

**UNDP (Nepal)
Country Programme Outcome
Evaluation
(Outcomes 5 & 6)**

FINAL REPORT

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Peter Blunt

Sushil J. B. Rana

Surendra Bhandari

Table of Contents

<i>Acknowledgements</i>	4
<i>List of Acronyms</i>	5
Executive Summary	6
Outcome Attainment	6
UNDP Contribution	8
Suggestions for Project Modification	8
Main Variables Affecting Project Performance	8
Recommendations for Project and Programme Performance Improvement	9
Suggestions for UN Support to State Governance (2018-2022)	9
Governance Context	12
United Nations Development Assistance Framework (2013-2017) and UNDP Country Programme	15
UNDP's Governance Programme	17
Election Support Project 2012- 2017	17
Local Government & Community Development Programme 2013-2017	17
Project to Prepare the Public Administration for State Reforms 2013-2016	17
Support to Participatory Constitution Building in Nepal Project 2008-2015	18
Parliament Support Project 2015-2019	18
Evaluation Objectives	19
Method	20
Progress towards the Attainment of Country Programme Outcomes 5 and 6 and Likelihood of Attainment by December 2017	22
Evaluation of Project and Programme Performance	25
<i>Election Support Project 2012- 2017</i>	25
<i>Local Government and Community Development Programme and its Policy and Programme Support Facility 2013-2017</i>	27
<i>Project to Prepare the Public Administration for State Reforms 2013-2016</i>	29
<i>Support to Participatory Constitution Building in Nepal Project 2008-2015</i>	31
<i>Parliament Support Project 2015-2019</i>	33
Main Independent Variables affecting Project AND Programme Performance	34
Recommendations for Project and Programme Performance Improvement	36
The Political Economy of the Governance Context and its Implications	36
Project Quality Assurance: Design, and Human Resource Management	36
Critical Analysis and Critical Self-Reflection	38
Knowledge of Main UN Planning Documents	38
Outcomes and Outcome Indicators	38
Understanding of Development, Gender Issues, and Key Terms	38
UNDP's Comparative Advantages	39
UNDP's 'Partnership Strategy'	39
Collaboration between UN Agencies	39
The Role of Country Office Programme/Project Managers	39
Suggestions for UN Support to State Governance (2018-2022)	41

<i>Thorough Analysis of the Governance Context</i>	41
<i>Strategic Positioning</i>	41
<i>Subnational Governance under the New Constitution</i>	42
<i>The Management of the Transition</i>	42
<i>Development Challenges ‘Outside’ of the Transition</i>	43
Upward Accountability	43
Human Resource Management in Government	44
Development ‘Hot Spots’: Municipalities	45
Investment Climate and the Productive Investment of Remittances	45
Returning Migrant Labour and Performance-Based Business Training and Incubation	46
Joint-Ventures and Cooperatives among Female-Headed Households	46
Expanding Performance-Based Vocational Training for Young People	46
Conclusion	48
<i>References</i>	50
<i>Annex 1: Evaluation Questions and Weightings, Data Sources and Methods</i>	53
<i>Annex 2: Work Plan</i>	62
<i>Annex 3: Standardised Data Collection Instrument</i>	64
<i>Annex 4: Progress towards the Attainment of Indicators for Country Programme Outcomes 5 and 6</i>	65
<i>Annex 5: Election Support Project – Project Evaluation Summary</i>	73
<i>Annex 6: Local Government & Community Development II – Project Evaluation Summary</i>	77
<i>Annex 7: Project to Prepare the Public Administration for State Reforms (PREPARE) 2013-2016 – Project Evaluation Summary</i>	82
<i>Annex 8: Support to Participatory Constitution Building in Nepal - Project Evaluation Summary</i>	86
<i>Annex 9: Parliament Support Project – Project Evaluation Summary</i>	91
<i>Annex 10: Bibliography</i>	94
<i>Annex 11: List of persons met</i>	97
<i>Annex 12: List of participants: CAC (Jun Tara) & WCF, Jagatra Devi VDC – 2 Nailothok Gaon, Syangja District</i>	100

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Peter Blunt
Sushil J. B. Rana
Surendra Bhandari

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List of Acronyms

CA	Constituent Assembly
CAC	Community Awareness Centre
CIAA	Commission for the Investigation of Abuse of Authority
CP	Country Programme
CPA	Comprehensive Peace Agreement
ECN	Electoral Commission Nepal
ESP	Election Support Project
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
HDI	Human Development Index
HDR	Human Development Report
LGCDP	Local Governance and Community Development Program
LSGA	Local-Self Governance Act
MDG	Millennium Development Goal
MTEF	Medium Term Expenditure Framework
PPSF	Policy and Program Support Facility
PREPARE	Project to Prepare the Public Administration for State Reform
PPSF	Policy and Programme Support Facility
PSP	Parliament Support Project
SPCBN	Support to Participatory Constitution Building in Nepal
TOR	Terms of Reference
UN	United Nations
UNDAF	United Nations Development Assistance Framework
UNDESA	United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs
UNDP	United Nations Development Program
USD	United States Dollar
WCF	Ward Citizen Forum
WB	World Bank

UNDP (Nepal) Country Programme Outcome Evaluation (Outcomes 5 & 6)

Executive Summary

1. The objectives of this evaluation required us to do the following (passages in quotes are *verbatim* from our TOR):

- (i) First, ‘to assess whether and to what extent...Country Programme (CP) outcomes 5 and 6 have been or are being achieved and to what extent UNDP support has contributed and is likely to contribute towards achieving the outcomes’.
- (ii) Second, to gauge the likelihood of ‘outcomes 5 and/or 6, and related outputs’, being attained by the end of 2017.
- (iii) Third, to consider, and to make recommendations concerning, ways in which the activities of existing projects can be modified in order to optimise their contributions to UNDAF/CP outcomes until the end of 2017. These projects comprise the Election Support Project (ESP), the Local Government and Community Development Programme II (LGCDP II), the Project to Prepare the Public Administration for State Reforms (PREPARE), Support to Participatory Constitution Building in Nepal (SPCBN), and the Parliament Support Project (PSP) (collectively, henceforth, the Programme).
- (iv) Fourth, to identify and analyse the major factors that affect project performance and to suggest ways in which they might be taken into account in activity design and implementation.
- (v) And fifth, to identify critical issues related to outcomes 5 and 6 of the existing UNDAF/CP that could inform the development of the next UNDAF/CP.

Outcome Attainment

2. This evaluation is restricted to Outcomes 5 and 6 of the UNDP Country Programme.¹ Outcome 5 states that: ‘Institutions, systems and processes of democratic governance are more accountable, effective, efficient and inclusive’; and Outcome 6 states that: ‘The three tiers of government are established and function to meet the needs of the new federal constitution’.

3. It is our view that both Outcomes 5 and 6 of the CP represent such lofty ambitions, and are so all-encompassing, that they would test the resources of a much larger, much more capable, and much longer-term programme than the one that is the subject of this evaluation, even if it were combined with the other governance-related support being provided by UNDP and other UN agencies and by government. Just to take one feature of Outcome 5 – ‘accountability’ – no distinction is drawn between upward and downward accountability. Moreover, this feature of the outcome and those on ‘inclusiveness’, ‘effectiveness’ and ‘efficiency’ refer to *all* ‘institutions, systems and processes’ of *governance*, that is, all domains, namely, *government*, the private sector and civil society and all governance-related ‘institutions, systems and processes’ within them. Any one of these features in just a single domain would be a mammoth undertaking in its own right.

¹ These are identical to Outcomes 5 and 6 of the UNDAF.

4. Very much the same can be said about Outcome 6 where no qualification is made in relation to ‘the three tiers of government’ that could materialise under the constitution and the very different implications for feasibility that different forms of subnational governance would have.

5. By dint of this (over-ambition) alone, progress towards anything like the complete achievement of these outcomes was destined not to have a very good outlook.

6. Against this background, the limited progress that has been made in relation to outcome attainment has been much better in relation to Outcome 5 than Outcome 6. We project that most of the indicators for Outcome 5 will be achieved by the end of 2017. Even so, for Outcome 5, few of the indicators have any clear bearing on the ‘accountability’ or ‘effectiveness’ or ‘efficiency’ of *government*, let alone *governance*. Most of them (5 out of a total of 8) are directed at questions of ‘inclusiveness’. Of the remainder, Indicator 5.2.1 has to do with a limited aspect of financial management effectiveness; 5.2.2 is concerned with one feature of downward accountability. While Indicator 5.2.3 is concerned with the *efficiency* of reporting. Neither 5.2.2 nor 5.2.3 specifies a benchmark or target.

7. We therefore do not expect the ‘effectiveness’ or ‘accountability’ or ‘efficiency’ aspects of Outcome 5 to be achieved by the end of 2017 or for much progress to be made towards their attainment.

8. We note that addressing questions of governance accountability, effectiveness, and efficiency need not have been hindered by the delay in the promulgation of the constitution. We are also of the view that, while a constraint on performance and its measurement, UN corporate inflexibility and the resulting limits imposed on ‘outcome change following approval’ was not a major factor in the performance of the programme and is therefore not included among the ‘main independent variables affecting project and programme performance’ that are discussed in the body of the report.

9. The prospects for complete indicator attainment in relation to Outcome 6 are not good, and we also have reservations about the quality of indicators for this outcome: in terms of their benignness, in terms of their clarity, and in terms of their development relevance. Examples are given in the body of the report.

10. For the reasons given above, and because of the project performance limitations we discuss in the body of the report, it seems highly unlikely to us that Outcome 6 – ‘the three tiers of government are established and function to meet the needs of the new federal constitution’ – or any of its three outputs will be realised by the end of 2017.

11. In summary, for the following reasons (apart from reasons of project performance and design, which we discuss separately), we are persuaded that only modest progress will be made towards the attainment of Outcome 5 and that there will be little or no progress towards the attainment of Outcome 6:

- (i) The ambition and scope of both outcomes are far too great for the time and other resources available for their attainment.
- (ii) The assumptions implicit in Outcome 6 did not materialise.
- (iii) The indicators for Outcome 5 are mostly concerned with the ‘inclusiveness’ aspect of the outcome.
- (iv) Even if achieved, the remaining (‘accountability’, ‘effectiveness’, and ‘efficiency’) indicators for Outcome 5 will not contribute significantly to the attainment of this outcome.
- (v) The absence of benchmarks and targets for a number of the indicators.
- (vi) The benignness of some indicators and the opaqueness of one.
- (vii) Weak connections between some indicators and their respective outcomes.
- (viii) The frequency with which indicators have changed.

- (ix) The limited extent to which the indicators gave a fair reflection of what at least some of the projects were doing.

12. The modest progress that will be made in relation to the indicators for Outcome 6 will have little direct bearing on the achievement of the outcome.

UNDP Contribution

13. UNDP has made a good contribution to the attainment of the inclusiveness aspects of Outcome 5, particularly through the ESP, the Policy and Programme Support Facility (PPSF) of LGCPD II,² and SPCBN. Contributions to Outcome 6 have been more difficult and problematic for the reasons we outline above and explain more fully in the body of the report.

Suggestions for Project Modification

14. Our suggestions for project modification arise from our evaluation of the performance of each of the five projects that comprise the Programme against the numerous questions we were required to address (as set out in our Terms of reference and discussed in Annex 1).

15. The best-performing projects were found to be the ESP, LGCPD II, and SPCBN.

16. In relation to ESP, LGCPD II, and SPCBN, possibilities for future work are set out in the body of the report

17. On the down side, we found that some of the activities supported in the CACs – such as animal husbandry (goats and poultry) – and the advice provided – e.g., on civil registration (births and deaths) – was either already well-known or obvious to local communities or where, because the message was straightforward and word would spread very quickly, would only need to be told once. The risks of making the mundane a matter for continuing development assistance are, first, that of creating in communities an over-dependence on support from ‘above’ – a ‘cargo cult’ mentality³; and second, of reducing the credibility of the assistance that is being provided because at least some of the people involved are going through the motions rather than doing anything that is recognised to be genuinely developmental. This is an example of the sort of issue that should have attracted the critical attention of the PPSF, and it may be representative of a more general problem.

18. We formed the view that PREPARE is in need of complete reformulation – that is, a new project - which we understand is planned by UNDP. Ideally, this should be preceded by a thorough and high quality analysis of the governance context of Nepal. A number of our suggestions concerning future support to governance – made in some detail a separate section of the report and summarised below – should be helpful to the formulation of a new project in this domain.

19. We also found the PSP to be in need of reorientation. Again, we understand that UNDP has already initiated this.

20. The SPCBN project ended in 2015. Its successor is the PSP.

Main Variables Affecting Project Performance

21. We identify the main variables affecting project performance as being (further detail and explanation is provided in the body of the report):

- (i) Quality of project design and quality control in relation to this.
- (ii) Quality of project staffing and human resource management.
- (iii) Quality of project management versus project administration (all forms of execution) by Country Office staff and by project managers.
- (iv) Government ownership in the interests of the public good.
- (v) Donor support and *confidence*.

² Note: all references to LGCPD II should be taken to mean its PPSF.

³ The expression is derived from a system of belief found in the Melanesian Islands that is based around the expected arrival of ancestral spirits in ships bringing cargoes of food and other goods.

- (vi) The complexity and predictability of the operating environment or context, including political economy considerations.

Recommendations for Project and Programme Performance Improvement

22. Many of the recommendations that we make in this report are already under active consideration by UNDP (Nepal) or in the process of being implemented by its leadership.

23. For reasons set out in the body of the report, we recommend that the following aspects of project and programme performance deserve particular attention (further detail and discussion on all of these matters appear in the body of the report):

- (i) The political economy⁴ of the governance context and its implications.
- (ii) Project quality assurance: design and human resource management.
- (iii) Critical analysis and critical self-reflection, involving the creation of a culture of critical analysis and critical self-reflection in the project teams that should be led by the UNDP Country Office staff.
- (iv) Knowledge of the main UN planning documents.
- (v) Outcome indicators.
- (vi) Understanding of development, gender issues⁵, and key terms.
- (vii) UNDP's comparative advantages.
- (viii) Collaboration between UN agencies.
- (ix) Roles of Country Office programme and project managers.

Suggestions for UN Support to State Governance (2018-2022)

24. We did not have sufficient time on this mission to do justice to this difficult and complex task. Accordingly, the possibilities that we set out below are those which seemed to us to be worthy of serious consideration but that need to be subjected to much more detailed analysis than we have been able to do here. The suggestions that we make below are discussed more fully in the body of the report.

- (i) **Thorough analysis of governance context.**
- (ii) **Subnational governance under the new constitution.** We feel that it is desirable as soon as possible for some resource-based rationalism to be injected into the discussions surrounding the transition and for this to be done at the highest levels of government – in the form, say, of rough estimates of what the costs would be of establishing even the most basic elements of a modest form of political and administrative decentralisation (elected councils at the provincial and local levels; provincial and district departments of health, education, and agriculture; and so on).
- (iii) **The management of the transition.** Recognising the dominance of political over technical rationality in the decision-making process, and in addition to the above, it still seems sensible to us for government to have for its consideration and guidance some clear and short critical path or decision tree, which indicates the optimal order in which different steps should be taken, the institutions affected and needing to be involved at different junctures, and the desirability of different forms of technical support along the

⁴ We adopt a power-based view of political economy, one that 'argues that institutions are consistently created by powerful interests that favour the better-off, while "losers" remain in their original state or end up even worse-off, especially in countries with "weak" governments' (World Bank, 2009a, 2009b). This view 'accords high analytical significance to the influence (in government) of social and economic structures and concentrations and networks of informal power' (Blunt, 2009).

⁵ An assessment of gender questions among UN agencies in Nepal noted that 'participants in the consultations process had expected to receive additional background notes and information on gender equality issues for the analysis of vulnerable groups' (UNDP, 2013).

way. Allied to this, we see as being sorely needed the production of short decision briefs that can explain to decision-makers simply and clearly what is at stake (resources and power) when it comes to even relatively modest functional reassignments in the main sectors of service delivery. In short, these contributions would help government to answer three fundamental questions in relation to the transition:

- a. How much would even relatively modest movement - at a measured pace - towards what is envisaged in the constitution cost and how long should it take?
- b. What would be the critical path of major decisions and steps to be taken?
- c. What would be at stake at different points in the critical path and who would need to be consulted or involved?

(iv) **Development challenges ‘outside’ of the transition.** We distinguish between governance issues ‘in’ and governance issues ‘outside of’ the transition. The commonsensical (political economy) reasoning behind this is simply that the transition is going to be complex; it will be decided largely on political rather than technical grounds; and is likely for these reasons to be messy and not readily amenable to technical assistance. Projects that fall within the ambit of the transition seem likely to be riskier largely because of the high density of political economy or informal transactions and negotiations that it will entail, which are very likely to dominate decisions concerning the distribution of power and resources within the system of subnational governance. We of course realise that our distinction is somewhat artificial in that, as an ‘open system’ (Katz & Kahn, 1978), it is impossible to ‘ring-fence’ one aspect of governance from another. Our distinction between governance issues ‘in’ and ‘outside’ of the transition should therefore be taken to refer to differences in degrees of susceptibility rather than an all or none condition. We identify the following challenges outside of the transition (rationales and further discussion are in the body of the report):

- a. Upward accountability.
- b. Human resource management in government.
- c. Development ‘hot spots’: municipalities.
- d. Investment climate and the productive investment of remittances.
- e. Returning migrant labour and performance-based business training and incubation.
- f. Joint-ventures and cooperatives among female-headed households.
- g. Expanding performance-based vocational training for young people.

25. We conclude that perhaps one of the most obvious and important lessons to be learned from this evaluation is that CP/UNDAF outcomes should not hinge too greatly (preferably, at all) on government decisions that, if delayed or different from what was expected, reduce outcome value significantly or render outcomes meaningless.

26. Largely for this reason, in making tentative suggestions for future areas of support to governance, we categorise the possibilities as falling ‘in’ or ‘outside’ of the transition. And even for those falling ‘in’ the transition, the suggestions that we make are likely to remain relevant whatever decisions are taken by government concerning the transition.

27. But whatever support is offered to governance in the future, it deserves to be informed by much more thorough analysis than we have been able to do here. The gravity, the complexity, and the immediacy of the governance problems facing the country now and in prospect urgently require much more detailed and careful analysis than they have received to date.

28. Another lesson to be learned from our evaluation concerns the over-ambition and lack of realism evident in nearly all of the planning and project documents that we read, beginning with the governance outcomes in the UNDP CP itself and in the UNDAF.

29. We believe that the excessive scope and ambition of the objectives in the apex planning documents (the UNDAF and CP) and the exaggerated claims of support to be rendered by projects, as set out in some of the project documents, could only have stemmed from a gross underestimation of the volume and complexity of work that would be involved in the realisation of even modest progress in relation to: making ‘more accountable, effective, efficient and inclusive’ the ‘institutions, systems and processes of democratic governance’, or ‘establishing’ and causing to function in line with the constitution ‘the three tiers of government.’ There are few places anywhere in the developing world that have managed to achieve significant across-the-board progress in relation to all of the fundamental aspects of good governance that are proclaimed as feasible short-term targets in these documents.

30. We argue that this problem – insufficient attention to what is feasible as opposed to what is desirable (or almost utopian) or the result of political compromise – is one that afflicts the new constitution as well. The unforeseen or unacknowledged problems that will inevitably materialise from attempting to implement the constitution too quickly and too completely will pose serious difficulties for an unsuspecting government, in the worst case to the detriment of political stability as well as development.

31. In an attempt to forestall this - while acknowledging that relevant decisions will be largely political - we suggest that ‘it is desirable as soon as possible for some resource-based rationalism to be injected into the discussions surrounding the transition and for this to be done at the highest levels of government’. It seems that the same would hold for apex UN (national) planning documents as well as at the coal face of project design.

32. The final lesson, which is a risk that attends all programmes and projects of development assistance everywhere, is one of goal displacement – referring here particularly to cases where the maintenance or continuation of the project or programme (and attendant jobs and other benefits) becomes the primary end and development ends are relegated to secondary status. The lack of critical analysis that we and other stakeholders have pointed to can be a symptom of this, as one of its effects would be to shield projects from close scrutiny and the possibility that they may have run out of useful things to do or are doing the wrong things or, generally, are performing poorly.

33. Putting project continuation above all else demands the absence of critical analysis and critical self-reflection. As we have seen in the CAC example (above), it can result in making the mundane a matter for continuing development assistance and can undermine community self-reliance by promoting in communities an over-dependence on support from ‘above’ – a ‘cargo cult’ mentality. In the worst case, where such goal displacement is widespread, both the effectiveness and the credibility of development assistance itself are put in jeopardy.

34. We recommend steps to be taken that would address these problems, many of which are already under serious consideration or are in the process of being implemented by UNDP (Nepal). Perhaps the most significant of these from a development standpoint, and the most important contributor to donor confidence, is the degree to which all project staff engage in critical self-reflection and critical analysis of their development work. Movement in this direction will have to be led by Country Office staff, who will have to become better informed and more engaged substantively with their projects than they have been to date. The benefits of doing so will be felt across all of the aspects of project and programme performance discussed in this evaluation.

Governance Context

35. Nepal is a landlocked least-developed country with a population of more than 28 million (UNDESA, 2016) comprising people of different castes, religions, ethnicities and languages. The 2011 census identifies up to 125 separate groups on the basis of caste and ethnicity.

36. The vast majority of people live in rural areas (83%) where infrastructure generally is poor, particularly electricity and clean water supply and transportation networks (UNDP, 2014; World Bank, 2015).

