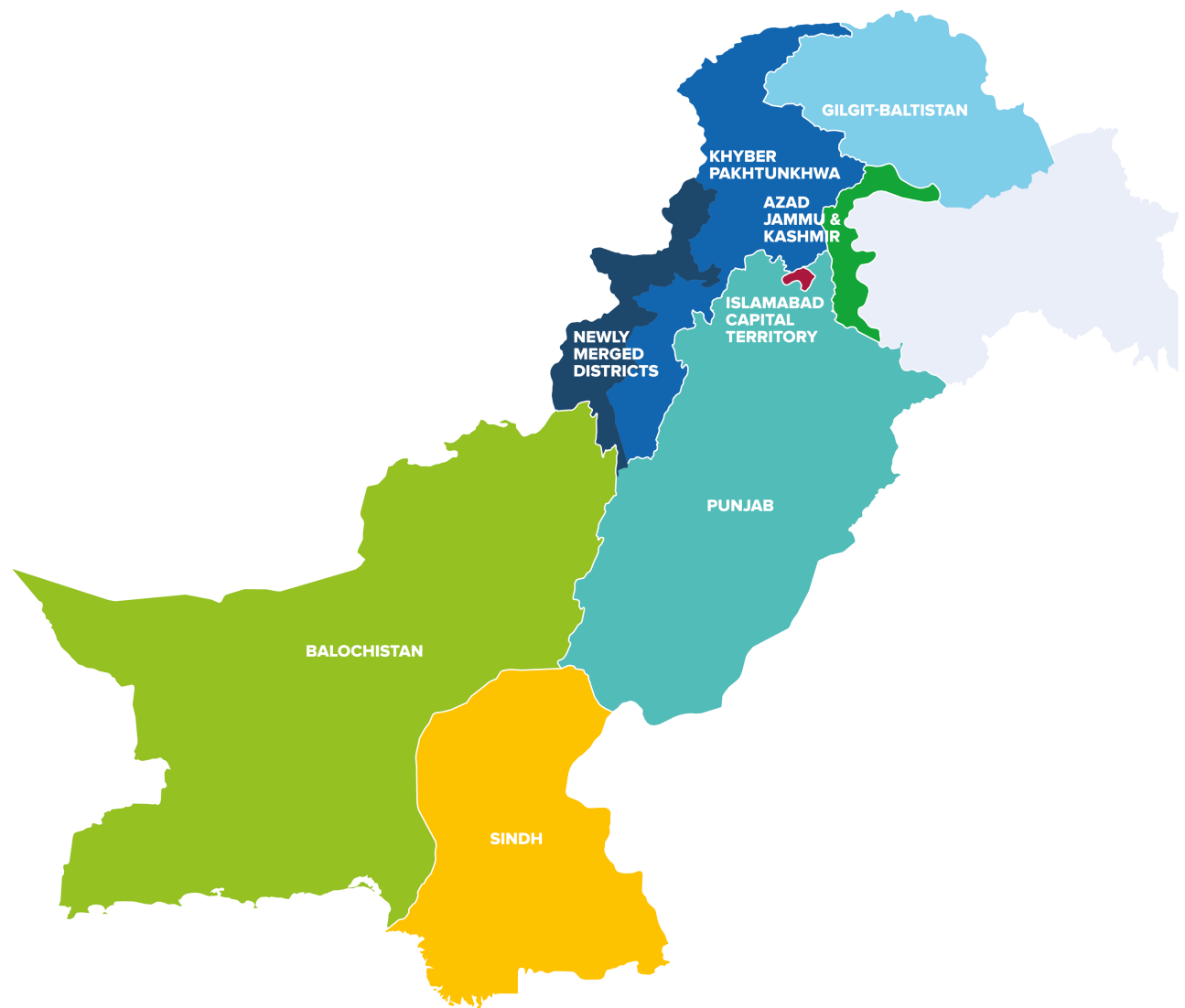


Final Evaluation Report

Pakistan United Nations Sustainable Development Framework (UNSDF)/One UN Programme III (OP III) 2018–2022



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April 2022

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ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

AFP	UN agencies, funds and programmes (UNCT member entities)
AJK	Azad Jammu and Kashmir
CBF	Common Budgetary Framework
DAC	Development Assistance Committee
DaO	Delivering as One
DRR	Disaster risk reduction
FAO	Food and Agricultural Organization of the United Nations
FGD	Focus group discussion
GBV	Gender-based violence
GDP	Gross domestic product
GB	Gilgit-Baltistan
GoP	Government of Pakistan
IFAD	International Fund for Agricultural Development
ILO	International Labour Organization
JP	Joint Plan
JWP	Joint Work Plan
KP	Khyber Pakhtunkhwa
LNOB	Leaving no one behind
M&E	Monitoring and evaluation
MoPD&SI	Ministry of Planning, Development & Special Initiatives
NGO	Non-governmental organization
NWOW	New way of working
OC	UN National Oversight Committee
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
OMT	Operations Management Team
OP III	One UN Programme III 2018–2022
PME	Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation Group
PMT	Programme Management Team
PPTs	Provincial Programme Teams
Prodoc	Project document
PSCs	Provincial Steering Committees
RBM	Results-based management
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals

SRH	Sexual and reproductive health
TFP	Technical and financial partner
TOC	Theory of change
TOR	Terms of reference
TWG	Technical Working Group
UN	United Nations
UNAIDS	United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS
UNCT	United Nations Country Team
UNDAF	United Nations Development Assistance Framework
UNDCO	United Nations Development Coordination Office
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNEG	United Nations Evaluation Group
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UN Habitat	United Nations Human Settlements Programme
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNIDO	United National Industrial Development Organization
UNOCHA	United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
UNRC	United Nations Resident Coordinator
UNRCO	United Nations Resident Coordinator's Office
UNSDCF	United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework
UNSDF	United Nations Sustainable Development Framework
UN Women	United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women
WASH	Water, sanitation and hygiene
WHO	World Health Organization

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Overview

This evaluation assesses the Pakistan One UN Programme III (OP III) 2018–2022, also known as the United Nations Sustainable Development Framework (UNSDF) for Pakistan. The programme is designed to support the efforts of the Government of Pakistan (GoP) to achieve its Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) commitments by 2030. UN support under the One UN Programme III is structured around ten outcomes, closely aligned with the Government’s Vision 2025, as well as with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its 17 SDGs. These ten outcomes are: (1) Economic Growth, (2) Decent Work, (3) Health and Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH), (4) Nutrition, (5) Food Security and Sustainable Agriculture, (6) Resilience, (7) Education and Learning, (8) Gender, Equality and Dignity, (9) Governance, and (10) Social Protection. Of these, outcome 3 on Health and WASH accounts for the largest chunk of the OP III budget (over 40 per cent). This will be the only evaluation conducted of the programme and it focuses on information from 2018 to 2020, including financial data, as well as some programmatic information until June 2021.

The three main purposes of this evaluation, as laid out in its Terms of Reference (ToR) are to: “(i) demonstrate accountability to stakeholders on performance in achieving development results and on invested resources; (ii) support evidence-based decision-making for the development of the new cooperation framework for 2023–27; and (iii) contribute key lessons learned to the existing knowledge based on how to accelerate the implementation of the 2030 Agenda.” The evaluation’s objectives, as given in the Terms of Reference, are to:

- (1) Provide an independent assessment of the performance of the OP III/UNSDF in both its development and humanitarian aspects as a package/portfolio. Performance should be assessed based on standard evaluation criteria, as well as the application of the United Nations Development Assistance programming principles, namely a human rights-based approach (including the principle of universality, linked with the SDG principle of leaving no one behind), gender equality, results-based management (RBM), capacity development, and environmental sustainability (including addressing climate change).
- (2) Assess the UN’s strategic positioning and use of strategies given the evolving needs of rights-holders, government priorities, and the changing context in the country.
- (3) Identify and analyse innovative/high-impact approaches, lessons learned, good practices, programmatic and operational challenges, such as government buy-in, access, the capacity of the UN system and the leadership of the UN Resident Coordinator’s Office (UNRCO).
- (4) Provide strategic and actionable recommendations to inform the direction of the next programme cycle of the UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework, which is aligned with national priorities.

In addition to these objectives, initial meetings with senior members of the UN Resident Coordinator’s Office revealed a strong interest in analysing the value added by the One UN Programme approach in improving overall programme quality.

This evaluation analyses these purposes and objectives using the lens of six criteria developed by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development’s Development Assistance Committee (OECD-DAC): relevance, effectiveness (and progress/contribution towards impact, if applicable), efficiency, sustainability, and coherence. Guided by the United Nations Evaluation Group’s (UNEG) *Norms and Standards*, and *Ethical Guidelines for Evaluation*, the evaluation uses mixed methods, combining qualitative and quantitative methods, alongside the triangulation of data, to compile a robust, credible evidence base. Quantitative analysis is largely based on secondary data and existing documentation. The evaluation team conducted a thorough vetting exercise of project documents, examining the extent to which these documents reflect adherence to key criteria, such as ‘Delivering as One’ (DaO), gender equality, and sustainability. This is

complemented by a thorough review of financial data. Qualitative primary data is derived from key informant interviews (KIIs) and focus group discussions (FGDs), paired with an online survey of key internal and external stakeholders.

Key findings

Relevance

Evaluation question 1. Alignment with national priorities and adjustment to changes in the context: Overall, the OP III/UNSDF's results chain and outcome design show good vertical alignment with overarching national goals and international objectives due to a thorough process of consultations with the federal government during the programme's design phase. However, there is less alignment with the requirements and aspirations of Pakistan's provinces and regions. Almost one-third of the budget focuses on health and WASH, with much smaller allocations for other key government priorities, such as zero hunger and decent work. Adapting to COVID-19 has been swift and effective, despite the challenges of social distancing/lockdown measures for working modalities (switching to home-based/virtual work if/when applicable and feasible) and a comprehensive COVID-19 response plan was developed.

Evaluation question 2. Human rights, gender and the principle of leaving no one behind (LNOB): Issues of gender, vulnerable groups and the principle of leaving no one behind are addressed structurally at the highest level in the programme through outcome 8 (Gender, Equality and Dignity). However, this outcome only constitutes 1 per cent of the target budget, and less than 1 per cent of cumulative expenditures during the first three years of the OP III/UNSDF's implementation – the lowest among all ten outcomes. While the OP III/UNSDF's work on gender and marginalized groups is appreciated, comparatively speaking, there is less awareness about the UN's human rights work. This implies a lighter footprint in this regard (in terms of related programmatic presence, impact and/or communication).

Evaluation question 3. The UN's comparative advantage: The UN has used its comparative advantages well to develop momentum and national ownership in terms of positioning the SDGs as a national priority. The UN has used its technical capacities, especially during the COVID-19 pandemic, neutral convenor role, and access to global resources. However, these advantages could have been better used to ensure effective programme implementation using the One UN Programme approach, especially at the sub-national level.

Effectiveness

Evaluation question 4. OP III/UNSDF's contribution to strengthening national capacities, the policy environment and the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals: The UN's role has been instrumental in creating awareness about SDGs and strengthening capacities among government agencies to implement the 2030 Agenda. While beneficiaries appreciate the role of SDG Units, they also express additional expectations and aspirations that have yet to be realized. It is difficult to analyse the UN's relative contribution to different high level performance indicators (pitched at the SDG/NDS level) given the lack of concrete data about different sources of funding for the respective comprehensive national efforts. Financial figures for 2018 to the end of 2020 show that, during this three-year period, the OP III/UNSDF required total resources of US\$2.035 billion, of which nearly US\$1.650 billion (81 per cent) were already available. The overall absorption rate – that is, the percentage of available resources spent – is 80 per cent overall. Outcome 10 (Social Protection) has the highest absorption rate (94 per cent), while outcome 1 (Economic Growth) has the lowest (12 per cent). However, it is difficult to undertake a more in-depth analysis of programme effectiveness as the original programme document prepared in 2017 does not provide specific outcome, output or activity targets for the programme and its outcomes.

Evaluation question 5. OP III/UNSDF monitoring system: The OP III/UNSDF adopted national level indicators on progress towards the SDGs as outcome level indicators. This is problematic for several reasons. First, the UN is only one contributor towards these goals. Second, information about the contribution of the government and other donors to national level progress on the achievement of the SDGs is not readily

available. Therefore, it is difficult to determine how much of the progress achieved on national level indicators is due to UN efforts. Thus, it may be better for the UN to develop its own outcome level programme indicators and related targets, based on its own programme plans and resource availability. This would address the issue of data availability, as well as being able to demonstrate the change truly attributable to the UN and, therefore, related results. At the top tier, indicators pitched at the level of SDG and NDS indicators should be carefully vetted in terms of the availability of data sources or means of verification. If these do not exist, or theoretically exist but have never really been functional, or become dysfunctional (due to a lack of funding or for other reasons), the UN should consider whether it should provide support to set up such systems. Such decisions will need to be based on carefully weighing related costs and benefits, a comparative analysis of the UN providing such support or letting other entities do so, sustainability and capacity building needs, etc. Results-based management would be strengthened if outcome indicators also include a number of quantitative indicators covering compacted and similar result types across sectors.

Evaluation question 6. Conducive to promoting integration across sectors: In general, the sheer number of outcomes has not been conducive to an integrated programmatic response, especially since leadership roles are spread across a range of UN agencies. Effectively, outcome design and related Joint Work Plans (JWPs) are biased towards each lead agency's individual work plans, emanating from their agency-specific corporate mandate and approach to work. The OP III/UNSDF's degree of integration would have likely benefitted if clusters had been set up as flexible programmatic platforms of exchange, allowing multiple outcome 'memberships' across clusters – similar to the logic of AFP memberships across outcomes – and permitting but not imposing cross-outcome programming/programmes, in the sense of integrated cluster Joint Work Plans, including cross-sectoral Joint Plans (JPs).

Efficiency

Evaluation question 7. Good use of human and financial resources, tools and innovative approaches: Performance in terms of overall efficiency is mixed. Resources generated after three of the programme's five-year period (60 per cent of its life cycle) cover 99.1 per cent of the extrapolated three-year projection of required resources. The absorption of available funds amounts to 80.3 per cent. Outcome 1 (Economic Growth) has the lowest absorption rate among all ten outcomes, at 16 per cent. However, it is difficult to compare financial data with OP III/UNSDF indicator progress (for those indicators that have data) because of the high level nature of selected OP III/UNSDF indicators. All UN agencies, funds and programmes (AFPs) are actively using long-term agreements (LTAs) and the Mutual Recognition Policy under the Business Operation Strategy (BOS) 2.0 has helped to galvanize AFPs and generate time and cost savings. However, the attendance of focal points from some agencies is irregular, and focal points are frequently changed. As a result, substantive feedback on draft LTAs often only arrives at the last minute, causing delays and frustration among members who attend regularly. Delays are also caused by irregular (de)briefing between Working Group focal points and focal points of the Operations Management Team (OMT) in specific AFPs. Moreover, newly introduced provincial OMT focal points require additional training.

Evaluation question 8. Integrated, collaborative and efficient implementation: The UN has successfully developed its structures at the national level (Outcome Groups, the United Nation Country Team (UNCT), Programme Management Team (PMT), etc.). Structures at the sub-national level are weaker and less effective, such as PPTs in Azad Jammu and Kashmir, and Gilgit-Baltistan. At the central level, Outcome Group meetings have been held infrequently. In general, Outcome Group leads feel that the work of their groups has not been successful due to insufficient capacities among many agencies to lead or participate in these groups, as well as the lack of funding coming through these groups.

Evaluation question 9. Efficiency of the COVID-19 responses: The UN in Pakistan has been able to draw on existing capacities, comparative advantages and mandates in its arsenal to respond to COVID-19. These include WHO's medical expertise as the specialized UN AFP leading in this field, OCHA's emergency coordination expertise, and the general development coordination backbone provided through UNRCO. As

part of the coordinated response, the entire UNCT/Humanitarian Country Team contributed by providing specific technical expertise, services and/or financial support to address the pandemic. These responses have been continuously sustained for two years, involving a fair amount of COVID-19 mainstreaming, adaptation and the adjustment of regular OP III/UNSDF activities, including the related repurposing of programme budget lines.

Sustainability

Evaluation question 10. Sustainability, ownership, durability of effects and the commitment of stakeholders: There are considerable concerns about the long-term sustainability of the OP III/UNSDF's results. Capacity building has been a key tool for ensuring sustainability, but frequent staff transfers and turnover undermine sustainability. Fewer capacity building activities have taken place in some provinces, such as Balochistan, than at the federal level. Working through partnerships with the government and civil society – such as on polio eradication – has proven a successful means of achieving sustainability. However, overall, the UN needs a clearer sustainability framework (exit strategies), spelling out how sustainability will be achieved and measured.

Coherence

Evaluation question 11. Programme coherence: Heavy reliance on activities and outputs delivered through single agency approaches has contributed to a relative lack of coherence in the delivery of Joint Work Plans. So did the fact that many, if not most, Outcome/Results Groups function at a sub-par level (on average, meetings are infrequent, do not always involve full participation and participants seldom change). In terms of programming modalities, joint programming through Joint Work Plans only involves Joint Plans in a few cases, with the notable exception of outcome 8 (Gender, Equality and Dignity) which relies heavily on the Joint Plan modality.

Conclusions

The findings of this evaluation show that the OP III/UNSDF 2018–2022 has played a critical role in instituting the process for the SDGs' achievement in Pakistan. The programme is well-aligned to national priorities and has been highly adept at changing in response to contextual changes, especially the COVID-19 pandemic. Stakeholders view the UN's convening role, normative support and capacity development as its stand out comparative advantages. In addition, they value the UN's neutrality (as a 'neutral broker') and the provision of technical expertise across a wide range of areas. An example of the UN's ability to gather global expertise and resources that stakeholders highlighted was the UN's engagement throughout the COVID-19 pandemic.

Overall, effectiveness and efficiency garners decent marks (7 out of 10, on average, both from internal and external stakeholders). However, concerns remain about sustainability and the lack of integrated programming, particularly at the sub-national level. There is also an absence of UN programme-specific indicators to measure higher level outputs across sectors, since the current set of official outcome level indicators mirrors national outcomes to which the UN contributes as one of many contributors. The efficient use of UNInfo to gauge the effectiveness of interventions remains a challenge due to the system's limited user-friendliness. Two-thirds of outcome indicators had no data points at all, and for some tier 2 SDG indicators, the meta data/data source has yet to be determined. Data disaggregation by gender, province, and leaving no one behind status is also mostly lacking.

The programme's capacity building work was appreciated. Work on gender and diversity issues, leaving no one behind and other UN principles may be rated as satisfactory, although the component of human rights-related work requires further expansion and investment. While all AFPs' actively use of long-term agreements and the Mutual Recognition Policy under BOS 2.0 has helped to galvanize AFPs and generate time and cost savings, some the attendance of focal points from some agencies has been haphazard and focal points have often changed. Issues that need to be addressed to achieve better coordination and enhanced general performance include: (i) the last minute submission of substantive feedback on draft long-term, which causes

delays and frustration among members who attend regularly, (ii) irregular (de)briefing between Working Group focal points and OMT focal points in specific AFPs, and (iii) the need for training for newly introduced Operations Management Team provincial focal points.

Regarding coherence, some outcome group leads felt that their group's work was not successful due to insufficient understanding and motivation among many agencies to lead or participate in these Delivering as One-inspired groups. This was further exacerbated by a lack of funding coming through to fund the (joint) activities of these groups. The number of outcome groups was too great, resulting in a lack of coordination and, in some cases, duplication. While capacity building initiatives supported sustainability, the programme would benefit from a clearer and more strategic approach to ensuring the sustainability of the development gains achieved, both at the output and outcome levels.

Many donors and provincial governments expressed their eagerness to explore innovative models of joint programming (such as cross-sectoral integrated programming, mini-UNSDCF-style tailor-made/customized and truly integrated provincial Joint Work Plans that not only avoid duplication but also maximize synergies).

Lessons learned

- There remains considerable room for improvement in terms of Delivering as One, ensuring the coherence of multi-agency programme design and implementation, and the existence of joint programming opportunities. The mere existence of Terms of Reference and organograms for Outcome Groups, the PMT and other bodies are not enough to ensure that the UN is truly Delivering as One. Increased levels of AFP involvement are required in terms of joint funding and programming.
- There is a mismatch between the UN's programme structures that reflect a One UN programme at the national level and Pakistan's evolution toward decentralized federal structures. Most of the government's SDG programming takes place at the sub-national level, yet UN programming followed a top-down approach (from the central, national level, downward).
- More coordinated support is needed at the sub-national level (for instance, remote Gilgit-Baltistan, the third-poorest region in the country, received very limited support). To ensure a more integrated response, a model of seven Joint Work Plans at the provincial/regional level may ensure greater effectiveness than the current outcomes-based model at the national level.
- Stakeholders across the board look at the UN's added ('intangible' yet concrete) value as a convenor (including the convening power and Delivering as One-related lessons learned for complex multi-stakeholder coordination platforms/mechanisms and related processes) and as a broker of multi-stakeholder solutions.
- Donors expect the UN to better coordinate its work and become better in cutting transaction costs (such as the number of parallel processes involved in setting up bilateral or parallel bilateral (donor/single agency) contracts in lieu of single Joint Plan contracts, separate reporting/monitoring burdens, etc.).

Best practices

- The OP III/UNSDF is highly relevant to national priorities established in 2016–17 due to thorough consultations held at the federal level.
- The UN has demonstrated a strong ability to adjust programming during the COVID-19 crisis and mounted an effective response to the crisis involving direct programming and support for the government.
- The OP III/UNSDF has involved strong fundraising and a strong absorption rate as of the end of 2020, with 80 per cent of required resources secured and an 80 per cent absorption rate of available resources.
- Internal and external stakeholders express a high degree of satisfaction with the effectiveness of overall UN programming.

- The programme incorporates gender, equity and leaving no one behind principles well overall, across different outcomes.
- There is a strong focus on partnerships and capacity building, especially at the federal level, which contributes to sustainability. However, this has not occurred to the same extent at the sub-national levels.

Recommendations

(a) Strategic level

Recommendation 1: In terms of the *results structure*, consider reducing the number of Outcome Groups, preferably by creating interconnected macroscopic hubs rather than outcome ‘super siloes’.

Recommendation 2: Regarding the internal programme *governance structure*, consider how to better articulate programmatic and operational processes, as well as how to ensure a more inclusive oversight practice that integrates demand-side aspects and bottom-up inputs.

Recommendation 3: Invest in deepening and broadening the mainstreaming of ‘leaving no one behind’ across programming and operational processes and procedures. For example, (a) consider more programming for marginalized groups like transgender and minority persons, (b) linked to the Business Operations Strategy which underpins the drive to enhance operational performance, consider mainstreaming gender, leaving no one behind and human rights in corporate procurement policy by strengthening socially sustainable aspects (for instance by introducing a quota and/or bonus points into tenders, introducing a minimum threshold or bonus for women-owned companies or based on the percentage of women employees, etc.) (This is principally a recommendation for the UNCT-OMT).

(b) Programmatic level

Recommendation 4: Emphasize integrated programming, including at the provincial level, capitalizing on the UN’s comparative advantage(s) in terms of its unique convening and normative role by setting up appropriate service delivery systems, building staff capacity and designing innovative nexus-sensitive support.

Recommendation 5: Invest in evidence-driven, integrated ‘new way of working’ (NWOW)-type programming to more effectively/efficiently tackle the complexity of contemporary multidimensional crises and challenges.

Recommendation 6: Invest in the UNDAF’s monitoring and evaluation (M&E) systems and processes – including relevant knowledge production, storage, distribution and usage/application – to ensure that the programme’s implementation matches the minimum standards of results-based management.

Recommendation 7: Introduce a code of conduct on fundraising/resource mobilization and advocate for donors to co-sign it.

CHAPTER 1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. Purpose and objectives of the evaluation

This evaluation assesses the Pakistan One UN Programme III (OP III) 2018–2022, also known as the United Nations Sustainable Development Framework (UNSDF) for Pakistan. This will be the only evaluation of the programme.

The programme is designed to support the efforts of the Government of Pakistan (GoP) to achieve its Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) commitments by 2030. Between January 2018 and December 2020, the UN invested over US\$1.3 billion in the OP III/UNSDF. The programme involves a range of stakeholders, including Pakistan’s federal and provincial governments, donors, implementing partners, advocacy groups, beneficiaries, UN agencies, funds and programmes (AFPs) active in Pakistan, and regional and global UN structures. Given the large-scale funds and range of stakeholders involved, this evaluation will help respond to accountability requirements to different stakeholders by informing them about the achievements, challenges and lessons learned to date. It will also contribute to programme development for the next phase of UN support for the Government of Pakistan from 2023 to 2027. The three main purposes of this evaluation, as outlined in its Terms of Reference (ToR), are to: “(i) demonstrate accountability to stakeholders on performance in achieving development results and on invested resources; (ii) support evidence-based decision-making for the development of the new cooperation framework for 2023–27; and (iii) contribute key lessons learned to the existing knowledge based on how to accelerate the implementation of the 2030 Agenda.” The objectives of the evaluation, as given in the Terms of Reference, are to:

- (1) Provide an independent assessment of the performance of the OP III/UNSDF 2018–2022 in both its development and humanitarian aspects as a package/portfolio. Performance should be assessed based on standard evaluation criteria (relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact, sustainability and coherence), as well as the application of the United Nations Development Assistance programming principles, namely the human rights-based approach (including the principle of universality, linked with the SDG principle of leaving no one behind), gender equality, results-based management (RBM), capacity development, and environmental sustainability (including addressing climate change).
- (2) Assess the UN’s strategic positioning and use of strategies given the evolving needs of rights-holders, government priorities, and the changing context in the country.
- (3) Identify and analyse innovative/high-impact approaches, lessons learned, good practices, programmatic and operational challenges, such as government buy-in, access, the capacity of the UN system and the leadership of the UN Resident Coordinator’s Office (UNRCO).
- (4) Provide strategic and actionable recommendations to inform the direction of the next programme cycle of the UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework, which is aligned with national priorities.

In addition to these objectives laid out in the evaluation’s Terms of Reference, initial meetings with senior members of the UN Resident Coordinator’s Office (UNRCO) revealed a strong interest in analysing the value added by the One UN Programme approach in improving overall programme quality. Thus, the evaluation particularly analyses whether and how the One UN Programme approach has encouraged more synergy, coordination, cooperation and complementarity among UN agencies and their partners at the level of the programme cycle and support functions, such as joint needs assessments, programming, monitoring and evaluation, and resource sharing. The focus is not on evaluating the individual programmes of different UN agencies, but rather on the combined strategic impact of the overall OP III/UNSDF.

The evaluation analyses these purposes and objectives using the lens of six criteria developed by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development’s Development Assistance Committee (OECD-DAC):

- **Relevance:** The degree of the link between, on the one hand, the OP III/UNSDf's objectives and support strategies, and on the other, the population's needs, government priorities, donor requirements, and UN global policies and strategies, as well as the extent to which changes in needs and government priorities were incorporated through changes in the programme.
- **Effectiveness:** The extent to which intended programme outcomes and results have been accomplished in line with targets, and the extent to which these results have contributed to the achievement of the OP III/UNSDf's overall goals so far.
- **Efficiency:** The extent to which programme outputs and outcomes have been achieved so far, with the appropriate amount of human, time, financial and material resources, as well as how such resources have been used and converted into results along the results chain.
- **Impact:** The ultimate significance and potentially transformative effects of the programme's interventions in terms of the social, environmental, and economic effects of these interventions on beneficiaries that are longer-term or broader than those analysed under the criterion of effectiveness. Since the methodology used in programme evaluations may not be adequate to assess actual impact, the focus in this evaluation is on progress/contribution towards impact.
- **Sustainability:** The likelihood that benefits from the programme continue after it ends, and the overall resilience of benefits derived from the programme, as well as the institutions/processes/service delivery mechanisms established/introduced/built or supported through UN programmes/projects, and risks that could affect their continuation.
- **Coherence:** The synergies, compatibility and interlinkages of the UN with the programmes of other development agencies, government policies and programmes, and the alignment of the OP III/UNSDf with the relevant norms and standards, as well as the extent to which the One UN Programme approach has added value, synergy and complementarity to the programmes of individual UN agencies and the overall UN programme.

The detailed questions under these criteria, as originally given in the Terms of Reference and further elaborated by the evaluation team based on discussions with UN staff, are presented in Chapter 4.

1.2. Scope of the evaluation

1.2.1. Geographical

In addition to working at the federal level, UN agencies in Pakistan also provide support in all four provinces and two federally administered areas of Gilgit-Baltistan (GB) and Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK), as shown in the table below.

Table 1. UN footprint in Pakistan

Province/region	UN agencies present
Balochistan	15 UN agencies: IFAD, ILO, FAO, UNAIDS, UNDP, UNESCO, UNFPA, UNHCR, UNICEF, UNIDO, UNODC, UN Women, WFP, WHO, ITC
Khyber Pakhtunkhwa	17 UN agencies: FAO, IFAD, ILO, UNAIDS, UNDP, UNESCO, UNFPA, UNICEF, UNHCR, UNIDO, UNODC, UN Habitat, UN Women, WFP, WHO, IOM, ITC
Punjab	14 UN agencies: IFAD, ILO, FAO, UN Habitat, UNDP, UNESCO, UNFPA, UNHCR, UNICEF, UNIDO, UNAIDS, UN Women, WFP, UNODC South Punjab, 9 UN agencies: UNIDO, UNICEF, UNDP, UNESCO, IFAD, UNHCR, ILO, UNWOMEN and FAO

Province/region	UN agencies present
Sindh	16 UN agencies: FAO, IFAD, ILO, UNAIDS, UNDP, UNESCO, UNFPA, UNICEF, UNHCR, UNIDO, UNODC, UN Habitat, UN Women, WFP, WHO, and ITC
Azad Jammu and Kashmir	6 UN agencies: ILO, UNDP, UNESCO, UNICEF, UNHCR and WFP
Gilgit-Baltistan	11 UN agencies: UNIDO, UNICEF, UNFPA, UNDP, WFP, UNESCO, IFAD, UNHCR, WHO, ILO, and FAO

Thus, the evaluation has a nationwide scope, covering all four of Pakistan's provinces and its two federally administered areas. The evaluation also analyses the suitability of the spread and size of the OP III/UNSDF in light of the needs in different geographical and thematic areas. It discusses this through the prism(s) of relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, early impact (to the extent possible) and sustainability. Coherence is covered by reviewing Delivering as One-related aspects of the programme. The evaluation also looks at complementarity and the degree of integration, or absence thereof (in the sense of duplication/competition or 'lost opportunities'), among programmes in Pakistan's provinces.

1.2.2. Thematic

UN agencies, funds and programmes in Pakistan work on a broad range of thematic areas and sectors. These include climate change, crime control, disaster risk reduction (DRR), education, food security, and agriculture, governance, health, human rights, income-generation and enterprise development, labour issues, migration and displacement, nutrition, poverty alleviation, the rule of law, sexual and reproductive health (SRH), social protection, water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH), and women's and youth empowerment. The evaluation analyses the specific added value and suitability as per AFPs' respective corporate mandates in light of the country's sectoral needs and related SDG aims in terms of relevance and the implications for efficiency, effectiveness, impact and sustainability, as well as the cross-cutting aims of the OP III/UNSDF.

1.2.3. Temporal

The implementation of the OP III/UNSDF began in January 2018, which serves as the starting date for the temporal focus of this evaluation. Although financial information is only available until December 2020, the evaluation covers programme achievements until October 2021, depending on the availability of information.

1.3. Structure of the report

This final report fundamentally seeks to create a common understanding of the aims, objectives, scope, methodology, limitations, roles and support requirements for this evaluation between the evaluation team and the commissioning entity. It captures the requirements laid out in the Terms of Reference, as well as additional points identified in meetings with UNRCO, which necessitated some changes in the ToR requirements.

The report consists of five chapters. This introductory chapter provides an overview of the purpose, objectives, criteria and scope of this evaluation. Chapter 2 provides the country context and needs that serve as the background for the development of the OP III/UNSDF, and the role of external assistance in Pakistan. Chapter 3 provides a detailed description of the OP III/UNSDF's strategic response and programme strategies to help the Government of Pakistan to achieve its SDG commitments. Chapter 4 provides a detailed analysis of the OP III/UNSDF's performance, including key findings against standard evaluation criteria. Chapter 5 provides the evaluation's final set of recommendations. The annexes include the evaluation matrix, data collection tools, stakeholder mapping and a list of the documents consulted.

CHAPTER 2. COUNTRY CONTEXT

2.1. Development challenges and national strategies

Founded in 1947 and located in South Asia, Pakistan is the world's fifth most populous country. It has an annual population growth rate of 2.4 per cent,¹ with its population projected at 220.9 million as of mid-2020.² Burgeoning population growth dilutes any significant strides Pakistan makes to address development challenges, as the bulging young population has yet to translate into a demographic dividend. In addition to rapid population growth, other critical challenges include a slow-growing economy and high inflation over the last three years, which directly impact poverty alleviation efforts. Weak governance affects Pakistan's ability to capitalize on its many assets (including its demographic dividend), while resulting in the mismanagement of the economy.

Table 2. Key facts about Pakistan

Location	South Asia
Land area	907,483 km sq. (33 rd largest globally)
Population	207.17 million (5 th largest globally)
Population breakdown:	
By age	34% under 15 years old; 61.4% between 15 and 64 years old ⁵
By gender	51% men and boys, 48.76% women and girls, 0.24% transgender persons ⁶
By province ³	110 million Punjab; 48 million Sindh; 35 million Khyber Pakhtunkhwa; 12.3 million Balochistan; 2 million Islamabad Capital Territory ⁷
By religion ⁴	96% Muslims 4% Christians, Hindus, Ahmadis and members of 'scheduled castes'. ⁸
By location	62% rural; 38% urban ⁹
By language (mother tongue)	38.8% Punjabi, 18.2% Pashto, 14.6% Sindhi, 12.2% Saraiki, 7.1% Urdu, 3% Balochi, and a variety of other languages
Number of persons with disabilities	3.3 million to 27 million ¹⁰
Government	Three-tiered federation with bicameral legislature
GDP per capita (US\$) current prices	1,542
Total GDP (US\$)	263 billion

1 Finance Division, Ministry of Finance (2020). *Pakistan Economic Survey 2019–20*. Islamabad: Government of Pakistan. Available at http://www.finance.gov.pk/survey/chapter_20/Executive_Summary.pdf

2 UN Population Reference Bureau.

3 Website of the Pakistan Bureau Statistics. Available at: <https://www.pbs.gov.pk>

4 UN United Nations (2016). *Pakistan Common Country Assessment 2016: An SDG baseline analysis*. Islamabad: UN Pakistan.

5 The country's population composition consists mostly of persons of working age; among the 34 per cent who are under the age of 15, 12.1 per cent are 0–4 years old and 22.1 per cent are 5–14 years. Roughly, 4.4 per cent of Pakistanis are over the age of 64.

6 Samaa TV (2017). "Population Census 2017: Men outnumber women in Pakistan." *Samaa TV*, 25 August 2017. Available at <https://www.samaa.tv/news/2017/08/population-census-2017-men-outnumber-women-pakistan>

7 Figures for Azad Jammu and Kashmir, and Gilgit-Baltistan, are not presented here because they were not included in the initial 2017 census data published by the Government.

8 This is the accepted term for various historically disadvantaged groups in the Indian subcontinent.

9 World Bank database.

10 According to informal estimates. Samaa TV (2017). "Population Census 2017: Men outnumber women in Pakistan." *Samaa TV*, 25 August 2017. Available at <https://www.samaa.tv/news/2017/08/population-census-2017-men-outnumber-women-pakistan>

Sectoral breakdown	19.1% agriculture; 19.2% industry; 61.7% services
GDP growth rate (%)	2020–2021: 3.9%
Literacy rate	60% overall; 70% men and boys; 50% women and girls
Education expenses as a % of GDP	2.9%
Health expenses as a % of GDP	3.2%
Child malnutrition rate	40%
Infant mortality rate	55.7 per 1,000 live births (2019)
Maternal mortality rate	140 per 100,000 live births
Income distribution (GINI coefficient)	31.6%
Human Development Index rank	154 out of 189 (2020)
Global Gender Gap Index rank	151 out of 153 countries (2020)
Unemployment rate (overall)	6.2% (2019)
COVID-19 cases/deaths	1.25 million/27,000

Pakistan faces major challenges in all of the ten outcome areas of the OP III/UNSDF, as discussed below.

Challenges related to outcome 1 – Economic Growth

Pakistan's economy is divided into the three major sectors: agriculture (19.1 per cent), industry (19.2 per cent) and services (61.7 per cent).¹¹ Thus, Pakistan has seen a premature move towards the services sector compared with other South Asian countries, where the average share of the service sector was 50 per cent in 2019 according to the World Bank's development database. Agriculture is still Pakistan's largest sector in terms of labour force employment. Most of the population is involved in agriculture, either directly or indirectly.¹² According to the World Bank's World Development Indicators (WDI), Pakistan is the 42nd largest economy globally in terms of nominal gross domestic product (GDP), a lower-middle-income country with a nominal GDP per capita of US\$1,357 in 2019, therefore ranking 154th globally in terms of per capita GDP. Based on its purchasing power parity (PPP) of US\$5,839, its rank was 132.¹³ Per capita income in 2020–21 was US\$1,542.¹⁴ Pakistan has been suffering an economic slump since 2018–19 with growth rates of 2.1 per cent, -0.5 per cent, and 3.9 per cent thereafter as a result of a balance of payment crisis in 2018.¹⁵ The effects of this crisis were compounded by the COVID-19 pandemic. Initial estimates show that 1.4 million jobs will be lost due to COVID-19.¹⁶ By October 2021, Pakistan registered 1.25 million confirmed cases of COVID-19 and over 27,000 deaths,¹⁷ ranking 27th globally in terms of the number of deaths and 150th of 223 territories in terms of deaths per million.¹⁸ The key beneficiaries of OP III/UNSDF outcome 1 are unemployed or underemployed persons, especially in less developed areas like Balochistan.

11 Finance Division, Ministry of Finance (2020). *Pakistan Economic Survey 2019–20*. Islamabad: Government of Pakistan. Available at http://www.finance.gov.pk/survey/chapter_20/Executive_Summary.pdf

12 Ibid.

13 World Bank, World Development Indicators.

14 Finance Division, Ministry of Finance (2020). *Pakistan Economic Survey 2019–20*. Islamabad: Government of Pakistan. Available at http://www.finance.gov.pk/survey/chapter_20/Executive_Summary.pdf

15 Ibid.

16 International Monetary Fund (2020). *IMF Country Report No. 20/114*. Washington, DC: IMF.

17 Government of Pakistan (2021). "Pakistan Cases Details – Covid 19: Overview, 31 December 2020." Available at <https://covid.gov.pk/stats/pakistan>

18 Worldometer (2022). "Reported Cases and Deaths by Country or Territory." Available at: <https://www.worldometers.info/coronavirus/#countries>

Challenges related to outcome 2 – Decent Work

Pakistan's employed labour force is 64 million strong.¹⁹ While young people between 20 and 24 years old account for the greatest proportion of the workforce, this age group also has the highest unemployment rate (11.56 per cent). Women's labour force participation rate doubled from 13.3 per cent in 1992 to 21.5 per cent in 2019. Nevertheless, it remains far below the rate for men (67.8 per cent)²⁰ and among the lowest in South Asia and globally. The informal sector accounts for around 36 per cent of Pakistan's economy and employs 72 per cent of labour in the country.²¹ Working conditions in the informal sector are generally poor, involving low levels of job security, wages and inadequate working conditions. The key beneficiaries of outcome 2 are unemployed or underemployed persons, especially in underdeveloped areas like Balochistan.

Challenges related to outcome 3 – Health and WASH

For decades, Pakistan has invested a smaller percentage of its GDP in social services – such as health, education and social protection – than other South Asian countries, especially Bangladesh, Sri Lanka and India. Pakistan's expenditure on health as a percentage of GDP was 3.2 per cent in 2017, compared to an average of 3.4 per cent in South Asia.²² It ranked 154th out of 189 countries on the 2020 Human Development Report, the lowest among all South Asian countries except Afghanistan.²³ Access to water, health and other social services is poor. Pakistan has one of the world's highest rates of maternal mortality (140 per 100,000 live births) and child mortality (55.7 per 1,000 live births).²⁴ The ratio of health workers to the population is 14 to 10,000 people²⁵ – well below the minimum 23 recommended by the World Health Organization (WHO). Nearly 40 per cent of areas in Pakistan lack access to Lady Health Workers (LHWs), which undermines universal access to family planning services.²⁶ Frequent outbreaks of diseases such as polio, measles, diphtheria (VPDs), dengue and typhoid fever increase the burden on the weak public health system. Pakistan is one of only two countries where poliovirus remains endemic. The government recently launched free health insurance schemes in northern parts of the country, covering hospitalization for major diseases. The key beneficiaries of outcome 3 are people who lack health and water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) services in underserved villages and slums.

