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Final Report on the United Nations Bhutan Country Fund

**Report of the Administrative Agent of the United Nations Bhutan Country Fund
for the Period 1 January 2009 to 31 December 2018**

Multi-Partner Trust Fund Office
Bureau of Management
United Nations Development Programme
<http://mptf.undp.org>

31 May 2019

United Nations Bhutan Country Fund

Signatories



Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO)



United Nations Capital Development Fund (UNCDF)



United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF)



United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD)



United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)



United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)



United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP)



United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN Women)



United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA)



United Nations Volunteers (UNV)



World Food Programme (WFP)

CONTRIBUTING DONORS

**Austrian Development Agency
Delivering Results Together Fund
Expanded DaO funding Window
Swiss Development Cooperation**

Abbreviations and Acronyms

List of abbreviations and acronyms commonly used in the report:

cCPAP	Common Country Programme Action Plan
DDM	Department of Disaster Management
GNH	Gross National Happiness
EFW	Expanded Delivering as One Funding Window for Achievement of the MDGs
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
FYP	Five Year Plan
IFAD	International Fund for Agricultural Development
IMNCI	Integrated Management of Neonatal and Childhood Illness
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
MPTF	Multi-Partner Trust Fund
MPTF Office	UNDP Multi-Partner Trust Fund Office
MoAF	Ministry of Agriculture and Forests
MoE	Ministry of Education
MoHCA	Ministry of Home and Cultural Affairs
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
OCHA	Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
RC	Resident Coordinator
RGoB	Royal Government of Bhutan
SAA	Standard Administrative Arrangement
TOR	Terms of Reference
UN	United Nations
UNAIDS	Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS
UNCDF	United Nations Capital Development Fund
UNCTAD	United Nations Conference on Trade and Development
UNDAF	United Nations Development Assistance Framework
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNV	United Nations Volunteers
UN Women	United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women
WFP	World Food Programme

Definitions

Allocation

Amount approved by the UN Bhutan Country Fund Steering Committee for projects/programmes.

Approved Project/Programme

A project/programme document, including budget, etc., that is approved by the UN Bhutan Country Fund Steering Committee for fund allocation purposes.

Donor Commitment

A contribution expected to be received or already deposited by a donor based on a signed Standard Administrative Arrangement (SAA), with the UNDP Multi-Partner Trust Fund Office (MPTF Office), in its capacity as the Administrative Agent of the UN Bhutan Country Fund.

Donor Deposit

Cash deposit received by the UNDP MPTF Office for the UN Bhutan Country Fund.

Indirect support costs

A general cost that cannot be directly related to any particular programme or activity of the Participating Organizations. Under UN MPTFs, these costs amount to 7 per cent as per the UNDG agreed MPTF cost recovery.

Net funded/transferred amount

Amount transferred to a Participating Organization, less refunds, of unspent balances received from the Participating Organization.

Participating Organizations

Organizations that have signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the UNDP MPTF Office.

Project Disbursement

The amount paid to a vendor or entity for goods received, work completed, and/or services rendered (does not include un-liquidated obligations).

Project Expenditure

Amount of project disbursement made plus un-liquidated obligations during the year.

Project Financial Closure

A project/programme is considered financially closed when all financial obligations of an operationally completed project/ programme have been settled, and no further financial charges may be incurred.

Project Start Date

Date of transfer of first instalment from the MPTF Office to the Participating Organization.

Project Operational Closure

A project or programme is considered operationally closed when all activities for which a Participating Organization is responsible under the approved programmatic document have been completed.

Total Approved Budget

Amount approved by the UN Bhutan Country Fund Steering Committee for projects/programmes.

Executive Summary

The United Nations (UN) Bhutan Country Fund was formally established on 30 June 2009 with the conclusion of the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between 14 Participating Organizations¹ and UNDP's Multi-Partner Trust Fund Office (MPTF Office) in its capacity as the Administrative Agent of the UN Bhutan Country Fund. The UN Bhutan Country Fund became operational in December 2009 with the first contribution from the Expanded Delivering as One Funding Window for Achievement of the MDGs (EFW)².

