach at the kick-off stage, inception and data collection stage strengthened accountability and promoted the use of evaluation results for future programming and policy development.

#### 4.7. ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS<sup>37</sup>

The evaluation approach strictly adhered to the United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG) Ethical Guidelines for Evaluation by adopting ethical behaviours comprising integrity, accountability, respect and beneficence. In addition, the evaluation approach explicitly included:

**Negotiating Informed Consent:** It was ensured that all respondents understood the purpose of the evaluation and their rights, securing informed consent before data collection. The key informant interview questions were always preceded by an informed consent note which included information about the evaluator, evaluation time, provision of taking a break during the interview, freedom to not respond to question/s, and permission to record the interview. The interview started only when the respondent gave his or her verbal consent.

**Rights to Confidentiality, Anonymity and Data Protection:** All the interviews were stored safely in devices only accessed by the evaluator and no data was stored on the cloud. Also, the data was anonymized to protect the privacy of respondents. The report does not contain any information which can link a response to a certain respondent, not even linking a response to the organization represented by the respondent.

**Respect for Respondent time:** The evaluator was aware that the respondents had to take out time from their busy schedule for the interview. Therefore, the evaluator scheduled the interviews as per the convenience of the respondents. However, in case of sudden change in the schedule, the evaluator ensured that the respondents are able to provide another set of date and time convenient to them within the data collection timeline.

#### 4.8. BACKGROUND INFORMATION ON EVALUATOR

This evaluation was carried out by a single person with significant experience (more than 10 years in research, monitoring and evaluation, with a total experience of 18 years in the field of social development) in carrying out evaluations in several countries, including Afghanistan. He has a master's in social research methods from University of Sussex and holds a Post Graduate Diploma in Rural Development from India. He is skilled in mixed methods research and has good data analysis and report writing skills.

#### 4.9. MAJOR LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

**Limitation I** – One of the most critical requirements of this evaluation was to capture the voices of the UN agencies, given that they were the key stakeholder in the NFM project. This also proved to be one of the major limitations which critically affected evaluation timeline. Significant difficulty was faced by the evaluator in scheduling interviews with representatives of UN organizations (UNICEF, WFP, FAO) within the planned data collection period (September to October). This resulted in the extension of the evaluation timeline from November 5 to December 15. As a mitigation measure, the evaluator reached out to UNDP team which continuously sent mails to representatives of UN agencies. UNDP shared the ToR, and evaluation questions with the UN agencies and also held several meetings with them to address any doubts they had regarding the evaluation. Finally, the representatives of UN agencies agreed to provide their interviews and the interviews were conducted before finalization of the evaluation report.

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<sup>37</sup> The ethical standards also adhered to the Association of Social Anthropologists of the UK and the Commonwealth (ASA) ethical guidelines for good research practice

**Limitation 2** - Few of the organizations (Magenta and GeoPolicity) did not respond to the mails of UNDP or to the mails of the evaluator. As a mitigation measure, the numbers of interviews from consulting agencies and experts were increased to compensate the interviews which could not be conducted (for example, one additional interview was conducted for Voxmapp sister agency, Apama). This resulted in reaching saturation with the number of interviews conducted and also ensured inclusion of voices of the consulting agencies.

**Limitation 3** – While the evaluator received several project related documents from UNDP, he did not receive access to the monitoring System (for NFA indicator monitoring), Gender Assessment Report, Output-wise expenditure, detailed head-wise expenditure from start to November, 24, detailed and up to date progress on results framework, and planned versus achieved (physical and financial) till November, 24. This initially resulted in comprehensiveness of the evaluation report. In order to address this limitation, the evaluator reached out to the UNDP team which compiled all the required documents and sent to the evaluator to complete the final evaluation report.

#### 4.10. DATA ANALYSIS

For data collected through an online questionnaire, the analysis included use of descriptive statistics in SPSS (ver. 25). For qualitative analysis, at first all the interview recordings were carefully transcribed using high quality transcription software. The transcriptions were then carefully analyzed and responses grouped under several themes. These themes are as per the evaluation questions. The evaluator conducted thematic analysis to ensure that the evaluation questions were comprehensively responded to.

## 5. FINDINGS

### 5.1. RELEVANCE

**EQ 1. To what extent was the NFM project in line with Country Programme outputs and outcomes (as listed in the project document), the UNDP Strategic Plan, national development priorities, and the SDGs?**

**Finding 1: The NFM project exhibited a high degree of alignment with UNDP Strategic Plan 2022-25, particularly Outcome 1.1, which focuses on essential service delivery and resilience-building, United Nations Strategic Framework for Afghanistan (2023-25) which prioritizes sustained essential services, economic opportunities and resilient livelihoods & social cohesion, inclusion, gender equality human rights and law, Transitional Country Programme Strategy (TCPS), 2022-25<sup>38</sup>, UN Transitional Engagement Framework (2022-24), which prioritizes humanitarian needs and resilience-building in Afghanistan, and ADB Operational Priorities (2019–2030), specifically Priority 1 (Poverty Reduction) and Priority 5 (Rural Development and Food Security) and Sustainable Development Goals<sup>39,40</sup>. The project effectively addressed Afghanistan’s socio-economic and humanitarian needs, making it a critical intervention in the country’s fragile political and economic context<sup>41</sup>.**

Under Output 2, the NFM project conducted socio-economic assessments in energy, health, nutrition and education. These assessments provided critical evidence to evaluate the alignment of NFA project activities with Afghanistan’s socio-economic needs. Particularly for energy assessment, country’s reliance on imported electricity and the centrality of energy to various sectors such as agriculture, health, and education made this assessment crucial for future programming by donors like ADB, World Bank, and KfW. Furthermore, recommendations to focus on rural enterprises and private sector engagement were seen as essential for sustainable development, adding another layer of relevance to the project’s goals.

Similarly, relevance of the NFM project in the post-2021 political context, where the ADB lacked direct ground presence in Afghanistan, was underscored in several interviews. The political instability and absence of government oversight necessitated a third-party mechanism like NFM to ensure accountability and transparency in donor-funded projects. During the interviews it was underscored how NFM filled this critical gap, especially for ADB, by providing monitoring and validation services for interventions that could no longer rely on traditional oversight. This demonstrates a strong alignment between the project’s objectives and the immediate needs of both the donor community and the Afghan population.

In addition, the immediate results assessment was particularly relevant for ensuring feedback to UN agencies and ADB. This assessment helped stakeholders understand the project’s real-time impact, ensuring that interventions remained aligned with the needs of the communities they served. By

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<sup>38</sup> TCPS Outcome 2: By the end of 2025, more people in Afghanistan will benefit from an increasingly stable, inclusive, and employment-rich economy, with greater equality of economic opportunities and more resilient livelihoods, increased food production, and improved natural resources management.

TCPS Output 2.4 Timely and evidence-based policy analysis and options available to programme implementation partners

<sup>39</sup> It contributed to Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), including SDG 1 (No Poverty), SDG 2 (Zero Hunger), SDG 3 (Good Health and Well-being), and SDG 4 (Quality Education).

<sup>40</sup> The UNDP Strategic Plan (2022–2025), particularly Outcome 1.1, which focuses on essential service delivery and resilience-building, the UN Transitional Engagement Framework (2022–2024), which prioritizes humanitarian needs and resilience-building in Afghanistan, and ADB Operational Priorities (2019–2030), specifically Priority 1 (Poverty Reduction) and Priority 5 (Rural Development and Food Security).

<sup>41</sup> Across multiple interviews respondents shared that NFM project was designed to monitor implementation of NFA project and to feed into pipeline development in majorly in the energy sector.



ensuring the inclusion of marginalized groups, such as people with disabilities and women, MgtWell's work also ensured that the project remained relevant to the most vulnerable populations in Afghanistan. Findings from the analysis of quantitative data shows that a little more than half of the respondents (57.1%, n=4) agreed that the NFM project was aligned with NFA priorities (42.9% (n=3) respondents fully agreed). Further, 71.5% (n=5) respondents reported that the NFM project aligned with the UNDP strategic plan<sup>42</sup>.

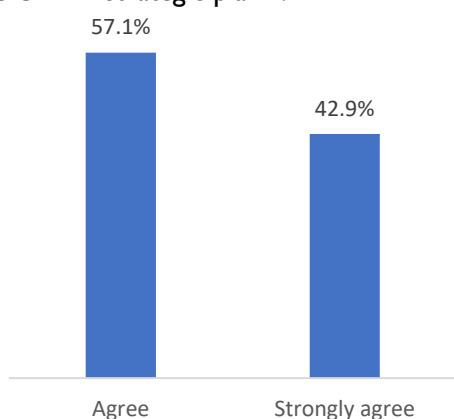


Fig 1. Percentage distribution of respondents who agreed that NFM project was aligned with NFA priorities

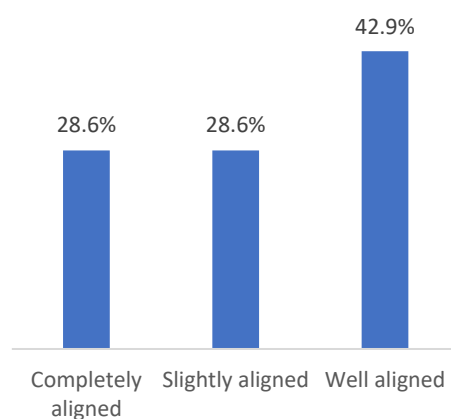


Fig 2. Percentage distribution of respondents who agreed that NFM project was aligned with UNDP strategic plan

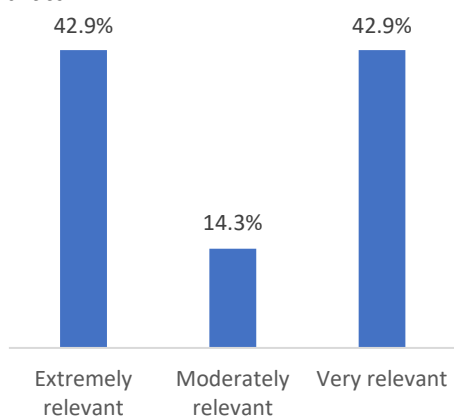


Fig 3. Percentage distribution of respondents based on their perception about the relevance of the project to the changing context of the country

**EQ 2. To what extent did the project approaches contribute to the Theory of Change (ToC) for the project? Did the project remain relevant throughout?**

**Finding 2: The ToC for the project was achieved given that the robust monitoring system set in place under the project ensured high quality of services delivery in the areas of health, education, food security and nutrition for Afghan citizens building the path toward socio-economic recovery of the country.**

Framework	Relevant Objectives	NFM Contribution
UNDP Strategic Plan (2022–2025)	Outcome 1.1: Essential services and resilience	Monitoring and socio-economic analysis
UN Transitional Framework	Prioritize health, education, and food security	Socio-economic assessments and pipeline support
ADB Operational Priorities	Priority 1: Poverty Reduction, Priority 5: Food Security	Monitoring service delivery and data analysis

The NFM project emerged as a critical mechanism to ensure accountability, transparency, and effective service delivery in Afghanistan's challenging socio-political landscape, particularly in remote and conflict-affected areas. Under Output 1, the NFM project established robust monitoring systems that aligned with the intended outputs and outcomes, including accountability and transparency in donor-funded projects. This alignment was achieved through participatory development of monitoring frameworks, real-time tracking platforms, and validation exercises. Additionally, the monitoring framework ensured consistency in tracking beneficiary reach and project outcomes, directly supporting the intended outputs of the NFM project.

The planning of the project involved a collaborative effort among multiple stakeholders. The Asian Development Bank (ADB) played a central role in shaping the project's objectives and providing financial oversight<sup>43</sup>. UNDP led the overall coordination and provided technical assistance, while other UN agencies like FAO, UNICEF, and WFP contributed based on their sectoral expertise<sup>44</sup>. The UN agencies also provide support to TPM monitoring agencies to secure access in their operational areas. Further, the project design was informed by needs assessments that identified gaps in services, particularly in food security, health, and education<sup>45</sup>. The findings from the secondary review of literature get substantiated by the findings from the key informant interviews. The interviews reveal that the NFM project was designed to address some of Afghanistan's most pressing challenges, particularly in terms of service delivery to remote and conflict-affected areas. This was especially important given the limitations faced by international organizations in physically accessing these regions due to security concerns. For example, in several interviews the relevance of the Third-Party Monitoring (TPM) mechanism in a high-risk context like Afghanistan, where security issues prevented UN staff from accessing many remote areas was emphasized.

Lesson 1. Critical Role of TPM in High-Risk Contexts: The Third-Party Monitoring (TPM) mechanism proved invaluable in ensuring accountability and transparency, especially in remote and conflict-affected areas. This mechanism is particularly effective when international organizations face access challenges due to security concerns. Future projects in similar contexts should continue leveraging TPM to ensure effective monitoring.

The TPM played a crucial role in ensuring that services reached the intended beneficiaries, even in areas where traditional monitoring mechanisms were ineffective. This hands-on support was particularly relevant to agencies like FAO, WFP, and UNICEF, which relied on TPM to ensure the quality and effectiveness of their people-centric services. Moreover, the relevance of the project in addressing Afghanistan's complex social dynamics was also highlighted. It was noted in the interviews that NFM's engagement with community members and its focus on beneficiary verification ensured that the project was aligned with the needs of the population. The project's design included efforts to understand the specific types of assistance received by communities from various UN agencies and ensured that marginalized groups such as internally displaced persons (IDPs) were adequately represented. This demonstrates how NFM tailored its activities to reflect the unique needs and challenges of Afghanistan's diverse population. Further, in order to ensure transparency and accountability in its operations,

agreements and MOUs were signed between UNDP and other agencies to formalize partnerships and define roles<sup>46</sup>.

<sup>43</sup> Report and Recommendation of ADB President, pp. 1, 7

<sup>44</sup> Final Prodoc NFM, pp. 1-3; LD08 PAM FAO, p. 1

<sup>45</sup> Report and Recommendation of ADB President, pp. 1-7

<sup>46</sup> A bilateral grant agreement between UNDP and ADB was signed on February 4, 2022, establishing UNDP's role as the implementing agency<sup>46</sup>. Additionally, grant agreements were signed between ADB and the implementing agencies, including UNICEF, WFP, and FAO, outlining funding allocations and responsibilities (Annex I Project Quality Assurance Report, p. 2). However, the documents do not provide detailed information on the timeline for implementation, though formal agreements would typically follow standard UNDP procedures.

### **EQ 3. To what extent were the methods, activities, and outputs aligned with the overall objectives and goals of the project?**

**Finding 3. The NFM project demonstrated a high degree of alignment between its design and objectives, effectively addressing Afghanistan's development needs in food security, health, and education through robust monitoring systems, socio-economic analyses, and knowledge-sharing mechanisms.**

A critical aspect of the NFM project's relevance was its ability to engage multiple stakeholders across sectors. The project's design incorporated input from UNDP, ADB, FAO, WFP, UNICEF, and local NGOs, reflecting a multi-sectoral approach to addressing Afghanistan's development needs. It was highlighted during the interviews that the ADB's Integrated Results Framework (IRF) created for the project ensured that each stakeholder's objectives were incorporated into the project design, making it highly relevant to the needs of the international organizations involved. This multi-stakeholder engagement ensured that the project addressed a broad range of issues, from energy and food security to health and education, thus increasing its relevance across various sectors.

The outputs and activities were designed to match the project's goals, including the establishment of a robust monitoring system and conducting socio-economic analyses<sup>47</sup>. The overall structure of the project ensured that it remained relevant to the objectives of the various stakeholders involved, particularly in terms of achieving ADB's monitoring and reporting requirements. Review of project literature shows that the project was set up with a clear purpose<sup>48</sup> and well-defined objectives<sup>49</sup>. In addition, the project exhibited adaptive management, incorporating lessons from results validation exercises into ongoing implementation<sup>50</sup>. While no formal design changes are noted, the project-maintained flexibility to adjust activities as needed. Moreover, the project's methods, activities, and outputs<sup>51</sup> were carefully designed to align with its overarching goals.

## 5.2. COHERENCE

### **EQ 4. To what extent did the project complement interventions by different entities, including UNDP and other UN actors, as well as other international partners and donors?**

**Finding 4: The NFM project successfully established collaborative mechanisms to ensure alignment with donor and stakeholder objectives. However, challenges in inter-agency data sharing, and limited inclusivity in decision-making reduced its potential to fully meet its participatory goals.**

In the first phase of the NFM project, the focus was on monitoring essential services under the ADB grant, and in subsequent phases, the project scaled up interventions based on the initial findings. This phased structure allowed for adaptability and the alignment of complementary services. The implementation of an Integrated Monitoring Framework<sup>52</sup>, ensured the progress tracking of interventions across sectors. This framework not only tracked effectiveness but ensured that various

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<sup>47</sup> Final Prodoc NFM, pp. 56-60

<sup>48</sup> The project's primary goal was to monitor and ensure the delivery of essential services in Afghanistan, focusing on food security, health, and education (Final Prodoc NFM, p. 47)

<sup>49</sup> The project aimed to achieve three key outputs: tracking service delivery, conducting socio-economic analyses, and sharing knowledge to support future programming. The monitoring mechanisms, impact assessments, and knowledge-sharing activities were closely aligned with these objectives (Draft-NFA 6-Month Update, p. 19)

<sup>50</sup> IRA-3 Report, p. 6

<sup>51</sup> Output 1: The establishment of a web-based M&E platform and regular results validation aligned with the objective of tracking service delivery .

Output 2: Conducting socio-economic analyses to assess the broader impact of the grant aligned with understanding the socio-economic context in Afghanistan .

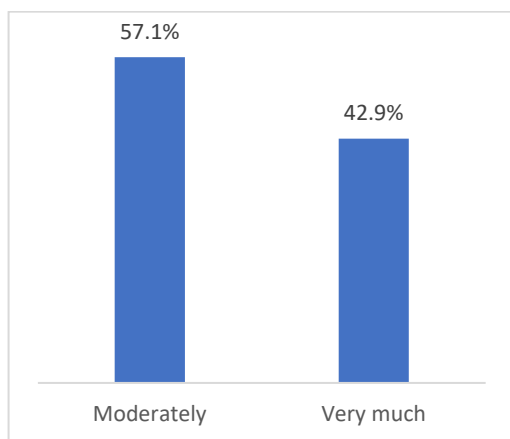
Output 3: Sharing findings and making recommendations for future programming aligned with the goal of supporting future assistance efforts . The high degree of alignment between the project's methods and its objectives reflects a well-structured design process aimed at achieving long-term development goals.

<sup>52</sup> Detailed in the NFM Project APR 2023 (p. 7) and NFM Project QI Report 2024 (p. 7)

interventions were aligned with the overall project objectives. As noted in the NFM Project Q3 Report (p. 8), the project made extensive use of evidence-based decision making, adjusting monitoring approaches based on impact assessments, socio-economic analyses, and results validation processes. This approach allowed the project to adjust to evolving ground conditions while ensuring that complementary services were provided. The project's ability to adjust based on external challenges such as security concerns was also reflected in the IRA-3 Report (p. 12). The use of adaptive management further solidified the coherence and interdependence of services despite a fluid political and operational context. Although the NFM project was not directly providing services, it complemented other similar interventions by focusing on monitoring and coordination efforts<sup>53</sup>.

Lesson 2. Integrated and Aligned Monitoring Systems Enhance Efficiency: The presence of overlapping third-party monitoring systems for the NFM project led to redundancy and data fatigue among UN agencies (WFP, UNICEF and FAO). A unified and integrated monitoring framework across UN agencies would reduce duplication, optimize resources, and streamline data collection, making monitoring more impactful.

Additionally, the formation of the Inter-Agency Task Force (IATF) in 2022, which later evolved into the Program Steering Committee for Afghanistan (PSCA), was crucial for providing oversight and ensuring coordination between ADB, UN agencies, and donor partners such as the World Bank and European Union. These alliances allowed for strategic oversight, ensuring that the monitoring activities of the NFM project complemented service delivery efforts across health, education, and food security sectors<sup>54</sup>. Partnerships with nine international NGOs further expanded the project's monitoring reach, ensuring services across sectors were effectively monitored and reported. This strategic collaboration enabled the NFM project to provide robust monitoring and reporting on challenges such as food insecurity and health disparities, ensuring coordination between stakeholders and reinforcing accountability mechanisms. Further, coherence between UN agencies was a recurring theme in the interviews. It was noted that the creation of a shared review process through the inter-agency steering committee helped improve coordination between agencies and ensured that the project's monitoring and reporting activities were aligned with the goals of FAO, WFP, and UNICEF. This coherence was critical for ensuring that the NFM project's monitoring activities complemented rather than duplicated the work being done by individual UN agencies.



<sup>53</sup> Examples of complementarities include, UNDP's Strengthening Monitoring Systems Initiative, which enhanced service monitoring in health and education sectors, WHO's Health Data Enhancement Program, which focused on improving health data collection and analysis for evidence-based decision-making.

<sup>54</sup> According to the Draft-NFA 6-Month Update (p. 4-5) and the Economic Prospects Report (p. 53), the collaboration with local stakeholders, which engaged local communities and NGOs, such as CARE International, also reinforced service complementarities by leveraging sectoral expertise.

Fig 4. Percentage distribution of respondents based on their perception about the extent NFM project was complementary to other similar interventions by UNDP or other international agencies

**EQ 5. To what extent were relevant stakeholders involved in the project’s design and implementation?**

**Finding 5: Interviews suggest that all the stakeholders were not involved in the project’s design stage but they were involved in the implementation stage. This resulted in the implementation getting affected to an extent.**

In interviews with representatives of UN organizations, it was pointed out that during the design of the NFM project they were not involved. They were not informed that UNDP would monitor the service delivery. During the interview with representative of an UN agency this was explained saying: *“When the project was actually getting formulated, we were not really fully in the picture of UNDP and ADB discussions and formulations”*. In addition, during another interview, one UNDP employee confirmed that during design phase there was communication gaps between ADB/UNDP and UN agencies which was explained saying: *“One of the key challenges and problem was that “this” monitoring aspect was not well coordinated with the UN agencies when the agreement was signed in Tajikistan”*.