37. The country's recent history is characterised by protracted and bitter-armed conflict that ended formally in 2006 with the signing of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement.

38. In 2008, a constituent assembly (CA) was elected and Nepal became a republic, bringing to an end a 240-year period of monarchic rule. Despite the peace accord, the state continues to face significant post-conflict challenges, many of which are related to power relationships and some of which have caste and ethnic roots.

39. Partly because of this, the political context has been subject to rapid and at times unpredictable change. No less than 8 governments served in the period 2008 to July 2016. A ninth government was formed in August 2016.

40. A new and progressive constitution was promulgated on 20 September 2015. The nationwide public consultations that were a prelude to the promulgation of the constitution constituted a crucial ingredient of the political stability that was a necessary condition for bringing to a constructive conclusion a long period of negotiation - a product of lingering identity-based political tensions that continue to fuel fundamental differences over the demarcation of provincial boundaries, proportional representation in state structures, and the electoral system.

41. These challenges are acknowledged in the 2015 constitution, which among other things commits the state to eliminating all forms of discrimination with a view to creating an inclusive, egalitarian society, and a multi-party democratic political system that is based on the protection of fundamental rights, an independent judiciary, the rule of law, freedom of the media, and periodic free and fair elections.

42. The governance challenges that it has faced and will continue to face make all the more remarkable the significant and sustained development progress that Nepal has made over the last 30 years, representing the fastest overall improvement on the Human Development Index (HDI) of any country on earth. In recognition of this outstanding record, in 2010, Nepal received a Millennium Development Goal (MDG) achievement award.

43. The country's rapid progress can be gauged from the fact that between 1990 and 2009 poverty fell by almost 40%. By 2011, the percentage of the population living below the poverty line had fallen to approximately 25% from 42% in 1996. Major gains have also been made in relation to literacy, school enrolment rates, life expectancy, child and maternal mortality, gender equality, and other aspects of health and education.

44. However, these impressive improvements for the population as a whole mask significant differences between groups and identities and between geographical regions and urban and rural areas. For example, the 2014 Human Development Report (HDR) for Nepal reports 'a clear association between caste and ethnicity, and levels of income, revealing a picture similar to that of the HDI'. Poverty in rural areas is almost twice that of urban areas (27 and 15 per cent respectively); among Dalits, it is almost twice that of non-Dalits; and poverty is 4.5 times more likely in households headed by an illiterate person than one in which the head has completed grade11 (UN, 2013a). And although progress in enhancing equal access to basic education (grades 1-8) among children has been good, the poorest in particular 'do not continue to post-basic education and the quality of education at all levels remains a problem' (World Bank, 2015). Despite these differences, and although inequalities remain, it is important to note that 'the trends have been positive across all regions, and caste and ethnic groups' (UNDP, 2014, p. 66).

45. As in many countries, because of the division of labour within the family, poor women in rural areas suffer disproportionately from the limitations of infrastructure (particularly electricity and clean water supply) and health services. The increasing number of female-headed households exacerbates these challenges as do marked HDI differences between rural areas in different regions of Nepal (UNDP, 2014).

46. On the positive side, the 2013 constituent assembly elections, which incorporated first past the post and proportional representation, resulted in one of the most inclusive nationally elected bodies in the country's history (second only to the 2008 constituent assembly). Thirty per cent of elected members were women and traditionally marginalised and vulnerable groups were also well-represented. Female representation in Nepal's constituent assembly is above the global average of 21.7% in parliaments and well above the Asian average of 18%. Moreover, surveys suggest that a large majority of Nepali citizens 'very strongly agree' that the national parliament should comprise equal numbers of men and women, which augurs well for the position of women and gender equality in Nepal.

47. Other development challenges are posed by the more than 500,000 unskilled and relatively uneducated young people who enter the national labour market every year; by accelerating rural urban drift; by the steady decline of manufacturing industry; by the stagnation of the rural sector; and by the increasing number of female-headed households stemming from the very large numbers of men who work abroad. As the Nepal HDR points out, the stream of young people entering the labour market every year provides opportunities - a potential 'demographic dividend' - but, equally, if insufficient of the right attention is given to it, social and political unrest are a likely consequence (UNDP, 2014). Taking advantage of the opportunities offered by a youthful and energetic labour force will demand that greater emphasis be given to vocational training, to policies and incentives that promote productive as opposed to speculative investment or consumption, to rural development, to foreign direct investment, and to both market-based and public employment creation.

48. The country's ability to maintain its outstanding development trajectory will be tested by these challenges and will therefore hinge greatly on questions of governance, including economic management, and the structure of the economy. Both are somewhat problematic.

49. In the case of governance, the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (2013-2017) (UNDAF) observes that core legal and judicial institutions should continue to be strengthened from their current relatively solid position in South Asia (World Bank, 2016). Others point to problems of systemic patronage that afflict all levels of governance (e.g., Asia Foundation, 2012). The latter is consistent with Nepal's score of 27 and a ranking of 130 out of 168 on Transparency International's corruption perception index for 2015, representing a slight worsening over the 2014 result. Transparency International categorises as 'highly corrupt' countries with a score of less than 50 (Transparency International, 2015). Public perceptions are suggestive of systemic corruption (Transparency International Nepal, 2014).

50. The main anticorruption organisations are the National Vigilance Centre and the Commission for Investigation of Abuse of Authority where improvements in enforcement and prevention need to be maintained. Expanding such capability sub-nationally and speeding up the processing of cases in the judicial system are important areas for further development (World Bank, 2016).

51. While its size is within reasonable bounds, the civil service is handicapped by systemic patronage, poorly motivated staff, fragmented decision-making, large numbers at the lower levels, inflexible working practices, weak human resource management and development, wage compression, the lack of health insurance and a contributory pension scheme, and the absence of an effective promotion and transfer policy. The composition of the civil service also needs to become more inclusive and representative, particularly at the higher echelons (World Bank, 2016).

52. On the economic front, while positive, GDP growth rates are less than the average for South Asia and are heavily dependent on remittances (World Bank, 2015a), which constitute a world-leading percentage of national GDP (about 30%). Globally, such remittances are greater in volume than development assistance and, in 2015, approaching the level of foreign direct investment. The

World Bank (2015b) projected a 4% annual growth of remittances for South Asian countries, although this is likely to be dampened by falling demand in the Gulf countries owing to lower oil prices.

53. Economic growth has been hampered to some extent by slow post-conflict recovery, inadequate infrastructure (especially in rural areas), a poor investment climate and falling foreign direct investment, an inflexible labour market and weak governance characterised by systemic patronage. Of particular concern are the steadily declining contribution of manufacturing to economic growth and the adverse effects of this on employment and job creation. On the positive side, the agricultural sector, which currently constitutes about 35% of GDP and provides employment for 75% of the population (World Bank, 2015), has considerable potential for development, as do tourism and hydropower.

54. There is also some concern about the strength of financial institutions, some of which are reportedly at risk of insolvency owing to risky lending practices, poor corporate governance, high credit exposure, and weak enforcement of prudential norms (World Bank, 2015).

55. Government's medium term expenditure framework (MTEF) among other things has improved the prioritization of public expenditures, better aligned policies and spending priorities, and improved fiscal discipline and the budget's pro-poor targeting. Nevertheless, the MTEF process should be broadened and deepened across the public sector and further attention should be given to improving the alignment of plans to budgets (World Bank, 2016).

56. Private sector development is also less than optimal, constrained by the necessity to comply with 130 processes from over 41 ministries and government agencies. This encourages a high degree of informality and rent seeking, and tax avoidance and lax regulation and inspection, all of which adversely affect service delivery (World Bank, 2015).

57. Further sustainable development is complicated as well by the fact that the ambitions of the Local Self Governance Act of 1999, which sought to devolve resources and power over them to local governments and to involve citizens in local planning, have been impaired by the decade-long Maoist insurgency and its post-conflict aftermath and the poor targeting of local development grants. This has been particularly evident in relation to political decentralisation where local elections have not been held for more than 15 years, thereby badly compromising questions of local accountability for service delivery, problems that are likely to be felt most acutely by the vulnerable groups that are the main concern of the UNDAF and the CP.

58. Under these conditions, the prospects are pronounced for waste and mismanagement of what is probably a (developing) world-leading block grant scheme involving USD 1.4 billion of mostly government funding over 4 years. Moreover, the research literature clearly demonstrates that the enhanced opportunities for local-level patronage predation (unsurprisingly) are welcomed by local vested interests or local elites (see, for example, Blunt *et al.*, 2012), emphasising the importance of the existence of well-functioning locally-elected assemblies that are capable of, and willing to,⁶ give voice to vulnerable and marginalised groups in particular and to provide for accountability in government and among contractors.

59. The governance and development context is complicated further by Nepal's high vulnerability to climate change and natural disasters. Records show a growing number of droughts, floods, hailstorms, landslides and crop diseases, the effects of which will be felt most acutely by the poor (World Bank, 2015).

60. Further political uncertainty and disputation is almost certain to attend the implementation of the 2015 constitution, particularly in relation to different possible forms of subnational governance, and there are other serious points of difference. For example, under Article 296(1) of the constitution, elections for the federal legislature should be completed by 20 January, 2018. However, this can only be achieved once provincial and local elections have been held. The issue of the delineation of provinces also remains controversial and is likely to affect the determination of election constituencies (Bhandari, 2016).

⁶ This is an important qualification – see Blunt and Khamoosh (2016).

United Nations Development Assistance Framework (2013-2017) and UNDP Country Programme

61. Based on a UN Country Analysis that identifies 19 of the most vulnerable, impoverished and excluded groups in the country, the UNDAF (2013-2017) and associated UN Country Programme (CP) are concerned primarily with doing everything that they can to contribute to the lessening, or amelioration, of vulnerability. The most fundamental cause of vulnerability, poverty and inequality was found to be structural discrimination based on 'socio-cultural traditions, norms and practices'. The Country Analysis concludes that this may be 'the single most important (of) the country's development challenges.'

62. Drawing on this analysis, the UNDAF identifies the main factors that contribute to vulnerability as being:

- (i) Caste, ethnic and gender discrimination;
- (ii) Limited human capital and confidence;
- (iii) Lack of employment opportunities and livelihoods;
- (iv) Unequal distribution of and access to economic resources;
- (v) Insufficient political representation;
- (vi) Problems surrounding the fair and impartial application of the rule of law;
- (vii) Weak institutional capacity; and
- (viii) Geographic remoteness.

63. These issues are reflected in the UNDAF and CP outcomes, which are set out below:

- (i) Vulnerable and disadvantaged groups get improved access to basic essential social services and programmes in an equitable manner.
- (ii) Vulnerable groups have improved access to economic opportunities and adequate social protection.
- (iii) Vulnerable and stigmatized groups experience greater self-confidence, respect and dignity.
- (iv) Vulnerable groups benefit from strengthened legal and policy frameworks and have increased access to fair and effective security and rule of law institutions that comply with international standards.
- (v) **Institutions, systems and processes of democratic governance are more accountable, effective, efficient and inclusive.**
- (vi) **The three tiers of government are established and function to meet the needs of the new federal constitution.**
- (vii) People living in areas vulnerable to climate change and disasters benefit from improved risk management and are more resilient to hazard-related shocks.
- (viii) National institutions have adequately addressed conflict-related violations of human rights and international humanitarian law and victims' post-conflict needs.
- (ix) National actors and institutions have managed conflict risk and are consolidating the peace.
- (x) Nepal's institutions are strengthened for more effective integration of policy and the economy into intergovernmental economic and normative processes, and international policy and legal regimes.

64. These outcomes are clearly inter-related in that, for example, improvements in outcomes (v) and (vi) – which in important respects are the bases of good governance - should lead to improvements in all of the other outcomes.

65. The outputs for Outcome (v) are:

- (i) Election Commission of Nepal has the capacity to conduct credible, inclusive and transparent elections.
- (ii) Provincial and local bodies can plan, budget, monitor, report and deliver inclusive government services.
- (iii) Provincial, district and local bodies have improved capacity to access additional financial resources in equitable and appropriate ways.

66. The outputs for Outcome (vi) are:

- (i) National institutions, policies and legislation reviewed from inclusion and gender perspectives, and developed in line with the provisions of Nepal's inclusive federal constitution.
- (ii) Civil service has the capacity to meet the needs of the inclusive federal constitution and government structures.
- (iii) National and provincial legislatures, executives and other state bodies have necessary capacities to fulfil their accountabilities to vulnerable groups.

67. At the time of UNDAF and CP production, the political climate and the governance context of the country made it seem that the adoption of a new constitution was imminent. This turned out not to be the case. As noted above, the constitution took much longer to be agreed than had been anticipated, and its adoption was delayed to late 2015.

68. Significant parts of the UNDAF had been predicated on the early adoption of the constitution.

69. The UN's ability to adapt in such circumstances is limited by UN corporate procedures that do not allow for outcome and output modifications in UNDAF/CP documents after they have been formally approved. Accordingly, in order to attempt to accommodate the changing governance context and to optimise UNDP project performance in the time available (to the end of 2017), UNDP has sought to adjust indicators and activities associated with these outputs. It has done this several times. The latest indicators associated with the outcomes and outputs referred to above are set out in the tables in Annex 4.

70. This evaluation was designed to assess the contributions of the UNDP programme outlined below to the attainment of CP outcomes 5 and 6; to make suggestions about project activities to the end of 2017 that could optimise project performance; and to make suggestions concerning areas of governance that are deserving of particular attention in the next UNDAF (2018-2022).

UNDP's Governance Programme

71. In partnership with a range of government and development agencies, UNDP has designed and implemented five projects that comprise the programme that is the subject of this evaluation, outlines of which are set out below (following the evaluation terms of reference):

Election Support Project 2012- 2017

72. This project provides technical assistance to the Election Commission of Nepal (ECN). It has three objectives:

- (i) To strengthen the capacity of the ECN to function as a permanent, independent, credible and professional institution of governance;
- (ii) To ensure that the election cycle is conducted in an effective, sustainable, and credible manner; and
- (iii) To increase democratic participation of voters in the electoral cycle, particularly of under-represented and disadvantaged segments of Nepali society.

73. To achieve the objectives, the ESP provides assistance to biometric voter registration, electoral mapping and geographic information systems, public outreach and voter education, electoral security and electoral dispute resolution, policy support through development of strategic plan and its implementation, gender, and social inclusion

74. The project has a budget of USD 24.6 million and is implemented in partnership with the European Union, DFID, Norway and Denmark.

Local Government & Community Development Programme 2013-2017

75. The LGCDP II is a national programme funded by the Government of Nepal and 12 development partners. The goal of LGCDP II is 'to contribute to poverty reduction through better local governance and community development'.

76. The programme covers both the demand and supply side of local governance and is implemented nationwide under the leadership of the Ministry of Federal Affairs and Local Development.

77. UNDP support has been rendered in two ways: first, as a provider of technical assistance under the Policy and Program Support Facility (PPSF); and second, as a member of the Joint Financing Arrangement.

78. The PPSF is a United Nations joint programme comprising UNDP, UNCDF and UNV. The objective of PPSF is to support effective implementation of LGCDP II at all levels through the provision of technical assistance, particularly in relation to:

- (i) The provision of national TA at the centre, in the regions, and at the local level;
- (ii) 'Policy, field testing and innovation, and capacity development';
- (iii) 'Seed funding, operations and logistics';
- (iv) 'Coordination and oversight, through the establishment of a Development Partner Coordination Cell'; and
- (v) 'Fiduciary assessments, and technical reviews and evaluations.'

79. The project has a budget of USD 16 million (one million of which is unfunded) and is financed DFID, the Government of Norway, the Government of Denmark, UNDP, UNCDF and UNV.

Project to Prepare the Public Administration for State Reforms 2013-2016

80. The project is said to provide technical support to:

- (i) 'Relevant government institutions' so as to prepare them 'for administrative restructuring and reforms in the context of the new federal constitution'.
- (ii) Policy development for 'inclusive administration' and the building of institutional and individual capacity in relation to this.
- (iii) The conduct of functional analyses and assignments in relation to service delivery.

- (iv) The ‘creation (of) a basis for the reorganization of the civil service along federal lines’.
- (v) The development of a transition management plan that provides a broad framework for federalizing the administration.
- (vi) The development of new laws and policies, new institutions, reorganization of existing institutional arrangements, restructuring of civil services, allocation of staff, and development of mechanisms and processes for carrying out service delivery with least possible disruptions.

81. The project has a budget of USD 2.1 million and is implemented by the Ministry of General Administration. Project funding has been supplied by: (2008-2013) DFID, Government of Austria, Government of Japan, Government of Norway, and the Government of Denmark; and (2014-2015) DFID, Government of Switzerland, and UNDP.

Support to Participatory Constitution Building in Nepal Project 2008-2015

82. The constituent assembly that was elected in 2008, which served as the parliament, was the most representative elected legislative body in Nepal’s history. Shortly after its formation, work on Nepal’s new constitution began. The SPCBN project was designed to support the development of a new constitution. The project has three objectives:

- (i) To develop the capacities of the constituent assembly (CA), the CA secretariat and its technical advisors so as to enable them to produce a new constitution.
- (ii) To help selected civil society organizations to obtain feedback on the draft of the new constitution from the public, particularly from women and excluded groups.
- (iii) To help Nepal’s state institutions prepare for a smooth transition towards a new constitutional order and state structure.

83. The project had a budget of USD 20.7 million and was implemented in collaboration with Constituent Assembly Secretariat.

Parliament Support Project 2015-2019

84. The PSP was launched in September 2015 as a response to the needs of the national parliament in the light of constitutional changes and the creation of a federal system of governance. The overall objective of the project is to:

- (i) Strengthen parliament as an institution so that it is able to respond to the needs and concerns of all citizens - including women, youth, and marginalized groups - in performing its duties in relation law-making and oversight.

85. The project has a budget of USD 2.9 million (for the period September 2015 to December 2019) and is implemented in collaboration with the Parliament Secretariat.

Evaluation Objectives

86. The evaluation had the following principal objectives.

- (i) First, 'to assess whether and to what extent the planned outcomes for 5 and 6 have been or are being achieved and to what extent UNDP support has contributed and is likely to contribute towards achieving the outcomes'.
- (ii) Second, to gauge the likelihood of outcomes 5 and/or 6, and related outputs, being attained by the end of 2017.
- (iii) Third, to consider, and to make recommendations concerning, ways in which the activities of existing projects (the means for output production) can be modified in order to optimise their contributions to UNDAF/CP outcomes until the end of 2017.
- (iv) Fourth, to identify and analyse the major factors that affect project performance and to suggest ways in which they might be taken into account in activity design and implementation.
- (v) And fifth, to identify critical issues related to outcomes 5 and 6 of the existing UNDAF/CP that could inform the development of the next CP.

87. Integral to the first four of these objectives was an appraisal not just of project and programme implementation, but also of the quality of the design of existing projects, together with consideration of the implications of the findings of the evaluation for project management and staffing.

88. Although requiring much more time than was available to this mission, the evaluation also formed a tentative view about the character and evolution of the country's governance context and the implications of this for project and programme design and the positioning of future support to governance.

Method

89. The terms of reference for this assignment summarise its purposes according to three general characteristics of UN outcome evaluations, namely assessment of:

- (i) Progress towards the attainment of outcomes (and associated outputs and indicators).
- (ii) Factors affecting progress towards the attainment of outcomes (and associated outputs and indicators).
- (iii) UNDP's main contributions towards such progress.

90. As is conventional in such evaluations, the methods employed were largely qualitative and informed by the 'interpretive paradigm' of social analysis (e.g., Blunt & Khamoosh, 2016; Burrell & Morgan, 1979) and 'critical realism' (e.g., Edgley, 2015), which regard much of social reality as being a product of individual perceptions, interpretations and meanings that are difficult or impossible to quantify.

91. The evaluation relied on both primary and secondary data. Primary data were gathered mainly by structured and semi-structured interviews, group discussions, and observations in the field. A work plan outlining the evaluation team's data collection activities in Nepal is set out in Annex 2.

92. In relation to data reliability and validity, in qualitative research, ideal sample size and parameters for data validity and reliability are difficult to determine with precision, and informed opinion on these matters varies somewhat (see, for example, Baker & Edwards). Nevertheless, an adequate and widely received 'rule of thumb' is as follows: 'when you keep getting the same sorts of answers to a question or line of questioning, particularly if your sample constitutes as much as, or more than, 10% of the population size (as in this case), then you can infer that such responses are valid and reliable.' Most of the findings presented in this report survived this simple test. However, wherever we could, we also employed a conventional form of 'triangulation' – 'multiple perceptions about a single reality' – as would normally apply under critical realism and other forms of qualitative investigation (see, for example, Golafshani, 2003, p. 603).

93. A complete list of persons met is set out in Annex 11. Annex 12 comprises the names of members of the Citizens Awareness Centre and Ward Citizens Forum who participated in discussions with the evaluation team during the field trip to Nailothok Gaon, Syangja District.

94. Secondary data comprised written project and other reports, relevant research literature, and (where available) personal case incidents based on participant observation. A bibliography is in Annex 10.

95. The team also collected data via the use of two short standardised questionnaires – see Annexes 3 and 4. Both of these instruments allowed project staff to express their views in writing on the matters addressed.

96. The terms of reference for the assignment required that this report include a discussion of the questions to be addressed in the evaluation and the ways in which this will be done. An *edited* list of these questions (derived from the assignment TOR), weightings for each of them, and examples of subsidiary questions are set out in Annex 1.

