



**Mid-Term Evaluation Business and Human Rights in Asia: Promoting Responsible Business Practices Through Regional Partnerships**

Date: February 8 2022

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<b>Evaluation recommendation 1.</b> The project should leverage the SDGs to continue to further the B&HR discourse in the region and to attract businesses. The project's indicator framework at the outcome and impact level should be tied more closely to the relevant SDG indicators.				
<b>Management response:</b> Agree, however, the project is in its final stage and it may be difficult to redraft the new indicators. The project team, will however, seek the guidance of the M&E colleagues and will revise the indicators.				
Key action(s)	Completion date	Responsible unit(s)	Tracking*	
			Comments	Status (initiated, completed or no due date)
The project would leverage the SDGs through the regional forums and the research reports to be published under the project.	30 September 2023	B+HR Asia (SIDA)		Initiated
The project will seek the guidance from the UNDP's M&E team and will revise the indicator framework.	31 July 2022	B+HR Asia (SIDA)		Initiated
	NA	NA		NA
<b>Evaluation recommendation 2</b> The project should ensure alignment in its results framework with the outcomes of the Regional Programme Document, UNDP's				

Global Rule of Law Programme – Phase IV, as well as the UNDP Strategic Plan 2022-2025. It should immediately address shortfalls in the indicator framework to be able to track, monitor and report on progress during the remaining implementation period. For the next programming phase, a strong and evidence-based theory of change should be developed, which can be used to develop the next phase results framework with SMART indicators and a strong M&E framework.

**Management response:** Agree, the project will revise its indicator framework for the remaining phase, and will take into account the recommendations for the next phase.

Key action(s)	Completion date	Responsible unit(s)	Tracking	
			Comments	Status (initiated, completed or no due date)
<p>The programme has aligned with the recent Regional Programme Document and the 2022-2025 Strategic plan i.e. RDP Output 2.2 Institutions, networks and non-state actors strengthened to promote expanded civic space and access to justice, through gender-responsive policy and systemic changes address racism, gender inequality, and exclusion and discrimination, strengthen the rule of law, human rights and equity of opportunities, including in digitalization and the business sector.</p> <p>The progress against the above-mentioned RPD output 2.2 will be monitored against the following output indicator:</p> <p>Indicator 2.2.1. Number of countries with institutions and private-sector partners with capacities to support the fulfilment of nationally and internationally ratified human rights obligations (IRRF 2.2.1):            Baseline (2020): 13 (private sector 2)            Target (2025): 18 (private sector 5)            Data source: Business and human rights monitoring reports</p>	February 2022			Completed
<p>The project will address the indicator framework with guidance from the M&amp;E teams at UNDP to be able to track, monitor and report on progress during the implementation period.</p>	31 July 2022	B+HR Asia (SIDA)		Initiated
<p>The inputs have been noted and the next phase will be developed with a strong and evidence-based theory of change, which will further be used to develop</p>	10 December 2023	B+HR Asia (SIDA)	The recommendation is	The next phase would be

the next phase results framework with SMART indicators and a strong M&E framework.			meant for the next phase of the project.	developed in Q4 of 2022 and Q1 of 2023.
<b>Evaluation recommendation 3</b> The regional approach adopted by the project should provide the anchor for UNDP's business and human rights programming in Asia going forward. A review should be conducted of which countries the project should focus on with a view of using the regional approach to push countries at the national level.				
<b>Management response:</b> Agree, please see key actions for the next steps				
Key action(s)	Completion date	Responsible unit(s)	Tracking	
			Comments	Status (initiated, completed or no due date)
<p>The project is conducting a review as recommended. While changes cannot be made in the current phase due to the commitments made with the donor, the findings will be used to inform any future development of next phase(s).</p> <p>The BR Asia project funded by Sweden helped mobilize resources for additional projects in the region. A programmatic review is being conducted to assess the best way possible to avoid overlap and duplication of resources.</p>	30 September 2022	B+HR Asia Programme (Projects funded through SIDA, EU and Japan)		Initiated
<b>Evaluation recommendation 4</b> High-level policy work at the regional level should feed into the national level planning and policies, without an exclusive focus on the development and implementation of National Action Plans.				
<b>Management response:</b> Partially agree. The implementation of the recommendation would also depend on the space created by other projects in the overlapping countries.				
Key action(s)	Completion date	Responsible unit(s)	Tracking	
			Comments	Status (initiated, completed or no due date)
This has been initiated, for example, the development of sector-specific Business responsibility and Sustainability Reporting guidelines for ICT sector in India; the development of a code of conduct for the agriculture sector in Viet Nam and engagement of the project with Bangladesh's Investment Development Authority.	30 July 2022	B+HR Asia (SIDA)		Started