Further, there were challenges to maintaining coherence at the field level. The respondents pointed out that some UN organization were unable to share their beneficiary data due to their data protection rules and procedures. In this situation UNDP negotiated an innovative solution with the UN agencies to ensure results validation and impact assessment. This included an agreement with UN organizations to share their own monitoring data instead of beneficiary data which provided an indication of the beneficiaries that they were reaching. Similarly, it was mentioned that the lack of collaboration between agencies at the field level created inconsistencies in how services were monitored and reported.

Despite these challenges, the NFM project’s thematic studies and results validation reports were well-aligned with ADB’s priorities, particularly its goals of ensuring transparency and accountability in project monitoring activities. This alignment ensured that the project’s outputs were coherent with donor expectations and contributed to future programming decisions, including informing the development of pipeline initiatives.

Lesson 3. Early and Inclusive Stakeholder Engagement is Critical: The lack of clarity and early involvement of key stakeholders during the design phase of the NFM project created confusion and resistance. Including all relevant UN agencies and partners in the conceptualization and design stages fosters ownership, reduces delays, and aligns expectations.

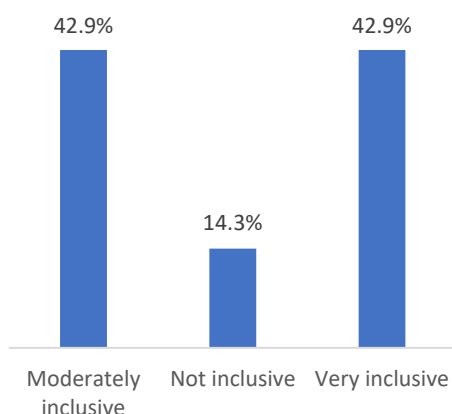


Fig 5. Percentage distribution of respondents based upon their perception about inclusivity of the NFM project design and implementation

### 5.3. EFFECTIVENESS

**EQ 6. To what extent did the project achieve its intended objectives and contribute to the project's strategic vision?**

**Finding 6. Analysis of data collected from interviews show that the NFM project was effective in fulfilling its objectives, particularly in the areas of monitoring, reporting, and thematic studies. It was noted that key deliverables, such as results validation and thematic studies, were successfully completed, providing ADB with critical data and insights for future programming in Afghanistan. These achievements demonstrate that the NFM project was able to meet its fundamental goals of providing oversight and accountability for donor-funded projects and contributed to the project's strategic vision in a complex and politically unstable environment<sup>55</sup>.**

The NFM project demonstrated resilience and adaptability in navigating Afghanistan's complex political, economic, and cultural landscape, leveraging local partnerships and innovative strategies to sustain service delivery and monitoring efforts and achieve its intended objectives. Although detailed quarter-wise breakdowns are limited<sup>56,57</sup>, key milestones can be identified throughout the project's timeline. In 2022, the project focused on establishing coordination mechanisms between UN agencies. Initial challenges in inter-agency collaboration were addressed by Q4, 2022, setting a strong foundation for future achievements<sup>58</sup>. By Q2, 2023, the web-based monitoring system was operational, allowing for real-time tracking of project outputs<sup>59</sup>. By the end of 2024, the project had completed Results Validation Wave 3 and key impact assessments, confirming the substantial progress made in food security, healthcare, and education<sup>60</sup>.

<sup>55</sup> The NFM project had three outputs – 1. The delivery of essential public services through ADB Grant Programme is monitored through a robust monitoring system; 2) Socio-economic analysis in the areas of health, education, nutrition and impact assessment of ADB Grant Programme in Afghanistan is conducted in an effective and efficient manner; and 3) Effective communication and a well-informed pipeline for the next stage of ADB assistance supported. Findings from secondary review of literature and primary key informant interviews show that as the NFM project comes to closure in December 2024, it has already completed three waves of results validation of the project (addressing Output 1), several sector assessment reports, and three rounds of impact assessment (addressing Output 2) and completing two energy sector assessment reports (Output 3) This indicates that at the end stage of the NFM projects it was able to complete its set outputs and objectives.

<sup>56</sup> The progress report available for review were Annual Progress Report, 2023, Half-yearly Progress Report, 1 January to 30 June, 2024, Quarterly Progress Reports, 2024 (Q1, Q2), Quarterly Progress Report, 2023 (Q3). No reports were available for 2022. Detailed quarterly progress reports were also not available for all quarters of 2023.

<sup>58</sup> NFM Project Board Meeting Minutes, p. 5

<sup>59</sup> NFM Project Quarter 2 Report, p. 8

<sup>60</sup> IRA-3 Report, p. 10

The NFM project successfully employed adaptive strategies and cultivated strong partnerships with local NGOs, community-based organizations, and UN agencies to overcome the significant challenges posed by Afghanistan's evolving political, economic, and cultural landscape. While these approaches ensured continuity in monitoring and service delivery, persistent challenges—such as restrictive gender norms, economic instability, and political constraints—affected and tested the project's capacity to achieve its objectives and goal.

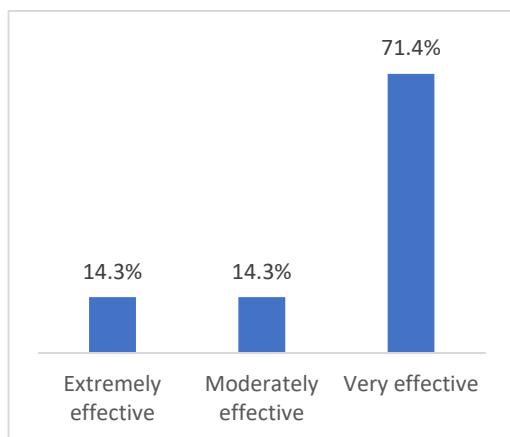


Fig 6. Percentage distribution of respondents based on their perception about the effectiveness of the NFM project in achieving its intended objectives

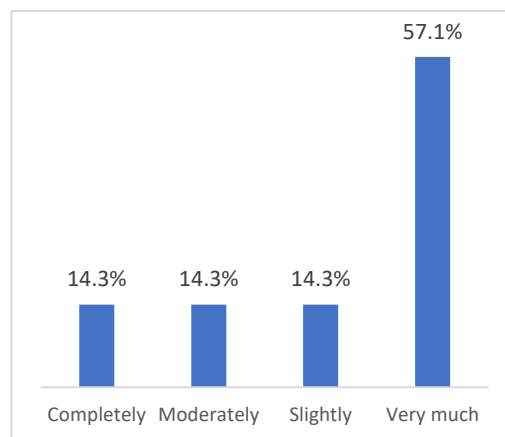


Fig 7. Percentage distribution of respondents based on their perception about effective usage of NFM findings in NFA

### Progress towards Results

The NFM project has made notable progress toward achieving its goals under the TCPS framework, particularly in monitoring essential public services and contributing to evidence-based policy analysis. While progress is ongoing, the achievements highlight the project's commitment to addressing Afghanistan's critical socio-economic needs, with a focus on marginalized populations.

### Alignment with TCPS Outcome I: Sustained Essential Services

Although the NFM project does not directly contribute to any outcome-level indicators under TCPS Outcome I, its outputs provide foundational support for ensuring equitable access to essential services. The project's robust monitoring systems have strengthened oversight and accountability, critical for sustaining service delivery standards.

### Progress under TCPS Output 2.4: Evidence-Based Policy Analysis

The NFM project developed a gender-based study as a knowledge product, offering valuable policy insights to UNDP program implementation partners. However, while the study has been produced, it remains unpublished, indicating progress toward fulfilling this output is ongoing. Gender disaggregation within the knowledge product underscores the project's commitment to inclusivity and its focus on addressing the unique challenges faced by marginalized groups, including women and girls.

### Progress Toward Project Outputs

The project achieved significant milestones in delivering its outputs:

#### Output I: Monitoring Essential Public Services

Indicator I.1: The integrated monitoring framework has been fully functional since the baseline stage, enabling the project to streamline monitoring activities effectively. This functionality has been sustained through Q4 2024, demonstrating consistency and reliability in monitoring systems.

Indicator 1.2: The third wave of results validation reports for health, education, and food security was successfully developed and finalized by the ADB. This accomplishment ensures that data-driven insights support decision-making and program adjustments.

Indicator 1.3: The Round 3 technical report assessing the immediate impacts of interventions in health, education, and food security was finalized and approved by the ADB. This milestone provides critical insights into the immediate outcomes of interventions, ensuring accountability and informed policy adjustments.

### Challenges and Opportunities

While the project achieved key deliverables, challenges remain, including the delayed publication of knowledge products. These delays limit the immediate utility of insights for program partners and policymakers. However, the functionality of the unified M&E framework and the finalization of technical reports signify a strong foundation for achieving future outputs. The gender-based study reflects the project’s commitment to inclusivity and offers a valuable resource for addressing systemic inequities in Afghanistan’s fragile socio-economic environment.

Therefore, the NFM project’s progress reflects its robust systems, collaborative efforts, and focus on evidence-based policy-making. By addressing gaps in essential service monitoring and emphasizing inclusivity through gender-based insights, the project continues to align with Afghanistan's broader development goals. However, ensuring timely publication of knowledge products and expanding the scope of stakeholder engagement will be critical to maximizing its impact and sustainability. The overall status of the project remains ongoing, with a promising trajectory for achieving its objectives in the near term.

**TCPS Outcome 1:** *By the end of 2025, more people in Afghanistan, particularly the most marginalized, can equitably access essential services that meet minimum quality standards. [Sustained Essential Services]*

*Summary of achievement based on CP Outcome targets.*

CP Outcome Indicator	CPD Target (2024)	Achieved Value to date (2024)	Summary achievement (provide gender disaggregation)	Status [Delayed, Ongoing, Completed]
				<i>There is no outcome level indicator to which NFM project contributes, however output level indicator is listed below</i>
<b>Overall status</b>				<b>Ongoing</b>

**TCPS Output 2.4 Timely and evidence-based policy analysis and options available to Programme implementation partners**

CP Output Indicator (with codes)	Achieved Value to date (2024)	Summary achievement to date (provide gender disaggregation)	Status [Ongoing, Delayed, Completed]



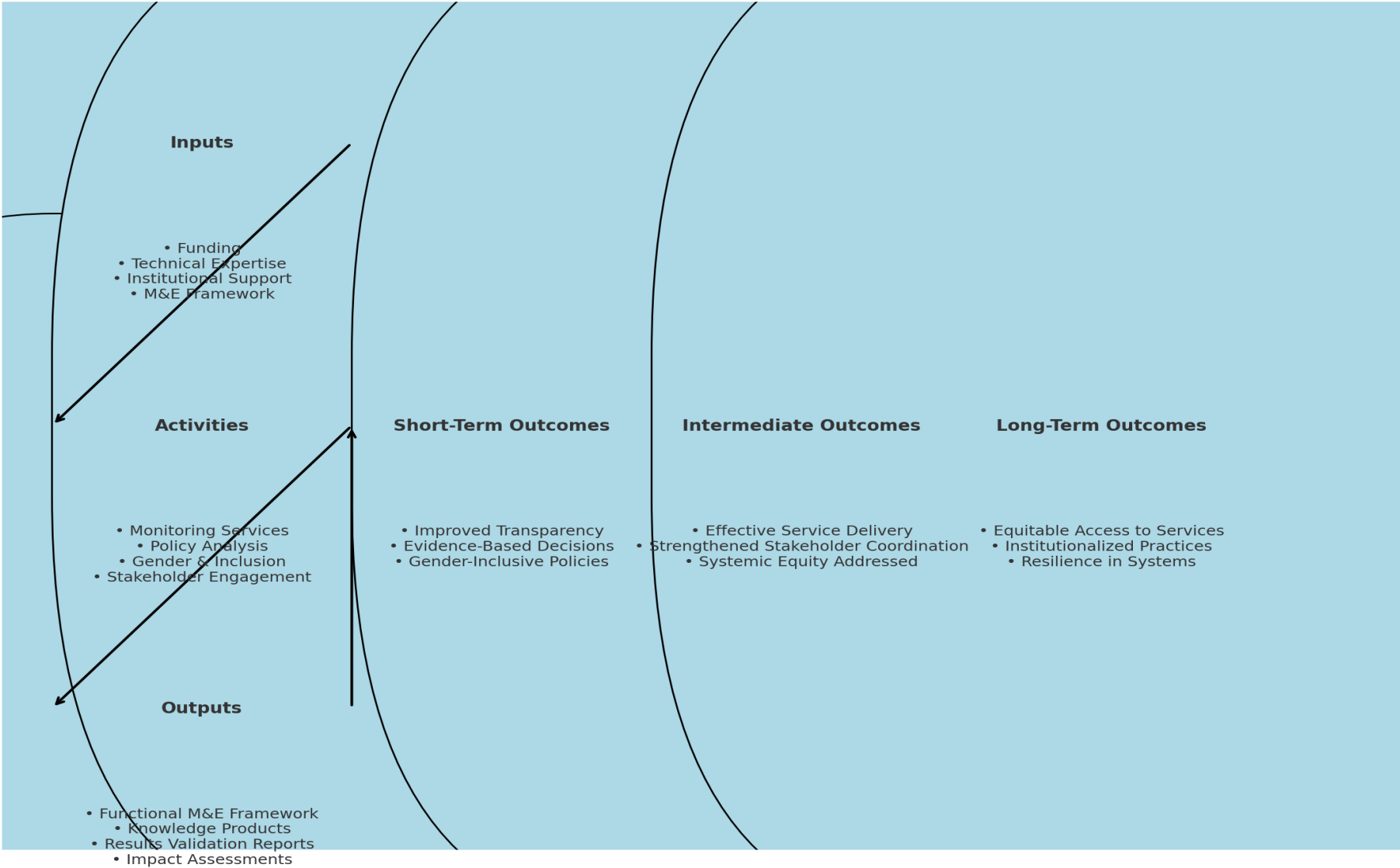
2.4.1 Number of knowledge products with policy analysis and insights published with UNDP support.	1	By Q4 2024, the NFM Project developed 1 knowledge product of gender-based study.	The knowledge product is produced but not published.
<b>Overall status</b>			<b>Ongoing</b>

## Progress towards Project Outputs

**PROJECT OUTPUT 1:** The delivery of essential public services through ADB Grant Programme is monitored through a robust monitoring system

Indicator (As per Pro Doc)	Baseline (As per AWP)	Annual Targets (As per AWP)	Q4 Planned	Q4 Actual	Status
<i>Indicator 1.1: Integrated monitoring framework is functional</i>	<i>1.1.1. Fully functional</i>	<i>1.1.1. Fully functional</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>unified M&amp;E framework is fully functional</i>
<i>Indicator 1.2: Number of results validation of health, education and food security reports produced.</i>	<i>1.2.0</i>	<i>1.2.1</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>The Results Validation Wave 3 report is developed and finalized by ADB.</i>
<i>Indicator 1.3: Number of impact (immediate results) assessment of health, education and food security reports produced.</i>	<i>1.3.0</i>	<i>1.3.1</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>The Round 3 technical report of Impact (Immediate Results) Assessment report has been finalized and approved by ADB.</i>

# Enhanced Logic Model for NFM Project



## Effectiveness of the monitoring system of the intervention and its overall quality

Under Output 1 of the NFM Project, the UNDP implemented a comprehensive and integrated monitoring system to validate project results and ensure accountability. A key component of this effort was the development and operationalization of a unified web-based monitoring framework designed to track progress against specific outcomes, outputs, indicators, and annual targets. This system enabled real-time monitoring and provided disaggregated data by service type, gender, and geographical location, facilitating targeted and inclusive project management.

The system was supported by robust field monitoring activities, including three waves of Results Validation (RV) to verify the accuracy of reported outcomes. During Q2 2024, the second wave RV report was finalized, offering insights into the project's mid-term achievements and areas for improvement. The third wave RV, conducted from February to May 2024, further reinforced the project's commitment to systematic validation and continuous learning.

The evaluation of the web-based monitoring framework revealed that it was live, functional, and had effectively supported the tracking of project progress. The system not only streamlined data collection and reporting but also enhanced transparency and informed decision-making. By integrating diverse datasets into a unified platform, it enabled stakeholders to monitor the delivery of services comprehensively and ensure alignment with the project's objectives.

This integrated approach exemplifies best practices in project monitoring by leveraging technology to enhance efficiency and inclusivity. The framework's functionality underscores its potential as a replicable model for similar projects, demonstrating how technology-driven solutions can address the complexities of monitoring large-scale, multi-faceted initiatives in fragile and conflict-affected settings. Future projects can build on this success by further refining data collection methodologies and expanding system functionalities to support broader development goals.