Between 2009 – 2018, the UN Country Team in Bhutan mobilized and implemented a total amount of USD 3,516,598 that were allocated to fill funding gaps in the UNDAFs, with transfers being made to nine Participating Organizations implementing activities across the UNDAF outcome/programmes. Contributions were received from the Expanded DAO Fund, the Delivering Results Together Fund, Australian Development Agency and the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation.

The UN Bhutan Country Fund responded to both the Delivering as One approach and commitment to Aid Effectiveness as per the Paris Declaration. In line with the objectives with which the Fund was established, it was instrumental in funding the underfunded portions of the UNDAFs as well as in responding to new initiatives that resulted out of emerging national and international needs. This enhanced the flexibility and responsiveness of the UN system through the UNDAFs to adapt to national priorities. The UN Bhutan Country Fund contributed to realizing the UNDAF outcomes by strengthening the planning and coordination process and channelling consistent and predictable funds towards the highest programme priorities.

Governed by its Steering Committee in accordance with the UN Bhutan Country Fund Terms of Reference, the Steering Committee is responsible for prioritization and allocation decisions of the UN Bhutan Country Fund. The overall management of the UN Bhutan Country Fund is led and coordinated by the Resident Coordinator in consensus with the Heads of the Participating Organizations.

The major vehicle for public transparency of operations under the UN Bhutan Country Fund during the reporting period was the MPTF Office GATEWAY (<http://mptf.undp.org>), and the dedicated UN Bhutan Country Fund website (<http://mptf.undp.org/factsheet/fund/BT100>)

¹ FAO, IFAD, UNICEF, UNFPA, UNDP, UNESCO, UNAIDS, UNOCHA, UNCDF, UNEP, UN Women, UNCTAD, UNV and WFP.

² The Expanded Delivering as One Funding Window for Achievement of the Millennium Development Goals (EFW) is a global funding facility established to support UN Delivering as One countries. Current donors to the EFW are the Netherlands, Norway, Spain and the United Kingdom/DFID.

Introduction

This Final Report on Activities Implemented under the UN Bhutan Country Fund is submitted to the Steering Committee and Donors contributing to the UN Bhutan Country Fund, in fulfilment of the reporting provisions of the UN Bhutan Country Fund Terms of Reference (TOR), the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) as an Administrative Agent (AA) and Participating Organizations, and the Standard Administrative Arrangement (SAA) between UNDP as an AA and donors. The UNDP Multi-Partner Trust Fund Office (MPTF Office) serves as the AA of the UN Bhutan Country Fund.

The Report covers the period, 1 January 2009 - 31 December 2018, focussing on results achieved in the last UNDAF cycle 2014 – 2018. It is neither an evaluation of the UN Bhutan Country Fund nor the MPTF Office's assessment of the performance of the Participating Organizations – tasks that belong to an independent evaluation.

Report Structure

The Report consists of five chapters: Chapter One provides an overview of the strategic framework of the UN Bhutan Country Fund. Chapter Two provides an overview of the UN Bhutan Country Fund's governance and fund management arrangements. Chapter Three provides an update on allocations and programme approvals and the implementation status during the reporting period. Chapter Four provides an overview of the financial performance of the UN Bhutan Country Fund. Chapter Five elaborates on efforts made to ensure UN Bhutan Country Fund transparency and accountability.

1. Strategic Framework

Bhutan became a democracy following the successful elections to the country's first democratically elected Parliament in March 2008, with the third democratically elected government in place since 2018. Bhutan will graduate from the Least Developed Country (LDC) category by 2023, coinciding with the end of its current Five-Year Development Plan. Bhutan's unique long-term vision and guiding development philosophy of Gross National Happiness (GNH) is seamlessly aligned with the Agenda 2030 and Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The core pillars of GNH: sustainable and equitable socio-economic development, conservation of the environment, preservation and promotion of cultural heritage and good governance cover all of the SDGs. As such, just as the SDGs serve as a practical global road map for *Leave No One Behind*, in Bhutan the SDGs are viewed as a highly relevant development strategic framework contributing to realizing Gross National Happiness as the country's long-term development goal. This synergy between GNH and SDGs will give Bhutan opportunities to reach those farthest behind and to complete the last mile for a smooth graduation from Least Developed Country to Middle Income Country. At the same time, the UNDAF One Programme 2014 – 2018 concluded in December 2018 and the United Nations Sustainable Development Partnership Framework 2018 – 2023 (UNSDPF) that was signed in December 2018 became operational on 01 January 2019.