<b>Evaluation recommendation 5</b> The project should consider expanding its partnership base further to ensure a whole of government and whole of society approach, which will contribute to more sustainable outcomes and results.				
<b>Management response:</b> Partially agree. Given that it is a regional project, it'd be challenging to adopt a whole of government approach as there are country-level B+HR projects supported through the EU and the Government of Japan, the Government of Germany and other development partners. Country-level projects work closely with the government and likely to adopt a whole of government approach, that is relevant for country-level programming.				
Key action(s)	Completion date	Responsible unit(s)	Tracking	
			Comments	Status (initiated, completed or no due date)
The project has already started expanding its partnership base to ensure whole of society approach, for example, recent work with the journalists, small grants to civil society organizations, engagement with human rights defenders, and collaboration with the national universities.	15 November 2022	B+HR Asia (SIDA)		Started
<b>Evaluation recommendation 6</b> The project should shift away from just awareness-raising to more refined capacity development approaches.				
<b>Management response:</b> Agree, the project is gradually adding capacity development efforts in addition to continuing its efforts on awareness-raising. Various activities undertaken in early 2022 and the ones outlined in AWP 2022 respond positively to the recommendation.				
Key action(s)	Completion date	Responsible unit(s)	Tracking	
			Comments	Status (initiated, completed or no due date)
Recommendation noted. Basis preliminary findings from the evaluation, the project has already started organizing training and workshops to build the capacities of target audiences. For example: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Training of business and policymakers on gender dimensions of the UNGPs</li> <li>2. Train the trainers of journalists followed by thematic trainings of journalists on issues such as investigative reporting, forced labour and modern slavery and so on.</li> <li>3. Trainings for NHRIs on B+HR in Asia</li> <li>4. Trainings for AICHR Representatives on B+H, HRDD and SDGs</li> </ol>	February 2022	B+HR Asia (SIDA)		Completed
	January 2022			Completed
	30 September 2022			Initiated (Agency hired)
	30 October 2022			Initiated

<b>Evaluation recommendation 7</b> The project should consider geographical expansion to strengthen sustainability and leave no one behind.				
<b>Management response:</b> Agree, the project is considering expansion to other countries and the Pacific for the next phase. Basis funds available in 2022 and 2023, the project will try to organise missions in the prospective countries and the sub-region.				
Key action(s)	Completion date	Responsible unit(s)	Tracking	
			Comments	Status (initiated, completed or no due date)
The project provided support to the Maldives in March 2022 and has been indirectly providing ongoing support to Pakistan and Nepal. The project is conducting a review of the countries and the region as outlined in recommendation no 3. The project is also speaking to other country offices to assess interest and political situation to propose new countries/regions for the project's next phase. The project intends to conduct additional missions in the proposed countries over the next few months.	October 2023	B+HR Asia (SIDA)		Started
<b>Evaluation recommendation 8</b> The project should further mainstream the human rights-based approach into its theory of change and project approaches and have a rights-holders centric approach by making more of a push towards the participatory and inclusive engagement to reach those furthest left behind.				
<b>Management response:</b> Agree. This recommendation is noted, and while this would be relevant and actionable during the next phase of the project, given the initial feedback from the evaluation, the project has increased its focus on human rights-based approaches to business and human rights agenda.				
Key action(s)	Completion date	Responsible unit(s)	Tracking	
			Comments	Status (initiated, completed or no due date)
At an overall level, the project commits to enhancing human rights-based approaches in its overall programming. In specific, the project is developing guidance for businesses on rights-holder centric recovery.	30 October 2022	B+HR Asia (SIDA)	The first draft of the report is available	Started