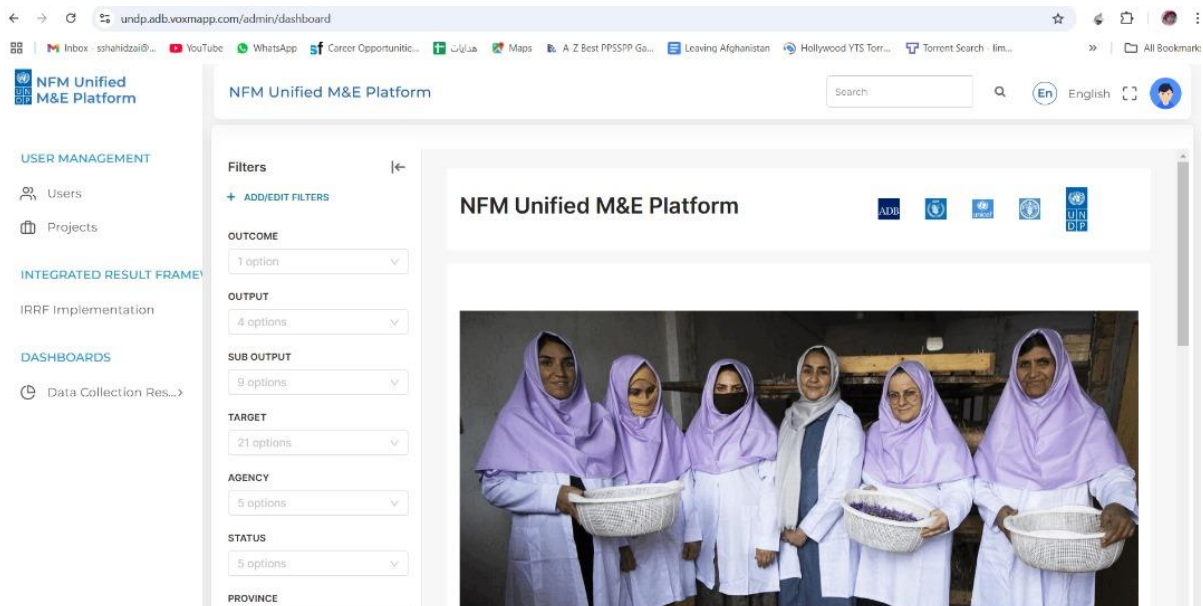


Image 1. Screen capture of the NFM Unified M&E platform

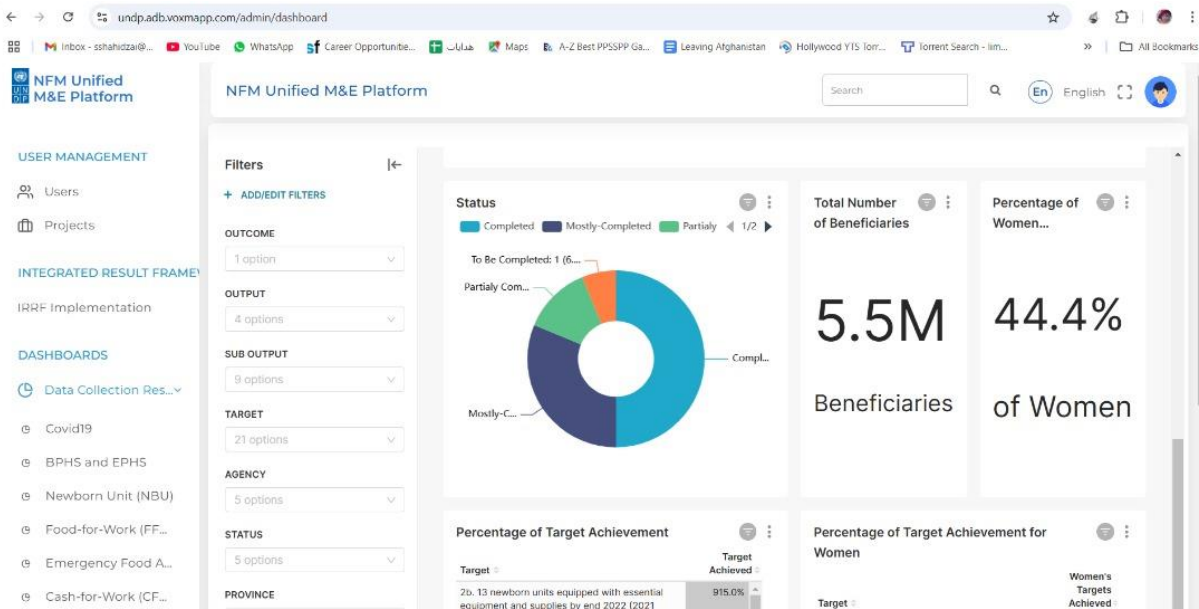


Image 2. Screen capture of the monitoring system dashboard

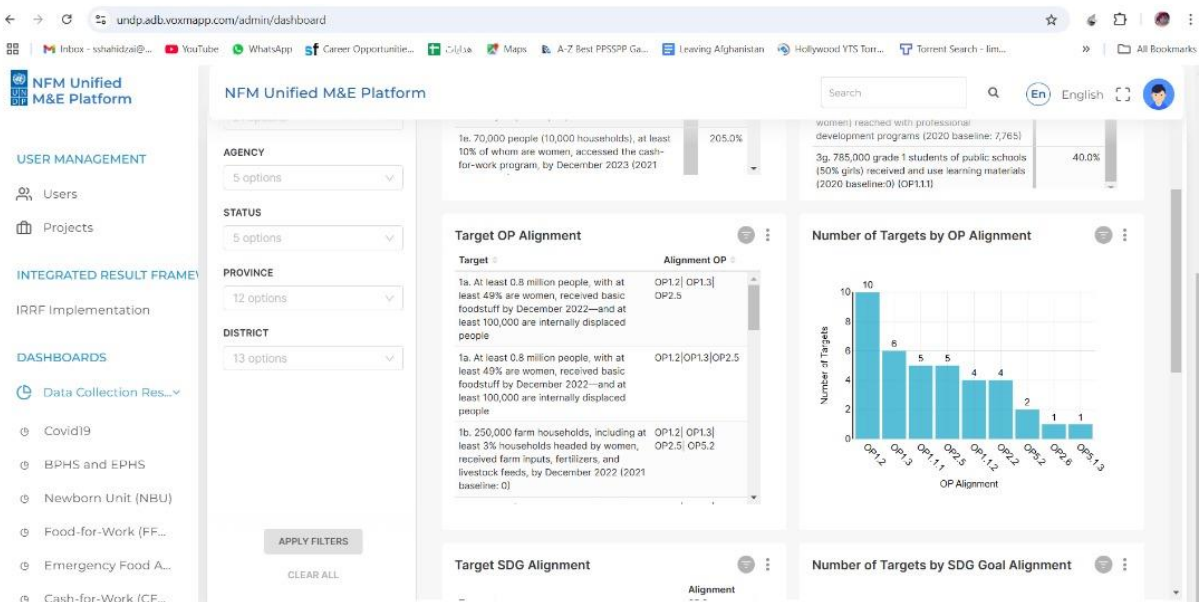


Image 3. Screen capture of monitoring system dashboard

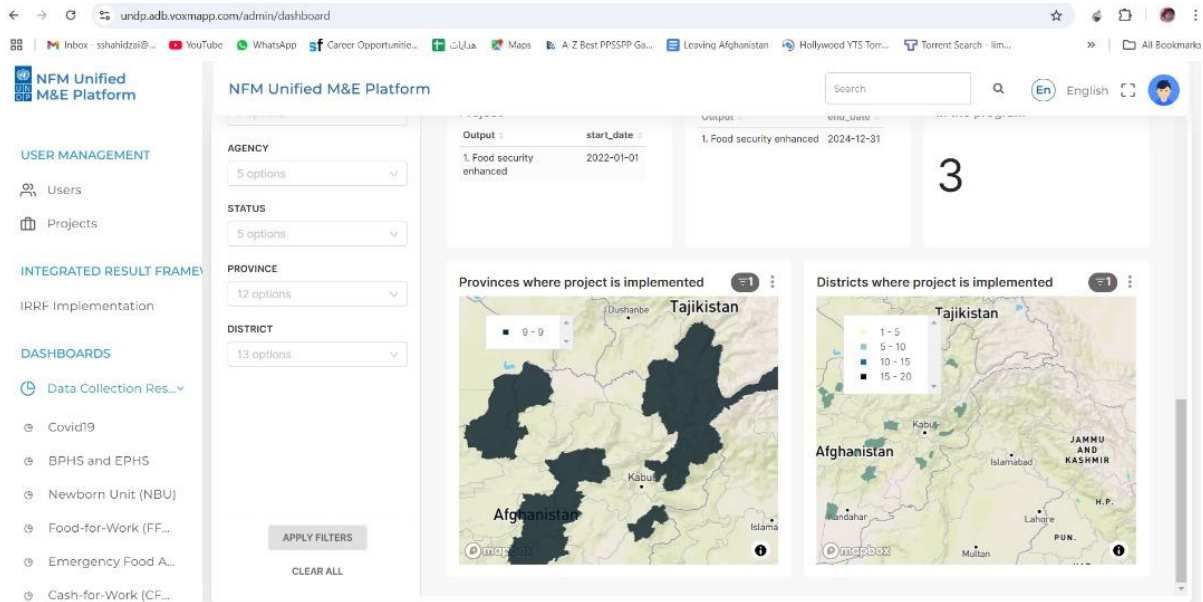


Image 4. Screen capture of monitoring system dashboard

**EQ 7. What are the key internal and external factors (success & failure factors) that have contributed, affected, or impeded the achievements, and how UNDP and the partners manage these?**

**Finding 7. Partnerships were key to the success of the NFM project. Also, the project's effectiveness in terms of monitoring and assessment was widely acknowledged as third-party monitoring (TPM) ensured that interventions reached remote and conflict-affected areas in Afghanistan was acknowledged. The production of knowledge products, such as assessments on energy, food security, and women's economic empowerment, further contributed to the project's success in delivering valuable insights to donors and stakeholders<sup>61</sup>. However, while obtaining permissions from DFA delayed the project activities, restrictions on women's participation in public life and NGOs complicated the project's ability to capture voices of women comprehensively.**

Partnerships were key to the success of the NFM project. Collaboration with local NGOs and community-based organizations played a critical role in navigating logistical challenges and ensuring that the project remained culturally sensitive throughout its implementation<sup>62</sup>. The collaboration with UN agencies (WFP, FAO, UNICEF, and UNDP) ensured a coordinated delivery of services, leveraging the strengths and expertise of each organization in food security, education, and healthcare. These partnerships not only facilitated efficient service delivery but also increased the sustainability of the project's interventions.

<sup>61</sup> The NFM project exclusively utilized resources for monitoring, assessment, and pipeline development activities under the NFA framework. The \$405 million project budget was allocated across four primary areas: food security (\$200 million), healthcare (\$100 million), education (\$100 million), and monitoring/capacity building (\$5 million)<sup>61</sup>. The NFM project relied on local partnerships and data collection tools to optimize resource utilization, ensuring effective monitoring and evaluation activities in Afghanistan's challenging operating environment<sup>61</sup>.

<sup>62</sup> According to the Clean Final JLB-Clean Results Validation Wave 3 Report (p. 40), these partnerships allowed the project to operate effectively even in remote and difficult-to-reach areas.

The political landscape in Afghanistan under the de facto authorities (DFA), created several operational challenges for the project. The need to obtain authorizations from the DFA led to significant delays in data collection, particularly in the education sector<sup>63</sup>. The restrictions on women's participation in public life and NGOs further complicated the project's gender-sensitive programming, limiting the scope of interventions targeting female beneficiaries<sup>64</sup>. These challenges were particularly pronounced in conservative areas<sup>65</sup>, where cultural norms restricted the engagement of female beneficiaries. For example, efforts to employ female enumerators or implement gender-sensitive measures often faced significant cultural resistance in these regions. Despite these obstacles, the project adapted by engaging proactively with the De-facto Agency (DFA) and leveraging established local networks to ensure continuity in service delivery<sup>66</sup>. Additionally, gender-sensitive approaches were used in data collection to ensure inclusivity while respecting local norms. For example, female enumerators or male relatives were engaged to reach women in communities where restrictions on female participation existed<sup>67</sup>. By aligning interventions with local customs and traditions, the project was able to navigate the complex cultural landscape of Afghanistan, ensuring effective monitoring and accountability<sup>68</sup>.

Lesson 4. Local Context and Access Challenges Must Be Anticipated: Navigating the de facto authorities for data collection posed significant delays and increased the workload on UN agencies (for example, UNICEF had to negotiate access for data collection agencies not only under NFM but also for other funding agencies such as World Bank). A deep understanding of the local socio-political context and pre-established mechanisms for access facilitation are vital for successful implementation.

**EQ 8. In which areas do the NFM project have the greatest and fewest achievements? Why and what have been the supporting factors? How can the NFM or relevant projects build on or expand these achievements?**

**Finding 8. The important achievements of the project are setting up the integrated results framework (IRF), and developing knowledge products, in the form of various assessment reports. The supporting factors have been the UNDP team's ability to successfully negotiate and address coordination issues with UN organizations and effectively onboard high-quality experts, both individual and agencies, to conduct relevant and potent assessments. ADB has already started implementing NFA 1.5 based on the NFM projects achievements and there is significantly high possibility that ADB will continue NFA for a longer period of time in the form of NFA 2.0.**

The NFM project achieved several significant milestones across its core sectors. In food security, the NFM project found out that there was significant progress in enhancing food security, coping capacities, and financial stability across several provinces in Afghanistan. In healthcare, the project effectively monitored the progress of maternal and newborn care programs, as well as vaccination initiatives, which reached underserved populations<sup>69</sup>. In education, the NFM project validated the Community Based Education (CBE) Model of UNICEF under which Alternative Learning Centers (ALCs) were

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<sup>63</sup> As detailed in the NFM Project Board Meeting Minutes (p. 7)

<sup>64</sup> IRA-3 Report, p. 37

<sup>65</sup> For the purpose of this report, 'conservative areas' refers to regions where traditional and cultural norms strongly influence societal behavior, particularly in limiting women's participation in education, health access, and decision-making processes. These areas are characterized by resistance to social or gender-inclusive reforms.

<sup>66</sup> NFM Project APR 2023, p. 37

<sup>67</sup> Result Validation Wave 2 Report, p. 24

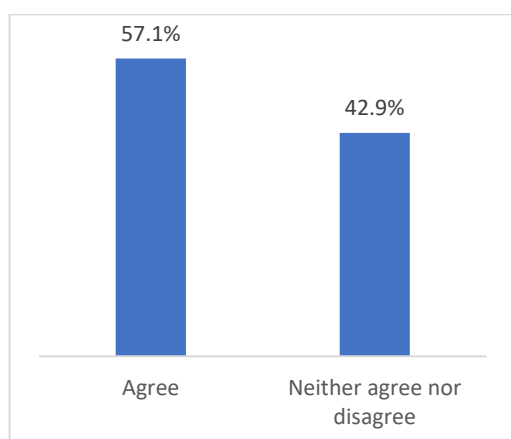
<sup>68</sup> IRA-2 Report, p. 42

<sup>69</sup> IRA-3 Report, p. 12

established and learning materials were distributed to over 264,000 children (60% of whom were girls), addressing gaps in traditional schooling, particularly in remote areas<sup>70</sup>.

The NFM project tracked all these results and shared it through its interactive dashboard. The project's effectiveness in terms of monitoring and assessment was widely acknowledged. In several interviews, the effectiveness of third-party monitoring (TPM) in ensuring that interventions reached remote and conflict-affected areas in Afghanistan was acknowledged. The TPM's role in providing independent data on the delivery of services by UN agencies, such as WFP and UNICEF, contributed to the effectiveness of the project's oversight mechanisms<sup>71</sup>. The production of knowledge products, such as assessments on energy, food security, and women's economic empowerment, further contributed to the project's success in delivering valuable insights to donors and stakeholders<sup>72</sup>.

Strong partnerships with UN agencies and local stakeholders were critical enablers for the project, ensuring coordinated and effective service delivery. The use of a web-based Monitoring and Evaluation Framework<sup>73</sup> allowed for real-time tracking of outputs, ensuring that the project could swiftly adapt to emerging challenges. Additionally, the project's flexibility in adapting to the dynamic political and social landscape of Afghanistan ensured that core activities continued despite external challenges. This adaptability was particularly important in navigating restrictions on women's participation and overcoming economic hurdles<sup>74</sup>.



*Fig 8. Percentage distribution of respondents based on their perception on how the project addressed needs of other UN agencies implementing NFA*

#### 5.4. EFFICIENCY

**EQ 9. To what extent was the project management structure, including the project board, as outlined in the project document efficient in generating the expected results?**

<sup>70</sup> Clean Final JLB-Clean Results Validation Wave 3 Report, p. 95

<sup>71</sup> The NFM project monitored and assessed the achievements of the NFA project through Results Validation and Impact Assessments, providing crucial feedback to guide its adaptive management approach. By regularly validating results and monitoring outcomes, the NFM project ensured that service delivery under the NFA framework was effectively assessed, gaps were identified, and actionable insights were provided for future programming. These activities allowed the NFA project to adjust its strategies and scale up successful interventions, particularly in education and healthcare<sup>71</sup>. By focusing on monitoring and evaluation, the NFM project ensured that project successes were fully leveraged and expanded as needed.

<sup>72</sup> The NFM project exclusively utilized resources for monitoring, assessment, and pipeline development activities under the NFA framework. The \$405 million project budget was allocated across four primary areas: food security (\$200 million), healthcare (\$100 million), education (\$100 million), and monitoring/capacity building (\$5 million)<sup>72</sup>. The NFM project relied on local partnerships and data collection tools to optimize resource utilization, ensuring effective monitoring and evaluation activities in Afghanistan's challenging operating environment<sup>72</sup>.

<sup>73</sup> As detailed in the NFM Project Quarter 2 Report (p. 8)

<sup>74</sup> IRA-2 Report, p. 14

**Finding 9. The project management structure was efficient in generating expected results, despite not all positions being filled, it was able to complete all the outputs under the project.**

The project team structure comprised a permanent team of technical specialists (national and international) and team of external, international experts hired under UNDP contract. The permanent team included a project manager, international coordinator specialist, national finance and administrative officer, national component officer, national information management officer and five national monitoring and evaluation officers (one each in Herat, Mazar, Kabul, Kandahar and Jalalabad). Analysis of data shows that out of the 12 positions budgeted under the NFM project, only 6 positions were filled<sup>75</sup>. Respondents shared that due to vacant positions of field officers monitoring of data quality during data collection by agencies contracted under NFM was affected. This finding was substantiated by quantitative findings. Quantitative data analysis shows that most (85.8%, n=6) respondents gave a score of less than 10 (extremely efficient) to the management team structure, indicating that while the management structure was efficient, there was room for improvement. However, there is no secondary data evidence on how lack of human resource in the project management structure affected the project implementation. In fact, in some of the interviews it was shared that positions were not filled as there was no requirement of these positions given the change in implementation plan of NFM<sup>76</sup>. Findings from the analysis of interviews shows that the project management structure was efficient in completing the activities of the project within the budget and the timeline. Despite initial loss of time, due to coordination issues, and extension of timeline, the project did not require a second extension and all the outputs were achieved within the project timeline. This is explained in one of the interviews with a UNDP staff who explained about the efficient project team structure saying: *“Since the funding amount for this project is highly limited, we had to keep the country office and the project team small but we were so lucky to have a really qualified and experienced project manager for this project, who was able to manage the project”*.

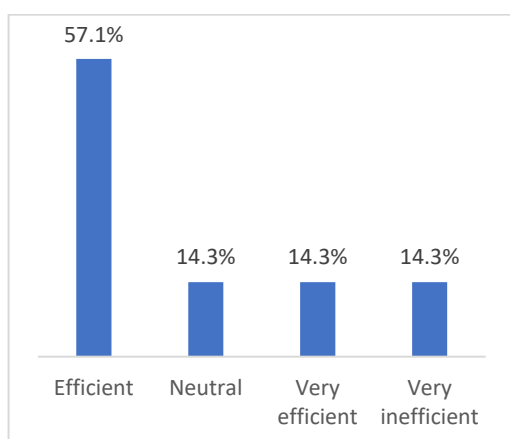


Fig 9. Percentage distribution of respondents based on their perception about the NFM project about efficient resource use

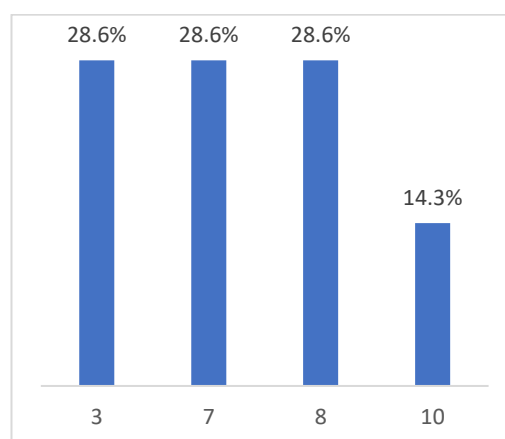


Fig 10. Percentage distribution of respondents based on their perception about the project management structure

<sup>75</sup> Copy of NFM project AWP package 2024\_Final Draft

<sup>76</sup> It was noted during interviews that the sample for results validation was limited to those locations which were not covered by existing monitoring system of UN agencies. The UN agencies felt that results validation should utilize their existing data and should collect data only from those locations where no data was available. This reduced the scope of work under the project. Also, use of remote data quality monitoring processes impacted staff positions and the outputs were achieved without the need to fill those vacant positions. Further, any additional project requirements were addressed through UNDP existing regional offices and staff (not funded under ADB programme).



**EQ 10. To what extent have the project implementation strategy and execution been efficient and cost-effective?**

**Finding 10. The NFM project demonstrated effective utilization of resources and innovative financial management, achieving its primary goals despite challenges such as understaffing<sup>77</sup>, delay in data sharing by UN organizations, delayed approvals, and logistical constraints.**

UNDP leveraged upon a web-based unified monitoring platform which significantly enhanced data collection, verification, and analysis, enabling informed decision-making and progress tracking against SDG targets and operational priorities. One of the critical findings is the project's adaptive allocation of funds to emerging priorities, such as transitioning to digital data collection, exemplifies responsive financial management. The streamlined processes in later phases and the integration of the monitoring platform into UNDP's system reflect a promising foundation for future programming and investments by ADB. Further, the project's financial management was responsive to changes through the flexible allocation of funds, allowing the project to adjust to emerging priorities and challenges. For instance, funds were reallocated when the project adopted digital data collection methods, covering additional costs for software and training<sup>78</sup>. While these reallocation efforts improved financial responsiveness, more detailed examples of reallocation based on specific ground conditions could have been provided<sup>79</sup>.

**EQ 11. To what extent has there been an economical use of financial and human resources? Have resources (funds, human resources, time, expertise, etc.) been allocated strategically to achieve outcomes?**

**Finding 11. The financial and human resources were economically used as with the deployed team and within the budget all the outputs were achieved. Also, the resources were allocated strategically to achieve the project outputs. This can be substantiated by the fact that despite a small team use of technology led to effective monitoring of the data quality and completion of the results validation and impact assessments successfully. Additionally, despite increase in the timeline, the outputs were achieved without an increase in the project budget.**

As far as financial allocations are concerned, the budget was distributed across the following areas: 1. Human resource (staff salaries); 2. Contractual service company cost; 3. International consultant fees; 4. General management cost; 5. Professional Services cost; 6. Cost for communication & audio-visual equipment; 7. Travel; and 8. Miscellaneous expenses. In 2024, the percentage of project management cost to the total annual budget was 33%. During the interviews it was mentioned by the respondents that the project management cost was on the higher side given that finding qualified, skilled and experienced people was difficult post-2021 and a higher salary had to be paid to recruit and retain skilled and experienced human resource. Additionally, due to extension of the project period, the administrative cost was on the higher side.

The NFM project's total budget amounted to \$5 million, which was allocated to strengthen monitoring, evaluation, and accountability mechanisms across several key sectors. It is distinct from the NFA project, which operates on a broader budget and scope<sup>80</sup>. Financial analysis shows that at the time of evaluation, the percentage of total expenditure to total ADB allocation for NFM was 87%. 49% of the expenditure was made for achieving Output 1 and 40% of the expenditure was made on achieving Output 3. Only 12% of the total expenditure was made on achieving Output 2.

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<sup>77</sup> Efficiency was impacted by unfilled positions, which hampered data quality monitoring, and higher management costs driven by post-2021 market conditions for skilled personnel. - KII

<sup>78</sup> IRA-3 Report, p. 18

<sup>79</sup> Report and Recommendation of ADB President, p. 13

<sup>80</sup> Report and Recommendation of ADB President, p. 13

Output ID and Description	Accumulated Expenses: Feb 2022 - 9 Dec 2024
<b>Output 1 (Quantum Output # 00130337):</b> The delivery of essential public services through ADB Grant Programme is monitored through a robust monitoring system.	2124542.86
<b>Output 2 (Quantum Output # 00130338):</b> Socio -economic analysis in the areas of health, education and nutrition and impact assessment of ADB Grant Programme in Afghanistan is conducted in an effective, and efficient manner.	504177.44
<b>Output 3 (Quantum # 00130339):</b> Effective communication and a well – informed pipeline for the next stage of ADB assistance supported.	1737274.09

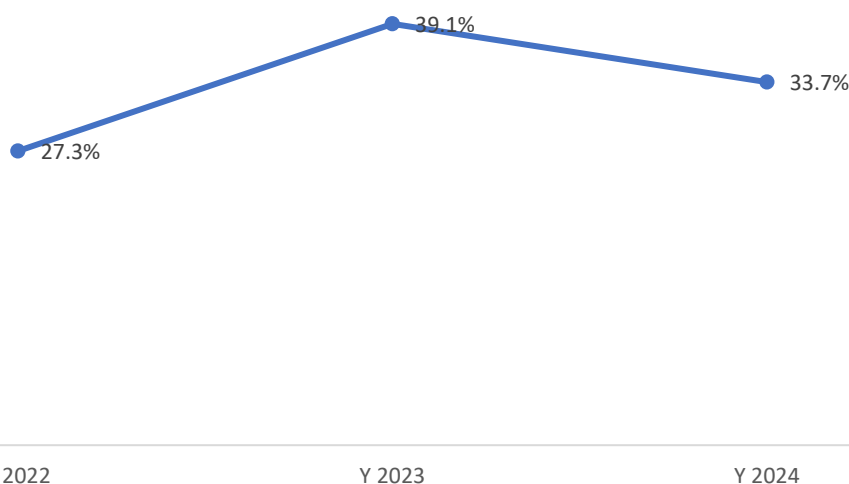
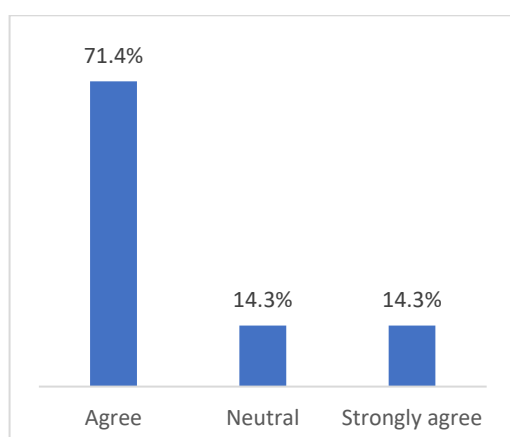


Fig 11. Trend in NFM spending (Y 2022-24)

The budget allocations across the different components were efficient, the expenditure rate was slow at the beginning of the project lifetime due to time spent on coordination with UN agencies. However, in the second year there was a significant increase in the project expenditure which continued in the third year as well.

Finally, the following quote from one of the respondents aptly sums up this section on efficiency of the NFM project - “The NFM project was Value for Money for ADB as it was able to piggy back on established systems of UNDP. In just 5 million US dollars ADB was able to undertake several sectoral assessments as well as was able to keep a close eye on NFA project spending. For ADB, it would have taken much longer to do this. The work done will inform future programming and future investments of ADB so it was like shooting two birds with the same arrow”. – KII, Respondent.