97. In our discussions with informants, we were cognisant of the biases that were likely to flow from conflicts of interest,⁷ either from people who were project staff and whose jobs depended on project continuation; or from others who had benefitted already or might benefit in the future from short-term consultancies arising from the projects or were connected in some way (via informal networks) to actual or potential 'beneficiaries'; or from those who might feel that poor project performance would reflect badly on them even though they were not directly employed by the project(s). The vast majority of people that we spoke to fell into one or other of these categories.

⁷ These apply in situations that have the potential to undermine the impartiality of a person because of the possibility of a clash between the person's self-interest and professional interest or public interest.

98. In a small number of instances below we comment explicitly on the extent to which informants ‘protested too much’⁸, that is, on occasions where they were clearly very keen to impress upon us the excellence of the projects with which they were associated, but all too rarely were able to explain which particular aspects of the projects concerned had impressed them the most or why. Invariably, in such cases, the projects concerned were those that seemed to us to have the most marked performance problems. Questions of interpretation and meaning clearly loom large in the evaluation of such testimony. But, equally clearly, in all cases where conflicts of interest – that in other circumstances might disqualify witnesses altogether or cause them to be recused – were evident it was necessary for us as best we could to weigh the comments that were made accordingly.

99. We note finally that, as an *independent* evaluation, the views that we formed and have expressed in this report constitute our *best interpretation* of the evidence that was available to us and that, unless we have made demonstrable errors of fact, these views are not subject to revision based on alternative interpretations that might be made by others of the same or different evidence.

100. Interested parties were given the opportunity to comment on the report and some of these are appended to the report.

⁸ This is a figure of speech with Shakespearean roots (Hamlet) that is used to describe someone's overly frequent and vehement attempts to convince others of some matter of which the opposite is true.

Progress towards the Attainment of Country Programme Outcomes 5 and 6 and Likelihood of Attainment by December 2017

101. A table summarising the contributions made by the Programme to the attainment of indicators for Outcomes 5 and 6 of the Country Programme is set out in Annex 4.

102. Outcome 5 states that: ‘Institutions, systems and processes of democratic governance are more accountable, effective, efficient and inclusive’.

103. And Outcome 6 states that: ‘The three tiers of government are established and function to meet the needs of the new federal constitution’.

104. It is our view that both Outcomes 5 and 6 of the CP represent such lofty ambitions, and are so all-encompassing, that they would test the resources of a much larger, much more capable, and much longer-term programme than the one that is the subject of this evaluation, even when combined with the other governance-related support being provided by UNDP⁹ and other UN agencies.

105. The following breakdown of Outcome 5 illustrates the extent of such over-ambition:

- (i) The outcome refers to *governance*, meaning *government*, the private sector and civil society.
- (ii) ‘Accountability’ embraces all governance-related upward and downward accountability across all three domains.
- (iii) ‘Effectiveness’ applies to all governance-related activities within all three domains.
- (iv) ‘Efficiency’ applies to all governance-related activities within all three domains.
- (v) ‘Inclusiveness’ could be taken to include consultation or participation for all governance-related decisions in all three domains.

106. Any one of these features of the outcome would be a mammoth undertaking in its own right.

107. Very much the same can be said about Outcome 6 where no qualification is made in relation to ‘the three tiers of government’ that could materialise under the constitution and the very different implications for the feasibility of system ‘establishment’ and ‘functioning’ that these would have.

108. By dint of this (over-ambition) alone, progress towards the achievement of these outcomes was destined not to have a very good outlook.

109. As we demonstrate in separate sections below and in the tables in Annexes 5 to 9 inclusive, the performance of the five projects that comprised the Programme was highly variable, yet - paradoxically - all of them managed to contribute to the attainment of outcome and output *indicators*. The low correlation between poor project quality and indicator attainment (that is, low quality did not necessarily inhibit indicator attainment) can be explained by the high correlation between poor project quality and the in some cases ‘softer’ or more ‘benign’ indicators that such projects had to satisfy or the absence of indicator benchmarks or targets.

110. Indeed, the whole question of outcome and output attainment is complicated by this inconsistency in indicator ‘softness’ and by some of the assumptions implicit in them – for example, the production of outputs such as the completion of ‘issue option papers’ (6.1.1) and of ‘sectoral functional analyses’ (first part of 6.3.1), whose links to real improvements in governance as stated in Outcome 5 of the CP in particular are tenuous at best.

111. So, strictly according to the degree of attainment of outcome and output *indicators*, it is possible for us to say that there has been across-the-board progress and that in some cases indicators

⁹ Examples of such support include UNDP’s Rule of Law and Human Rights Projection System project and NHRC’s Strategic Plan Support Project. However, these projects were not part of our terms of reference and we were unable in the time to evaluate their contributions to outcome attainment, although their titles would suggest relevance to the accountability aspects of Outcome 6.

have already been satisfied, in one or two instances by a wide margin (e.g., 5.2, which refers to voter turnout; and 5.2.3, which refers to the submission of ‘trimester progress reports’).

112. Generally, however, (indicator) progress has been much more demonstrable and marked in relation to Outcome 5 than Outcome 6. The Programme’s best-performing projects – ESP, LGCDP II, and SPCBN – are responsible for this. We project that most of the indicators for Outcome 5 will be achieved by the end of 2017, but that this will only contribute to a one feature of the outcome, ‘inclusiveness’.

113. For Outcome 5, few of the indicators have any clear bearing on the ‘accountability’ or ‘effectiveness’ or ‘efficiency’ of *government*, let alone governance. Most of the indicators (5 out of a total of 8) are directed at questions of ‘inclusivity’ and ‘downward accountability’. For the remainder, Indicator 5.2.1 has to do with a limited aspect of financial management effectiveness; 5.2.2 is concerned with one feature of downward accountability. While Indicator 5.2.3 is concerned with the *efficiency* of reporting. Neither 5.2.2 nor 5.2.3 specifies a benchmark or target

114. Clearly, the accountability, efficiency, and effectiveness aspects of Outcome 5 will not be achieved by the end of 2017 and any progress that is made towards these aspects of the outcome will be modest.

115. We note that addressing questions of governance accountability, efficiency, and effectiveness need not have been hindered by the delay in the promulgation of the constitution.

116. We are less sanguine about the prospects for indicator attainment in relation to Outcome 6. While in our view, Indicator 6.1 (perceptions that ‘there is the possibility of the insertion of (the) aspirations’ of marginalised groups in the constitution) has already been achieved, we conclude that it is highly unlikely that the indicator for Output 6.2 (a draft ‘public service reform strategy’) or the second part of Indicator 6.3.1 (‘a federal structure carried out for setting up national and provincial government structure enacted’) will be achieved in the time and with the resources available to the PREPARE project. It is apparent also that Indicator 6.3.1 is so badly expressed as to make it nonsensical, which renders its attainment impossible.

117. We also have serious doubts about the worth of the first part of Indicator 6.3.1 and of the likelihood of any significant achievement in relation to Indicator 6.3.2 (this refers to ‘enhanced capacity in oversight functions’ of ‘MPs and parliament secretariat staff’), although the latter is considerably mitigated by the fact that ‘enhanced capacity’ is undefined (and is likely to be from a low base) and that the number of MPs whose ‘capacities’ are to be ‘enhanced’ is unspecified.

118. It seems highly unlikely to us that even in the best of circumstances that Outcome 6 – ‘the three tiers of government are established and function to meet the needs of the new federal constitution’ – or any of its three outputs will be realised by the end of 2017.

119. We believe that the ambition of the constitution in relation to subnational governance exceeds by a wide margin the financial and human resources that are available to government and this is likely to prevent attainment of this outcome.

120. We recognise that that the construction of good log frames and of meaningful indicators that are not ‘set-up’ for easy attainment is difficult to do, particularly in circumstances of rapid and often unpredictable changes to the governance context. Nevertheless, more attention deserves to be given to the feasibility of outcomes, the timely production of meaningful indicators, and to the business of maintaining their relevance and to continuous review by the projects of progress towards their attainment. Indeed, perhaps the only advantage of the very wide coverage envisaged in some of the project documents was the high degree of flexibility that this afforded for the repositioning of project activities when it became apparent that the promulgation of the constitution would be delayed. This conclusion clearly carries implications for how well UNDP planned for the risk, and how well UNDP adapted to the evolving situation.

121. In summary, for the following reasons (apart from reasons of project performance and design, which we discuss separately), we find it to be almost certain that modest progress will be made

towards the attainment of Outcome 5 but that there will be little or no progress towards the attainment of Outcome 6:

- (i) The ambition and scope of both outcomes are far too great for the time and other resources available for their attainment.
- (ii) The assumptions implicit in Outcome 6 did not materialise.
- (iii) The indicators for Outcome 5 are mostly concerned with the 'inclusiveness' aspect of the outcome.
- (iv) Even if achieved, the remaining ('accountability', 'effectiveness', and 'efficiency') indicators for Outcome 5 will not contribute significantly to the attainment of this outcome.
- (v) The absence of benchmarks and targets for a number of the indicators.
- (vi) The benignness of some indicators and the opaqueness of one. For example, we found the latter to be true for 6.3.1: '# of sectoral functional analyses for a federal structure carried out for setting up national and provincial government structure enacted.' As worded, it is impossible to make sense of.
- (vii) Weak connections between some indicators and their respective outputs and outcomes. An example of this is to be found in Indicator 6.1.1, which states: '# issue/option papers on key constitutional issues developed and discussed with CA members'. The relevant output states: 'National institutions, policies and legislation reviewed from inclusion and gender perspectives, and developed in line with the provisions of Nepal's inclusive federal constitution.' The indicator does not provide direction on which 'issues/options' should be pursued or the number of them that should be produced or specify their character and, hence, digestibility by the national institutions involved. The latter are also unspecified in the output, as are 'policies' and 'legislation'.
- (viii) The frequency with which indicators have changed.
- (ix) The limited extent to which the indicators gave a fair reflection of what at least some of the projects were doing.

122. The modest progress that will be made in relation to the indicators for Outcome 6 has little direct bearing on the achievement of the outcome.

Evaluation of Project and Programme Performance

123. This section and the next address evaluation objectives (iii) and (iv) (see paragraph 71 above), namely, first, ‘how can project performance be improved?’ and second, ‘what are the main independent variables affecting project performance?’

124. In order to determine how performance can be improved and what its major determinants are it is clearly necessary to examine carefully the performance, strengths and weaknesses of the projects that comprise the Programme.

125. In addressing these questions, we have sought answers to the questions outlined in the terms of reference, an edited list of which (and discussion) is set out in Annex 1. Below, we discuss the performance of each project in relation to four categories of questions that we were asked to address, namely: ‘relevance’, ‘effectiveness’, ‘efficiency’, and ‘sustainability’. We also comment on how the project might proceed between now and the end of 2017.

Election Support Project 2012- 2017

126. A detailed evaluation and rating of this project and ratings against the questions we were required to address by our terms of reference are set out in Annex 5.

127. This project has performed well and has made a good contribution to the attainment of the inclusiveness aspects of Outcome 5.

128. **Relevance.** The activities of the project - which include support to biometric voter registration, voter education, the conduct of elections, and policy development and strategic management – are clearly highly relevant. While not always carried out as self-consciously as they might have been project contributions to the inclusion of women and vulnerable groups has been significant. We scored the project low on ‘adaptation’ because it was not as knowledgeable as it could or should have been about the UN planning context within which it operated (the UNDAF and CP).

129. **Effectiveness.** As can be seen from the table in Annex 5, the project scored well on all indicators of effectiveness except for ‘partnership strategy’ and ‘quality of indicators’ over which it had relatively little control. However, we have some concerns about some of the policy work that has been done. For example, we found the Gender Inclusion Strategy (2015-2020) to be rhetorically repetitive and lacking in specificity about the measures to be taken. The project also seems to have little success at building and institutionalising senior management capability – for example, in relation to policy development and strategic management. We acknowledge, however, that high staff turnover has meant that capacity is in constant need of renewal.

130. **Efficiency.** As noted in the annexes and in our inception report, this category comprises mainly questions that have to do with effectiveness rather than efficiency – mainly with project complementarity with other donor and UN agency projects and UNDP’s added value – but we have persevered with it nonetheless. The project has collaborated with the National Democratic Institute and International IDEA and UN Women and, mainly through its support to voter registration and education and the effects that this seems to have had on female voter turnout. On questions of efficiency in the ECN, and in view of the already high and rising costs of election, we feel that the project could have given more attention to this – for example, in relation to year-round civic education and the use of GIS for polling locations.

131. **Sustainability.** The project scored well on stakeholder commitment, but less well on project and government capability in this regard. Even so, a number of important project contributions are clearly sustainable in that systems and procedures have been introduced – in relation, for example, to voter registration and voter education – which will almost certainly persist when the project comes to an end.

132. However, strong sustainability could have been made better if project and country office staff had a fuller understanding of different forms of capacity and institution building. This comment has general applicability and validity for all 5 of the projects evaluated.

133. **Suggestions for the future.** General suggestions for project and programme performance are discussed in a separate section below. Our suggestions in relations to ESP *per se* are:

- (i) First, that consideration should be given to phasing out the support to the Electoral Information and Education Centres (EIEC), and to voter registration. Both of these activities seem to us to be well-institutionalised and should be capable by now of being maintained by government without outside support.
- (ii) Second, that any further support that is given to policy development and strategic management should be much more self-conscious about building the requisite capabilities in senior management than it appears to have been to date and the work done should be based on action learning (Revens, 1982). The latter comment is valid for all projects in the Programme.
- (iii) Third, that the general support that the project has in mind for the education of voters and the training of large numbers of short-term polling officers that will be needed to run subnational elections should be thought-through and specified precisely, including realistic and cost-effective proposals about the timing and length and intensity, precise forms of support, and cost estimates.
- (iv) Fourth, that the project be more self-conscious than it appears to have been to date about the benefits of appropriate rather than the latest technologies that are relevant to the work of the ECN and that it promote the use of appropriate technology wherever and whenever it can.
- (v) Fifth, drawing on (iii) above, that consideration be given to structuring future support in the form of intensive short term ‘bursts’ of well-targeted activity – for example, once the timing of subnational elections has been decided – rather than a permanent project presence.
- (vi) Sixth, the latter would be helpful to weaning the ECN away from what some see to be its over-dependence on UNDP project support and therefore contribute to and perhaps hasten institutionalisation of project activities. This point seems to us to be particularly relevant in this field as the range of operations and technologies that need to be mastered by the ECN are neither particularly numerous nor (in most cases) technically demanding.
- (vii) Seventh, the project should refrain from performing the regular activities of the ECN - e.g., procurement of election materials, regular training, etc.
- (viii) Eighth, the project should support the development of legislation, systems and procedures for dealing with deceased voters, ‘out-of-the-country’ voting, and early voting (for absentees) as mentioned in the strategic plan of the ECN.
- (ix) Ninth, training should be based more on thorough training needs analyses than it appears to have been to date.
- (x) Tenth, issues such as ‘electoral financing’ are worthy of analysis.

Local Government and Community Development Programme and its Policy and Programme Support Facility 2013-2017

135. A detailed evaluation of this project and ratings against the questions we were required to address by our terms of reference are set out in Annex 6.

136. In our estimation, and bearing in mind the caveats made in our earlier discussion of indicator variability, this project has also made a solid contribution to the attainment of the inclusiveness and downward accountability aspects of CP Outcome 5 and has performed well in some of its main areas of activity.

137. Our comments apply to the Policy and Programme Support Facility (PPSF). Where we refer to LGCDP II it can be taken as being synonymous to the PPSF.

138. **Relevance.** Again, as with all of the projects the work carried out by the project – such as, ‘inclusive planning’; means for the expression of citizen voice; public financial management and revenue generation; training; gender; policy and legislation; and management information systems - was relevant to the main interests of government. The project’s support to the continuing functioning of WCFs is much appreciated by government and seems to us to be valuable, although more critical consideration could have been given to the lessening and/or redirection of such support.

139. The project’s support to the development of new policy *per se* was limited.

140. However, in relation to project adaptation, we could not find any evidence of sufficient consideration being given to the development of well thought-through and more narrowly defined areas of activity for the future - that is, activities that are argued on the basis of the changing governance circumstances of the country and project achievements to date. The PPSF should have been actively engaged in this.

141. In the self-report questionnaire, in response to the question, ‘kindly describe briefly and precisely what you consider to be the two most important **and feasible** activities or lines of work that should be pursued by the project in the future’, the project could only identify the following possibilities:

- (i) ‘Capacity development of elected representatives and staff;’ and
- (ii) ‘Improvement in public financial management.’

142. Note that neither of these suggestions makes any reference to any aspect of policy or programme development.

143. **Effectiveness.** The project scored satisfactorily on most of the questions in this category, although like other projects it did not score well on the ‘partnership strategy’ or ‘indicator’ questions.

144. While the volume of work done by the project has been impressive (although much of it has comprised indirect support) – e.g., in relation to training (more than 50,000 attendees); planning workshops (1.2 million participants); public hearings in 57% of VDCs; and so on – the development benefits of these activities are neither adequately discussed nor clear. We were unable in the time available to us to assess the relevance or quality of training materials or the quality of training.

145. The PPSF appears to have made worthwhile contributions to the development of guidelines for the use of social accountability mechanisms such as public hearings, public audit, social audit, and citizens’ report cards. These mechanisms constitute the Minimum Conditions and Performance Measures (MCPM) linked to the formula based grant to local bodies and, to the extent that these have been institutionalized, they will have helped to improve transparency as well as downward accountability in local bodies.

146. The PPSF has also provided support to the adoption by local bodies of the Fiduciary Risk Reduction Action Plan (FRRAP). To date, 60% of the FRRAP indicators have been achieved, providing evidence of improvement in the financial management system. Training and technical backstopping was also provided to municipalities to pave the way for the introduction of the Integrated Property Tax system (IPT). 61 Municipalities (28%) have adopted the IPT system.

147. However, like the donors we spoke to, we have concerns about the performance management of the large number of TAs employed by the project, which is the responsibility of the PPSF – for example, in relation the analyses (if any) that were done as the bases for the jobs they were to perform, resulting job descriptions, and the maintenance subsequently of sufficient contact with the TAs to influence and learn from what they were doing or not doing so that, accordingly, adjustments could be made to their own jobs and the activities of the project more broadly. We do not believe that the national execution modality of the project relieves either project management or UNDP Country Office staff of their responsibilities for optimising TA performance within the constraints that applied.

148. We also found the Gender Equality and Social Inclusion Policy, 2010, and its associated strategic plan, which the PPSF claims to have contributed to, not to be very well constructed or to contain sufficiently precise direction.

149. We also found that some of the activities supported in the CACs – such as animal husbandry (goats and poultry) – and the advice provided – e.g., regarding civil registration (births and deaths) – was either already well-known or obvious to local communities or, where because the word would spread very quickly, would only need to be told once. The risks are, first, that of creating in communities an over-dependency on support from above – a ‘cargo cult’ mentality – and, second, reducing the credibility of the whole exercise to one where everyone involved is going through the motions rather than doing anything that is recognised to be genuinely developmental.

150. **‘Efficiency’.** The project scored well on complementarity, particularly with other UN agencies - UN Women and UNCDF as part of the Joint Financing Arrangement, and with UNFPA, UNV, UNDP as part of the UN joint programme. The chief technical adviser for UNCDF told us that LGCDP and relevant people and projects in UNCDF were ‘joined at the hip’.

151. Perceptions among certain key stakeholders are that UNDP does not operate efficiently or effectively. Examples given in relation to this project included concerns about the effectiveness and efficiency of the large numbers of national TA.

152. **Sustainability.** The project scored satisfactorily on this criterion but there is considerable room for improvement. Perhaps the most serious limitation has been the fact that among project staff understanding of what might constitute institutionalisation and sustainability was not well developed. We found this to be a general problem across all five projects.

153. Donors were committed to sustainability but not clear about where it was evident in the project.

154. In terms of ownership, there was clear and strong ownership of certain project activities among government counterparts – e.g., support to PFM and the early work done on WCFs. Such ownership was much less evident among donors.

155. Likewise, among government counterparts there was general appreciation of the neutrality and ‘government-friendliness’ of UNDP, and this view was also held by donors. This was not always seen by donors as a positive feature however.

156. **Suggestions for the future.** The following occur to us as matters worthy of attention as a basis for policy and legislative development. We understand that currently these are matters over which the PPSF does not have great influence, but in our view they are the sorts of questions that it should become more deeply involved with in the future:

- (i) Analysis of the effectiveness of the conditional and unconditional grant schemes, and the results achieved under the ear-marked funding for women and marginalised or vulnerable groups.
- (ii) Analysis of the feasibility of the form of subnational governance envisaged in the constitution – in terms of resources and politics and comparative experience of the costs and benefits.
- (iii) Analysis of the nature and effectiveness of upward accountability in the existing system of subnational governance and the implications of this for greater devolution.

- (iv) Support to the consideration by elected local bodies of the merits of maintaining WCFs and, if so, in what form and with what mandates.

Project to Prepare the Public Administration for State Reforms 2013-2016

157. A detailed evaluation of this project and ratings against the questions we were required to address by our terms of reference are set out in Annex 7.