The UN Bhutan Country Fund allocations were guided primarily by the strategic priorities stated in the UNDAF 2008 – 2013 and the UNDAF One Programme 2014 – 2018, both of which were results of a highly consultative and participatory processes involving the Royal Government of Bhutan, key national implementing partners, all resident and non-resident UN agencies supporting Bhutan and other international partners. The UNCT's strategic priorities are fully aligned with national development priorities laid out in the respective Five-Year Plans of the Royal Government during this period. Although this is the final report of the UN Bhutan Country Fund for the period 01 January 2009 to 31 December 2018, it emphasizes the results achieved during the UNDAF One Programme 2014 – 2018 cycle.

The UN Bhutan's Delivering as One approach has several components:

One Programme: The overall goal of the UNDAF One Programme is to maximize the contributions of Participating Organizations by enhancing coordination, coherence, and programmatic synergies to assist in building an equitable, prosperous and democratic Bhutan. There has already been a significant reduction in the number of work plans and project documents between the Royal Government and the UN Organizations as a result.

Common Premises and Services, and Harmonized Business Practices: Taking advantage of the robust UN harmonization, both at programme and operations level, a joint Business Continuity Plan was first developed in March 2009, which further reinforces UN Bhutan's Delivering as One with mutual back-up facilities and equipment in case of major disruptive events. All the UN agencies present in the country—except for WHO—are housed in the One UN House, operating under an integrated ICT service, including further harmonization in procurement and other common services.

Communicating as One: The UN Bhutan Communications Group comprising of representatives from all six resident agencies is responsible for ensuring a One UN image. The Group provides advisory support to the UNCT and ensures UN advocacy and communications through various channels. The RCO now leads the Communications Group in advancing joint advocacy and the One Voice approach of the UNCT.

Common Budgetary Framework and Joint Resource Mobilization: The UN Bhutan Country Fund is an opportunity for the UN in the country to have a common Fund as a new pooled mechanism to mobilize and allocate additional resources at the country level, targeting the unfunded gaps in the One Programme.

Organizational Change – Leadership, Structure, Skills and Culture: Organizational change has taken root in UN Bhutan through successful UN harmonization, both at programme and operations level. The Government has expressed its appreciation to the subsequent reduction in transaction costs as a result of the harmonized processes.

2. Governance of the UN Bhutan Country Fund

2.1 Allocation Criteria

The allocation criteria for the UN Bhutan Country Fund (Refer Annex C) provide an objective basis for resource allocation decisions by the Steering Committee to allocate un-earmarked resources to the respective outcomes/outputs of the One Programme. The criteria for initial allocation are mainly related to One Programme relevance, Delivering as One, resource gaps and agency comparative advantage. Additional criteria for subsequent allocation are related to absorption capacity. The Outcome Groups are responsible for ensuring that their proposed activities meet the fund allocation criteria. The requests should preferably not be below US\$ 100,000 in order to encourage programmatic approaches and ensure operational efficiency.

The One Programme document, as well as joint programmes and agency programme documents falling thereunder is the programmatic planning document that will serve as the basis for funding requests and allocations.

1. For un-earmarked contributions, fund allocation will follow a two-tier process as reflected in the Fund Allocation Process in Annex B. The joint Outcome Groups (refer to Figure 1) will submit their priorities for funding based on the updated funding gap matrix, finalized at their Annual Review meetings in November each year. These proposed priorities will be compiled and reviewed by the Office of the Resident Coordinator and the GNH Commission and submitted to the Steering Committee.
2. The Steering Committee will review the proposed priorities and approve the initial prioritization if required, and based on it, the Steering Committee will submit an overview of the Resource Gap matrix to the development partners in December each year.

Upon receipt of funds from donors, the Steering Committee will make the allocation decisions, based on the financial status of the Fund and the needs of the Government. The Steering Committee will inform the Country Programme Board of the final endorsement at the Board's annual meeting. For decision making, at least half of the Steering Committee members should be present or provide delegated authority. Decisions will be based on a consultative process and will be documented jointly by the Office of the Resident Coordinator and the GNH Commission.