Challenges related to outcome 4 – Nutrition

Low agricultural yields, major water scarcity, low economic growth, and high population growth rates have worsened poverty and hunger in Pakistan. They have also weakened the coping capacities of people most at risk from climate change. Around 40 million people (nearly 20 per cent of the population) are undernourished or food insecure, according to a joint global report by UN agencies in 2019. Malnutrition is widespread; over 40 per cent of children under-five years old are stunted (12 million children), 17.7 per cent are wasted and 2.5 million are 'severely wasted'.²⁷ The key beneficiaries of outcome 4 are children and pregnant and lactating women from low-income backgrounds.

19 Pakistan Bureau of Statistics (2018). *Labour Force Survey 2018–19*. Islamabad: Government of Pakistan.

20 World Bank Group (2019). *Pakistan@100: From Poverty to Equity Policy Note*. Washington, DC: World Bank. Available at <http://documents1.worldbank.org/curated/en/868741552632296526/pdf/135319-WP-P163618-14-3-2019-20-44-35-PakPNFromPovertytoEquityFinal.pdf>

21 Pakistan Bureau of Statistics (2018). *Labour Force Survey 2018–19*. Islamabad: Government of Pakistan.

22 World Bank, World Development Indicators.

23 United Nations Development Programme (2020). "Human Development Data Centre." Available at <http://hdr.undp.org/en/data>

24 World Bank, World Development Indicators.

25 Finance Division, Ministry of Finance (2020). *Pakistan Economic Survey 2019–20*. Islamabad: Government of Pakistan. Available at http://www.finance.gov.pk/survey/chapter_20/Executive_Summary.pdf

26 Population Council (2016). *Landscape Analysis of the Family Planning Situation in Pakistan*. Islamabad: Government of Pakistan.

27 Government of Pakistan and UNICEF (2018). *National Nutrition Survey 2018*. Islamabad: Government of Pakistan.

Challenges related to outcome 5 – Food Security and Sustainable Agriculture

Pakistan's agriculture sector plays a key role in the economy, contributing around 20 per cent to the country's GDP and engaging 40 per cent of the labour force.²⁸ It is also an important source of foreign exchange earnings and has strong links with other sectors. The main crops grown in Pakistan include cotton, wheat, sugarcane, rice and other minor crops. The agriculture sector suffers from low productivity compared with neighbouring India due to a lack of proper water management, the use of poor quality seeds, inefficient outdated technology, and a lack of access to credit and markets. In recent years, Pakistan has had to import sugar, wheat and rice due to insufficient local production, resulting in a heavy burden on its foreign reserves. The key beneficiaries of outcome 5 are small-scale agriculturists and livestock owners.

Challenges related to outcome 6 – Resilience

Climate change has a serious economic, social and environmental impact in Pakistan, and has increased the frequency and severity of disasters. Major floods in 2010 destroyed infrastructure, reduced access to food and basic services, increased the need for immediate external assistance, and made 90 million people food insecure.²⁹ Droughts in 2013–2015 and 2018–2019 undermined the nutrition and food security of about 2 million³⁰ and 5 million people, respectively.³¹ Since 2019, desert locusts have affected 46 districts nationwide and 161,720 km² of the country's territory was declared susceptible to locust attacks.³² Heavy snowfall, rain and avalanches in January 2020 affected 1 million households in Azad Jammu and Kashmir, Balochistan and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.³³ In August–September 2020, torrential monsoon rains and severe floods affected 4.24 million people in Sindh, Balochistan and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. Pakistan has hosted large numbers of Afghan refugees since the 1980s, and currently hosts over 1.4 million registered Afghan refugees. They have access to the same basic services (health facilities, educational opportunities and banking services) as Pakistanis. The key beneficiaries of outcome 6 are low-income persons in the 20–30 most disaster-prone districts of Pakistan.

Challenges related to outcome 7 – Education and Learning

Over the decades, Pakistan has invested a smaller percentage of its GDP in education than other countries in South Asia. Its expenditure on education as a percentage of GDP was 2.9 per cent in 2017, compared to an average of 3.5 per cent in South Asia according to the World Bank's development database. Pakistan's overall literacy rate is 60 per cent, which falls to 49 per cent among women and girls.³⁴ The country has the world's second-highest number of out-of-school children, as an estimated 22.8 million children between 5 and 16 years old are not in school (44 per cent of the total out-of-school children in this age group).³⁵ The quality of education in public schools is generally poor. The key beneficiaries of outcome 7 are children from low-income households, including those enrolled in low quality government schools or religious seminaries.

Challenges related to outcome 8 – Gender, Equality and Dignity

Women face significant marginalization and discrimination in Pakistan. The country ranked 136th of 162 countries on the Gender Inequality Index (GII) 2019 and 151st of 153 countries on the World Economic

28 Finance Division, Ministry of Finance (2020). *Pakistan Economic Survey 2019–20*. Islamabad: Government of Pakistan. Available at http://www.finance.gov.pk/survey/chapter_20/Executive_Summary.pdf

29 International Center for Tropical Agriculture and World Bank (2017). *Climate Smart agriculture in Pakistan. CSA Country Profiles for Asia Series*. Washington, DC: CIAT and World Bank. Available at <https://climateknowledgeportal.worldbank.org/sites/default/files/2019-06/CSA-in-Pakistan.pdf>

30 United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (2015). *Pakistan Humanitarian Bulletin, Issue 32, December 2014–January 2015*. Islamabad: UNOCHA.

31 National Development Management Authority and United Nations (2019). *Drought Response Plan (Jan–Dec 2019)*. Islamabad: NDMA and UN Pakistan. Available at https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/drought_rp_draft_20190305.pdf

32 Ahmed, Amin (2020). "FAO Prepares Crisis Appeal for locust issues." *Dawn*, 18 May 2020. Available at <https://www.dawn.com/news/1557933/fao-prepares-crisis-appeal-for-pakistans-locust-issue>

33 United States Agency for International Development (2020). *Pakistan Food Assistance Fact Sheet, April 2, 2020*. Islamabad: USAID. Available at <https://reliefweb.int/report/pakistan/pakistan-food-assistance-fact-sheet-april-2-2020>

34 Finance Division, Ministry of Finance (2020). *Pakistan Economic Survey 2019–20*. Islamabad: Government of Pakistan. Available at http://www.finance.gov.pk/survey/chapter_20/Executive_Summary.pdf

35 United Nations Children's Fund (n.d.). "Pakistan: Education." Available at <https://www.unicef.org/pakistan/education>

Forum's Global Gender Gap Index 2020.³⁶ Violence against women and their social, economic, and political marginalization are among the most critical social issues in Pakistan. The range of problems includes physical issues such as domestic, physical and sexual violence, honour killings, acid attacks, forced marriages and conversions, and sexual harassment in workplaces and public spaces. It also includes restrictions on mobility and economic engagement, discriminatory inheritance practices, and discriminatory mores, rules and laws.

Gender-based violence (GBV) is pervasive across Pakistan. Around 34 per cent of women who are, or ever have been, married have experienced spousal physical, sexual, or emotional violence.³⁷ Another survey in 2008 found that 70 per cent of women respondents had experienced domestic violence.³⁸ According to a Human Rights Watch's 2009 report, 70–90 per cent of Pakistani women have suffered from some form of domestic violence.³⁹ About 5,000 women are killed annually as a result of domestic violence in Pakistan, with thousands of other women maimed or disabled.⁴⁰ According to the Aurat Foundation – one of the largest non-governmental organizations (NGOs) working on women's issues in the country – 1,000 Hindu and Christian girls are kidnapped, raped, forcibly converted to Islam and forced to marry Muslim men annually. Law enforcement authorities often do not view domestic violence as a crime and usually refuse to register the cases brought to them. Marital rape is common but is not recognized as a crime by Pakistani laws. Legislation to address violence against women and girls is patchy and poorly enforced. Consequently, a survey by the Thomson Reuters Foundation ranked Pakistan as the sixth most dangerous country in the world for women. In 2018, Pakistan passed legislation to recognize the rights of transgender persons and in 2020, passed laws recognizing the rights of persons with disabilities. The key beneficiaries of outcome 8 are vulnerable women, persons with disabilities and members of minority groups.

Challenges related to outcome 9 – Governance

Pakistan is a three-tiered federation of four provinces. In 2010, the 18th Amendment to the Constitution devolved significant administrative and budgetary authority to provincial governments for key sectors – including health, education, climate change, human rights, population and social welfare, food and agriculture, water supplies and sanitation. The Federal Government is principally responsible for defence, currency, external trade, foreign affairs, coordination and international commitments. However, a large number of ministries deal with provincial subjects due to incomplete devolution. The local government system remains weak, as administrative and financial powers are still controlled by provincial governments. At present, local governments are suspended in all four provinces. Pakistan follows a parliamentary form of government, with a bicameral legislature at the national level, unicameral legislature in the provinces and an independent judiciary at all three levels of government. The last general election was held in 2018 and the next is due in 2023. The key beneficiaries of outcome 9 are all Pakistanis, especially low-income individuals who are more dependent on government services.

Challenges related to outcome 10 – Social Protection

Social protection programmes in Pakistan have historically been weak but have been expanded considerably in the last decade. This began with the launch of the Benazir Income Support Programme (BISP) in 2008, which provides income support to poor women's households based on pre-defined poverty scores.⁴¹ Additional programmes launched since 2018 under the *Ehsaas* programme include food assistance,

36 Ahmed, Amin (2019). "Pakistan ranks 151 out of 153 on global gender parity index: World Economic Forum Report." *Dawn*, 17 December 2019. Available at <https://www.dawn.com/news/1522778>

37 National Institute of Population Studies (2019). *Pakistan Demographic and Health Survey 2017–18*. Islamabad: Government of Pakistan. Available at <https://dhsprogram.com/pubs/pdf/FR354/FR354.pdf>

38 Iftikhar, Rukhsana (2019). "Break the Silence: Pakistani Women Facing Violence." *Journal of Political Studies* (36): 63.

39 Gosselin, Denise Kindschi (2010). *Heavy Hands: An Introduction to the Crime of Intimate and Family Violence* (4th edition). London: Pearson.

40 Hansar, Robert D. (2007). "Cross-Cultural Examination of Domestic Violence in China and Pakistan". In Nicky Ali Jackson (ed.) *Encyclopaedia of Domestic Violence* (1st edition). London and New York: Routledge, p. 211.

41 Benazir Income Support Programme (n.d.). "Benazir Income Support Programme Government of Pakistan." Available at <https://www.bisp.gov.pk>

scholarships, income and loan programmes.⁴² All of these programmes have been reviewed positively at the national and international levels. During the COVID-19 pandemic, Pakistan expanded its social safety net under the *Ehsaas* programme to support the most vulnerable persons in the country. According to the *Ehsaas* programme's website, these initiatives cover more than 15 million families). The key beneficiaries of outcome 10 are vulnerable persons with low levels of income.

2.2. The role of external assistance

External assistance flows into Pakistan from a variety of bilateral, multilateral and private sources, although the bulk of this assistance is in the form of loans. In 2020–2021, the Government of Pakistan received loans and grants worth a total of US\$4.8 billion. Of this sum, only US\$250 million (5 per cent) was provided in the form of grants, and over 90 per cent of total assistance was from multilateral sources.⁴³ The largest multilateral sources of external assistance were the World Bank and the Asian Development Bank, which provided over two-thirds of total multilateral disbursements. Among bilateral donors, China and the United States of America were the biggest donors, providing nearly two-thirds of total bilateral support. These loans and grants are for both large-scale infrastructure and social development projects. The Federal Government spent nearly US\$8 billion in 2020–2021 on health, education, social support and development expenditures.⁴⁴ Thus, an amount equal to more than 50 per cent of these expenditures comes from external assistance. In addition to the resources set aside for grassroots projects, external assistance is also a valuable source of funding for capacity building, technical assistance and institutional reforms.

42 Ministry of Poverty Alleviation and Social Safety (n.d.) "Ehsaas." Available at <https://pass.gov.pk>

43 Ministry of Economic Affairs (2021). *Monthly Report: Foreign Economic Assistance June 2021*. Islamabad: Government of Pakistan. Available at <http://ead.gov.pk/SiteImage/Publication/MontlyDisbursementJune2021R.pdf>

44 Ministry of Finance (2020) *Annual Budget 2020–21*. Islamabad: Government of Pakistan.

CHAPTER 3. UN STRATEGIC RESPONSE AND PROGRAMME STRATEGIES

3.1. Pakistan's strategy on the Sustainable Development Goals

Pakistan was one of the first countries in the world to endorse the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in 2015 and form a Parliamentary SDGs Secretariat based at its National Assembly. Discussions on the SDGs have been held with all relevant stakeholders at the federal and provincial levels to help achieve the country's SDG targets. The seven pillars of Vision 2025, Pakistan's national development framework, are fully aligned with the SDGs. In 2018, the Ministry of Planning, Development & Special Initiatives (MoPD&SI) and the Planning & Development Departments of provincial governments also launched a joint five-year joint, the National Initiative for the Sustainable Development Goals to institutionalize the 2030 Agenda.⁴⁵

3.2. United Nations Sustainable Development Framework/One UN Programme III 2018–2022

The United Nations in Pakistan is supporting the Government's efforts to achieve its SDG targets. The **Pakistan One United Nations Programme III (OP III)**, also known as the **United Nations Sustainable Development Framework for Pakistan (UNSDF)** lays out the strategic framework for programme collaboration between the UN and the Government of Pakistan between 2018 and 2022. UN support is structured around ten outcomes that are closely aligned with Vision 2025 and the 17 SDGs, as the table below demonstrates.

Table 3. OP III/UNSDF outcomes

OP III/UNSDF outcomes their and alignment with Vision 2025 and the SDGs	OP III/UNSDF outcome statement and budget
Outcome 1 – Economic Growth Vision 2025 Pillars 1 to 7 SDGs 1, 3, 4, 5, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17	By 2022, the people in Pakistan, especially key populations, including those who are unskilled, benefit from improved inclusive and sustainable economic growth, progress towards full access to energy, and fair trade practices. Budget: US\$69.3 million.
Outcome 2 – Decent Work Vision 2025 Pillars 1, 2, 3, 5, 6 SDGs 1, 3, 4, 5, 8, 9, 10, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17	By 2022, the people in Pakistan, especially women and youth, have improved access to productive livelihoods, income opportunities and decent work. Budget: US\$47.4 million.
Outcome 3 – Health and WASH Vision 2025 Pillars 1, 2, 4 SDGs 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 10, 14, 15, 16, 17	By 2022, the people in Pakistan, especially the most vulnerable and marginalized, have access to, and benefit from, improved universal health coverage, including sexual and reproductive health, and equitable WASH services. Budget: US\$413.2 million.
Outcome 4 – Nutrition Vision 2025 Pillars 1, 2, 4 SDGs 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 10, 16, 17	By 2022, children, adolescent girls and boys, pregnant and lactating women, the elderly and persons with disabilities have improved dietary intake, feeding and care practices, resulting in improved nutritional status, while reducing stunting and other forms of undernutrition. Budget: US\$116.1 million.
Outcome 5 – Food Security and Sustainable Agriculture Vision 2025 Pillars 1, 2, 4 SDGs 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 9, 10, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17	By 2022, the people of Pakistan, especially the most vulnerable and marginalized populations, have improved availability of, access to, and consumption of safe, nutritious and sufficient food, while promoting sustainable agriculture to achieve zero hunger. Budget: US\$98 million.
Outcome 6 – Resilience Vision 2025 Pillars 1, 2, 4 SDGs 5, 6, 7, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17	By 2022, the resilience of the people in Pakistan, especially key populations, is increased by addressing natural and other disasters, including climate change adaptation measures and the sustainable management of cultural and natural resources. Budget: US\$133.9 million.

⁴⁵ Federal SDGs Unit, Ministry of Planning, Development and Reforms. (n.d.) "Overview of SDGs." Available at <https://www.sdgpakistan.pk/web/sdgs>

OP III/UNSDF outcomes their and alignment with Vision 2025 and the SDGs	OP III/UNSDF outcome statement and budget
	million.
Outcome 7 – Education and Learning Vision 2025 Pillars 1, 2, 6 SDGs 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 8, 12, 16, 17	By 2022, children and youth will have enhanced, equitable and inclusive access to, and benefit from, quality learning opportunities. Budget: US\$130.7 million.
Outcome 8 – Gender, Equality and Dignity Vision 2025 Pillars 1, 2, 5 SDGs 1 to 17	By 2022, government institutions will have increased accountability towards gender equality commitments and social, economic, cultural and political rights. Budget: US\$52.2 million.
Outcome 9 – Governance Vision 2025 Pillars 1 to 7 SDGs 1 to 17	By 2022, the people in Pakistan will have increased knowledge of their rights and improved access to more accountable, transparent and effective governance mechanisms and rule of law institutions. Budget: US\$131.5 million.
Outcome 10 – Social Protection Vision 2025 Pillars 1, 2, 6 SDGs 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 10, 16, 17	By 2022, improved and effective social protection systems will be available for all, particularly for the most vulnerable and marginalized populations. Budget: US\$195.2 million.

The OP III/UNSDF aims to: “(i) strengthen national and sub-national capacities; (ii) provide high-quality policy advice and technical assistance; (iii) support the collection and analysis of disaggregated data; and (iv) focus on overcoming bottlenecks and barriers to ensure that development reaches key populations most in need.” The target results are national in nature at the outcome level, while those at the ‘output level’ respond to specific provincial and local priorities. These are articulated in separate Joint Work Plans based on individual UN agency programming. In addition to the OP III/UNSDF’s ten outcome areas, cross-cutting issues are also addressed by the programme – such as youth/adolescents, population trends, urbanization, culture and data. These issues are also analysed by this evaluation.

The OP III/UNSDF aims to ensure joint UN-Government oversight exercised by a Joint UN-National Oversight Committee (OC), alongside Provincial Steering Committees (PSCs). Focused Outcome (Results) Groups for each of the OP III/UNSDF’s ten outcomes aim to ensure improved coordination and joint programming, as well as to produce Joint Work Plans. Signed by the Government of Pakistan, Joint Work Plans include output level priorities and key activities at both the national and provincial levels. These Joint Work Plans are the key tools used by the Oversight Committee and Provincial Steering Committees to review progress, identify resource gaps and foster stronger partnerships. In addition to the Government, the UN works closely with donors, international and national investors, development partners, international NGOs, local civil society, academia, the media, and communities to achieve results under the OP III/UNSDF.

Internally, the OP III/UNSDF is guided by the UN Country Team (UNCT), which includes the heads of all the UN agencies, funds and programmes working in Pakistan, including non-resident agencies. The UNCT is led by the UN Resident Coordinator (UNRC) and works to ensure inter-agency coordination and joint decision-making around all aspects of the UN system in Pakistan. The UN Country Team is supported by the Programme Management Team, the Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation Group, 10 Outcome Groups, and Provincial Programme Teams. These structures are discussed below.

Programme Management Team (PMT)

The PMT acts as the key advisory body to the UN Country Team and includes the deputy heads of UN agencies Pakistan. It was supposed to hold monthly meetings to advise the UN Country Team on all aspects of the OP III/UNSDF, including: “joint resource mobilization; integrated policy support; aligning UN programming with normative programming principles; maximizing programmatic synergies; capitalizing on emerging best practices across Pakistan’s provinces; and harmonizing results management and supporting joint initiatives by UN agencies.”

Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation (PME) Group

The PMT is supported by a dedicated PME Group, which provides monitoring frameworks, supports the development of Joint Work Plans and led this evaluation. It consists of senior planning and monitoring and evaluation (M&E) specialists from UN agencies.

Outcome Groups

The OP III/UNSDF's ten Outcome Groups are the main mechanism for UN joint programming. Each group is led by one UN agency with particular technical competence and programming in the outcome area (with the exception of outcome 3, which is led by two agencies). The head of each convening agency is accountable to the UN Resident Coordinator and the UN Country Team for outcome level coordination. Each Outcome Group produces Joint Work Plans that include output level priorities and key activities at the national and provincial levels. The table below lists the participating agencies for each outcome.

Table 4. OP III/UNSDF outcomes and UN agencies

Outcomes	Lead agency	Participating agencies
Outcome 1 – Economic Growth	UNIDO	UNV, UN Habitat, FAO, UNESCO, ILO, IOM, UNCTAD, UNOPS and UN Women
Outcome 2 – Decent Work	ILO	UN Women, UNHCR, UNESCO, UNDP, UNIDO and IOM
Outcome 3 – Health and WASH	WHO and UNICEF	UNFPA, UNAIDS, UNODC, UN Habitat, UNHCR and IOM
Outcome 4 – Nutrition	WFP	WHO, UNICEF and FAO
Outcome 5 – Food Security and Sustainable Agriculture	FAO	FAO, WFP and UNIDO
Outcome 6 – Resilience	IOM	WFP, UNDP, UNIDO, UN Habitat, IOM, UNESCO, WHO, UNICEF, UNFPA, FAO, UNOPS, UN Environment and UN Women
Outcome 7 – Education and Learning	UNICEF	UNESCO, UNHCR, UNFPA, UNV, WFP and ILO
Outcome 8 – Gender, Equality and Dignity	UN Women	UNICEF, UNAIDS, UNODC, UNESCO, UNFPA, WHO, FAO, ILO, UNOPS and UNDP
Outcome 9 – Governance	UNDP	UNFPA, UNODC, UN Habitat, UNHCR, UN Women, UNICEF, WHO, IOM and UNESCO
Outcome 10 – Social Protection	ILO	UNICEF, UNAIDS, WFP, UNHCR, IOM and WHO

Provincial Programme Teams (PPTs)

The PPTs include UN programme staff based in Pakistan's provinces and federally administered areas. These teams are meant to report to the Programme Management Team, support the UN provincial lead agency in engaging with provincial/regional governments, and facilitate meetings of the relevant Provincial Steering Committee. The PPTs' purpose and function is to strengthen interagency integration and coordination, as well as to oversee the implementation of the OP III/UNSDF's Joint Work Plans at the provincial level.

CHAPTER 4. MAJOR FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS

4.1. Relevance of the OP III/UNSDF

Evaluation question 1. To what extent is the OP III/UNSDF aligned with (i) national development priorities, the SDGs, and the key Conventions Pakistan is a signatory of, and to what extent has it proven to be (ii) adaptive to changing needs considering the evolving programme environment and the COVID-19 context?

The United Nations in Pakistan is supporting the Government of Pakistan's efforts to achieve its SDG targets. As noted in Chapter 3, the OP III/UNSDF lays out the strategic framework for programme collaboration between the UN and the Government between 2018 and 2022 and is well-aligned with both Pakistan's national development framework, Vision 2025, and the SDGs. Developed during the mandate of the PML-N government, Vision 2025 has seven pillars linked to the 17 SDGs:⁴⁶

- People First: Developing social and human capital and empowering women (SDGs 1, 3, 4 and 5).
- Growth: Sustained, indigenous, and inclusive growth (SDGs 8, 10, 12, 13, 14 and 15).
- Governance: Democratic governance, institutional reform and modernization of public sector (SDG 16).
- Security: Energy, water, and food security (SDGs 2, 6, 7 and 11).
- Entrepreneurship: Private Sector and entrepreneurship-led growth (SDG 9).
- Knowledge Economy: Develop a competitive knowledge economy through value addition (SDGs 4 and 9).
- Connectivity: Modernizing transport infrastructure and regional connectivity (SDGs 9 and 17).

The ten outcomes of the OP III/UNSDF are closely aligned with the pillars and priorities of Vision 2025, as well as the 17 SDGs (see Table 3, above). The table below presents budget allocations for each of the ten outcomes and their percentage share in the total target budget of US\$2.035 billion for the programme.⁴⁷ As it reveals, outcome 3 (Health and WASH), disproportionately represents nearly 41 per cent of the budget, while outcome 9 (Governance) represents nearly 10 per cent. Thus, two outcomes take up over 50 per cent of the total budget. There is no clear justification given on why such a huge proportion of the budget was allocated to these two outcomes.

Table 5. Budget allocations for the 10 outcomes

Outcome	Total resources required (US\$)	Outcome budget as a percentage of the total resources required
Outcome 1 – Economic Growth	82,008,299	4%
Outcome 2 – Decent Work	107,116,933	5%
Outcome 3 – Health and WASH	831,708,917	41%
Outcome 4 – Nutrition	142,252,599	7%
Outcome 5 – Food Security and Sustainable Agriculture	181,204,245	9%
Outcome 6 – Resilience	186,530,037	9%

⁴⁶ Planning Commission of Pakistan (2014). *Pakistan Vision 2025*. Islamabad: Government of Pakistan. Available at <https://www.pc.gov.pk/uploads/vision2025/Pakistan-Vision-2025.pdf>

⁴⁷ United Nations (2018) *One UN Programme III 2018–2022: United Nations Sustainable Development Framework for Pakistan*. Islamabad: UN Pakistan. Available at <https://pakistan.un.org/sites/default/files/2020-05/UNDAF-OPIII-v9.pdf>

Outcome	Total resources required (US\$)	Outcome budget as a percentage of the total resources required
Outcome 7 – Education and Learning	160,092,638	8%
Outcome 8 – Gender, Equality and Dignity	13,073,236	1%
Outcome 9 – Governance	209,134,729	10%
Outcome 10 – Social Protection	122,313,065	6%
Total	2,035,434,698	100%

Another key strategic framework that needs to be considered in terms of the OP III/UNSDF's alignment is the five-year joint project, National Initiative for Sustainable Development Goals to Institutionalize the 2030 Agenda. Pakistan's National SDGs Framework divides the 17 SDGs into three priority categories as follows:⁴⁸

Priority category 1 (immediate priority)

- SDG 2: Zero Hunger
- SDG 3: Good Health and Well-being
- SDG 4: Quality Education
- SDG 6: Clean Water and Sanitation
- SDG 7: Affordable and Clean Energy
- SDG 8: Decent Work and Economic Growth
- SDG 16: Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions

Priority category 2 (medium-term priority)

- SDG 1: No Poverty
- SDG 5: Gender Equality
- SDG 9: Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure
- SDG 10: Reduced Inequalities
- SDG 11: Sustainable Cities and Communities
- SDG 17: Partnerships for the Goals

Priority category 3 (long-term priority)

- SDG 12: Responsible Consumption and Production
- SDG 13: Climate Action
- SDG 14: Life Below Water
- SDG 15: Life on Land

⁴⁸ Federal SDGs Unit, Ministry of Planning, Development and Reforms. (n.d.) "Overview of SDGs." Available at <https://www.sdgpakistan.pk/web/sdgs>

Since each of the OP III/UNSDF's ten outcomes contribute to multiple SDGs, it is difficult to analyse whether the percentage of the budget allocated to each SDG. For instance, it is hard to determine whether the budget gives greater priority to category 1 SDGs prioritized by the Government.

Information from the stakeholder survey, key informant interviews (KIIs) and focus group discussions (FGDs) affirm a high degree of relevance of the OP III/UNSDF for national priorities. Nearly 68 per cent of internal and 88 per cent of external stakeholders believe that the objectives of the OP III/UNSDF are consistent with Pakistan's national priorities. Relevance in terms of international and regional commitments is also rated as 'high' or 'very high'. Nearly 73 per cent of internal and 75 per cent of external stakeholders also believe that that the consistency of the OP III/UNSDF's objectives with the UN's perceived priorities is 'high' or 'very high'.

Qualitative responses to the survey, key informant interviews and focus group discussions credited this high level of relevance to a high degree of consultation and participation. This is especially true for Islamabad-based respondents. However, several provincial stakeholders emphasize the need for greater consultation at the sub-national/provincial level. A few stakeholders feel that more attention to environmental and climate change issues is needed. Government counterparts consider the UN's work on economic growth and decent work as especially relevant.

These priorities relate to the priorities of the Federal Government. There is little evidence of the OP III/UNSDF referring to, or incorporating, provincial government strategies – such as the Sindh Sustainable Development Strategy 2016,⁴⁹ the Punjab Growth Strategy 2018⁵⁰ or the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Integrated Development Strategy 2014–2018.⁵¹ Furthermore, Pakistan's National SDGs Framework is framed as a single national level platform. It lacks disaggregation of SDG targets at the sub-national level, despite the fact that the contexts and needs of different provinces vary considerably. As a result, the OP III/UNSDF also consists of a single national level programme, instead of providing different targets and plans for different provinces. This is the main criticism of the programme by provincial/regional stakeholders, especially those from lesser-developed areas like Balochistan and Gilgit-Baltistan.

Several contextual changes occurred during the implementation of the programme. First, the government in 2018 and the new government de-prioritized Vision 2025 without adopting any new overarching national development framework. However, the new government launched the *Ehsaas* programme to provide social protection to vulnerable groups. It did so primarily by providing cash grants, food rations, food kitchens, scholarships and income-generation assistance.⁵² While the overall OP III/UNSDF at the outcome design level was not amended in response to these changes in national priorities, individual UN agencies are supporting different components of the *Ehsaas* programme in specific areas of intervention, such as WFP's support for the *Ehsaas Nashonuma* programme for food assistance.⁵³

Second, the programme was developed in 2016–2017, when Pakistan's economic situation was much better, with higher GDP growth and low inflation. The beginning of the OP III/UNSDF's implementation in 2018 coincided with an economic slowdown, lower GDP growth, high inflation and considerable unemployment. There is little evidence of a formal change or scaling-up in the programme in response to the economic slowdown. Nevertheless, many outcomes, such as outcome 2 (Decent Work) and 10 (Social Protection) focused on income generation and social protection support. Nor is there evidence that the results and targets of the OP III/UNSDF were adjusted to reflect the fact that the economic slowdown would set back Pakistan's progress towards SDG targets.

⁴⁹ Government of Sindh (2016). *Sindh Strategy for Sustainable Development*. Karachi: Government of Sindh.

⁵⁰ Government of Punjab (2015). *Punjab Growth Strategy 2018: Accelerating Economic Growth and Improving Social Outcomes*. Lahore: Government of Punjab. Available at <https://www.theigc.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/04/Punjab-Growth-Strategy-2018-Full-report.pdf>

⁵¹ Government of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (2014). *Integrated Development Strategy 2014–2018*. Peshawar: Government of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. Available at: <https://pndkp.gov.pk/download/integrated-development-strategy-2014-2018>

⁵² Ministry of Poverty Alleviation and Social Safety (n.d.) "Ehsaas." Available at <https://pass.gov.pk>

⁵³ Ibid.

The third major contextual change was the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic in February 2020. The UN, in collaboration with the Government, developed the COVID-19 Pakistan Socio-economic Framework in May 2020. This plan consists of five streams of work: (i) making essential health services available to those in need and protecting health systems; (ii) helping people cope with adversity through social protection, basic services and food security; (iii) protecting jobs, supporting small and medium-sized enterprises, and the most vulnerable productive actors through economic recovery programmes; (iv) guiding the necessary surge in fiscal and financial stimulus to make macroeconomic policies work for the most vulnerable, and strengthening multilateral and regional responses; and (v) promoting social cohesion and investing in community-led resilience and response systems. These five streams are connected by a strong environmental sustainability imperative to build back better. The development of this framework reflects a high degree of UN responsiveness to changing contexts in terms of supporting the Government's COVID-19 efforts and developing its own consolidated response despite the restrictions caused by the pandemic on normal work patterns. However, it is unclear what the UN's financial contribution to this programme is, and whether it involves new funds or reallocations from the existing budget. WHO played a critical role in providing technical support to the Federal Government in running the National Command and Control Centre, set up to coordinate the national response to the medical emergency. Other key actors included UNDP, UNICEF, UNFPA and the UNRCO as a convenor.

Respondents who participated in the online perception survey, key informant interviews and focus groups considered the OP III/UNSDF's ability to make adjustments and adapt to the changing context as 'good' or even 'great'. Around 40 per cent of the internal and 38 per cent of the external respondents surveyed regard this ability as 'high' or 'very high'. Qualitative responses in the survey, interviews and focus groups reveal that some respondents believe there was a greater need to adapt to the change in government and the COVID-19 crisis. Thus, overall, the evaluation team finds the OP III/UNSDF's performance in terms of relevance to be high.

Evaluation question 2. To what extent has a human rights-based and gender-sensitive approach been applied in the OP III/UNSDF's design, implementation and monitoring, and is the 'leaving no one behind' principle appropriately embedded across the OP III/UNSDF, taking into account the particularities and specific interests of vulnerable groups?

One of the OP III/UNSDF's ten outcomes is Gender, Equality and Dignity (outcome 8). As such, issues of gender, vulnerable groups, and hence directly the principle of leaving no one behind, are addressed structurally at the highest level in the programme. However, this outcome only constitutes 1 per cent of the target budget and less than 1 per cent of cumulative expenditures during the first three years of the OP III/UNSDF's implementation, the lowest among all ten outcomes. Information on the programme's implementation available through its annual reports and other documents show that gender, leaving no one behind, human rights principles and the humanitarian-development-peace nexus are incorporated in the programme's implementation to varying extents. The COVID-19 pandemic intensified women's vulnerability to a loss of income, health issues and violence. Neither gender, leaving no one behind nor human rights issues are explicitly mentioned among the cross-cutting issues identified in the programme document, which are youth/adolescents, population trends, urbanization, culture and data. Other, additional key groups for leaving no one behind efforts should include transgender persons, minorities and low-income persons.

Gender

Gender mainstreaming is present across all of the OP III/UNSDF's outcomes, to at least a satisfactory extent. In many cases, there is at least a focus on promoting gender equality and women's empowerment. Data from the vetting exercise shows that all of the country programme documents of ten large UN agencies reviewed are in line with the gender and leaving no one behind focus of the OP III/UNSDF document. However, in about half of these cases, the agencies made some adaptations. Some 77 per cent of the internal and 50 per cent of external stakeholders surveyed believe that gender issues have been mainstreamed 'well' or 'very well' in the

programme. The percentage of internal and external stakeholders who rate outcome 8 work as at least 6 out of 10 is 56 per cent and 80 per cent, respectively. Both figures are on the low side compared to responses for all of the programme's outcomes.

The Essential Services Package was a key UN programme in this period for responding to violence against women and girls. The interventions under this programme included training stakeholders on addressing gender-based violence, supporting pro-women activities, strengthening the capacities of criminal justice institutions, legal staff, law enforcement agencies, decision makers, opinion leaders and service delivery actors. It also involved supporting helplines, shelters and women-friendly health centres. The UN leveraged existing government initiatives, such as the Punjab Police's Women Safety Application and the Ministry of Human Rights' Cyber Harassment Helpline. The programme strengthened Gender Desks and the capacities of rule of law institutions under the outcome 9 (Governance), particularly in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and its Newly Merged Districts.

Vetting data shows that only one meeting of Outcome Group 8 took place. However, according to the information provided by outcome 8's lead agency, five different UN groups on gender, including Outcome Group 8, were combined under the G2G initiative on gender issues, which met regularly and was very effective in addressing gender issues across the UN agenda. Vetting data also shows that agencies leading on gender were among the agencies that allocated the highest percentage to joint programming and referencing the work of other agencies. The Country Programme Documents of different UN agencies were well-aligned with gender, leaving no one behind and inclusion, as noted above. WHO's Country Cooperation Strategy 2020–2025 is fully aligned with OP III/UNSDF outcomes, according due focus to gender and human rights as cross-cutting areas, providing 1:1 mapping for one area and strong adoption in three areas. UNICEF's Country Programme Document is directly in line with the outcome areas of the OP III/UNSDF, and gender and basic human rights are fully covered by its document. UNFPA's, UNDP's and UNESCO's Country Programme Documents are also directly in line with the OP III/UNSDF and directly reference the cross-cutting areas of gender and human rights. The focus on the cross-cutting area of gender is also included in the outcome areas of FAO's Country Programme Document. However, more than a quarter (27.5 per cent) of all project documents (prodocs) are 'gender-blind', while slightly less than three-quarters (72.5 per cent) of agencies mainstream gender and/or list gender as a standalone result, activity or process that is part of the analysed prodocs. Specifically, this is clear in 52.5 per cent of single agency programmes/projects and 20 per cent of joint programmes).

The OP III/UNSDF has two important gender joint programmes: (i) the joint programme on "Empowering and protecting Pakistan's youth, women, girls and boys today for a developed tomorrow" under outcome 8 with three participating UN organizations (PUNOs) – UN Women, UNFPA and UNICEF – and a budget of US\$23 million. A second joint programme focuses on sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV), officially entitled "Strengthening Integrated prevention and response services to address SGBV & nutrition-related health and protection needs in the post-COVID situation", which sits across outcomes 8 (Gender, Equality and Dignity) and 10 (Social Protection) and involves five agencies – UN Women, UNFPA, WHO, UNODC and UNDP. The latter is part of a global programme that includes Pakistan alongside half a dozen other Asian countries. Frequent/large donors to UN AFPs in Pakistan include the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), the United Kingdom's Department for International Development (DFID), the Green Climate Fund (GCF), the United States Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs (US INL), the Government of Japan/Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA), Australia's Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT), and Canada's Department of Foreign Affairs Trade and Development (DFATD), among others.

Leaving no one behind

Data from the vetting exercise shows that the Country Programme Documents of ten large UN agencies in Pakistan reviewed were in line with the OP III/UNSDF programme document's focus on leaving no one behind.

Roughly 40 per cent of the internal and 50 per cent of the external stakeholders surveyed feel that the OP III/UNSDF has addressed disability, minorities, refugees and transgender issues ‘well’ or ‘very well’. Qualitative responses to the survey, key informant interviews and focus group discussions show that several respondents believe that progress on these issues was slow and varied considerably from agency to agency. To ensure that the COVID-19 response leaves no one behind, the UN distributed relief packages to transgender persons, poor women and other vulnerable groups in remote areas, shelters and prisons.

The UN promoted decent work and the economic empowerment of transgender persons, especially those from rural or low-income backgrounds. The UN-supported Transgender Persons (Protection of Rights) Act promulgated in 2018 qualifies as a potential high-impact achievement. Outcome 1 (Economic Growth) specifically targeted the growth rates of household expenditure or income per capita among the poorest 40 per cent of the population. Under outcome 2 (Decent Work), preparations for Pakistan’s latest Child Labour Survey – the first in over two decades – were finalized in 2018, in collaboration with the Pakistan Bureau of Statistics. Other priorities include monitoring gender gaps in immunization programmes under outcome 3 (Health and WASH). Outcome 3 explicitly aims to ensure that the people in Pakistan, especially the most vulnerable and marginalized, have access to, and benefit from, improved universal health coverage. All of these interventions also addressed human rights issues, directly and indirectly.

Crucially, capacity building strengthened the Agriculture Support System in both Balochistan and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, the two poorest provinces in the country. Under outcome 5 (Food Security and Sustainable Agriculture), life-saving relief assistance cemented food security for hundreds of thousands of people in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and its Newly Merged Districts – safeguarding their immediate well-being and laying the groundwork for long-term recovery. Under outcome 6 (Resilience), UN support improved access to basic social services for 174,000 people who had been temporarily displaced. Early recovery interventions reached out to 10,610 households, while 16,412 people received shelter assistance and 26,618 benefitted from emergency heat wave response support. WASH initiatives safeguarded the health, nutrition and well-being of disaster-affected communities. While outcome 8 (Gender, Equality and Dignity) constituted the smallest percentage (1 per cent) of the total budget, as noted above, it represents the highest percentage of resources available compared to the total budget (112 per cent).

Human rights

There is less emphasis on human rights in the OP III/UNSDF programme document, even in its description of the ten outcomes. However, there is an explicit focus on ‘rights’ in general (including ‘basic rights’ and ‘fundamental rights’ as the UN sought to adapt the wording of outcomes to address government concerns about explicitly using the term ‘human rights’).

Data from the vetting exercise shows that all of the Country Programme Documents of the ten large UN agencies reviewed are in line with the OP III/UNSDF’s focus on gender and leaving no one behind, although roughly half of these agencies made some adaptations. Responses to the survey, key informant interviews and focus groups also reveal a mixed picture. Nearly 64 per cent of the internal and 63 per cent of the external stakeholders surveyed feel that the focus on human rights issues is ‘high’ or ‘very high’. With UN support, Pakistan devised a mechanism to appoint special prosecutors for cases related to human rights issues. However, many respondents feel that practical progress was slow and that a clearly visible positive effect of the intervention has yet to be seen.