*Fig 12. Percentage distribution of respondents based on their perception about the project being value for money*

**EQ 12. To what extent have the M&E systems utilized by the project enabled effective and efficient project management?**

**Finding 12. In order to efficiently and effectively monitor project progress against selected outcomes, outputs, indicators, and annual target disaggregated by type of services, gender, and geographical location, the project developed a unified web – based M&E platform. This platform effectively tracked project’s progress.**

The integrated monitoring platform was designed to support collection, verification and analysis of data collected by field enumerators across the country in the areas of health, education, and nutrition. The unified monitoring platform adopted into a web – based system with appropriate monitoring, evaluation, dashboard, and reporting tools to effectively incorporate the first-hand data from the field level and provide clear picture of project progress against each indicator. All the data collected from field level was archived into the system creating dashboards to show progress against the SDG targets and operational priorities of ADB. The unified system covered all project activities including IRRF implementation, result assessment (multiple waves), impact/immediate result assessment (multiple waves), socio economic analysis of health, education and nutrition, and thematic studies undertaken by the project. Since November 2023, this platform has been migrated in to the UNDP's server and is fully accessible<sup>81</sup>.

Efficiency in terms of timely delivery was a mixed aspect of the project. Interviews pointed out that the initial stages of the results validation process (RV wave 1) were delayed due to slow approval processes and disagreements between UN agencies. This affected the project’s ability to deliver outputs in a timely manner. However, by RV wave 2, several of these initial challenges had been mitigated. Enhanced coordination mechanisms and clearer communication protocols reduced delays in data sharing, enabling the completion of outputs (such as specific outputs, e.g., "sectoral monitoring reports"). By RV wave 3, processes were further streamlined, and most outputs were delivered on schedule. That said, minor delays persisted (specific outputs, e.g., "education sector data validation"), primarily due to logistical constraints in remote areas. While these improvements demonstrate progress, they also highlight the need for proactive planning to address such challenges more effectively in the future. Despite challenges, such as limited access to remote areas due to security concerns, delays in stakeholder coordination<sup>82</sup>, and data management limitations<sup>83</sup> stemming from inadequate tools and technical capacity, the money and resources spent on the project led to the achievement of its primary goals.

**AEQ 1. What systems and tools were developed and implemented for the Social and Environmental Safeguarding?**

**Finding AE1: UNDP successfully implemented its Social Environmental Screening Procedures (SESP) and Social and Environmental Standards (SES) across all ADB-funded project activities in Afghanistan, including NFM project, ensuring compliance with sustainability principles, identifying no significant environmental or social risks, and maintaining a "low" overall risk level. Through rigorous monitoring, adherence to the Do**

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<sup>81</sup> NFM Annual Progress Report, 2023

<sup>82</sup> While informal communication among UN agencies facilitated collaboration, it was not always sufficient to ensure seamless operations. Delays in decision-making and information dissemination often arose due to overlapping roles and inconsistent reporting protocols. The use of a comprehensive software solution for monitoring field services helped address some of these challenges. This technology improved the efficiency of data collection and analysis, enabling the project to manage its geographically dispersed interventions. However, formalized coordination processes could have further enhanced operational efficiency.

<sup>83</sup> The NFM project faced challenges in handling large datasets due to a lack of advanced data processing tools and limited technical capacity within the team.

**No Harm (DNH) and Leave No One Behind (LNOB) principles, and the establishment of robust grievance redress mechanisms, UNDP integrated social and environmental safeguards into all project phases, achieving enhanced sustainability and stakeholder engagement.**

Between January and June 2023, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) successfully implemented its Social Environmental Screening Procedures (SESP) and safeguard measures across all project activities, including NFM, funded by the Asian Development Bank (ADB) in Afghanistan. This adherence to UNDP standards ensured that none of the activities posed any environmental or social risks. Through extensive screenings and regular monitoring, no environmental or social risks were identified, with the overall risk level for the project classified as “low.” To mitigate potential social and environmental impacts, the NFM Project formally adopted the SESP under UNDP guidance. The Social and Environmental Standards (SES) document, endorsed by UNDP’s Senior Deputy Resident Representative for Programme (SDRR-P), underscores UNDP’s commitment to embedding social and environmental sustainability within its programmes. The SES objectives aim to enhance programme quality through principled approaches, maximize social and environmental benefits, and mitigate adverse impacts on people and the environment. They also emphasize capacity building among partners and stakeholders for effective risk management while ensuring inclusive stakeholder engagement through mechanisms like the Grievance Redress Mechanism (GRM).

The SES is underpinned by a robust Accountability Mechanism with two primary functions:

1. A Stakeholder Response Mechanism (SRM) to address project-related grievances from individuals, communities, and other affected groups.
2. A Compliance Review Process to ensure adherence to UNDP’s social and environmental policies.

Adherence to the principles of Do No Harm (DNH), respect for human rights, Conflict Sensitivity (CS), and Leave No One Behind (LNOB) has been integrated at both national and sub-national levels. These principles guide project design to prevent any actions that may lead to radicalization, conflict escalation, or jeopardize beneficiary safety. Ensuring physical safety and avoiding long-term adverse impacts remain at the forefront of all project activities.

The SESP framework has been recognized as a crucial tool for identifying social and environmental opportunities and risks, helping determine appropriate mitigation measures. A data-sharing agreement with AWAAZ, signed on September 29, 2022, further strengthened grievance redress mechanisms by establishing UN-to-UN agreements that enhance awareness and provide structured channels for grievance collection across UNDP-led projects, including the NFM project. The SESP is continuously monitored and applied to all current and future project activities. Extensive mainstreaming of UNDP’s Social and Environmental Standards (SES) is achieved through capacity-building initiatives, including training outsourced firms and stakeholders on SESP adherence. This comprehensive integration ensures that project activities align with the SES framework at all stages of the programme cycle. Project activities, largely analytical in nature, have integrated SESP elements into socioeconomic assessments, thematic studies, and evaluations. Regular monitoring and adherence to SESP guidelines confirm that no major risks—whether moderate, substantial, or high—were identified during project implementation. The overall risk level remains consistently low, affirming the effectiveness of the framework in mitigating potential impacts and fostering sustainable development outcomes. By maintaining these rigorous safeguards, UNDP has ensured that its projects deliver substantial social and environmental benefits while minimizing any potential risks, thereby upholding its commitment to sustainable development in Afghanistan.

## 5.5. IMPACT

**EQ 13. To what extent has the project generated or is expected to generate significant positive or negative, intended, or unintended, higher-level effects?**

**Finding 13. The NFM project achieved significant impacts in monitoring and assessment, contributing to improvements in service delivery under the NFA framework<sup>84</sup>. The robust monitoring under the NFM project ensured quality service delivery, evidence of which is the high level of beneficiary satisfaction document in the IRA. Also, the results validation and impact surveys validated the Community Based Education (CBE) model of UNICEF. Further, SDG monitoring provided evidence to confirm that the NFM project supported SDGs, including those related to poverty reduction (SDG 1), quality education (SDG 4), and gender equality (SDG 5).**

Impact assessment relied on qualitative and quantitative evidence, including KIIs, FGDs, monitoring reports, and service delivery validation exercises. Evidence from the 1st Immediate Results Assessment (IRA) report indicates high levels of beneficiary satisfaction, particularly in the education sector, where access to education was improved, learning environments were enhanced, and student performance showed positive trends<sup>85</sup>. Further, beneficiary feedback indicated improved food quality and increased quantities of food availability, contributing to socioeconomic well-being<sup>86</sup>. Moreover, the project supported the Agriculture and Livelihoods Strategic Thematic Working Group (AL-STWG) through placement of an international consultant in the UN Resident Coordinator Office for coordination of AL-STWG activities<sup>87</sup>. Another important contribution of the project was report on the country's economic prospects and possible paths toward future sustainable growth which included data from economic modelling and simulation<sup>88</sup>. However, despite these successes, the absence of a clear, overarching impact summary in the reports leaves room for interpretation regarding the full realization of long-term impacts. Most sources focus on short-term outcomes rather than sustained, long-term effects, suggesting that further research or follow-up assessments would be needed to confirm the long-term impact.

Several interviews highlighted the positive impact of the NFM project on service delivery monitoring and evaluation in Afghanistan. Respondents shared that the energy sector assessment, for example, provided actionable insights that would guide future donor investments in the energy sector. Similarly, the positive impact of the third-party monitoring mechanism, which ensured that UN agencies were held accountable for delivering services to remote and conflict-affected areas, was emphasized. By providing independent monitoring data, the NFM project played a crucial role in improving the quality and reach of services delivered by UN agencies such as FAO, WFP, and UNICEF. In addition, 85.7% (n=6) of respondents confirmed that the NFM project contributed significantly to the NFA project, while 71.4% (n=5) of respondents felt that the NFM project was highly successful in achieving its intended impact.

One of the key challenges reported during the interviews was the lack of feedback from the UN agencies on the results validation and impact assessment findings shared with them. In fact, several respondents shared that they had no idea how the UN agencies utilized the findings. There is no documentary proof as well with them of how those findings were used to bring a change in their programming. However, some positive changes were observed from the first results validation to the third results validation which can be attributed to the data shared by the agency conducting the results validation. Another missed opportunity is the lack of community participation in the results validation or the immediate assessments findings process.

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<sup>84</sup> The NFM project was not explicitly designed to directly address the operational needs of other UN agencies. Instead, its role was to generate monitoring outputs, such as socio-economic assessments and validation reports, which provided evidence-based recommendations to inform and enhance the service delivery activities implemented by other UN agencies under the broader NFA framework. These outputs were instrumental in identifying service delivery gaps and offering actionable insights that could support the planning and execution of programs by agencies such as WFP, FAO, and UNICEF.

<sup>85</sup> IRA Report Cleaned Version 6 March 2024, pp. 195-228

<sup>86</sup> Draft-NFA 6-Month Update, p. 18; NFM Project APR 2023, p.14

<sup>87</sup> NFM Quarterly Progress Report (Q3), 2023, p.15

<sup>88</sup> Half-yearly NFM progress report, 1 January to 30 June, 2024, p.17

During the interviews, it was shared that a community-based results validation mechanism (similar to the mechanism used by Integrity Watch) could have been implemented to ensure that community was more intimately involved in the monitoring and evaluation process, sharing data with UN agencies as well ensuring sustainability of the whole results validation process. However, such a mechanism was not planned or designed. The absence of this mechanism reflects a missed opportunity to make the monitoring and evaluation process more inclusive and transformative. However, the project’s thematic studies and assessments had a significant impact on donor decision-making. Interviews mentioned that the results validation and monitoring reports provided critical data that ADB used to make informed decisions about future programming in Afghanistan. The project’s ability to generate high-quality data and insights was crucial for ensuring that donors like ADB could continue to invest in Afghanistan’s development despite the challenges<sup>89</sup> it faced.

Lesson 5. Sensitive Interventions Require Adaptive Approaches: In challenging contexts such as Afghanistan, where policies on education, particularly for girls, remain restrictive, NFM validated that adaptive strategies like community-based education (CBE) proved effective in addressing gaps and ensuring access to essential services.

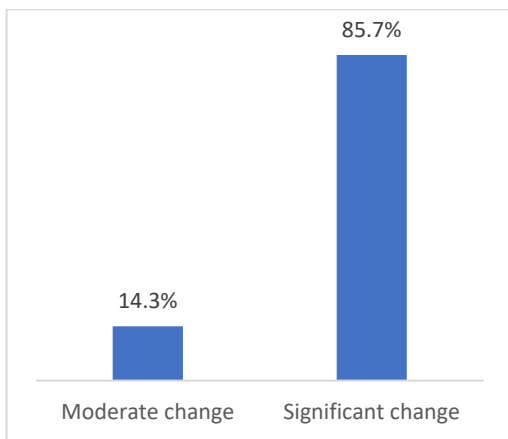


Fig 13. Percentage distribution of respondents based on their perception about NFM project contributing to positive changes in the NFA project

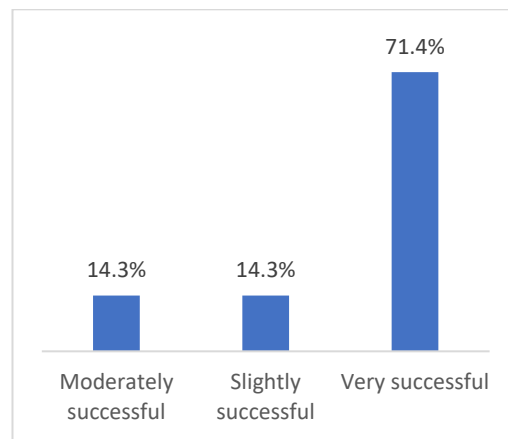


Fig 14. Percentage distribution of respondents based on their perception about NFM project achieving its intended impact

The project faced several challenges during its design and implementation, and various strategies were employed to address them:

**Key Successes:**

**1. Energy sector assessment as a foundational activity of the NFM project:** From the outset, the NFM project planned to conduct an energy sector assessment to inform pipeline development for future projects. This assessment identified critical gaps and opportunities, enabling actionable recommendations that aligned with future programming priorities. While the NFM project’s role

<sup>89</sup> **1. Resistance from De Facto Authorities (DFA):** The DFA’s resistance to issuing letters of authorization, especially in the education sector, delayed assessments. The project responded by engaging in proactive communication with central and local authorities to secure approvals<sup>89</sup>.

**2. Restrictions on women and girls:** The project’s ability to reach female beneficiaries was constrained by societal restrictions. To overcome this, the project adopted adaptive strategies, such as conducting surveys with a male relative (mahram) or using female enumerators accompanied by a mahram<sup>89</sup>.

**3. Coordination challenges with UN agencies:** Initially, coordination between UN agencies was difficult. The project addressed this by establishing a collaborative PSCA and holding regular bilateral meetings to enhance communication and data sharing.

was focused on assessment and recommendations, UNDP's broader portfolio includes additional energy-related initiatives beyond the scope of the NFM project.

**Case Study 1** – During an energy assessment visit to Kandahar, the project team observed a small factory producing cardboard boxes for fruit exports. The factory relied heavily on diesel generators due to limited national grid electricity availability (7-8 hours/day). The owners expressed an urgent need for renewable energy solutions, such as solar power, to improve operations. These insights informed the energy sector assessment report, providing donors with specific, actionable recommendations for solar energy interventions to address industry needs effectively.

2. Strengthened focus group methodology in results validation: The NFM project introduced additional focus group discussions after the first results validation exercise to capture diverse beneficiary voices and provide deeper insights into community needs. These focus groups, conducted in subsequent waves, enriched the findings and supported the development of evidence-based recommendations for ADB and UNDP

**Case Study 2** – The project identified significant discrepancies in food distribution (30-40%) during results validation, which were addressed by FAO and WFP through revised distribution strategies. Similarly, challenges with medicine stock management in UNICEF-supported programs were flagged in the second results validation and subsequently improved. The project also noted positive examples, such as female teachers interviewed during monitoring visits to schools operating under UNICEF support despite restrictive government policies

An important intervention in the NFM project was the establishment of the Program Steering Committee for Afghanistan (PSCA) as a unified platform for interagency coordination. Initially, two platforms were created: (1) an Interagency Task Force for technical discussions and (2) an Oversight Body comprising ADB and UN agencies. These were later merged into the PSCA to streamline decision-making and improve efficiency.

Key Contributions of the PSCA - Facilitated strategic management and alignment of project activities.  
- Resolved coordination issues between stakeholders, ensuring smoother project implementation. - Enabled the integration of monitoring outputs into actionable insights for project adaptation.

Additional Interventions - Regular technical-level discussions among foreign agencies (e.g., USAID, GIZ, and the World Bank) provided critical inputs for implementation and ensured alignment with international best practices. - Adjustments to the PSCA meeting schedule (from quarterly to biannual) allowed for greater flexibility and responsiveness to operational challenges in Afghanistan. - The integration of stakeholder feedback during PSCA meetings ensured that the project remained adaptive to emerging needs and challenges.

## 5.6. SUSTAINABILITY

**EQ 14. To what extent are the project's results sustainable going forward? Are there any social or political risks that may jeopardize sustainability of project outputs and the project's contributions to country programmed outputs and outcomes?**

**Finding 14. Several respondents indicated that the knowledge products generated by the NFM project—such as thematic studies and assessments—would have lasting value. Specifically, the centralized database system established by the project will continue to be utilized by UN agencies and donors for future programming. Analysis indicates towards social<sup>90</sup>, economic<sup>91</sup> and political<sup>92</sup> risks remain that may derail sustainability of project outputs.**

<sup>90</sup> Challenges such as community resistance or limited local capacity may also undermine long-term gains.

<sup>91</sup> Continued reliance on external donor funding could jeopardize the ability to sustain progress without external financial support

<sup>92</sup> The volatile political landscape in Afghanistan poses a substantial risk to the sustainability of project outcomes, particularly in sectors reliant on government cooperation

Lesson 6. Ownership of Knowledge Products Ensures Long-term Utility:

Knowledge products produced under the NFM project lacked full dissemination and integration into broader decision-making frameworks. People from UN agencies who were involved in providing key inputs and guiding the results validation and impact assessments did not get an opportunity to technical review and provide their feedback on the results validation and impact assessment reports since the reports were shared at senior management level. Therefore, projects should emphasize ownership, broad stakeholder consultations, and dissemination strategies to maximize utility and reach.

ADB aims to promote the sustainability of its project outcomes by protecting the environment and people through its safeguards, which are applied for all ADB loan and TA projects<sup>93</sup>. Further, program documents define sustainability as the continuation of human development gains by maintaining essential services such as food security, healthcare, and education during periods of economic and political crisis. Sustainability is framed in terms of preventing regression in development progress and ensuring capacity building for longer-term impacts<sup>94</sup>. However, the NFM project was unique given that it was conceptualized at a time when Afghanistan was going through transition and it was strongly felt at ADB that UNDP was best positioned to implement NFM. Therefore, there was no sustainability plan for NFM given the non-conventional nature of this project. During interviews the respondents provided varied opinions on sustainability.

Close of half of the respondents interviewed (47%) expressed confidence in the project’s ability to create lasting impacts, however, 45% respondents were

uncertain about sustainability due to the reliance on donor funding and the ongoing political challenges. Additionally, respondents emphasized community engagement and local ownership as critical for sustaining project outcomes beyond donor support<sup>95</sup>. Further, studies on renewable energy and women’s economic empowerment are expected to inform future projects and policy decisions. Quantitative findings support these observations, with 57.1% of respondents (n=4) indicating that the benefits and outcomes of the NFM project are likely to be sustained beyond its lifecycle.

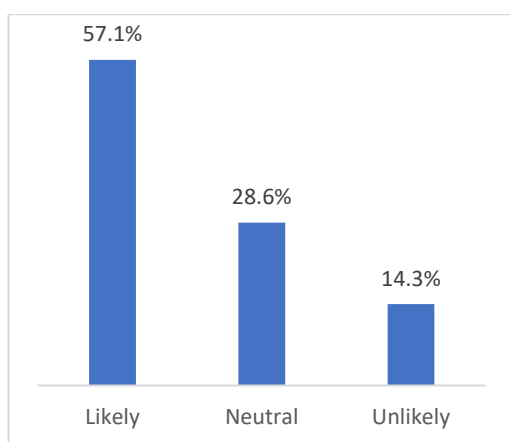


Fig 15. Percentage distribution of respondents based on their perception about sustainability of project benefits and outcomes beyond project lifecycle

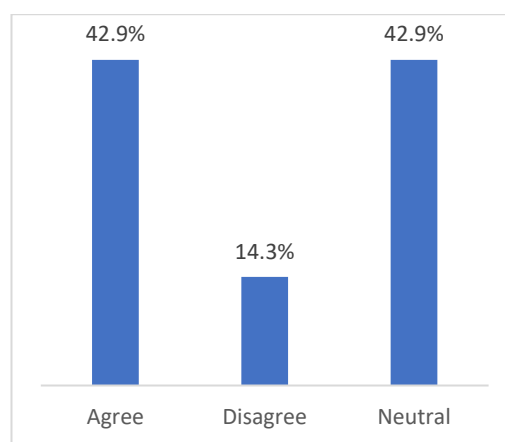


Fig 16. Percentage distribution of respondents based on their awareness about presence of a clear sustainability plan for NFM

**EQ 15. To what extent will financial and economic resources be available to sustain the benefits achieved by the project?**

<sup>93</sup> ADB Sustainability Report, 2024, p.42

<sup>94</sup> Final ProDoc NFM, p. 17

<sup>95</sup> IRA Report Cleaned Version, p. 223; p. 124



**Finding 15. No explicit commitments were made by external or internal parties to continue funding the project after its completion. The project was heavily reliant on financial support from the Asian Development Bank (ADB), which served as the primary donor<sup>96</sup>.**

While the project lacked long-term financial commitments, the insights and data generated by the NFM project have influenced subsequent donor decisions. ADB continues to support the continuation of the NFA framework, and additional initiatives—such as the energy sector project—are in the pipeline as a direct outcome of the monitoring activities conducted under NFM. Therefore, as result of the monitoring conducted by UNDP under NFM, ADB is supporting a continuation of the NFA project. Plus, additional projects - in particular the energy sector project - are in the pipeline as a result of the NFM project. It was never envisaged that the project would be handed over to domestic sources - nor would that be feasible in the current context. It was never envisaged that the project would transition financial responsibility to domestic sources, nor would this have been feasible given the political and operational constraints in Afghanistan. This reliance on external donors underscores the vulnerability of the project’s sustainability, as it lacked clear financial support beyond its current funding cycle.

It is important to consider here that the project did not have a formal sustainability plan with timelines or specific actions outlined. Instead, discussions on sustainability were addressed indirectly in the program documents, focusing on capacity building and the maintenance of essential services<sup>97</sup>. The project prioritized addressing immediate gaps in service provision over developing a detailed long-term sustainability strategy. Therefore, it can be argued that as a result of the monitoring conducted by UNDP under NFM, ADB is supporting a continuation of the NFA project. Plus, additional projects - in particular the energy sector project - are in the pipeline as a result of the NFM project. It was never envisaged that the project would be handed over to domestic sources - nor would that be feasible in the current context.