2.2 Steering Committee

The Steering Committee is comprised of UN signatories to the UN Bhutan Country Fund and the Gross National Happiness (GNH) Commission and is co-chaired by the Secretary of the GNH Commission and the UN Resident Coordinator. The ToR for the Steering Committee is attached as Annex D.

The Steering Committee will be responsible for prioritization and allocation decisions of the un-earmarked contributions to the UN Bhutan Country Fund. The initial prioritization for allocation will be guided by recommendations from the Joint Outcome Groups' annual review process.

The Steering Committee will guide the operations and management of the Fund; it will annually review the joint resource mobilization strategy and subsequently implement it. The Steering Committee will ensure that the Country Programme Board is informed of the allocations and will take into consideration the Country Programme Board's strategic priorities.

During the reporting period, no Steering Committee meeting was convened due to a change in the Secretary of the GNHC—Government Co-chair—and allocation decisions were made through formal exchange of letters.

2.3 UN Resident Coordinator

The overall management of the UN Bhutan Country Fund is led and coordinated by the UN Resident Coordinator in consensus with the Heads of the Participating Organizations. In line with the overall objective of 'Delivering as One' in Bhutan, the UN Resident Coordinator is responsible for:

- Strategic leadership of the UN Bhutan Country Fund on the basis of the UNDAF One Programme;
- Advocating and mobilizing resources for the UN Bhutan Country Fund in collaboration with Participating Organizations;
- Lead a consultative process on allocations from the UN Bhutan Country Fund, and make final decision if consensus cannot be reached, with documented process and rationale for these decisions;
- Signing the Memorandum of Understanding with Participating Organizations and the Standard Administrative Agreement(s) as a witness; and
- Implementation of the programme activities funded by the resources from the UN Bhutan Country Fund will be the responsibility of the Participating Organizations, as stipulated in the Memorandum of Understanding. The RC will hold the Heads of Participating Organizations accountable for their Organization's results that are funded through the UN Bhutan Country Fund.

2.6 Administrative Agent

As stated in the Memorandum of Understanding, Section I, the UNDP MPTF Office will, as the Administrative Agent:

- a. Receive contributions from donors that wish to provide financial support to the Fund;
- b. Administer such funds received, in accordance with this Memorandum of Understanding including the provisions relating to winding up the Fund Account and related matters;
- c. Subject to availability of funds, disburse such funds to each of the Participating UN Organizations in accordance with instructions from the Steering Committee, taking into account the budget set out in the approved programmatic document³, as amended in writing from time to time by the Steering Committee;

³ As used in this document, an approved programmatic document refers to the One Programme Joint Work Plans which is approved by the Steering Committee for fund allocation purposes.

- d. Consolidate statements and reports, based on submissions provided to the Administrative Agent by each Participating UN Organization, as set forth in the TOR, and provide these to each donor that has contributed to the Fund Account and to the Steering Committee;
- e. Provide final reporting, including notification that the Fund has been operationally completed, in accordance with Section IV below;
- f. Disburse funds to any Participating UN Organization for any additional costs of the task that the Steering Committee may decide to allocate (as referred to in Section I, Paragraph 3) in accordance with TOR.

In line with the provisions of the Memorandum of Understanding, the Administrative Agent will ensure that the finalized annual consolidated report on the UN Bhutan Country Fund, is compiled and distributed to all donors contributing to the Fund and to the Participating UN Organizations, including maintaining an appropriate level of fund information on the UN system website for Bhutan (www.unct.org.bt) and the UNDP MPTF Office's website (<http://mptf.undp.org/>) to ensure transparency and visibility of donor contributions.

3. Approval and Implementation Status

3.1 Programme Allocation Overview and Status

Between January 2009 to December 2018, a total of \$3,782,011 was allocated and transferred to nine participating organizations (FAO, UNDP, UNICEF, UNFPA, WFP, UNCDF, UNESCO, UNEP and UNCTAD, and), in support of seven programme areas, namely: education; environment; poverty; health; governance; gender equality and; child protection .

3.2 Programme Implementation Status

Well targeted priorities and diligent follow-up by Participating Organizations contributed to the financial implementation rate as of end-2018 (99.15 per cent). For the full financial report, please see Annex 1 of this report: Consolidated Annual Financial Report of the UN Bhutan Country Fund.