Efforts under outcome 8 are also a key example of the UN’s work encompassing the humanitarian-development-peace nexus. Work on gender, leaving no one behind, human rights, inequality and the humanitarian-development-peace nexus is also mainstreamed under other outcomes. In conclusion, more emphasis could have been placed on mainstreaming these cross-cutting issues across the OP III/UNSDF programme document. Moreover, the specifically earmarked allocated budget should have been higher. This is particularly true for human rights issues are rarely mentioned in the overall architecture of the

programme's ten outcomes and cross-cutting issues. Nevertheless, as noted above, rights in general are well-integrated in the OP III/UNSDF document.

Evaluation question 3. To what extent did the OP III/UNSDF's design incorporate and bring to bear the specific comparative advantages of the UN?

Stakeholders agree on the critical value added by the UN's neutrality and its convening role in terms of bringing different stakeholders together, providing coordination support to the Government of Pakistan and the overall community of technical and financial partners (TFPs), and helping to broker solutions when needed. Beyond its convening role, stakeholders appreciate the UN's ability to provide normative expertise, guidance and technical support across the entire gamut of development challenges. They feel that the COVID-19 pandemic response especially proved the UN's comparative advantage in terms of providing substantive operational support across a wide range of areas, including its ability to gather global expertise and resources. This encompassed strategic planning of the immediate tactical response, as well as the design and coordination of the longer-term recovery plan and related resource mobilization, strategic capacity building and support for humanitarian service delivery.

Key informants largely feel that the UN has used these comparative advantages well to develop momentum and national ownership to instil the SDGs as a national priority. This includes developing and securing the approval of the National SDGs Framework, helping the Government to establish national and sub-national capacities for the SDGs' implementation, and generating the financial resources needed to kick-start implementation. The SDG Units established at the national and sub-national levels are seen as a clear manifestation of the use of this comparative advantage, as is the WHO's provision of technical capacity to help the government implement an efficient and effective response to COVID-19. The UNRCO and UNOCHA also played critical roles.

External stakeholders particularly appreciate the UN's role in helping to undertake rapid multi-agency needs assessments in the wake of major emergencies. They also consider UN efforts to build the capacity of national institutions as a good use of its comparative advantages. Nearly 73 per cent of internal and 74 per cent of external stakeholders believe that the OP III/UNSDF reflects the UN's strengths and priorities well.

4.2. Effectiveness of the OP III/UNSDF

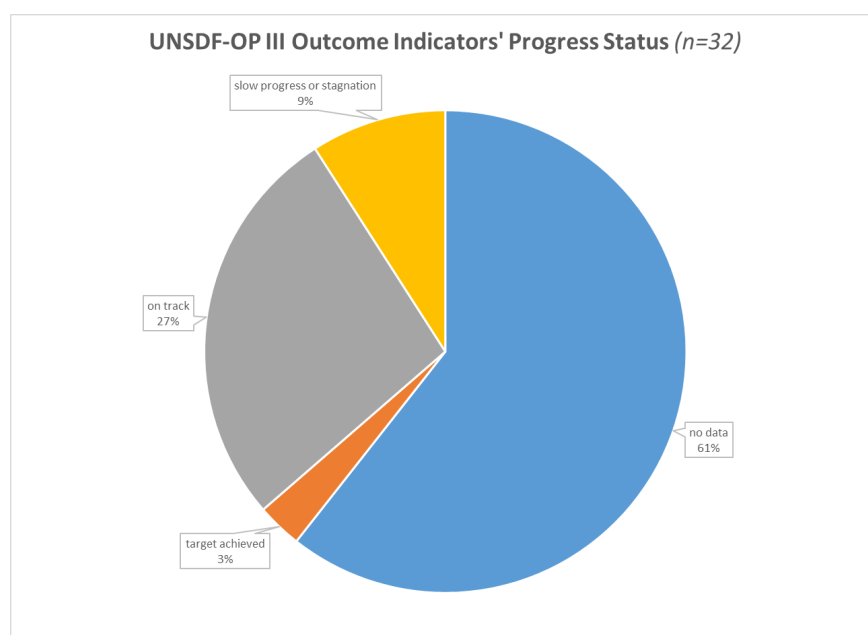
Evaluation question 4: To what extent have the results achieved by the OP III/UNSDF contributed to strengthening national capacities, the policy environment and the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals, and to what extent has the UN contributed to progress towards planned outcome results?

An analysis of the UN's contribution to national outcomes related to achieving SDG targets is not an easy task since the UN is only one of many stakeholders contributing to these efforts in Pakistan. Information about outcome level achievements is hard to gather due to the dependence on survey rounds to inform outcome indicators. Some of these are tier 2 indicators which still lack SDG baseline data or targets because there is still no related methodological guidance or meta-data available. Even in the rare cases where fairly recent data is available, it is difficult to analyse the UN's relative contribution to different high level OP III/UNSDF performance indicators (pitched at the SDG/National Development Plan (NDS) level).

Slightly fewer than 40 per cent (12 of 32) of the Results Framework's (RF) outcome level indicators have data points available and, therefore, can be used. Just over 60 per cent (20 of 32) cannot be used due to a lack of data, the absence of data sources and a related methodology. In cases where progress data is available, it was not always disaggregated at the sub-national level. In at least three cases, the application of the meta-data is not entirely convincing. Among the indicators informed by data points (progress values), roughly one-tenth

indicate stagnation or slow progress, whereas 30 per cent show good progress and, in the case of one indicator, excellent progress.⁵⁴

Figure 1. Outcome indicator progress



The effectiveness of any programme depends on its ability to generate planned resources. While operational requirements are rarely limited to financial resources, ensuring the budget is normally the factor which, first and foremost, determines whether operational targets can be achieved. Financial figures for the calendar years of 2018 to the end of 2020 show that during this three-year period, the OP III/UNSD's total required resources amounted to US\$2.035 billion. Of this sum, nearly US\$1.650 billion (81 per cent) are already available, with two more years to go until the programme ends. Until the end of 2020, the availability of resources has been highest for outcome 8 (Gender, Equality and Dignity) at 112 per cent of the revised outcomes budget. However, as noted above, the budget of this outcome amounts to only 1 per cent of the total OP III/UNSD budget. Outcome 10 (Social Protection) has the lowest ratio of the available budget to the total programme budget (63 per cent) and it is the second largest outcome as a percentage of the total budget. The overall absorption rate – that is, the percentage of available resources spent – is 80 per cent. Outcome 10 has the highest absorption rate (94 per cent) while outcome 1 (Economic Growth) has the lowest (12 per cent). This implies that planned progress against established outcome 1 targets, as well as the related contribution to achieving economic growth-related SDG indicators, has been modest or negligible. This is especially true because other TFPs, such as the World Bank, have a much larger footprint in this thematic area.

The OP III/UNSD's entire three-year (2018–2020) expenditure of US\$1.3 billion translates into an annual average of US\$430 million, equivalent to 9 per cent of the external aid Pakistan received in 2020–2021

⁵⁴ The caveat is that, for the vast majority of these cases, data points are from 2018 (or 2019), which should have served as baseline values rather than progress update measures. Some of the baselines, moreover, date back to 2011 or 2012. This shows that a discussion of outcome results exclusively centring on outcome indicator data can only yield limited added value. The fact that baseline data is outdated in many cases and available data points have no real progress data to show for the years of the OP III/UNSD's implementation, suggests that there is practically no outcome level progress data available. Therefore, the analysis is inherently limited to listing key achievements based on annual work plans since there is a considerable distance between listed achievements and outcome indicators. The UN's contribution is relatively modest compared to other funding sources including domestic/sovereign budget funding. Moreover, activities/outputs only contribute to overall outcomes and many activities – including under the public health outcome – were modified to address COVID-19. This at least partially, and overall quite considerably, diverted funding and efforts away from initially planned activities and corresponding result chains.

through loans and grants (US\$4.8 billion of which – that is, 95 per cent – are in the form of loans). The sum is also only slightly greater than 5 per cent of the federal government’s investments (US\$8 billion) in health, education, social support and general development expenditures in the same year. This demonstrates that in Pakistan, the UN’s role, worth and value have already clearly shifted away from pure service delivery to more catalytic interventions. These include upstream work, capacity development, strategic pilots and similar interventions with a higher impact but low(er) costs.

Table 6. Financial overview of OP III/UNSDF budget data, 2018–2020

Outcome	Total resources required (US\$)	Outcome budget as a percentage of the total resources required	Available resources (%)	Expenditure as a percentage of required resources	Absorption rate as a percentage of available resources spent
Outcome 1 – Economic Growth	82,008,299	4%	78%	12%	16%
Outcome 2 – Decent Work	107,116,933	5%	77%	65%	84%
Outcome 3 – Health and WASH	831,708,917	41%	86%	77%	89%
Outcome 4 – Nutrition	142,252,599	7%	81%	66%	81%
Outcome 5 – Food Security and Sustainable Agriculture	181,204,245	9%	95%	61%	65%
Outcome 6 – Resilience	186,530,037	9%	87%	52%	61%
Outcome 7 – Education and Learning	160,092,638	8%	57%	42%	75%
Outcome 8 – Gender, Equality and Dignity	13,073,236	1%	112%	99%	88%
Outcome 9 – Governance	209,134,729	10%	73%	70%	96%
Outcome 10 – Social Protection	122,313,065	6%	63%	59%	94%
Total	2,035,434,698	100%	81%	65%	80%

Responses to the survey, key informant interviews and focus group discussions enable further analysis of the effectiveness of the OP III/UNSDF. Nearly 82 per cent of internal respondents and 100 per cent of external respondents rate the quality of the professional services at six out of 10, or higher.⁵⁵ Nearly 80 per cent of internal and 100 per cent of external stakeholders rate the programme’s effectiveness and ability to deliver results at six out of 10, or higher. The table below reflects the opinions of internal and external stakeholders about the programme’s effectiveness by outcome. In general, external stakeholders’ perceptions are more positive for all outcomes. Among internal stakeholders, the most positive responses relate to outcomes 2 and 3. Some 72 per cent of internal respondents rate the performance of these outcomes as six out of 10, or higher. The least positive responses concern outcome 1. This may be linked to the fact that this outcome has the lowest expenditure rate, as mentioned above.

Table 7. Outcome performance rating based on the stakeholder survey

Outcome	Percentage of internal stakeholders who rate outcome performance as 6/10 or higher (n=22)	Percentage of external stakeholders who rate outcome performance 6/10 or higher (n=8)

55 See: https://d.docs.live.net/be45a87555a898f7/Desktop/effectiveness%20-V3.docx#_ftn1

Outcome	Percentage of internal stakeholders who rate outcome performance as 6/10 or higher (n=22)	Percentage of external stakeholders who rate outcome performance 6/10 or higher (n=8)
Outcome 1 – Economic Growth	52	67
Outcome 2 – Decent Work	72	100
Outcome 3 – Health and WASH	72	75
Outcome 4 – Nutrition	62	75
Outcome 5 – Food Security and Sustainable Agriculture	65	67
Outcome 6 – Resilience	63	100
Outcome 7 – Education and Learning	61	100
Outcome 8 – Gender, Equality and Dignity	56	80
Outcome 9 – Governance	58	100
Outcome 10 – Social Protection	58	100
Total	67	100

The survey, focus groups and key informant interviews reveal that external stakeholders appreciate the UN's COVID-19 programming and view it as highly effective. Key informants at both federal and provincial level consider that the UN's role has been instrumental in creating awareness about the SDGs and strengthening capacities among government agencies to implement the 2030 Agenda. In particular, the role of SDG Units established at the federal and provincial/regional levels is seen as critical in raising awareness of the SDGs and creating momentum for their achievement. While beneficiaries appreciate the role of SDG Units, they also express additional expectations and aspirations that have yet to be realized – for instance, raising awareness at the district level. Moreover, some smaller agencies worry about the risk of being marginalized by the lead agencies' privileged access to decision-making, potentially creating a monopoly for these outcome leads. Stakeholders appreciate the OP III/UNSDF's work on gender and marginalized groups. Comparatively speaking, they are less aware about the UN's human rights-related work. This implies a lighter footprint in this regard in terms of related programmatic presence, impact and/or communication.

The sections below combine a discussion of the theory of change and available data on the achievements of each OP III/UNSDF outcome. While the discussion covers outcome indicator data as far as possible, it draws heavily on data at the output and key activity level.

Outcome 1 – Economic Growth

The outcome statement of outcome 1 aims to ensure that the people in Pakistan, especially key populations, including those who are unskilled, benefit from improved inclusive and sustainable economic growth, progress towards full access to energy, and fair trade practices. The strategies to achieve this through relevant outputs include: strengthening agricultural production, improving industrial competitiveness, enhancing fair trade, and supporting renewable energy technologies for both 'off grid' and 'on grid' solutions.

The performance indicators for outcome 1 are linked to the following SDG targets: 1.1 proportion of the population with primary reliance on clean fuels and technology (SDG 7.1.2), 1.2 growth rates of household expenditure or income per capita among the bottom 40 per cent of the population and the total population (SDG 10.1.1), and 1.3 growth/increase in exports from industrial and agricultural products. The required policy support for these SDG targets involves, respectively: exploring new avenues of clean fuel technology,

uplift schemes for ‘backward’ areas and creating opportunities for deprived segments of society, and using fiscal, wage and social protection and policies to achieve greater equality.

The first indicator reflects a decline in terms of repeat measurement against the original baseline figure of 93 to 91 per cent, while there was no repeat measurement for the second indicator. A review of the progress achieved against outcome indicators yields limited insights given that, for two of the three indicators, no data update is available. The only data point available merely covers the initial phase of the OP III/UNSDF’s implementation.⁵⁶ It is worth mentioning, however, that this indicator (the proportion of the population with primary reliance on clean fuels and technology (SDG 7.1.2)) experienced decent progress. In order to achieve the aims and strategies as per the outcome level theory of change (TOC), the UN implemented a range of activities. These include, among others, the key activities and output level results outlined in the table below.

Table 8. Outcome 1 output level results and key activities in 2018–2020

2018
→ The State of Pakistan’s Cities Report identified the socio-economic drivers of urbanization in the country’s 10 largest cities.
→ The Municipal Business Plan of Peshawar’s Tehsil and Town Municipal Administration (TMA-I) was developed to strengthen the revenue base for the effective delivery of basic urban services, while bolstering the city’s economic growth.
→ In Islamabad Capital Territory, a framework for cooperation on local economic development was put in place through a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between the UN, the Metropolitan Corporation of Islamabad (MCI), the Islamabad Chamber of Commerce & Industry (ICCI) and the Policy Research Institute of Market Economy (PRIME).
→ The Cluster Development Initiative in Punjab fostered linkages between the province’s high-growth clusters and global value chains by strengthening productivity, skills development, good manufacturing practices and compliance with international standards.
→ UN initiatives worked to mobilize Pakistan’s cultural and creative industries by linking the conservation of heritage sites to local livelihoods in Punjab, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Islamabad.
→ With UN support, demonstration projects based on solar and biomass gasification technologies were completed, promoting business-to-business (B2B) models and encouraging the uptake of investments in renewable energy across the industrial sector.
→ In Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, safe and affordable women-only buses helped mitigate barriers to women’s mobility, education and employment.
→ 2019
→ 300 SMEs benefitted from the Cluster Development Initiative, resulting in a 10 per cent increase in the beneficiary companies’ exports.
→ As a result of UN support for value chains and agro-industry: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1.3 million households benefit from livestock vaccinations.

⁵⁶ Pakistan Bureau of Statistics (2019). *Pakistan Social and Living Standards Measurement Survey 2018–19*. Islamabad: Government of Pakistan.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 13.79 million large and small ruminants were vaccinated against livestock diseases.
→ Advances on affordable housing came to the fore, with plans made to build 500,000 houses with UN support.
→ 50 industries began to benefit from the Energy Management System Initiative.
→ 159 people were trained on climate adaptation and reducing pollution, alongside other moves to reduce industry's environmental footprint.
→ 2020
→ Thanks to UN support, there was a 10 per cent increase in 300 SMEs' exports.
→ UN support contributed to a 5 per cent reduction in Pakistan's hydrofluorocarbons (HCFC) quota.
→ 3,400 metric tonnes of carbon dioxide (CO ₂) emissions will be prevented by 5MWs solar projects implemented with UN support.
→ In Balochistan and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, the Project for Agri-food and Agro-industry Development Assistance revitalized livelihoods in the cattle meat and apple value chains among farmers, herders and food processors, especially women and youth.
→ The Mainstreaming Climate Change Adaptation through Water Resource Management in Leather Industrial Zone Development Project finished work on a drainage system, culverts, roads and the electrification of Punjab's Sialkot Tannery Zone.

The financial analysis (see the annexed financial analysis for details) shows that while the percentage of available resources against initially projected requirements was still decent at 78 per cent, the absorption rate for outcome 1 was very low, at just 16 per cent – the lowest among all ten OP III/UNSDF outcomes.

Outcome 2 – Decent Work

Pakistan's decent work-related national priority targets are addressed through OP III/UNSDF's outcome 2 performance indicators linked to SDG targets 8.5 (achieve full and productive employment and decent work for all women and men, including for young people and persons with disabilities, and equal pay for work of equal value) and 8.6 (substantially reduce the proportion of youth not in employment, education or training). Related policy support involved establishing new training centres and equipping centres with new technologies, increasing the demand for locally-produced goods in international markets to boost domestic employment, and introducing a legal framework to ensure gender parity in payment for work of the same value performed by persons with similar qualifications.

The design of OP III/UNSDF outcome 2 is well-aligned with SDG 8's decent work components. The outcome statement foresees improved access to productive livelihoods, income opportunities and decent work, especially for women and youth, by creating an enabling environment through upstream measures, improving the capacities, capabilities and competencies of women and youth, and implementing practical support measures implemented to allow enhanced access to income opportunities and decent work. Related strategies include promoting compliance with International Labour Standards (ILS) and mainstreaming gender

and protection guidelines in formal and informal employment, supporting the development and implementation of policies, frameworks and mechanisms to create new, quality jobs and expand access to improved operational safety and health (OSH), better working conditions and social security. They also include facilitating social dialogue and reducing the disparities experienced by vulnerable groups. Measures to enhance access to income generation opportunities and decent work, as well as enhancing the offer of the labour force, involved a number of strategies. These include strengthening the capacities of employers' and workers' organizations, capacity building for women and youth entrepreneurs, linking entrepreneurs to markets and income generation programmes, fostering dialogue between stakeholders on decent employment conditions, and gathering and analysing data on the labour market.

The data points for outcome 2's outcome indicators have all not been updated since the first year of the programme cycle. Therefore, an evidence-based conclusion cannot be drawn on performance in this specific area. Regardless of whether or not empirical evidence exists, there are concerns about the way that official data on the 'average earnings' indicator is presented. It remains unclear if and how the data (expressed in the country's official monetary currency, Pakistani rupees) was adjusted for purchasing power and inflation, or not. The existing data's macro-trends point in the right direction for all three indicators (i.e. a decline in the number of youth not in education, employment or training (NEET), a decreasing unemployment rate, and increased average earnings). Overall, the funding of outcome 2 was satisfactory, reaching 77 per cent of the required budget for the three-year period (2018–2020). Roughly 85 per cent of available funding was spent. To achieve the aims and strategies laid out by outcome 2's theory of change, the following activities were implemented, as laid out in the table below.

Table 9. Outcome 2 output level results and key activities in 2018–2020

→ 2018
<p>→ UN agencies aided the development and technical review of key frameworks, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • provincial labour policies in Sindh, Punjab and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa; • the Sindh Home-based Workers Act 2018; • the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Child Labour Policy 2018; • the Punjab Domestic Workers Bill 2018; • the Punjab Bonded Labour System (Abolition) Act 1992, updated in June 2018; • five draft labour laws in Balochistan under the Industrial Relations Act; and • the draft National Labour Protection Framework (NLPF).
<p>→ Preparations for Pakistan's latest Child Labour Survey – the first in over two decades – were finalized in collaboration with the Pakistan Bureau of Statistics.</p>
<p>→ The capacities of over 3,240 participants were strengthened to promote decent employment, spearhead entrepreneurship and facilitate the organization of employers and workers in the formal and informal economy.</p>
<p>→ Capacity building strengthened the Agriculture Support System in both Balochistan and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. Agricultural value chains – the bedrock of sustainable rural livelihoods – were strengthened by disseminating and encouraging the adoption of climate-smart, resilient production practices in agriculture, livestock rearing, poultry management and inland fisheries.</p>
<p>→ UN initiatives championed women's economic empowerment by strengthening the capacities of 10,733 people – 90 per cent of whom are women – to secure decent jobs, engage in entrepreneurship, accumulate assets and exercise their rights.</p>

→ Technical and vocational training was paired with access to agricultural and fisheries production, legal aid, technical assistance and removing legal barriers to facilitate Afghan refugees' access to work. Alongside assistance for livelihoods in Pakistan, 237,647 undocumented Afghans and Afghan Citizen Card (ACC) holders received multi-stakeholder response support to facilitate sustainable, voluntary returns to Afghanistan.

→ 2019

→ 15,900 workers' occupational safety and health improved.

→ 9,060 women home-based workers received life skills training.

→ 2,045 host community members and refugees received vocational training.

→ 16,213 young people benefitted from entrepreneurship education.

→ 2,200 entrepreneurs accessed microfinance with UN support.

→ 2020

→ 900 people benefitted from the UN cash-for-work initiative, 34 per cent of whom were women in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

→ 74,390 cotton pickers were trained on labour issues and COVID-19 prevention.

→ 3 million workers were reached by a COVID-19 awareness raising campaign.

→ UN assistance helped 30 Migrant Workers' Resource Centres reach out to 150,000 prospective and returned migrants with guidance on safe, regular migration.

→ The Skills Development Programme provided certified vocational and technical skills training to 4,715 young refugees and Pakistani host community members. Among them, 200 refugees were placed in internships for on-the-job training

On average, the availability of resources reached 77 per cent for outcome 2, while expenditure against initial budget projections reached 65 per cent in the first three years of the OP III/UNSDf's implementation. Meanwhile, fund absorption (84 per cent) was quite high, balancing out the relative lack in available funding. Overall, the budget situation and absorption capacity allowed outcome 2 to function satisfactorily.

Outcome 3 – Health and WASH

Under outcome 3, the UN aims to ensure that the people in Pakistan, especially the most vulnerable and marginalized, have access to, and benefit from, improved universal health coverage, including sexual and reproductive health, and equitable WASH services. Strategies to achieve this outcome include supporting the Government to ensure universal health coverage for all segments of the population, preventing diseases like hepatitis and promoting the control of non-communicable diseases, supporting the Government's provision of timely, high-quality health services for migrants, and assisting the Government to ensure equitable access to WASH services, with a focus on eradicating open defecation. They also include supporting national and sub-national capacity to develop policies, legislation, programmes and institutional mechanisms, strengthening

national capacity to generate and use disaggregated data, and improving national and sub-national capacity to deliver quality integrated maternal, new-born and child health services. Other strategies include boosting national and sub-national capacity to deliver quality, integrated sexual and reproductive health services, promoting the integration of specialized services into the health care system, and promoting evidence-based HIV/AIDS, drug prevention and treatment policies and services.

The performance indicators for outcome 3 are linked to the following SDG targets: 3.1 coverage of essential health services (defined as the average coverage of essential services based on tracer interventions that include reproductive, maternal, newborn and child health, infectious diseases, non-communicable diseases, service capacity and access among the general and the most disadvantaged populations) (SDG 3.8.1); 3.2 the under-five and neo-natal mortality rate (SDG 3.2.1 and 3.2.2); 3.3 the maternal mortality ratio (SDG 3.1.1); 3.4 the proportion of women of reproductive age, aged 15–49, who have their need for family planning satisfied with modern methods (SDG 3.7.1); 3.5 the proportion of the population using safely managed drinking water and sanitation services (SDG 6.1.1 and 6.2.1); 3.6 the number of new HIV infections per 1,000 uninfected population, by sex, age and key populations (SDG 3.3.1); and 3.7 the coverage of treatment interventions (pharmacological, psychosocial and rehabilitation and aftercare services) for substance use disorders (SDG 3.5.1). The required policy support for these SDG targets includes: doubling public allocations for health by 2030, broadening the scope of the Prime Minister’s Health Insurance Programme and provincial health care systems; health education programmes at the school level, hygiene awareness programmes at the community level, improving the health monitoring system at the district level, and training and building the capacity of staff on the Health Management Information System (HMIS).

Data for three of these seven indicators is not available. Progress took place on two indicators: (i) the under-five mortality rate and (ii) the proportion of women of reproductive age who have their need for family planning satisfied with modern methods. The caveat, from a methodological point of view, is that in both cases baseline data is from 2012–2013 while the most recent data point (‘update’) is from a 2017–2018 survey, which should have served as the baseline. There are doubts about the progress update for indicator 3.5 on the proportion of the population using safely managed drinking water and sanitation services, since the update on access to potable water (95 per cent in 2018, which is the year that should have been used as the baseline) was far beyond the established final target (50 per cent). Outcome 3’s lead indicator, 3.1 on the coverage of essential health services (which corresponds to SDG target 3.8.1), consists of six sub-measures. No data updates are available for three of these sub-measures. The other three sub-measures which do have data updates available (3.1.1 on reproductive health services: contraceptive prevalence rate, any method, 3.1.2 on maternal health: skilled birth attendance, and 3.1.4 on child health: immunization) enabled this evaluation to gauge progress towards the set target. Sub-measures 3.1.2 and 3.1.4 use the Pakistan Social and Living Standards Measurement Survey 2018–2019 as their data source and reveal good progress against the baseline. However, this baseline is from 2012–2013. Performance on sub-measure 3.1.1 (reproductive health services) deteriorated slightly compared to the baseline value. However, this reflects the evolution of reproductive health services during the preceding UNDAF cycle, the One UN Programme II 2013–2017, rather than during the implementation of the OP III/UNSDF.

In terms of Outcome 3’s intervention logic, the UN achieved a number of wide-ranging results in 2018–2020 which cover almost all of the strategies mentioned above, leading to considerable progress towards the outcome’s overall aims. Some of these results are presented in the table below.

Table 10. Outcome 3 output level results and key activities in 2018–2020

→ 2018
→ With UN support, 39 million children under the age of five were vaccinated through 10 polio campaigns, with a focus on core polio reservoirs – reaching 99 per cent of the target population.

- ➔ A highly successful national measles campaign vaccinated 37 million children between 9 and 59 months old (105.5 per cent of the target), dealing a swift blow to a leading cause of preventable child deaths and disabilities.
- ➔ In refugee villages, 21,374 children benefitted from age-specific routine immunization services, yielding a 92 per cent rate of full immunization coverage. The *Refugee Affected Housing Areas* (RAHA) programme used US\$2 million to upgrade 12 health facilities in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and renovate two hospitals in Rawalpindi, Punjab, and Chaghi, Balochistan. At health facilities in refugee villages, 83,824 women and children benefitted from healthcare guided by protocols on the integrated management of newborn and childhood illnesses (IMNCI).
- ➔ UN agencies supported the development of a National Population Policy – which was endorsed by Ministry of National Health Services, Regulation and Coordination – Punjab’s Costed Implementation Plan (CIP) and Post-Partum Family Planning Strategies in Punjab and Sindh.
- ➔ With UN support, Pakistan’s strong health policy frameworks were translated into action on the ground. To ensure that every newborn survives and thrives, UN agencies aided the implementation of Newborn Survival Strategies and costed plans in three provinces.
- ➔ UN agencies supported the development of a Multi-sectoral Roadmap on Pre-Exposure Prophylaxis (PrEP) in collaboration with Pakistan’s National AIDS Control Programme (NACP), which promises to strengthen HIV prevention efforts at the community level.
- ➔ To integrate evidence-based drug use prevention, treatment and rehabilitation services into existing health systems, two training programmes on the Universal Prevention Curriculum (UPC) and the Universal Treatment Curriculum (UTC) were introduced in Pakistan.
- ➔ The UN aided the revision of the National Tuberculosis (TB) Guidelines, while promoting Lady Health Workers’ involvement in identifying missing tuberculosis cases and improving case notification.
- ➔ 2 million people gained access to adequate sanitation, taking Pakistan another step closer to ending the practice of open defecation. While 4 million people gained accessed safe drinking water with direct UN support, another 5 million benefitted indirectly through public funds.
- ➔ Improving school WASH facilities helped to transform student health, nutrition, enrolment, attendance and retention across Pakistan. Some 9,500 students – including 4,600 girls – were reached with WASH services in schools around the country.

➔ 2019

- ➔ SDG 3 targets and indicators were integrated into the National Health Plan with UN support.
- ➔ 1.7 million people gained access to safe drinking water with UN support.
- ➔ 8,000 people were screened for HIV in Balochistan.
- ➔ 40 million children were reached by polio vaccination campaigns, including 5 million in high-risk areas.
- ➔ 700 maternal, newborn and child health providers were trained with UN assistance.

➔ 2020

- 39 million children were targeted by 14 UN-supported polio vaccination campaigns.
- 14.3 million people were sensitized on better health-seeking behaviour.
- 9 million newborns and children benefitted from improved health care.
- UN support provided 130,000 frontline health workers with protective personal equipment (PPE), while training 83,744 on COVID-19 and 142,978 on infection prevention and control (IPC) using specially developed training manuals.
- 9.8 million people benefitted from improved WASH facilities in health centres and schools.

The financial data for this outcome shows a high percentage of available resources (86 per cent) compared to the total resources required, as well as a high absorption rate (nearly 90 per cent). Overall, the UN achieved good performance on outcome 3, which represents the largest proportion of the total OP III/UNSDF budget.

Outcome 4 – Nutrition

The aim of outcome 4 is to ensure that children, adolescent girls and boys, pregnant and lactating women, the elderly and persons with disabilities have improved dietary intake, feeding and care practices, resulting in improved nutritional status, while reducing stunting and other forms of undernutrition. Strategies for achieving this include supporting the development and implementation of an integrated, multi-sectoral National Nutrition Policy/Strategy, improving federal, provincial and regional coordination mechanisms to effectively monitor and evaluate nutrition programmes, and strengthening the capacities of federal, provincial and district authorities to enhance nutrition through a multi-sectoral approach. They also include assisting federal and provincial governments to generate and analyse evidence on innovative, scalable and sustainable nutrition-specific and nutrition-sensitive interventions, aiding the implementation of current multi-sector nutrition strategies to improve dietary intake, feeding and care practices among vulnerable groups, and continuing the momentum of Scaling Up Nutrition (SUN) interventions through its various networks, while assisting nutrition-specific and nutrition-sensitive interventions.

The performance indicators for outcome 4 are linked to the following SDG targets: 4.1 the prevalence of stunting (height for age <-2 standard deviation from the median of WHO's Child Growth Standards) among children under 5 years of age (SDG 2.2.1), and 4.2 the prevalence of malnutrition (weight for height $>+2$ or <-2 standard deviation from the median of WHO's Child Growth Standards) among children under 5 years of age, by type (SDG 2.2.2). The required policy support for these SDG targets involved bridging the 'yield gap' through innovation and quality agricultural practices, improve food value chains (including production, supply and affordability), greater care for the first 1,000 days of a child's life, the provision of supplements and food fortification to eliminate nutritional disorders, and school feeding programmes at the primary level.

For both indicators, the update measurement dates from 2018, using the National Nutrition Survey (NNS) as the data source, while the previous NNS 2011 serves as the baseline. While the prevalence of stunting among children under-five year moved in the right direction, over the long-term (falling from 43.7 per cent in 2011 to 40.2 per cent in 2018, against a target of 37 per cent), the most recent data point does not allow the measurement of any results during the OP III/UNSDF's life cycle, which began in 2018. The indicator on the prevalence of malnutrition involves the same caveat (as it uses 2018 as its data point), shows a clearer trend. Between 2011 and 2018, the related value increased from a baseline of 15 per cent to value of 17.7 per cent in 2018, rather than moving on a downward trajectory towards the target value of 7 per cent. This mirrors the opinions of the expert stakeholders responsible for this outcome, who identify (mal)nutrition as a 'silent pandemic' that needs to be urgently addressed. The table below highlights the wide-ranging results that the

UN achieved between 2018 and 2020, which cover almost all of the strategies mentioned above and led to considerable progress towards the overall aims of outcome 4.

Table 11. Outcome 4 output level results and key activities in 2018–2020

→ 2018
→ UN agencies supported the development of new policy frameworks by Pakistan's Ministry of National Health Services, Regulation and Coordination (MoNHSR&C), provincial Departments of Health, the SUN Secretariat and the National Fortification Alliance.
→ To help Pakistan achieve SDG 2 (Zero Hunger) and the Global Nutrition Targets 2025, the UN aided the development and monitoring of Action Plans on Malnutrition. The Pakistan Multi-Sectoral Nutrition Strategy (PMNS) 2018–2025 was designed and launched with the SUN Secretariat, and work began on a National Action Plan for Nutrition.
→ UN-supported research generated evidence to make nutrition policies and programming more effective. The National Nutrition Survey 2018 was the first to yield district-representative nutrition data. UN agencies supported provincial governments to improve access to treatment and nutrition services. The Community Management of Acute Malnutrition (CMAM) initiative saved lives across 17 districts of Sindh, Balochistan, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, and Azad Jammu and Kashmir. In 2018, 173,219 children were treated for severe acute malnutrition (SAM) through a network of 2,303 treatment sites. Another 162,374 children under the age of five were treated for moderate acute malnutrition (MAM) with <i>Achamum</i> specialized nutritious food, as were 161,088 pregnant and lactating women with <i>Maamta</i> .
→ The UN worked to break the intergenerational cycle of stunting by prioritizing prevention. Two rounds of National Immunization Days provided Vitamin A supplements to 32.2 million children (91 per cent of the target) and 33.9 million children (96 per cent of the target), respectively – curbing Vitamin A deficiency, the leading cause of child blindness. Specialized nutritious foods benefitted 128,873 women and children, as did micronutrient supplements for 115,594 children, and 231,403 pregnant and lactating women.
→ Global Breastfeeding Week 2018 reached out to 50 million people, while behaviour change communications transformed health, hygiene and infant and young child feeding (IYCF) practices by engaging 297,397 mothers, caregivers and pregnant women with messages on maternal and child nutrition. Capacity building helped 4,735 health workers deliver effective IYCF counselling.
→ Azad Jammu and Kashmir's large-scale wheat flour fortification drive set the stage for better nutrition for 2.6 million people – 65 per cent of its population – as the UN helped the Government to procure pre-mix.
→ 2019
→ Pakistan Dietary Guidelines for Better Nutrition were developed with UN support.
→ 266,780 children were treated for severe acute malnutrition, 53 per cent of whom are girls.
→ There was a 15 per cent reduction in stunting in intervention areas in Rahim Yar Khan, Punjab.
→ Pakistan's Adolescent Nutrition Strategy was developed with UN assistance.
→ 35 officials were trained to monitor legislation on breastmilk substitutes.
→ 2020

- 57,700 children were treated for severe acute malnutrition, 52 per cent of whom are girls.
- 0.43 million children and women received food assistance.
- 3,200 government staff were trained to improve nutrition nationwide.
- The Community-based Management of Acute Malnutrition programme was successfully handed over to the Government and implemented in 22 districts.
- With the Benazir Income Support Programme, the UN supported *Ehsaas Nashonuma*, the Government's new stunting prevention programme that reached 4,442 children, 6,996 women and set up 29 facilitation centres.

Financial data for outcome 4 reveals a high level of available resources (81 per cent) compared to the total resources required. The absorption rate (81.3 per cent) was also high. Thus, overall, the UN achieved good performance on this outcome.

Outcome 5 – Food Security and Sustainable Agriculture

The aim of outcome 5 is to ensure that the people of Pakistan, especially the most vulnerable and marginalized populations, have improved availability of, access to, and consumption of safe, nutritious and sufficient food, while promoting sustainable agriculture to achieve zero hunger. Strategies to achieve this include working with vulnerable and marginalized people to raise awareness of improved dietary feeding and care practices, rebuilding livelihoods through the rehabilitation of agriculture, natural resource management and food assistance for assets (FFA), and offering food and cash assistance, coupled with agriculture and livestock inputs, in response to shocks, disasters, or displacement. They also include increasing the incomes of poor, rural households in targeted areas through increased crop and livestock productivity, promoting the Government's approval and implementation of a National Agriculture and Food Security Policy, and preparing and implementing a National Action Plan on achieving the Zero Hunger goal. Further strategies include supporting the SPS management system nationwide, advocating for increased investment in agriculture and livestock, and boosting stakeholder capacity to undertake gender-responsive food security analysis.

Outcome 5's performance indicators are linked to the following SDG targets: 5.1 the proportion of agricultural area under productive and sustainable agriculture (SDG 2.4.1), 5.2 the prevalence of undernourishment (SDG 2.1.1) and 5.3 the prevalence of moderate or severe food insecurity in the population, based on the Food Insecurity Experience Scale (FIES) (SDG 2.1.2). The required policy support for these targets include bridging the yield gap through innovation and quality agricultural practices, and, improving food value chains including production, supply and affordability.

No new data is available for these measures and, for the first indicator, baseline data is also missing. The intervention logic included in this outcome's theory of change was captured well through outputs targeting almost all of the strategies described above to achieve the outcome's overall aims. Key results achieved in 2018–2022 are presented in the table below.

Table 12. Outcome 5 output level results and key activities in 2018–2020

- **2018**
- UN efforts fostered food security in Pakistan through research and analysis that kept stakeholders abreast of realities on the ground. Regular editions of the Pakistan Monthly Market Price Bulletin were published on the Vulnerability Analysis and Mapping (VAM) web portal. With UN support, drought assessments

were carried out for Balochistan and Sindh – the two provinces whose agricultural production is most affected by extended periods of drought.

- ➔ Using Geographic Information System (GIS) techniques, the spatial-temporal mapping of smog in Punjab was conducted (R-SMOG). A new UN study helped to identify the relationship between smog and the practice of burning crop residue in the province's rice belt.
- ➔ Live-saving relief assistance cemented food security for hundreds of thousands of people in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and its Newly Merged Districts – safeguarding their immediate well-being and laying the groundwork for long-term recovery. Through UN-supported initiatives, US\$5 million were disbursed as conditional cash assistance, as were 11,258 metric tonnes of conditional food assistance. Relief assistance changed the lives of 160,000 formerly temporarily displaced persons, as did 21,071 metric tonnes of food distributed through 10 Humanitarian Hubs.
- ➔ 723,522 people received conditional food and cash transfers through a Livelihood Recovery Programme in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa's Newly Merged Districts of Khyber, Kurram, Orakzai, North Waziristan and South Waziristan.
- ➔ The UN supported 4R nutrient stewardship for sustainable agriculture intensification and improved soil fertility in Balochistan, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Punjab and Sindh. This provides a framework to achieve cropping system goals – ranging from increased production to farmer profitability, environmental protection and sustainability.

➔ 2019

- ➔ The Food Security and Nutrition Information System (FMIS) was rolled out with UN support.
- ➔ With UN assistance, 555 tenancy agreements between landlords and sharecroppers (*haris*) were signed in Sindh.
- ➔ 713,600 people benefitted from the Food Assistance for Assets initiative.
- ➔ 9,400 farmers were trained to adopt climate-smart practices.
- ➔ 19,812 households received monthly food assistance.

➔ 2020

- ➔ 330 officials were trained on agriculture and natural resource-related SDG indicators.
- ➔ 27 per cent of the beneficiaries of the Food Assistance for Assets (FFA) initiative's conditional cash assistance were women.
- ➔ 44,000 farmers were trained on climate-resilient agriculture.
- ➔ With UN assistance, a Food Security and Nutrition Information System was operationalized, including a Food Price Dashboard to track anomalies in supply chains and prices.
- ➔ To support the Government's COVID-19 response, the UN published weekly price bulletins on major food items.

An analysis of the financial information for outcome 5 reveals a high percentage of available resources (95 per cent) and an average absorption rate of nearly 65 per cent, largely due to a low level of expenditure (the fund absorption rate was only 50.7 per cent in 2018).