The aforementioned argument is support by findings from the key informant interviews. During key informant interviews, several respondents noted the absence of a formal sustainability plan for the NFM project. The project’s design did not include provisions for ensuring the continuation of monitoring mechanisms or data collection processes beyond its conclusion. This reflects the project’s non-traditional nature, which focused on producing valuable assessments, database systems, and monitoring frameworks rather than implementing direct service delivery. Further, while the project’s assessments provided valuable insights, respondents highlighted the need for more focused studies to ensure long-term sustainability. The databases and knowledge products created by the project—including thematic assessments and data collection practices—are expected to have enduring value for future programming and institutional use.

The project included a Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning (MEL) strategy that involved several key components: logical frameworks, integrated web-based monitoring systems, third-party monitoring, and results validation exercises. These tools helped track project progress, ensuring that activities remained aligned with outcomes and that the project could adapt as needed<sup>98</sup>. Field data was collected by trained enumerators using digital tools, and third-party monitoring provided an extra layer of accountability<sup>99</sup>.

**EQ 16. To what extent are lessons learned being documented by the project team on a continual basis and shared with appropriate parties who could learn from the project?**

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<sup>96</sup> Report and Recommendation of ADB President, p. 17

<sup>97</sup> Report and Recommendation of ADB President, p. 17

<sup>98</sup> LD09 PAM UNICEF, p. 68; NFM Project APR 2023, p. 9

<sup>99</sup> IRA-3 Report

**Findings 16. The learning documents contributed to the project’s adaptive management process, enabling the team to make real-time adjustments based on insights gathered from monitoring and evaluation reports. Data from progress reports, results validation exercises, and impact assessments helped guide decision-making, allowing the project to adapt to emerging challenges and ensure that interventions remained effective<sup>100</sup>.**

Several learning documents were produced over the course of the project:

1. Impact assessments and results validation reports provided insights into the project’s performance and lessons learned<sup>101</sup>.

2. Project progress reports, submitted regularly to ADB, contained reflections on challenges, lessons learned, and recommendations for future programming<sup>102</sup>. Although these documents were not explicitly labeled as “learning documents,” they captured key information that informed adaptive management throughout the project’s lifecycle.

The documents confirm that all formal reports, including the RV (Results Validation) and IRA (Impact Assessment) reports, were submitted to ADB and shared with relevant UN agencies for validation before finalization<sup>103</sup>. However, during the interviews it was mentioned by several respondents that despite assisting the monitoring agencies and consultants before and during data collection, the reports prepared by them was not shared with them for technical feedback but was shared at senior management level and they did not get the opportunity to provide any feedback or to use the findings immediately at the field level. It was recommended that there was a need for more inclusive dissemination plan so that the report findings could be shared with everyone involved in the process.

The learning documents provided actionable insights that enhanced decision-making throughout the project. They allowed the project team to refine implementation strategies and improve outcomes based on the lessons learned. For example, feedback from monitoring reports helped optimize the allocation of resources and guided strategic adjustments in service delivery (LD08 PAM FAO, p. 26). These insights were also expected to inform the design of future initiatives, such as potential second-phase projects or new interventions<sup>104</sup>.

#### 5.7. GENDER EQUALITY/WOMEN’S EMPOWERMENT, HUMAN RIGHTS, LEAVE NO ONE BEHIND

**EQ 17. To what extent does the project adopt gender-sensitive, human rights-based and conflict sensitive approaches, in compliance with the principle of Leaving No One Behind (LNOB)?**

**Finding 17. The UNDP DRR emphasized on an inclusive approach, while conducting assessments, including other sectors such as health besides food security in the assessments. Specifically, under the NFM project, a gender and food security study were conducted to help ADB identify and address the gender issues in food, livelihoods, employment, education and health services in the context of natural disasters and DFA takeover<sup>105</sup>.**

The Project was designed in line with UNDP’s strategic mandate to promote gender equality and women empowerment by prioritizing them in all its activities and ensure gender–balance proportion in its engagement with relevant UN agencies, civil society organizations and community level interventions maintained. It is also aligned with and contributes to UNDP’s Gender Equality Strategy

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<sup>100</sup> NFM Project Board Meeting Minutes

<sup>101</sup> IRA-3 Report

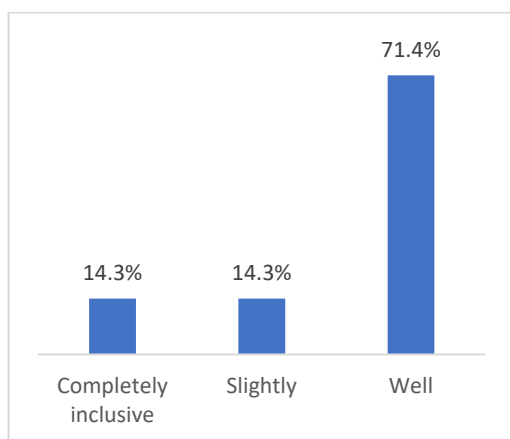
<sup>102</sup> LD I I PAM WFP, p. 74

<sup>103</sup> LD I I PAM WFP, p. 74; NFM Project Board Meeting Minutes

<sup>104</sup> Final Prodoc NFM, p. 11; NFM Project Quarter 2 Report 2024

<sup>105</sup> Minutes of Project Board Meeting, p.6

(2018-2021 and 2022-2025)<sup>106</sup>. Further, gender mainstreaming<sup>107</sup> was an important element of NFM project and UNDP made a substantive analysis to assess this across NFM project design, implementation, monitoring and reporting. Further, gender analysis was undertaken in all the assessment and monitoring activities. For example, the impact assessment reports assessed the project's effect on gender equality and women's empowerment consider how the project affects women's health, nutrition and ability to work and obtain services that could save their lives. The project also continuously followed the Gender and Humanitarian Access Working Groups to inform its decision making for the project<sup>108</sup>. Further, Leaving No One Behind principle was incorporated in the design of monitoring activities, ensuring inclusion of vulnerable & marginalized groups to reduce disparities & biases in information gathering.



*Fig 17. Percentage distribution of respondents based on their perception about the project being gender sensitive and based on human rights approach*

**EQ 18. How adequately were cross-cutting themes such as human rights, gender equality, age and environment considered in the NFM project?**

**Finding 18. The NFM project was also relevant in addressing cross-cutting issues such as gender and inclusion, which are critical in the Afghan context. Several interviews highlighted the project's focus on ensuring that marginalized groups, particularly women and people with disabilities, were included in assessments and monitoring efforts. This was particularly important given the significant barriers faced by women in accessing services in Afghanistan, especially in remote and conservative areas.**

Female enumerators were employed to interview women beneficiaries, which was a critical aspect of ensuring that the project was relevant to both men and women. By capturing gender-disaggregated data and focusing on marginalized groups, the NFM project ensured that its activities reflected the needs of all segments of the population, particularly those most at risk of being excluded from services. For future projects, a focus on sustained community engagement and gender-sensitive programming is critical to maintaining the gains achieved by the NFM project.

**EQ 19. To what extent have gender equality and the empowerment of women been addressed in the design, implementation, monitoring, and communication?**

**Finding 19 – UNDP emphasizes gender equality as a core component of sustainable**

<sup>106</sup> NFM Project Quarter 1 Report, 2024, p.14

<sup>107</sup> The project ensured a balanced gender proportion (30% - 40%) in all the assessments including household questionnaires, key informant interviews, FGDs and consultation sessions to capture first-hand data on gender related issues from the community levels to effectively inform future gender-based programming.

<sup>108</sup> Ibid, p. 16

**development, especially in fragile and conflict affected states. In NFM project as well, UNDP incorporated gender equality and the empowerment of women in its design, implementation, monitoring and communication.**

Recognizing that women and girls are disproportionately affected by conflict and instability, UNDP's approach focuses on building resilience and creating opportunities for gender response recovery. The project document indicates that gender mainstreaming was incorporated in project design, implementation, monitoring and reporting. For instance, field monitoring collected data for interpretation of results and triangulation towards Gender Equality and Women Empowerment (GEWE). The NFM project also assessed the gender impact of projects and programmes linked to the indicators in the SES Gender Section across all the thematic areas and across 4 key SDGs. The data provided in results validation and impact assessment reports provided gender disaggregated data so that project results were effectively communicated to stakeholders in a gender-responsive manner.

**EQ 20. To what extent has the NFM project promoted positive changes in gender equality and the empowerment of women? Were there any unintended effects? How can the NFM project further broaden in a future phase its contribution to enhancing diversity and inclusion?**

**Finding 20. The NFM project made significant efforts to ensure data from female beneficiaries as well as their voices despite the restrictions imposed by DFA. Additionally, under Output 3, the Assessing Access to Livelihoods, Employment, Education, and Health Services, by Afghan Women and Girls in the Context of Natural Disasters and DFA Takeover Study was undertaken. This study provided a comprehensive situation of women and girls, including an analysis of gender equality across different thematic areas. Further, the review of project literature does not provide any evidence of unintended effects. In addition, future phases of the NFM project can further enhance its contribution to diversity and inclusion by addressing gaps in decision-making roles, expanding community engagement<sup>109</sup>, and institutionalizing gender-responsive programming.**

The project's major achievement in promoting gender equality lies in its validation of the Community Based Education Model of UNICEF, which established ALCs and distributed learning materials to over 264,000 children, 60% of whom were girls. It was also ensured under the project that the monitoring agencies employ gender-sensitive data collection methods, such as employing female enumerators for data collection. Further, in one of the interviews it was categorically mentioned that in all national level consultations which took place in Kabul city women entrepreneurs and leaders participated actively. Further, there is no evidence if NFM had any unintended effects on gender equality and empowerment of women.

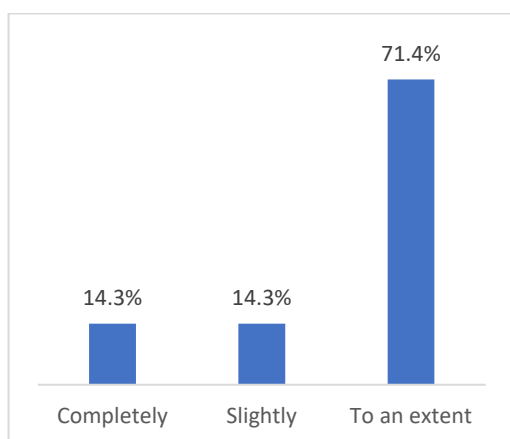
**EQ 21. To what extent have local communities, women, youth, people with disabilities and other disadvantaged groups benefited from the NFM project? Has the project applied UNDP Social and Environmental Safeguards?**

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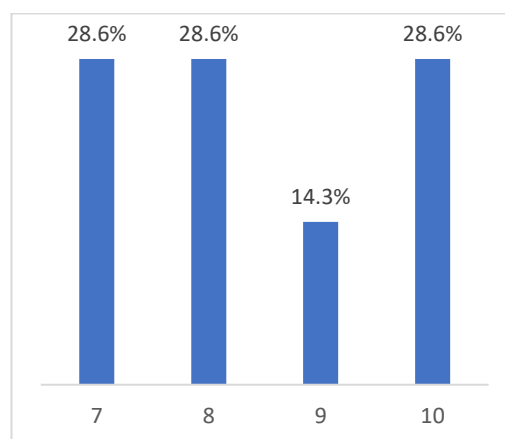
<sup>109</sup> The project aimed to incorporate participatory processes by engaging local communities in project planning and implementation. This is particularly evident in the establishment of community-based monitoring systems and consultations with local actors, which align with the NFM project's focus on monitoring and accountability. However, the Clean Final JLB-Clean Results Validation Wave 3 Report (p. 80) points to some limitations in the democratic nature of the project's setup. While local communities were engaged, their decision-making power was primarily reflected in community-based monitoring mechanisms established under the NFM project, aligning with its monitoring and accountability objectives. However, decision-making power for certain groups, particularly women, remained limited. This highlights gaps in inclusiveness that future programming could aim to improve, especially in ensuring that marginalized groups have a more significant role in decision-making processes that are tracked and informed through the monitoring framework established by the NFM project.

**Finding 21. The NFM project took steps to include people with disabilities by collecting data on their participation, as noted in the Result Validation Wave 2 Report (p. 38). Further, the Education Sector Socioeconomic Analysis Report (p. 29) recommends on improving accessibility and inclusion for people with disabilities in future interventions, ensuring that they are not marginalized in service delivery and project participation.**

A significant percentage (42.9%, n=3) of the respondents felt that the NFM project was moderately inclusive in ensuring the participation of all relevant stakeholders (e.g. Government agencies, local communities, and beneficiaries). In addition, most of the respondents (71.4%, n=5) felt that marginalized groups (women, youth, people with disabilities) could only participate to a limited extent. These findings reflect the NFM project’s role in identifying gaps in inclusiveness and providing recommendations for enhancing participation in future programming. The NFM project document<sup>110</sup> clearly mentions that under the project substantive analysis will be undertaken to assess the extent of gender mainstreaming across project design, implementation, monitoring, and reporting. Based on this understanding, under NFM, Gender and Food Security Assessment was undertaken in 2023. Additionally, Gender Study was undertaken in 2024<sup>111</sup>. Analysis of IRA reports, RV reports and thematic assessment reports show that the data in the reports was disaggregated by gender, age, location and education. Therefore, gender and diversity were cross-cutting themes in all the assessments.



*Fig 18. Percentage distribution of respondents based on their perception about extent of participation of marginalized groups in the project*



*Fig 19. Percentage distribution of respondents based on their perception about extent the project promoted gender equality and the empowerment of women*

<sup>110</sup> Final ProDoc NFM, 2022

<sup>111</sup> The report was gender study was not available at the time this evaluation was undertaken.

## 6. CONCLUSION

Criteria	#	Conclusion
Relevance	1	The NFM project exhibited a high degree of alignment with UNDP Strategic Plan 2022-25, United Nations Strategic Framework for Afghanistan (2023-25), Transitional Country Programme Strategy (TCPS), 2022-25 <sup>112</sup> , UN Transitional Engagement Framework (2022-24), and ADB Operational Priorities (2019–2030), and Sustainable Development Goals. The project effectively addressed Afghanistan’s socio-economic and humanitarian needs, making it a critical intervention in the country’s fragile political and economic context. Further, the project ToC was achieved due to the robust monitoring system set in place under the project. <i>Linked to finding 1 and 2</i>
	2	The NFM project demonstrated a high degree of alignment between its design and objectives, effectively addressing Afghanistan's development needs in food security, health, and education through robust monitoring systems, socio-economic analyses, and knowledge-sharing mechanisms. Further, the outputs and activities were designed to match the project’s goals. <i>Linked to finding 3 and 4</i>
Coherence	3	The NFM project successfully established collaborative mechanisms to ensure alignment with donor and stakeholder objectives. However, challenges in inter-agency data sharing, and limited inclusivity in decision-making reduced its potential to fully meet its participatory goals. <i>Linked to finding 5</i>
	4	All the stakeholders were not involved in the project’s design stage but they were involved in the implementation stage. This resulted in the implementation getting affected to an extent. <i>Linked to finding 6</i>
Effectiveness	5	The NFM project was effective in fulfilling its objectives, particularly in the areas of monitoring, reporting, and thematic studies. The key deliverables, such as results validation and thematic studies, were successfully completed. These achievements show that the NFM project was able to meet its fundamental goals of providing oversight and accountability for donor-funded projects and contributed to the project’s strategic vision in a complex and politically unstable environment. <i>Linked to finding 7</i>
	6	Partnerships were key to the success of the NFM project. Efforts, in the form of negotiations and use of institutional mechanisms in the form of project steering committee and integrated results framework to coordinate efforts among the various stakeholders, ensured that the objectives of the project were achieved successfully. <i>Linked to finding 8 and 9</i>

<sup>112</sup> TCPS Outcome 2: By the end of 2025, more people in Afghanistan will benefit from an increasingly stable, inclusive, and employment-rich economy, with greater equality of economic opportunities and more resilient livelihoods, increased food production, and improved natural resources management.

TCPS Output 2.4 Timely and evidence-based policy analysis and options available to programme implementation partners

<b>Efficiency</b>	7	<p>The NFM project demonstrated effective utilization of resources and innovative financial management, achieving its primary goals despite challenges such as understaffing, delay in data sharing by UN organizations, delayed approvals, and logistical constraints. These challenges were addressed by strategic allocation of resources, use of technology, such as a unified web – based M&amp;E platform, continued negotiations with UN agencies and speeding up approval processes.</p> <p><i>Linked to finding 10, 11, 12</i></p>
<b>Impact</b>	8	<p>The NFM project achieved significant impacts in monitoring and assessment, contributing to improvements in service delivery under the NFA framework. The robust monitoring under the NFM project ensured quality service delivery. Also, the results validation and impact surveys validated the Community Based Education (CBE) model of UNICEF. Further, SDG monitoring provided evidence to confirm that the NFM project supported SDGs.</p> <p><i>Linked to finding 13</i></p>
<b>Sustainability</b>	9	<p>The knowledge products generated by the NFM project in the form of centralized database system, learning documents, assessment reports are expected to have lasting value. Specifically, the centralized database system established by the project will continue to be utilized by UN agencies and donors for future programming. Analysis indicates towards social, economic and political risks remain that may derail sustainability of project outputs.</p> <p><i>Linked to finding 14 and 16</i></p>
	10	<p>The project can be considered as one of its kind given that one UN agency, in principle, cannot monitoring other UN agencies. Therefore, this was a one-off project which no future financial commitments by any external or internal parties to continue funding the project after its completion.</p> <p><i>Linked to finding 15</i></p>
<b>Gender equality/women's empowerment, human rights, leave no one behind</b>	11	<p>The NFM project, implemented under the guidance of UNDP, demonstrated a robust commitment to fostering inclusivity and addressing cross-cutting issues such as gender equality and disability inclusion, which are critical in Afghanistan's fragile and conflict-affected context. By integrating gender and inclusion considerations into its assessments, monitoring, and programming, the project effectively prioritized the needs of marginalized groups, particularly women, girls, and people with disabilities. The gender and food security study under the NFM project provided a comprehensive framework for understanding and addressing gender issues in food security, livelihoods, education, health services, and employment. It also supported ADB's capacity to respond to the unique needs of women and other vulnerable populations. Despite restrictions imposed by the DFA, the project ensured that the voices and perspectives of female beneficiaries were captured, offering critical insights into the barriers they face and opportunities for enhancing gender equality. The project's emphasis on inclusion extended beyond women to encompass people with disabilities, as evidenced by targeted data collection efforts and recommendations for improving accessibility in future interventions. While the project achieved significant milestones in promoting diversity, inclusion, and gender equality, it also highlighted critical gaps that require attention in future phases. Expanding the involvement of women and marginalized groups in decision-making roles, strengthening community engagement, and institutionalizing gender-responsive programming are essential for sustaining and scaling the project's impact.</p> <p><i>Linked to findings 17, 18, 19, 20, 21</i></p>

## 7. RECOMMENDATIONS

### Recommendation 1:

#### **Strengthen coordination structures and enhance field-level collaboration and data sharing in case of those project which require multiple stakeholders**

To prevent operational delays and enhance efficiency, it is essential to strengthen coordination structures, formalize inter-agency agreements on data sharing and cooperation before project initiation. These agreements should establish clear protocols for beneficiary-level data sharing among UN agencies and external partners, addressing ethical guidelines, privacy standards, and technical interoperability. Early agreement on roles, responsibilities, and data-sharing mechanisms ensures timely access to critical information, reducing misunderstandings and fostering collaboration. By preemptively resolving logistical and technical challenges, such agreements support evidence-based decision-making and streamline monitoring, evaluation, and reporting processes. This proactive approach enhances coordination, prevents duplication, and strengthens the project's overall impact and sustainability.

*Linked to conclusion 3,4,7*

*Responsibility: UNDP, and other stakeholders, Priority: High, Time implication: Long term*

### Recommendation 2:

#### **Develop a better sustainability strategy for any investment made in any project**

For future projects, it is crucial to incorporate a formal sustainability plan from the inception phase to ensure the project's long-term impact. This plan should define how key components, such as monitoring mechanisms, data collection processes, and knowledge-sharing initiatives, will be maintained and transitioned to relevant stakeholders after project completion. By identifying roles, resources, and partnerships early on, the plan ensures continuity and prevents the loss of valuable data and insights. Clear strategies for capacity building and institutional strengthening should be included to empower local actors to sustain project outcomes independently. This proactive approach not only enhances the project's legacy but also ensures that its benefits extend well beyond its conclusion, fostering resilience and self-reliance in the communities served.

*Linked to conclusion 9, 10*

*Responsibility: ADB, UNDP, Priority: High, Time implication: Long term*

### Recommendation 3:

#### **Institutionalize Lessons Learned for Future Projects**

Documenting lessons learned from the projects is essential to inform future interventions and enhance their effectiveness. These lessons should be systematically integrated into project planning and training materials, ensuring that stakeholders can build on past successes and avoid repeating challenges. Establishing a centralized repository of case studies and best practices will provide a valuable resource for guiding similar projects in the future. This repository can serve as a reference for designing inclusive, gender-responsive, and context-specific interventions. Additionally, it will foster knowledge-sharing across agencies and partners, promoting consistency and innovation in implementation. By institutionalizing this process, future projects can benefit from a structured approach to learning and adaptation, ultimately improving outcomes and sustainability.

*Linked to conclusion 8, 9, 10, 11*

*Responsibility: UNDP, Priority: High, Time implication: Immediate*

### Recommendation 4:

#### **Community based results validation**

Community-based results validation is a critical and innovative approach to ensure meaningful community engagement in the monitoring and evaluation of projects. By involving community members directly, this approach not only fosters local ownership but also enhances the credibility and relevance of the findings. When complemented with third-party validation, it adds an additional layer of accountability and inclusiveness. To operationalize a community-based results validation or monitoring



and evaluation system, investment in training and capacity building is essential. Equipping community members with the right technology and skills will empower them to actively participate in data collection, validation, and decision-making processes. This approach strengthens transparency, encourages community-driven solutions, greater inclusion and ensures that project outcomes align with the needs and priorities of the people it serves. It is a sustainable model that builds trust and enhances the long-term impact of development initiatives.