3.3 Implementation Achievements

The sections below provide an overview of the main implementation achievements of programmes, as reported by the respective Participating Organizations during the period 2009 – 2018. Additional information on the programmes is available in individual programme reports posted on the MPTF Office GATEWAY (<http://mptf.undp.org>). Annual progress reports for previous years can also be found on GATEWAY (<http://mptf.undp.org/document/download/9141>).

Achievements and Results

Phase I: 2009-2013

Between 2009 – 2013, a total contribution of USD 2,419,000 was received from the Expanded DAO Funding Window and a total of USD 2,544,649 was approved for allocation to nine Participating UN Organizations to meet unfunded activities across the five UNDAF 2008 – 2013 Outcomes namely: Poverty and MDGs; Health; Education; Governance and; Environment.

Under the Poverty and MDGs outcome, targeted interventions in four most remote and poorest villages helped enhance the level of food security, accessibility, availability and better nutrition among villagers. Income security has also been increased through creation of micro-business opportunities such as dairy, poultry farms and handicraft, the foundation of which has been made more sustainable through the formation of community self-help groups.

Under the Health outcome, the funds were used to fill critical resource gaps in the provision of reproductive health services, thereby ensuring the availability of modern methods of contraceptives in all the health facilities. This led to an increase in the contraceptive prevalence rate from 35.4 per cent in 2007 to 56.6 per cent in 2010. Several trainings for health professionals were also conducted that led to enhanced quality of health services.

Under the Education outcome, support to the Government's National School Feeding Programme led to higher primary enrolment rate for girls as compared to boys by 1 per cent. Prior to this the number of boys enrolled at schools was always higher. Support to Life Skills Education programme in schools through Training of Trainers helped equip school teachers with the skills to deal with complex youth issues in schools, including the advocacy materials distributed across schools.

Under the Governance outcome, funds were utilized to support critical areas such as gender, child protection, local governance and capacity development and community information centres.

Under the Environment outcome, activities funded out of the One Fund contributed to the establishment of better preparedness and response systems to reduce risks of the Bhutanese population from disasters. In addition, through the support to implementation of human-wildlife conflict management strategy, communities have adopted mitigation measures to address this issue, thereby protecting crops from wildlife depredation. The expenditure amount at the end of 2013 was USD 2,306,041 as against the approved USD 2,544,649, with a delivery rate of 90 per cent during the five years.

Phase II: 2014-2018

More recently, during the period 2014 - 2018, the following results were achieved across the four UNDAF One Programme Outcomes, namely: Sustainable Development; Essential Social Services; Gender Equality and Child Protection and; Governance:

Sustainable Development

- a) A public advocacy campaign was carried out on the SDGs and their relationship to GNH. To initiate this work, an International Consultant was hired to develop a communications and advocacy strategy to support the Government in creating awareness of the 12th FYP NRKAs and the SDGs. An action plan for the implementation of the strategy has been drafted.

- b) Sectoral and inter-sectoral awareness sessions were also carried out to enhance policy-maker's engagement with SDGs. To support each sector in articulating and owning their respective roles in Bhutan's development planning, including understanding how SDGs can be a tool to leverage SDG results, the project supported sector-specific and inter-sectoral awareness raising sessions. As a result of this continuous work, the SDG indicators were used as a basis for the formulation of the National Key Result Areas (NKRAs), Sectoral Key Result Areas (SKRAs) and the Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) of the plan. As a result, the 16 NKRAs are closely related to that of the 17 SDGs and about 44 indicators of SDGs are integrated as KPIs for the NKRAs.
- c) The private sector, CSOs and the Government agencies have been critical partners in implementing the project. The preparation of the 12th FYP has been inclusive of bilateral discussions with CSOs, the private sector, political parties, etc. GNHC worked very closely with theme based working groups to seek their input on strategic focus/priority of the 12th FYP.