Outcome 6 – Resilience

The performance indicators for outcome 6 are linked to the following SDG targets: 6.1 the proportion of local governments that adopt and implement local disaster risk reduction strategies in line with the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015–2030 (SDG 11.b.1) and 6.2 the number of integrated policies/ strategies/ plans operationalized which increases their ability to protect the environment and population, as well as adapt to and mitigate the adverse impacts of climate change, and foster climate resilience and low greenhouse gas emission development in a manner that does not threaten food production (SDG 13.2.1). Required policy support for these SDG targets includes integrating climate change measures into national policies, strategies and planning, addressing the impact of climate change through policy and institutional support, and reviewing cropping patterns for the more efficient use of water in the agriculture sector. It also includes increasing human and institutional capability on climate change mitigation, adaptation, impact reduction and early warning, implementing the Pakistan Climate Change Act 2017, and raising awareness of climate change. However, there was no data available for these indicators beyond baseline data.

The aim of outcome 6 is increasing the resilience of the people in Pakistan, especially key populations, by addressing natural and other disasters, including climate change adaptation measures and the sustainable management of cultural and natural resources. Strategies to achieve this included supporting the implementation of key national frameworks for risk management and resilience, strengthening the ‘transformative’ capacity of institutions, and aiding government efforts to gather and analyse data on human-induced crises. They also include boosting the Government’s ability to achieve long-term change, building ‘absorptive’ capacity among the population, improving ‘adaptive strengths’ among the population and supporting environmental sustainability, with a focus on climate change adaptation and mitigation strategies. The table below highlights the main activities and results achieved in terms of these strategies to achieve the overall aims of outcome 6, covering all the key components of the outcome’s theory of change.

Table 13. Outcome 6 output level results and key activities in 2018–2020

→ 2018
→ With UN assistance, the National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) drafted a National Plan of Action on the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction (SFDRR), Guidelines for Early Recovery Needs Assessments and National Guidelines for Tsunami Risk Mitigation. Eight drought-affected districts of Sindh were assessed to inform the National Drought Plan, in coordination with the Government.
→ Key gains for environmental sustainability included six National Resource Management (NRM) Policies, two key policies on forests and wildlife in Sindh, and provincial Integrated Sustainable Land Management (ISLMP) Policies in all four provinces. Policy Guidelines on Green Building Codes were developed to foster climate-resilient urban development, including government efforts to strengthen the regulatory framework for sustainable buildings and green construction practices.
→ To keep children safe, the UN supported new Education in Emergencies Guidelines, related Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) and climate change adaptation resource tools for children.
→ 2018 witnessed the launch of the Disaster Management-Decision Support System (DM-DSS), alongside Multi Hazard Vulnerability and Risk Assessment (MHVRA) Atlases for 10 of the most hazard-prone districts of Sindh and Punjab.
→ UN initiatives ensured that humanitarian resources were on standby for 100,000 people. Nationwide, UN

support strengthened life-saving risk reduction and response capacities. Disaster risk reduction planning is poised to improve following training for 9,480 stakeholders. Ten emergency response simulation trainings and exercises (SIMEXs) – delivered in partnership with the National Institute of Disaster Management (NIDM) – honed the skills of 395 officials from Provincial and District Disaster Management Authorities, UN agencies, academia and NGOs on end-to-end supply chain management in emergencies.

→ Helping small-scale farmers in the Indus River Basin to adapt to climate change is the focus of a landmark new UN project, intended to benefit 1.5 million rural people. UN efforts supported Pakistan's communities to act as guardians of their land and to manage its resources sustainably. In 2018, 19,000 hectares of land were rehabilitated to safeguard ecosystems.

→ With UN support, access to basic social services improved for 174,000 people who had been temporarily displaced. Early recovery interventions reached out to 10,610 households, while 16,412 people received shelter assistance and 26,618 benefitted from emergency heat wave response support. WASH initiatives safeguarded the health, nutrition and well-being of disaster-affected communities. In 2018 alone, 12,516 people gained access to clean drinking water and 43,500 people to safe sanitation. While 84,019 people were engaged by hygiene-promotion drives, 57,456 people reaped the benefits of food security and livelihood interventions and 4,504 people received cash-based assistance. To bolster service delivery, 460 cross-cutting trainings on resilience were delivered across Pakistan.

→ Schools in Pakistan are better prepared to cope with hazards thanks to UN's pioneering School Safety Programme. Implemented in all four provinces, it focused on 10 hazard-prone districts across all of the country's provinces. Training on local level disaster preparedness and response strengthened the skills of 19,008 participants – students, teachers, community members, civil society and trainers – to prepare for and bounce back from disasters. Building improvements helped 17 schools to withstand crises.

→ 2019

→ UN support for formerly displaced persons improved 1.57 million people's access to basic services.

→ 35 automatic weather stations were set up and operational thanks to UN support.

→ 1,100 government and humanitarian partners were trained on preparedness.

→ 3.6 million people benefitted from preparedness, response and recovery interventions.

→ District level Disaster Risk Management Plans were developed with UN assistance.

→ 2020

→ 140 district officials were trained on disaster risk reduction.

→ 0.6 million km² of land was surveyed and 11,300 km² were treated to curb locust attacks.

→ 4.3 million animals were vaccinated against foot and mouth disease.

→ At the national level, the UN supported the National Disaster Management Authority to develop evidence-based policies and recommendations aligned with the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction.

→ The UN's World Water Development Report 2020 was launched, as was the Pakistan Council of Research in Water Resources' Groundwater Investigations and Mapping in the Lower Indus Plain.

Financial data for outcome 6 reflects a high percentage of available resources (87 per cent) but a much lower absorption rate (60 per cent).

Outcome 7 – Education and Learning

Outcome 7's performance indicators are linked to the following SDG targets: 7.1 the net enrolment rate (NER) in education (primary, lower secondary and secondary), 7.2 the proportion of children and young people: (a) at the end of primary and (b) at the end of lower secondary who achieve at least a minimum proficiency level in (i) reading and (ii) mathematics, by sex (SDG 4.1.1), and 7.3 the participation rate of youth and adults in formal and non-formal education and training in the previous 12 months, by sex (SDG 4.3.1). The required policy support for these SDG targets include the mandatory enrolment of all children, improving the quality of education at all levels by establishing stringent quality assurance, and reviewing the incentive structure for girls' and women's enrolment at all levels. They also include a food voucher scheme for out-of-school children, improving school infrastructure at all levels, introducing technology for classroom instruction, and establishing School Monitoring Committees at the district level with multi-stakeholder representation for a more inclusive learning environment that includes children with special needs and a culturally-sensitive policy for girls. No repeat measurements were available for these indicators after the baseline data.

The aim of this outcome is to ensure that children and youth have enhanced, equitable and inclusive access to, and benefit from, quality learning opportunities, especially those from disadvantaged backgrounds. The strategies for this include supporting improved access to, and the quality of, education across Pakistan, particularly to ensure that as many children, youths and adults as possible – both girls/women and boys/men – achieve literacy and numeracy. It also involves strengthening education sector planning to raise the quality and reach of education and learning programmes, and promoting the expansion of early childhood education (ECE) and alternative forms of education, introducing innovative practices. Other strategies include advocating for excluded groups' right to free, compulsory education, strengthening skills and knowledge at the family and community levels, creating an enabling environment for youth empowerment, advocating for the inclusion of schools' meals in education policy frameworks, championing social cohesion and resilience through education, and strengthening moves to protect Pakistan's rich cultural heritage through education. The UN carried out a range of activities, including those in the table below, to deliver on these strategies and achieve outcome 7's overall aims.

Table 14. Outcome 7 output level results and key activities in 2018–2020

→ 2018
→ With UN support, provincial governments made headway by developing multi-year costed Education Sector Plans to guide their education reform agendas. By the end of 2018, Punjab's and Sindh's plans were nearly complete.
→ With UN support, 19 districts across the country increased girls' enrolment and retention. Capacity development for teachers was paired with moves to mobilize entire communities to improve the quality of education – vital for keeping girls and boys in school and ensuring they can learn in a safe, supportive environment.
→ With UN assistance, 100,000 children in Punjab and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa benefitted from early childhood education.
→ The UN continued to prioritize education for the most marginalized children in Pakistan, including refugees. The phased transition from the Afghan to the Pakistani curriculum in refugee village schools in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa enabled 35,696 Afghan refugee children to study the Pakistani curriculum.

→ The UN directly supported alternative learning programmes (ALPs) for over 30,000 children – 60 per cent of whom are girls – in Sindh and Balochistan.
→ Nearly 55,000 children – 50 per cent of whom are girls – teachers and community members were trained on school-based disaster risk reduction in Sindh, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Balochistan. This approach will be incorporated in Education Sector Plans.
→ 2019
→ 3,500 children will benefit from school feeding in Islamabad Capital Territory with UN support.
→ 302,192 children accessed formal and non-formal education with UN assistance.
→ 27,539 refugees were supported to study the Pakistani curriculum.
→ 6,898 schools received training on menstrual hygiene management (MHM).
→ 1,000 people were engaged on media and information literacy about education.
→ 2020
→ 1.06 million children benefitted from hygiene measures to prevent COVID-19 in schools.
→ 1.27 million School Management Committee (SMCs) members, teachers and educators were sensitized on keeping schools safe during the COVID-19 pandemic.
→ 0.215 million out of school children were supported to access education.
→ With UN support for GPE-funded sector planning, provincial Education Sector Plan Implementation Grants – valued at US\$94 million – were developed, and Balochistan and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa endorsed pioneering Education Sector Plans.
→ UN support for remote learning modalities like the Government’s Teleschool initiative contributed to the immediate continuity of learning, mitigating the effects of school closures during the COVID-19 pandemic.

The financial data for outcome 7 shows that the availability of resources was low (57 per cent) on average compared to required resources. However, the absorption rate was higher (nearly 75 per cent) and has been increasing over the years.

Outcome 8 – Gender, Equality and Dignity

The outcome aims to ensure that government institutions will have increased accountability towards gender equality commitments and social, economic, cultural and political rights. Strategies to achieve this include strengthening institutional mechanisms for human rights and gender equality, supporting legal and policy reforms that are gender-sensitive and responsive, and elaborating action plans to raise women’s and minorities’ participation in decision-making. They also include assisting federal and provincial counterparts to enhance access to quality multi-sectoral sexual and reproductive health services and rights, promoting a coordinated and effective response to gender-based violence across all sectors, promoting a coordinated and

effective response to gender-based violence across all sectors, and strengthening the knowledge and capacities of law enforcement agencies, criminal justice institutions, decision makers opinion leaders and multiple service delivery sectors. Other strategies include promoting positive public narratives around religious and social tolerance, developing systems, benchmarks and research to generate data on human rights, and focusing on specific solutions for vulnerable groups like Afghan refugees and temporarily displaced persons to secure their sustainable reintegration.

Outcome 8's performance indicators are linked to the following SDG targets: 8.1 the proportion of women and girls aged 15 years and older subjected to physical, sexual or psychological violence (SDG 5.2.1), 8.2 provincial governments have systems to track and make public allocations for gender equality and women's empowerment (SDG 5.C.1), 8.3 the proportion of seats held by women in national parliaments and local governments (SDG 5.5.1), and 8.4 the number of legal frameworks in place to promote, enforce and monitor equality and non-discrimination on the basis of gender (SDG 5.1.1). The required policy support for these SDG targets includes legal and administrative actions to enforce laws for women's protection, ensure job quotas in the government and non-governmental sectors, the provision of basic services to facilitate women's participation in socio-economic spheres, and the enforcement of laws for women's protection while bringing the incidence of violence against women close to zero.

For the two latter indicators, repeat measurements are not available after the baseline data. The first indicator on sexual and gender-based violence experienced a promising decrease from the baseline of 39 per cent to 34 per cent in 2018–2019. As above, this updated data point only covers the very initial phase of the OP III/UNSDf's implementation, rather than reflecting the results of the programme's work. Globally, sexual and gender-based violence increased dramatically since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic. It is fair to assume that the situation in Pakistan is similar, with negative related consequences in 2021 and 2022. Key achievements under output 8.4 include key legal frameworks put in place at the beginning of the OP III/UNSDf's implementation, including the Transgender Persons (Protection of Rights) Act of 2018 and the Sindh Women Agriculture Bill of 2019. Beyond these gains, the UN pursued a range of activities and results which comprehensively addressed almost all of the strategies required to achieve the overall aims of outcome 8. Key results are highlighted in the table below.

Table 15. Outcome 8 output level results and key activities in 2018–2020

→ 2018
→ The Transgender Persons (Protection of Rights) Act 2018 was put in place.
→ UN assistance enabled over 5 million women to gain access to improved water, sanitation and hygiene services.
→ UN support advanced women's participation in governance by collaborating with the Election Commission of Pakistan's Women's National Identity Card and Voter Registration Campaign, which registered 4.3 million women voters.
→ With UN support, policy reforms to advance gender equality came to the fore. The passage of Sindh's Home-based Worker's Act 2018 marks a breakthrough for women workers' rights, wages and social security.
→ A Gender Action Plan was included in Balochistan's Rule of Law Roadmap to enable a more gender-responsive justice system. The National Framework on Quality of Care at Childbirth will help to reduce maternal and neonatal mortality rates. Pakistan's Prevention of Trafficking in Persons Act 2018 focused on women and children, involving especially severe punishments for trafficking women or minors – with prison sentences of up to 10 years and fines of PKR 1 million.
→ Building the capacity of service providers remained at the heart of UN efforts to eliminate violence against women and girls. Standard Operating Procedures were developed to prevent and respond to gender-based violence in humanitarian settings, while a clinical handbook was adapted to improve

services for survivors of gender-based violence.

→ 2019

- The Sindh Women Agriculture Bill 2019, developed with UN support, came into force.
- The UN supported 3,839 women home-based workers (HBWs) to diversify their incomes.
- Four provincial Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment (GEWE) Policies were drafted.
- 1,042 justice officials and police were trained on addressing violence against women and girls (VAWG).
- 14 women-only buses were rolled out in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa to enable women's mobility through safe public transportation.
- The UN supported 1,100 women to obtain Computerized National Identity Cards.

→ 2020

- 600 law enforcement and justice officials were trained to address gender-based violence (GBV).
- 10.15 million people were sensitized on psychosocial support and gender-based violence.
- 100,000 rural women were sensitized on COVID-19 prevention.
- Some 4,200 people – 60 per cent of whom are women – and 250 women with disabilities accessed tele-psychosocial support and gender-based violence referral services.
- In Sindh, 14 radio shows and six online sessions on mental health and gender-based violence sensitized 240,682 youths and 348,179 community members.

Financial analysis shows that performance on outcome 8 was very good. The availability of resources exceeded required resources (112 per cent), while the absorption rate was nearly 90 per cent.

Outcome 9 – Governance

Outcome 9 aims to ensure that all the people in Pakistan will have increased knowledge of their rights and improved access to more accountable, transparent and effective governance mechanisms and rule of law institutions. The strategies to achieve this include working with the Government to strengthen existing engagement mechanisms in order to foster accountability by incorporating the voices of citizens and civil society into governance systems, and identifying data gaps, particularly through research and analysis, with a focus on key populations – including women and youth – to stimulate evidence-based service delivery related to governance concerns. They also include developing evidence-based programmes based on empirical data for 'best fit' governance approaches, strengthening institutional capacities to modernize data collection, management and analysis, and bolstering the capacities of institutions – including government bodies, parliaments, law enforcement agencies, information and media entities, planning and development agencies, the Election Commission (ECP), and other justice and rule of law institutions. Further strategies include supporting state bodies to establish and institutionalize processes that improve service delivery and expand people's access to governance mechanisms, rule of law institutions and relevant administrative mechanisms, as well as to provide durable solutions for refugees, returning temporarily displaced persons (TDPs) and migrants. They also include providing state bodies and rule of law institutions with access to knowledge and international good practice and networks to inform their responses to existing and emerging issues, and assisting government efforts to improve the performance of key elements of the criminal justice system – the police, prosecutors, judiciary and prison systems.

Outcome 9's performance indicators are linked to the following SDG targets: 9.1 government effectiveness, the rule of law and control of corruption as measured by World Bank's Worldwide Governance Indicators, 9.2 (a) in-depth analysis of the population census and household surveys available for informed evidence-based planning, budgeting and monitoring, and (b) 100 per cent birth registration and 80 per cent death registration achieved (SDG 17.19.2), and 9.3 the proportion of total government spending on essential services (health, education and housing) (SDG 1.a.2). The required policy support for these SDG targets includes higher, sustained and inclusive growth, the provision of social protection to at least 70 per cent of persons below the poverty line, balanced regional development, and increased access to credit for livelihood sources. No updated data is available for the second indicator. Performance on the other indicators is mixed. The indicators on government effectiveness and the rule of law experienced decent progress until 2020. The sub-measures on controlling corruption experienced backsliding, falling below the baseline value (with data from 2016), rather than progressing. For the indicator on government spending on essential services, the sub-measure on health sector spending is on track – rising from a baseline of 0.76 per cent of GDP to 1.1 per cent of GDP. However, spending on education dropped from the baseline value of 2.3 per cent of GDP to 1.5 per cent in 2019. This has increased the gap towards the 4 per cent target. The table below highlights the activities the UN undertook to achieve the aims of outcome 9 through the strategies mentioned above.

Table 16. Outcome 9 output level results and key activities in 2018–2020

→ 2018
→ A landmark Results Management System (RMS) was put in place to make elections more efficient and transparent. Developed and implemented by the Election Commission of Pakistan with UN support, the computerized system delivers accurate results, free from mathematical or human error.
→ In 2018, 4.3 million were added to the electoral rolls before the General Election thanks to the UN-supported campaign by the Election Commission of Pakistan on Women's National Identity Cards and Voter Registration. Capacity building for 850,000 election officials on election administration and operations encouraged them to strive for more inclusive and credible electoral processes.
→ Training for over 1,000 civil servants – ranging from Basic Pay Scale grades (BPS) 18 to 21 – equipped them to use data to inform evidence-based public policy-making that addresses needs on the ground.
→ The UN aided the development of Pakistan's National SDGs Framework.
→ The UN championed the rule of law in Pakistan by assisting the development of policy frameworks that lay a stronger foundation for justice, accountability and human rights. 2018 was a year of breakthroughs, such as the approval of the Balochistan Rule of Law Roadmap and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa's Judicial Reforms Strategy.
→ With UN support, the National Anti-Narcotics Policy Framework 2018 was developed, while precursor identification kits and eLearning bolstered the operational capacity of the Anti-Narcotics Force.
→ Birth registration systems developed with UN assistance registered 382,164 children in all four provinces.
→ With donor support, UN initiatives worked to address the unmet health and protection needs of older Afghan refugees and of host communities in Balochistan and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.
→ Capacity building for 387 journalists and media professionals, including 70 women, sought to foster objective, inclusive reporting on a range of issues – from the general election to the challenges faced by marginalized groups. A fellowship programme to promote democratic discourse supported training for 43 journalists.
→ 2019
→ The Human Rights Information Management System was rolled out with UN support.
→ 1.4 million refugees benefitted from the extension of Proof of Registration (PoR) Cards, following sustained UN advocacy for the extension of these forms of identification that permit refugees' temporary

legal stay and movement in Pakistan.
→ 1.26 million children were registered by birth registration systems established with UN support.
→ 22 Legal Aid Desks were handed over to the Government of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.
→ 400 officers were trained through the Terrorism Investigation Course.
→ 2020
→ 1,600 law enforcement officers were trained to counter trafficking and illicit financing.
→ 2.5 million children's births were registered with UN support.
→ 4.5 million people were sensitized by a COVID-19 youth awareness campaign.
→ UN support strengthened the Government of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa's capacities for planning, communications and implementing reforms. This included the integration of the Financial Management Information System, the development of a Local Government Budgetary Framework, the creation of a Technical Assistance Unit, and a technologically-assisted land resettlement exercise. Assistance was also provided for the development of the province's economic recovery plan, <i>Azm-e-Nau</i> .
→ At the national level, UN efforts enhanced the capacity of the Election Commission of Pakistan by helping to formulate the Federal Election Academy's mandate, training 330 commission staff and finalizing implementation plans for the commission's third strategic plan.

The financial information for outcome 9 shows that, while the availability of resources was average (73 per cent), the absorption rate was very high (96 per cent).

Outcome 10 – Social Protection

Outcome 10's performance indicators are linked to the following SDG targets: 10.1 the proportion of the population covered by social protection floors/systems, by sex, distinguishing children, unemployed persons, older persons, persons with disabilities, pregnant women, newborns, work injury victims and the poor and the vulnerable (SDG 1.3.1), and 10.2 the proportion of men, women and children of all ages living in poverty in all its dimensions according to national definitions (SDG 1.2.2). The required policy support for these SDG targets includes higher, sustained and inclusive growth, the provision of social protection to at least 70 per cent of the population below the poverty line, balanced regional development, and increased access to credit for livelihood sources. No updated data is available for these indicators. Therefore, it is not possible to review national progress.

The aim of this outcome is to ensure that improved and effective social protection systems are available for all, particularly for the most vulnerable and marginalized populations. Strategies to achieve this include supporting the Government, through consultation with stakeholders, to further develop a strong, needs-based social protection framework, providing technical assistance to sub-national governments to strengthen and expand access to social protection mechanisms, and fostering innovative solutions to strengthen existing schemes – such as the Benazir Income Support Programme and Pakistan *Bait-ul-Mal*. They also include enhancing linkages between the pillars of the social protection framework, and bolstering coherence with other policy frameworks, as well as integrating these linkages, alongside evidence on existing and emerging vulnerabilities, as key features of Social Protection Action Plans. Other strategies include advocating for universal health care, insurance schemes, birth registration, Computerized National Identity Cards and cash transfers, promoting integrated approaches, assisting government efforts to generate disaggregated data on social protection and social dynamics across Pakistan, supporting the analysis, monitoring and evaluation of social protection policies and programmes, and providing information and policy advice on current international debates around social protection. In order to achieve these aims and strategies, the UN implemented a range of activities in 2018–2022, some of which are highlighted in the table below.

Table 17. Outcome 10 output level results and key activities in 2018–2020

→ 2018
→ Aided by sustained UN advocacy, 221 people accessed compensation for the deadly factory fire at Ali Enterprises in Karachi's Baldia Town.
→ With UN support, Pakistan developed a comprehensive policy to foster fair recruitment and safe migration. The stage is set for its effective implementation, thanks to UN capacity building for public institutions and a large-scale awareness raising campaign targeting potential Pakistani migrants.
→ High level strategic UN advice strengthened the landmark <i>Ehsaas</i> (compassion) strategy for poverty reduction. Following UN advocacy and technical assistance, 61,300 households registered with the Benazir Income Support Programme received humanitarian cash transfers.
→ UN agencies facilitated the voluntary repatriation of 14,017 Afghan refugees, 13,582 of whom were entitled to cash assistance. Cash-based interventions benefitted 914 refugee families, as did core relief items for 8,114 refugees – including mosquito nets, hygiene products and jerry cans. Multi-stakeholder support for 237,647 undocumented Afghans and Afghan Citizen Card holders enabled sustainable returns and access to protection mechanisms. Through Proof of Registration Card Modification Centres, 20,665 birth certificates were issued for refugee children.
→ UN research in Punjab is set to inform cost-effective programming to prevent stunting among the poorest households covered by safety nets. Livelihood interventions benefitted 4,211 families in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, 65 per cent of whom are refugees, while 35 per cent are host families. In collaboration with the Pakistan Poverty Alleviation Fund, the Poverty Graduation Approach helped 2,000 refugee (70 per cent) and host households (30 per cent) build sustainable livelihoods and attain food security.
→ 2019
→ 300 households were linked with social assistance via a 'one window' system in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.
→ The Healthy City Programme was rolled out in Islamabad with UN support.
→ 6,035 refugees accessed cash assistance to support their repatriation to Afghanistan.
→ A strong precedent for workplace safety and compensation was set as the UN supported 224 dependents of the Baldia factory fire to access compensation.
→ UN assistance prioritized universal social protection nationwide.
→ 2020
→ 88,600 vulnerable households benefitted from shock-responsive cash assistance.
→ 74,000 refugee households benefitted from UN cash transfers.
→ 50 focal points from social protection institutions were trained.
→ eLearning courses on social security systems trained 33 participants from the public sector and social partners, while online workshops on employment injury systems honed the capacities of medical officers and staff of Employees' Social Security Institutions.

- ➔ With UN assistance, a tripartite Coordination Forum for Social Security Agencies was set up.
- ➔ UN studies explored entry points for a National Registry of Workers and Enterprises and an Unemployment Insurance Scheme.

Financial data on outcome 10 shows that available resources only amounted to 63 per cent of required resources, the absorption rate was very high (above 93 per cent).

Evaluation question 5: To what extent is the OP III/UNSDF monitoring system, including monitoring tools, indicators and means of verification, suitable for effectively measuring progress towards the OP III/UNSDF Outcomes and Outputs in particular, and the SDGs more broadly?

The OP III/UNDF document (cf. page 101; sub-chapter 4.1.4) states that "Monitoring and reporting results will remain a UN priority under the OP III." In terms of monitoring progress, the following reporting responsibilities apply:

- Each UN agency is responsible for reporting around its areas of intervention at the output level, according to agreed indicators and targets.
- Each agency is responsible for reporting its contributions towards the achievement of the OP III/UNSDF's outcomes and their respective indicators and targets.
- The PME Group is responsible for preparing common Monitoring, Evaluation and Results Frameworks, for ensuring that all baselines, targets and indicators are established appropriately, and for verifying reported data.
- Each year, the One UN Annual Report will capture the key results of the Outcome Groups. Monitoring and reporting will be undertaken through the UNInfo System, a web-based programme management information system developed by the United Nations Development Operations Coordination Office (UNDOCO). The system will be made available and accessible to all stakeholders, including the Government of Pakistan.

In practice, the system encountered a number of procedural and technical challenges. Closely aligned to the SDGs, the OP III/UNSDF Results Framework is an outcome level framework that reflects the basis of UN support for the achievement of the OP III/UNSDF's ten joint outcomes. The Results Matrix includes outcome level indicators, each with corresponding targets and baselines. Only nationally-owned data sources are used. Targets were set on the basis of a trend analysis, extrapolations and projections. The framework draws inputs from the process of localizing the SDGs at the federal and provincial levels in Pakistan. It is also informed by the SDG Data Gap Analysis undertaken by the Planning Commission of Pakistan with UN support – an analysis that serves as the initial point for mainstreaming the SDGs. This process entailed a comprehensive examination of Pakistan's data ecosystem vis-à-vis reporting needs, providing a detailed account of data and baselines – established from government databases – at the national and provincial levels. The analysis assessed data availability for each indicator, including disaggregated data. Following the Global Tier System, a coding system was devised for each indicator, which pinpointed efforts needed to fill data gaps on the SDGs. The OP III/UNSDF adopted national level indicators for progress towards the SDGs as outcome level indicators. This is problematic for several reasons. First, the UN is only one contributor towards these goals. The Government of Pakistan, and larger multilateral and bilateral donors like the World Bank, Asian Development Bank and European Union, among others, also fund programmes that contribute to advancing progress on the

SDGs. In many cases, their funding is much greater than the UN's contribution. For example, as noted above, the Government of Pakistan received total loans and grants of around US\$4.8 billion in 2020–2021.⁵⁷ It spent nearly US\$8 billion during the 2020–2021 fiscal year on health, education, social support and development expenditures.⁵⁸ This is comparable to the US\$2.035 billion total budget of the five-year OP III/UNSDF and its expenditure of US\$1.3 billion during the first three years of its implementation. Even considering that UN contributions focus on upstream policy work, normative advocacy, support and capacity building, and that the UN adds an additional dimension of intangible added value through its convening role, it must be acknowledged that other technical and financial partners also provide policy and capacity building support. Moreover, financial support to the Government is to a large part covered through bilateral deals or brokered by Bretton Woods institutions directly.

The second issue critically discussed here is that information about the contribution of the Government and other donors to national level progress on the SDGs is not readily available. This makes it difficult to identify how much of the progress achieved on the national level indicators is due to UN efforts. In addition, national level progress is measured through government surveys that are not conducted every year. When they are conducted, their dates do not tally with key OP III/UNSDF milestones. Thus, the evaluation team's analysis shows that consistent data is not available for even one year for most of the indicators adopted by the programme. Third, there seem to be quality and reliability issues with some of the national survey results. These include nutrition-related data, learning result assessments and the computation of income/earnings (earning power adjusted in terms of inflation). Finally, information on the achievement of national level targets is incomplete. Out of the 32 indicators included in the OP III/UNSDF Results Matrix, no data point is available after the baseline for 19 indicators (63 per cent of the officially established indicators could not be used for this evaluation although this is, arguably, their primary purpose). Seven of the 13 indicators that do have available data points reveal good or excellent progress, while four indicate moderate progress. The details of the situation for each indicator are included in the annexes of this report.

Thus, it may be better for the UN to develop its programme indicators and related targets at the outcome level, based on its own programme plans and resource availability. This would also contribute to the better utilization of results-based management grounded on UN-specific targeted results. Current systems and the actual practice of results-based management remain fairly weak and require further development. The OP III/UNSDF programme document positions monitoring, evaluation and reporting results as a UN priority, and the OP III Results Framework as the basis of UN support for achieving the OP III/UNSDF's ten outcomes, as noted above. However, beyond the limited information uploaded to UNInfo, there is no comprehensive monitoring system in place to track progress on the UN's own planned outcomes, outputs and activities during the programme's duration. A review of the Joint Work Plans reveals that 42 per cent of the activities listed on UNInfo are not operational. In effect, they are 'empty shells', featuring the title or name of an activity without any information on its budget, responsible agency or any M&E progress updates. Furthermore, 28 per cent of outputs are single agency outputs – that is, all of the activities are implemented by only one agency. To have a proper monitoring system in place, the UN must establish clear UN-wide programme targets and then develop a system for individual agencies to periodically report progress. There is also a need to enhance the UNRCO's capacities for this task. The corporate monitoring and evaluation system of UN Info, introduced towards the beginning of the OP III/UNSDF cycle, was supposed to serve as the programme's monitoring system according to corporate standards. These foresee the UNInfo database as a standard monitoring and evaluation platform to track the implementation of the programme/project activities, and keep track of output and outcome progress. In terms of the sheer number of indicators across various levels (outcomes,

57 Ministry of Economic Affairs (2021). *Monthly Report: Foreign Economic Assistance June 2021*. Islamabad: Government of Pakistan. Available at <http://ead.gov.pk/SiteImage/Publication/MontlyDisbursementJune2021R.pdf>

58 Ministry of Finance (2020) *Annual Budget 2020–21*. Islamabad: Government of Pakistan.

outputs and activities) the system is well-filled. However, it does not seem to have become operational in the sense of truly serving as a live instrument at any specific point in time.

UNInfo played a role in informing the OP III/UNSDF's Annual Reports. However, since activity and output level indicators stem from agency-specific monitoring and evaluation frameworks, the utility and interlinked degree of utilization of the system are likely to have been limited. A number of in-house stakeholders considered that 'SMARTER' OP III/UNSDF output level indicators lacking and, therefore, requested them, including some outcome leads. These are seen as a means of orientation for collectively tracking of progress against a core set of actually attributable results. Internal stakeholder interviews echo this sentiment, as many consider UNInfo as not user-friendly and adding limited value to planning and operational work. Interpreting these statements and the evidence of poor uptake – as reflected in the absence of monitoring and evaluation data from a Delivering as One perspective – additional training on UNInfo might not be the answer. This is because agency programme and monitoring and evaluation staff are bound to consider UNInfo as a duplication of work (effectively asking them to re-enter single agency indicator data manually into a not very user-friendly interface). However, if output indicators and activity indicators could be set up according to the Delivering as One logic (in the sense of multiple agencies sharing joint, common indicators that all of them contribute to), then UNInfo's value addition would become apparent as a joint UN monitoring and evaluation platform.

Evaluation question 6: Has the implementation of the OP III/UNSDF through its related governance structure been conducive in promoting and actively supporting policies that are consistent with each other or integrated across sectors, thus addressing the multi-sectoral nature of social and economic development – including by, and through, strengthening economic and individual resilience with a view to reducing vulnerability to disasters and crises?

In general, the sheer number of outcomes has not been conducive to an integrated programmatic response, especially since leadership roles are spread across different agencies. Had there been an intermediary, federating structure between the PMT/UNCT and the Outcome Groups – for example, in the form of strategic results or priority area fora, combining related outcomes – such clusters could have ensured a higher degree of cross-sector integration and related synergies. Effectively, however, outcome design and related Joint Work Programmes were biased towards lead agencies' individual work plans emanating from their agency-specific corporate mandate and approach to work (see the Joint Work Programme analysis below).

Work under outcome 1 (Economic Growth) could, or ideally should, have been systematically been framed jointly with at least those outputs and activities under outcomes 2 (Decent Work), 5 (Food Security and Sustainable Agriculture) and 6 (Resilience) that directly or indirectly interface or overlap with its remit. Similar connections could have been established between outcomes 3 (Health and WASH), 4 (Nutrition) and 6 (Resilience), as well as between outcomes 2 (Decent Work) and 7 (Education and Learning), and between outcomes 8 (Gender, Equality and Dignity), 9 (Governance) and 10 (Social Protection). If (super)clusters had been erected following an exclusive logic (with one outcome placed under a single cluster), super-silos might have ensued. But the degree of OP III integration would have likely benefitted if clusters had been set up as flexible programmatic platforms of exchange, allowing multiple outcome 'memberships' across clusters – similar to the logic of AFP memberships across outcomes – and permitting, but not imposing, cross-outcome programming/programmes in the sense of integrated cluster Joint Work Plans, including cross-sector Joint Plans (JPs). In 2018–2022, outcome 8 was the only outcome which relied on JPs for its Joint Work Plan. The only Joint Plan in the context of the OP III/UNSDF is the Joint Plan on violence against women and girls. This sits across outcome areas – contributing to outcomes 8 and 10 – and has five participating agencies (UN Women, UNFPA, WHO, UNODC and UNDP).

Under outcome 2 (Decent Work), the UN paired technical and vocational training with access to agricultural production, fisheries, legal aid and technical assistance to facilitate Afghan refugees' access to work by removing legal barriers. These efforts did not only address outcome 2; they also contributed to outcomes 8 (Gender, Equality and Dignity), 6 (Resilience) and 10 (Social Protection). However, there is no official, explicit

connection drawn between these areas. This needs to be considered as a missed opportunity for realizing and addressing inherent connections in an explicit, direct and conscious manner, rather than consciously integrating the programming of activities under one or several concerned outcome Joint Work Plans.

Similarly, when in 2018 the UN championed women's economic empowerment by strengthening the capacities of 10,733 people (90 per cent of whom are women) to secure decent jobs, engage in entrepreneurship, accumulate assets and exert their rights, this contributed to areas of work addressed through outcome 2 as well as outcome 8. Once more, no official linkages were established. Similarly, when agricultural value chains were strengthened by disseminating and encouraging the adoption of climate-smart, resilient production practices in agriculture, livestock rearing, poultry management and inland fisheries, this work not only addressed outcome 2, but also outcomes 5 (Food Security and Sustainable Agriculture) and 6 (Resilience). When in 2018, UN advocacy and technical assistance contributed to 61,300 BISP households receiving humanitarian cash transfers under outcome 10 (Social Protection), no linkages appear to have been developed with other initiatives to help these households become self-sufficient by advancing sustainable livelihoods (outcome 2), agricultural work (outcome 5) or nutritional work (outcome 4). There also appear to have been no efforts to link the initiative with resilience work (outcome 6) by extending cash transfers to Afghan refugees.

An obvious example of latent, dormant and not sufficiently addressed synergies is the between outcomes 4 and 5. Since malnutrition encompasses both underweight and overweight individuals, it presents very complex challenges. It encompasses both those with inadequate access to food due to poverty, as well as those with unhealthy nutrition habits as an expression of 'modern', urbanized life styles involving overly indulging in 'fast food'/'junk food', food that is sugar-loaded and/or high in trans-fats, rather than a balanced diet. All of this is compounded by non-regular eating patterns and is detrimental to health. Related cardiovascular diseases, diabetes, cancer and other 'civilizational ills' also point to the importance of, ideally, integrating the area of health interventions with this specific programmatic cluster. This means that the pool of those afflicted by malnutrition includes both the poor and the well-to-do; with the affluent strata suffering from malnutrition not due to lack of access to wholesome food – including vegetables and fruits, etc. – but in spite of, or even increasingly because of, their high(er) income. Instead of selecting the healthy options, the choice of what, when, where and how to eat follows a logic of 'conspicuous consumption'. In this respect, it might be worth reconsidering the current outcome indicator in the Results Framework.

While the malnutrition-specific indicator is designed to only cover the children under five years old (defined as "weight for height $>+2$ or <-2 standard deviation from the median of the WHO Child Growth Standards"), according to experts, the general phenomenon of malnutrition affects virtually the entire population pyramid. This is true across the socio-economic continuum, regardless of gender, region and, increasingly, age groups. The malnutrition crisis which affects all age groups and social strata is also spurred by economic growth and modernization/industrialization of the food (and hospitality) industries. It does not merely indicate a lack of calorific intake. Therefore, it may make sense to also specifically measure 'overweight' as a key nutrition/health indicator.

Outcome 6 explicitly focuses on resilience and preparedness vis-à-vis disasters and crises. In light of the increasing complexity of development challenges – including the nexus between climate change-related impacts on livelihoods and vulnerability to violent conflict and radicalization – it may be necessary to strengthen a triple nexus-style 'new way of working' approach in and for Pakistan at the national and provincial levels. This could be achieved through a joint workshop with OCHA, NGOs, the Government of Pakistan including provincial governments, donors, international NGOs, local NGOs and CSOs, the private sector and academia. It is worth noting that some donors would welcome integrated proposals that cut across their own separate funding streams. In the case of the European Union, this would allow the donor to establish a link between, and simultaneously tap into, the streams of development programming, humanitarian programming and ad hoc activities. This donor explicitly encourages UN AFPs to propose

integrated, nexus-style programmes especially for thematic and geographical areas where they have a track record of implementing activities and have accumulated the requisite experience. The stakeholder interviews have already helped identify a candidate for such a proposal, building on ongoing, separate projects in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (forest management, snow leopard conservation and tourism promotion). These could be merged into an integrated nexus-style platform of wildlife conservation, involving reforestation, disaster risk reduction, resilience measures, eco-tourism, related support for TVET and preventing and countering violent extremism (PCVE). That is, this could be taken forward as one programme, rather than as distinct projects with separate(d) activities. Another factor that should be taken into account – including for nexus-style programmes – is the need to customize interventions at the sub-national level, to the extent possible.

Last but not least, in terms of enhancing the degree of disaster preparedness and the effectiveness of interventions situated across the traditional humanitarian-developmental divide, the evaluation team has found evidence of some systematic synergies under the *Ehsaas* programme. These are referred to above, recalling that vulnerable families received humanitarian cash transfers under outcome 10 (Social Protection), although refugees are not mentioned. A best practice used in other countries involves a multiple W-mapping approach (who-what-where-when-with whom-and how). If such an approach is introduced in Pakistan, existing systems (WFP's Vulnerability Analysis and Mapping portal, OCHA's systems, etc.) could be effectively used and built upon.

4.3. Efficiency of the OP III/UNSDF

Evaluation question 7: To what extent has the UN made good use of its human and financial resources, tools and innovative approaches to ensure value for money and complementarities with the Government's efforts in order to generate results through the OP III/UNSDF?

The UN engaged with relevant sector-specific lead entities (ministries and state agencies) and civil society organizations involved in the sector(s) through the OP III/UNSDF's Outcome Groups. As discussed below in detail, engagement relied heavily on the Outcome Group lead agencies' sectoral contacts and relationships with stakeholders.

While joint programming is foreseen as a key design feature, joint outputs and activities have been the exception rather than the rule. The protracted, complex emergency context created by the COVID-19 pandemic prompted the UN to intensify 'jointness' in its programme coordination and delivery, through the UN Pakistan COVID-19 Socio-Economic Response Plan (SERP). Other than this, there are few experiences of genuine Joint Plans, most notably the UN's support for the Government's *Ehsaas* programme.

As noted above, stakeholders appreciate the OP III/UNSDF's capacity building work. This indicates the good use of available human and financial resources.

In terms of operations (OMT), all UN AFPs are actively using long-term agreements (LTAs). The Mutual Recognition Policy under the Business Operations Strategy (BOS) 2.0 has really helped to galvanize AFPs and generated time and cost savings. However, the attendance of focal points from some agencies is haphazard and focal points are often changed. Other issues also cause friction and frustration; these need to be addressed to achieve better coordination and overall performance. For instance, substantive feedback on draft long-term agreements tends to arrive at the last minute, which causes delays and frustration among members who attend regularly. (De)briefing between Working Group focal points and OMT focal points in specific AFPs is irregular, which also causes delays. Newly introduced OMT provincial focal points require additional training.