*Linked to conclusion 8,9,10,11*

*Responsibility: UNDP, other UN organizations (WFP, FAO, UNICEF), Time implication: Immediate*

## 1. TOR FOR THE EVALUATION

### Terms of Reference For Individual Contract



<b>Consultancy Title:</b>	International Consultant (Evaluation Expert)
<b>Services/Work Description:</b>	Final Evaluation of NFM Project
<b>Project/Programme Title:</b>	Monitoring Support to Novel Financing for Sustaining Essential Service Delivery Project (NFM)
<b>Duty Station:</b>	Home-based with one mission to Afghanistan.
<b>Duration:</b>	01 August 2024 – 31 October 2024 (up to 30 working days)
<b>Expected start date:</b>	01 August 2024

#### Background and Context

In response to the deteriorating humanitarian situation in Afghanistan, the Asian Development Bank (ADB) has launched a USD 405 million grant through the “Novel Financing for Sustaining Essential Service Delivery Project” to alleviate the adverse effect of the crisis. The objective of the intervention is to sustain the delivery of essential public services and food security to ease the adverse impact of economic disruptions on the welfare and livelihoods of the most vulnerable population groups in Afghanistan.

The ADB grant is being implemented through separate projects delivered by UNDP, UNICEF, WFP, and FAO as executing agencies. The grant allocation to UNICEF is focused on ensuring continuity of core public health services and support to the delivery of primary and secondary education. The grant allocations to WFP and FAO supports the provision of emergency food assistance and sustaining local staple food production and supply chains. The allocation to UNDP is focused on monitoring the grant Programme implemented by UNICEF, WFP, FAO and conducting socio-economic assessments and on-demand research to support Phase 2.

The UNDP project, Novel Financing for Sustaining Essential Service Delivery Project (NFM), provided technical assistance to ensure the effective monitoring of the outcomes of the ADB Programme “Sustaining the delivery of essential public services and food security to ease the adverse impact of economic disruptions on the welfare and livelihoods of vulnerable Afghan people” and provided socio-economic situation and impact analysis of the country. To guide the implementation of this project, UNDP established an Inter-Agency Task Force consisting of UNDP, WFP, UNICEF, FAO and ADB to outline the results framework, roles, and individual responsibilities for progress reporting.

The UNDP NFM project under evaluation has three outputs. The first output focuses on monitoring the implementation of the grant by WFP, UNICEF, and FAO through (i) establishment of an integrated system for monitoring of achievements of results (outcomes and outputs); (ii) analysis and monitoring of the project’s contribution to Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs); and (iii) field monitoring to validate results using 1,500 trained local enumerators across 34 provinces. The second output focuses on socioeconomic analysis and assessments of the country situation and will include (i) macroeconomic and social assessments of the situation in Afghanistan and the impact of the ADB assistance (which will also be used as inputs for Project Completion Report); and (ii) analysis on the economic prospects of the country and possible paths towards future sustainable growth. The third output covers other support for the implementation of the project such as (i) Gender - responsive communications; and (ii) analytical and advisory inputs for possible phase 2 of the project. The grant provided to UNDP was \$5.0 million. The project period was 35 months (February 2022 to December 2024).

### Project's Theory of Change (ToC):

If the delivery of essential services through the ADB Grant Programme is monitored in an effective and efficient manner.

**Then** Afghan citizens including women, children, and disadvantaged groups will have improved access to quality services in the areas of health, education, and capacities to address food insecurity and malnutrition.

**Resulting in** increased community resilience to the current shocks and crisis and building the foundation for socio-economic recovery in the long-term

**This will in turn contribute** to building the foundation for increased public social welfare and trust in community services.

**Output 1:** The delivery of essential public services through ADB Grant Programme is monitored through a robust monitoring system.

**Output 2:** Socio-economic analysis in the areas of health, education and nutrition and impact assessment of ADB Grant Programme in Afghanistan is conducted in an effective, and efficient manner.

**Output 3:** Effective communication and a well – informed pipeline for the next stage of ADB assistance supported.

The Asian Development Bank supported three outputs. UNDP also has contributed 200,000 USD TRAC resources for output 3.

PROJECT/OUTCOME INFORMATION		
Project title	Monitoring Support to Novel Financing for Sustaining Essential Service Delivery Project (NFM)	
Quantum/Atlas ID	00141905	
Corporate outcome and output	TCPRF Outcome I: Provision of Essential Services TCPRF Output I.1. Essential basic services and infrastructure (Health, WASH, Solid Waste Management, Education etc.) including COVID 19 support enabled and supported.	
Country	Afghanistan	
Region	Asia and the Pacific	
Date project document signed	8 February 2022	
Project dates	Start Date	Planned End Date
	4 <sup>th</sup> February 2022	31 <sup>st</sup> December 2024
Project budget	US\$ 5,000,000	
Project expenditure at the time of evaluation	US\$ 4,500,000 (as of March 2024)	
Funding source	Asian Development Bank (ADB) and UNDP TRAC	
Implementing party	UNDP (Direct Implementation Modality)	

### Evaluation purpose, scope, and objectives

#### The Purpose and Objectives of the Final Evaluation

The Final Evaluation aims to inform UNDP Afghanistan, its partners and ADB of lessons learned, results achieved and areas for improvements. The Final Evaluation will produce valuable lessons and experiences, providing useful findings for other relevant projects and various initiatives organized by UNDP Afghanistan as well as other Country Offices. Also, the Final Evaluation will be able to produce a report on the achievements of the NFM project, including success stories, which will be published on the UNDP website.

To meet these ends, the Final Evaluation will serve to:

- Assess project performance and progress against the expected outputs, targets including indicators presented in the RRF and contribution to expected outcome.
- Review and document the success and draw out lessons for deepening impact.
- Assess the effectiveness of the project's engagement with UNDP NFM project and other UN agencies.
- Identify challenges and the effectiveness of the strategic approaches that project adopted for addressing those challenges.
- Determine the relevance, coherence, effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability, and impact of

the project interventions as well as gender equality/women's empowerment, human rights and leave no one behind.

- Provide actionable, forward-looking recommendations for future programming in this area.
- Report on the achievements of the NFM project plus success stories on the project, which will be published on UNDP website.
- Highlight project's overall accountability within the corporate framework, e.g., contribution to higher level results, such as Strategic Plan, Transitional Country Programme Results Framework (TCPRF) etc.

### **The Scope of the Final Evaluation:**

The Final Evaluation is expected to assess the UNDP/NFM project progress against the Project Document, targets stipulated in the RRF and the achieved results from 4 February 2022 to 31 December 2024 and propose recommendations, which will inform and help improve the design of any future projects. The Final Evaluation will be based on a desk review of project related documents and in-depth in-person and virtual interviews and surveys as outlined in the methodology section. The Final Evaluation will also document achievements, good practices, success stories, lessons learned or transferable examples. The Final Evaluation's geographical coverage includes the provinces of Kabul, Jalal Abad, Mazar and Herat provinces of Afghanistan. The evaluation expert will also conduct interviews with relevant stakeholders and partners i.e. UNICEF, FAO, WFP, ADB, MgtWell, VoxMapp, AACS and Magenta. The Evaluation Expert will also interview individual consultants who have conducted assessments assignments for the NFM Project. The list of and details of the Individual Consultants will be provided by the NFM Project.

### **Evaluation criteria and key guiding questions**

The evaluation will be conducted in compliance with the key principles of the UNDP Evaluation Policy and will be guided by the United Nations Development Evaluation Group's Norms and Standards for Evaluation and the Organization of the Economic Cooperation Development/Development Assistance Committee (OECD/DAC)'s Evaluation Criteria for Development Assistance. The evaluation will be independent, impartial, transparent, ethical, and credible based on data and evidence. The evaluation will be based on the following criteria with the following guiding questions, which will be further reviewed/elaborated in the evaluation inception report. The evaluation will assess the six OECD/DAC main evaluation criteria as recommended by the UNDP Evaluation Policy: 1) Relevance; 2) Coherence; 3) Effectiveness; 4) Efficiency; 5) Impact; and 6) Sustainability as well as gender equality/women's empowerment, human rights and leave no one behind (GEWE/HR/LNOB).

#### **1. Relevance**

- To what extent was the NFM project in line with national development priorities, Country Programme outputs and outcomes (as listed in the project document), the UNDP Strategic Plan, national development priorities, and the SDGs?
- To what extent do the NFM project's approaches contribute to the theory of change for the country's Programme outputs and outcomes? Did the project remain relevant throughout?
- To what extent were the methods, activities, and outputs aligned with the overall objectives and goals of the project?

#### **2. Coherence**

- To what extent did the project complement interventions by different entities, including UNDP and other UN actors, as well as other international partners and donors?
- To what extent were relevant stakeholders involved in the project's design and implementation?

#### **3. Effectiveness**

- To what extent did the project achieve its intended objectives and contribute to the project's strategic vision?
- What are the key internal and external factors (success & failure factors) that have contributed, affected, or impeded the achievements, and how UNDP and the partners manage these?
- In which areas do the NFM project have the greatest and fewest achievements? Why and what have been the supporting factors? How can the NFM or relevant projects build on or expand these achievements?

#### **4. Efficiency**

- To what extent was the project management structure, including the project board, as outlined in the project document efficient in generating the expected results?
- To what extent have the project implementation strategy and execution been efficient and cost-effective?
- To what extent has there been an economical use of financial and human resources? Have resources (funds, human resources, time, expertise, etc.) been allocated strategically to achieve outcomes?
- To what extent have the M&E systems utilized by the project enabled effective and efficient project management?

#### **5. Sustainability**

- To what extent are the project's results sustainable going forward? Are there any social or political risks that may jeopardize sustainability of project outputs and the project's contributions to country programme outputs and outcomes?
- To what extent will financial and economic resources be available to sustain the benefits achieved by the project?
- To what extent are lessons learned being documented by the project team on a continual basis and shared with appropriate parties who could learn from the project?

#### **6. Impact**

- To what extent has the project generated or is expected to generate significant positive or negative, intended, or unintended, higher-level effects?

#### **7. Gender equality/women's empowerment, human rights, leave no one behind**

- To what extent does the project adopt gender-sensitive, human rights-based and conflict sensitive approaches, in compliance with the principle of Leaving No One Behind (LNOB)?
- How adequately were cross-cutting themes such as human rights, gender equality, age and environment considered in the NFM project?
- To what extent have gender equality and the empowerment of women been addressed in the design, implementation, monitoring, and communication?
- To what extent has the NFM project promoted positive changes in gender equality and the empowerment of women? Were there any unintended effects? How can the NFM project further broaden in a future phase its contribution to enhancing diversity and inclusion?
- To what extent have local communities, women, youth, people with disabilities and other disadvantaged groups benefited from the NFM project? Has the project applied UNDP Social and Environmental Safeguards?

#### **19. Methodology**

It is expected that the evaluation will employ a combination of both qualitative and quantitative evaluation methods to capture the project results and generate evidence to substantiate all findings. Evidence obtained and used to assess the results should be triangulated. The evaluator should propose their own methodology and detailed action plan as part of the Inception Report, which may include:

**Desk Review:** At the beginning of the assignment, the Evaluation Consultant will need to review key documents, such as, but not limited to, the project document, progress reports, Programme assurance reports, knowledge products and relevant policies of UNDP and the de facto Authorities. The complete list of documents will be provided as soon as the Consultant is onboard.

- Project document (contribution agreement) with all annexes.
- Theory of change and results framework.
- Programme and project quality assurance reports.
- Annual workplans.
- Activity designs.
- Consolidated quarterly and annual reports.
- Results-oriented monitoring report.
- Highlights of project board meetings. Technical/financial monitoring reports.

#### **Data collection**

- Semi-structured interviews with key representatives of key partner UN agencies, and other partners:
- Development of evaluation questions around relevance, coherence, effectiveness, efficiency,

sustainability, impact and GEWE/HR/LNOB and designed for different UNDP NFM project implementing partners to be interviewed.

- Key informant/in depth interviews with key partners and UNDP NFM project partners. All interviews should be undertaken in full confidence and anonymity.
- Surveys and questionnaires including participants in development Programmes, surveys and questionnaires involving UNDP NFM project implementing partners at strategic and programmatic levels, if deemed relevant.
- Field visits and on-site validation of key tangible outputs and interventions.

The evaluator is expected to follow a participatory and consultative approach that ensures close engagement with the NFM Project team, partner UN agencies, and implementing partners.

**Data review, validation, and analysis:**

- To ensure maximum validity and reliability of data quality, the evaluator should:
- Triangulate information from various data sources to strengthen validity of findings and conclusions.
- Apply a gender and human rights lens to all evaluation products.
- Address gender, disability, and human rights issues in the NFM Final Evaluation Report.

**All conclusions, judgments, and opinions must be qualified by evidence and not be based on opinions.**

As part of the requirement, the final evaluation must include an assessment of the extent to which the design, implementation, and results of the project have incorporated gender equality perspective and rights- based approach. The evaluator will make sure Integrating Human Rights and Gender Equality in Evaluation during the inception phase. In addition, the methodology used in the evaluation, including data collection and analysis methods should be human rights and gender-sensitive to the greatest extent possible, with evaluation data and findings disaggregated by sex, ethnicity, age, etc. – with a focus on people with disabilities. Detailed analysis on disaggregated data will be undertaken as part of final evaluation from which findings are consolidated to make recommendations and identify lessons learned for enhanced gender responsive and rights-based approach of the project. The final methodological approach including interview schedule, field visits and data to be used in the evaluation should be clearly outlined in the inception report and be fully discussed and agreed between UNDP NFM Project and the international evaluator.

**Evaluation products (deliverables)**

**Evaluation inception report (10-15 pages).** The inception report should be carried out following and based on preliminary discussions with UNDP after the desk review and should be produced before the evaluation starts (before any formal evaluation interviews, survey distribution or field visits) and prior to the country visit. An Evaluation matrix, as per the sample below, should be included in the inception report.

**Evaluation debriefing.** Immediately following the data collection phase, the evaluator will present their preliminary debriefing and findings.

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

**Draft evaluation report (30 pages excluding annexes).** The content of the reports should consist of the following:

- List of Acronyms and Abbreviations (1 page)
- Executive Summary summarizing the key findings with rating scale, and recommendation (1-2 pages)
- Introduction (1 page)
- Evaluation Scope and Objective (1-2 pages)
- Evaluation Approach and Methods (1-2 pages)
- Data analysis, finding, including a table of progress against indicators (15-20 pages)

- The report will also reflect human/best practice narrative as per the evidence collected from the field visit.
- Conclusions, recommendations and Lessons Learned (5 pages)
- The report should consist of good flow reflecting clear linkage from data analysis to each finding, its relevant conclusion, and recommendation.
- The recommendation should be focused, specific, and actionable.
- The lesson learnt should be elaborated based on the reflection from the project performance, coupled with the experience from the consultant. The lesson learnt should be able to serve the purpose of informing the current project and could be leveraged to inform other future project/programming.
- Annexes: Survey/ questionnaire questions and analyses, List of contacts, and Other relevant information.
- Evaluation report audit trail. Comments and changes by the evaluator in response to the draft report should be retained by the evaluator to show how they have addressed comments.
- Final evaluation report. Reflecting on the achievements and success stories of the project.

#### Expected Deliverables

#	Deliverables/Outputs	Estimated Duration to complete	Target Due Dates	Review and Approvals required
1	Briefing by UNDP; desk review, evaluation design, methodology selection, workplan formulation, stakeholder list; submission of Inception Report (including final methodology, data collection tools and questions, proposed data collection schedules, evaluation matrix, evaluation briefing etc.), comments, revision, and approval of Inception Report	7 days	15 August 2024	UNDP Evaluation Manager (DEU Head) with Programme Officer, PQA Unit and Project Manager
2	Data collection in-country and virtual, conducting key informant interviews and focus group discussions, preliminary analysis, debrief to UNDP and Evaluation Reference Group	15 days	15 September 2024	UNDP Evaluation Manager (DEU Head) with Programme Officer, PQA Unit and Project Manager
3	Data analysis, triangulation, drafting of evaluation report.	8 days	15 October 2024	UNDP Evaluation Manager (DEU Head) with

	Comments received and addressed, submission and acceptance of Final Evaluation Report Draft 2 and audit trail			Programme Officer, PQA Unit and Project Manager
	<b>Total Number of working Days:</b>	<b>30 days</b>		

### Payment Modality

Payment to the individual contractor will be made based on the actual number of days worked, deliverables accepted and upon certification of satisfactory completion by the manager.

Deliverables/ Outputs	% Of total contract amount
The payment will proceed upon successful completion all above 3 deliverables	100%
Total	100%

\*The total duration of the task should not exceed 30 working days.

### Evaluation team composition and required competencies.

The UNDP NFM Project Final Evaluation requires one international consultant to complete the final evaluation. The Final Evaluation is estimated to be conducted between 1<sup>st</sup> August 2024 and 31<sup>st</sup> October 2024, with a total of 30 working days.

### Required Competencies

#### I. Academic Qualifications:

- A minimum of a master's degree or equivalent in, development studies, Public Policy, International Development, Development Economics/Planning, Economic, and Management or other relevant social science and or in any other related university degree.

#### II. Years of experience:

- The Applicant should have a minimum of 10 years of professional experience in program evaluation, monitoring, evaluation within a development context. This experience should cover areas such as policy support, program management, socio-economic support, and community-based programs. Additionally, candidates should demonstrate expertise in research studies, data analysis, and report writing. Prior experience conducting evaluations, particularly related to UN initiatives focused on poverty reduction, stabilization, recovery, and socio-economic empowerment, is highly desirable.
- At least 5 years of proven experience in development, risk assessment, and/or evaluation of Programmes or projects in development or provision of essential services of Health, Education, and nutrition.
- Experience in result-based management, evaluation methodologies and Programme/project monitoring approaches with development partners.
- The project final evaluation experience with UNDP is highly desired.
- Sound understanding of the UN system and of UNDP's mandate and role.

#### III. Language:

- Excellent knowledge, both oral and written, of English with presentational capacities is required.

#### IV. Competencies:

#### Functional Competencies:

- Ability to work independently.
- Ability to perform tasks in a timely manner and produce quality final product.
- Strong interpersonal, communication and diplomacy skills.



- Openness to change and ability to receive and integrate feedback.

**Corporate Competencies:**

- Demonstrates integrity by modelling the UN’s values and ethical standards.
- Promotes the vision, mission, and strategic goals of UNDP.
- Displays culture, gender, religion, race, nationality and age sensitivity and adaptability.
- Treats all people fairly without favoritism.
- Fulfils all obligations to gender sensitivity.

**Responsibilities of the Final Evaluation Consultant:**

- Review the relevant documents.
- Develop and submit a draft and final inception report.
- Conduct evaluation.
- Maintain ethical considerations.
- Develop and submit a draft evaluation report.
- Organize meeting/consultation to discuss the draft report.
- Incorporate input and feedback in draft report.
- Submit final report with due consideration of quality and effectiveness.
- Organize sharing of final evaluation report.
- Evaluator is expected to work within Afghanistan- Kabul working hours, particularly for the interviews.

**Implementation arrangements**

The Evaluation Consultant will be working under the general guidance of the UNDP Afghanistan Senior Deputy Resident Representative for Programmes and overall coordination by the Evaluation Manager - UNDP Afghanistan’s Head of Development Effectiveness Unit (DEU). The deliverables will be reviewed by the Evaluation Manager who will facilitate inputs from the NFM Project Team, UNDP Programme Management Unit and other Country Office business units, the project’s donor, and other relevant stakeholders. Inputs will be consolidated by the UNDP Evaluation Team before sharing with the Evaluation Consultants. The deliverables are to be cleared by the Evaluation Manager to ensure evaluation objectives are met, reports are of acceptable quality standards, and relevant stakeholders are duly consulted. Payment release will be approved upon confirmation of the deliverables by the Evaluation Manager. UNDP Afghanistan reserves the right to maintain regular communication with the consultant and to engage/visit/monitor the implementing activities where needed. The NFM Project team will work closely with the Evaluation Consultants to facilitate the process (if needed), including providing relevant documents related to the NFM Project for desk review, identifying stakeholders and sources of information, and assisting to resolve any issues arising during the assignment period to the extent possible. The FINAL EVALUATION Consultants will be briefed by UNDP upon onboarding.

The below table illustrates roles and responsibilities of evaluation stakeholders for this evaluation:

Who (Responsible)	What (Responsibilities)
Evaluation Manager Head, DEU	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assure smooth, quality, and independent implementation of the evaluation with needful guidance from UNDP’s Senior Management.</li> <li>• Evaluation Consultant ensures the independent implementation of the evaluation process.</li> <li>• Approve each step of the evaluation.</li> <li>• Supervise, guide, and provide feedback and comments to the evaluation consultants.</li> <li>• Ensure quality of the evaluation.</li> <li>• Ensure the Management Response and action plans are realistic and fully implemented</li> </ul>
Project Team	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide required information, furnishing documents for review of the Evaluation Team</li> <li>• Provide logistic arrangements, such as for support in setting up stakeholder meetings, arranging field visits and coordinating with partners.</li> </ul>

Who (Responsible)	What (Responsibilities)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide necessary information and coordination with different stakeholders including donors.</li> <li>• Provide feedback and comments on the inception report and the draft evaluation report.</li> <li>• Prepare management response and action plan and follow up the implementation</li> </ul>
UNDP Evaluation Team (Programme Officer and DEU Team)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide required information, furnishing documents for review to the consultant team.</li> <li>• Provide feedback and comments on the inception report and the draft evaluation report.</li> <li>• Review Management Response and action plan and follow up the implementation.</li> </ul>
Final Evaluation Consultant	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review the relevant documents.</li> <li>• Develop and submit a draft and final inception report.</li> <li>• Conduct evaluation.</li> <li>• Maintain ethical considerations.</li> <li>• Develop and submit a draft evaluation report.</li> <li>• Organize meeting/consultation to discuss the draft report.</li> <li>• Incorporate input and feedback in draft report.</li> <li>• Submit final report with due consideration of quality and effectiveness.</li> <li>• Organize final debriefing</li> </ul>
Evaluation Reference Group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Evaluation Reference Group comprised of the SDRR-P or her/his representative, the Evaluation Manager, Head of DEU, Head of PMU, and units, IRMU, and other relevant stakeholders, will provide advisory support and guidance to the evaluation process.</li> <li>• Review draft report and provide feedback.</li> <li>• Participate in debriefing session</li> </ul>

**Duty Station:**

The selected Evaluation Consultant is required to undertake the Basic Security in the Field (BSIF) training. (<https://dss.un.org/dssweb/WelcometoUNDSS/tabid/105/Default.aspx?returnurl=%2fdssweb%2f>) before traveling. The evaluation consultant will also be required to travel to Kabul, Mazar, Herat and Jalal Abad for conducting field visits and interviews with key informants and key actors (as per the proposed timeline, the evaluation consultant can travel to maximum of two provinces, while two other provinces can be covered via online or phone call interviews). The travel and transportation facilitation will be made by UNDP NFM Project.