158. We found this to be one of the two weakest projects that comprise the Programme. This had much to do with the over-ambitious scope of the project and the large number of complex fields that it claimed to be capable of providing technical support to. It was also a function of the ambiguities and lack of practical meaning in some of the ‘fields’ that the project professed interest to support. Superficially, these statements were right-sounding, but otherwise largely vacuous, as the following examples demonstrate: first, to ‘prepare...relevant government institutions...for administrative restructuring and reforms in the context of the new federal constitution’. The difficulty here is clearly ‘how does one prepare for the largely unknown?’ Second, to create ‘a basis for the reorganization of the civil service along federal lines’. Again, in the absence of any clear and precise direction as to the distribution of functions, authority and resources subnationally, one might wonder what such a ‘basis’ might look like and how one might ‘create’ it.

159. Even in the few areas where the project laid claim to have done some useful work, such as ‘functional analysis’, there was insufficient understanding among the project staff we spoke to of: (1) the logical order (critical path) in which the various components of a restructuring of subnational governance should be addressed; (2) of the fact that decision-making concerning such matters invariably is very largely political, particularly in a neopatrimonial state; and that, (3) in order to have any chance of being useful to political decision-makers and senior bureaucrats, the lengthy and complex documents produced by the project had to be distilled into one or two page briefs outlining in plain language how the issues of money and power that would be the subject of negotiation could be translated into the practicalities of different sectors.

160. In terms of both complexity and scope, the project has clearly bitten off more than it can chew with the resources at its disposal and, to this extent, has been hoisted by its own petard (project document).

161. The project scores in the red on our achievement barometer for three out of four performance criteria.

162. **Relevance.** Despite the above, the main work of the project – such as the functional analyses it commissioned – was relevant to national priorities and we have given it a generous score on this part of the relevance assessment. However, it scored poorly on the other two questions. We could find no evidence of particular and meaningful attention having been given to the special interests of women and vulnerable groups. In so far as adaptation is concerned, we could not see how a project that clearly could not see the problems inherent in the matters we have discussed above could possibly ‘adapt’.

163. **Effectiveness.** Clearly, the above make it highly unlikely that the project could be effective and the ratings on the questions in this category that can be seen in Annex 6 reflect this.

164. **Efficiency.** We could find no evidence to justify satisfactory scores on any of the questions in this category. On its potential contributions to other UN agencies, we were told by one agency that they could see major implications and potential benefits (unlikely for the reasons we have given above) for their work arising out of the functional analyses, but they had not been consulted about them at any stage and had not been consulted during project design.

165. **Sustainability.** Ownership and feedback from government counterparts was mixed. Among the more damaging pieces of evidence on sustainability was that project survival itself was in constant jeopardy, signified by the fact that the project has managed to attract no donor funding since inception. This is highly suggestive of little or no ownership from donors. Interview evidence

confirmed this. Moreover, donors in particular were not convinced of the quality of technical advice being provided under the project and of UNDP's contribution in this regard.

166. The project had not made any attempt to institutionalise the capabilities required to produce the documents that it did, in either government or non-government organisations. The fact that some of the documents were produced by or with national consultants mitigated this somewhat.

167. **Suggestions for the future.** The project in its present form does not have a very bright future. It is clearly in need of complete reformulation (a new project), which we understand is planned by UNDP. In our view, ideally, this should be preceded by a thorough and high quality analysis of the governance context of Nepal.

168. A number of our suggestions concerning possibilities for future support to governance – made in a separate section below – should be helpful to the formulation of a new project.

Support to Participatory Constitution Building in Nepal Project 2008-2015

169. A detailed evaluation of this project and ratings against the questions we were required to address by our terms of reference are set out in Annex 8.

170. The main work of the project – public consultations about the contents of the constitution – was impressive in scale and a political necessity, which it appears to have done thoroughly and well. By comparison, the design of the current PSP is disappointing.

171. In particular, to the (in some ways considerable) extent to which the project has contributed to the production of a new and quite progressive constitution – mainly through the national consultations and its support to the constituent assembly – it helped to solidify and stabilise the bases of good governance and has therefore already made a significant contribution to outcomes 5 and 6 of the UNDAF.

172. **Relevance.** The project clearly addressed matters that were national priorities, in particular the nationwide consultations that were conducted with citizens about the constitution. This was required as part of the peace agreement that was signed in 2006. Many of the concerns of vulnerable groups, of women and of children, the elderly, and the handicapped are reflected in the progressive constitution that was promulgated in late 2015. The project's other major areas of support were also clearly important to government, but there is much less evidence there to suggest clear development benefits.

173. There was considerable evidence that the needs and interests of women and excluded groups were targeted directly and gathered during national consultations on the constitution, working through a number of (genuine) CSOs that represented, for example, 'indigenous women', Dalits, and so on.

174. **Effectiveness.** The project scored well or satisfactorily on all of the questions in this category.

175. Possible unintended consequences of the project are noteworthy however. Two in particular deserve mention. First, it is likely that the nationwide consultations will have raised citizen expectations that somehow all or most of their concerns will be reflected in the constitution. Where this is seen not to be the case, disappointment and resentment are likely which could lead to civil unrest. Second, there is a possibility that the consultations may have encouraged rather than ameliorated national fragmentation along ethnic or other identity-related lines.

176. Also noteworthy for this project was the fact that it established effective working relations with a number of CSOs in addition to those mentioned above – e.g., a legal sector association, local government associations, and media groups.

177. Strong views were also expressed to us by stakeholders, particularly though not exclusively in government, about the perceived advantages of working with the UN system and with UNDP. This was reflected in two main ways. First, in the extent to which people felt confident and secure to present their views about the constitution under the UN banner. And second, in government's evident trust in UNDP to support this crucial work.

178. **'Efficiency'.** While this project scored satisfactorily on this criterion, it is apparent that most of the projects – perhaps all of them – were not adequately informed and therefore aware of the necessity or desirability for their work to be complementary with other UN agency projects or of the desirability of UNDP contributing to other UN agency programmes. The same was true of the UNDP 'partnership strategy'.

179. **Sustainability.** Like the other projects, 'ownership' seemed strong in government, less so among donors.

180. All stakeholders assert their commitment to 'sustainability'. This is not problematic. What is problematic is the extent to which the different stakeholders involved have a clear and shared understanding: first, of what can constitute sustainability and institutionalisation; second of which

project activities should be institutionalised or made sustainable; third, progress in relation to this; and fourth, of each other's views on the issues involved.

181. Capability in relation to questions of sustainability is variable and, like some other aspects of capacity among stakeholders, too subject to the variability in the individuals concerned rather than being a consistent feature of the particular institution.

182. **Suggestions for the future.** The PSP project, discussed below, is the successor to the SPCBN project.

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Parliament Support Project 2015-2019

183. A detailed evaluation of this project and ratings against the questions we were required to address by our terms of reference are set out in Annex 9.

184. This project receives less than satisfactory ratings on three of the four performance categories (see Annex 9). The work that appears to have been done in relation to the (benign) outcome and output indicators is not well understood by the project team (in relation to the oversight or legislative functions, for example) and seems unlikely to have had much effect in so far as the functioning of parliament and the capabilities of parliamentarians is concerned.

185. **Relevance.** Both the predecessor project and the PSP clearly address national priorities. In the case of the PSP, however, the things that it says it will do with the resources at its disposal are unrealistic – see, for example, pp. 4 and 5 of the project document.

186. With respect to women and vulnerable groups, the activities of the predecessor project clearly addressed such matters and output 3 (of 3 outputs) in the PSP reveals a similar interest. There is relatively little *evidence* of this in the current project however.

187. **Effectiveness.** Achievements to date have satisfied relatively benign indicators (e.g., 6.3.2). Most problematic, however, is the low level of understanding of the work that they claim to be doing among the project staff we spoke to.

188. The female CA members and ex-members we spoke to reported that they saw a clear need for the project but that to date they had received no tangible benefit from it. They expressed a particular need for assistance with drafting laws pertaining to federalisation under the new constitution.

189. Future performance is likely to be adversely affected also by problems of project design.

190. **'Efficiency'.** Performance in this category on the basis of uncorroborated self-reports from project staff was rated as satisfactory on all indicators.

191. **Sustainability.** Government ownership of the project was strong.

192. Again, all stakeholders expressed strong commitment to sustainability. Capability varied significantly, however, and most significantly was particularly low among the project staff we spoke to.

193. We were told that the project was 'planning to produce a plan' (!) on sustainability.

194. Project staff were unclear about how UNDP's contribution to sustainability was being expressed.

195. **Suggestions for the future.** The broad scope and lack of clarity evident in the existing project document (see, for example, pp. 4-5 of that document) strongly suggest the need for project redesign. This was confirmed by our discussions with project staff and by the written responses from them to our standardised questions, all of which were much stronger on development form than they were on relevant and well-informed substance.

Main Independent Variables affecting Project AND Programme Performance

196. As with most organisations, the main independent variables affecting project and programme performance are:

- (i) **Quality of project design and quality control in relation to this.** We believe this to have been a problem with all of the projects, but it has been pronounced in some, most notably PREPARE and PSP. In particular, these projects have been wildly unrealistic in terms of their scope and feasibility given the context and the availability of financial and (suitable) human resources. The following excerpt from the PREPARE project document, which was just one of six such areas of proposed technical assistance, illustrates the point: ‘The development of new laws and policies, new institutions, reorganization of existing institutional arrangements, restructuring of civil services, allocation of staff, and development of mechanisms and processes for carrying out service delivery with least possible disruptions.’
- (ii) **Quality of project staffing and human resource management.** This involves job design, selection, placement, induction, performance appraisal, organisation development and culture building, and so on. Our own assessments and the views expressed to us by donors suggest that this could be improved across all projects. This applies to both core project staff and to those who are embedded in the government system. The comments are applicable irrespective of mode of project execution. In relation to ‘embedded’ staff, it seems that thorough job analyses have not been conducted as bases either for selection or job descriptions. The job descriptions that we have seen are far too general and attempt to cover every possible eventuality rather than being confined to a well-defined - and real - job.
- (iii) **Quality of project management** (all forms of execution) versus project administration by Country Office staff and by project managers. In relation to the latter, we found several instances where interactions between project management in Kathmandu and staff in the field offices were infrequent and not substantive. Some staff reported feeling ‘neglected’ or ‘ignored’: ‘once we had been selected and given our amazingly long terms of reference we never heard from them (UNDP) again’. This was particularly the case for embedded national TA staff, which should be read in the light of our comments in (ii) immediately above.
- (iv) **Government ownership in the interests of the public good.** In nearly all cases, government expressions of ownership across all projects have been strong. However, it is likely that at least in some cases vested interests as well as the public good weigh in such calculations. Ownership for the former reasons is clearly detrimental to the likelihood of development benefits being realised from project activities. In a number of instances, we gained the strong impression that government or ex-government officials were too eager to impress upon us the uniformly excellent value of the projects, but when pressed had little or no knowledge of the specifics of what the projects had done that had impressed them so much – we could not help but conclude that ‘they protested too much’.¹⁰
- (v) **Donor support and confidence.** The former clearly depends on the latter. Both are crucial to project survival. Many of the matters discussed here and in the next section are vital ingredients of donor confidence and there is understandably therefore a close correlation between our assessment of their presence or absence in the projects and donor confidence in those projects.

¹⁰ For ease of reference, we repeat here our earlier explanation of this term: This is a figure of speech with Shakespearean roots (Hamlet) that is used to describe someone's overly frequent and vehement attempts to convince others of some matter of which the opposite is true.

(vi) **The complexity and predictability of the operating environment or context, including political economy considerations.** These are clearly features of most so-called ‘least-developed countries’, which have been pronounced in Nepal in recent times. In order to position themselves and contribute optimally to development, projects must be capable of analysing and coping with both. Yet the project documents contained no mention of such matters, as if they were to be suspended in a political economy-free zone, and neither project nor Country Office staff raised political economy issues in our discussions with them.

197. The above is clearly not an exhaustive list of independent variables, others include: government absorptive capacity, staff turnover in government, and levels of commitment and motivation among technical counterparts in government. But these are clearly matters over which UNDP has no control and little influence.

Recommendations for Project and Programme Performance Improvement

198. These recommendations arise from our assessments of project and programme performance, from our comparative experience of such matters, and from our knowledge of the latest and best thinking on the questions addressed.

199. We would like to make clear at the outset that a significant number of the recommendations that we make are already under serious consideration by UNDP Nepal or are in the process of being implemented by its leadership.

The Political Economy of the Governance Context and its Implications

200. The term 'political economy' has become an increasingly popular part of the vernacular of development assistance. DfID (2006), for example, acknowledges the vital importance of these ideas to the understanding of development and employs the term the 'drivers of change perspective' to describe their use of them. The importance of a political economy perspective to public service management reform is also stressed by the World Bank (2008, 2009b) and by a number of other development agencies, such as Sida (Unsworth, 2007)

201. But while it is widely recognised that the most significant impediments to governance reform of any kind arise because such reform threatens the (illicit) interests of governing elites and other powerful groups, on the whole it is still insufficiently self-consciously reflected in development policy and practice. To reiterate, reform fails most often because it does not receive the genuine high-level support in government that it requires to succeed. Purely technocratic remedies have little purchase on these matters and they fail more often than they succeed as a result (Blunt, 2009).

202. Political economy analysis can contribute to addressing such deep-seated problems by revealing the informal forces, power relations, and reciprocal obligation that impede development and, done well, it can help to pin-point where constructive change might be most feasible and thereby inform how best to position development assistance.

203. The importance of such analyses is clearly much more pronounced in governance conditions characterised by systemic patronage or neopatrimonialism¹¹ (e.g., Blunt *et al.*, 2012) – conditions that many observers agree would be a fair characterisation of Nepal (e.g., Asia Foundation, 2012; Transparency International, 2015).

204. Yet there was no evidence in any of the project documents we reviewed or in our discussions with project or Country Office staff that these matters were of sufficient significance (or were sufficiently understood) even to warrant mention let alone serious discussion or analysis. It was as if the work being done was suspended in a rarefied political economy-free zone, somehow immune to informal influences.

205. **Recommendation.** We believe that not recognising the significance of these matters, or turning a blind eye to them, is detrimental to project performance and that this is a serious defect of project design, project implementation, and project management that should be rectified as soon as practicable.

Project Quality Assurance: Design, and Human Resource Management

206. There were two aspects of quality assurance that struck us most forcibly as being deficient in the projects that we reviewed. The first was the design of the projects as reflected in the approved project documents. The second was concerned with fundamental aspects of human resource management.

207. **Project design.** The following aspects of project design were most problematic:

¹¹ Wikipedia provides a standard definition: neopatrimonialism is a system of social hierarchy where patrons use state resources in order to secure the loyalty of clients in the general population. It is an informal patron–client relationship that can reach from very high up in state structures down to individuals in small villages.

- (i) Over-ambition - in terms of the range and complexity of the matters that were claimed to fall within the ambit of the project and were feasible given the human and other resources at its disposal.
- (ii) The overuse of meaningless words and phrases and development jargon and the inability to penetrate beneath them and to express project intentions or activities in practical terms and plain English.
- (iii) Weak, or no, analytical bases and arguments for undertaking the work proposed.
- (iv) The complete absence of political economy analysis in governance circumstances characterised by systemic patronage.

208. **Human resource management.** We found a number of fundamental aspects of human resource management not to be receiving the attention that they deserved, including:

- (i) Selection – this was reflected in the marked variability of capabilities between project staff concerning general matters of development as well as their own fields of professed expertise. It has been widely received for some time that in professional bureaucracies selection constitutes the most critical aspect of performance management and quality control (see Mintzberg, 1979).
- (ii) Job design and job descriptions – these problems were most pronounced in relation to the jobs of embedded TAs (such as LGCDP).
- (iii) Performance management – in addition to (i) above, whatever the form of execution, Country Office and project staff should see themselves as members of a team that are all striving to achieve the same development ends. Having said that, Country Office project managers need to give greater attention to promoting critical analysis and critical self-reflection in the projects they manage; to developing a deeper substantive knowledge themselves of the projects in their portfolio; and to engaging with all stakeholders on matters of project substance.
- (iv) Culture and team-building – in the development of the attributes we recommend in (iii) above, there is often a difficult balance to be struck between, on the one hand, constructive involvement and collaboration and, on the other, interference and micro-management. Erring in the direction of the latter can produce adversarial relations that are counterproductive. Strong and constructive organisational culture therefore must be built on clarity about what the goals are and where authority and responsibility for achieving them lies; and on the acceptance of the idea that ‘we are in this together’ and that we should work as a team. Such project cultures should cultivate and reward a preparedness to admit mistakes and to learn from them and to make it clear to others that this is the case.

209. **Recommendations.** We recommend as follows:

- (i) **Project design.** Interested development partners should be invited to become formally involved in the design process at an early stage.
- (ii) **Project documents.** That, before they are approved, project documents should be subject to review by, preferably, two independent referees of international standing in the field(s) covered by the project, one appointed by UNDP and the other by the donor partner(s) involved.
- (iii) **Human resource management.** Emphasis should be placed on developing selection and remuneration systems that optimise the selection of high quality professional project staff. After project design, this is the most critical contributor to project performance. However, management capability is also extremely important and should be given greater attention in the selection of team leaders or project managers; it should also be part of the professional development of Country Office staff. We

devote a separate section to the professional development of Country Office staff below.

Critical Analysis and Critical Self-Reflection

210. Throughout this document we have repeatedly stressed the importance of critical analysis to all aspects of project design, implementation and management. This emphasis is entirely consistent with the views expressed to us by all of the donors that we met and was corroborated by our discussions with project staff and our reading of project and planning documents.

211. It seems likely to us that this could well be the most important determinant of donor confidence. For these reasons, it deserves to be singled out for special attention.

212. **Recommendation.** We recommend that the creation of a culture of critical analysis and critical self-reflection in the project teams should be led by the UNDP Country Office staff; and that such capabilities should be made required attributes of project staff, but particularly project managers and team leaders; and that they should be reflected in selection and performance criteria.

Knowledge of Main UN Planning Documents

213. As in any organisation, but particularly in professional bureaucracies¹², it is clearly desirable that staff understand the overall goals of the organisation and their responsibilities in relation to their attainment. The UNDAF and the Country Programme contain information of this type and all of the project teams, including CO staff, should be aware of their most important features and the outcomes to which their own projects and activities are expected to contribute. We found such knowledge to be highly variable between and within project teams.

214. **Recommendation.** Steps should be taken to provide for more thorough and more uniform knowledge of the main features of UN planning documents – particularly the UNDAF and CP – among project teams, and this process should be led by CO staff.

Outcomes and Outcome Indicators

215. We have noted above that both Outcomes 5 and 6 of the CP represent lofty ambitions, which would test the resources of a much larger, much more capable, and much longer-term programme than the one that is the subject of this evaluation, even if it were combined with the other governance-related support being provided by UNDP and other UN agencies.

216. And as discussed under ‘outcome achievement’ above, there was considerable variability in the quality of the latest indicators for Outcomes 5 and 6.

217. **Recommendation.** Greater attention should be given to the timely production of meaningful, and sufficiently testing, but *realistic and feasible*, outcomes, outputs and indicators and (in the case of indicators) to the business of maintaining their relevance and to continuous review by the projects of progress towards their attainment.

Understanding of Development, Gender Issues, and Key Terms

218. The practical implications and possible manifestations of widely used development terms such as ‘capacity building’, ‘institutionalisation’, and ‘sustainability’ are not sufficiently understood among project staff.

219. We feel that more could be done also to improve the understanding of project staff concerning the many different – direct and indirect – ways in which issues of gender and vulnerability can be addressed. UNDP (2013) notes a ‘lack of support in monitoring and evaluating gender mainstreaming in national development plans, general budget support, programming, and sector wide approaches.’

220. **Recommendation.** As a ‘learning organisation’ and an industry leader in these matters, UNDP should distribute among project staff relevant UNDP guidelines; should conduct workshops for project teams that develop understanding and skills and review project progress in relation to

¹² The ‘shop floor workers’ in a professional bureaucracy are highly qualified professionals.

them; and should be actively involved in country common analysis, gender and social inclusion analysis, and targeting in programme design.

UNDP's Comparative Advantages

221. We only encountered one person among the many that we met (as informants) who had a reasonably complete understanding of what UNDP's comparative advantages might be. These were said to be:

- (i) Brand recognition.
- (ii) Long-term and close relations with many different government agencies.
- (iii) Convening power.
- (iv) Its identification with internationally-accepted value-based principles.
- (v) Its role as a knowledge broker, particularly South/South learning.

222. Other stakeholders acknowledged one or two of these, but rarely more than that. The most widely recognised advantage was (ii) above, although this was sometimes seen to have the potential of being a negative feature.

223. **Recommendation.** If UNDP is keen to have these advantages recognised more widely, it should decide what the full list of such advantages is or could be and then promote them more vigorously, particularly among the project teams, including CO staff.

UNDP's 'Partnership Strategy'

224. As one of the questions to be addressed, examining the contribution of UNDP's 'partnership strategy' was a requirement of our TOR. Following the submission of our draft report, we were informed that this had been included in error and should not have been the subject of evaluation.

Collaboration between UN Agencies

225. This is clearly desirable for optimising the achievements of the development ends set out in UN planning documents such as the UNDAF and the CP. Each of the agencies has clear development interests and capabilities but these tend not to be sufficiently widely or deeply understood. Such understanding is particularly important for project staff (where such understanding was generally lower) but also for CO staff (who, generally, were better informed).

226. **Recommendation.** We recommend, first, that summary information on the matters referred to above be produced and disseminated to project teams; and second, that greater attention be given to exploring possibilities for inter-agency collaboration by projects and programmes in the UN agencies.