In terms of the overall financial situation, the OP III/UNSDF's total five-year planned budget is US\$2,295,397,753, including projected funds and resources to be mobilized. The total budget included in the original OP III/UNSDF document's Common Budgetary Framework (CBF) was US\$1,387,741,802, which was designed to cover a period of 2.5 years, until the scheduled mid-term review of the programme. Based on the

2.5 year projected requirements, the adjusted three-year total budget amounts to US\$1,665,290,162,40 (the 2.5-year total added to US\$277,548,360.40, the half-year average of the Common Budgetary Framework's 2.5 year total). Resources generated after three years of the programme's implementation – that is, 60 per cent of the programme's life cycle – cover 99.1 per cent of the extrapolated three-year total of the 2.5-year Common Budgetary Framework's projection of required resources (2.5 years CBF total: US\$1.387 billion; three-year extrapolation: US\$1.665 billion; actual available budget until the end of 2020: US\$1.65 billion). The OP III/UNSDf's actual required three-year budget, as opposed to the projected budgetary volume, amounts to US\$2.035 million (122.2 per cent), whereas the actually available three-year budget represents 99.1 per cent of the adjusted three-year projection. Overall, the OP III/UNSDf's expenditure levels until the end of 2021 amount to 79.5 per cent of the initial budgetary projection based on the original Common Budgetary Framework developed in 2017.

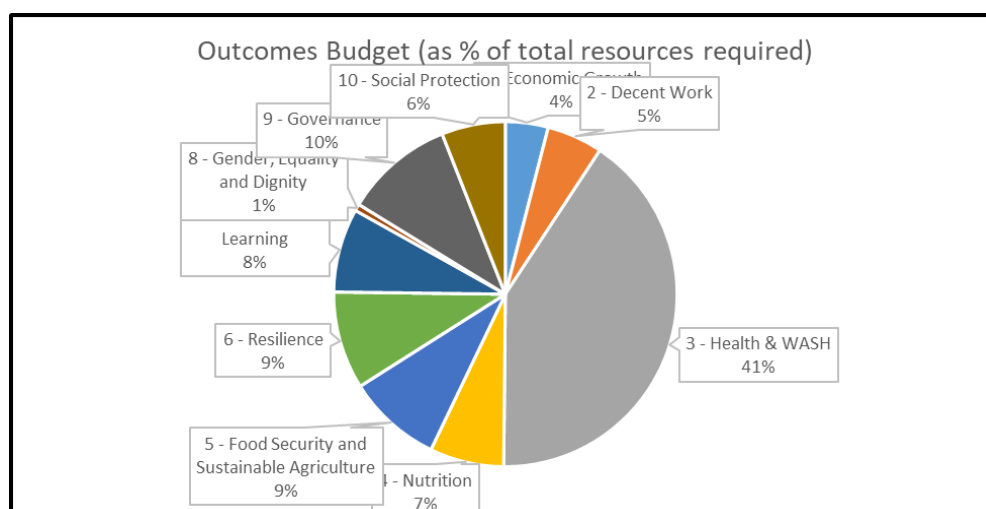
The overall absorption rate – that is, effective expenditures of available funds – is 80.3 per cent. This indicates a decent uptake of available resources. Expenditures reached 65.1 per cent of actual requirements, whereas available resources reached 81.1 per cent of requirements, as per adjusted annual planning figures. This reflects a good ability to fundraise and mobilize resources. However, conclusions about the effectiveness of joint fundraising cannot be made based on this figure alone, because single-agency funding and resource mobilization must also be taken into account.

Table 18. OP III/UNSDf absolute and relative budget data

	OP III/UNSDf (total across all outcomes)				
2018–2020 (initial 3 years of the OP III/UNSDf)	Total resources required (US\$)	Available resources (US\$)	Mobilized resources (US\$)	Expenditure (US\$)	Absorption (burn rate) (%)
Grand total	2,035,434,698	1,649,866,518	404,939,918	1,324,584,957	80.3
Percentage of the resources required		81.1		65.1	

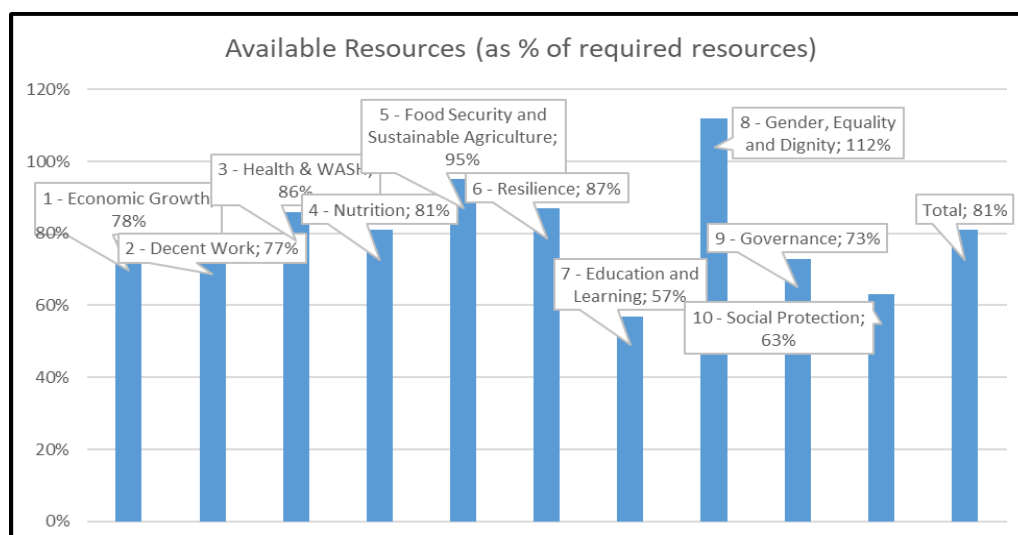
At the level of OP III outcomes, outcome 3 (Health and WASH) accounts for the largest share of the budget by far, at 41 per cent. All nine other outcomes account for an average share of roughly 7 per cent. The second-highest budget share is for outcome 9 (Governance) at 10 per cent, while the smallest share is for outcome 8 (Gender, Equality and Dignity) at 1 per cent.

Figure 2. Relative share of budget requirement by outcome



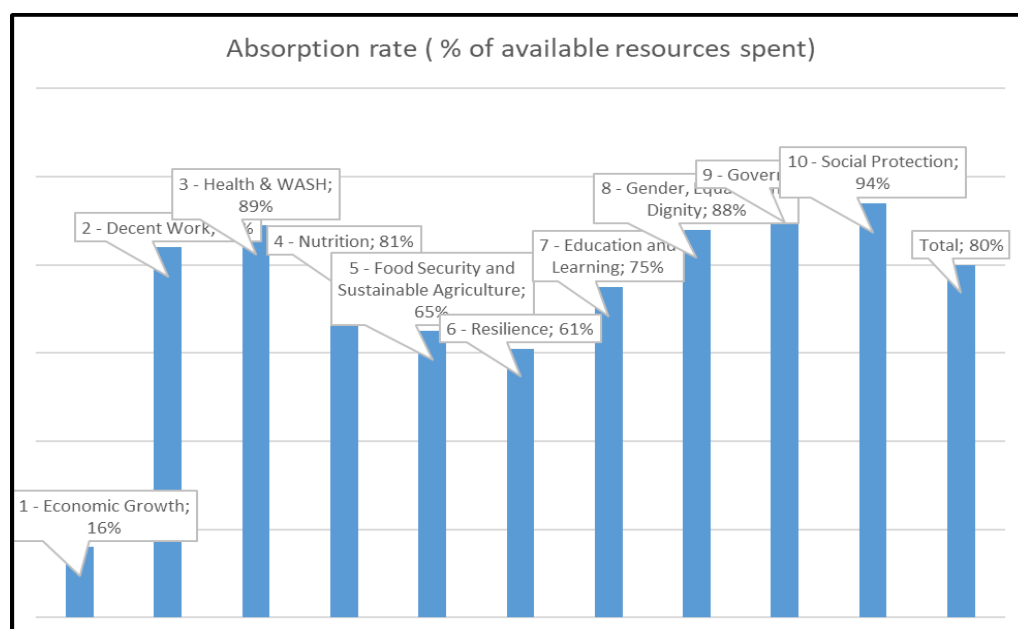
Outcomes 7 (Education and Learning) and 10 (Social Protection) have the lowest percentage of available resources against projected requirements at 57 per cent and 63 per cent, respectively. All of the other outcomes have percentage values well over 70 per cent. Outcome 8 (Gender, Equality and Dignity) has the highest value, at 112 per cent, due to some reallocations and extra incoming funds.

Figure 3. Relative proportion of the available budget by outcome requirements



In terms of the absorption rate of available outcome level budgets, nine of the outcomes absorbed more than 60 per cent of available resources, with the highest absorption rate recorded for outcome 10 (Social Protection) at 94 per cent. The remaining outcome, outcome 1 (Economic Growth), had the lowest absorption rate at 16 per cent.

Figure 4. Relative budget absorption by outcome



Evaluation question 8: To what extent did the UNCT, UNRCO, UN interagency coordination mechanisms and joint programming/joint programmes contribute to the more integrated, collaborative and efficient implementation of the OP III/UNSDF, including the reduction of transaction costs, effective and efficient implementation in case of shortfalls in financial contributions, and resource mobilization?

As indicated by its name and its purpose, the Joint Work Plan – the implementation tool of the Outcome Groups – serves as the mode of transmission for the OP III/UNSDF's governance architecture and programme logic. Even the most integrated high level scheme will suffer if there is lacklustre coordination during implementation. By contrast, a well-designed and properly coordinated Joint Work Plan can instil synergies in conventional, non-integrated programmatic silos and sub-silos. Ideally, integration should be present both in the Joint Work Plan's design and implementation, as well as in outcome design and coordination (through Outcome/Results Groups as well as the super-structure of the PMT, OMT and UNCT, backed by a strong UNRCO). The worst case scenario involves a tentatively coordinated Joint Work Plan both in terms of its structure and practice, as well as weak coordination and integration at the level of outcome design.

It is worth mentioning that the most recent version of the Joint Work Plan was uploaded to UNInfo in November 2019. This cannot be blamed on any flaws of UNInfo or a lack of agencies' willingness to update information. Rather, the Joint Work Plan was not updated due to coordination issues, including priority shifting due to the COVID-19 emergency response and related re-programming/repurposing, shifts in the Government and frequent staff turnover. No updated version of the Joint Work Plan was officially signed for 2020 or 2021.

The UN has been quite successful at developing structures at the national level (Outcome Groups, the UNCT and PMT, etc.). Structures at the sub-national level are weaker and less effective, such as PPTs in Azad Jammu and Kashmir, and Gilgit-Baltistan. At the central level, Outcome Group meetings have been held infrequently. In general, lead agencies feel that the work of their Outcome Groups has not been successful due to insufficient capacities among many agencies to lead or participate in these groups, as well as the lack of funding coming through these groups.

Delivering as One champions exist among senior leadership and chief technicians. However, single agency interests have been a dominant feature of the overall OP III/UNSDF and corporate culture. For instance, in some cases donors have had to coordinate between UN AFPs. A considerable number of key stakeholders do not appear to have fully bought into Delivering as One principles. As a case in point, some donors report witnessing, and being negatively affected by an increase in transaction costs due to, competition and a lack of coordination between AFPs. The vetting of key OP III/UNSDF programming and governance process-related 'artefacts' – such as prodocs, meeting minutes, work plans, etc. – reveals some 'oneness'. For example, they include references to the OP III/UNSDF, various outcomes, joint programming and collaboration among UN agencies, joint assessments and monitoring. However, the detailed findings below point to a number of relative gaps, weaknesses and flaws when it comes to Delivering as One-specific aspects of 'jointness' in the articulation, coordination and cooperation of guiding documents and processes. The sections below present an overview of related insights from the vetting exercise, by category (prodocs, Country Programme Documents, the minutes of Outcome Group meetings and a Joint Work Plan analysis).

(a) Prodoc analysis

Among 40 prodocs, including some project proposals (n=40), 82.5 per cent refer to single agencies projects and 17.5 per cent to projects using various joint programming modalities. These modalities include UN agency-to-agency contribution agreements, Joint Plans by more than two participating UN agencies, and donor agreements (grants, contractual or third-party cost sharing agreements). Thirteen of 40 prodocs (32.5 per cent) reference or mention the alignment of their outputs/activities with the OP III/UNSDF, whereas 25 per cent refer to single agencies projects (10 out of 40) and 7.5 per cent refer to Joint Programmes (three out of 40). Some 25 per cent of single agencies projects and Joint Programmes explicitly cross-reference or quote knowledge/learning products (reports, studies, etc.) produced by other agencies. Good examples of this, with

in-built synergies and explicitly cross-referencing of one (or more) programmes/projects run by other AFPs, are UNIDO's Pakistan Agri-food and Agro-industry Development Assistance Initiative (PAFAID) in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Balochistan, and the ILO's Clear Cotton Project. Both involve close collaboration with FAO even though they are single agencies projects. More than 50 per cent of existing UN interventions are either exclusively, or also, geographically located in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Balochistan.

(b) Country programme analysis (Country Programme Documents and equivalents)

All AFP Country Programme Documents are aligned with relevant OP III/UNSDF outcomes. Practically all Country Programme Documents mention the OP III/UNSDF (stating that they are 'aligned with' the OP III/UNSDF, etc.) either in the narrative and/or their results framework. Outcome statements in Country Programme Documents do not repeat OP III/UNSDF outcome statements verbatim. Instead, they adapt the language of OP III/UNSDF outcomes. In some cases, Country Programme Documents' results frameworks reference OP III/UNSDF outcome indicators. In almost all cases, Country Programme Documents' outcomes fall under existing OP III/UNSDF outcomes. Output/activity design is in line with specific agencies' mandates and respective corporate strategic note (SN) and/or regional plan/initiative(s). Cross-cutting areas are mainstreamed across all Country Programme Documents. However, in a few cases, the design of cross-cutting areas follows corporate logic/language rather than OP III/UNSDF joint standards.

(c) Analysis of meeting minutes (Outcome Groups, UNCT, PMT and OMT)

Specifically customized Terms of Reference exist for all 10 Outcome Groups. Nevertheless, six Outcome Groups have not held a single official meeting, not including participation in humanitarian/COVID-19 meetings. Outcome Group 4 held a total of eight meetings (1x1, 2x2, 1x3 meetings until the end of 2021). This represents 3 per cent of the expected number of meetings if monthly frequency is used as a target, or 10 per cent if quarterly frequency is used as a target. On average, the average attendance of participating agencies' staff was 70 per cent during the meetings held. This analysis is based on data shared with the evaluation team by November 2021. While the ILO provided additional data at a later stage for outcomes 2 and 10, the overall picture remains the same.

Senior leadership's and staff's attendance, as well as the overall quality of related meeting minutes, largely meets expected standards laid out in the Terms of Reference. However, fluctuations in AFP representation are apparent in a number of cases. On average, UNRCO's attendance was 50 per cent at the meetings held. The UNCT, PMT and OMT all held regular meetings. Average attendance as per membership stipulations was 90 per cent for UNCT meetings, and 80 per cent for PMT and OMT meetings.

(d) Joint Work Plan analysis (10 outcomes, 54 outputs and 250 activities)

All outcome indicators are mentioned in the Joint Work Plan, with some small discrepancies. For instance, outcome 3 lists seven indicators whereas the Results Framework has six, while outcome 10 lists four instead of three indicators although but all 31 indicators from the RF are mentioned. There is a non-standard approach in terms of matching outcome level indicators with outcome/output statements. Most outcome indicators directly follow the outcome statement, but in a few cases outcome indicators are included at the output level, following the logic of the 'best fit' with respective output statements. For five of the 10 outcomes, additional output and/or activity level indicators have been filled in (featuring statements, but no data). This suggests that in every single case there have been copied and pasted from agency Country Programme Documents' results frameworks/JWPs. Furthermore, in some cases, baseline and final target values are mentioned but no single 'actual' update is included.

Financial data does not match the 'actual' three-year financial table or the 2.5 year Common Budgetary Framework. In a considerable number of cases, activities are 'empty shells'. There are different possible reasons for this – oversight was abandoned, there was no funding, the activity is covered under 2018 as a one-year activity according to the initial plan, the activity was postponed (until the next year), or sequential planning (2020+). In some cases, there is a discrepancy between the agencies listed as contributing entities

and their appearance under activities. This might be due to ‘ghost’ contributors, who are supposed to come in at a later stage of the activity to provide coordination and/or financial, rather than operational, support. Alternatively, this may be due to a simple oversight in completing the form. A related example is output 3.1.5. This concerns “increased national and sub-national capacity to ensure equitable access and utilization of integrated quality RMNCAH including SRHR and family planning services in development and humanitarian settings for all (including youth)” and is meant to be implemented jointly by UNHCR, WHO, UNFPA, UNICEF and UNAIDS. However, only three of the five listed AFPs appear under specific activity lines.

For four outcomes (3, 6, 8 and 9) activities listed under outputs are framed as multi-agency activities, while all others activities are presented as single agency activities. Therefore, only six outcomes include specific activities delivered by more than one agency (multi-agency activities). Some 28 per cent of outputs are entirely implemented by a single agency across all related activities, while 89 per cent of outputs do not include multi-agency activities at all. This means that only 11 per cent of outputs involve multi-agency activities. In two of the four cases in which multi-agency activities appear under a specific outcome, more than one output includes at least one multi-agency activity (two different outputs under outcome 3 and another two under outcome 9).

At the activity level, 42 per cent of the activities listed are ‘empty shells’ – while they have a title and/or an implementing entity mentioned, they include no budgetary and/or monitoring data (104 of 250 activities). This reveals that reporting and/or financing/delivery were major challenges during the OP III/UNSDF’s implementation. Overall, 95.5 per cent of activities are single agency activities, while 4.5 per cent (11 of 250 activities) of the activities listed under the Joint Work Plan are multi-agency activities, implemented jointly by at least two AFPs. These include four activities under outcome 3, three of which appear under a single output, one activity each under outcomes 6 and 8, and five activities under outcome 9 under two outputs (with four activities listed under one of these two outputs). Outcome 3 (Health and WASH) is the most integrated outcome, while output 3.1.1 is the output with the largest number of AFPs contributing to the same activity. This output is “legal, policy and social barriers are removed and a combination of prevention, testing, treatment care, services for HIV, TB and Hepatitis are scaled up through rights-based and gender-sensitive advocacy, technical assistance and multi-stakeholder partnerships.” The output involves UNAIDS, WHO, UNODC, UNICEF, UNHCR, UNFPA and UNDP. Under this output, two activities involve four contributing agencies – activity 3.1.1.5 involves UNAIDS, UNICEF, UNODC and WHO, while activity 3.1.1.9 involves UNAIDS, UNDP, UNFPA and WHO.

Output 3.1.5 is the output with the highest relative share of activities implemented by more than one agency – with three of its nine activities (one-third) jointly implemented by UNICEF and WHO. The output concerns “increased national and sub-national capacity to ensure equitable access and utilization of integrated quality RMNCAH including SRHR and family planning services in development and humanitarian settings for all (including youth)” and involves UNHCR, WHO, UNFPA, UNICEF and UNAIDS, as noted above. Overall, 10 UN AFPs are involved in multi-agency activities – UNAIDS, UNDP, UNEP, UNESCO, UNFPA, UN Habitat, UNICEF, UNODC, UN Women and WHO.

It is difficult to identify evidence of reduced transactions costs in the programmatic realm. In terms of operations (OMT), as mentioned above, shared long-term agreements and the Mutual Recognition Policy under the Business Operations Strategy 2.0 generated time and cost savings. The exact amount of direct and indirect savings in terms of money and time has not yet been calculated. It is expected that its monetary value for the entire OP III/UNSDF life cycle adds up to several million United States dollars.

Recognizing these problems, the evaluation team suggests a new structure for the next UN programme cycle starting from 2023, consisting of only five Outcome Groups, and a related theory of change, as shown below.

Figure 5. Theory of change outlines for five Outcome Groups for the next UN programme cycle

Outcome Group 1 – Basic Social Services

Health and family planning	Education	Water, sanitation and hygiene	Nutrition	Agriculture	Social protection
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Outcome Group 2 – Gender Equality and Women’s Empowerment

Normative frameworks and data	Inclusive gender financing	Protection against harmful practices	Awareness, voice, agency and leadership	Women’s economic empowerment
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Outcome Group 3 – Climate Change and the Environment

Overarching policy, advocacy, awareness raising, data compilation – creating enabling environment for climate action in Pakistan	Protection of the source of the Indus Basin	Equitable and efficient use of water and other resources of the Indus Basin	Protection of the marine ecosystems of the Indus Basin
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Outcome Group 4 – Sustainable Economic Growth

Gender-responsive strategies and programmes for sustainable and green economic growth and decent work	Adequate decent employment opportunities for youth, women and other vulnerable groups	Enabling business environment and financing for development for job-rich economic sectors	Strengthened capacities and competencies of human resources, technical education, skills and entrepreneurship opportunities	Addressing Inequalities and disparities in the world of work	Promotion of decent work and workers’ rights
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Outcome Group 5 – Governance

Strengthened democratic governance of state institutions and systems	Affordable and efficient justice system	Awareness and agency of people about their rights
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Evaluation question 9. To what extent were the previous structures of development assistance and partnerships efficient and able to adapt to support COVID-19 responses? Were these adequate? Where were the weaknesses? Has the UN been able to offer a timely and cost-efficient procurement offer to meet the country's response to COVID-19?

The UN provided a multi-pronged response to the COVID-19 pandemic, following the logic of saving lives, protecting people and recovering better. This threefold response to support the Government of Pakistan involved: (i) an immediate health response to control the transmission of the novel coronavirus, getting people the health care they need, and reducing mortality, (ii) an OCHA-led humanitarian response to help the most vulnerable people to withstand the COVID-19 crisis by providing planning support, emergency supplies, and food and cash aid to the most vulnerable people in Pakistan, especially communities recovering from floods and multiple shocks, and (iii) general coordination, planning and monitoring support on a national scale through an integrated multi-sector recovery mechanism called the UN Pakistan COVID-19 Socio-Economic Response Plan, led by the UN Resident Coordinator.

The UN in Pakistan has been able to draw on the different capacities, comparative advantages and mandates in its arsenal. These include the medical expertise of WHO as the specialized UN AFP leading in this field, the emergency coordination expertise of OCHA, and the general development coordination backbone provided through the UNRCO. As part of the coordinated response, the entire UNCT/Humanitarian Country Team contributed by providing specific technical expertise, services and/or financial support to address the pandemic. The response has been continuously sustained for almost two years, involving a fair amount of COVID-19 mainstreaming, adaptation and adjustments of regular OP III/UNSDF activities, including the related repurposing of programme budget lines.

In terms of delivery strategies, the UN applied the whole set of modalities it is known for – mobilizing the specific technical expertise of its member entities where needed and best suited. The assessment of the value added by this integrated response is overwhelmingly positive. In particular, both in-house and external stakeholders emphasize that the crisis brought out the best in the UN system as a whole and its individual components, which joined forces and used a joint approach. In this respect, during these times of crisis, where business as usual would not have been good enough, the UN machinery was able to shift into overdrive impressively. More specifically, in terms of the emergency response, through the Risk Communication and Community Engagement (RCCE), the UN has kept supporting Pakistan's RCCE Plan on responsive, empathic, transparent and consistent messaging in local languages through trusted communication channels, community-based networks, key influencers and by building local capacities. This involved engaging key groups, raising awareness through the media, setting up helplines, mobile outreach and training activities. Risk communication including community engagement was used to sensitize and inform the population about the danger posed by COVID-19, including the basic messages of observing social distancing and basic hygiene measures, including handwashing and wearing face masks. The approach involved mobilizing youth, the media, religious leaders and community leaders (such as elders), teachers, students, parents, law enforcement and authorities nationwide. The UN also supported surveillance and case identification, laboratory capacities and testing, and preventive measures at points of entry. Through infection prevention and control efforts, frontline workers were equipped with protective equipment and training. Furthermore, the UN provided lifesaving WASH facilities and supplies to communities.

The UN Pakistan COVID-19 Socio-Economic Response Plan was swiftly put together by building on the global guidance issued by the UN's headquarters. It is an integrated customized socio-economic response package to mitigate the human crisis caused by the pandemic, basically by adjusting the existing gamut of activities to the COVID-19 context. Wherever possible and appropriate, elements of COVID-19 mitigation and recovery were added to the programme response. Moreover, existing activities and programme components were adapted by retooling them, in the sense of adding to the overall set of integrated COVID-19 responses. The UN Pakistan COVID-19 Pakistan Socio-Economic Framework in support of the Government consists of five pillars designed to keep public services accessible, provide the most vulnerable with vital support, throw businesses a lifeline to keep them solvent, maintain functional supply chains, uphold the performance of democratic institutions and maintain respect for human rights. Its pillars are:

- (i) Health first, involving support for Pakistan's official health system to deliver essential services, including immunization, maternal and child health services, and health care for communicable and non-communicable diseases.
- (ii) Social protection and basic services, involving combatting malnutrition, supporting agriculture and food security, enabling children to learn remotely and fighting sexual and gender-based violence.
- (iii) Economic recovery, involving support for SMEs, training entrepreneurs, creating cash-for-work opportunities, and backing innovative business ideas to enable them to 'turn the crisis into an opportunity'.
- (iv) Multilateral collaboration and macroeconomic support to ensure macroeconomic balance and prevent further harm from the economy and society as a whole.

- (v) Social cohesion and community resilience, including youth mobilization to ensure that Pakistan ‘recovers better’ from COVID-19.

While the medical and public health response focuses on suppressing the transmission of the virus, the coordination, planning and monitoring support of both the humanitarian and the socio-economic response plans ensured the planning and implementation of integrated solutions. Surveillance, rapid response teams and case investigation support was provided to ensure the scientifically sound detection of COVID-19 cases and contact tracing. Reporting, capacity building and the provision of response supplies were part of the related implementation strategies. Apart from the WHO-led scientific support and the vaccine drive, intervention strategies across the gamut of the UN’s support included brokering multi-stakeholder agreements, organizing and hosting meetings, setting up and running working groups and task forces, and providing technical assistance through the provision of experts. In terms of procurement support, the UN was able to shore up significant direct and indirect support to help the Government to fight the pandemic from early 2020. The following examples of relevant UN inputs and activities, which are by no means exhaustive, reflect the diversity and scope of the UN’s response:

- As part of UN support for the Government of Pakistan’s vaccination drive, WHO and UNICEF delivered over 18 million doses of COVID-19 vaccines (Astra Zeneca, Pfizer, Moderna and Sinopharm) to the Government on behalf of the COVAX facility between May and August 2021. Another 6 million doses were received in September 2021. By early October 2021, Pakistan had administered 83 million vaccine doses, more than 29 million people had been fully vaccinated and 60 million had been partially vaccinated.
- In addition to supporting national health services through the Ministry of National Health Services, Regulation and Coordination, the UN formed a partnership with the National COVID-19 Secretariat to provide relevant technical and coordination support.
- UNDP supported the fourth video conference between the Balochistan Command and Operation Centre (BCOC) and Divisional Command and Operation Centres on 24 November 2020. Participants agreed to strictly enforce Standard Operating Procedures – such as compulsory mask-wearing, hand sanitization and social distancing – and to crack down on businesses and shopping malls that are not following SOPs. It also convened the 5th Early Recovery Working Group (ERWG) to address the pandemic’s economic impact and the Government’s Action Plan to address the second wave of COVID-19 infections.
- UNHCR, as co-chair of the Protection Working Group, supported the coordination of COVID-related protection interventions by National and Provincial Disaster Management Authorities. This involved identifying gaps, strengthening referral mechanisms, monitoring the protection response, and intensifying messaging to combat myths and stigma surrounding COVID-19 in refugee communities.
- UNFPA, as co-chair of the Gender-based Violence Sub-Working Group, aided coordination, technical backstopping and oversight for multisectoral prevention, mitigation and response services to protect women, girls and vulnerable groups. It deployed senior technical experts on gender-based violence and sexual and reproductive health to support the National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) to integrate a women’s rights lens into the COVID-19 response. Other experts deployed to the Ministry of National Health Services, Regulation and Coordination helped to strengthen COVID-19 response capacity and the Universal Health Coverage Initiative.
- UNICEF, the World Bank, the Asian Development Bank (ADB) and the Ministry of National Health Services, Regulation and Coordination procured supplies to fight COVID-19, financed by Pandemic Emergency Funds and an ADB grant agreement. Among other risk communication and community engagement activities, UNICEF engaged 12,781 more religious leaders to raise awareness of COVID-19 risks through existing polio alliances and health programmes – bringing the total number of religious leaders mobilized to 423,662. They used Friday sermons and 423,662 mosque announcements to promote preventive

behaviours, explaining the importance of handwashing, mask-wearing, physical distancing, polio eradication and essential immunization, while encouraging other religious leaders to follow suit.

- WHO co-led the COVAX initiative with Gavi, the Vaccine Alliance, and the Coalition for Epidemic Preparedness Innovations (CEPI) that accelerated the development of COVID-19 vaccines and works to guarantee equitable access for all countries. In Pakistan, WHO's team of technical officers led a committee on the launch of the COVID-19 vaccine. It finalized standards, uniform responses to vaccination-related questions – including questions on registration, eligibility, health facilities, efficacy, side-effects and contraindications – while high level WHO representatives attended meetings of the National Command and Control Centre. These included discussions on the COVID-19 vaccine's phased launch through Pakistan's Expanded Programme on Immunization (EPI), using the databases of the National Database and Registration Authority (NADRA).
- WFP supported the implementation of the National Action Plan for COVID-19 by Disaster Management Authorities and Departments of Education at the national, provincial and district levels. It finished building an emergency storage facility for Sindh's Provincial Disaster Management Authority (PDMA) and a cold storage facility for Khyber Pakhtunkhwa's Department of Health.
- UNODC delivered sensitization modules for police and prison staff on preventing and mitigating the risks of COVID-19 transmission. It held meetings on the plight of under-trial prisoners (UTP) through a weekly virtual forum with provincial criminal justice stakeholders, including the judiciary. It also explored COVID-19's impact on criminal justice institutions' performance through a citizen perception survey in two provinces.
- UNOPS procured emergency medical and laboratory equipment for the Aga Khan Foundation's hospitals in Gilgit-Baltistan, Azad Jammu and Kashmir, and the district of Chitral in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, in order to support their response to COVID-19.
- Laboratory equipment worth US\$1.5 million, funded by the Asian Development Bank, was delivered to UNICEF's warehouse in July 2021, following delays caused by global supply chain disruptions. This equipment was later delivered to 20 laboratories identified with the Ministry of National Health Services, Regulation and Coordination.
- The UN actively assisted the timely sourcing and availability of quality essential medical supplies and protective equipment for Pakistan's COVID-19 response. It did so by brokering agreements and providing procurement services, support to operational facilities, data services and updating the referral pathway. In terms of supplies and logistics, many AFPs provided inputs. For example, to strengthen COVID-19 testing and laboratory capacities, WHO alone supplied 34 real-time testing machines and eight bio safety cabinets, more than 150 motorbikes for sample transportation and surveillance, and donated 20 ambulances, biomedical equipment and supplies (50 ventilators, 100 oxygen concentrators, 50 suction machines, 20 ECG machines, 50 automated beds, personal protective equipment (PPE), hand sanitizers and disinfectants) to COVID-19 designated health care facilities and points of entry to improve infection prevention and control, case management and critical care. WHO also supported the establishment of three COVID-19 vaccination centres in Islamabad in line with global standards, as well as a COVID-19 vaccination monitoring cell at the offices of the federal Expanded Programme on Immunization. It provided technical capacity building for over 350 laboratory personnel on quality system management, bio-risk management, COVID-19 diagnostics and compliance with standards. It also trained 10,000 vaccinators and data entry operators on the databases and mobile applications of the Community Viability Monitoring Framework (COVIM) and the National Incident Management System (NIMS). Some 5,130 vaccinators and data entry operators were trained on vaccine administration, as were over 11,000 health care workers on infection prevention and control.

One weakness that must be highlighted is that the roll-out and coordination of activities at the sub-national level may have lagged behind in some cases, both in terms of speed and outreach/coverage. This possibly also occurred in remote areas where the quality of activities and service delivery relies on implementing partners.

4.4. Sustainability of the OP III/UNSDF

Evaluation question 10: To what extent is the OP III/UNSDF designed and implemented with a view towards sustainability (institutional, social, financial, etc.), ownership, the durability of effects and the commitment of stakeholders? What evidence demonstrates improved institutional capacity and performance, particularly among national institutions that were supported by and through the OP III/UNSDF?

The evaluation considered sustainability from a 360° lens, covering financial, environmental, management and programmatic issues. Since the OP III/UNSDF is ongoing and its impacts are at an early stage, the focus of analysis is less on the actual sustainability achieved and more on the steps being taken to ensure sustainability. A close review shows that concerns about ensuring sustainability do not appear very prominently or explicitly in the OP III/UNSDF programme document. Ideally, there would have been a detailed section presenting a sustainability framework that describes how the UN conceptualizes sustainability and how it plans to ensure it. Such a section is missing in the programme document. However, some of the programme approaches mentioned in the overall document do address sustainability.

For example, the cross-cutting strategies include ensuring national ownership, moving from a project to a programme approach, including policy work and enhancing partners' capacities can all help to ensure sustainability. Many of the programme descriptions under its outcomes focus on sustainability. Thus, the overall aim under outcome 1 (Economic Growth) emphasizes both inclusivity and sustainability as key considerations. Outcome 5 (Food Security and Sustainable Agriculture) defines sustainable agriculture in terms of environmental sustainability. The overall aim under outcome 6 (Resilience) focuses on the sustainable use of natural resources.

In terms of the actual implementation and achievement of sustainability concerns, the three annual OP III/UNSDF reports between 2018 and 2020 reports do not provide any detailed information on outcomes or performance based on sustainability or other key OECD-DAC criteria. However, the reports provide under various outcomes focusing on programme dimensions like technical capacity building, policy work and partnerships that normally contribute to sustainability. Thus, given the lack of a comprehensive monitoring and evaluation system mentioned above, programme documents do not provide comprehensive information to rigorously analyse progress towards sustainability. Responses to the survey show that nearly 40 per cent of internal and 50 per cent of external stakeholders believe that capacity building or capacity development has been mainstreamed across the OP III/UNSDF's outcomes, outputs and inputs/activities, either decently or in some cases even, very well. Nearly 50 per cent of internal and 12.5 per cent of external stakeholders rate performance on mainstreaming environmental sustainability issues highly or very highly. Moreover, 35 per cent of internal and 25 per cent of external stakeholders feel that the impact of the OP III/UNSDF's work is likely or highly likely to be sustained in the long-term. Qualitative responses to the survey, focus group discussions and key informant interviews reveal considerable concerns about the programme's ability to address sustainability issues. Stakeholders feel that capacity building has been a key tool for ensuring sustainability, although frequent staff transfers and turnover (including national programme and senior technical level staff, as well as the out-rotation of expatriate technical and managerial staff) undermine sustainability. Fewer capacity building activities took place in some provinces, such as Balochistan, than at the federal level. Working through partnerships with the government and civil society – for instance, on polio eradication – has proven a successful means of achieving sustainability. Short-term UN funding, frequent changes in government functionaries and a lack of political ownership also undermine sustainability. Thus, a clearer sustainability framework (with exit strategies) is required that spells out how sustainability will be achieved and measured for future UN programmes.

The concerns around sustainability also extend to the areas of gender, leaving no one behind and inclusion issues. While capacity building has been a key vehicle for ensuring sustainability in other areas, capacity building initiatives specifically related to gender, leaving no one behind and inclusion issues are less prominent in the planning and implementation phases of the OP III/UNSDF. The lack of well-developed provincial/regional structures for OP III/UNSDF planning, consultation and programme implementation in less developed provinces and regions make sustainability around the issues of leaving no one behind and inclusion more acute.

4.5. Coherence/coordination

Evaluation question 11: To what extent have the UNCT and UN inter-agency coordination mechanisms, including joint programmes, contributed to increased UN coherence towards common objectives and to deliver quality, integrated, SDG-focused policy support; and has the OP III/UNSDF strengthened the position, credibility and reliability of the UN system as a partner for the Government and other actors, and been used effectively as a partnership vehicle?

In a nutshell, and by referring to the detailed evidence presented – especially under the answers to evaluation questions 6–9 – the basic tenets of Delivering as One-related best practices are well-observed. These include Outcome Group design, a strong PME group supporting the PMT, UNInfo as a common monitoring and evaluation backbone, Joint Work Plans, the presence of Joint Plans and the implementation of the Business Operations Strategy 2.0. However, there is room for improvement in all areas in terms of further reducing transaction costs, increasing the degree of articulation and integration, stronger inter-agency coordination and cross-sector collaboration, enhancing the targeting of leaving no one behind and SDG-specific monitoring and evaluation, and the use of SMART indicators. As discussed in detail above, the exact extent to which SDG-focused policy support has been provided cannot be exactly determined with the existing set of performance indicators and related monitoring and evaluation systems, at least not at present. This would require a comprehensive set of updated data points to inform virtually all indicators with relevant progress data.

As reflected in the stakeholder interviews and survey data, there is strong appreciation of the UN's overall value. Stakeholders recognize and cherish the UN's comparative advantages, including technical acumen and expertise in support of national SDG efforts. They also appreciate its more intangible added value in terms of high level coordination services, including serving as an international broker, convener, neutral interlocutor and provider of guidance and counsel on normative standards. Hence, the OP III/UNSDF, as the UN's programmatic framework and platform, by extension serves as meta-partnership vehicle. It is similarly seen as very valuable and of strategic importance to support Pakistan in pursuing its national policy goals, including the SDGs.

4.6. Early impact

Key immediate impact is apparent in five major areas:

- (1) **The COVID-19 response:** The UN's specialized medical expertise played a critical role in providing technical assistance to Pakistan's National Command and Control Centre, set up by the Federal Government to deal with the health emergency prompted by the COVID-19 crisis. The centre's work has been praised globally for keeping the number of deaths due to COVID-19 low compared with other, similar country contexts.
- (2) **Support for the Ehsaas programme:** The *Ehsaas* programme was launched as the flagship programme of the PTI government in 2018. Several UN agencies, particularly WFP and UNICEF – supported various components of *Ehsaas*. The programme is credited with successfully addressing the impoverishment caused by the economic slowdown and the COVID-19 pandemic.

- (3) **Polio eradication:** WHO and UNICEF have played a critical role in moving Pakistan towards eradicating polio, including between 2018 and 2022.
- (4) **Humanitarian emergency work:** UN agencies have played critical roles in providing relief response in the wake of several disasters in Pakistan since 2018, including the severe earthquake in Balochistan in 2021, as well as multiple floods and drought in different provinces/regions.
- (5) **Locust control:** Pakistan has experienced by major locust attacks in recent years. The UN's specialized agricultural expertise has proven to be of critical importance in minimizing the impact of locust attacks on crops.

4.7. Lessons learned

- (1) There remains considerable room for improvement in terms of Delivering as One and ensuring the coherence of multi-agency programme design, implementation and the existence of joint programming opportunities.
- (2) More coordinated support is needed at the sub-national level. For instance, while Gilgit-Baltistan is remote and the third-poorest region in the country, it has received very limited support.
- (3) The mere existence of Terms of Reference and organograms for Outcome Groups or the PMT, etc. are not enough to ensure that Delivering as One is actually happening. Increased levels of AFP implication are required in terms of joint funding and programming.
- (4) The *Ehsaas* programme platform, which is further being ramped up, could potentially serve as a key instrument to push for innovative, integrated, Delivering as One multi-AFP joint programming and Joint Plans in support of multi-sectoral government-driven programming (including a nexus logic).
- (5) There is a mismatch between the UN's programme structures that reflect a One UN Programme at the national level and Pakistan's evolution to decentralized federal structures. Most government programming for the SDGs occurs at the sub-national level, but UN programming has followed a top-down approach (from the central, national level, downward).
- (6) To ensure a more integrated response, a model of seven Joint Work Plans at the provincial/regional level may ensure greater effectiveness than the current outcome-based model at the national level.
- (7) Stakeholders across the board look at the UN's added (intangible yet very concrete) value as a convenor – including its convening power and Delivering as One-related lessons learned for complex multi-stakeholder coordination platforms/mechanisms and related processes – and as a broker of multi-stakeholder solutions.
- (8) Donors expect the UN to better coordinate its work and become better at cutting transaction costs. This includes cutting the number of parallel processes for setting up bilateral or parallel bilateral (donor/single agency) contracts in lieu of single Joint Plan contracts, as well as separate reporting/monitoring burdens, etc.