**Evaluation ethics**

The TOR should include an explicit statement that evaluations in UNDP will be conducted in accordance with the principles outlined in the UNEG ‘Ethical Guidelines for Evaluation.’

“This evaluation will be conducted in accordance with the principles outlined in the UNEG ‘Ethical Guidelines for Evaluation.’ The consultant must safeguard the rights and confidentiality of information providers, interviewees, and partners through measures to ensure compliance with legal and other relevant codes governing collection of data and reporting on data. The consultant must also ensure security of collected information before and after the evaluation and protocols to ensure anonymity and confidentiality of sources of information where that is expected. The information knowledge and data gathered in the evaluation process must also be solely used for the evaluation and not for other uses with the express authorization of UNDP and partners.”

The consultant must also ensure the security of collected information before and after the evaluation and protocols to ensure anonymity and confidentiality of sources of information where that is expected. The information knowledge and data gathered in the evaluation process must also be solely used for the evaluation

and not for other uses, with the expressed authorization of UNDP and partners. The evaluator is responsible for ensuring the report is readable and reads well and factoring the aspects of Gender and LNOB.

**Application submission process and criteria for Selection Proposal Evaluation Method and Criteria:**

The award of the contract shall be made to the individual consultant/s whose offer has been evaluated and determined as:

- 1) Responsive/compliant/acceptable; and
- 2) Having received the highest score out of a pre-determined set of weighted technical and financial criteria specific to the solicitation.

Technical Criteria weight 70%

Financial Criteria weight 30%

Only candidates obtaining a minimum of 49 points (70% of the total technical points) would be considered for the Financial Evaluation.

Technical Criteria 70  
points Technical Proposal  
(30 marks)

- 1) Technical Approach & Methodology (20 marks) – Explain the understanding of the objectives of the assignment, approach to the services, methodology for carrying out the activities and obtaining the expected output, and the degree of detail of such output. The Applicant should also explain the methodologies proposed to adopt and highlight the compatibility of those methodologies with the proposed approach.
- 2) Work Plan (10 marks) – The Applicant should propose the main activities of the assignment, their content and duration, phasing and interrelations, milestones (including interim approvals by the Client), and delivery dates. The proposed work plan should be consistent with the technical approach and methodology, showing understanding of the TOR and ability to translate them into a feasible working plan.

Qualification and Experience (40 marks) [evaluation of CV]:

- General Qualification (15 marks)
- Experience relevant to the assignment (25 marks)

**Documents to be included when submitting the proposals:**

Interested individual consultant/s must submit the following documents/information to demonstrate their qualifications in one single PDF document:

- Duly accomplished confirmation of Interest and Submission of Financial Proposal
- Personal CV or P I I, indicating all experience from similar projects, as well as the contact details (email and telephone number) of the candidate and at least three (3) professional references.

**Technical Proposal:**

- Brief description of why the individual considers him/herself as the most suitable for the assignment.
- A methodology, on how they will approach and complete the assignment and work plan as indicated above.

The consultant/s shall submit a price proposal as below:

- 1) Daily Fee: The consultant shall propose a daily fee which should be inclusive of his/her professional fee, local communication cost and insurance (inclusive of medical evacuation). The number of working days for which the daily fee shall be payable under the contract is 25 working days.
- 2) The consultant is NOT allowed to stay in a place of his choice other than the UNDSS approved places. The payment for accommodation shall be made directly by the Project.
- 3) Travel and Visa (One round trip to Afghanistan): The consultant shall propose an estimated lump sum for home-Kabul-home travel and Afghanistan visa expenses. The

UNDP NFM project will cover the cost of internal travel within Afghanistan.

The total professional fee shall be converted into a lump sum contract and payments under the contract shall be made on submission and acceptance of deliverables under the contract in accordance with the abovementioned schedule of payment. The total professional fee shall be converted into a lump sum contract and payments under the contract shall be made on submission and acceptance of deliverables under the contract in accordance with the abovementioned schedule of payment.

- 4) DSA Cost: The DSA cost US\$ 163 per night for the total of 14 nights during the visit to Afghanistan.

## II. EVALUATION MATRIX

Question	Sub-question	Methods of data collection	Sources of Data
<b>Relevance</b>			
To what extent was the NFM project in line with Country Programme outputs and outcomes (as listed in the project document), the UNDP Strategic Plan, and the SDGs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To what extent was NFM project aligned with NFA priorities, UNDP country programme outputs and outcomes and the UNDP strategic plan?</li> <li>To what extent was the NFM project aligned with SDGs?</li> <li>Who were involved in planning the project? What process was adopted to developing and finalizing the plan? How was it relevant to the changing context of the country?</li> </ul>	Key informant interviews, project documents	Project Inception Report, minutes of the relevant committee meetings
To what extent do the NFM project's approaches contribute to the theory of change? Did the project remain relevant throughout?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>How was the ToC realized? What was the process through which the project activities were planned? How were the interventions implemented?</li> <li>How did the interventions address the needs of the target groups?</li> <li>Did issues of redundancy or lack of relevance of the project ever exist at any point of time in the project lifecycle?</li> </ul>	Key informant interviews	Results framework, Theory of Change
To what extent were the methods, activities, and outputs aligned with the overall objectives and goals of the project?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>On a scale of 1-10, to what extent was the project design aligned to the objectives of the project? How many times was the design changed, if at all?</li> <li>Was the project set-up with clear purpose and objectives. If yes, to what extent? If no, why not?</li> </ul>	Desk review, Key informant interviews, questionnaire	Results framework, Theory of Change
<b>Effectiveness</b>			
To what extent did the project achieve its intended objectives and contribute to the project's strategic vision?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Did the project achieve its outputs?</li> <li>What were the findings from different monitoring, evaluation, assessment reports? How were these findings used? How did these findings benefit the NFA?</li> </ul>	Report findings.	Various impact, assessment, monitoring reports
What are the key internal and external factors (success & failure factors) that have contributed, affected, or impeded the achievements, and how UNDP and the partners manage these?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>What factors affected the project critically?</li> <li>What measures were taken to ensure quality, transparency and accountability in the processes (for example, selection of beneficiaries by UN agencies and selection of respondents by UNDP, sample locations for data collection, data collection, management, analysis, report development)</li> <li>How was the independent character of data collection and reporting ensured?</li> <li>How effective were the partnerships and collaborations with local organizations and stakeholders?</li> <li>How adaptable and flexible were UNDP and its partners in responding to unforeseen challenges?</li> </ul>	Review of project documents, key informant interviews, beneficiary interactions	M&E, assessment, progress reports

In which areas does the NFM project have the greatest and fewest achievements? Why and what have been the supporting factors? How can the NFM or relevant projects build on or expand these achievements?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What can be described as the achievements of the project?</li> <li>• What have been the enablers for the project? How did they enable in achieving the project objectives or outputs?</li> <li>• What are the areas in which the project could not achieve the expected outputs? What were the reasons for the same?</li> <li>• How did the project utilize the achievements from the project? What was the approach used?</li> <li>• How can the project successes scale up?</li> </ul>	Review of project documents, key informant interviews	Physical progress documents, Financial documents
To what extent did the project have clear operational guidelines, procedures and tools, and implementation mechanisms (Risk management, Monitoring, Evaluation, financial management, etc.) to guide the project operations?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Were SoPs (Risk management, Monitoring &amp; Evaluation, financial management, etc.) developed for the project?</li> <li>• Who developed these SoPs? How were these SoPs developed?</li> <li>• Were these SoPs followed? If not, what were the reasons that these SoPs were not followed?</li> <li>• How many times were the SoPs changed over the project life period?</li> <li>• Which SoPs needed to be developed, and which could not be developed?</li> <li>• How effective were the SoPs (Risk management, Monitoring &amp; Evaluation, financial management, etc.) on a scale of 1-10?</li> </ul>	Desk review, Key informant interviews,	All SoPs under the project
<b>Impact</b>			
Were there any success /failures realized during the course of the implementation that were not envisioned in the initial stages?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Did the project contribute to increased capacities of project stakeholders? If yes, how?</li> <li>• What success stories have come out from the project design and implementation process?</li> </ul>	Desk review, Key informant interviews,	Reports
To what extent has the project generated or is expected to generate significant positive or negative, intended, or unintended, higher-level effects?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To what extent did the project contribute to changing the lives of the beneficiaries? What were these changes?</li> <li>• What were the most important interventions without which the project could not have functioned at all?</li> </ul>	Desk review, Key informant interviews,	Report on contribution of the project to relevant SDGs and other national priorities Results Framework, Internal and external reports that document changes due to the project
<b>Efficiency</b>			
To what extent was the project management structure, including the project board, as outlined in the project document efficient	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• On a scale of 1-10, how robust was the management structure of the project? What are the reasons behind choosing a certain score?</li> <li>• What were the challenges, if any, in the management structure of the project? How could the management structure be further improved?</li> </ul>	Desk Review, KIs, questionnaire	Management Structure, Management guidelines

in generating the expected results?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What were the changes that took place in the governance structure, project management structure, process, and procedures over the project lifecycle?</li> <li>• How was inclusiveness ensured in the management structure, functions and decision making?</li> <li>• How responsive was the management structure to change? What could have been the reasons if the project management was not responsive?</li> </ul>		
To what extent have the project implementation strategy and execution been efficient and cost-effective?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What was the volume of resources used in the project?</li> <li>• What was the percentage increase in the project budget over the project life cycle?</li> <li>• What was the cost against each of the intended results?</li> <li>• Did the money and resources spent result in realizing the intended results?</li> <li>• On which heads was the budget used? What were the guidelines for budget use?</li> <li>• What was the process of resource allocation?</li> <li>• Whether Value for Money was achieved in the project?</li> </ul>	Desk Review, KIs	Financial documents (Audit reports, Bank Reconciliations, other financial documents)
To what extent has there been an economical use of financial and human resources? Have resources (funds, human resources, time, expertise, etc.) been allocated strategically to achieve outcomes?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Do you think resources could have been saved? If yes, what were the areas in which resources could have been saved but were used nevertheless? How could the resources be saved and under which heads or in which areas?</li> <li>• What were the areas in which budget spending was important but was low or missing?</li> <li>• What impacted allocation of resources across the project lifecycle? What worked and what did not work?</li> <li>• How efficient was the project implementation approach on a scale of 1-10? What are the reasons behind the score you have chosen?</li> </ul>	Desk Review, KIs	Financial evaluation reports
To what extent the project enabled effective and efficient project management?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Was cost-benefit analysis ever done for the project?</li> <li>• What were the benefits against each dollar spent on the project?</li> <li>• What was the expected return or benefit from the project against a dollar spent?</li> </ul>	Desk Review, KIs	Financial evaluation reports
<b>Sustainability</b>			
To what extent are the project's results sustainable going forward? Are there any social or political risks that may jeopardize sustainability of project outputs and the project's contributions to country programme outputs and outcomes?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How is sustainability defined in the program (program documents and how does the project staff define sustainability?)</li> <li>• Were any commitments made by any external/internal parties to continue funding the project even after its end date?</li> <li>• What was the project plan for sustainability? When was this plan made?</li> <li>• Was a strategy developed for the project in case of reduced funding from donors? If yes, is that strategy applicable in the current context? If no, how can such a strategy be developed and contextualized?</li> </ul>	KII, Focus groups, Review of literature	Progress reports, independent evaluation reports

To what extent will financial and economic resources be available to sustain the benefits achieved by the project?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What aspects of the project can continue even without donor funding?</li> <li>• How do you think the project can be sustained?</li> <li>• What will happen to the assets (building, equipment, etc.) after the project phases out?</li> </ul>	KII, Review of literature	Audit reports
To what extent are lessons learned being documented by the project team on a continual basis and shared with appropriate parties who could learn from the project?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What learning documents were developed over the project lifecycle?</li> <li>• How were the learning documents disseminated among the different stakeholders?</li> <li>• How did the learning documents feed into and benefit the project?</li> </ul>	KII, Review of literature	
<b>Coherence</b>			
To what extent did the project complement interventions by different entities, including UNDP and other UN actors, as well as other international partners and donors?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Did the project set up complementarities of services?</li> <li>• Was any alliance or consortium formed to work together on common areas of interest?</li> <li>• Was any initiative taken for decentralized planning and setting up inclusive task force?</li> </ul>	Desk Review, KIIs	
To what extent were relevant stakeholders involved in the project's design and implementation?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How was inclusiveness ensured in project design and implementation?</li> <li>• Was there a functional Complaint or Feedback Registering Mechanism?</li> <li>• Was the CRM responsive enough?</li> <li>• What was the response rate (%) of the complaints received on yearly basis?</li> <li>• How was the feedback compiled and put into policies which governed the project? Was there a mechanism to change activity design based on target population feedback?</li> <li>• Did the project hear the voices of the target population? If yes, in what way?</li> </ul>	Desk review, KIIs, beneficiary surveys, focus groups	SoP on Feedback and Grievance Redressal
<b>Gender equality/women's empowerment, human rights, leave no one behind</b>			
To what extent does the project adopt gender-sensitive, human rights-based and conflict sensitive approaches, in compliance with the principle of Leaving No One Behind (LNOB)?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What were the ethical considerations for this project?</li> <li>• Were there operational guidelines for project staff to ensure a gender-sensitive, conflict sensitive, human rights-based approach in their work? How were people with disability included in the project?</li> <li>• Did the project invest in building capacities of stakeholders in adopting gender sensitive, human rights and conflict sensitive approaches?</li> </ul>	Desk review, KIIs	



<p>How adequately were cross-cutting themes such as human rights, gender equality, age and environment considered in the NFM project?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• On a scale of 1-10, how responsive was the project to gender/special needs? Please provide reasons for the choice of a certain score.</li> <li>• How were the risks to the participation of women/people with special needs minimized?</li> <li>• What were the SOPs for recruitment, training, and retention of women/people with special needs (for UNDP, partner staff, experts, advisors)?</li> </ul>	<p>Desk review, KIIs, questionnaire</p>	<p>HR Policy and Procedures</p>
<p>To what extent have gender equality and the empowerment of women been addressed in the design, implementation, monitoring, and communication?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How many women were recruited compared to men in the project?</li> <li>• How many women dropped out (look for a yearly drop-out trend)?</li> <li>• What was the longest serving period for a woman (compared to a man) staff?</li> <li>• What challenges did women face in terms of recruitment and training? How were these challenges addressed?</li> <li>• Were women included in design and implementation of the project? If yes, how was their inclusion ensured?</li> </ul>	<p>KIIs</p>	
<p>To what extent has the monitoring NFM project promoted positive changes in gender equality and the empowerment of women? Were there any unintended effects?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What were other essential arrangements under HR to ensure women could work with dignity?</li> <li>• On a scale of 1-10, how likely was it that a woman or a person with special needs will be allowed leave without having to provide a reason?</li> <li>• Was pay-parity ensured under the project?</li> <li>• On a scale of 1-10, how likely was it that a woman would receive equal salary than a man in the same position?</li> <li>• What could have been done better in the project to enhance diversity and inclusion?</li> </ul>	<p>Desk review, KIIs, focus groups, beneficiary surveys</p>	<p>HR Policy and Procedures</p>
<p>To what extent have local communities, women, youth, people with disabilities and other disadvantaged groups benefited from the NFM project?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How were local communities engaged in the project activities?</li> <li>• How was it ensured that women and people with disabilities, marginalized groups, were able to include their voices in the project?</li> <li>• What role did the youth play in project design and implementation?</li> <li>• What changes did the project bring in the life of local communities, women, youth, people with disabilities and other disadvantaged groups?</li> </ul>	<p>Desk review, KIIs, focus groups, beneficiary surveys</p>	

### III. RESEARCH TOOLS (KII SCHEDULES AND QUESTIONNAIRE)

#### **Key Informant INTERVIEW Schedule for UNDP Staff Monitoring Support to Novel Financing for Sustaining Essential Service Delivery Project (NFM)**

##### **A. General Questions**

1. What specific tasks did you handle related to NFM project? How did you contribute to the overall monitoring effort? What was your role in designing and/or implementation of NFM?

##### **B. Relevance**

1. What was the process through which the activities under the project planned? What was the role of the different stakeholders in the planning process?

2. How was the project relevant, given that the UN agencies monitored under the Project also had their own monitoring system? Did the evidences from monitoring and evaluation activities lead to – a. new project initiatives, intervention development, or b) improvement in systems and processes, mechanisms, or c) resource optimization. How were the UNDP findings and recommendations different from the third party TPM findings of the UN organizations?

3. How did the project support the UN agencies to achieve the NFA outputs and outcomes (for instance, the development of integrated monitoring framework or setting up inter-agency task forces, how relevant and effective were these)? Did the project aid in future planning and decision making of the UN agencies being monitored?

4. Were there any adjustments made mid-course to maintain alignment with project outputs and outcome? Can you provide some examples of these adjustments?

5. Were there any agreements or MoUs signed between UNDP and other UN agencies? What were the coordination and communication mechanisms between UNDP and UN agencies? What were the challenges in coordination and communication, if any?

6. How relevant were the IRA, progress reports, results validation and sector assessment reports? Were these studies and reports based on the need of the UN agencies? Were there discussions or brainstorming among the stakeholders on the findings and the recommendations from the studies? How were the findings and recommendations used?

7. How did the project contribute to SDGs?

##### **C. Effectiveness**

1. What were the key successes of the project and how were they achieved?

2. What internal and external factors affected the project delivery and in what ways? What could have been done to make the project more effective?

3. How effective was the project in identifying issues and guiding NFM implementation? What were the challenges faced and how were they addressed?

4. What measures were taken to ensure quality, transparency and accountability in the processes (for example, selection of beneficiaries by UN agencies and selection of respondents by UNDP, sample locations for data collection, data collection, management, analysis, report development)

5. How was the independent character of project and project components (data collection, management, reporting) ensured?

6. Were SoPs (Risk management, Monitoring & Evaluation, financial management, etc.) developed for the project? Who developed these SoPs? How were these SoPs developed? Were these SoPs followed? If not, what were the reasons that these SoPs were not followed? How many times were the SoPs changed over the project life period? Which SoPs needed to be developed, and which could not be developed?

##### **D. Impact**

1. What was the impact of this project at UN Organization level, partner level, ADB level and community level?

2. Can you please share some success stories or unexpected outcomes of this project? What were the lessons learnt from this project?

3. What would have happened if this project did not exist?

4. Did the project contribute to increasing the capacities of different stakeholders? If so, how?

5. How did this project contribute to any of the SDGs? Was this contribution acknowledged at the national and international level?

##### **E. Efficiency**

1. How was the management structure planned? What are the possibilities that a different management structure could have achieved similar outcomes? Was the management structure supportive of your work?
2. Were there any changes made to the management structure during this project period? If yes, what were the reasons for these changes?
3. How were the resources (human, financial, etc.) allocated through the project? Was this allocation sufficient? Were there any areas where the resources could have been saved or utilized more efficiently?
4. Was a Cost-Benefit Analysis or Social Return on Investment ever conducted for the project? If yes, what were the key findings in terms of cost-effectiveness?
5. Were any challenges encountered related to budget management or resource allocation during implementation?

#### **F. Sustainability**

1. What is the phase-out plan for the project? Was a strategy developed to sustain the project's activities or benefits after end of donor funding? How effective has been this strategy? If no such strategy exists, how are the project results going to be sustained?
2. What aspects of the project can continue without donor funding? Were any commitments made by external or internal parties to continue funding the project after its conclusion? Could the systems you worked on continue without external funding?

#### **G. Coherence**

1. Did the project try to set-up complementarities of services? If no, what were the reasons?
2. How were relevant stakeholders, including local communities, women, youth and people with disabilities, involved in project's design and implementation? How effective was the project in setting up partnerships or alliances with local organizations and stakeholders?

#### **H. Gender equality/women's empowerment, human rights, leave no one behind**

1. What were the ethical considerations for this project?
2. Were there operational guidelines for project staff to ensure a gender-sensitive, conflict sensitive, human rights-based approach in their work? How were people with disability included in the project?
3. Did the project invest in building capacities of stakeholders in adopting gender sensitive, human rights and conflict sensitive approaches?
4. How many women were recruited compared to men in the project (applies to all levels)? How many women dropped out mid-course?
5. What challenges did women face in terms of recruitment, training and working? How were these challenges addressed?
6. What were other essential arrangements under HR to ensure women could work with dignity?
7. Were women included in design and implementation of the project? If yes, how was their inclusion ensured? Was pay-parity ensured under the project?
8. How did the project in-corporate gender sensitive, human rights-based and conflict sensitive approaches? What could have been done better in the project to enhance diversity and inclusion?

#### **H. Conclusion**

1. Were lessons learned documented and shared across stakeholders? How were these learnings used to improve NFM and NFA implementation?
2. What key lessons have been learned from this project that could inform future similar projects?
3. Based on your experience, what recommendations would you give for improving the monitoring systems for future projects

## **Key Informant INTERVIEW Schedule for Representatives of UN Agencies Monitoring Support to Novel Financing for Sustaining Essential Service Delivery Project (NFM)**

### **A. General Questions**

1. What was your role in this Project? How many months did you spend in the project?

### **B. Relevance**

1. Who were involved in planning the NFM Project? What process was adopted to developing and finalizing the project plan? Was the project relevant to the monitoring needs of the NFA Project?

2. To what extent was NFM aligned with NFA outputs and outcomes? What efforts were made to align the same? Were there challenges in aligning the monitoring system with NFA project outputs? How were these addressed?

3. How did the inter-agency task force work? Did conflicts exist or take place in its operations? How were these conflicts managed?