The Role of Country Office Programme/Project Managers

227. Our discussions with CO staff indicate that their current role in relation to projects involves a heavy burden of administrative work - making sure that procedures are followed, reports are delivered on time and in the correct format, and so on – as well as substantive interactions with projects.

228. The interface between the CO and the projects (whatever their form of execution) is clearly one of the main opportunities for UNDP to add value to its projects and to be seen to be adding value.

229. **Recommendations.** We recommend that CO staff responsible for projects should be encouraged to do as we suggest below and that they be provided with professional development that enables them to do so (to reiterate our earlier remarks, a number of these recommendations are under active consideration by UNDP):

- (i) Increase their active interest in the substance of their projects and engage in critical discussion with project staff of project goals and activities and monitoring and evaluation issues.
- (ii) Act as a broker and proselytiser of knowledge concerning UNDP, UN agencies, and development generally, gender and vulnerability issues, and key development terms

(as discussed above). This will require them to keep abreast of UN publications and professional developments in the published literature.

- (iii) Lead on matters associated with the main UN planning documents, such as the UNDAF and the CP, and provide for better understanding and awareness of the issues involved among project staff.
- (iv) Familiarise themselves with *all* of the comparative advantages to which UNDP can reasonably lay claim; be able to utilise these advantages to the benefit of their projects; demonstrate to others how these benefits are being gained; and generally to be an important part of the public face of the organisation in these respects.

DRAFT

Suggestions for UN Support to State Governance (2018-2022)

230. We have not had the time on this mission to do the thorough empirical ground work, reading, and analysis that would enable us to make confident suggestions about possible future areas of UN support in the broad field of governance.

231. Accordingly, the possibilities that we discuss below can be regarded as those which seemed to us to be worthy of serious consideration but that they need to be subjected to much more detailed analysis than we have been able to do here.

232. Except for local governance, we have deliberately omitted mention here of the fields covered by some of the projects we were asked to evaluate, fields which can be regarded as standard areas of operation or lines of business for UNDP – for example, elections, support to parliament, and general public administrative reform. This is partly because, following discussion of our evaluation of the performance of each of the projects (above), we have made some suggestions for the future. But it is also because we felt that the current portfolio of projects is perhaps a little too much a replica of what UNDP tends to do in other places rather than a well thought-through response to the most pressing development challenges of the country. The current mix of projects may also be a function of what has become a more constricted view of which aspects of governance are legitimate targets for UNDP support, which seem to be those associated with certain aspects of *government* as opposed to the more broadly conceived notion of *governance* (see Blunt & Rondinelli, 1997).

233. We, on the other hand, have chosen to take a view of the governance of the state that assumes that contributions can be made by or within or between three broad domains or ‘major realms of activity’ (Blunt & Rondinelli, 1997): government, the private sector, and civil society (the latter defined in Putnam’s terms – see Putnam, 1993). Accordingly, in our discussion below, in some cases our suggestions straddle two of these realms in particular, namely, government and the private sector.

Thorough Analysis of the Governance Context

234. We could not find a recent and good quality analysis of the governance context of Nepal in the literature. None of the informants we asked was able to direct us to one that had been done within the last five years. The circumstances that we outline in the introductory paragraphs of this report – particularly the rapidity, complexity, and unpredictability of change and the challenges inherent in the structure of the economy and of the population – suggest that such an analysis is urgently needed.

Strategic Positioning

235. The analysis that we refer to above would clearly contribute greatly to the strategic positioning of UNDP and UN support to governance.

236. In the absence of such analysis, a categorisation that seems to us to be worthy of consideration right away would be one that distinguishes between governance issues ‘in’ and governance issues ‘outside of’ the transition. The commonsensical (political economy) reasoning behind this is simply that the transition is going to be complex; it will be decided largely on political rather than technical grounds; and is likely for these reasons to be messy and not readily amenable to technical assistance. Projects that fall within the ambit of the transition seem likely to be riskier largely because of the high density of political economy or informal transactions and negotiations that it will entail, which are very likely to dominate decisions concerning the distribution of power and resources within the system of subnational governance.

237. Our suggestions below are structured roughly along these lines.

238. We of course realise that our distinction is somewhat artificial in that, as an ‘open system’ (Katz & Kahn, 1978), it is impossible to ‘ring-fence’ one aspect of governance from another. Our distinction between governance issues ‘in’ and ‘outside’ of the transition should therefore be taken to refer to differences in degrees of susceptibility rather than an all or none condition.

239. The question of strategic positioning looked at through this lens would be a matter of deciding on the rough balance to be struck between projects that were ‘in’ and ‘outside’ of the transition.

Subnational Governance under the New Constitution

240. We suspect that those in government who are supporting the ambitious programme of subnational governance reform that is envisaged in the constitution and the very short period that has been proposed for its implementation have not allowed sufficiently for the complexity, or the costs, or the human resource implications, or the likely political contestation of what is involved.

241. We expect that even relatively modest and staged devolution over the medium term would be difficult to manage well and to finance out of government revenues.

242. While acknowledging that negotiations surrounding the transition will be largely political, we believe that it is desirable as soon as possible for some resource-based rationalism to be injected into the discussions and for this to be done at the highest levels of government – in the form, say, of rough estimates of what the costs would be of establishing even the most basic elements of a modest form of political and administrative decentralisation (elected councils at the provincial and district levels; provincial and district departments of health, education, and agriculture; and so on).

243. We envisage a study that would analyse the feasibility of such a modest form of subnational governance – in terms of resources and politics, timing, and comparative experience of the costs and benefits.

The Management of the Transition

244. In our discussions with senior government officials about the transition, we were struck very forcibly by the understandable confusion and anxieties they exhibited about what to do, the order in which to do it, and how.

245. Recognising the dominance of political over technical rationality in the decision-making process surrounding the transition, it still seems sensible to us for government to have for its consideration and guidance some clear and short critical path or decision tree, which indicates the optimal order in which different steps should be taken, the institutions affected and needing to be involved at different junctures, and the desirability of different forms of technical support along the way.

246. Allied to this, and perhaps drawing on some of the functional analyses that have been conducted, we see as being sorely needed the production of short decision briefs that can explain to decision-makers simply and clearly what is at stake (resources and power) when it comes to even relatively modest functional reassignments in the main sectors of service delivery (health, education, agriculture, water and sanitation, and so on).

247. These contributions and the feasibility study proposed in the previous section would comprise carefully targeted strategic interventions of potentially high return and relatively low cost.

248. In short, these contributions would help government to answer three fundamental questions in relation to the transition:

- (i) How much would even relatively modest movement (at a measured pace) towards what is envisaged in the constitution cost? And what is a realistic time frame for the realisation of the form of subnational governance that is envisaged in the constitution?
- (ii) What would be the critical path of major decisions and steps to be taken?
- (iii) What would be at stake at different points in the critical path and who should be consulted and involved?

Development Challenges ‘Outside’ of the Transition

249. As suggested above, there are aspects of governance (defined broadly), support to which would entail significantly less risk than some transition-related support would, but could yield significant and much needed development benefit.

Upward Accountability

250. For good reasons having to do with watershed changes in the form of national governance, a protracted insurgency, and a complex and contested constitution-building process, great emphasis has been given in Nepal to downward accountability: to the building of bonds between citizens and the state; to citizen understanding of and involvement in elections and the expression of citizen voice; to grassroots-determined development; and to the special needs of vulnerable groups. All of these features of democracy are well-represented in Nepal’s recently promulgated and progressive constitution.

251. But the day-to-day functioning of the state in developing and developed settings alike hinges by necessity on the reliability and effectiveness of *upward* accountability. Clearly, if for no other reasons, governments would quickly grind to a halt if every decision they had to take was subject to consultation or participation.¹³

252. Problems of upward accountability are particularly pronounced in neopatrimonial or patronage-based systems of governance such as Nepal’s. As in other such settings, governance tends to be much stronger on form than substance, and on statements of grand intent rather than the implementation of even the most mundane of rules and regulations. Generally speaking, the research literature demonstrates that these problems worsen under conditions of governance devolution or decentralisation. Blunt *et al.* (2012) explain why: ‘levels of accountability and transparency and efficiency and effectiveness are generally lower at the local level, particularly in some important capacity-dependent respects, and opposition to localised corruption is weaker and more diffuse than at the centre. These are benign and conducive conditions for the establishment and consolidation of patronage.’ And even in lower middle income countries like Indonesia, where a highly devolved system of subnational governance was introduced with a ‘big bang’ in 2002, upward accountability is still more honoured in the breach than the observance.

253. In Indonesia, observers (e.g., World Bank, 2007) agree that decentralisation has enabled patronage to spread nationwide and has resulted in ‘a dramatic increase in rates paid’ for civil service jobs, with payments being channelled through middlemen ‘with close connections to the highest local government officials’; and that it has ‘given rise to rampant money politics’ and created new opportunities for corruption – for example, ‘by district heads seeking to gain and maintain support from legislatures; and legislators exploiting their newly-acquired power over local budgets to secure financing for their political parties’. More common still was the fact that ‘all sides have taken the chance to embezzle funds for self-enrichment’. Comparing corruption levels before and after decentralisation, the World Bank (2007, p. 2) concluded that ‘the more things change, the more they stay the same’.

254. In Nepal, such prospects lie in wait for a system of upward accountability that we suspect is already under severe challenge at the centre. The manifestations of lax accountability are likely to be the same in Nepal as they are in other countries, including: payments by contractors for short-listing and selection to implement projects; payments by staff for selection to fill consulting or project positions; extortion by government officials of ‘voluntary’ donations by business people in exchange for being left alone; fees for (fraudulent) official certification of indigence; retention of interest earned from cash held in loan accounts, sometimes in collusion with commercial banks on a ‘profit-sharing’ arrangement; payment for ‘ghost’ services and/or payment of inflated invoices in collusion with contractors; and ‘speed money’ and other charges for services including ‘tax avoidance, health treatment, school enrolment, issuance of wedding certificates, and so on.

¹³ This is an important but widely misunderstood distinction.

255. Patronage-based forms of resistance in Nepal are also likely to follow a pattern evident in other countries, such as: non-implementation of legislation or the ‘dragging-out’ of the establishment of ‘approved’ institutions; chronic ‘hand-wringing’ about internal inconsistencies and contradictions in legislation and functional assignments, and other technocratic anomalies, but equally chronic remedial inaction; ‘going through the motions’ – for public- and donor-relations reasons - of institutional and organisational establishment or re-design, but not holding organisations or individuals to account for the implementation of their mandates; the ‘disestablishment’, or legislating out of existence an agency or commission charged with managing a civil service system; ‘starvation’, or reducing the budget of the implementing agency so as to sabotage its functioning; ‘re-claiming’, or decentralizing personnel decisions to the ministry or agency level in order to avoid system-wide rules; ‘re-definition’, or ‘legislating for the reduced coverage of the civil service system’; ‘re-engineering’, or employing means for hiring public officials that lie outside the regulations of the formal system; and ‘opting-out’, or resisting incorporation into a meritocratic civil service regime at the agency or service level (Blunt *et al.*, 2012).

256. Just as in other countries, in Nepal, patronage’s great capacity for survival and self-propagation means that even under the new constitution the likelihood is that it will strive to consolidate its grip on the civil service and to extend its reach across and between all levels and sectors of government. Extant HRM practices in government are likely to be crucial ingredients of patronage and largely of its design, under its control, and subject to its protection.

257. Under such conditions, to have any chances of success, there must be recognition of the fact that ‘the causes of *and solutions to* poor governance lie principally in patterns of state-society relations’ (Centre for the Future State, 2010, p. 2, emphasis added), or what we have referred to earlier as the political economy of state functioning.

Human Resource Management in Government

258. As noted above, HRM malpractices are among the most common and lucrative sources of patronage predation in neopatrimonial states. Examples include: little or no formal human resource planning; staffing decisions that are made centrally with no match to local need; non-transparent appointments, concealing widespread job purchase, nepotism and influence-peddling; staffing proposals from local governments that do not specify types or levels of expertise needed; thousands of civil service casual workers employed – as teachers or clerks or in other skilled occupational categories - without formal selection; appointments based on ethnicity and kinship and ‘feudalism’ or hereditary privilege; little or no performance appraisal of staff and advancement on the basis of tenure in the job and/or other informal factors, including ‘achievements in irregular income generation’ and bribes; appointments to senior positions beyond retirement age and outside of the formal structure on the basis of ‘personal links and loyalty’; where so-called ‘fit and proper’ tests for employment have been introduced on paper, they are derided as ‘fee and prosper tests’ in practice; training whose purpose is to generate income for related parties (firms) and travel and accommodation allowances (sometimes from government and donors simultaneously) for government officials; little or no relationship between performance and remuneration; discretionary allowances paid to staff that constitute considerably more than the base pay and that are ‘non-transparent and prone to abuse’; few meaningful job descriptions; high absenteeism (particularly among teachers and health care workers); conversions of contract to permanent staff that have little or no effect on performance because they are not part of a coherent overall plan¹⁴; large numbers of ‘ghost workers’; and large numbers of people who have informal contractual arrangements - so-called ‘honorary employees’ - who are not subject to civil service rules.

259. All of these matters are crucial to service delivery and government performance and closely bound-up with matters of upward accountability.

260. These are problems that may present on the surface, and be portrayed, as problems of ‘capacity,’ but most often they are not. They have much more to do with patronage relations and

¹⁴ In the health sector in Indonesia, such conversions have increased the total number of civil servants by 43% (Heywood *et al.*, 2011).

informal ‘incentive structures’ and, to have any chance of success, development assistance must acknowledge this and design its support accordingly.

261. This will be far from straightforward, however, as comparative experience shows that patronage has successfully employed a wide variety of means either to deflect or assimilate and neutralise externally-induced technocratic reform. Its defenders are skilled and inventive at ‘channelling’ and ‘reflecting back’ conventional development rhetoric so as to create a reassuring impression of interest in governance reform while maintaining the patronage-based or particularistic *status quo*.

262. We would argue that the HRM and governance conditions that are integral to patronage exist not because government officials do not understand what HRM practices or other conditions should obtain, or because they lack capacity, but because they realise all too well that Weberian universalism and merit-based decision-making are contrary to their interests and therefore deliberately resist their introduction. It is simply convenient to the defence of the *status quo* to allow the erroneous idea to prevail that the civil service does not function as it should primarily because of a lack of capacity or because of intractable legislative and functional assignment complexity problems, and so on.¹⁵ Responding to market signals, at least some consultants and some sections of the implementation industry appear to collude in this. This has the twin benefits of masking systemic patronage while attracting new donor funding to sustain technocratic ‘reform’ and yet more capacity building, with attendant opportunities for predation by actors on both the demand and supply sides (Blunt *et al.*, 2012).

263. We believe that these matters are particularly deserving of attention in Nepal, in a manner that takes account of the political economy realities.

Development ‘Hot Spots’: Municipalities

264. A number of recent reports have identified municipalities as development ‘hot spots’, meaning that they are likely to be both important drivers of local and national economic development as well as sites of social distress arising, for example, from accelerating levels of rural-urban migration and lagging and poorly planned infrastructure development (e.g., UNDP, 2014).

265. Whatever the pace of implementation of devolution turns out to be under the new constitution, it is widely agreed that municipal governance will require special attention and that it has the potential to yield significant development gains. We share this view and recommend that this be an area that receives further detailed study as a basis for possible project support from UNDP.

Investment Climate and the Productive Investment of Remittances

266. In our brief discussion of the governance context at the beginning of this report, we pointed to the heavy dependence of the Nepali economy on remittances, noting that they constitute around 30% of GDP and that, in this respect, Nepal is a world leader. It is estimated that consumption accounts for 70% of remittances and that a high proportion (most) of the balance comprises non-productive or speculative or safe-haven investment.

267. World Bank data also point to falling levels of foreign direct investment, heavily positively correlated of course with the period of the insurgency but also a function of a non-conducive investment climate.

268. Policy development that provides suitable incentives for the productive investment of remittances and for foreign direct investment is clearly needed. A regulatory environment of business that seems to be designed for the wrong kinds of ‘entrepreneurship’ is also badly in need of reform.

¹⁵ We do not mean to deny that lack of capacity or legislative inconsistencies are problematic, just that they are at best second order problems and that their existence (real or counterfeit) is convenient to vested interests for the reasons given.

Returning Migrant Labour and Performance-Based Business Training and Incubation

269. A large proportion of the able bodied male workforce of the country is involved in migrant labour. There are a number of projects that address skill development, job opportunities, and exploitation of migrant workers.

270. One such project is the ILO labour migration project entitled, ‘Promoting the Effective Governance of Labour Migration from South Asia through Actions on Labour Market Information, Protection during Recruitment and Employment, Skills and Development Impact (in Nepal, India and Pakistan)’ (ILO, 2016). The objectives of this project are:

- (i) ‘To provide reliable information on overseas employment opportunities and build the capacity to match qualified job seekers with foreign employers;
- (ii) To reduce migration costs and abuses and increase the protection of migrant workers in countries of origin and destination by improving recruitment services; and
- (iii) To enhance training and the portability of skills for outgoing and returning migrant workers and promote the development impact of migration.

271. An important complement to such work and to the investment climate and policy development advocated in the preceding section would be the provision to migrant workers of information and advice concerning different forms of productive investment; advice concerning investment opportunities and incentives; and training in small business management, financing, and entrepreneurship; and business incubation.

272. Such work would also have the advantage of affording opportunities for collaboration with other UN agencies and the realisation of the benefits of synergy between agencies that the UN system promises.

Joint-Ventures and Cooperatives among Female-Headed Households

273. The vast majority of Nepali migrant workers are men. The main destinations are Malaysia and the Gulf States. Estimates indicate that for migrant labour to non-Indian destinations, less than 5% are women whereas for ‘unofficial’ migrant labour to India, women may constitute up to 12% (ILO, 2016).

274. Migrant labour is clearly a major contributor to the very large and growing number of female-headed households in the country. This, in turn, is also a major contributor to rural-urban drift.

275. Anything that can be done to relieve the additional burden imposed on women as a result of this and to reduce the incidence of rural-urban migration should clearly yield considerable development benefit.

276. In other countries such as Ethiopia, women’s cooperatives have proved to be a successful means of increasing the bargaining power and viability of agricultural smallholdings (Woldu, *et al.*, 2015).

277. Policies in health, education, agriculture, and water and sanitation that provide for the availability of more accessible and better quality services in rural areas will also ease the burden on female-headed households and contribute to stemming the flow of rural-urban migration.

278. The three possibilities that we have outlined above – the productive investment of remittances; small business training and incubation for returning migrant workers; and initiatives aimed at female-headed households – are all highly inter-related and may lend themselves to the construction of a cohesive development programme that combines policy and legislative development, the provision of advice, and the development of different types of capability. Such a programme would have the added advantage of giving equal prominence to men and women.

Expanding Performance-Based Vocational Training for Young People

279. There are about 500,000 new entrants to the labour market each year in Nepal. As we suggested in our discussion of the governance context of Nepal, these young people have the potential to provide a ‘development dividend’ but only so long as they are able to find productive employment.

280. The following considerations add weight and context to the worthiness of this area as a target of development assistance (following ADB, 2014):

- (i) Youth unemployment in Nepal stands at around 9% and is growing.
- (ii) Average per capita incomes have been growing, but around 80% of the Nepali population survives on \$2 (purchasing power parity) or less daily as compared to 29% in Sri Lanka and 81% in Bangladesh.
- (iii) Educational levels of the labour force are low in Nepal, although they are improving because of attempts to introduce universal primary education. In Nepal, an estimated one-third of entrants drop out of school before completing grade 5.
- (iv) The current rate of urbanization is relatively low in Nepal (19%), but increasing quite rapidly. By comparison, urbanisation is 28% in Bangladesh.
- (v) Agricultural workers have been declining as a proportion of the labour force, but they still account for 75% in Nepal, as compared to 50% in Bangladesh, and about 33% in Sri Lanka.
- (vi) The informal sector accounts for 90% of the labour force in Nepal.
- (vii) 'Enterprise-based training is lowest in the South Asia region, particularly in Bangladesh and Nepal, compared with the rest of the developing world.'
- (viii) The challenge of domestic job creation in Nepal is offset partly by employment abroad.

281. There is some interesting and important work already underway in this area in Nepal, but more will clearly need to be done. One such project is The Employment Fund, which offers training in about 80 occupations – such as construction, hospitality, garments and textile, agriculture, and electronics – throughout Nepal.

282. Unlike many other skills training programs, the Employment Fund applies results-based financing, meaning that training providers are only paid once trainees have been gainfully employed (see Bettina *et al.*, 2016). This method has also been successfully employed in Liberia (see Haddock, 2016).

Conclusion

283. The main tasks of the mission were: to evaluate the contributions of the Programme to the attainment of Outcomes 5 and 6 of the CP; to assess the likelihood of outcome attainment by the end of 2017; to assess the extent of UNDP's contribution to the progress that has been made; to identify the main drivers of project and programme performance; to make recommendations for improvement; and to suggest possible areas of future support to governance in Nepal.

284. The modest contributions of the Programme to the achievement of Outcomes 5 and 6 of the CP are partly attributable, first, to the fact that the outcomes (particularly Outcome 6) were predicated on the existence of a formally approved constitution that was not promulgated until September 2015; second, to the fact that UN corporate procedures do not permit modifications to be made to outcomes or outputs after they have been formally approved; and third, to the variable quality of output indicators (relevance, benignness, etc.), the frequency with which these were changed, and awareness of these changes in the projects. More importantly, however, we believe that progress was constrained by over-ambition in the outcome statements themselves; by poor project design; and by highly variable project performance.