4.8. Best practices

- (1) The OP III/UNSDF is highly relevant to national priorities established in 2016–17 due to thorough consultations held at the federal level.
- (2) The UN has demonstrated a strong ability to adjust programming during the COVID-19 crisis and mounted an effective response to the crisis involving direct programming as well as support for the government.

- (3) The OP III/UNSDF has involved strong fundraising and a strong absorption rate as of the end of 2020, with 80 per cent of required resources secured and an 80 per cent absorption rate of available resources.
- (4) Internal and external stakeholders express a high degree of satisfaction with the effectiveness of overall UN programming.
- (5) The programme incorporates gender, equity and leaving no one behind principles well overall, across different outcomes.
- (6) There is a strong focus on partnerships and capacity building, especially at the federal level, which has contributed to sustainability.
- (7) All AFPs are actively using long-term agreements and the Mutual Recognition Policy under the Business Operations Strategy 2.0 has really helped to galvanize AFPs and generate time and cost savings.

4.9. Conclusions

The findings of this evaluation show that the OP III/UNSDF 2018–2022 has played a critical role in instituting the process for achieving the SDGs in Pakistan.

Relevance

Evaluation question 1. Alignment with national priorities and adjustment to changes in the context: Overall, the OP III/UNSDF's activities are well-aligned with overarching national goals and international objectives. This high degree of relevance to national priorities is due to a thorough process of consultations with the Federal Government during the programme's design phase. However, there is less alignment with the requirements of Pakistan's provinces and regions. Adapting to COVID-19 was effective and swift, despite the challenges of social distancing/lockdown measures for working modalities, and a comprehensive COVID-19 response plan was developed.

Evaluation question 2. Human rights, gender and the principle of leaving no one behind: Issues of gender, vulnerable groups and the principle of leaving no one behind are addressed structurally at the highest level in the programme through outcome 8 (Gender, Equality and Dignity). However, this outcome only constitutes 1 per cent of the target budget, and less than 1 per cent of cumulative expenditures during the first three years of the programme's implementation. While the OP III/UNSDF's work on gender and marginalized groups is appreciated, comparatively speaking, there is less awareness about the UN's human rights work.

Evaluation question 3. The UN's comparative advantage: The UN had used its comparative advantages well to develop momentum and national ownership in terms of positioning the SDGs as a national priority. The UN has used its technical capacities, especially during COVID-19, neutral convenor role, and access to global resources. However, these advantages could have been better used to ensure effective programme implementation using the One UN Programme approach, especially at the sub-national level.

Effectiveness

Evaluation question 4. OP III/UNSDF's contribution to strengthening national capacities, the policy environment and the achievement of Sustainable Development Goals: The UN's role has been instrumental in creating awareness about the SDGs and strengthening capacities among government agencies to implement the 2030 Agenda. It is difficult to analyse UN's relative contribution to different high level OP III performance indicators given the lack of concrete data about different sources of funding for the respective comprehensive national effort. It is difficult to undertake a more in-depth analysis of programme

effectiveness as the original programme document prepared in 2017 did not provide specific outcome, output or activity targets for the programme and the various outcomes.

Evaluation question 4. OP III/UNSDF's contribution to strengthening national capacities, the policy environment and the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals: The UN's role has been instrumental in creating awareness about SDGs and strengthening capacities among government agencies to implement the 2030 Agenda. While beneficiaries appreciate the role of SDG Units, they also express additional expectations and aspirations that have yet to be realized. It is difficult to analyse the UN's relative contribution to different high level OP III/UNSDF performance indicators (pitched at the SDG/NDS level) given the lack of concrete data about different sources of funding for respective comprehensive national efforts. Financial figures for 2018 to the end of 2020 show that, during this three-year period, the OP III/UNSDF required total resources of US\$2.035 billion, of which nearly US\$1.650 billion (81 per cent) were already available. The overall absorption rate – that is, the percentage of available resources spent – is 80 per cent overall. Outcome 10 (Social Protection) has the highest absorption rate (94 per cent), while outcome 1 (Economic Growth) has the lowest (12 per cent). However, it is difficult to undertake a more in-depth analysis of programme effectiveness as the original programme document prepared in 2017 does not provide specific outcome, output or activity targets for the programme and its outcomes.

Evaluation question 5. OP III/UNSDF monitoring system: The OP III/UNSDF adopted national level indicators on progress towards the SDGs as outcome level indicators for the programme. This is problematic for several reasons. First, the UN is only one contributor towards these goals, which makes it difficult to analyse its relative contribution to national level indicators. Second, information about the contribution of government and other donors to national level progress on the achievement of the SDGs is not readily available. Therefore, it is difficult to determine how much of the progress achieved on national level indicators is due to UN efforts. Thus, it may be better for the UN to develop its own outcome level programme indicators and related targets, based on its own programme plans and resource availability. This would address the issue of data availability, as well as being able to demonstrate the change truly attributable to the UN and, therefore, related results. At the top tier, indicators pitched at the level of SDG and NDS indicators should be carefully vetted in terms of the availability of data sources or means of verification. If these do not exist, or theoretically exist but have never really been functional, or become dysfunctional (due to a lack of funding or for other reasons), the UN should consider whether it should provide support to set up such systems. Such decisions will need to be based on carefully weighing related costs and benefits, a comparative analysis of the UN providing such support or letting other entities do so, sustainability and capacity building needs, etc.

Evaluation question 6. Conducive to promoting integration across sectors: In general, the sheer number of outcomes has not been conducive to an integrated programmatic response, especially since leadership roles are spread across a range of different UN agencies. Effectively, outcome design and related Joint Work Plans are biased towards each lead agency's individual work plans emanating from their agency-specific corporate mandate and approach to work.

Efficiency

Evaluation question 7. Good use of human and financial resources, tools and innovative approaches: Performance in terms of overall efficiency is mixed. Resources generated after three of the programme's five-year period (60 per cent of its life cycle) cover 99.1 per cent of the extrapolated three-year projection of required resources. The absorption of available funds amounts to 80.3 per cent. Outcome 1 (Economic Growth) has the lowest absorption rate among all ten outcomes, at 16 per cent. However, it is difficult to compare financial data with OP III/UNSDF indicator progress (for those indicators that have data) because of the high level nature of selected OP III/UNSDF indicators. All UN AFPs are actively using long-term agreements and the Mutual Recognition Policy under the Business Operations Strategy 2.0 has really helped to galvanize AFPs and generate time and cost savings. However, the attendance of focal points from some agencies is irregular, and focal points are frequently changed. As a result, substantive feedback on draft long-term

agreements often only arrives at the last minute, causing delays and frustration among members who attend regularly. Delays are also caused by irregular (de)briefing between Working Group focal points and OMT focal points in specific AFPs. Moreover, newly introduced OMT provincial focal points require additional training.

Evaluation question 8. Integrated, collaborative and efficient implementation: The UN has successfully developed its structures at the national level (Outcome Groups, UNCT, PMT, etc.). Structures at the sub-national level are weaker and less effective, such as PPTs in Azad Jammu and Kashmir, and Gilgit-Baltistan. In general, Outcome Group leads feel that the work of their groups has not been successful due to insufficient capacities among many agencies to lead or participate in these groups, as well as the lack of funding coming through these groups.

Evaluation question 9. Efficiency of the COVID-19 response: The UN in Pakistan has been able to draw on existing capacities, comparative advantages and mandates in its arsenal to respond to COVID-19. These include the medical expertise of WHO as the specialized UN AFP leading in this field, the emergency coordination expertise of OCHA, and the general development coordination backbone provided through UNRCO. As part of the coordinated response, the entire UNCT/Humanitarian Country Team has contributed by providing specific technical expertise, services and/or financial support to address the pandemic.

Sustainability

Evaluation question 10. Sustainability, ownership, durability of effects and the commitment of stakeholders: There are considerable concerns about the long-term sustainability of the OP III/UNSDF's results. Capacity building has been a key tool for ensuring sustainability, but frequent staff transfers and turnover undermine sustainability. Fewer capacity building activities took place in some provinces, such as Balochistan, than at the federal level. Working through partnerships with the government and civil society – such as on polio eradication – has proven a successful means of achieving sustainability. However, overall, the UN needs a clearer sustainability framework (exit strategies), spelling out how sustainability will be achieved and measured.

Coherence

Evaluation question 11. Programme coherence: Heavy reliance on activities and outputs delivered through single agency approaches has contributed to a relative lack of coherence in the delivery of Joint Work Plans. So did the fact that many, if not most, Outcome/Results Groups function at a sub-par level (on average, meetings are infrequent, do not always involve full participation and participants seldom change). There are also too many Outcome Groups, which leads to a lack of coordination. In terms of programming modalities, joint programming through Joint Work Plans only involves Joint Plans in a few cases, with the notable exception of outcome 8 (Gender, Equality and Dignity) which relies heavily on the Joint Plan modality. In terms of Delivering as One and coherence, as noted above, the work of some Outcome Groups has not been successful due to insufficient understanding and motivation among many agencies to lead or participate in these Delivering as One-inspired groups, as well as the lack of funding for the (joint) activities of these groups.

CHAPTER 5. RECOMMENDATIONS

This chapter presents the evaluation's recommendations in descending order in terms of priority – from the most strategic foundational recommendations related to the results structure, to recommendations further articulating how the suggested approach can be spelled out at the level of the governance set-up, programming and results-based management. The recommendations are presented in sub-sections, organized by the evaluation category as per standard OECD-DAC/UN Evaluation Group evaluation criteria. By default, the recommendations are directed at the UNCT and/or UNRCO, unless stated otherwise.

(a) Relevance and coherence

These recommendations concern strategic programme design and planning, as well as the related programme governance mechanism, to increase overall relevance and performance.

Strategic level

Recommendation 1: In terms of the *results structure*, consider reducing the number of Outcome Groups, preferably by creating interconnected macroscopic hubs rather than outcome 'super siloes'.

Potential pathways to be considered are discussed below.

The thematic areas covered by the OP III/UNSDF's outcome areas could be regrouped as follows:

- (i) Creating a green and sustainable economic growth-centred hub (hub A), covering the areas currently addressed by the outcomes on Economic Growth (outcome 1), Decent Work (outcome 2) and Resilience (outcome 6).
- (ii) Building a human capital-centred hub (hub B) around the areas currently covered by the outcome areas of Food Security and Sustainable Agriculture (outcome 5), Nutrition (outcome 4), Health and WASH (outcome 3), Education and Learning (outcome 7), Gender, Equality and Dignity (outcome 8) and Social Protection (outcome 10).
- (iii) Placing Governance (outcome 9) under hub A in terms of economic governance-related aspects and under hub B in terms of access to administrative services, including democratic governance. The idea would be to continue providing conventional sector-specific support where needed. However, the general thrust would be to tap into the UN's unique comparative advantage, which reaches across sectors, by promoting holistic cross-sectoral solutions between sectors and across hubs. For example, education-related support would seek to systematically strengthen the nexus between the skills and knowledge required for employability, including self-employment/job creation in the private sector. Another example of cross-hub synergies to be addressed through integrated activities would be support for resilient growth and decent work (hub A) and social protection (hub B).

In terms of framing higher level results at the output level, these could be pitched across sectors as structural support for transformative results in terms of, for instance:

- (a) Contributing to institutions and duty bearers across all sectors having the systemic, legal, staff/human resource and equipment-related capacities to provide equitable quality services.
- (b) Embracing a people-centred approach – with a focus on leaving no one behind, gender equality and human rights – to ensure that beneficiaries are fully aware of their rights and entitlements, and make use of these (such as political participation and access to social services, including education and health services, legal services and the justice sector, etc.). This will also cover knowledge about the existence of, services offered by, and access to accountability mechanisms. Results could be further fine-tuned by differentiating between the national/federal level and customized package solutions at the sub-national level. This would respond to area-based needs and requirements. Enablers – such as

digital solutions, private sector involvement and innovative knowledge management, etc. – should be mainstreamed across all result chains.

Recommendation 2: Regarding the internal programme *governance structure*, consider how to better articulate programmatic and operational processes, as well as how to ensure a more inclusive oversight practice that integrates demand-side aspects and bottom-up inputs.

Possible pathways in this respect could include, inter alia:

- (a) Setting up a more nimble UNSDCF programme governance mechanism (for example, with the UNCT and the PMT as a programme oversight forum, acting as a liaison between the UNCT dealing with strategic and political issues, and the programmatic side, in addition to a reduced number of thematic macro-Outcome Groups).
- (b) Strengthening the link between central and provincial level OMT focal points, including at the Working Group level. This recommendation is directed at the OMT and PPTs.
- (c) Introducing a sub-national inclusive development forum (with the UNRC as co-convener, and led by the Government of Pakistan) based on local realities and in discussion with provincial/administrative area governments.

Regarding the third point, some potential ideas to trigger a related discussion might be to introduce a two-tiered approach for the forum. This would involve more frequent programme/sector cluster-specific meetings led by deputy representatives/heads of programmes (HoPs) (convened at the provincial level in every province, at least twice per year) and an annual provincial tour with the UNCT led by the Resident Coordinator convened in every province. Deputy/head of programme level meetings would effectively serve the purpose of higher level provincial programme coordination as preparatory meetings to the more strategic meeting of agency representatives alongside other stakeholders. This mechanism would ensure better connectivity between the national and provincial levels, so that institutional/federal level support is properly informed by needs, demands and requirements at the sub-national level, as well as related programme coordination and management. The forum would also ensure an adequate area-based focus on leaving no one behind, as well as multi-stakeholder coordination at the sub-national level. Importantly, this would also allow active stakeholder development/aid coordination and likely result in enhanced fundraising and resource mobilization since grounded in a team-based UN-technical and financial partners' governance approach.

Recommendation 3: Invest in deepening and broadening the mainstreaming of 'leaving no one behind' across programming and operational processes and procedures. For example, (a) consider expanding programming for transgender and minority persons, (b) linked to the Business Operations Strategy which underpins the drive to enhance operational performance, consider mainstreaming gender, leaving no one behind and human rights into corporate procurement policy by strengthening socially sustainable aspects (for instance by introducing a quota and/or bonus points into tenders, introducing a minimum threshold or bonus for women-owned companies or based on the percentage of women employees, etc.). This is principally a recommendation for the UNCT-OMT.

(b) Effectiveness and efficiency

Programmatic level

Recommendation 4: Emphasize integrated programming, including at the provincial level, capitalizing on the UN's comparative advantage(s) in terms of its unique convening and normative role by setting up appropriate service delivery systems, building staff capacity and designing innovative nexus-sensitive support.

Potential ideas on how this could be tackled could include any of the following efforts:

- (a) Creating bottom-up provincial/regional level Joint Work Plans as quasi-Joint Plans (integrated joint programming maximizing cross-AFP collaboration, with a focus on tapping into synergies rather than only focusing on eliminating duplications. This would reduce the number of missed opportunities for programmatic Delivering as One to a minimum). Here, existing activities could be federated under the common roof of a Joint Programme or a programmatic portfolio of projects which would thereby become more closely interlinked (in Azad Jammu and Kashmir, individual tourism support, snow leopard conservation and forest/biodiversity protection projects could be framed as a Joint Plan to enhance synergies and attract more substantial donor interest).
- (b) Introducing cross-sectoral flagship programmes, such as (i) a broad-based climate change/resilience-related programme, or (ii) an integrated waste-to-value green employment and energy programme in all of Pakistan's provinces. Regarding the second point, there is a huge opportunity in the sense that the waste management field is controlled by informal networks, including criminal gangs which operate outside legal frameworks. Across Pakistan, it appears that there is, at most, one sanitary landfill waste site, and waste-to-value or circular economy-based approaches are either underdeveloped or non-existent. This indicates the huge scale of the problem (including (i) detrimental environmental and public health consequences, such as the seepage of toxic waste into the ground, polluting the soil and aquifers, (ii) unhindered methane gas production, which contributes to the greenhouse effect, and (iii) the exposure of informally organized or individual waste scavengers who run recycling operations, including child labourers, all of whom are vulnerable to falling prey to criminal illegal waste disposal schemes). On the other hand, opportunities to create sustainable green jobs are plentiful. A related programme would provide institutional capacity building and legal/regulatory support (such as drafting a waste management strategy and action plan, etc. linked to anti-corruption and anti-crime components). In addition, there are obvious implications in terms of private sector-driven employment creation, the need for related employment/skills training, including specifically tailored TVET support (e.g. setting up commercial small- to medium-scale waste management and recycling businesses), and access to financial support, health and WASH-related aspects, environmental protection and fighting climate change, knowledge transfer, decent work, supporting women- and youth-led SMEs, and links to urban agriculture.

Recommendation 5: Invest in evidence-driven, integrated 'new way of working' (NWOW)-type programming to more effectively/efficiently tackle the complexity of contemporary multidimensional crises and challenges.

Possible ideas related to this recommendation could include:

- (a) Spelling out the implications of the 'new way of working' in and for Pakistan at the national and sub-national levels (joint workshops with OCHA, NGOs, the Government of Pakistan including provincial governments, donors, international NGOs, local NGOs and CSOs, the private sector and academia).
- (b) Testing innovative modalities (for example, an integrated Joint Work Plan framed as a provincial/area-based new way of working, experimenting with innovative programmatic and governance design modalities, etc.) in smaller sub-national entities such as Khyber Pakhtunkhwa or Azad Jammu and Kashmir (cf. b. 1/'Programming', above). The European Union, specifically, would welcome integrated proposals cutting across its own three separate funding streams (development programming, humanitarian programming and an ad hoc activity-based stream). UN AFPs are encouraged to propose integrated, nexus-style programmes especially for those thematic and geographical areas where they have a track record of implementing activities and have accumulated experience. For example, an integrated platform for wildlife conservation (of snow leopards, etc.) involving reforestation, disaster risk reduction and resilience measures, eco-tourism and related

technical and vocational education and training (TVET) support could be merged into one integrated, nexus-style programme rather than through distinct activities/projects.

Recommendation 6: Invest in the UNDAF's monitoring and evaluation (M&E) systems and processes (including relevant knowledge production, storage, distribution and usage/application) to ensure that the programme's implementation matches the minimum standards of results-based management.

Related to this recommendation, possible entry points for a discussion might include:

- (a) Introducing a Delivering as One performance dashboard for monitoring and evaluation, including programmatic and operational indicators and related mutually binding (collective) goals.
- (b) Treating SDG/NDS level indicators as impact level indicators and establishing a tier of joint output level indicators (select key/flagship Joint Plan outcome indicators to ensure efficiencies). Such quantitative indicators would cover compacted, similar result types across sectors. Related indicators can be easily tracked and serve the purpose of sector-wide tracking to inform management decisions in the sense that real results-based management intends. The way to design such indicators is to identify commonalities between set targets or results, and to design the related indicator statement to capture the (smallest) common denominator. Related clusters of (high level) outputs can then serve as higher level measures, both within Result Groups and across outcomes, i.e., for the entire results framework/One UN Programme. An example could be the 'number of leaving no one behind-sensitive sectoral policies, strategies and organic laws supported (disaggregated by the phases of drafting and review (attribution), and enactment/promulgation (contribution)'. Another example would be to design a cross-sector indicator for higher level systems innovation and/or the training of related human resources to ensure the appropriation, functionality and sustainability of these systems (for instance, introducing digital system solutions in the form of designing and setting up databases, ensuring intranet connectivity, introducing back-up servers, digitizing paper-based systems such as cadaster archives, upgrading of Excel databases to higher level software, etc.). Such indicators address the mid-tier level – between high level transformative change and outputs that create an enabling environment to achieve the envisioned systemic transformation in capacities, capabilities, knowledge, attitudes, perceptions and related practices.
- (c) Providing support to the statistical system, including administrative reporting at both the national and sub-national levels (disaggregated data to allow for leaving no one behind-specific programming and planning, as well as monitoring/tracking localized SDG indicators). With regard to strategic, evidence-based planning, the absence of sub-national data disaggregated by 'leaving no one behind' is an area that deserves UN support and investments in national systemic capacity. Since this is an area linked to SDG efforts, a connection could be established with SDG Units and general SDG advocacy work that falls under the remit of relevant key agencies (UNDP and UNFPA as technical leads) and, arguably also the UNRCO (as convenor and fundraiser to ensure the proper funding of related activities).
- (d) Revisiting the cost efficiency and sustainability of key interventions through applied research and systems thinking. For example, the TVET system should provide more sustainable, impactful trainings beyond the trainings that are currently offered (which are limited to 30–45 days). According to stakeholders, the current system is not conducive to a meaningful impact and is fairly inefficient because the skills imparted are limited, out-of-date or not helpful in enhancing trainees' profiles/skills set and, therefore, their employability. Hence, there is need to upgrade the technology and 'machine park', as well as the current curriculum and training content, in order to enhance trainees' employability. This recommendation is directed at TVET stakeholders/related One UN Programme-Joint Work Plan stakeholders and implementing partners.

- (e) Considering lessons that can be learned from the experience of the integrated multi-stakeholder/multi-sector COVID-19 platform and related mechanisms.
- (f) Advocating for a review of the fitness-for-purpose of the Government of Pakistan's administrative structures, as well as applying lessons to be learned from Delivering as One (inclusive holistic programming superseding conventional silo logic to the extent possible, and the Business Operations Strategy's focus on common premises, carpooling, etc.).
- (g) Introducing UNSDCF-specific minimum requirements or thresholds for 'jointness' (inter-agency MOUs, Joint Plans, joint programming, etc.).
- (h) Providing more capacity support for smaller UN agencies to enable them to fulfil the requirements of 'jointness' and One UN programming, as well as providing more clarity and strengthening UNRCO's role and functions.
- (i) Strengthen leaving no one behind data capacity across the board (systemic, administrative reporting at the sector level, and statistical machinery) to allow for leaving no one behind-specific targeting in programming. This recommendation is directed at the PME Group and the PMT.

(c) Sustainability

Recommendation 7: Introduce a code of conduct on fundraising/resource mobilization (considering examples such as the UNRCO-driven models in Madagascar and Tanzania, available from UN staff in those countries) and advocate for donors to co-sign it.

Final Evaluation Report

Pakistan United Nations Sustainable Development Framework (UNSDF)/One UN Programme III (OP III) 2018–2022

ANNEXES

Annex 1. Terms of Reference

Terms of Reference

Mid-Term Evaluation of the United Nations Sustainable Development Framework (UNSDF)/United Nations One Programme III (OP III) 2018–2022

Background and context

Pakistan is a confederation of four provinces (Punjab, Sindh, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Balochistan¹), one federal capital (Islamabad Capital Territory), and two federally administered regions (Gilgit-Baltistan (GB) and Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK)). Following the 18th Amendment to Pakistan's Constitution in 2010, administrative and budgetary authority was devolved to the country's provincial governments. This includes responsibility for key social sectors: health, education, climate change, human rights, population and social welfare, food and agriculture, and water supplies and sanitation. The Federal Government, however, is responsible for coordination and international commitments. It is also exclusively responsible for finance, defence, natural resources, and foreign affairs. Pakistan's local government system remains weak, as administrative and financial powers remain in the hands of provincial governments. Many of its provinces have yet to hold local government elections and devolve power to these bodies.

Pakistan is the 5th most populous country in the world, with a population of 211.17 million that is growing at an annual rate of 2.4%.² The country's population density stands at 265 per square kilometres, with the composition skewed towards working age population: 61.4% of the population falls in the 15 to 64-year-old age group; 12.1% are between 0 and 4 years old, and 22.1% are between 5 and 14 years. In terms of gender, 51% of the population are men and boys, 48.76% are women and girls, and 0.24% are transgender persons³. In the absence of reliable data, [estimates](#) of the number of people living with disabilities in Pakistan vary widely – from 3.3 million to 27 million.⁴ Over 96% of Pakistan's population are Muslims⁵ while the remaining 4% include Christians, Hindus, Ahmadis, and members of 'scheduled castes'.⁶ Regional and geographic (rural-urban) disparities persist across the country. While 54.6% of Pakistanis in rural areas are multidimensionally poor, this is true for just 9.4% of those in urban centres.

¹ This report consistently refers to Pakistan's provinces in this order based on their share of the national population, from the largest (Punjab) to the smallest (Balochistan).

² *Economic Survey of Pakistan 2020*, http://www.finance.gov.pk/survey/chapter_20/Executive_Summary.pdf

³ Population census 2017: Men outnumber women in Pakistan", Samaa TV, August 25, 2017, <https://www.samaa.tv/news/2017/08/population-census-2017-men-outnumber-women-pakistan/>.

⁴ *Ibid*

⁵ *Pakistan Common Country Assessment 2016: An SDGs Baseline Analysis*, United Nations, Pakistan.

⁶ This is the accepted term for various historically disadvantaged groups in the Indian subcontinent.

Pakistan's diverse economy structure comprises three major sectors: agriculture, industry, and services. Agriculture is the largest sector in terms of labour force participation; most of the population depends on agriculture, either directly or indirectly. The undocumented or informal economy accounts for 36% of the economy as a whole. As expected, the industrial and service sectors have been the most negatively affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. Initial estimates suggest that, in light of COVID-19 and the restrictions imposed to curb coronavirus' transmission, 1.4 million jobs will be lost, equivalent to 2.2% of the employed work force.⁷ Moreover, the ongoing pandemic has heightened the deep-rooted issue of women's marginalized presence in decision-making fora. Women in Pakistan – who are disproportionately impacted by COVID-19, as they comprise of about 70% of frontline health workers – represented only 5.5% of COVID-19 committee members as of May 2020.⁸

Pakistan embraced the 2030 Agenda in 2016 by adopting the SDGs as part of its national development agenda, *Vision 2025*. This vision articulates the overarching national policy framework for development priorities.⁹ Since then, there has been considerable progress by mainstreaming the SDGs in national policies and strategies, including the Five-Year Plan, provincial growth strategies, and Pakistan's long-term development perspective. Learning from the experience of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), National and Provincial Assemblies established SDG Taskforces to oversee progress on the goals. The Federal Government's multi-year Public Sector Development Programme (PSDP) is central to financing the SDGs, although a limited focus has been placed on goals related to governance and the environment.

Significant finances are needed to prepare Pakistan's economy to achieve key SDGs by 2030: an estimated US\$31 billion¹⁰ per year between 2019 and 2030, at projected exchange rates.¹¹ The IMF estimates the annual financing gap for the SDGs at PKR 620 billion (US\$3.72 billion) for 2020–2030. Accordingly, Pakistan should be spending PKR 6.2 trillion (US\$37.246 billion) on achieving the SDGs over the next 10 years¹². Some forward-looking actions put in place by the Government – such as the ongoing China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) initiative – promise potentially broad-based, multisectoral growth over the medium to long-term.

Pakistan's labour force is 65.5 million strong according to the Labour Force Survey 2017–18.¹³ It has the 9th largest labour force in the world considering its population growth rate. While young people (aged 20–24) account for the greatest proportion of its workforce, they also experience the highest unemployment rate (11.56%). Women's labour force participation doubled from 13.3% in 1992 to 23.4% in 2019; yet it remains far below the rate for men (48.1%)¹⁴ and among the lowest rates in South Asia and around the world. In 2018, Pakistan's Inequality-adjusted Human Development Index (IHDI) value was 0.386, representing a 31% 'loss' of its Human Development Index (HDI) value. This means that nearly one-third of Pakistan's achievements on human development are lost due to rampant inequality. It also ranks 136th of 162 countries on the Gender Inequality Index (GII) and 151st of 153 countries on the World Economic Forum's Global Gender Gap Index 2020.¹⁵ Most women workers are concentrated in the informal sector, particularly in agriculture and domestic work.

Over the years, Pakistan has invested less than the optimal amount in delivering public services. In fact, it spends a smaller proportion of its GDP on social services to improve human development indicators – such as health, education, and social protection – than most countries in the region, including Nepal, Sri Lanka, and

7 IMF Country Report No. 20/114

8 Gender Impact of COVID-19 in Pakistan: Contextual Analysis and the Way Forward; International Foundation for Electoral Systems;

https://www.ifes.org/sites/default/files/gender_impact_of_covid-19_in_pakistan_contextual_analysis_and_the_way_forward_may_2020.pdf

9 Pakistan Vision 2025, Planning Commission of Pakistan, 2014, <https://www.pc.gov.pk/uploads/vision2025/Vision-2025-Executive-Summary.pdf>

10 Weighted Average Customer Exchange Rates (State Bank of Pakistan) US\$1=166.46 PKR as of 22nd June 2020

11 Anwar, T (2019), Achieving SDGs for Pakistan: A Costing Framework. Pakistan Institute of Development Economics

12 Rana, Shahbaz. (2020). "IMF Advises Pakistan to Open up Economy." *Express Tribune*, 13 Feb. 2020, www.tribune.com.pk/story/2155580/2-imf-advises-pakistan-op-illen-economy/?amp=1

13 Labour Force Survey 2017–18

14 World Bank Group Pakistan@100 From Poverty to Equity Policy Note March 2019;

<http://documents1.worldbank.org/curated/en/868741552632296526/pdf/135319-WP-P163618-14-3-2019-20-44-35-PakPNFromPovertytoEquityFinal.pdf>

15 "Pakistan ranks 151 out of 153 on global gender parity index: World Economic Forum Report", *Dawn*, December 17, 2019, <https://www.dawn.com/news/1522778>.

India. In terms of Pakistan's total expenditure on social services, education receives the largest share (64 percent), followed by health (31 percent). Other services lag far behind – the environment, water supply and sanitation sector receives just 4 percent, and population planning a meagre 1 percent. However, Pakistan is surging climate change-related vulnerabilities, an increasingly scarce and unsafe water supply, and a high unmet need for family planning despite an unsustainably high population growth rate.

In addition, access to drinking water, basic vaccination coverage, and child delivery capacities in health facilities vary widely across income quintiles. For example, around 21 million people in Pakistan have no access to clean drinking water near their homes. Infrastructure facilities are not equitably distributed in Pakistan. An important factor affecting access to opportunity is infrastructure, including the water supply for irrigation, housing and shelter, and the road network. Large-scale farmers pre-empt most of the water available for irrigation. Some 28 percent of poor households each live in a single room, frequently with as many as eight family members. The National Highway Authority routinely neglects farm-to-market roads which are essential for linking farmers and small-scale producers with work and livelihood opportunities.

The greatest share of provincial health expenditure is spent on general hospitals and clinics, while maternal and child health care receives a negligible share. Pakistan has the highest rates of maternal and child mortality. Pakistan is one of just two countries in the world where wild poliovirus remains endemic. The maternal mortality ratio (MMR) based on deaths in the three years prior to the PMMS 2019 was estimated for Pakistan (excluding Azad Jammu and Kashmir and Gilgit-Baltistan) at 186 (95% confidence interval: 138- 234) per 100,000 live births¹⁶. Balochistan had the highest MMR of 298 and Punjab the lowest at 157 while Sindh had 224 and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa had 165 maternal deaths per 100,000 live births. The MMR for urban areas was 158 compared to 199 for rural areas. Obstetric haemorrhage was the leading cause (41%) of maternal deaths, followed by hypertensive disorders (29%).

The ratio of health workers is 14 to 10,000 population, well below of the minimum of 23 recommended by World Health Organization, with an insufficient number of competent midwives. Nearly 40 percent of areas in the country are not covered by lady health workers (LHWs), posing a major obstacle in achieving universal access to family planning services, which will require a well-thought out strategy to resolve.¹⁷ According to the 2017–2018 PDHS, 17% of currently married women have an unmet need (measured as the percentage of married women who want to space their next birth or stop childbearing entirely but are not using contraception) for family planning services due to lack of information and/or services including lack of adequate infrastructure. Frequent outbreaks of polio, measles, diphtheria (VPDs), dengue and typhoid fever present among the greatest challenges to Pakistan's public health system, a situation further aggravated by COVID-19. Without increasing the health budget and social safety nets, out-of-pocket health expenditure will shoot up in the coming years, making the poor even more vulnerable.

Malnutrition is rampant: over 40% of Pakistan's children under-five are stunted (12 million children), 17.7% suffer from wasting and 2.5 million are 'severely wasted'.¹⁸ Higher parity, illiterate parents, a lack of sanitation facilities and poverty are significantly linked with the likelihood of stunting. There is also a gender bias in stunting. Analysis by UNICEF suggests that boys in Pakistan are more likely to be affected by all forms of malnutrition, with regional disparities.¹⁹ As noted above, 12.3% of Pakistan's population are undernourished, with an estimated 26 million people suffering from undernourishment or food insecurity, according to the *State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World 2020*. Other estimates put this number even higher. For instance,

16 Pakistan Maternal Mortality Survey 2019

17 Landscape Analysis of the Family Planning Situation in Pakistan. Population Council. September 2016

18 Government of Pakistan and UNICEF (2018). *National Nutrition Survey 2018*. Islamabad: Government of Pakistan.

19 Mahmood, Tahir, Faisal Abbas, Ramesh Kumar, and Ratana Somrongthong (2020). "Why under five children are stunted in Pakistan? A multilevel analysis of Punjab Multiple indicator Cluster Survey (MICS-2014)." *BMC Public Health*, 20(952).

recent estimates by the World Food Programme suggest that as many 20%–30% of the population (40 to 62 million people) are affected by some form of food insecurity.²⁰

Climate change has serious impacts on all aspects of sustainable development in Pakistan – economic, social and environmental. The mega floods of 2010 decimated infrastructure, hampered access to food and basic services, increased the need for immediate external assistance and rendered 90 million people food insecure.²¹ Droughts in 2013–2015 and 2018–2019 compromised the nutrition and food security of an estimated 2 million²² and 5 million people²³, respectively. Since 2019, desert locust swarms have plagued 46 districts across Pakistan's four provinces. Of the country's total land area, 161,720 km² were declared especially susceptible to locust attacks.²⁴ Heavy snowfall, rain and avalanches in January 2020 affected 1 million households in Pakistan Administered Kashmir, Balochistan and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.²⁵

In August–September 2020, torrential monsoon rains and subsequent floods affected 4.24 million people in Sindh, Balochistan and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. Some 2.2 million of them required agricultural and livestock-related aid. Roughly half of the affected households in Sindh lacked enough money to buy food from the market. It is worth noting that disasters like droughts and floods tend to recur in the same areas periodically, devastating the same vulnerable populations time and time again. Low agricultural productivity, increased water scarcity, stagnant economic growth, and a rapidly growing population have worsened poverty, food insecurity, and hunger, while undermining the coping capacities of the people most at risk from climate change. High levels of food insecurity remain a major concern in Pakistan.

Some 40 million people (20% of the population) are undernourished or food insecure according to a joint global report by FAO, WFP, UNICEF, WHO, and IFAD in 2019. Persons with disabilities, especially people with mental disabilities, are more vulnerable than other groups. Disability is also a barrier to accessing basic socio-health care in Pakistan. About one in five (81%) household members age 5 or older have difficulty one or more of the 'functional domains'.²⁶ Women and girls with disabilities face a 'double burden' of discrimination due to their gender and their disabilities. They are particularly restricted from accessing basic services, including sexual and reproductive health care.

Climate change is also driving countries towards green economies. This transition has far-reaching implications for the labour market. Some jobs will disappear and new jobs will be created. Many workers will need to re-skill and adopt different work practices, involving the use of new technologies to improve resource efficiency and reduce wastage. It is imperative that the Government embraces a comprehensive policy approach that, on the one hand, stimulates investment in green sectors and, on the other, enhances workers' skills and employability.

Pakistan has the second highest number of out-of-school children in the world (22.8 million), with more girls out of school (53%) than boys (47%). Its federal and provincial governments have yet to devise a feasible solution to enrol all out-of-school children in the education system. Poor quality education is another major challenge; simply put, not all those who attend school are truly learning.²⁷ Discriminatory laws and social norms are pervasive, as are harmful practices and other forms of violence against women, girls and boys. Women and girls face serious barriers to their sexual and reproductive health and rights.

20 World Food Programme (2020). *Rapid Assessment – Possible Impact of the Novel Coronavirus Pandemic (COVID-19) on Livelihoods, Food Security, Nutrition and Agricultural Supply Chain in Pakistan*. Islamabad: WFP. Available at <https://docs.wfp.org/api/documents/WFP-0000117769/download>

21 International Center for Tropical Agriculture and World Bank (2017). *Climate Smart agriculture in Pakistan. CSA Country Profiles for Asia Series*. Washington, DC: CIAT and World Bank. Available at <https://climateknowledgeportal.worldbank.org/sites/default/files/2019-06/CSA-in-Pakistan.pdf>

22 United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (2015). *Pakistan Humanitarian Bulletin, Issue 32, December 2014–January 2015*. Islamabad: UNOCHA.

23 National Development Management Authority and United Nations (2019). *Drought Response Plan (Jan–Dec 2019)*. Islamabad: NDMA and UN Pakistan. Available at https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/drought_rp_draft_20190305.pdf

24 Ahmed, Amin (2020). "FAO Prepares Crisis Appeal for locust issues." *Dawn*, 18 May 2020. Available at <https://www.dawn.com/news/1557933/fao-prepares-crisis-appeal-for-pakistans-locust-issue>

25 United States Agency for International Development (2020). *Pakistan Food Assistance Fact Sheet, April 2, 2020*. Islamabad: USAID. Available at <https://reliefweb.int/report/pakistan/pakistan-food-assistance-fact-sheet-april-2-2020-0>

26 Ibid {43}

27 National Education Management Information System, Academy of Education Planning and Management, and Ministry of Federal Education and Professional Training (2018). *Pakistan Education Statistics 2016–17*. Islamabad: Government of Pakistan. Available at <http://library.aepam.edu.pk/Books/Pakistan%20Education%20Statistics%202016-17.pdf>. Accessed 25 November 2020.

Gender-based violence (GBV) remains pervasive across Pakistan. Around 34% of women who are, or ever have been, married have experienced spousal physical, sexual, or emotional violence.²⁸ Nevertheless, significant provincial variations exist. Pakistan also has a skewed sex ratio at birth (SRB) as a result of son preference and gender-biased sex selection. Only one-quarter of married women use effective modern contraception and fewer than 5% of young women have comprehensive knowledge of HIV/AIDS. Pakistan also experiences high rates of sexually transmitted infections (STIs), particularly among key populations, given pervasive inequities. These include limited access to comprehensive sexuality education (CSE) and reproductive commodities, such as condoms, and discriminatory social norms. All this has an adverse effect on reproductive health.

The World Bank's World Development Indicators (WDI) rank Pakistan as the 42nd largest economy globally in terms of nominal gross domestic product (GDP). This places it in the range of lower-middle income countries. In 2019, its nominal GDP per capita was US\$1,357, earning it a ranking of 154th in the world. Based on its purchasing power parity (PPP) of US\$5,839, it ranked 132nd. Over the years, Pakistan has invested less than the optimal amount in delivering public services. In fact, it spends a smaller proportion of its GDP on social services to improve human development indicators – such as health, education, and social protection – than most countries in the region, including Nepal, Sri Lanka, and India. In terms of Pakistan's total expenditure on social services, education receives the largest share (64 percent), followed by health (31 percent). Other services lag far behind – the environment, water supply and sanitation sector receives just 4 percent, and population planning a meagre 1 percent. In terms of exports, Pakistan's economy ranked 69th in 2018, while ranking 49th in total imports. Pakistan has experienced structural trade deficits, with exports remaining sluggish on the back of low global demand. As a result, the trade deficit widened to US\$32.6 billion in 2018²⁹, as imports grew far faster than exports.

Pakistan is currently facing an unprecedented economic shock due to the COVID-19 pandemic, coupled with enormous pressure on its health sector. Nevertheless, it has performed well in terms of expanding its social safety net under the *Ehsaas* Programme to support the most vulnerable. Before the pandemic, the economy was already experiencing a downturn prompted by the Government's stabilization policies.³⁰ Nevertheless, these stabilization efforts positively affected the economy's current account, with the deficit contracted from 4.8% of GDP in FY19 to 1.1% in FY20, largely as import values declined by 19.3%.³¹ Real GDP growth has declined from 5.5% in FY18 to 1.9% in FY19 and later to -0.38% according to the Planning Commission of Pakistan.