Essential Social Services

- a) In 2015, UNICEF supported the Ministry of Health to conduct a National Nutrition Survey. The survey measured and generated important data on the prevalence of chronic under-nutrition and anaemia in under-fives, prevalence of anaemia in women of child bearing age and adolescent girls, as well as identified its determinants. A web-based EMIS was piloted in 2015, and now most schools used the web-based system. This has enabled the timely and accurate production of the Annual Education Statistics. To improve management of disabilities in young children, an in-service training on rapid neurodevelopmental assessment (RNDA) and disability reporting and intervention was conducted for 25 physiotherapy technicians assigned to hospitals. Key findings from the survey on nationwide survey on the knowledge, attitudes, practices (KAP) of Bhutanese people towards disabilities informed revision of the policy on Infant and Young Child Feeding, and development of a National Food and Nutrition Security Strategy covering 2016–2025 and Action Plan covering 2016–2018.
- b) A nation-wide social mobilization on adolescent health was conducted by the UNFPA through the Bhutan Broadcasting Service (BBS), to raise awareness among adolescents in particular and the public in general on adolescent sexual and reproductive health issues, availability of adolescent-friendly health services and the packages offered by the services in order to increase utilization of those services. Following orientation sessions with the Royal Institute of Health Sciences, a Standard Operating Procedure was developed that guided establishment and operation of an adolescent-friendly health centre in the institute for the students who are mostly adolescents. UNFPA, in collaboration with the National Statistics Bureau, conducted the Knowledge, Attitude and Practice (KAP) survey on social issues among monks and nuns, with the objective to provide evidence for policy formulation and programme interventions to enhance their knowledge and skills as agents of change. Furthermore, the Y-PEER methodology was adapted, and standard guideline are being used in all Y-PEER units in higher learning institutes. This support improved young people's sexual and reproductive health and in enhanced their access to sexual and reproductive health information and services through peer approaches, as per the National Youth Policy.

- c) In 2015, UNFPA supported the development of the draft national protocol for clinical management of rape/sexual violence to guide the health sector response to gender-based violence services in all the hospitals. The draft guideline on gender-based violence counselling standards was also developed and will be used as training guide for training of in-service health workers. The development of standard operating procedures on the implementation of Life Skills Education with a focus on sexual and reproductive health education in the nunneries was also completed.

Gender Equality and Child Protection

- a) Recognizing the importance of engaging children and families towards protection of children from violence, abuse, and exploitation, UNICEF worked with NCWC and partners to develop an awareness programme focused on key child protection issues, and the laws that protect them from violence. To provide clarity on roles of stakeholders and equip them with step-by-step guidance on dealing with victims and vulnerable children and women in a time-bound and efficient manner, UNICEF supported the NCWC to develop two separate, but inter-linked, Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) on case management and referral system. To ensure that the provisions and safeguards in the child protection legislation, namely the Child Care and Protection Act 2011, are operational, UNICEF supported the Royal Bhutan Police (RBP) to enhance their capacities on child protection issues – through Women and Child Protection Desks, Child-friendly Interview Rooms, and capacity development of police personnel. UNICEF also worked with the Bhutan Nuns Foundation (faith-based organization), to enhance knowledge and capacities of male principals and teachers from nine nunneries to work effectively with young nuns.
- b) UNICEF’s Adolescent Development and Partnership and Child Protection programmes partnered with the NGOs Youth Development Fund (YDF) and Respect, Educate, Nurture and Empower Women (RENEW) to promote direct engagement of adolescents and youth on protection issues, including violence against children and adolescents. Workshops conducted with 70 volunteers from six districts resulted in enhanced awareness among participants on protection issues, and an action plan on child protection and adolescent participation in their communities. The qualitative research on violence against children (second phase of the three-phase research) was completed in 2015. The research identified drivers of violence against children. These include alcohol abuse by parents, divorce among parents, poverty, cultural beliefs such as “karma”, and societal acceptance of physical means of disciplining children.

Governance

- a) The UN supported the Government in the preparation of the 12th Five Year Plan (FYP), with the aim to integrate the SDGs into the national planning processes, goals and objectives. Through extensive stakeholder consultations with the Ministries, Autonomous agencies, CSOs, Private sector and the local governments, Bhutan has in place, a national development plan that is more inclusive and

sustainable and one that is aligned to the SDGs principle of ‘leaving no one behind’ and ‘inclusiveness’.