285. For Outcome 5, we feel confident that it will be possible to say by the end of 2017 that the 'inclusiveness' aspects of the outcome will have been well satisfied. However, the governance 'accountability', 'effectiveness' and 'efficiency' aspects of Outcome 5 will not be achieved. We can find no good reason why progress in relation to accountability, effectiveness, and efficiency should have been prevented by the absence of an approved constitution.

286. Outcome 6 is completely dependent on the existence of an approved constitution. The short amount of time left between now and the end of 2017; the over-ambition and ambiguity of the outcome statement; the technical and political complexity of the tasks; and the condition of the projects that carry the greatest responsibilities for contributing to this outcome make it certain that this outcome will not be achieved.

287. There are clear lessons to be learned here. Among the most obvious and important of these is that CP/UNDAF outcomes should not hinge too greatly (preferably, at all) on government decisions that, if delayed or different from what was expected, reduce the value of outcomes significantly or render them meaningless.

288. Largely for this reason, in making tentative suggestions for future areas of support to governance we have chosen to categorise the possibilities as falling 'in' or 'outside' of the transition. And even for those that we suggest 'in' the transition, we have been careful to make them relevant whatever decisions are taken by government concerning the transition.

289. However, whatever support is offered to governance in the future it deserves to be informed by much more thorough analysis than we have been able to do here. The gravity, the complexity, and the immediacy of the governance problems facing the country now and in prospect urgently require much more detailed and careful analysis than they have received to date.

290. Some of our suggestions for the future do not fit snugly with the traditional areas of UNDP support to governance. We have done this deliberately in order to demonstrate the sorts of possibilities that a more self-consciously demand-side perspective would yield. That is, a perspective that takes seriously the idea that the development context, rather than what is comfortable or customary for the provider, should determine the priorities for development assistance. We emphasise again, however, that these are tentative suggestions based on insufficiently deep or wide analysis.

291. Another lesson to be learned from our evaluation concerns the over-ambition and lack of realism evident in nearly all of the planning and project documents that we read, beginning with the governance outcomes in the UNDP CP itself and in the UNDAF.

292. We believe that the excessive scope and ambition of the objectives in the apex planning documents and the exaggerated claims of support to be rendered by projects, as set out in some of the project documents, could only have stemmed from a gross underestimation of the volume and complexity of work that would be involved in the realisation of even modest progress in relation to:

making 'more accountable, effective, efficient and inclusive' the 'institutions, systems and processes of democratic governance', or 'establishing' and causing to function in line with the constitution 'the three tiers of government.' There are few places anywhere in the developing world that have managed to achieve significant across-the-board progress in relation to all of the fundamental aspects of good governance that are proclaimed as feasible short-term targets in these documents.

293. We have argued above that this problem – insufficient attention to what is feasible as opposed to what is desirable (almost utopian) or the result of political compromise – is one that afflicts the new constitution as well, and that the unforeseen or unacknowledged problems that will inevitably materialise will come back to haunt an unsuspecting government, in the worst case to the detriment of political stability as well as development.

294. In an attempt to forestall this, and while acknowledging that relevant decisions will be mostly political, we have suggested that 'it is desirable as soon as possible for some resource-based rationalism to be injected into the discussions surrounding the transition and for this to be done at the highest levels of government' and have proposed some ways in which this might be done. It seems that the same would hold for apex UN (national) planning documents as well as at the coal face of project design.

295. A final lesson, which is a risk that attends all programmes and projects of development assistance everywhere, is one of goal displacement – here referring to cases where the maintenance or continuation of the project or programme (and attendant jobs and other benefits) becomes the primary end and development ends are relegated to secondary status. The lack of critical analysis that we and other stakeholders have pointed to could be a symptom of this, as one of its effects would be to shield projects from close scrutiny and the possibility that they may have run out of useful things to do or may be doing the wrong things or, generally, are performing poorly.

296. Putting project continuation above all else demands the absence of critical analysis and critical self-reflection, which can result in making the mundane a matter for continuing development assistance (as in the CAC example referred to above). This carries additional risks. First, there is the possibility of creating in communities over-dependence on support from 'above' – a 'cargo cult' mentality; and, second, in the worst case, of reducing not just the effectiveness but, more importantly, the credibility of development assistance.

297. We recommend steps to be taken that would address these problems, many of which are already under serious consideration or are in the process of being implemented by UNDP (Nepal). Perhaps the most significant of these from a development standpoint, and the most important contributor to donor confidence, is the degree to which all project staff engage in critical self-reflection and critical analysis of their development work. Movement in this direction will have to be led by Country Office staff, who will have to become better informed and more engaged substantively with their projects than they have been to date. The benefits of doing so will be felt across all of the aspects of project and programme performance discussed in this evaluation.

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Annex 1: Evaluation Questions and Weightings, Data Sources and Methods

Evaluation Questions and Weightings, Data Sources and Methods									
Questions	Data Sources and Methods								Comment
	Primary					Secondary			
	Interviews; group discussions; participant observation; and development indicators					Documentary evidence and analysis			
	Government counterparts	Development indicators	Project staff	Civil society organisations and citizens	Other -e.g., UN staff; donors	Constitution, government plans and policies	UN documents	Project documents	
Relevance									
Examples of subsidiary questions: (1) What do you consider to have been the most noteworthy contributions of your project and why? (2) Can you give us some concrete examples of the ways in which your project has addressed questions of gender, and social exclusion more broadly?									
To what extent do the outcomes and related outputs address national priorities? Weighting: 0.4/1									For all questions, the evaluation will assign most value to data sources that are free from conflicts of interest. Questions will be weighted according to their perceived (by the evaluation team) contribution to the category of question.
Have UNDP interventions been relevant to addressing the problems of women and socially excluded groups? Weighting: 0.4/1									In evaluating all questions, the team will delve beneath conventional assertions and cliché and probe for clear and precise information on whether and, if so, how such

Evaluation Questions and Weightings, Data Sources and Methods

Questions	Data Sources and Methods								Comment
	Primary					Secondary			
	Interviews; group discussions; participant observation; and development indicators					Documentary evidence and analysis			
	Government counterparts	Development indicators	Project staff	Civil society organisations and citizens	Other -e.g., UN staff; donors	Constitution, government plans and policies	UN documents	Project documents	
									statements were or are planned to be translated into action.
In order to maintain the relevance and value of its support has UNDP been able to adapt its programming (for outcomes 5 & 6) sufficiently to the evolving needs of the country and to changing political and other circumstances? Weighting: 0.2/1									This is likely also to entail commentary on original project designs; the quality, manner and frequency of reporting; and consideration of the implications for project staffing and project management.
Effectiveness Examples of subsidiary questions: (1) Can you tell us what you consider UNDP's main comparative advantages to be? (2) Can you give us some examples of how one or other of these comparative advantages has contributed positively to the performance of your project? (3) Can you give us a concrete example of the ways in which your project activities have been of equal benefit to men and women? (4) Please also give us at least one example of how your project has benefitted marginalised or vulnerable groups in society?									
To what extent have the outcomes been achieved and, if they									

Evaluation Questions and Weightings, Data Sources and Methods

Questions	Data Sources and Methods								Comment
	Primary					Secondary			
	Interviews; group discussions; participant observation; and development indicators					Documentary evidence and analysis			
	Government counterparts	Development indicators	Project staff	Civil society organisations and citizens	Other -e.g., UN staff; donors	Constitution, government plans and policies	UN documents	Project documents	
have not been achieved, how likely is it that they will be? Weighting: 0.4/1									
Have any unexpected or unintended outcomes been achieved? Weighting: 0.03/1									In the spirit of critical rationalism (learning from one's mistakes), this part of the evaluation will consider <i>both</i> positive and negative unintended effects of project activities and design.
If the outcomes are not being achieved, what are and/or have been the main constraints and what can be done to address them? Weighting: 0.00/1									The evaluation will consider <i>both</i> technical and political economy constraints and differentiate between necessary and sufficient conditions for successful reform.
Has UNDP made the									The starting point will

Evaluation Questions and Weightings, Data Sources and Methods

Questions	Data Sources and Methods								Comment
	Primary					Secondary			
	Interviews; group discussions; participant observation; and development indicators					Documentary evidence and analysis			
	Government counterparts	Development indicators	Project staff	Civil society organisations and citizens	Other -e.g., UN staff; donors	Constitution, government plans and policies	UN documents	Project documents	
<p>best use of its comparative advantage in the implementation and management of the projects?</p> <p>Weighting: 0.1/1</p>									clearly be what UNDP (Nepal) considers its main comparative advantages to be.
<p>What can be done to improve the utilisation of the benefits to be derived from UNDP's comparative advantage?</p> <p>Weighting: 0.00/1</p>									This requires a discussion of constraints to performance and means for improvement and is not a measure of effectiveness <i>per se</i> .
<p>Has UNDP's partnership strategy and its implementation been appropriate and effective in contributing to the outcomes?</p>									It will clearly be necessary here to establish unequivocally what that 'strategy' has been and whether it is apparent to key stakeholders.

Evaluation Questions and Weightings, Data Sources and Methods

Questions	Data Sources and Methods								Comment
	Primary					Secondary			
	Interviews; group discussions; participant observation; and development indicators					Documentary evidence and analysis			
	Government counterparts	Development indicators	Project staff	Civil society organisations and citizens	Other -e.g., UN staff; donors	Constitution, government plans and policies	UN documents	Project documents	
Weighting: 0.02/1									
To what extent have project results benefitted women and men equally? Weighting: 0.2/1									It is likely to be difficult here to establish with a high degree of certainty cause-effect relationships.
To what extent have project results benefitted marginalised groups? Weighting: 0.2/1									As immediately above – because of the large number of potential independent (causative) and mediating variables.
Is the current set of outcome and output indicators optimal for measuring progress? Weighting: 0.05/1									
What factors have contributed to achieving or not achieving the outcomes?									Again, the evaluation will consider <i>both</i> technical and political economy constraints and differentiate between

Evaluation Questions and Weightings, Data Sources and Methods

Questions	Data Sources and Methods								Comment
	Primary					Secondary			
	Interviews; group discussions; participant observation; and development indicators					Documentary evidence and analysis			
	Government counterparts	Development indicators	Project staff	Civil society organisations and citizens	Other -e.g., UN staff; donors	Constitution, government plans and policies	UN documents	Project documents	
Weighting: 0.1									necessary and sufficient conditions for successful reform. But, again, this is not a measure of effectiveness per se.
Efficiency Examples of subsidiary questions: (1) Are there any aspects of your project that you would describe as being particularly efficient or inefficient? (If examples are given) Can you explain why you think this to have been the case, what do you think were the principal factors involved?									
How have UNDP's programmes and those of other organizations built on each other's work in order to contribute to the outcomes? Weighting: 0.25/1									As it is phrased, this is more an 'effectiveness' question. An 'efficiency' question might read: 'How efficient has been the establishment, management and operation of inter-agency relations?'
How have other UN agencies interventions been complementary to achieving the outcomes of UNDP-supported initiatives?									This question and the one immediately above cover much the same ground. Consideration should be given to deleting one of them.

Evaluation Questions and Weightings, Data Sources and Methods									
Questions	Data Sources and Methods								Comment
	Primary					Secondary			
	Interviews; group discussions; participant observation; and development indicators					Documentary evidence and analysis			
	Government counterparts	Development indicators	Project staff	Civil society organisations and citizens	Other -e.g., UN staff; donors	Constitution, government plans and policies	UN documents	Project documents	
Weighting:									
Are there any opportunities for UNDP to add value to other the work of other UN agencies? Weighting: 0.25/1									Again, there is considerable overlap between this question and the two immediately above, suggesting that they should be rationalised.
Has UNDP been cost-effective in its management and support of project implementation? Weighting: 0.30/1									This is an overall efficiency question that would probably benefit from some degree of 'disaggregation'. It is also a matter where, in order to avoid clear conflicts of interest, the team will need to make its judgments based on overall progress and its probing of project and project management staff.
Sustainability									

Evaluation Questions and Weightings, Data Sources and Methods

Questions	Data Sources and Methods								Comment	
	Primary					Secondary				
	Interviews; group discussions; participant observation; and development indicators					Documentary evidence and analysis				
	Government counterparts	Development indicators	Project staff	Civil society organisations and citizens	Other -e.g., UN staff; donors	Constitution, government plans and policies	UN documents	Project documents		Published research literature
<p>Examples of subsidiary questions: Can you tell us what you understand the term ‘institutionalisation’ to mean and then give us some examples of it from your project? Capacity building can take many different forms, all of which have implications for sustainability, can you give us some examples of capacity building from your project and tell us how they contributed to sustainability?</p>										
<p>How strong is the level of ownership of project achievements by government counterpart agencies and other stakeholders?</p> <p>Weighting: 0.35/1</p>										<p>It does not necessarily follow that strong government ownership is helpful or synonymous with sustainability. Government may own and like – as many do – projects or activities that are not sustainable and/or not very developmental.</p>
<p>Is government and are other stakeholders committed to sustainability and are they capable of providing for it?</p> <p>Weighting: 0.35/1</p>										<p>And, we might add, ‘do all parties have a more or less similar understanding of what it means and entails?’</p>
<p>To what extent has</p>										<p>This too will hinge – for</p>

Evaluation Questions and Weightings, Data Sources and Methods									
Questions	Data Sources and Methods								Comment
	Primary					Secondary			
	Interviews; group discussions; participant observation; and development indicators					Documentary evidence and analysis			
	Government counterparts	Development indicators	Project staff	Civil society organisations and citizens	Other -e.g., UN staff; donors	Constitution, government plans and policies	UN documents	Project documents	
UNDP been able to contribute to the sustainability of outputs and outcomes? Weighting: 0.30/1									the beginning – on what the different parties involved understand sustainability to mean in practice.
What could be done to strengthen sustainability? Weighting: 0.00/1									These matters will be discussed in the report and relevant data will be gathered but this question will not contribute to the assessment of sustainability <i>per se</i> .

Annex 2: Work Plan

UNDP (Nepal) Country Programme Outcome Evaluation (outcomes 5 and 6)																		
Work Plan for period 22 July to 5 September																		
Activity (according to evaluation TOR)	July				August												September	
	22-24	25-26	27-29	30-31	1-3	4-6	7-8	9-11	12-13	14-16	17-19	20-22	23-25	26-28	29-31	1-2	3-5	
Desk review of documents (4 days)	█	█	█	█														
Travel																		
Discussions with UNDP staff																		
Inception report (3 days)																		
Preliminary interviews with project implementation team members & with government																		
Further interviews with key government counterparts and other stakeholders																		
Analysis of preliminary primary data from interviews																		
Preparation for initial field trips																		
Field trip																		
Analysis of data gathered to date and writing																		
Second round of meetings with project staff																		

Annex 3: Standardised Data Collection Instrument

Outcome Evaluation: Country Programme Document (outcome 5 and 6) Project Data Collection Instrument 1

For each of the questions set out below, kindly supply succinct dot point responses. We may want to follow-up with discussion after we have received your responses.

We would expect that your responses should not exceed a total of 3 pages.

1. What do you consider to have been the **three** most important accomplishments of your project to date, and why do you consider this to be the case?
2. What have been the main constraints that you have faced in doing your work (maximum of three)?
3. Please outline what you consider to be the main elements of sustainability that are inherent to the accomplishments listed under Question 1.
4. Kindly describe briefly and precisely what you consider to be the two most important **and feasible** activities or lines of work that should be pursued by the project in the future.
5. Can you provide two concrete examples of the ways in which your project has given equal attention to men and women?
6. Can you give an example of how the activities of your project have had a positive impact on the position of marginalised or vulnerable groups in Nepal?
7. Are there any other development assistance projects that you interact with closely? If yes, kindly specify which ones and say how you work with them.
8. Do you work with other UN agencies? If yes, please say which UN agencies and outline briefly what are the bases and forms of your interactions with them.

Annex 4: Progress towards the Attainment of Indicators for Country Programme Outcomes 5 and 6

Outcome five: Institutions, system and processes of democratic governance are more accountable, effective, efficient and inclusive				
Indicators	Progress	Will the indicator be attained by the end of the program cycle? If not, what further progress will be made?	Constraints	Comments
5.1: % of women and minority candidates elected in national and local elections (Women comprised 30 % of the elected candidates in CA Elections 2013; and 7 % of the elected members were Dalit, 34% Janajati and 18 % Madhesi)	By world standards the results on women's representation in parliament and inclusion in elections is good. The percentage of women in parliament is far ahead of the Asian average of 18%. ESP's technical assistance in the area of gender and social inclusion contributed to the development and endorsement of the first Gender and Social Inclusion Policy, and to making the 2013 CA elections inclusive. However, the policy is strong on repetitive rhetoric but weak on the specifics of what precise measures will be taken.	The provisions of the Constitution of Nepal 2015 require that women comprise at least 33% of all members of federal and provincial parliaments and also provides for inclusive candidacy of different ethnic groups. Such requirements are also included in the draft of federal and provincial electoral laws. Moreover, recent survey results suggest strong popular support for the equal representation of women in national parliament. In view of the above, this indicator is likely to be attained.	Accurate data on minority candidates are not available.	Greater attention could and should have been paid by the project to persuading the ECN to disaggregate data not just by gender but also by cast, ethnicity and physical disability.
5.2: % of eligible voters who turn out in national and local elections	ESP supported the ECN in conducting a nationwide voter education campaign through the use of print, electronic and social media. This contributed to the high turnout in CA elections (80% +). Biometric voter registration and the inclusion of voters' photographs on the voters' lists also contributed, by building voter confidence in the integrity of the system.	Yes. The target of 67% was exceeded in the CA Elections of 2013. Local elections have yet to be held, but there is no reason to suppose that the turn out will be any less.		The CA Elections had one of the highest voter turnouts in the electoral history of Nepal.
Output 5.1 Election Commission of Nepal has the capacity to conduct credible, inclusive and transparent elections				
5.1.1: % of men and women (16+) registered by the Election Commission of Nepal with photographs	ESP's continuous technical assistance to the ECN in the area of voter registration contributed to successful voter registration with photographs and biometric profiling,	Yes. With technical assistance from ESP, the ECN registered 13.6 million citizens, which exceeds the target of 70% by 2017.	Removal of deceased people from the voters list is not done	

Outcome five: Institutions, system and processes of democratic governance are more accountable, effective, efficient and inclusive				
Indicators	Progress	Will the indicator be attained by the end of the program cycle? If not, what further progress will be made?	Constraints	Comments
and biometric profiling (UNDAF)	printing of the voters' roll with photographs, and distribution of voters' identification cards. This improved the integrity of the system and reduced the likelihood of proxy and multiple voting.		systematically.	
5.1.2 : % of invalid ballots on national elections and local elections	ECN voter education and information campaigns in support of the 2013 CA election were conducted with significant support from the ESP. Before that, the project had also supported a voter education assessment and the production of a voter education plan. Compared to the 2008 CA election, in 2013 there was a reduction in invalid votes of 0.46% in PR and by 0.19% in FPTP.	The good quality of the voter education systems that are in place and have been institutionalised within the ECN make it likely that invalid ballots will be kept within reasonable bounds. But this will depend also on how much additional strain is put on the system by the local elections that are called for under the constitution and the quality and coverage of the voter education that immediately precedes such elections.	The strain imposed by the volume of work generated by, and the likely complexity of, local elections make further short term advances unlikely.	
5.1.3: No of citizens sensitized on electoral system and processes through Electoral Education and Information Centre (EEIC) (Since the establishment of EEIC, 22,631 citizens 54% male, 46% female have visited EEIC)	After the positive impact of the EEIC at the central level, ESP supported the establishment of regional EEIC to promote wider coverage of ECN outreach activities and incorporated material on questions of democratic governance in general.	Yes. Two regional EEICs have been established and an additional one is being established to promote democratic participation, aimed particularly for under-represented and disadvantaged or vulnerable groups in those regions. Regional centres will clearly expand the geographical coverage of the EEICs and improve access for young people and vulnerable groups outside of the Kathmandu valley.	In the aftermath of the 2015 earthquake EEIC activities were suspended temporarily, which caused a slight decline in the number of EEIC visitors.	
Output 5.2 : Provincial and local bodies can plan, budget, monitor, report and deliver inclusive government services				
5.2.1: % of DDCs and municipalities that have improved their financial	The following programme support activities seem likely to have contributed to the attainment of this indicator (some data on	No target or baseline percentages are available, but further progress in the terms described seems likely in view of the	▪ Human resource in new municipalities.	