Pakistan even today hosts more than 1.4 million Afghan refugees and 850,000 Afghan Citizen Card holders along with other segments of Afghans. Given that 85% refugees continue to be hosted by developing countries with limited resources, the burden becomes more difficult and disproportionate. Pakistan despite its economic and social pressures has demonstrated unparalleled generosity and hospitality in hosting Afghan refugees for four decades and adhered to the highest standards of protection and facilitation, which continued with more vigour during the pandemic. Afghan refugees and other segments of Afghans are provided with same basic services such as health facilities, educational and professional opportunities as extended to Pakistanis. They have free enrolment in government primary schools and access to higher and professional education with generous scholarships. Plentiful livelihood opportunities are open to them with permission to open banks accounts. On the lines as being provided to vulnerable Pakistani families under Ehsaas Program, UNHCR supported providing cash assistance of Rs.12,000 per family to 36,500 extremely vulnerable Afghan refugees' families, aimed to extend to 85,000 families by end of 2020.

28 PDHS 2017–18

29 Economic Survey of Pakistan 2020, http://www.finance.gov.pk/survey/chapter_20/Executive_Summary.pdf

30 That included cutting expenditures, limiting imports and increasing taxes.

31 <https://www.worldbank.org/en/country/pakistan/overview>

The UN in Pakistan

The UN is present in Pakistan with 23 UN agencies, funds and programmes including 4 UN enabler agencies that together constitute the United Nations Country Team (UNCT). These entities include:

Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO)	International Labour Organization (ILO)
International Organization for Migration (IOM)	Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS)
United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD)	United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)
United Nations Environmental Programme (UNEP) (non-resident agency)	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)
United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA)	United Nations Human Settlement Programme (UN Habitat)
United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)	United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF)
United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO)	United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC)
United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS)	United Nations Volunteers (UNV)
United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN Women)	World Food Programme (WFP)
World Health Organization (WHO)	

UN enabler agencies in Pakistan

United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UN OCHA)	United Nations Department for Safety and Security (UNDSS)
United Nations Resident Coordinator's Office (UNRCO)	United Nations Information Centre (UNIC)

United Nations Sustainable Development Framework (UNSDF)/One UN Programme (OP III) 2018–2022

The UN supported Government of Pakistan in its determined political will towards expeditiously prioritizing and adopting SDGs within national and local level priorities under the United Nations Sustainable Development Framework for Pakistan (UNSDF), also known as Pakistan One United Nations Programme III (OP III) 2018–2022.

The five-year UNSDF/OP III was initiated in Pakistan in year 2018. Its planned results focus on ten key outcome areas (Table 1) that respond to Pakistan's development priorities and harness the powerful force of the United Nations' comparative advantage in these areas. These were identified through an intensive consultation process with national and provincial authorities, alongside other implementing partners and stakeholders in the country. Each outcome is closely aligned with Pakistan's Vision 2025 and the SDGs, placing a particular emphasis on improving the lives of the poorest and those most in need. These key outcomes and their anticipated results serve as a framework for taking stock of progress, and of the effectiveness of the collaborative work carried out by the United Nations and the Government of Pakistan. Each of the outcome

was led by one or two UN agencies bringing together commitment of several UN agencies. They are expected to provide the people of Pakistan with a fuller range of choices and opportunities, promoting their human development and – in the words of Agenda 2030 – helping them to fulfil “their potential in dignity, equality and in a healthy environment.”

The UN is supporting government’s efforts towards achieving the SDG targets at federal, provincial and district levels through technical assistance, institutional strengthening, capacity building and policy advocacy. Demonstration of evidence-based doable and successful models is promoted through development and implementation of pilot intervention resulting in development of technical guidance notes for the Government machinery. UN took a route with both knowledge and technology transfer, ensuring enabling environment for the implementation of the joint action plan. The achievements accounts not only for the new initiative but the refinement and realignment of the ongoing multi-year programmes of UN in Pakistan.

Annex 1 Table 1. UNSDF/OP III outcomes and Outcome Groups' composition

Outcome theme and statement	Alignment with the SDGs	Lead UN agency	Participating UN agencies
Economic Growth (Outcome 1): By 2022, the people in Pakistan, especially key populations, including those who are unskilled, benefit from improved inclusive and sustainable economic growth, progress towards full access to energy, and fair trade practices.	7, 8, 9, 11	UNIDO	UNV, UN Habitat, FAO, UNESCO, ILO, IOM, UNCTAD, UNOPS and UN Women
Decent Work (Outcome 2): By 2022, the people in Pakistan, especially women and youth, have improved access to productive livelihoods, income opportunities and decent work.	8	ILO	UN Women, UNHCR, UNESCO, UNDP, UNIDO and IOM
Health and WASH (Outcome 3): By 2022, the people in Pakistan, especially the most vulnerable and marginalized, have access to, and benefit from, improved universal health coverage, including sexual and reproductive health, and equitable WASH services.	3, 6	WHO and UNICEF	UNFPA, UNAIDS, UNODC, UN Habitat, UNHCR and IOM
Nutrition (Outcome 4): By 2022, children, adolescent girls and boys, pregnant and lactating women, the elderly and persons with disabilities have improved dietary intake, feeding and care practices, resulting in improved nutritional status, while reducing stunting and other forms of undernutrition.	2	WFP	WHO, UNICEF and FAO
Food Security and Sustainable Agriculture (Outcome 5): By 2022, the people of Pakistan, especially the most vulnerable and marginalized populations, have improved availability of, access to, and consumption of safe, nutritious and sufficient food, while promoting sustainable agriculture to achieve zero hunger.	2	FAO	FAO and UNIDO
Resilience (Outcome 6): By 2022, the resilience of the people in Pakistan, especially key populations, is increased	7, 13, 14, 15	IOM	WFP, UNIDO, UN Habitat, IOM,

Outcome theme and statement	Alignment with the SDGs	Lead UN agency	Participating UN agencies
by addressing natural and other disasters, including climate change adaptation measures and the sustainable management of cultural and natural resources.			UNESCO, WHO, UNICEF, UNFPA, FAO, UNOPS, UN Environment and UN Women
Education and Learning (Outcome 7): By 2022, children and youth will have enhanced, equitable and inclusive access to, and benefit from, quality learning opportunities.	4	UNICEF	UNESCO, UNHCR, UNFPA, UNV, WFP and ILO
Gender, Equality and Dignity (Outcome 8): By 2022, government institutions will have increased accountability towards gender equality commitments and social, economic, cultural and political rights.	5, 10	UN Women	UNICEF, UNAIDS, UNODC, UNESCO, UNFPA, WHO, FAO, ILO, UNOPS and UNDP
Governance (Outcome 9): By 2022, the people in Pakistan will have increased knowledge of their rights and improved access to more accountable, transparent and effective governance mechanisms and rule of law institutions.	16, 17	UNDP	UNFPA, UNODC, UN Habitat, UNHCR, UN Women, UNICEF, WHO, IOM and UNESCO
Social Protection (Outcome 10): By 2022, improved and effective social protection systems will be available for all, particularly for the most vulnerable and marginalized populations.	1, 10	ILO	UNICEF, UNAIDS, WFP, UNHCR, IOM and WHO

Alongside these ten key outcome areas, a number of cross-cutting issues underpin the OP III. These include the United Nations' key normative programming principles, alongside key issues of particular relevance for Pakistan – such as youth/adolescents, population trends, volunteerism, migrations, urbanization, culture and data.

As Pakistan's provinces have their own inter-related, but ultimately independent, development strategies and plans, these rich, nuanced provincial and regional frameworks have substantively influenced the UN's prioritization of key issues.

Under each outcome, the UNCT defines outputs in the Joint Work Plans (JWPs) that are prepared every year by the 'Outcome Groups' mentioned in Table 1 for effective and coordinated implementation of the UNSDF/OP III. Additionally, UN agencies in Pakistan mobilized swiftly and comprehensively to respond to COVID-19. The UN launched a three-pronged health, humanitarian and socio-economic response, to support the Government. The WHO-led health response focused on science, solidarity and solutions. The UN assisted coordination at the federal and provincial levels, leading task forces, working groups and regular meetings across a range of sectors, from health and nutrition to WASH, education, child protection, gender-based violence, disaster risk reduction and many more. UN agencies contributed to planning for the rollout of COVAX in 2021, in addition to providing support for cold chain procurement, vaccine logistics, community engagement, crisis communications and training. The UN assisted Pakistan's Risk Communication and Community Engagement (RCCE) Plan on responsive, transparent and consistent messaging in local languages through trusted

communication channels, community-based networks and key influencers. For example, engaging 423,662 religious leaders expanded the reach of COVID-19 awareness raising through mosque announcements and Friday sermons that promoted preventive behaviours, such as handwashing, mask-wearing, physical distancing and immunization. Partnerships with provincial governments and community-based organizations – including local leaders and youth groups – helped COVID-19 prevention messages reach 36.6 million people. UN support for the detection of COVID-19 cases, contact tracing and case identification included training surveillance teams and donating vehicles to transport samples between health facilities and laboratories. Installing automated hand hygiene stations at major airports, training staff and information displays made points of entry safer. Aided infection prevention and control (IPC) in communities and health facilities to promote preventive behaviours, raise awareness and stem the transmission of the coronavirus. In terms of operational support and logistics, UN actively procured medical supplies and personal protective equipment (PPE). The UN's response also addressed the humanitarian impact of COVID-19 on the most vulnerable groups in Pakistan. For example, UN agencies supported the Government's flood response in Sindh with medical supplies, mosquito nets, food and cash assistance for over 70,000 people. In May 2020, the UN Country Team collectively developed the COVID-19 Pakistan Socio-Economic Framework in partnership with the Ministry of Planning, Development and Special Initiatives, establishing the basis for the Government's response to the pandemic. The framework includes an analysis of technical and financial resource requirements. It seeks to support the Government to implement new economic priorities, protect jobs and economic activity, ensure food security, and meet the social and health needs of vulnerable groups in a cohesive, collaborative manner. Rapidly assessing emerging needs, the UN revised project strategies, reprogrammed and adapted interventions. UN revisited work plans to devise safe avenues for service delivery, including using virtual means of communication and incorporating strict adherence to COVID-19 Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) during in-person meetings.

Across the OP III's ten-outcome areas during 2018–2020, the UN supported sustainable, inclusive and resilient development and fought to end poverty and hunger, to turn the tide of ill health, insecurity and inequality. The UN strove to promote equitable economic growth grounded upon decent work and environmental sustainability. Hence, reached those farthest behind first by supporting better healthcare, immunization, water and sanitation solutions, good nutrition, food security, and quality education. Along this journey, the One UN Programme helped to build equity and resilience to shocks, standing with the most vulnerable communities in Pakistan. The Programme assisted important strides towards greater social protection and good governance, embedded in a rule of law culture in which people can exercise their rights, secure their livelihoods, and protect those of future generations. All the efforts sought to advance gender equality and human rights – the cornerstones of sustainable development. As civic space shrinks worldwide, the UN is cognizant that defending equality and fundamental rights has never been more necessary. To support Pakistan's progress on the SDGs, the UN has embraced a 'new way of working', blending urgent, life-saving humanitarian response with development that fosters long-term resilience, recovery and stabilization.

Analysing the UNSDF/OP III's implementation, operational modalities, approach and impact during the period of 2018–2021 is the objective of this evaluation.

Rationale of the evaluation

Given the timing, the evaluation will be both formative and summative. It is intended to serve both an accountability and a learning function. On one hand, the size of the funding invested (\$ 1.33 billion) during the period between January 2018 till December 2020 by the UN in the implementation of the UNSDF/OP III is considerable. For this reason, the evaluation is commissioned to respond to accountability requirements and to provide an in-depth overview based on an independent assessment for the use of different stakeholders and inform the development of the United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (UNSDCF)/Fourth United Nations One Programme (OP IV) 2023–2027. On the other hand, a forward-looking evaluation is beneficial at this point to take stock and learn from the work done during 2018–2021

implementation and planning of the UNSDF/OP III. The evaluation findings will be used by a broad range of stakeholders, including the Government of Pakistan at national and sub-national levels, the members of UNCT, partners from the civil society and academia and other development partners, donors, and the international and national community and beneficiaries

Purpose of the UNSDF/OP III evaluation

The UNSDF/OP III evaluation will serve the following three main purposes: (i) demonstrate accountability to stakeholders on performance in achieving development results and on invested resources; (ii) support evidence-based decision-making for development of new cooperation framework for 2023–27; and (iii) contribute key lessons learned to the existing knowledge based on how to accelerate the implementation of the Agenda 2030.

Evaluation objectives

The objectives of the evaluation are to:

- Provide an independent assessment of the performance of the UNSDF/OP III in both its development and humanitarian aspects as a package/portfolio. Performance should be assessed based on the evaluation criteria of relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability, coherence/coordination, as well as based on the application of the UNSDF/OP III Programming Principles, including the human rights-based approach (including the principle of universality, linked with the SDG principle of leaving no one behind), gender equality, results-based management (RBM), capacity development, and environmental sustainability (including addressing climate change).
- Assess the UN's strategic positioning and use of strategies given the evolving needs of rights holders, government priorities, and the changing context in the country.
- Identify and analyse innovative/high impact approaches, lessons learned, good practices, programmatic and operational challenges (For e.g., government buy-in, access, capacity of UN system and UNRCO's leadership, etc.).
- Provide strategic and actionable recommendations to inform the direction of the next Programme Cycle of the UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework, which is aligned with national priorities.

Evaluation's scope

The evaluation will cover the period of implementation between 2018 till 2021 for UNSDF/OP III portfolio as described in the Object of the Evaluation (above).

The geographic scope will be national. Different components of the UNSDF/OP III have different geographic coverage. During inception phase, detailed information on the geographic scope of the various interventions under the UNSDF/OP III will be provided. For sampling purposes, the consideration should be that the evaluation is at the strategic level and intends to look at the UNSDF/OP III as a portfolio of interventions rather than analysing in-depth every single programme component. The evaluation is also intended to look into the approach adopted to ensure joint programming of UN, through evaluating the strategic alignment between the individual UN entity's country programme and UNSDF/OP III priorities.

Evaluation criteria

The UNSDF/OP III evaluation shall systematically use the five OECD – Development Assistance Committee (DAC) criteria: relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability, impact, coherence.

- The criterion of relevance brings into focus the correspondence between the objectives and support strategies of the UNSDF/OP III, on the one hand, and population needs, government priorities, and UN global policies and strategies on the other. In particular, it will look into the extent to which the objectives of the UNSDF/OP III correspond to population needs at country level and were aligned throughout the programme period with government priorities, with global strategies and frameworks of the UN.
- Assessing effectiveness, the extent to which UNSDF/OP III results have been achieved, and the extent to which these results have contributed to the achievement of the UNSDF/OP III outcomes, will require a comparison of the intended goals, outcomes and outputs with the actual achievement of terms of results.
- The efficiency criterion-the extent to which UNSDF/OP III outputs and outcomes have been achieved with the appropriate amount of resources and captures how resources such as funds, expertise, time, etc. have been used by the UN and converted into the results along the results chain.
- Sustainability is related to the likelihood that benefits from the UNSDF/OP III continue. Therefore, the sustainability criterion – the continuation of benefits from a UN-financed intervention after its termination – will assess the overall resilience of benefits to risks that could affect their continuation. Coherence is related to the synergies, compatibility and interlinkages of the UN with each other and the programmes of other development partners, government policies and programmes and alignment of the UNSDF/OP III with the relevant norms and standards.
- Impact addresses the ultimate significance and potentially transformative effects of the UNSDF/OP III interventions. It seeks to identify social, environmental and economic effects of the UNSDF/OP III interventions that are longer term or broader in scope than those already captured under the effectiveness criterion. Given the difficulties involved in measuring impact in evaluations, the focus will be on progress towards impact.

Evaluation questions

Following are the preliminary evaluation questions specific to above criteria:

The questions that provide direction for this evaluation, align with the previously stated evaluation objectives and the OECD/DAC evaluation criteria of relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability, and coherence/coordination. The evaluation questions are listed below.

Relevance

- To what extent does the UNSDF/OP III contribute to and is aligned with (i) national development priorities, the SDGs, and the key Conventions Pakistan is signatory of (ii) Adapted to the changing needs considering the evolving programme environment and the COVID-19 context?
- To what extent has a human rights-based, a gender-sensitive approach been applied in the UNSDF/OP III design, implementation and monitoring? To what extent is the 'leaving no one behind' principle relevantly embedded in the UNSDF/OP III? Does it take into account the particularities and specific interests of the vulnerable groups?
- To what extent was the UNSDF/OP III's results matrix designed as coherent (linked to the national development documents and contributed to the national monitoring systems), and focused framework that promotes and contributes to integrated approaches and allows for comprehensive monitoring and reporting against the stated outcomes?

Effectiveness

- To what extent, have the results achieved by the UNSDF/OP III contributed to strengthening the national capacities, policy environment and the achievement of Sustainable Development Goals? To what extent has the UN contributed to the progress towards planned outcome results?
- To what extent did the UNSDF/OP III interventions reached the groups that are left behind or at risk of being left behind in line with the overarching objective of the UNSDF/OP III? To what extent have human rights principles and gender equality been effectively streamlined in the implementation of the UNSDF/OP III?
- Considering the specific context and needs, to what extent has the UN managed to operationalize the humanitarian – development-peace nexus also keeping in consideration the COVID-19 pandemic? Are there any lessons learned in relation to the scope of activities along the continuum humanitarian-development included in the UNSDF/OP III?
- To what extent is the UNSDF/OP III's monitoring system, including monitoring tools, indicators and means of verification, suitable for effectively measuring progress towards the UNSDF/OP III's outcomes and outputs in particular, and the SDGs more broadly?

Efficiency

- To what extent were the previous structures of development assistance and partnerships efficient and able to adapt to support the COVID-19 responses? Were these adequate? Where were the weaknesses? Has UN been able to offer a timely and cost-efficient procurement offer to meet country's response to COVID-19?
- To what extent the UN has made good use of its human and financial resources, tools and innovative approaches to ensure value for money and complementarities to Government's efforts, to generate the results on UNSDF/OP III?
- To what extent, UNCT, UNRCO, UN interagency coordination mechanisms and the joint programmes contributed to more integrated, collaborative, and efficient implementation of the UNSDF/OP III, including reduction of transaction cost, effective and efficient implementation in case of shortfalls in financial contributions and resource mobilization?

Sustainability

- To what extent is the UNSDF/OP III designed and implemented with a view towards sustainability (institutional, social, financial, etc.), ownership, durability of effects and commitment of stakeholders? What are evidences that demonstrate improved institutional capacity and performance particularly among national institutions that were supported by and through the UNSDF/OP III?

Coherence/coordination

- To what extent have the UNCT, UN inter-agency coordination mechanisms, including joint programmes, contributed to increased UN coherence towards the common objectives and to deliver quality, integrated, SDG-focused policy support?
- Has the UN system collectively prioritized activities based on the needs (demand side) rather than on the availability of resources (supply side), and reallocated resources according to the collective priorities if necessary? Has the Cooperation Framework contributed effectively to this end by providing greater clarity and transparency of results achieved and resources used?
- Has the UNSDF/OP III strengthened the position, credibility, and reliability of the UN system as a partner for the government and other actors, and used effectively as a partnership vehicle?

Impact

- Has the UN system leveraged all sources of financing and investments, rather than relying mostly on donor funding for its activities, to ensure the scale of impact necessary for attaining the 2030 Agenda?
- To what extent has the UNSDF/OP III achieved its programme objectives?

Supporting transformational changes

- Has the UN system promoted or supported policies that are consistent among each other and across sectors, given the multi-sectoral nature of social and economic development?
- Has the UN system supported the country and the people in strengthening economic and individual resilience and contributed to reducing vulnerability against disasters and crises?

Conformity with the cross-cutting principles

- Has the UN system support extended in such a way to promote gender equality, rights of religious minorities, people with disabilities followed Human Rights principles and delivered in due consideration to environmental implications? How effectively UN addressed geographical disparities through geographical spread and outreach?

During the inception phase, the evaluation team, discussion with the evaluation steering committee, streamlined the questions to make them sound and focus to provide specific responses to the expectations of UNCT and national government in the partnership. Based on this a Questions pool has been developed that reflects the shared understanding of the evaluation committee and team on the relevant evaluation questions breakdown and which served as the pool for developing evaluation instruments for different stakeholders.

Evaluation methodology and approach

The evaluation will be theory based and evaluators are expected to use pre-existing monitoring and evaluation data, to be supplemented by key informant interviews. The evaluation will be guided by the “Norms and Standards” and the “Ethical Guidelines for Evaluation” of the United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG). It will be based on a non-experimental design, using mixed-methods combining qualitative and quantitative methods and triangulation of data to compile a robust and credible evidence base. Quantitative analysis will be largely based on secondary data and existing documentation, including, but not only, UNInfo web portal reports, agency’s Country Programme Evaluations and monitoring reports, UNSDF/OP III annual evaluations for 2018 and 2019, thematic/outcome/programme evaluations (a preliminary list of information sources is provided in Annex X). The UNSDF/OP III evaluation is expected to incorporate the findings from these evaluations to the best possible extent, focusing the primary data collection on the resulting gaps. The team will mostly be expected to generate qualitative primary data through Key Informant Interviews (KIIs), Focus Group Discussions (FGDs), that in some cases could take place in small homogeneous groups of informants either in-person or through virtual means. However, the UN welcomes the use of alternative data generating approaches that add further value in cases where – during the inception phase – it becomes clear that the use of secondary data and documentation is insufficient to answer the evaluation questions.

The theory of change will be the key reference framework for evaluators. A theory-of-change workshop will be organized during the first week of the Evaluation Team’s in-country work. The workshop will provide an opportunity for the Evaluation Team and the UNCT members to develop a common understanding of what ought to happen to achieve the goals, what the UN’s activities are expected to achieve, what interaction will be required with other actors, including government, and other stakeholders. Having a common understanding of this kind at the start of the exercise is critical to avoiding dispute at a later date. The outcome of the theory of change workshops shall be used as a reference in designing the evaluation and analysing the evidences collected by the evaluation team.

The evaluation will be initiated with the review of terms of references of the individual UN entity’s country programme evaluations to assess the evaluation questions for individual agency’s evaluation and UNSDF/OP III

synergies. The process will focus on avoiding evaluation fatigue for the stakeholders. Subsequently, the meta-analysis will be conducted to systematically assess the results from the individual UN entity's Country Programme Evaluations, UNSDF/OP III annual results reports for 2018, 2019 and 2020 and annual evaluations for 2018 and 2019. The meta-analysis phase will drive conclusions influencing the UNSDF/OP III evaluation and guide upon the key areas to focus during evaluation.

Since the evaluation questions are focused on strategic aspects that relate to the UNSDF/OP III as a portfolio of interventions and not on single interventions and considering that a number of evaluations and other documentation is going to provide secondary data related to beneficiaries at different levels, the great majority of KIIs is expected to take place with government and non-government actors, a selected number of UN staff and other stakeholders in Islamabad and provincial offices. If the need for interviews with stakeholders in other locations will be identified as a priority during inception phase, remote interviews or alternative solutions should be sought.

The UN estimates that approximately 50 key informant interviews or interviews with small groups of key informants and at least 20 FGDs will be required either in-person or virtual depending upon the overall situation of Covid-19 in country. This number should be considered as indicative only for the sake of the preparation of the proposal during the implementation process. It will have to be revised during the inception phase when a deeper analysis of the available information vis-a-vis the evaluation questions will be conducted.

Participatory approach

The evaluation will be based on an inclusive, transparent and participatory approach, involving a broad range of partners and stakeholders at national and sub-national levels. These stakeholders include government representatives, civil society organizations, implementing partners, private sector, academia, United Nations organizations, donors and, most importantly, rights-holders.

Mixed-method approach

The evaluation will primarily use qualitative methods for data collection, including document review, interviews, focused group discussions and observations, where appropriate. The qualitative data will be complemented with quantitative data to minimize bias and strengthen the validity of findings. Quantitative data will be compiled through desk review of documents, websites and online databases to obtain relevant financial data and data on key indicators that measure change at output and outcome levels.

These complementary approaches described above will be used to ensure that the evaluation: (i) responds to the information needs of users and the intended use of the evaluation results; (ii) upholds human rights and principles throughout the evaluation process, including through participation and consultation of key stakeholders (rights holders and duty bearers); and (iii) provides credible information about the benefits for duty bearers and rights-holders (women, adolescents and youth) of UNFPA support through triangulation of collected data.

Since February 2020, the country was affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. As of 4 March 2021, a total of 585,435 cases of confirmed COVID-19 cases were reported, including 13,076 deaths. Due to emergency circumstances globally, including restricted travels, the evaluation team will consider using different manners such as using remote assistance, virtual meetings and face-to-face meetings adhering to COVID-19 SOPs.

Evaluation matrix

To ensure that the collection and recording of data and information is done systematically, Evaluation team is required to set up and maintain an evaluation matrix. This matrix, will help the Evaluation team to consolidate in a structured manner all collected information corresponding to each evaluation question and to identify data gaps and collect outstanding information before the end of the field phase.

The evaluation matrix will play important but slightly varying roles throughout all stages of the evaluation process and therefore will require particular attention from the Evaluation team:

During the design phase, the evaluation matrix will be used to capture core aspects of the evaluation design: (a) what will be evaluated (i.e., evaluation criteria, evaluation questions and related issues to be examined – “assumptions to be assessed”); (b) how to evaluate (sources of information and methods and tools for data collection). In this way, the matrix will also help Evaluation team and the evaluation manager to check the feasibility of evaluation questions and the associated data collection strategies.

During the data collection phase of the evaluation, the evaluation matrix will help Evaluation team to: (a) approach the collection of information in a systematic, structured way; (b) identify possible gaps in the evidence base of the evaluation; and (c) compile and organize the data to prepare and facilitate the systematic analysis of all collected information.

During the analysis and reporting phase, the evaluation matrix will help Evaluation team to conduct the analysis in a systematic and transparent way, by showing clear association between the evidence collected and the findings and conclusions derived on the basis of this evidence.

Data collection

The evaluation will consider primary and secondary sources of information. Primary data will be collected through semi-structured interviews with key informants (at least 50 KII) at national and sub-national levels (government officials, representatives of implementing partners, civil society organizations, other United Nations organizations, donors, and other stakeholders), as well as focus group discussions (at least 20 FGDs) with service providers and rights-holders. Both interviews and FGDs can be conducted virtually or in-person. Online surveys and/or questionnaires will be developed and used where appropriate and necessary to capture the in-depth knowledge.

The evaluation team will ensure that data collected is disaggregated by sex, age, location and other relevant dimensions, such as disability status, to the extent possible.

Secondary data will be collected through desk review of existing literature of the UN (evaluations, research and assessments conducted by UNAFPs), annual reviews/progress reports, and other monitored data and the government managed information systems.

Methods for data analysis

The evaluation matrix will provide the guiding structure for data analysis for all components of the UNSDF/OP III evaluation. The questions will be used to structure data analysis. The following methods of data analysis and synthesis are encouraged to be used:

- Descriptive analysis to identify and understand the contexts in which the programme has evolved, and to describe the types of interventions and other characteristics of the programme.
- Content analysis to analyse documents, interviews, group discussions and focus groups notes to identify emerging common trends, themes and patterns for each key evaluation question, at all levels of analyses. Content analysis can be used to highlight diverging views and opposing trends. The emerging issues and trends provide the basis for preliminary observations and evaluation findings.
- Comparative analysis to examine evidence on specific themes or issues across different areas of programme implementation. It can be used to identify good practices, innovative approaches and lessons learned.
- Quantitative analysis to interpret quantitative data, in particular data emerging from programme annual reports, studies and reports, and financial data.

- Contribution analysis to assess the extent to which the country programme contributed to expected results. The Evaluation team is encouraged to gather evidence to confirm the validity of the theory of change, and to identify any logical and information gaps that it contained; examine whether and what types of alternative explanations/reasons exist for noted changes; test assumptions, examine influencing factors, and identify alternative assumptions for each pathway of change

Data triangulation

All evaluation findings should be supported with evidence. Data must be triangulated across sources and methods by cross-comparing the information obtained via each data-collection method (desk study, individual interviews, discussion groups, focus groups) and double- or triple-checking the results of the data analysis. Evaluation team should also cross-compare the evidence obtained through different data sources – e.g., compare evidence obtained through interviews with government staff with those obtained from beneficiaries or from secondary data sources.

Validation

Data validation is a continuous process throughout the different evaluation phases. The evaluators should check the validity of the collected data and information and verify the robustness of findings at each stage of the evaluation, so they can determine whether they should further pursue specific hypotheses (related to the evaluation questions) or disregard them when there are indications that these are weak (contradictory findings or lack of evidence, etc.).

The findings, conclusions and recommendations of the Evaluation team will be validated with multiple stakeholders at different stages. At the end of the field data collection phase, the Evaluation team will meet with Evaluation management team to share and discuss preliminary findings/conclusions, hypotheses and evidence.

A validation meeting with the ERG will be conducted to discuss findings, conclusions and recommendations before the final report is submitted. This opportunity will allow integrating comments from stakeholders into the final evaluation report. ERG members will review draft reports and participate in validation meetings.

In light of COVID-19 and social distancing measures, it is possible that a series of validation meetings takes place in a virtual manner, by breaking the stakeholders into smaller groups.

The validation mechanisms will be presented in the design report.

Evaluability and limitations

Overarching nature of the UNSDF/OP III evaluation: The overall general approach to the evaluation described above implies a synthesis approach largely based on analysis of secondary information, including Country Programme Evaluations and other evaluations conducted by individual UN Agencies. This approach has the advantage to avoid duplications and excessive burden on the key informants. On the other hand, a potential limitation is that it makes the UNSDF/OP III evaluation dependent on the quality and timely delivery of the full or preliminary results of the agency evaluations. The evaluation team will be provided with a mapping of the available evaluations as well as with access to the evaluation reports or preliminary findings. The evaluation team will also be put in contact with other evaluation teams as relevant.

Data availability and reliability: Due to restrictions in access to and generation of data in the country, data gaps exist especially in relation to the situation of vulnerable groups. This may pose some limitations to the evaluation, especially with regards to the criteria of effectiveness and sustainability. Although data to measure achievements against UNSDF/OP III outcomes and outputs is somewhat available, it must be mentioned that the choice of the indicators during the planning stage has faced limitations, because of the limited measurability or lack of data sources, especially for disaggregated data. Qualitative indicators under some of

the outcomes and outputs may also be difficult to measure due to the fact that they are often not specific, or they lack reference to benchmarks. This will require the evaluation team to fill the gaps during the data collection phase, through various means such as logically deducing approximate data ranges/points through trend analysis linking existing data points, using proxy indicators, qualitative information in the absence of concrete quantitative data, etc. Especially in relation to the outputs linked with the humanitarian response, the monitoring system and the quality of the data have evolved and improved progressively.

Evaluative framework: The main evaluative framework is the UNSDF/OP III narrative and its results and resource framework. The Joint Work Plans will also be used to complement this framework.

Evaluation process

Inception phase: The main objective of the inception phase will be to assess the evaluability vis-à-vis the planned evaluation focus as well as to define the details of the methodology, timeline and data collection tools to conduct the evaluation. This phase will include:

Preliminary desk review of available sources (see Annex X for an indicative list of documents). The documentation made available to the evaluation team will include but may not be limited to: UNSDF/OP III signed documents, UNSDF/OP III Joint Work Plans for 2018 – 2020, Annual results reports 2018 – 2020, Annual evaluation assessments 2018–2019, UN agency-specific planning and evaluation documents linked to the UNSDF/OP III; programme monitoring data covering the timeframe of the evaluation; relevant studies, reports or similar documents related to topics addressed by the UNSDF/OP III; policies, strategies and normative guidance that has informed the development of the UNSDF/OP III; relevant national policies and strategy documents.

Discussions with the Evaluation Management Committee and the Evaluation Reference Group (ERG) (see Evaluation Management, below) to: a) understand the spirit of the evaluation questions and refine them; b) understand relevant contextual factors and fine-tune the methodology accordingly; c) understand the chronology of external and internal events during the UNSDF/OP III period under evaluation and establish an events timeline; d) if necessary, reconstruct and validate the theory of change for the UNSDF/OP III.

Preparation of the inception report: The evaluation team will have to submit an inception report aligned with the UNEG Norms and Standards. The Inception Report will be subject to quality assurance performed by the evaluation manager, a review conducted by UN stakeholders, and an ethical review.

The approval of the inception report marks the completion of the inception phase. It must include: methodology, including: evaluation matrix, data collection tools, identification of key informants; analysis of risks related to ethical issues and identification of mitigating measures. The inception report must be in line with the UNEG guidelines on ethics in evaluation. The inception report will be submitted for ethical review before proceeding with the next phase.

Work plan detailing the work schedule and outline of the final report (see indicative outline below).

Data collection phase: Following the inception phase, the data collection phase will begin with the finalization and launching of the online survey tool and the contractual vetting tool. Thereafter, key informant interviews and focus group discussions with selected interlocutors will take place. Iterative cross-checking and data triangulation will be built into the data collection processes, including both the quantitative and qualitative sub-sets of data. At the end of the mission, the evaluation team will present its preliminary observations and findings to the Evaluation Reference Group and to other UN staff as relevant.

Reporting phase: The evaluation team will prepare a draft evaluation report that will be subject to a quality assurance process based on UNEG Norms and Standards. The report should be no longer than 40-60 pages excluding annexes and should be in line with the following tentative outline:

- Executive summary

- Introduction
- Description of the evaluation methodology
- Analysis of the context
- Key findings
- Conclusions and practical, actionable recommendations
- Lessons Learned

Annexes including: Evaluation ToR, Evaluation matrix, Inception report (including gap and stakeholder analysis), List of persons interviewed, Summary of field interviews, List of documents reviewed, any other relevant material that supports evaluation findings and recommendations.

Management Response to the Evaluation. In line with the recently released UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework Guidance, following receipt of the final evaluation report, the UNCT will conduct a management response to the evaluation and determine the actions to be taken to operationalize the evaluation recommendations.

Evaluation process, deliverables and payment schedule

The following is a tentative work-plan, based on the assumption that the evaluation will be conducted by a team of three (see the Evaluation Management Section). The purpose is to provide indications on the required time allocation. Contractor can propose alternative solutions in terms of team size and time allocation by providing a clear rationale:

Phase	Deliverables	Due date	Person days	Payment schedule
Inception phase	Inception report Data collection tools Stakeholder mapping	30 June	20 days	30%
Data collection and meta-analysis phase	Meta-analysis report Key informant interviews' (KII) reports Presentation of preliminary findings	20 July	25 days	30%
Analysis and report writing phase	Draft evaluation report Stakeholder consultation workshop Final report	5 September	35 days	40%

Team composition and qualifications

The following was a proposition for the team composition that should be considered as indicative for the purposes of the bidding process. The contractor can propose alternative solutions, as long as all the qualifications and TOR requirements are met. A rationale for a different team composition should be provided in the technical proposal that the contractor will submit.

Team Leader: The team leader will be an international consultant and will be responsible for the overall delivery of the evaluation and the management of the evaluation team. S/he will have primary responsibility for designing the methodology, preparing the inception report as well as the draft and final evaluation reports in line with this ToR. The person should:

- Have at least 10 years of proven experience in leading development and humanitarian evaluations.

- Have conducted evaluations positively rated against the UNEG Standards by one of the adhering UN Agencies will be considered an asset.
- Have a strong development background with a solid understanding of the humanitarian aspects and of the humanitarian-development nexus.
- Have expertise in UN strategic planning processes, including familiarity with key concepts/approaches such as RBM, HRBA, gender equality, governance and social protection.
- Have an in-depth understanding of the various strategies used by the UN in both development and humanitarian contexts.
- Have previous evaluation experience in an upper middle-income country.
- Exposure to the Pakistan context and knowledge of challenges is going to be considered an asset.

2–3 team member(s): The two team members will contribute to the design of the evaluation methodology, to the preparation of the inception report as well as of the draft and final evaluation reports. They will largely contribute to the data collection and analysis phase. At least one of the team members should:

- Be a Pakistani national and bring in the required insight from the perspective of Pakistan's context (especially the socio-political and institutional context) and have knowledge of UN's mandate and experience of partnering with the Government of Pakistan.
- Have proven experience in planning, monitoring and evaluation processes based on RBM, HRBA and gender mainstreaming.
- Have at least 5 years' experience in the research field, especially qualitative data collection and analysis.
- Have at least 5 years' experience in analysing quantitative data.
- Have at least 5 years' experience in conducting evaluations. Having conducted evaluations with UN agencies adhering to the UN Evaluation Group is an asset.

Evaluation management

As per UNEG norms and standards, cooperation framework evaluations should be participatory and involve all key stakeholders in order to bolster ownership over the evaluation findings. In line with these standards, the evaluation will involve the following groups of stakeholders:

The Oversight committee (OC) will be responsible for the proper conduct of UNSDF/OP III evaluation. The oversight committee is co-chaired by the Resident Coordinator and a government representative (Secretary EAD). UNCT members or government agency counterparts not on the Steering Committee may opt to join the Consultative Group (defined below).

The Oversight Committee will invite government counterparts and other key stakeholders of UNCT agencies to form an Evaluation Reference Group (ERG)/Consultative Group. The Consultative Group will provide inputs at key stages of evaluation, such as in the design and activity planning, the validation of findings and the forming of recommendations.

The Oversight Committee will appoint an Evaluation Manager for the evaluation of UNSDF/OP III. The Evaluation Manager should not be and have not been involved in implementing a programme or a project to be evaluated, have a sound knowledge of the evaluation process and methodology, and understands how to abide by UNEG Evaluation Norms and Standards. The Resident Coordinator and UNCT should ensure that the

Evaluation Manager could operate within an environment and conditions conducive to an independent and unbiased evaluation management and is not subject to undue pressure from any interested party.

The Evaluation Team will comprise of independent external evaluators. It must have a team leader with extensive evaluation expertise and average 3–5 members, depending on the size of the UN country operation. There must be at least two members to allow triangulation of observations and validation of findings within the team. In composing the evaluation team, national evaluators should be used to the extent possible, and the gender balance should be kept. Further, the team can be supported by local enumerators (data collectors), if needed, to collect primary data.

The UNSDF/OP III evaluation in Pakistan will have a designated Evaluation Advisor in UNDCO to safeguard the independence and quality of the evaluation and to intervene in case of dispute.

Annexes of the ToR

Annex 1: UNSDF/OP III Evaluation Roadmap

Annex 2: UNSDCF 2023–2027 Roadmap

Annex 3: UNEG Guidelines

Annex 4: List of documents for desk review and meta-analysis

Annex 5: Initial list of Stakeholders

Annex 2. Evaluation approach and methodology

(Source: Inception report)

Theory of change conceptual framework

The evaluation is theory-based in the sense that it starts from examining the UNSDF/OP III's inherent underlying theory of change (ToC). The ToC is anchored in the country's blueprint for development, the Vision 2025, the medium-term development strategy, and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) as per Agenda 2030. Every single OP III Outcome has its own inherent design logic which is spelled out in the introductory page of the respective sub-chapter in the main UNSDF/OP III document, presenting the various UNSDF/OP III outcomes' particular rationale and design logic by (indirectly) discussing the "if-then-because" sequence. A main analytical focus of the MTE will be on these outcome level ToCs.

The evaluation will analyse the validity of the theory of change's inherent logic, by gauging to what extent the underlying root cause analysis and related design of the result chains and Outcome structure were and remain pertinent, evidence-based, logical and rational. This will include checking the validity of the "if-then-because" sequence throughout the implementation period; as well as whether any adjustments were necessary (in case of substantive changes in the contextual landscape unless already foreseen and inbuilt into the ToC) and, if so, were actually carried out. If the need for new pressing adjustments to the evolved context were to be identified in the course of the evaluation and it were to transpire that related steps are not in the process of being considered, designed or undertaken, then related recommendations would be made.

Participatory approach

The evaluation will adhere to a participatory approach orientated towards ensuring stakeholder learning and participation throughout the evaluation process. The evaluation team will adopt an inclusive and transparent approach to ensure the involvement of a wide range of stakeholders in the evaluation. An initial mapping of the stakeholders has been undertaken and this will be updated in consultation with the Evaluation Management team.

Stakeholders to be interviewed will be drawn from within the UN as well as from across the governmental entities, civil society, the private sector and development partners. The stakeholders will be clustered according to the Outcomes Area they were engaged in. Deliberate steps will be taken to ensure representation and/or selection of stakeholders who will provide information on gender and marginalized populations including people with disability and youth, among others.