The first outcome of the preparatory process was the formulation and circulation of the guidelines for the plan in January 2017. The 12th FYP guidelines provide a broad policy framework for the central and local Government agencies to prepare the 12th FYP based on the national priorities. It also inspires and directs other stakeholders – private sectors, CSOs and development partners to work in close collaboration and in line with the national development agenda.

Responsible staff both at central and district levels were trained on the inclusion and participatory approaches throughout the plan preparatory process. Seven planning officials (five male and two female) were trained on strategic planning and prioritization at Bangkok School of Management to better understand the planning process and employing strategies in developing the national plan. These capacity building activities have greatly contributed to formulating the national and agency key results which are relevant to Bhutan’s next development phase.

The 12th FYP documents have been drafted following an inclusive and participatory approach to ensure ownership of the plan and are in the advance stage of finalization for approval by the next Government towards the end of the year, 16 National Key Result Areas (NKRAs) and Dzongkhag Key Result Areas (DKRAs) and Thromde Key Result Areas (TKRAs) and their KPIs have been proposed by sectors and local governments through a series of brainstorming workshops.

- b) The GNH Commission (GNHC) in collaboration with UNDP completed the Initial Vulnerability Needs Assessment in April 2015. As a follow up to the initial study, a more thorough assessment was undertaken in October 2015 and is in the process of finalization following discussions with Government and other stakeholders.

The report builds on the initial assessment and is a comprehensive assessment of the defined vulnerabilities; it also describes the current programmes, policies and gaps, and offers recommendations to inform interventions for vulnerable groups. As a result of the two vulnerability assessments, the Government formed a multi-sectoral task force in November 2015 to formulate the National Disability Policy. The task force includes persons with disabilities and members from disability organizations and the private sector. UNDP’s work with the task force has been on capacity development and facilitation of South-South Cooperation in Cambodia, during Cambodia’s mid-term review of their National Disability Policy, for better understanding of disability and the process of formulation of policy and monitoring. The task force developed a concept note on formulation of a National Disability Policy for Bhutan, for submission to the Planning Commission.

- c) UNDP also worked in close collaboration with the National Commission for Women and Children in the implementation of the National Action Plan for Gender Equality in Elected Office (NAPGEE) since 2014. Beyond examining national laws, the review also looked at the extent to which Bhutan’s legal framework guarantees gender equality and women’s participation in political and public life, using specific CEDAW legal indicators. In addition, a review of policies from the perspective of gender equality was conducted by the National Commission for Women and Children in October 2015 to

assess how current policies have an impact on women's participation in socio-economic development. The review used the frameworks of the Beijing Platform for Action, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, and the Sustainable Development Goals to identify the current policies' compliance with international standards on gender.

- d) Furthermore, UNDP supported Institutional Building Program for Treaty Ratification for the Office of the Attorney General, which aimed to develop formal guidelines for treaty ratification by the Government. The guideline was discussed during the stakeholder meeting and submitted to the Cabinet in December 2015 for consideration. UNDP also supported the Royal Audit Authority in developing a training module on auditing from gender perspective and conducted a Training of Trainers (ToTs) among its top managers. The participants then trained all employees of RAA on gender, and on auditing from gender perspective. The training module will be included in RAA's new "Training course" to be used for training field auditors and the internal auditors of Ministries and agencies.
- e) In 2015, UNDP, in partnership with the ministries of Labour and Human Resources and of Agriculture and Forests, conducted a detailed feasibility study for engaging youth in commercial agricultural farming—covering eight districts of Thimphu, Paro, Punakha, Wangdue Phodrang, Tsirang, Mongar, Trashigang and Pemagatshel—in August - December 2015. The main objective of the feasibility study was to identify suitable fallow land and assess the technical and economic viability of using the land for commercial farming. The study provided recommendations to the Government for engaging youth in agricultural livelihoods.
- f) In 2016 UNCTAD work was to guarantee that the proposed Bhutan UNCTAD e-Regulations system (See: <https://bhutan.eregulations.org/>) would be fully operational with results oriented and user-friendly through an online facilitated access. This objective was fully reached as UNCTAD and Government of Bhutan were awarded for the UNCTAD e-Regulations in Bhutan. In July 2016, Bhutan received the top rating for information portals on the "Global Enterprise Registration GER".
- g) In 2016, UNDP supported the Justice sector to conduct its first holistic strategic planning workshop and adopted a "white paper" on justice sector planning. As a result, "Justice Services and Institutions Strengthened" has been identified as a National Key Result Area in Bhutan's 12th Five Year Plan. This is intended to bring about improvement in coordination across the justice sector agencies, starting with Office of Attorney General drafting its first strategic plan supported through the UN One Programme ADC project. The support to finalize the strategic plan will be continued in 2017. UNDP also supported the Government in initiating a legal and policy framework on Persons Living with Disabilities (PLWD). The legal and policy environment to advance gender equality and tackle vulnerabilities was strengthened in 2016. As a follow up to the Vulnerability Baseline Assessment (VBA), the concept note to formulate Policy for PLWD was approved by the Cabinet. In an effort to strengthen the LGBT community in Bhutan, a Legal Environment Assessment of HIV (2016) in Bhutan also helped close the gap in understanding who is vulnerable and why for improved targeting. One