Outcome five: Institutions, system and processes of democratic governance are more accountable, effective, efficient and inclusive

Indicators	Progress	Will the indicator be attained by the end of the program cycle? If not, what further progress will be made?	Constraints	Comments
<p>management and public expenditure monitoring in line with government regulations (UNDAF)</p>	<p>actual progress in relation to this indicator can be found in the CPAP monitoring and evaluation matrix):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The adoption by all local bodies of the Financial Risk Reduction Action Plan (FRRAP). 60% of the FRRAP indicators were achieved. ▪ The adoption by 61 municipalities (28%) of the Integrated Property Tax system (IPT). This has encouraged municipalities to think about other possible sources of and a broad-based tax system. All of this has helped to increase municipal revenues by 12.38% in the FY 2014/15 as compared to previous year. ▪ Internal revenue collection by DDCs improved by 26.67 % in 2014/15 as compared to the previous year. ▪ Training of DDCs' staff on the use of the District Financial and Administration Management Package (DFAMP). All DDCs are using DFAMP software to report on public expenditure in line with government regulations. MoFALD is now receiving financial reports on time. ▪ The introduction of VDC accounting software to improve public expenditure and reporting. As of July 2016, VDC accounting software is operational in 250 VDCs and it is installed in 1196 VDCs. 	<p>plausibility of the causative connections between the project activities listed and the indicator.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Absence of elected representatives in local bodies. 	
<p>5.2.2: % of WCFs holding VDCs and the integrated</p>	<p>The following project support activities have contributed to improved downward</p>	<p>No target or baseline percentages are available, but further progress in the terms</p>		

Outcome five: Institutions, system and processes of democratic governance are more accountable, effective, efficient and inclusive				
Indicators	Progress	Will the indicator be attained by the end of the program cycle? If not, what further progress will be made?	Constraints	Comments
Planning Committees (IPCs) accountable for block grant allocations made	<p>accountability:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The establishment of more than 35,000 Ward Citizen Forums (WCFs) ▪ Training to WCF members on planning, civic oversight, and the provisions in Local Body Resource Mobilization and Management Guidelines 2069 (LBRMMG). The LBRMMG provides detailed information on the allocation of block grants and the roles and responsibilities of Integrated Plan Formulation Committees. ▪ The training of WCF members has resulted in timely conduct of Ward Level Planning Workshops by more than 90 % of local bodies (LBs). Moreover, LBs have included more than 46.24% projects recommended by WCFs through participatory planning process in their annual plans. 	described is likely.		
5.2.3: % LBs (Local Bodies) submitted trimester progress report on time	The programme has supported the introduction of Web-based reporting systems in all DDCs (75) and municipalities (217). This seems likely to have contributed to the timely trimester progress reports being issued by 100% of local bodies (DDCs and Municipalities).	Indicator has been achieved.		
Outcome Six: Tiers of government established and function to meet the provisions of the new federal constitution				
Indicators	Progress	Will the indicator be attained by the end of the program cycle? If not, what further progress will be made?	Constraints	Comments

Outcome five: Institutions, system and processes of democratic governance are more accountable, effective, efficient and inclusive

Indicators	Progress	Will the indicator be attained by the end of the program cycle? If not, what further progress will be made?	Constraints	Comments
<p>6.1: % of people who perceive that there is possibility of insertion of their aspirations (equality, identity, prosperity, gender equity and employment) by the new constitution</p>	<p>The promulgation of a new and, by any standards, progressive constitution in September 2015 and the relatively muted criticism of it since then is strongly suggestive of indicator accomplishment. This can only be asserted with confidence, however, after relevant surveys have been completed.</p> <p>The programme's support to widespread national consultation - more than 10,000 events and 70 'knowledge products' (many of them multilingual) – means that the project can lay reasonable claim to having contributed significantly to the constitution's representativeness and its promulgation.</p> <p>The project's claims in this respect are strengthened by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 600,000 people consulted on the reports of 11 CA Thematic Committees and 7000 submissions to the CA-I arising from this. ▪ Civic education on constitutional issues to encourage views to be expressed. ▪ During CA-II, the submission of 15,500 reports (containing suggestions) to CA as part of public consultation on the draft constitution. ▪ Engagement with media and training of over 400 journalists on the constitution making process. ▪ Development of a Virtual Media Community of Practice (www.mediamanch.net), networking more 	<p>Yes, in many important ways this indicator has been achieved. Many people's aspirations have been reflected in the new constitution. Moreover, the promised amendment process will address outstanding issues.</p>	<p>People's interest to participate in the perception survey could be a limiting factor because the survey is going to be carried out after 2 years.</p>	

Outcome five: Institutions, system and processes of democratic governance are more accountable, effective, efficient and inclusive				
Indicators	Progress	Will the indicator be attained by the end of the program cycle? If not, what further progress will be made?	Constraints	Comments
	<p>than 700 journalists from around the country and abroad.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Supporting CA members to form a women's caucus that transcended party affiliations. 			

Output 6.1: National institutions, policies and legislation reviewed from inclusion and gender perspectives, and developed in line with the provisions of Nepal's inclusive federal constitution				
Indicators	Progress	Will the indicator be attained by the end of the program cycle? If not, what further progress will be made?	Constraints	Comments
6.1.1: # issue/option papers on key constitutional issues developed and discussed with CA members	From 2008 to 2015, SPCBN developed and discussed 15 issue/option papers on key constitutional issues and shared them with CA members.	Already achieved.		This is a particularly 'soft' indicator whose development benefits are tenuous at best.

Output 6.2. Civil service has the capacity to meet the needs of the inclusive federal constitution and government structures				
Indicators	Progress	Will the indicator be attained by the end of the program cycle? If not, what further progress will be made?	Constraints	Comments
Government led public service reform strategy drafted	No reform strategy <i>per se</i> has been drafted with support from the project and no clear progress towards its development has been made.	It seems highly unlikely that this indicator will be attained or that significant further progress will be made for reasons given in the body of the report.	Certainly, the complexity and volume of reform issues flowing from the constitution and the widespread uncertainty caused by this has inhibited progress.	The project has failed to address this indicator <i>directly</i> in its activities.

Output 6.3. National and provincial legislatures, executives and other state bodies have necessary capacities to fulfill their accountabilities to vulnerable groups

Indicators	Progress	Will the indicator be attained by the end of the program cycle? If not, what further progress will be made?	Constraints	Comments
<p>6.3.1. # of sectoral functional analyses for a federal structure carried out for setting up national and provincial government structure enacted</p>	<p>This indicator has 2 parts. The first part – a relatively soft target – has been met to a large degree in that functional analysis options papers have been written – on health, education, agriculture, transport infrastructure, drinking water, energy; land administration; and law and order and industry and tourism.</p> <p>The second indicator in the statement is much more demanding, and perhaps unrealistic in the circumstances. It has not been met; little progress has been made towards it, and it is unlikely to be achieved by the end of 2017.</p>	<p>By the end of UNDAF cycle, functional analysis option papers will have been written for most sectors.</p> <p>Until decisions concerning the assignment of functions have actually been made it makes no sense – and would be a waste of time and other resources - to design subnational governance structures.</p> <p>The project did not seem to recognise this logical necessity.</p>		<p>Functional and resource assignments are the cornerstone of the reform of subnational governance. Decisions concerning such matters are largely political, however, not technical. It is not the production of complex technical functional assignment documents that is important here therefore, but much more the translation of such material into short policy and decision briefs that can be digested by senior bureaucrats and by political decision-makers. The indicator was deficient in this respect. And the project showed little (unprompted) recognition of this.</p>
<p>6.3.2. # of MPs and parliament secretariat staff with enhanced capacity in oversight functions</p>	<p>The indicator’s attainment could be satisfied by marginal improvements to oversight capability starting from a low base.</p> <p>The following project activities suggest that progress may have been achieved towards this ‘soft’ target, although we have not been able to assess the quality of any of the advice</p>	<p>In the absence of targets, there is no way of assessing definitively whether this indicator will be attained by the end of 2017.</p> <p>However, the most benign interpretation of an already benign indicator suggests that it might be.</p>		<p>A mid-term review of the project is envisioned in 2018.</p> <p>Among project staff, general understanding of the matters of technical assistance supposedly offered by the project was</p>

	<p>or training claimed to have been conducted by the project, including the following self-reported activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The production of an ‘oversight framework’. Project staff were unable satisfactorily to explain the substance or main features of this and appeared to have little understanding of the practicalities of the oversight function. ▪ ‘One interaction with 13 parliamentarians from various parliamentary committees and 9 staff of the Secretariat including the Secretary General’ – on international best practices concerning oversight. Project staff were unable to say what ‘best practices’ had been revealed to parliamentarians. ▪ Support to planning on the oversight function and integration of SDGs into the parliamentary oversight function. For this, the project organized two ‘sensitization workshops’ for more than 80 parliamentarians and staff. ▪ Public hearing programmes on proposed bills, and ‘field visits’ by parliamentarians. 			<p>superficial.</p>
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Annex 5: Election Support Project – Project Evaluation Summary

Election Support Project – Project Evaluation Summary											
Criteria	Ratings out of 10 on questions An average rating of 7 or more is dark green; 5 or 6 is light green; 4 or less is red						Achievement barometer	Comments (constraints & improvements)			
Relevance											
	National priorities Weighting: 0.40/1		Women & excluded Weighting: 0.40/1		Project adaptation Weighting: 0.20/1						
	8 The project clearly addresses important national priorities. It has also made important contributions to the attainment of UNDAF/CP outcomes and outputs, particularly Output 5.1 and Output indicator 5.1.2: e.g., voter registration and education and voter ID cards		7 Much of the work of the project has also made important contributions in this regard – prominent examples include its contributions to biometric voter registration and information centres that reportedly have given special attention to vulnerable groups.		4 The project was not well-informed about the contents of the UNDAF, most importantly its emphasis on vulnerable groups. Its ability to be optimally adaptive was clearly hampered by this, but also by the insufficient number of output indicators in the CP in particular and the frequent changes made to indicators that in some cases seemed not to attend sufficiently to what the projects that were responsible for contributing to outcome attainment were actually doing.						The project has clearly done good work, which could have been made more pointed and developmental, and therefore helpful to the attainment of UNDAF outcomes (in addition to those on governance), had the project team possessed a fuller understanding of the contents of the UNDAF and CP and the latest indicators.
Effectiveness											
	Achievement & likelihood Weighting: 0.40/1	Unexpected outcomes Weighting: 0.03/1	UNDP comparative advantage (CA) Weighting: 0.10/1	Partnership strategy effectiveness Weighting: 0.02/1	Women & men equally Weighting: 0.20/1	Marginalised groups Weighting: 0.20/1	Quality of indicators Weighting: 0.05/1				
	8 We can	8 None	6 This was	3 There was no	7 Yes, the work	7 Yes, the	3 Poor – there				The overall performance of the project has been good. Its average score here has been dragged down by variables

Election Support Project – Project Evaluation Summary

Criteria	Ratings out of 10 on questions An average rating of 7 or more is dark green; 5 or 6 is light green; 4 or less is red							Achievement barometer	Comments (constraints & improvements)				
conclude with a reasonable degree of confidence that Output 5.1 will have been achieved or largely achieved by the end of 2017. Indicator 5.1.2 has already been achieved by a wide margin. The policy and strategy on gender are weak however.	detected, except (according to one donor) a potentially unhealthy level of dependency by government on UNDP projects.	expressed by the project team in terms of the ability to recruit high level technical expertise and convening capability. Feedback from other stakeholders was equivocal.	clear idea of what this comprised among any of the stakeholders we spoke to.	of the project has been instrumental in this regard – through voter registration and information centres.	work of the project has been instrumental in this regard – through voter registration and information centres.	was only one directly related to this important aspect of governance – where more were needed and would have better expressed to very good work of the project.							over which it had little or no control, but were included in the ‘effectiveness’ category in the evaluation TOR. Even so, there are areas for improvement. For example, the Gender Inclusion Policy (2013) and the Gender Inclusion Strategy (2015-2020) are rhetorically repetitive and lacking in specificity about the measures to be taken. The project also seems to have little success at building and institutionalising senior management capability – e.g., in relation to policy development and strategic management.

Election Support Project – Project Evaluation Summary

Criteria	Ratings out of 10 on questions An average rating of 7 or more is dark green; 5 or 6 is light green; 4 or less is red				Achievement barometer	Comments (constraints & improvements)
Efficiency						
	Programme complementarity with other donor agencies Weighting: 0.25/1	Programme complementarity among UN agencies Weighting: 0.25/1	Can UNDP add value to UN agency programmes Weighting: 0.20/1	UNDP cost-effectiveness Weighting: 0.3/1		As suggested in the inception report, the questions in this category are largely concerned with effectiveness rather than efficiency . In so far as efficiency per se is concerned, the project was not able to gather sufficient, relevant data in the time.
	6 We do not have strong evidence on this, but project team reports suggest that such complementarity existed with projects implemented by, for example, the National Democratic Institute (NDI) and International IDEA.	6 The project team reported constructive interactions with UN Women in particular.	7 There is some evidence of this from this project, particularly in relation to UN Women programmes	5 We were unable in the time to collect sufficient evidence of the right kinds to support a firm view, in relation to the presence or absence of cost-effectiveness. Perceptions among certain key stakeholders are that UNDP does not operate efficiently or effectively.		
Sustainability						
	Stakeholder ownership Weighting: 0.35/1	Stakeholder commitment to sustainability & capability Weighting: 0.35/1	UNDP contribution Weighting: 0.30/1	How to improve sustainability Weighting: 0.00/1		Strong sustainability could have been made better by fuller understanding of different forms of capacity and institution building among project and country office staff. This comment has
	6 Strong evidence of this from government counterparts; less uniform from donors.	8 Strong and clear from government and donors. However, capability in the project is not as good as it could be.	7 The project has performed well in relation to the sustainability of its work, but its already strong performance could have been enhanced by better understanding of the	4 The major opportunity here is to provide for better understanding among both project and UNDP country office staff of what forms institutionalisation and sustainable capacity building can take; what		

Election Support Project – Project Evaluation Summary

Criteria	Ratings out of 10 on questions An average rating of 7 or more is dark green; 5 or 6 is light green; 4 or less is red				Achievement barometer	Comments (constraints & improvements)
			UNDAF and CP and by the matters referred to in the next column and under 'comments'.	constitutes UNDP's comparative advantages and its 'partnership strategy'.		general applicability and validity for all 5 of the projects evaluated. Support should cease to activities that have now been institutionalised. Suggestions for the future made in the body of this report.

Annex 6: Local Government & Community Development II – Project Evaluation Summary

Local Government and Community Development II & PPSF - Project Evaluation Summary										
Criteria	Ratings out of 10 on questions An average rating of 7 or more is dark green; 5 or 6 is light green; 4 or less is red							Achievement barometer	Comments (constraints & improvements)	
Relevance										
	National priorities Weighting: 0.40/1		Women & excluded Weighting: 0.40/1		Project adaptation Weighting: 0.20/1					
	8 The project addresses a number of important aspects of local government – principally, ‘inclusive planning’; means for the expression of citizen voice; public financial management and revenue generation; training; gender; policy and legislation; and management information systems – and has made solid contributions in most of them.		6 It has engaged in a number of separate activities that address issues of gender directly including amendments to the Gender Equality and Social Inclusion policy. It is not clear how much other major areas of activity have taken gender into account.		4 We could not find much evidence of sufficient consideration being given to the development of well thought-through and more narrowly defined areas of activity for the future - that is, activities that are argued on the basis of the changing governance circumstances of the country and project achievements to date.					
Effectiveness										
	Achievement & likelihood Weighting: 0.40/1	Unexpected outcomes Weighting: 0.03/1	UNDP comparative advantage (CA) Weighting: 0.10/1	Partnership strategy effectiveness Weighting: 0.02/1	Women & men equally Weighting: 0.20/1	Marginalised groups Weighting: 0.20/1	Quality of indicators Weighting: 0.05/1			
	7	4	5	3	6	5	4			There is good evidence to suggest that some of the main areas of project

Local Government and Community Development II & PPSF - Project Evaluation Summary

Criteria	Ratings out of 10 on questions An average rating of 7 or more is dark green; 5 or 6 is light green; 4 or less is red							Achievement barometer	Comments (constraints & improvements)
<p>Perhaps the most outstanding contribution of the early phases of this project has been to the establishment and support to the operation of the more than 30,000 ward citizen forums (WCFs) throughout the country (from 2009). The PPSF has made worthwhile contributions to the development of guidelines on social accountability tools such as public hearings, public audit, social audit, and citizens' report cards (a significant number of which were either developed or</p>	<p>One unexpected possible outcome has been the general engagement between people at large and the state that was promoted by the project and in many respects realised.</p> <p>Some of the activities supported in the CACs – such as animal husbandry (goats and poultry) – and the advice provided – e.g., regarding civil registration (births and deaths) – was</p>	<p>There was no clear evidence of this from the project. Among donors, there was recognition of UNDP's perceived neutrality but little sense that this was seen to be important to the performance of this particular project.</p>	<p>It was not clear to project staff what comprised the 'strategy' and it was therefore not possible to assess its effects. It should be noted that most stakeholders (including UNDP staff) had some trouble with specifying precisely what the 'strategy' entailed.</p>	<p>There was some direct evidence of this in the training that was conducted and in 'inclusive planning' where nearly 40% of the 1.2 million citizens that participated were women.</p>	<p>There was no direct evidence of this, although much of the project's work seems likely to have yielded benefits for marginalised groups.</p>	<p>Indicators were deficient in a number of respects – see body of report for detail.</p>		<p>performance had clear development benefits, particularly the continuing support to the functioning of WCFs. In others, there was perhaps too much emphasis on process and quantity over quality. The PPSF has also provided support to the adoption by local bodies of the Fiduciary Risk Reduction Action Plan (FRRAP). To date, 60% of the FRRAP indicators have been achieved, providing evidence of improvement in the financial management system.</p>	

Local Government and Community Development II & PPSF - Project Evaluation Summary

Criteria	Ratings out of 10 on questions An average rating of 7 or more is dark green; 5 or 6 is light green; 4 or less is red						Achievement barometer	Comments (constraints & improvements)
refined during the second phase of the project). These processes constitute the Minimum Conditions and Performance Measures (MCPM) linked to the formula based grant to local bodies and, to the extent that these have been institutionalized, they will have helped to improve transparency as well as downward accountability in local bodies	either already well-known or obvious to local communities. The risk was one of creating in communities an over-dependency on support from above – a ‘cargo cult’ mentality and or reducing the credibility of the whole exercise.							Training and technical backstopping was also provided to municipalities to pave the way for the introduction of the Integrated Property Tax system (IPT). 61 Municipalities (28%) have adopted the IPT system
Efficiency								
	Programme complementarity with other donor agencies Weighting: 0.25/1	Programme complementarity among UN agencies Weighting: 0.25/1	Can UNDP add value to UN agency programmes Weighting: 0.20/1	UNDP cost-effectiveness Weighting: 0.3/1				Perhaps the most worrisome aspect of this part of project assessment – and of the other projects too – is the low levels of
	7 There is clear complementarity	7 There is clear	4 No clear	4 We were unable in the time to				

Local Government and Community Development II & PPSF - Project Evaluation Summary

Criteria	Ratings out of 10 on questions An average rating of 7 or more is dark green; 5 or 6 is light green; 4 or less is red				Achievement barometer				Comments (constraints & improvements)		
	with the projects and programmes of other donor agencies, such as JICA, GIZ, USAID, DFID, and SDC.	complementarity with the work and interests of UN Women and UNCDF as part of the Joint Financing Arrangement, and with UNFPA, UNV, UNDP as part of the UN joint programme.	evidence of this.	<p>collect sufficient evidence of the right kinds to support a firm view, in relation to the presence or absence of cost-effectiveness.</p> <p>Perceptions among certain key stakeholders are that UNDP does not operate efficiently or effectively.</p> <p>Examples given in relation to this project included concerns about the effectiveness and efficiency of the large numbers of national TA.</p>						donor confidence in UNDP's efficiency and effectiveness added-value. This finding was uniform across donors.	
Sustainability											
	Stakeholder ownership Weighting: 0.35/1	Stakeholder commitment to sustainability & capability Weighting: 0.35/1	UNDP contribution Weighting: 0.30/1	How to improve sustainability Weighting: 0.00/1							There is a general problem among project staff of limited understanding of what forms of capacity and institution building might be central to sustainability, which is an important constraint to performance in this crucial area.
	5 There was clear and strong ownership of certain project activities among government counterparts – e.g., the mostly indirect support to PFM and the early work done on WCFs. Such ownership was much less evident among donors.	4 Among project staff understanding of what might constitute institutionalisation and sustainability was not well developed, which is clearly key. Donors were	6 Among government counterparts there was general appreciation of the neutrality and 'government-friendliness' of UNDP, and among donors. The latter was not always seen by donors as a positive feature however.	This will be addressed separately in the body of the report.							

Local Government and Community Development II & PPSF - Project Evaluation Summary

Criteria	Ratings out of 10 on questions An average rating of 7 or more is dark green; 5 or 6 is light green; 4 or less is red				Achievement barometer				Comments (constraints & improvements)	
		committed but not clear about where it was evident in the project.								