Stakeholders will be encouraged to engage in an interactive discussion following the semi-structured interview guidelines. Every discussion, be it bilateral or in a focus group setting, will cover a backward looking analysis of past experiences in the sense of eliciting the various stakeholders' respective view(s) about relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability, coherence, key results and related success stories, best practices and lessons learned, as well as main challenges, problems and/or risks; and if and to what extent these remain or were successfully navigated or mitigated. Moreover, in adding the forward-looking lens to the backward-looking stance, stakeholders will be invited to share their ideas about relevant and pertinent recommendations on how to enhance OP III implementation by adjusting relevant processes, content design, implementation mechanisms, etc.

During interviews, the evaluation team will systematically prompt interviewees to back up their claims, opinions and judgments with relevant evidence. Furthermore, active stakeholder participation will be encouraged throughout the evaluation process' meetings/interviews and the inclusive validation workshop

that will take place towards the end of the evaluation process to validate and provide further input to the findings, conclusions, and recommendations of the evaluation.

Mixed-method approach

The evaluation will apply a hybrid or mixed method approach which means that both quantitative and qualitative data will be collected to inform the analysis, with qualitative primary data stemming from interviews while quantitative information (as well as qualitative data) will be picked from secondary data sources (grey literature, corporate UN monitoring reports, UN agency briefs and knowledge/M&E products including evaluation reports of agency-specific country programmes, annual reports, etc.). The interview techniques used to collect primary data will include open and semi-structured focused and key informant interviews with key stakeholders, a comprehensive review of documents and detailed in-depth content analysis. Given the Covid-19 situation, interviews will be conducted remotely through Zoom meetings.

The data accessible through UNInfo will play a critical role in terms of providing both quantitative and qualitative data to inform UNSDF/OP III performance indicators across all outcome areas. This will allow for a detailed meta-analysis of data that also forms the basis of annual UNSDF/OP III results reports and progress reports. To the extent possible and if applicable, the evaluation team will make use of UNInfo's analytical capabilities (including graphic analytical display of trend curves per outcome indicator, etc.).

Progress against targets will also be analysed in relation to the availability (or absence) of planned financial data. If such data is readily available, the UNSDF/OP III's relative weight per outcome area vis-à-vis the size of Government of Pakistan's related budget portfolio and other TFPs will also be taken into account when discussing the contribution to UNSDF/OP III outcome indicators. This may help in approximately identifying the UN's likely contribution to improvements in national-level SDG results indicators that also serve as the indicators for the UNSDF/OP III.

Environmental sustainability, human rights, leaving no one behind (LNOB), gender equality and women's empowerment

The evaluation will be carried out in accordance with UNEG Evaluation Norms and Standards of Evaluation and Ethical Standards as well as OECD/DAC evaluation principles and guidelines and fully compliant with the DAC Evaluation Quality Standards (2006). A mainstreaming approach will be adopted to ensure that cross cutting issues including gender equality and empowerment of women, diversity inclusion and non-discrimination, human rights and environmental sustainability are addressed in data collection and analysis.

The evaluation team has foreseen and in some cases is already undertaking, the following steps to ensure mainstreaming of these cross cutting issues: (i) A specific evaluation question on mainstreaming of these issues has been included in the evaluation matrix; (ii) Interview guides include evaluation questions to specifically assess these parameters; and (iii) further triangulation of document review and UNInfo gender marker and human rights marker reports among others will be undertaken.

In addition, both the online survey templates for internal and external stakeholders included specific questions about these cross-cutting aspects. Also, the vetting process of key contractual documents included the filtering of CPDs, prodocs, etc. with regards to the cross-cutting issues of gender, Human rights, and issues facing minorities, checking for the treatment of these subject matters throughout, at all levels. In addition, the vetting will also gauge how well elements of sustainability (including environmental sustainability, capacity-building, etc.) are addressed through the various documents analysed.

The issue of environmental sustainability will also be addressed during interviews with outcome leads (heads of agency and/or deputies), the Operational Management Team and provincial programme teams including government counterparts, with regards to the potential, or already existing, systematic installation of solar panels for office/administrative buildings, shared/joint premises, the practice of inter-entity car pools, and

overall mainstreaming of environmental standards into day-to-work office work (recycling of paper, energy saving practices at the office, biogas production using green waste, etc.). The issue of mainstreaming LNOB, gender, human rights and environmental aspects into tenders and LTAs will also be discussed.

Evaluation criteria and evaluation questions

The evaluation questions are framed in line with the standard OECD/DAC evaluation criteria which comprise relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, coherence, sustainability, and impact. A special additional emphasis will be laid on determining the degree of the UN(DAF)'s comparative advantage and coherence (especially but not exclusively, via the Delivering as One modality). The ToR provided a total of 19 preliminary key evaluation questions which were further fine-tuned and translated into assumptions in the attached Evaluation Matrix. The 19 questions were reviewed and fine-tuned by whittling them down to a total of 15 evaluation questions. Assumptions will be tested throughout the data collection and related iterative analytical process, by confronting them with data collected.

The final conclusions reached at the end of the analytical process will allow to either confirm and thus validate, or negate and thereby refute the various initial assumptions. The key questions were further broken down into a sub-layer of more specific questions which are presented in Annex 6 (Data Collection Tool "Question Pool"). The initial 15 key questions by evaluation criterion follow herewith:

Relevance

- To what extent has a human rights-based, a gender-sensitive approach been applied in the UNSDF/OP III design, implementation and monitoring? To what extent is the 'leaving no one behind' principle relevantly embedded in the UNSDF/OP III? Does it take into account the particularities and specific interests of the vulnerable groups?
- To what extent is the UNSDF/OP III aligned with (i) national development priorities, the SDGs, and the key Conventions Pakistan is signatory of (ii) Adapted to the changing needs considering the evolving programme environment and the COVID-19 context?
- To what extent was the UNSDF/OP III's results matrix designed as coherent (linked to the national development documents and contributed to the national monitoring systems), and focused framework that promotes and contributes to integrated approaches and allows for comprehensive monitoring and reporting against the stated outcomes?

Effectiveness

- To what extent is the UNSDF/OP III's monitoring system, including monitoring tools, indicators and means of verification, suitable for effectively measuring progress towards the UNSDF/OP III's outcomes and outputs in particular, and the SDGs more broadly?
- To what extent have the results achieved by the UNSDF/OP III contributed to strengthening the national capacities, policy environment and the achievement of Sustainable Development Goals? To what extent has the UN contributed to the progress towards planned outcome results?
- To what extent did the UNSDF/OP III's interventions reach the groups that are left behind or at risk of being left behind in line with the overarching objective of the UNSDF/OP III? To what extent have human rights principles and gender equality been effectively streamlined in the implementation of the UNSDF/OP III?
- Considering the specific context and needs, to what extent has the UN managed to operationalize the humanitarian-development-peace nexus also keeping in consideration the COVID-19 pandemic? Are there any lessons learned in relation to the scope of activities along the continuum humanitarian-development included in the UNSDF/OP III?

Efficiency

- To what extent the UN has made good use of its human and financial resources, tools and innovative approaches to ensure value for money and complementarities to Government's efforts, to generate the results on UNSDF/OP III?
- To what extent, UNCT, UNRCO, UN interagency coordination mechanisms and the joint programmes contributed to more integrated, collaborative, and efficient implementation of the UNSDF/OP III, including reduction of transaction cost, effective and efficient implementation in case of shortfalls in financial contributions and resource mobilization?
- To what extent were the previous structures of development assistance and partnerships efficient and able to adapt to support the COVID-19 responses? Were these adequate? Where were the weaknesses? Has the UN been able to offer a timely and cost-efficient procurement offer to meet the country's response to COVID-19?

Sustainability

- To what extent, is the UNSDF/OP III designed and implemented with a view towards sustainability (institutional, social, financial, etc.), ownership, durability of effects and commitment of stakeholders? What are evidences that demonstrate improved institutional capacity and performance particularly among national institutions that were supported by and through the UNSDF/OP III?

Conformity with the cross-cutting principles

- Has the UN system support extended in such a way to promote gender equality, rights of religious minorities, people with disabilities, follow Human Rights principles; and delivered support in due consideration to environmental implications? How effectively has the UN addressed geographical disparities through geographical spread and outreach?

Coherence/coordination

- To what extent have the UNCT, UN inter-agency coordination mechanisms, including joint programmes, contributed to increased UN coherence towards the common objectives and to deliver quality, integrated, SDG-focused policy support; and has the UNSDF/OP III strengthened the position, credibility, and reliability of the UN system as a partner for the government and other actors, and used effectively as a partnership vehicle?

Supporting transformational changes

- Has the UN system promoted or supported policies that are consistent among each other and across sectors, given the multi-sectoral nature of social and economic development?
- Has the UN system supported the country and the people in strengthening economic and individual resilience and contributed to reducing vulnerability against disasters and crises?

During the inception phase, the evaluation team, discussion with the evaluation steering committee, streamlined the questions to make them sound and focus to provide specific responses to the expectations of UNCT and national government in the partnership. Based on this a Questions pool has been developed that reflects the shared understanding of the evaluation committee and team on the relevant evaluation questions breakdown and which served as the pool for developing evaluation instruments for different stakeholders.

Methodological design

The evaluation matrix is central to all stages of the evaluation – design, data collection, analysis, conclusions and recommendations. The matrix lays out the entire evaluation plan. For each evaluation question, the matrix identifies key assumptions to be examined, indicators, sources of information and data collection methods. The evaluation matrix is crucial for the development of the detailed plan for data collection, preparation of the structure of interviews and development of data collection tools. A draft of this matrix has been developed and included in this inception report and will be reviewed by the Evaluation Manager and ERG. A final evaluation matrix will incorporate comments of the ERG.

Data collection methods

(a) Document review

An extensive review of documents relevant to the UNSDF/OP III design and implementation will be carried out to derive suitable secondary data for the evaluation. This will serve to inform the effectiveness-related analysis based on mapping out progress against set targets for performance indicators as per the OP III's results framework; running financial analyses; identifying key findings and conclusions, etc. from programme/Outcome level mid-term annual reports or mid-term reviews, etc. Criteria for document selection will include relevance to specific UNSDF/OP III strategic result areas and outcomes, relevance to the evaluation questions, periodicity of the document i.e. it falls within the evaluation period and it contributes to understanding the context and relevance of UNSDF/OP III. Some of the key documents to be reviewed include (a) documents on international norms and standards and internally agreed goals and commitments; (b) national and country policies and strategies including the overarching vision and medium term planning of the country; (c) UNSDF/OP III design documents including the common country assessment, results frameworks, annual work plans and reports, financial data among others; (d) evaluation reports of UN agencies; and (e) other documents demonstrating the outputs and outcomes of the UNSDF/OP III. Insights from documents review will inform the final development of the semi-structured key informant interview guides.

A specific contractual vetting tool will be designed to systematically analyse inter-entity relationships as per tangible evidence reflected in Prodocs, CPDs, Outcome Group minutes, etc. following the logic of an empirical social network analysis (breaking down different types of “connectors” into quantitative and qualitative indicators). The sampling universe will include all agencies' country programmes, Prodocs, LTAs, all Outcome Groups, all UN donors and Government of Pakistan partner entities. Indicator review and financial analyses will also build on data pulled from accessible literature, documentation and data (including UNInfo, etc.). The contractual vetting tool will also allow to capture elements related to cross-cutting issues such as LNOB, gender mainstreaming, human rights, etc.

(b) Key informant interviews and focus group discussions

Key informant interviews as well as focus group discussions across various categories of stakeholders will be undertaken. Interlocutors will be selected based on a comprehensive mapping of stakeholders. Interviews will be carried out at the national and county level and will target stakeholders involved in the UNSDF/OP III. The selection of key informants will be based on the strategic result areas and outcome they contributed to. Key informants will be drawn from UN, government at national and county sub-national levels, civil society, private sector and development partners. These interviews will provide primary data for the evaluation. Interviews will follow either the bilateral format (in-depth session with only one key informant) or the focus group discussion (FGD) approach. FGDs will add specific value when doing joint brainstorming on key stand-out achievements; and in view of identifying success stories, key challenges, best practices, lessons learned and developing prioritized key recommendations.

As a rule, to the extent possible, the coordination fora (PMT, OMT, RSAs/Outcome Groups, TWGs) will be covered through a mix of FGDs and bilateral interviews. FGDs would also add value when interviewing donors

or even specific Government stakeholders, as a quasi-online mini-workshop, specifically towards the end of the data collection phase when the evaluators will already have formed preliminary opinions about strengths and weaknesses, successes and challenges, etc. faced by the various Outcome Areas, and the UNSDF/OP III's overall performance per evaluation criterion. In this respect, FGDs can serve the purpose of fine-tuning key observations, conclusions and recommendations, by filling any pending data gaps, recapitulating initial assumptions and findings to expose them to confirmation or refutation by the collective combined judgment of key stakeholders including clients/beneficiaries, donors/financiers, IPs, etc.

(c) Online survey

A perception-style survey will be posted online, to capture some of the more intangible dimensions of the evaluation object (cf. annex 6 for draft templates). This is a complementary tool that is not overlapping with questions asked during interviews. Interviewees (KIIs/FGDs) will all be asked to also fill the online survey, which will allow to also reach out to all those who cannot participate in an interview session for whatever reason, be it because they were not selected to be part of the interview sample, were too busy and could not make time, were absent or on leave, etc. The template will be designed in such a way that there will be inter-comparability between data sets for internal and external stakeholders, through a shared common trunk of identical questions asked to both stakeholder categories.

Specifically for internal stakeholders, there are also a few stand-alone questions geared towards UN-internal idiosyncrasies specifically covering the realm of operations (BOS, LTA, etc.). The sampling universe will comprise all Government of Pakistan and NGO/INGO/CSO partner entities, including management and technical staff. Internal stakeholders (agencies, funds, programmes, governance structure members) are all part of the sample universe. Those individuals wearing multiple hats (e.g., (Deputy) Head of Agency, Head of Outcome Group/SRG and/or PMT/OMT) will be asked to only submit one filled survey form (rather than filling it several times, in line with their multiple functions). Sampling techniques will not be relevant since, following a de facto census-style coverage, all key stakeholders within UN and external agencies will be invited for either individual or focus group interviews.

Data collection tools

The annex section of the IR includes the draft mapping tools for the various above mentioned quantitative and qualitative, primary and secondary data sources (namely, (a) the indicator review “traffic light analysis” tool; (b) a financial analysis tool; (c) the contractual vetting tool; (d) a pool of standard evaluation questions to be further fine-tuned through customized queries for specific interlocutors and interview settings (bilateral, group interview, FDG); (e) templates of customized questionnaires for the online-administered internal and external stakeholders' survey.

Sample design (selection of districts and stakeholders)

Regarding the sampling strategy, a purposive approach will be adopted. The online survey will allow for intending universal coverage of all stakeholders across the board (Government of Pakistan partner entities, CSOs, private sector, INGOs/NGOs, donors/technical and financial partners (TFPs), all AFPs, all county administrations, etc.). All AFPs including NRAs will be covered through the contractual vetting tool scanning the prodocs, outcome level result group minutes, CPDs, etc. (cf. annex 6 for further details). Financial and indicator data also cover all AFPs. Sampling techniques will not be relevant since all key stakeholders within UN and external agencies will be invited for either individual or focus group interviews.

Finally, interviews will be carried out with top level management (RC/UNRCO, Government of Pakistan UNSDF/OP III focal point entities/individuals), sector/Outcome level leads (AFP managers and technical staff, Government of Pakistan line ministry directors and technical staff), TWG leadership and members, IP/NGO focal points, a select number of county level Government of Pakistan sub-national representatives, i.a.

Consolidation of data, analysis and reporting

As mentioned, the evaluation will capture and analyse both qualitative and quantitative data. The data used for analysis will come from various primary and secondary sources. In order to use existing sources/information and avoid duplication, secondary data will be mainly collected from various information sources through a continuous comprehensive desk review that will include the analysis of relevant documents, information, data/statistics, triangulation of different studies, etc. Primary data will be collected from stakeholder key informants through interviews, discussions and other formal and informal consultative processes.

The literature review will be based on UNSDF/OP III design and planning, implementation and M&E-related documents including the original UNSDF/OP III document, key programme/FPI/key JP documents (Prodocs, reports, AWP, MoUs, etc.) and other relevant UN and Government of Pakistan documentation; as well as relevant studies and research reports. In addition, relevant web links, studies, and survey and evaluation reports and sectoral studies and evaluations will be consulted; where applicable.

Key methodological techniques and/or tools that are suggested for this evaluation comprise the following items:

- (1) A critical review of the (overt or covert) underlying theory/theories of change as well as related risk analysis and respective employment/application thereof at Results, Outcome and output level.
- (2) A detailed review of the UNSDF/OP III result chain of key results and related performance indicators including concrete targets/milestones, including corresponding national strategic goals/results and indicators. This should help to assess the strategic relevance and responsiveness of the UNSDF/OP III in view of contributing to specific needs and requirements as laid out in the national development strategy. It will also allow the evaluation to gauge the “vertical and logical fit” of the result chains.
- (3) A critical review of the logic and language of the results statements vis-à-vis their respective indicators, target sequence, data collection tools, and data sources (means of verification); including a critical analysis of the metadata (including its absence, in none available). This would qualify as an assessment linked to gauging the degree of evaluability of the UNSDF/OP III in light of existing indicator metrics.
- (4) A matrix of standard queries and tools (cf. “Evaluation Matrix” further below) to be applied in stakeholder interviews will serve as guideline and scaffolding for data collection, and analysing/presenting qualitative analytical as well as assorted quantitative findings. Likewise, the Government of Pakistan’s representatives and institutional beneficiaries, IPs, CSOs, etc. will all be approached to collect their respective comments about the perceived subjective relevance of the UNSDF/OP III, the quality of services delivered, past or present challenges encountered, strategies (past, present or potential) to address them, lessons learned, best practices, recommendations, etc.
- (5) The matrix of key evaluation questions will be complemented with customized specialized queries building on the issues addressed in the generic evaluation matrix and incoming answers to those standard questions provided by the various stakeholders. The questions will serve as semi-structured interview guide allowing for heuristic flexibility along the way as the dialogues or group discussions will unfold. Room will be made to systematically probe for key human interest stories as miniature research studies documenting significant transformational changes (early impact, e.g. in the form of so-called “game changers”).
- (6) Progress mapping: Compiling “as is”/status quo-related performance data within the M&E matrix to confront the respective state of advancement per indicator against set goals. A simple traffic light mapping approach (red-yellow-green, respectively standing for progress that is lagging behind, adequate, or on track) will be used to mark achieved progress levels against set goals (see the related annex 6.5).

- (7) If data will lend itself to such an approach, a simple trend projection tool will allow to trace previous progress against indicators and the final set target value. This graphic display of the mid-term progress realized would serve to elicit discussions about the likely final achievement level vis-à-vis the respectively targeted result at the end of the UNSDF/OP III implementation period. Any potential delays, shortfalls, etc. could spark a discussion about related strategic or tactical countermeasures to address current problems or circumvent anticipated issues. This could include operational, logistical, procedural, sequential and/or strategic solutions. For anticipated challenges, potential response mechanisms could be discussed. If the trend curve shows non-linear progress in the past (plateau, regression, etc.) this could serve to discuss reasons for set-backs experienced, and how these were addressed. The related programme/project response applied to address the challenge(s) encountered, in turn, could possibly qualify as a lesson learned and/or a best practice.
- (8) Confronting progress against set indicator targets with related financial (allocation as per planned budget, spending as percentage of planned as well as of allocated budget) could also be carried out if detailed financial data is available and indicators lend themselves to such an approach (in the sense that they are set up according to attribution rather than contribution logic). This would allow for identifying cases of programme/project overachievement in terms of progress against set indicator goal in the absence of proper funding; as well as cases of underachievement in terms of progress against set goals in spite of proper funding, etc. The idea here would be to verify whether poor performance in moving towards planned results might be attributable to financial constraints. Lacklustre implementation might of course also be reflected in poor spending, hence the actual causal relationship (what is the cause and what the effect: poor financial performance leading to poor implementation results or vice versa) will always need to be taken into account. Here, one would draw on qualitative interview data. This type of more advanced analysis that would attempt to systematically look at the connection between financial data and results performance might not always be possible, since it would only make sense in those cases where a direct relation between funding against planned results and indicator design can be established.
- (9) Stakeholder mapping, including the mapping of other stakeholders' activities and financial support vis-à-vis the Government of Pakistan's own domestic budget support in contributing to national goals, to inform the assessment of the UNSDF/OP III's relative contribution or even attribution of results achieved. For key strategic outputs and related outcomes where the UN was the predominant, or only partner providing support to the Government of Pakistan, related strategic indicator progress (at the level of the SDGs and/or national development strategy goals) would qualify as a key contributions provided by the UNSDF/OP III. Conversely, in areas where many other partners provide considerable support and the UN was/is only "chipping in", the degree of the UNSDF/OP III's actual contribution would be comparatively low.

The scheduling of interviews and selection of interlocutors will take into account the gender and social inclusion perspective. To the extent possible and where applicable, all data will be systematically disaggregated by gender, age, ethnic or social status, and region; and the analysis will reflect such disaggregation. Other than the backward-looking part of the analysis which analyses the ground so far covered, the forward-looking component will provide recommendations for the design of the new UNSDCF as well as, if applicable, for the remainder of the UNSDF/OP III's implementation period. Aspects to be covered in this part comprise the strategic positioning and of the UN, fundraising/resource mobilization-related issues, as well as suggestions related to UNSDF/OP III programme/project design (e.g., about amending/adding/dropping specific outcomes or outputs/key activities; about mainstreaming of capacity building, RBM, the gender dimension, sustainability, etc.).

Ethical considerations

The evaluation will apply standard ethical considerations including informed consent, strict adherence to the rule of anonymity and confidentiality (i.e., not attributing specific statements to individuals when discussing or presenting findings), respecting the principle of voluntary participation and the right not to participate, a do-no-harm approach (including virtual interviews to rule out infection risks posed by the interview process during the still on-going Covid-19 pandemic). The evaluation will not reflect personal or sectoral interests but uphold the highest standards of professional integrity by respecting the rights of institutions and individuals to provide information in confidence, while always remaining sensitive to the beliefs and customs of local social and cultural environments.

At the same time, systematic cross-validation of data through triangulation and a scientific overall approach to data collection and analysis will ensure the objectivity of findings, and that recommendations are grounded in actual evidence. Applying these standards of ethical principles and practice will help ensure that the evaluation will collect unbiased data and provide suggestions that will be of benefit to the evaluation's direct stakeholders (UNRCO, UN agencies/funds/programmes, donors, the Government of Pakistan, civil society, private sector) as well as Pakistan's society as a whole

Data quality considerations

As part of quality assurance, all findings will be supported with evidence. Overall, a mix of quantitative and qualitative data from a balanced set of data sources and stakeholders will be captured, thus ensuring utmost comprehensiveness and absence of bias in the data which will serve for final analysis in view of reaching conclusions with regards to the set of evaluation criteria and related evaluation questions and related assumptions. Whenever possible, opportunities for data triangulation will be seized for cross-validation purposes to allow for trends, hypotheses and tentative statements to be tested.

Triangulation methods and techniques (such as checking if different figures and metrics provided calibrate, etc.) will be employed to ensure that the information and data collected are valid, reliable and limit bias in data collection and analysis. If and when contradictions are identified, the data source (be it the interviewees who provided such information and/or related key documentation) will be further consulted and engaged, to check the validity of such data.

The evaluation team will turn to the steering committee at any stage of the evaluation, should there be any concerns or issues cropping up related to the quality of consistency of meetings held, the ownership of findings, the rigor or perceived lack thereof in terms of data accessed through reports, UNInfo, interviews, etc. Data collection and analysis will further apply a 'do no harm' approach and standard UNEG ethical principles ensuring that the evaluation is non-discriminatory, remains wholly objective and impartial, adheres to confidentiality, etc. To avoid bias during stakeholder consultations, the scheduled interviews will embrace an inclusive approach factoring in relevant aspects and factors (including, inter alia, gender balance, agency/entity representation, regional representation if applicable, etc.).

Limitations of the methodologies and mitigation measures

The evaluation team has identified various potential risks and limitations that may affect this evaluation or hinder the smooth implementation of the data collection and analytical work. While it is hoped that few of these factors will present a significant challenge, it was felt advisable to prepare a related risk management strategy including the following mitigation strategies.

- Due to Covid-19-related travel constraints and remote work (i.e., working-from-home) arrangements at the UN, donors and CSOs, it will not be feasible for the evaluators to meet in person with most of the interlocutors. Importantly, field visits of programme/project implementation sites and interviews with grassroots level beneficiaries will not be possible. This could be a constraint on obtaining a clear

understanding of the context and reality of the working environment. Moreover, the possibility of establishing rapport with informants (via more informal interactions, especially after having finished the official interview format) that often contribute to enhanced understanding and insights into the context and programme, can be practically ruled out. As noted above, video conferencing technology will be used when possible to optimize the interpersonal connection with informants, and secure communications platforms will be prioritized to reassure them of confidentiality of data. Every effort will be made to accommodate the scheduling and technology preferences of informants so that they feel comfortable with the process.

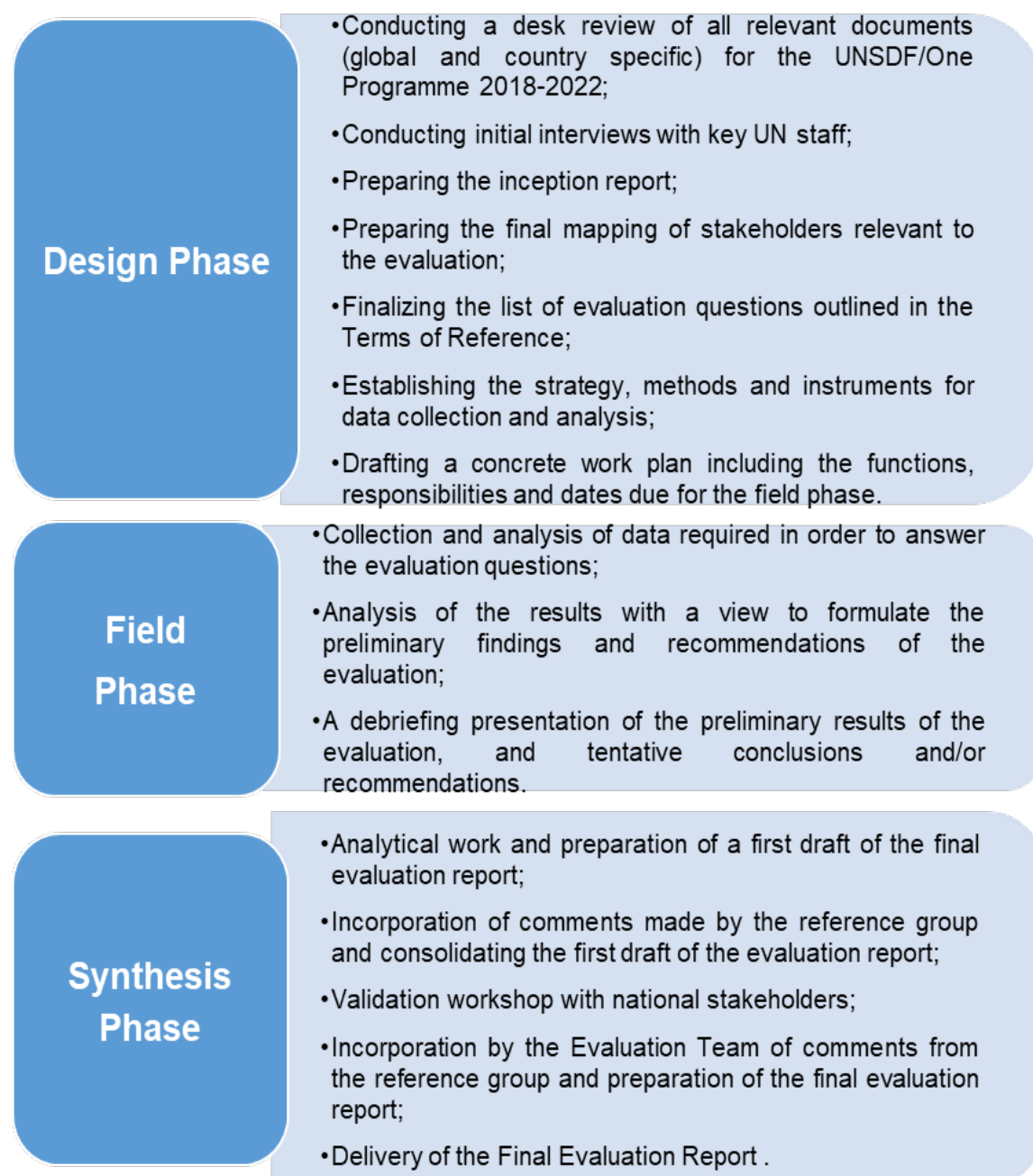
- Restrictions imposed by Covid-19-related safety measures (remote/home-based work depriving informants from accessing their offices and related ICT infrastructure including readily available access to computer work stations and internet) might pose an obstacle to participation by potential informants; especially those without an internet connection at home or at the workplace, if they are not able to safely reach a location with reliable internet. Also, slow and/or unreliable internet connectivity may hinder inclusion of some individuals, especially national counterparts and beneficiaries. The evaluators will make every effort to facilitate sufficient connectivity so these informants can share their views effectively. As well, if feasible, alternative avenues of synchronous communication will be identified prior to meetings as possible back-up solutions if needed, to minimize delays and inconvenience in case the first choice of platform or media does not work out. In those cases where the evaluators cannot be reached due to connectivity issues, alternate informants (of the same category) will be identified in consultation with ERG/RCO members. In addition, if need be, the evaluators will offer the option of responding to written questions to facilitate the participation of informants facing connectivity challenges, security concerns, quarantine, or other challenges.
- In view of assessing effectiveness and efficiency, the potential risk is that recent (2020–2021) data to inform progress against indicators and/or related budgetary data might in some cases not be available or not sufficiently disaggregated. Another potential risk is that UNSDF/OP III outcome level indicators might be framing results that are essentially “out of reach” of meaningful UNSDF/OP III contributions, let alone attributions. This risk is inherent for indicators that are adopted from the SDG framework and/or mirror results pitched at the level of the national development strategy or plan. In those cases where the UN was/is a relatively minor contributor to any such indicator, establishing a compelling link between indicator progress and UNSDF/OP III performance might in some cases may be problematic. The foreseen mitigation strategy would be to analyse (key) output level indicators and/or suitable proxy indicators to present attributable tangible results.
- The scope and complexity of the UNSDF/OP III represent a challenge to comprehensive evaluation of its implementation since the beginning of the programme’s implementation. The evaluation team will make extensive use of existing literature including country programme mid-term reviews, specific key programme/project evaluations including flagships and JPs, any type of reviews of Outcome-level progress and results, etc. to complement the meta-level data collected via key informant interviews and the detailed vetting of contractual agreements. The overall approach is therefore pitched at a strategic level with a focus on the Outcome level.

Annex 3. Evaluation process

Overview of the phases of the evaluation

The implementation period of this assignment starts from September 21, 2021, and ends no later than January 20, 2022, for a total of 40 days. Figure 1 below provides an overview of the different phases of this evaluation:

Annex 3. Figure 1. Evaluation phases and activities



Team composition and distribution of tasks

The Team will consist of an International Team Leader and a National Evaluator. Their tasks and division of responsibilities will be as follows based on their contractual obligations:

International Team Leader

- (1) Development of the inception report that details the design, methodology (including the methods for data collection and analysis criteria for selection of examples, required resources), and work plan of the evaluation team.
- (2) Meta-Analysis through review of the individual UN Agencies Funds and programmes (AFPs) evaluations of country programme documents (CPDs) and present the preliminary report of meta-analysis within first 4 weeks of the assignment.
- (3) Decision on the division of labour within the evaluation team and coordination of team tasks within the framework of the TORs.
- (4) Leading of the stakeholder feedback sessions on the evaluation through formal and informal sessions and finalization of the report based on feedback from the quality assurance process.
- (5) Overseeing and quality assurance throughout the preparation of the report and taking a lead in the analysis of the evaluative evidence.
- (6) Overseeing the administration, and analysis of the results of the data collection exercise.
- (7) Drafting the evaluation report, and coordination of the inputs from team members.
- (8) Preparation of the periodic inputs to the meetings (consultations and de-briefings) with UNCT and other stakeholder to review findings, conclusions, and recommendations.
- (9) Organizing the validation workshop to validate the findings before producing final evaluation report.
- (10) Delivery of the final evaluation report.

National Evaluator

- (1) Provide expertise in local development issues with sound understanding of the social and economic context of Pakistan.
- (2) Review relevant documents related to the programme.
- (3) Participate in the preparation of the inception report and design of the evaluation methodology.
- (4) Conduct an analysis of the outcomes, outputs, Joint Work Plans.
- (5) Carry out fieldwork and data collection as per the inception report and Terms of Reference.
- (6) Draft related parts of the evaluation report as agreed on the division of labour with the Team leader.
- (7) Assist the Team Leader in finalizing the evaluation final report including incorporating suggestions received on draft related to his/her assigned sections.
- (8) Perform any other research tasks as requested by the Team Leader.

Management and conduct of the evaluation

The UNRCO will appoint an Evaluation Manager as well as an Evaluation Reference Group to assist and guide the evaluation team with regards to logistical support, quality control (providing comments and suggestions based on the technical review of draft evaluation sub-products as well as the final (draft) report culminating in the evaluation report's final validation).

The team is composed of members from the UNRCO, the UNSDF/OP III's Monitoring and Evaluation Team comprised of technical members from UN agencies, civil society and Government of Pakistan representatives.

The evaluation team will work according to the protocols agreed upon by the evaluation team and UNRCO. The evaluation team will respect all UNRCO policies and procedures and will ensure the confidentiality of all respondents as well as all information received from the agencies.

Resource requirements and logistics support

The evaluation team will require the following support from the UNRCO:

- Availability of key documents related to the UNSDF/OP III
- List of key stakeholders to be interviewed and a request to them to cooperate with the evaluation team
- Help in the logistical arrangements for arranging the interviews
- Provision of at least two Research Assistants to the evaluation team for the documents review and analysis
- Help in setting up debrief sessions
- Arrange to provide feedback on the first draft of the report from all relevant stakeholders.

Annex 3. Figure 2. Project schedule

PHASE	DURATION	ACTIVITY	1 st Month				2 nd Month				3 rd Month			
			1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4
Design phase														
	4 days	Desk review, Evaluation design, and work plan formulation												
	1 day	Delivery of the Inception report												
Field phase	20 days	Field visits, interviews with partners, and key stakeholders; review of key documents; Presentation of key findings												
Synthesis phase	10 days	Drafting of the evaluation report												
	5 days	Finalization and submission of the evaluation reports (incorporating comments received on first drafts)												

Work/implementation plan

The evaluation mission follows a structural logic of three subsequent phases (Figure 2). The initial design phase is followed by the field phase for data collections. The final stage (synthesis phase) will be dedicated to data analysis, report drafting, presenting findings and recommendations, and fine-tuning the report culminating in its ultimate validation. The overall level of effort is 40 work days per consultant.

The key deliverable dates are as follows:

Inception report: October 6, 2021

Initial findings overview report and presentation: November 20, 2021

Draft and final report: If possible, by Nov 30th (latest by December 7, 2021)

Annex 4. Draft stakeholder map

Detailed stakeholder mapping was carried out by UNRCO, related documentation as well as the detailed interview schedule including names/functions of interlocutors can be accessed through them upon request. The following is a basic mapping discussed with UNRCO prior to identifying suitable informants based on a number of criteria including degree of seniority and function in the UNSDF/OP III overall governance and oversight machinery, level of involvement/'knowledgeability', availability, etc.

Stakeholder	Role/engagement within the UNSDF/OP III and role in the evaluation/areas of interest/focus	Observations ³²
UNCT/RC/ Regional directors	Commission the evaluation Management response to the evaluation/main users of the evaluation Provide strategic oversight and direction to outcome leads Review of evaluation preliminary and final reports RC as enabler, UNCT as coordinating platform	Evaluation team to interview the UNCT/PMT-OMT/Outcome Group leads either through key informant interview or focus group discussion Evaluation team to interview RC (also previous RC present during implementation of the UNSDF/OP III) (In their capacity as chair and head of UNCT and co-chair of the UNSDF/OP III) Evaluation team to debrief UNCT on the preliminary findings
OCHA	Enabler forum	Discuss utility and potential of UNSDF/OP III especially in view of nexus issues (needs, challenges, lessons learned and best practices, prospects/potential, etc.)
Government of Pakistan (federal and provincial/regional): Line ministries, national commissions	UNSDF/OP III co-chairs- Cabinet Secretary National Treasury and also Devolution planning. Cabinet secretaries or UNSDF/OP III co-chairs Provide oversight and decision making to the design and implementation of the UNSDF/OP III, with a keen focus on alignment and contribution to national development strategies	Evaluation team to have key informant interviews with each of the co-chairs (if possible, have physical meetings with each)
	Joint UNSDF/OP III secretariat/hosted at the National treasury- provide oversight, guidance to the UNSDF/OP III or focus on the UNSDF/OP III's contribution and alignment to national development priorities	Evaluation team to have key informant interviews with chair of the Joint Secretariat (Director of ERD) and the head of UN desk at the National Treasury and focus group discussion with the secretariat members
	Government Line Ministries/commissions/etc. aligned to the UNSDF/OP III strategic result areas and outcomes – as key implementing partners in collaboration with the strategic result groups – focusing on results and contribution of UNSDF/OP III (gender, justice and the rule of law/human rights/national cohesion/elections/devolution/health/education/National Aid Commission/social protection/housing/Nation Bureau of Statistics/housing/disaster risk management/agriculture/industrialization/manufacturing/Monitoring and Evaluation Department) also contribution to realization of SDGs	Evaluation team to hold key informant interviews at Government of Pakistan Secretary and/or Director level

³² (N.B.: By default, all stakeholders will be prompted to fill online survey; wherever feasible, KII or FGD will be added; technical issues of alignment and coherence will be addressed via vetting tool for detailed analysis of contractual agreements).

Stakeholder	Role/engagement within the UNSDF/OP III and role in the evaluation/areas of interest/focus	Observations ³²
	Provincial Governments/Council of Governors Key implementers/coordinators of the UNSDF/OP III via Provincial Steering Committee	Evaluation team will have Key interviews with the current and previous chair of Council of Governors Interviews with the CEO Council of Governors Interviews with governors in selected counties
UNSD/OP III strategic Outcome Result Groups/specific UN agencies (outcome leads/co-leads as well as provincial leads; and simple member agencies)	Key implementers of the UNSDF/OP III	Evaluation team to have focus group discussions and collect polling/on-line survey self-assessment data regarding DaO aspects (coherence/cohesion, coordination, synergies, etc.) with each of the Outcome Groups' lead and co-lead as well as other relevant key members, using a standard tool
PMT-OMT-TWG chairs and co-chairs as well as member entities	Key strategic coordinators of UNSDF/OP III implementation	
Provincial Programme Teams (PPTs)	Key transmission mechanism at sub-national level re OP III implementation (report to/liase with PMT and OMT; support UN provincial lead agency in engaging with provincial/regional governments; facilitate meetings of relevant Provincial Steering Committee; in view of strengthening UN inter-agency integration and coordination in the interest of high-quality implementation of the OP III)	Interviews and/or written exchanges/online polling
Resident Coordinators office	Coordination of the UNSDF/OP III	Evaluation team to interview UNRCO staff (RC, Head of UNRCO, Gender focal point, PBF focal point, M&E focal point, etc.)
Technical working groups (Communications, M&E, Gender/Human Rights, etc.)	Provide technical support to the UNSDF/OP III strategic result area groups (PMT, MEL, Gender, UN communication Group, SMT/OMT) technical working group)	Evaluation team will have either key informant interviews the group chairs or focus group discussions with members
Development partners	Strategic guidance, funding of UNSDF/OP III activities (EU, Norway, Sweden, Finland, Denmark, Canada, etc.)	Evaluation team will have key informants with the relevant donors funding UNSDF/OP III related activities (at least 10 development partners)
CSOs	Implementing partners (IPs), beneficiaries	Interview key IPs/beneficiaries and stakeholders (umbrella organizations, associations, etc.)
Private Sector	Beneficiaries and donors	Chamber of Commerce, key financial supporters/partnership entities, key IPs