4. What was the process of coordination, communication, feedback between UNDP and other UN agencies?

5. How was this project relevant to other UN agencies given that they have their own monitoring & evaluation systems and mechanisms, including independent, third-party monitoring?

6. What was the process through which the project activities were planned? What was your role in this planning? What was your role in implementation of the activities?

7. Do you think that the project was set-up with clear purpose and objectives? What could have been done better?

### **C. Effectiveness**

1. How did the monitoring system help in tracking the project's progress toward its outcomes?

2. What factors affected the achievement of project objectives?

3. How adaptable and flexible was UNDP in responding to your needs?

4. How did the monitoring system help strengthen partnerships and collaborations with local organizations?

5. What can be described as achievements of the project? What have been the enablers for the project and what were the limitations? What are the areas in which the project could not achieve the expected output?

6. How did the achievements of the monitoring support inform the NFA project's adjustments or interventions?

9. Are you aware if SoPs (for QA/QC, Data Collection, Analysis, Reporting) were developed? Did you (as in the organization) have any role in development/validation of these SoPs? Were these SoPs followed in the field?

10. Did UNDP develop MECLA strategy for NFM? What other strategies were developed? How effective were these strategies? How was data visualized and reported?

11. What resources were allocated by your organization for this project? How were these resources utilized?

### **D. Impact**

1. To what extent did the monitoring system contribute to identifying and measuring the project's impact?

2. Did the project contribute to increased capacities of project stakeholders? If yes, how?

3. What success stories have come out from the project design and implementation process? What are the key learnings?

4. What were the most critical monitoring-related interventions without which the project could not have functioned?

5. How did NFA contribute to different SDGs? Was this contribution possible without NFM?

### **E. Efficiency**

1. What is your opinion about the project management structure? How could the management structure be further improved?

2. Did the resources spent on monitoring systems result in realizing the intended outcomes, or could they have been allocated differently?

3. Were there areas where monitoring resources were over or under-utilized?

### **F. Sustainability**

1. How is sustainability defined in the context of this project? What was the plan for sustainability? Was any strategy developed?

2. What aspects of the project can continue without donor funding?

3. What will happen to the assets created under the project after the project phases out or comes to an end?

4. Were there specific learning documents related to monitoring support, and how were they used to ensure sustainability? Do the learnings documents or the knowledge materials have any future use?

### **G. Coherence**

1. Did the project try to set-up complementarities? Was any alliance, consortium, working groups, task force formed to work together on common areas of interest and based on the evidence gathered?

2. Was the monitoring system aligned with the complaint and feedback mechanisms, and how did this influence project policies?

3. How effective was the monitoring system in capturing feedback from marginalized groups (women, people with disabilities)?

### **H. Gender equality/women's empowerment, human rights, leave no one behind**

1. What were the ethical considerations for this project?

2. Were there operational guidelines for project staff to ensure a gender-sensitive, conflict sensitive, human rights-based approach in their work? How were people with disability included in the project?

3. Did the project invest in building capacities of stakeholders in adopting gender sensitive, human rights and conflict sensitive approaches?

4. How many women were recruited compared to men in the project (applies to all levels)? How many women dropped out mid-course?

5. What challenges did women face in terms of recruitment, training and working? How were these challenges addressed?

6. What were other essential arrangements under HR to ensure women could work with dignity?

7. Were women included in design and implementation of the project? If yes, how was their inclusion ensured? Was pay-parity ensured under the project?

8. How did the project incorporate gender sensitive, human rights-based and conflict sensitive approaches? What could have been done better in the project to enhance diversity and inclusion?

### **I. Conclusion**

1. What are your recommendations for improving monitoring support in future projects?

## **Key Informant Interview Schedule for ADB Representative Monitoring Support to Novel Financing for Sustaining Essential Service Delivery Project (NFM)**

### **A. General Questions**

1. How did your role interact with the monitoring systems established in the project?

### **B. Relevance**

1. Why this project was considered relevant given that the UN agencies have their own monitoring mechanism and they also deploy independent, third-party monitors?

2. Were you involved in planning of the project? What role did you play? Who else was involved? What process was adopted in developing and finalizing the project? How was it relevant to the changing context of the country?

3. How did this Project support the UN agencies to achieve the NFA (Novel Financing for Afghanistan) outputs and outcomes? Did the project aid in future planning and decision making of the UN agencies being monitored?

4. Could the monitoring system have been designed differently to provide more timely or accurate information? If yes, how?

5. What was the process thorough which the project activities were planned? What role did ADB play in planning the activities?

6. How did the project activities address the need of the NFA Project beneficiaries? Were the project activities able to achieve the project objectives and goals and the NFA objectives and goals?

7. Did the monitoring system provide the data needed to respond to evolving needs? Could the system have been more responsive? What other interventions could have been implemented to enhance the project's relevance to national priorities?

8. How did the project contribute to different SDGs? Was this contribution acknowledged at the national and international level?

### **C. Effectiveness**

1. How did the monitoring system contribute to achieving the NFA project outputs? What have been the enablers for the project? How did they enable in achieving the project objectives or outputs?

2. What are the areas in which the project could not achieve the expected outputs? What were the reasons for the same?

3. How effectively was the evidence generated from monitoring used to guide decision-making and project adjustments?

### **D. Efficiency**

1. Were there any challenges in integrating monitoring activities into the management structure?

2. Did the money and resources spent on monitoring contribute to realizing intended results of NFA? Did ADB provide guidelines for budget use? What was the process of financial management?

3. What were the areas in which resources could have been saved? What were the areas in which budget spending was important but was low or missing? How could the resources be saved?

4. Did the ADB undertake any Cost-Benefit Analysis for this project? If no, why? What was the expected return or benefit from the project against a dollar spent? How would have absence of this project affected NFA financially?

5. Did you observe any gaps or delays in resource allocation that impacted the project's cost-effectiveness? What mechanisms were in place to ensure cost-effectiveness? What were the major challenges in managing the project's budget or resources?

### **E. Impact**

1. Were there any success stories where monitoring data led to significant project adjustments or outcomes?

2. What were the most important interventions without which the project could not have functioned at all?

3. What challenges were faced during design and implementation process? How were these challenges addressed?

4. Did the monitoring system identify any unforeseen impacts (positive or negative) that wouldn't have been detected otherwise?

5. Did the project build capacity among various stakeholders, including local partners and communities? If yes, how was this achieved?

### **F. Sustainability**

1. How sustainable is the monitoring system established by the project? Can it continue without external funding?
2. What was the plan for sustainability for this project? When was this plan made? How successful has this plan been?
3. What aspects of the project can continue without ADB or any other donor funding? What happens to the assets after phase out?
4. Did the project develop a MECLA strategy? What learning documents were developed? How were the learning documents used and knowledge disseminated among the different stakeholders? How did these learning documents feed and benefit the project?

#### **G. Coherence**

1. Did the project set-up complementarities? Was any alliance or consortium formed to work together on common areas of interest?
2. How was inclusiveness ensured in the project design and implementation? Was a functional Complaint and Feedback Registration System or Mechanism set-up as a part of the Project? If yes, how was the feedback compiled and used to influence the NFA project policies?

#### **H. Gender equality/women's empowerment, human rights, leave no one behind**

1. Were there operational guidelines for project staff to ensure a gender-sensitive, conflict sensitive, human rights-based approach in their work? How were people with disability included in the project?
2. How were local communities, women, youth and people with disabilities involved in project's design and implementation? How was the project in setting-up partnerships or alliances with local organizations and stakeholders?
3. Did the project invest in building capacities of stakeholders in adopting gender sensitive, human rights and conflict sensitive approaches?
4. How did the project in-corporate gender sensitive, human rights-based and conflict sensitive approaches? What could have been done better in the project to enhance diversity and inclusion?
5. What could have been done better in the project to enhance diversity and inclusion?

#### **I. Conclusion**

What recommendations would you make to improve monitoring support for future projects?

**Key Informant Interview Schedule for Representatives of UN Partner  
Organizations/Experts/Specialists/Consultants  
Monitoring Support to Novel Financing for Sustaining Essential Service Delivery Project  
(NFM)**

**A. Relevance**

1. What role did you or your organization play in the Project (Monitoring of NFA Project)? Did you get an opportunity to provide inputs in the assignment you undertook at the design stage or pre-bid stage?
2. How did the monitoring support provided by your assignment add value to the NFA project? Was it critical to ensuring relevance to the local context?
3. While designing the implementation of the assignment did you consult any other stakeholder other than UNDP? If yes, then who were these stakeholders? How did they help in the design aspect of your assignment? If no, they why? What was the process used to design the delivery of your assignment?
4. In implementing your assignment, how did you integrate monitoring tools to ensure timely tracking of progress and stakeholder buy-in?
5. Did you receive ample clarity on what was to be achieved from the assignment? Did you receive required support, guidance or handholding from UNDP?
6. How did you work contribute to different SDGs?

**B. Effectiveness**

1. How did internal (UN agencies) and external factors (political, social) affect the effectiveness of the monitoring systems?
2. Did economic challenges affect the implementation or quality of the monitoring activities? How was this managed?
3. What measures did you take to ensure cultural sensitivity and community engagement? How did you select your sample locations, respondents?
4. How effective were your partnerships with local organizations, DFA departments, CDCs and community members? What challenges did you face in establishing these partnerships?
5. How flexible was UNDP in adapting the monitoring systems to unforeseen challenges?
6. What were the main achievements of the monitoring support in the NFM project?
7. What is the way forward for similar projects? What are the areas in which the project could not achieve the expected outputs? What could be the reasons for the same?
8. Did UNDP undertake orientations or workshops to guide you or build your capacity during the assignment life-cycle? Also, were there SoPs or Guides in place, either at your end or the end of UNDP, for MECLA, Risk Management, QA/QC, etc.)? If yes, were these SoPs followed?
9. How did you ensure independent nature of your work? How did you ensure quality, transparency and accountability in your work?

**C. Efficiency**

1. How effective was the management structure in supporting the monitoring activities of the NFA project? Were there challenges?
2. Were there areas where monitoring resources could have been optimized to improve efficiency?
3. What was the return or benefit from the project against the money spent? Were these returns or benefits as per expectations?

**D. Impact**

1. How did the monitoring system contribute to the overall success of the NFA project?
2. Did the monitoring data show that the project achieved its intended impact? How?
3. Did the project contribute to increased capacities of project stakeholders? If yes, then how?
4. Can you share success stories where monitoring data led to significant changes or improvements in the project?
5. How did the project contribute to changing the lives of the NFA project beneficiaries?



6. What were the most important interventions in the project without which the project could not have functioned at all?

#### **E. Sustainability**

1. Was there a strategy for sustaining the monitoring system beyond the project period?
2. Which aspects of the monitoring system can be sustained without donor funding, and how?
3. Did NFM have a MECLA strategy? How was the strategy implemented, especially the CLA part?
4. Were any learning documents related to monitoring systems created? How were they used?

#### **F. Coherence, Gender equality/women's empowerment, human rights, leave no one behind**

1. How inclusive was the monitoring system in capturing feedback from diverse groups (e.g., women, marginalized communities)?
2. Was the monitoring system aligned with the complaint mechanism to capture data on service delivery issues?
3. Were guidelines followed to ensure human rights-based approach in your work? How?
4. What was the strategy to include women, children, youth, people with disability, IDPs, returnees, marginalized communities in your work for NFM? How were local communities engaged in NFM activities?
5. What could have been done better in the project to enhance diversity and inclusion?

#### **G. Conclusion**

1. What recommendations would you provide to improve monitoring systems in future similar projects?

**Thank you for giving your valuable time! You have been simply awesome!**

## Online Questionnaire

### Section 1: Relevance

1. To what extent do you agree that the NFM project was aligned with NFA priorities?  
Strongly Disagree (1) | Disagree (2) | Neutral (3) | Agree (4) | Strongly Agree (5)
  2. How well do you think the NFM project aligned with the UNDP Strategic Plan?  
Not at all aligned (1) | Slightly aligned (2) | Moderately aligned (3) | Well aligned (4) | Completely aligned (5)
  3. To what extent was the planning and design of the NFM project relevant to the changing context of the country?  
Not relevant (1) | Slightly relevant (2) | Moderately relevant (3) | Very relevant (4) | Extremely relevant (5)
- 

### Section 2: Effectiveness

4. How effective was the NFM project in achieving its intended objectives?  
Not effective (1) | Slightly effective (2) | Moderately effective (3) | Very effective (4) | Extremely effective (5)
  5. How effectively were monitoring and evaluation findings used to adapt and improve the NFA project?  
Not at all (1) | Slightly (2) | Moderately (3) | Very much (4) | Completely (5)
  6. To what extent do you agree that the project addressed the needs of the target groups (beneficiaries)?  
Strongly Disagree (1) | Disagree (2) | Neutral (3) | Agree (4) | Strongly Agree (5)
- 

### Section 3: Efficiency

7. How efficient was the NFM project in using resources (financial, human, and time) to achieve its outcomes?  
Very inefficient (1) | Somewhat inefficient (2) | Neutral (3) | Somewhat efficient (4) | Very efficient (5)
  8. On a scale of 1 to 10, how would you rate the efficiency of the project's management structure?  
(1 = Very inefficient, 10 = Extremely efficient)
  9. To what extent do you agree that the project achieved value for money in its implementation?  
Strongly Disagree (1) | Disagree (2) | Neutral (3) | Agree (4) | Strongly Agree (5)
- 

### Section 4: Impact

10. How much do you think the NFM project has contributed to positive changes in the lives of beneficiaries?  
No change (1) | Slight change (2) | Moderate change (3) | Significant change (4) | Major change (5)
  11. To what extent did the project contribute to building the capacities of stakeholders (project staff, beneficiaries, partners)?  
Not at all (1) | Slightly (2) | Moderately (3) | Significantly (4) | Extremely (5)
  12. How successful was the NFM project in achieving its intended impact?  
Not successful (1) | Slightly successful (2) | Moderately successful (3) | Very successful (4) | Extremely successful (5)
- 

### Section 5: Sustainability

13. How likely is it that the benefits and outcomes of the NFM project will be sustained beyond the project lifecycle?  
Very unlikely (1) | Unlikely (2) | Neutral (3) | Likely (4) | Very likely (5)
14. To what extent do you agree that there is a clear plan in place for the sustainability of the project's achievements?

Strongly Disagree (1) | Disagree (2) | Neutral (3) | Agree (4) | Strongly Agree (5)

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### **Section 6: Coherence**

15. To what extent was the NFM project complementary to other similar interventions by UNDP or other international agencies?  
Not at all (1) | Slightly (2) | Moderately (3) | Very much (4) | Completely (5)
16. How inclusive was the project design and implementation in ensuring the participation of all relevant stakeholders (e.g., government agencies, local communities, and beneficiaries)?  
Not inclusive (1) | Slightly inclusive (2) | Moderately inclusive (3) | Very inclusive (4) | Completely inclusive (5)
- 

### **Section 7: Gender Equality, Human Rights, and Inclusion**

17. How well do you think the project adopted gender-sensitive and human rights-based approaches in its design and implementation?  
Not at all (1) | Slightly (2) | Moderately (3) | Well (4) | Completely (5)
18. To what extent were marginalized groups (women, youth, people with disabilities) able to participate in and benefit from the project?  
Not at all (1) | Slightly (2) | Moderately (3) | Very much (4) | Completely (5)
19. On a scale of 1-10, how likely was it that the project promoted gender equality and the empowerment of women?  
(1 = Not likely, 10 = Extremely likely)
- 

### **Section 8: Overall Assessment**

20. Overall, how satisfied are you with the NFM project's ability to meet its objectives and contribute to national development priorities?  
Very dissatisfied (1) | Dissatisfied (2) | Neutral (3) | Satisfied (4) | Very satisfied (5)


#### IV. LIST OF INDIVIDUALS INTERVIEWED

Sl.	Name	Gender	Organization	Designation
1.	Joanna Brooks	F	UNDP	Monitoring, Evaluation and Reporting Specialist
2.	Delesgues Lorenzo	M	Voxmapp/Apama	Result validator
3.	Akanksha Chaurey	F	International Consultant	
4.	Khwaga Kakar	F	Apama Consultancy Services	Director
5.	Wajihullah Sahibzada	M	UNDP	Monitoring and Evaluation Officer
6.	Abdul Hares Halimi	M	Asian Development Bank	Programs Officer and UNDP's Project Team Leader
7.	Nawidullah Assadzay	M	MgtWell Consulting Services	Head of M&E
8.	Azizullah Azizi	M	UNDP	M&E Officer
9.	Hyewon Jung	F	UNDP Afghanistan	Partnerships & Programme Advisor
10.	Dirk Stoelhorst	M	UNDP IRMU	Risk Management Specialist
11.	Syed Haroon Ahmadi	M	UNDP Afghanistan Afghanistan	RBM Analyst
12.	Anisha Thapa	F	UNDP Afghanistan	Programme Specialist - Quality Assurance
13.	Muhammad Nassim Attahi	M	UNDP Afghanistan	Country Economist
14.	Nenad Tonic	M	UNICEF Afghanistan	Monitoring Lead, UNICEF, Education Section
15.	Anthony Sabiti	M	WFP Afghanistan	Deputy Head of Programme
16.	Sarayu Hanchaicharoen	M	WFP Afghanistan	Head, M&E
17.	Kaustabh Devale	M	FAO Afghanistan	Emergency and Rehabilitation Officer, Head of Programme Unit
18.	Abebe WondimuPetros	M	FAO Afghanistan	MEAL Officer
19.	Bikash Ranjan Dash	M	UNDP	Former Project Manager, UNDP NFM
20.	Najibullah Yusufi	M	UNDP Afganistan	Programme Analyst, UNDP, PQA Unit

## V. LIST OF SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS REVIEWED


- Minutes of Project Board Meeting, dt. 02.11.2023
- Monitoring and Evaluation Plan and Budget, Period – 01 Jan – 31 Dec, 2024 and 01 Jan – 31 Dec, 2023
- Impact/Immediate Results Assessment (IRA-1) Report, Dec, 2023
- Second Round Impact Assessment Report (IRA-2), April 9, 2024
- Third Round Impact Assessment Project (IRA-3), August 06, 2024
- Field Monitoring Reports – July 30, 31, 2024
- Project Administration Manual – FAO, UNICEF, UNDP, WFP
- UNDP NFM Project Document
- Annual Progress Report, 2023
- Half-yearly Progress Report, 1 January to 30 June, 2024
- Quarterly Progress Reports, 2024 (Q1, Q2)
- Quarterly Progress Report, 2023 (Q3)
- Project Quality Assurance Report
- Results Validation (Wave 2) Report
- Results Validation (Wave 3) Report
- Results Validation Inception Report
- Sector Assessment Reports – (a) Economic prospects of Afghanistan and possible paths toward future sustainable growth, (b) Nutrition sector socio-economic analysis, (c) Health sector socio-economic analysis, (d) Energy sector baseline report, (e) Energy programme conceptual report, (f) community based survey to assess the food security report
- ADB Sustainability Report, 2024
- UNDP Strategic Plan, 2022-25
- United Nations Strategic Framework, 2023-25
- SE Safeguards Monitoring Report, January – June 2024
- UNDP Afghanistan Gender Study
- Progress towards results NFM

VI. PLEDGE OF ETHICAL CONDUCT IN EVALUATION SIGNED BY EVALUATORS.







ETHICAL GUIDELINES FOR EVALUATION

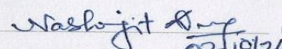
## PLEDGE OF ETHICAL CONDUCT IN EVALUATION



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

<p> <b>INTEGRITY</b></p> <p>I will actively adhere to the moral values and professional standards of evaluation practice as outlined in the UNEG Ethical Guidelines for Evaluation and following the values of the United Nations. Specifically, I will be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Honest and truthful</b> in my communication and actions.</li> <li>• <b>Professional</b>, engaging in credible and trustworthy behaviour, alongside competence, commitment and ongoing reflective practice.</li> <li>• <b>Independent, impartial and incorruptible</b>.</li> </ul>	<p> <b>ACCOUNTABILITY</b></p> <p>I will be answerable for all decisions made and actions taken and responsible for honouring commitments, without qualification or exception; I will report potential or actual harms observed. Specifically, I will be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Transparent</b> regarding evaluation purpose and actions taken, establishing trust and increasing accountability for performance to the public, particularly those populations affected by the evaluation.</li> <li>• <b>Responsive</b> as questions or events arise, adapting plans as required and referring to appropriate channels where corruption, fraud, sexual exploitation or abuse or other misconduct or waste of resources is identified.</li> <li>• <b>Responsible</b> for meeting the evaluation purpose and for actions taken and for ensuring redress and recognition as needed.</li> </ul>	<p> <b>RESPECT</b></p> <p>I will engage with all stakeholders of an evaluation in a way that honours their dignity, well-being, personal agency and characteristics. Specifically, I will ensure:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Access to the evaluation process and products by all relevant stakeholders – whether powerless or powerful – with due attention to factors that could impede access such as sex, gender, race, language, country of origin, LGBTQ status, age, background, religion, ethnicity and ability.</li> <li>• Meaningful participation and equitable treatment of all relevant stakeholders in the evaluation processes, from design to dissemination. This includes engaging various stakeholders, particularly affected people, so they can actively inform the evaluation approach and products rather than being solely a subject of data collection.</li> <li>• Fair representation of different voices and perspectives in evaluation products (reports, webinars, etc.).</li> </ul>	<p> <b>BENEVICENCE</b></p> <p>I will strive to do good for people and planet while minimizing harm arising from evaluation as an intervention. Specifically, I will ensure:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Explicit and ongoing consideration of risks and benefits from evaluation processes.</li> <li>• Maximum benefits at systemic (including environmental), organizational and programmatic levels.</li> <li>• No harm. I will not proceed where harm cannot be mitigated.</li> <li>• Evaluation makes an overall positive contribution to human and natural systems and the mission of the United Nations.</li> </ul>
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I commit to playing my part in ensuring that evaluations are conducted according to the Charter of the United Nations and the ethical requirements laid down above and contained within the UNEG Ethical Guidelines for Evaluation. When this is not possible, I will report the situation to my supervisor, designated focal points or channels and will actively seek an appropriate response.

NABHOJIT DEY (International Consultant)  (Signature and Date)  
02/10/24



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