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Annex 7: Project to Prepare the Public Administration for State Reforms (PREPARE) 2013-2016 – Project Evaluation Summary

Project to Prepare the Public Administration for State Reforms – Project Evaluation Summary											
Criteria	Ratings out of 10 on questions An average rating of 7 or more is dark green; 5 or 6 is light green; 4 or less is red							Achievement barometer	Comments (constraints & improvements)		
Relevance											
	National priorities Weighting: 0.40/1		Women & excluded Weighting: 0.40/1		Project adaptation Weighting: 0.20/1						Some of the discussion papers produced by the project have been of good quality, but not well-suited to the civil service audience that needs to benefit from them.
	8 The main work that the project has been engaged in – such as the production of discussion papers on functional analyses and state restructuring - is relevant to national priorities. Whether the work has been done in a way that is helpful to such priorities is much less clear.		3 There is little or no evidence to suggest that the project has addressed these issues directly.		3 This has been a pronounced weakness of the project. In its current form, the areas to which the project says that it will provide assistance are far too numerous, complex, and all-embracing. Just one of them alone – functional assignments, for example – would tax a much larger, more capable, and longer-term project.						
Effectiveness											
	Achievement & likelihood Weighting: 0.40/1	Unexpected outcomes Weighting: 0.03/1	UNDP comparative advantage (CA) Weighting: 0.10/1	Partnership strategy effectiveness Weighting: 0.02/1	Women & men equally Weighting: 0.20/1	Marginalised groups Weighting: 0.20/1	Quality of indicators Weighting: 0.05/1				The project has been in existence for 3 years, relying solely on UNDP core funding. It has not managed in that time to attract any donor funding. This is a telling indicator of perceptions of project performance and
	2 The goals set for the project and the large number of complex fields that it claims to provide	4 The likelihood of positive unexpected outcomes arising from this work is	6 There is some evidence to suggest that one of UNDP's alleged (because	2 There was no evidence to suggest that any aspect of the project's performance benefitted from this.	5 A reasonable inference would be to say that the work that has been done to date – if implemented	3 There was little or no evidence to suggest that these matters had been addressed	3 These were seriously handicapped by the project limitations referred to under 'achievement'				

Project to Prepare the Public Administration for State Reforms – Project Evaluation Summary

Criteria	Ratings out of 10 on questions An average rating of 7 or more is dark green; 5 or 6 is light green; 4 or less is red						Achievement barometer					Comments (constraints & improvements)		
technical assistance to are wildly unrealistic. The areas that the project claims to have performed well in – such as functional analyses – are perceived as problematic by some key government counterparts and of low quality by other stakeholders.	low.	others question its validity) comparative advantages – access to high quality technical expertise - were put to good use in this project.	Project staff and other stakeholders were unaware of what it comprised.	– could have had this effect, but there was little suggest that this matter had been attended to self-consciously.	by project activities or that it was a self-conscious or deliberate aim of the project.	and ‘adaptation’.							project design.	
Efficiency														
	Programme complementarity with other donor agencies Weighting: 0.25/1	Programme complementarity among UN agencies Weighting: 0.25/1	Can UNDP add value to UN agency programmes Weighting: 0.20/1	UNDP cost-effectiveness Weighting: 0.3/1										
	4 We could find little direct evidence of this.	4 We could find little direct evidence of this.	2 No evidence to support this possibility	5 We were unable in the time to collect sufficient evidence of the right kinds to support a firm view, in relation to the presence or absence of cost-										

Project to Prepare the Public Administration for State Reforms – Project Evaluation Summary

Criteria	Ratings out of 10 on questions An average rating of 7 or more is dark green; 5 or 6 is light green; 4 or less is red				Achievement barometer					Comments (constraints & improvements)	
			from this project.	effectiveness. Perceptions among certain key stakeholders are that UNDP does not operate efficiently or effectively.							
Sustainability											
	Stakeholder ownership Weighting: 0.35/1	Stakeholder commitment to sustainability & capability Weighting: 0.35/1	UNDP contribution Weighting: 0.30/1	How to improve sustainability Weighting: 0.00/1							
	3 The ownership and feedback from government counterparts was mixed. The fact that the project has managed to attract no donor funding since inception is highly suggestive of little or no ownership from donors. Interview evidence confirmed this.	3 Government was clearly committed to the idea of sustainability, but was not convinced of the merits of much of the work that had been done by the project and therefore the desirability of its sustainability. The character of much of the support – the provision of discussion papers – also severely constrains the prospects for sustainability, as typically they have	4 UNDP’s contribution is seen by government and donor stakeholders not to have produced uniformly high quality technical advice in the main areas of project operation.	This will be addressed separately in the body of the report.							It is not evident that the project made any attempt to institutionalise the capabilities required to produce the documents that it did in either a government or non-government organisation. The fact that some of the documents were produced by or with national consultants mitigated this somewhat. It is, of course, commonplace for governments to subcontract out complex

Project to Prepare the Public Administration for State Reforms – Project Evaluation Summary

Criteria	Ratings out of 10 on questions An average rating of 7 or more is dark green; 5 or 6 is light green; 4 or less is red				Achievement barometer	Comments (constraints & improvements)
		been produced by short-term international and/or national consultants.				work of this kind either to the private sector or to research institutes or universities. There was o recognition of this among project staff.

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Annex 8: Support to Participatory Constitution Building in Nepal - Project Evaluation Summary

Support to Participatory Constitution Building in Nepal - Project Evaluation Summary										
Criteria	Ratings out of 10 on questions An average rating of 7 or more is dark green; 5 or 6 is light green; 4 or less is red						Achievement barometer	Comments (constraints & improvements)		
Relevance										
	National priorities Weighting: 0.40/1 8 The project clearly addressed matters that were national priorities, in particular the nationwide consultations that were conducted with citizens about the constitution. This was required as part of the peace agreement that was signed in 2006. Many of the concerns of vulnerable groups, of women and of children, the elderly, and the handicapped are reflected in the progressive constitution that was promulgated in late 2015. The project's other major areas of support were also clearly important to government, but there is much less evidence to suggest clear development benefits.	Women & excluded Weighting: 0.40/1 8 There was considerable evidence that the needs and interests of women and excluded groups were gathered during national consultations on the constitution, working through a number of CSOs that represented, for example, 'indigenous women', Dalits, and so on.	Project adaptation Weighting: 0.20/1 4 The lack of precision and realism evident in the PSP project document is highly suggestive of a lack of adaptive capability.							The main work of the project – public consultations about the contents of the constitution – was impressive in scale and a political necessity, which it appears to have done thoroughly and well. By comparison, the design of the current PSP is disappointing.
Effectiveness										
	Achievement & likelihood Weighting: 0.40/1 8	Unexpected outcomes Weighting: 0.03/1 5	UNDP comparative advantage (CA) Weighting: 0.10/1 8	Partnership strategy effectiveness Weighting: 0.02/1 7	Women & men equally Weighting: 0.20/1 7	Marginalised groups Weighting: 0.20/1 7	Quality of indicators Weighting: 0.05/1 5			

Support to Participatory Constitution Building in Nepal - Project Evaluation Summary

Criteria	Ratings out of 10 on questions An average rating of 7 or more is dark green; 5 or 6 is light green; 4 or less is red							Achievement barometer	Comments (constraints & improvements)
<p>To the (in some ways considerable) extent to which the project has contributed to the production of a new and quite progressive constitution – mainly through the national consultations and its support to the constituent assembly – it helped to solidify and stabilise the bases of good governance and has therefore already made a significant contribution to outcomes 5 and 6 of the UNDAF.</p>	<p>There are two possible unintended political consequences of the national consultations on the constitution. First, that it will have raised expectations nationwide that somehow all or most concerns will be reflected in the constitution. Where this is seen not to be the case, disappointment and resentment are likely which could lead to civil unrest. Second, there is a possibility that the consultations may have encouraged national fragmentation</p>	<p>This was reflected in two main ways. First, in the extent to which people felt confident and secure to present their views about the constitution under the UN banner. And second, in government's evident trust in UNDP to support this crucial work.</p>	<p>The project seems to have formed very effective working relations with a number of CSOs in addition to those mentioned above – e.g., the law association, local government associations, and media groups.</p>	<p>There was considerable evidence of this in the public consultation work, much less so in the other main areas of activity.</p>	<p>There was considerable evidence of this in the public consultation work, much less so in the other main areas of activity.</p>	<p>See general comments on the quality of indicators in the body of the report.</p>			

Support to Participatory Constitution Building in Nepal - Project Evaluation Summary

Criteria	Ratings out of 10 on questions An average rating of 7 or more is dark green; 5 or 6 is light green; 4 or less is red						Achievement barometer	Comments (constraints & improvements)
		along ethnic or other identity-related lines.						
Efficiency								
	Programme complementarity with other donor agencies Weighting: 0.25/1	Programme complementarity among UN agencies Weighting: 0.25/1	Can UNDP add value to UN agency programmes Weighting: 0.20/1	UNDP cost-effectiveness Weighting: 0.3/1				
	6 There was some circumstantial evidence of this in relation to the public consultations on the constitution and the support to the CA.	6 A 'working group' involving the project, UNHCR, UNICEF and UN Women was established to address 'citizenship issues'	5 This project should have had quite a lot to offer, but it is not clear that much or any effort was put into this. See comment.	5 We were unable in the time to collect sufficient evidence of the right kinds to support a firm view, in relation to the presence or absence of cost-effectiveness. Perceptions among certain key stakeholders are that UNDP does not operate efficiently or effectively.				
Sustainability								
								It is apparent that most of the projects – perhaps all of them – were not adequately informed and therefore aware of the necessity or desirability for their respective projects to be complementary with other UN agency projects or of the desirability of UNDP contributing to other UN agency programmes. The same was true of the UNDP 'partnership strategy'.

Support to Participatory Constitution Building in Nepal - Project Evaluation Summary

Criteria	Ratings out of 10 on questions An average rating of 7 or more is dark green; 5 or 6 is light green; 4 or less is red				Achievement barometer				Comments (constraints & improvements)		
	Stakeholder ownership Weighting: 0.35/1	Stakeholder commitment to sustainability & capability Weighting: 0.35/1	UNDP contribution Weighting: 0.30/1	How to improve sustainability Weighting: 0.00/1							Simply from a resource standpoint, much of what the project did is not sustainable.
	5 There was strong ownership of some of the main components of the project expressed by government counterparts, less so by donors because they seemed not to be sufficiently informed of what the project had accomplished and why it was significant.	4 All stakeholders assert their commitment to 'sustainability'. This is not problematic. What is problematic is the extent to which the different stakeholders involved have a clear and shared understanding: first, of what can constitute sustainability and institutionalisation; second of which project activities should be institutionalised or made sustainable; third, progress in relation to this; and fourth, of each other's views on the issues involved. Capability is highly	4 All parties recognised the importance of the UN's perceived impartiality and neutrality and its resulting convening capabilities, but there was little or no recognition of any particular field of technical competence on the part of UNDP.	This will be addressed separately in the body of the report.							

Support to Participatory Constitution Building in Nepal - Project Evaluation Summary

Criteria	Ratings out of 10 on questions An average rating of 7 or more is dark green; 5 or 6 is light green; 4 or less is red			Achievement barometer	Comments (constraints & improvements)
		variable and, like some other aspects of capacity among stakeholders, too subject to the variability in the individuals concerned rather than being a consistent feature of the particular institution.			

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Annex 9: Parliament Support Project – Project Evaluation Summary

Parliament Support Project – Project Evaluation Summary											
Criteria	Ratings out of 10 on questions An average rating of 7 or more is dark green; 5 or 6 is light green; 4 or less is red						Achievement barometer	Comments (constraints & improvements)			
Relevance											
	National priorities Weighting: 0.40/1		Women & excluded Weighting: 0.40/1		Project adaptation Weighting: 0.20/1						Some of the work of the predecessor project (SPCBN) – public consultations about the contents of the constitution - was a political necessity, which it appears to have done thoroughly and well. By comparison, the design of the current PSP is disappointing.
	6 Both the predecessor project and the PSP clearly address national priorities. In the case of the PSP, however, the things that it says it will do with the resources at its disposal are unrealistic – see, for example, pp. 4 & 5 of the project document. This is reflected in the quality of the things that it has done to date.		3 The activities of the predecessor project clearly addressed such matters and output 3 (of 3 outputs) in the PSP reveals a similar interest. There is relatively little <i>evidence</i> of this in the current project however.		4 The lack of precision and realism evident in the PSP project document is highly suggestive of a lack of adaptive capability.						
Effectiveness											
	Achievement & likelihood Weighting: 0.40/1	Unexpected outcomes Weighting: 0.03/1	UNDP comparative advantage (CA) Weighting: 0.10/1	Partnership strategy effectiveness Weighting: 0.02/1	Women & men equally Weighting: 0.20/1	Marginalised groups Weighting: 0.20/1	Quality of indicators Weighting: 0.05/1				The work that appears to have been done in relation to the indicators is not well understood by the project team and seems unlikely to have had much effect in so far as the functioning of parliament and the capabilities of
	4 Achievements to date have satisfied relatively benign indicators (e.g., 6.3.2). The level of understanding	5 Little harm appears to have been done.	5 Evidence to suggest this added some value, particularly perceptions of neutrality	3 No knowledge of the ‘partnership’ strategy among project staff.	3 Predecessor project scored well on this. The PSP is weak on this important	4 Predecessor project scored well on this. Only addressed in a general sense in new	5 Indicators are too benign.				

Parliament Support Project – Project Evaluation Summary

Criteria	Ratings out of 10 on questions An average rating of 7 or more is dark green; 5 or 6 is light green; 4 or less is red						Achievement barometer				Comments (constraints & improvements)			
	of the work that they claim to be doing among the project staff we spoke to is very low. Future performance could be adversely affected also by problems of project design.		or impartiality and convening power.		question.	the project document. No convincing evidence available.							parliamentarians is concerned.	
Efficiency														
	Programme complementarity with other donor agencies Weighting: 0.25/1	Programme complementarity among UN agencies Weighting: 0.25/1	Can UNDP add value to UN agency programmes Weighting: 0.20/1	UNDP cost-effectiveness Weighting: 0.3/1										
	5 Some <i>self-report</i> assertion of this adding to effectiveness and, to the extent that so-called ‘overlaps’ were less likely, to efficiency – examples include: NDI, International IDEA.	5 Some <i>self-report</i> assertion of this – examples include: UN Women, UNHCR, UNICEF	5 No solid evidence of this.	5 We were unable in the time to collect sufficient evidence of the right kinds to support a firm view, in relation to the presence or absence of cost-effectiveness. Perceptions among certain key stakeholders are that UNDP does not operate efficiently or effectively.										Very difficult in the time and with the resources to evaluate this aspect of project and UNDP performance.
Sustainability														
	Stakeholder ownership Weighting: 0.35/1	Stakeholder commitment to	UNDP contribution Weighting: 0.30/1	How to improve sustainability										

Parliament Support Project – Project Evaluation Summary

Criteria	Ratings out of 10 on questions An average rating of 7 or more is dark green; 5 or 6 is light green; 4 or less is red				Achievement barometer	Comments (constraints & improvements)
		sustainability & capability Weighting: 0.35/1		Weighting: 0.00/1		
	6 Government ownership of the project was reasonably strong.	4 Again, all stakeholders express strong commitment to this. Capability varies significantly however. Most significantly, it is particularly low among the project staff we spoke to.	2 Project staff were unclear about how this was being addressed. We were told that the project was ‘planning to produce a strategy’ (!) on this.	This will be addressed separately in the body of the report.		

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Annex 11: List of persons met

1. Gareth Rannamets	DFID
2. Bishnu Adhikari	DFID
3. Bodh Raj Niroula	Former Joint Secretary, MOFALD
4. Tank Mani Sharma Administration	Secretary, Ministry of General
5. Ms. Nita Pokharel Administration	Joint Secretary, Ministry of General
6. Andres des Castilla	ESP
7. Mourizio Cacucci	ESP
8. Kundan Shrestha	ESP
9. Madhav Prasad Ghimire Nepal	Former Chief Secretary, Government of
10. Raj Bahadur Shrestha	PSP
11. Basanta Adhikari	PSP
12. Manohar Prasad Bhattarai	Secretary General, Parliament Secretariat
13. Krishna Khanal	Expert, Constitution, related to SPCBN
14. Vijay Prasad Singh	UNDP
15. Yam Nath Sharma	UNDP
16. Ms. Binda Magar	UNDP
17. Ms. Sachchi Ghimire Karki	UNDP
18. Ms. Bandana Risal	UNDP
19. Tek Tamata	UNDP
20. Ms. Kalpana Sarkar	UNDP
21. Ms. Pragya Bashyal	UNDP
22. Roshan Bhandari	UNDP
23. Ms. Sujeeta Bajracharya	UNDP
24. Ms. Archana Aryal	UNDP
25. Renaud Meyer	UNDP
26. Krishna Adhikari	UNDP
27. Ms. Shalini Tripathi	PREPARE
28. Dinesh Prasad Pant	PREPARE
29. Chhabi Rijal	LGCDP
30. Shiva Raj Pokharel	LGCDP
31. Raghu Shrestha	LGCDP
32. Reshmi Raj Pandey	Joint Secretary, MOFALD
33. Purushottam Nepal Commission	Joint Secretary, Local Body Fiscal
34. Sharada Prasad Trital	Secretary, Election Commission (ECN)

35. Neel Kantha Uprety	Former Chief Election Commissioner, ECN
36. Tirtha Dhakal	Joint Secretary, NPC
37. Krishna Hachhethu	Expert, related to SPCBN
38. Raju Chapagain	Expert, related to SPCBN
39. Yam Kisan	Expert, related to SPCBN
40. Umesh Prasad Mainali	Chairman, Public Service Commission
41. Buddhi Karki	Former Staff, SPCBN
42. Machhindra Jimi	Former Staff, SPCBN
43. Ms. Sita Gurung	Former Staff, SPCBN
44. Ms. Vibeke Sorum	Embassy of Norway
45. Ms. Pia Hannibal	Embassy of Switzerland, SDC
46. Ms. Marie Thrane	Embassy of Denmark
47. Mohan Lal Acharya	DANIDA
48. Ms. Manju Gurung	DANIDA
49. Radheshyam Adhikari	Member of Parliament
50. Laxman Lal Karna	Member of Parliament
51. Khim Lal Devkota	Former MP/CA Member
52. Anil Chandrika	LGCDP
53. Chandra Ghimire (OPMCM)	Secretary, Prime Minister's Office
54. Prem Lal Lamichhane	Under Secretary/OPMCM
55. Suresh Balakrishnan	UNCDF based in Dhaka
56. Bed Bhattarai Commission	Secretary, National Human Right
57. Dr. Shankar Sharma	Former VC, National Planning Commission
58. Balkrishna Prasai	Former Secretary, Government of Nepal
59. Hira Mani Ghimire	Expert, related to PREPARE
60. Ms. Martha McGurie	Team Leader, Outcome Evaluation 2
61. Dilli Raj Ghimire	Joint Secretary, Ministry of Law and Justice
62. Dr. Pekka Seppala	DCM, Embassy of Finland
63. Raju Tuladhar	Asian Development Bank
64. Ms. Garcia Alcubilla Diana	European Union
65. Ms. Dama Sharma	Former MP/CA Member
66. Ms. Sita Gurung	Member of Parliament
67. Ms. Bimala KC	Former MP, CA Member
68. Ms. Kamala Subedi Ghimire	Member of Parliament
69. Ms. Usha Kala Rai	Former MP/CA
70. Ms. Giulia Vallese	UNFPA

71. Ms. Geetanjali Singh	UN Women
72. Ms. Krishna Kumari Waiba	Civil Society Organization (CSO) Member
73. Gajadhar Sunar	CSO Member
74. Purushottam Upadhyaya	CSO Member
75. Krishna Man Pradhan	Nepal Law Society
76. Ms. Babita Basnet	Journalist, CSO Member
77. Balananda Paudel Commission	Chairman, Local Body Reconstruction
78. Hari Mainali	Chief District Officer (CDO), Kaski
79. Ganga Lal Subedi	District Election Officer, Kaski
80. Damodar Bhandari	Local Development Officer (LDO), Kaski
81. Bhim Bahadur Kunwar Municipality	Executive Officer, Pokhara Sub
82. Saroj Shrestha	RCU, LGCDP, Pokhara
83. Chandra Regmi	RCU, LGCDP, Pokhara
84. Naresh Budhathoki	RCU, LGCDP, Pokhara
85. Ms. Nirmala Subba	RCU, LGCDP, Pokhara
86. Prakash Tiwari	RCU, LGCDP, Pokhara
87. Ekendra Lamsal	RCU, LGCDP, Pokhara
88. Ms. Manisha Lamichhane	RCU, LGCDP, Pokhara
89. Basant Keshav Parajuli	Old Age Home, Pokhara
90. Krishna Awasthi	Former LGCDP Staff, Pokhara
91. Babu Ram Gautam	CDO, Palpa
92. Krishna Prasad Pandey	LDO, Palpa
93. Bishnu Prasad Dhakal	CDO, Rupandehi
94. Yubraj Subedi	LDO, Rupandehi

Annex 12: List of participants: CAC (Jun Tara) & WCF, Jagatra Devi VDC – 2 Nailothok Gaon, Syangja District

SN	Name	Gender	Position
1	Renuka Neupane	F	Coordinator (WCF vice Coordinator)
2	Dilmaya Sunar	F	vice coordinator CAC & WCF member
3	Binita B.K.	F	Member (WCF Coordinator)
4	Shobha Sunar	F	Member
5	Durga Sunar	F	Member
6	Dilsari Sunar	F	Member
7	Laxmi Sunar	F	Member
8	Matikala Sunar	F	Member
9	Sita Pariyar	F	CAC & WCF Member
10	Tila Neupane	F	Member
11	Sabitra Neupane	F	Member (WCF member too)
12	Champa Neupane	F	CAC & WCF Member
13	Chan Kumari Thapa	F	Member WCF and CAC
14	Shiva Kumari Thapa	F	Member
15	Amrita Sunar	F	Member
16	Yamkala Pariyar	F	Member
17	Sumitra Sunar	F	Member
18	Tulasa Pariyar	F	Member
19	Jamuna Pariyar	F	Member
20	Maya Nepali	F	CAC & WCF Member
WCF Member participated at that discussion			
21	Chhabilal Neupane	M	Member
22	Pitambar Neupane	M	Member
23	Hema Neupane	F	Member
24	Moti Maya Neupane	F	Member
25	Khagisara Neupane	F	Member
26	Saraswati Neupane	F	Member
27	Thagbir Damai	M	Member
28	Sirjana Neupane	F	Member
29	Manisara Neupane	F	Member