<b>Evaluation recommendation 9</b> The project should focus more on access to remedy and ensuring access to justice for all, as well as the introduction of stronger accountability tools and mechanisms.				
<b>Management response:</b> Agree				
Key action(s)	Completion date	Responsible unit(s)	Tracking	
			Comments	Status (initiated, completed or no due date)
The recommendation is noted. The project will focus on Access to Remedy at its flagship annual event UN Responsible Business and Human Rights Forum on 22-24 August 2022.  In addition, the project has developed an activity to facilitate the establishment of an Access to Justice Lab.	August 2022	B+HR Asia		Started
	December 2022			
<b>Evaluation recommendation 10</b> The project should have a clearly defined exit strategy, for the current phase and in general, which reinforces ownership and the sustainability of project results.				
<b>Management response:</b> please add				
Key action(s)	Completion date	Responsible unit(s)	Tracking	
			Comments	Status (initiated, completed or no due date)
The recommendation is noted and the project is developing an exit strategy by establishing partnerships with other projects at UNDP and other partners. In addition, the project is investing in digitised solutions that remain accessible after the project.	June 2023	B+HR Asia		Started
<b>Evaluation recommendation 11</b> The project should explore opportunities to connect B&HR with emerging areas, including the environment, technologies, and automation, and SMSEs and the informal economy.				
<b>Management response:</b> Agree, while the project has started work on the environment and informal economy, it will need dedicated funds to develop activities on these areas.				
			<b>Tracking</b>	

Key action(s)	Completion date	Responsible unit(s)	Comments	Status (initiated, completed or no due date)
<p>The project will develop activities to connect B+HR agenda with environment in 2023 AWP.</p> <p>Meanwhile, the project has started connecting different agendas with B+HR through activities outlined in AWP 2022.</p>	December 2023	B+HR Asia		Started
<p><b>Evaluation recommendation 12</b> The project should consider a tighter programmatic approach at the implementation level to further improve harmonization and coordination between the SIDA funded and EU funded projects.</p>				
<p><b>Management response:</b> Agree, the programme is conducting a joint analysis at a programmatic level in Asia-Pacific and will act accordingly.</p>				
Key action(s)	Completion date	Responsible unit(s)	Tracking	
<p>The two projects have recently been evaluated and conducting a joint analysis to improve harmonization and coordination.</p> <p>The projects have also agreed to hold monthly programmatic coordination meetings.</p>	<p>August 2022</p> <p>(and ongoing)</p>	B+HR Asia	Comments	Status (initiated, completed or no due date)
				Started





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**Sent:** Friday, May 27, 2022 9:42 AM

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**Subject:** Re: Management Response: Mid-term evaluation SIDA B+HR Asia

Dear Harpreet and Nick,

With many thanks to Sirin and Haroon for supporting the project team and reviewing the management response, I'm happy to sign off without further comment.

I understand there must be reasons why the SIDA and EU funds have been programmed as separate projects. However, as the evaluation also notes this makes it more difficult to coordinate the work in a coherent manner towards joint higher level impact. I would like to explore whether in the next phase it would be possible to develop one integrated project document that is jointly funded by both donors. We've had a good experience with this kind of set-up for Being LGBTI in Asia: one project document, one TOC, one results reporting with 2-4 separate donor agreements (with their own workplan, budget and financial reports). The Youth team is also currently consolidating their initiatives under one project document.

This approach would clarify the linkages between the two complementary parts of the larger project, and will also save you a lot of administrative work ongoing as you would only need to manage one board, one risk registry etc

Kind regards,  
Katri

**From:** Harpreet Kaur <[harpreet.kaur@undp.org](mailto:harpreet.kaur@undp.org)>

**Date:** Monday, 23 May AD 2022 20:54

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**Subject:** Re: Management Response: Mid-term evaluation SIDA B+HR Asia

Dear Nick

SIDA's evaluation already has elements on coordination - both in findings and in recommendations. Only EU's evaluation is missing on the coordination component and therefore I realised the question at EU's debrief. Under management response, we have specified that a joint analysis is underway and we'd continue to collaborate.

Regards

Harpreet

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**Subject:** RE: Management Response: Mid-term evaluation SIDA B+HR Asia

Thanks Harpreet, just one question – weren't we supposed to finalise both MTRs only after the deep dive on EU+SIDA projects? Presumably there will be some specific recommendations on that issue for both projects which will also require a management response?



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