of the early results was for the LGBT community. Sensitization on Gender-Based Violence (GBV) to tackle domestic violence was conducted for over 1,500 students through training of school principals, health coordinators and counsellors on GBV, including strengthening community outreach to tackle GBV through such trainings and sensitization programmes. Towards establishment of a Legal Aid System in Bhutan, the working group that was set up following the Legal Aid Symposium in 2014, developed a proposal with “recommendation of Models viable in Bhutan and the need for a specific legislation relating to legal aid” and submitted to the Cabinet.

- h) The project has supported the mapping of Bhutan’s ‘data ecosystem’. This report includes the findings and recommendations of the Bhutan’s data ecosystem mapping. Drawn through the pedestal of the ecosystem approach, the report presents a gamut of assessments of Bhutan statistical system, including the legal and the policy frameworks; entry points and obstacles for multi-stakeholder engagement on data for implementation and monitoring of the 12th FYP; innovation and new technologies for participation; infrastructure/institutional requirements for the improved collection, analysis, dissemination and use of data; and efforts to support the creation of national and international legislative frameworks for monitoring and accountability of the SDGs. It evaluates the data gaps, availability and credibility and assesses the capacity and institutional upgrading required to address these gaps for effective tracing and monitoring of the 12th FYP progress, including the SDGs, both at national and sub-national levels.

The data ecosystem report will help and corroborate progress towards Bhutan’s 12th FYP to deliver measurable and accurate development results in line with both GNH and the SDGs. The implementation of the 12th FYP and the SDGs in Bhutan provides an impetus to improve data availability, quality, timeliness and comparability both nationally and sub-nationally.

Conclusion

The UNCT operated and continues to do so, in a highly constrained resource and resource mobilization environment. Phasing out of Bhutan’s development partners during the UNDAF One Programme period and improvement in Bhutan’s microeconomic indicators leading to Bhutan’s graduation from the LDC status by 2023 have significantly affected resource mobilization especially in the social areas. Despite resource mobilization challenges, the UNCT was able to rely on the UN Bhutan Country Fund that has been instrumental in filling resource gaps in key priority areas of the UNDAFs that were either unfunded or under-funded.

The UNDAF One Programme End-of-Cycle evaluation noted that the UNCT needs to look beyond traditional source of financing as the phasing out of Bhutan’s development partners and the improvement in Bhutan’s microeconomic indicators takes effect. More specifically, the following lessons were learned:

- a. **Joint Resource Mobilization:** Joint programme initiatives can lead to enhanced resource mobilization opportunities and increased UNCT ownership of joint results. Going forward, actions to streamline joint resource mobilization should be considered-actioned.
- b. **One Fund:** One fund can act as a catalyst for larger investments. The UNCT members should better utilize the One Fund including using it as a conduit for agency resources.

In line with the above lessons learned, the following recommendations should be considered:

- a. The UN Resident Coordinator (UNRC) and UNCT to lead joint resource mobilization actions (with a focus on joint programmes) and report quarterly on such actions through the monthly UNCT meetings;
- b. Prepare a Joint Resource Mobilization Strategy with actions based on the analysis of the development financing landscape in Bhutan and innovative financing opportunities (i.e. Social Impact Investment, Green Financing, etc). As part of this strategy, **ways to optimize the One Fund should be explored.**