

Insert Logo for Participating
UN Organisation(s)



A UN system-wide
service hosted by



[Pilot of the UNSDG Operational Guide on LNOB in Nepal]

**MPTF OFFICE GENERIC FINAL PROGRAMME¹ NARRATIVE REPORT
REPORTING PERIOD: 1 JANUARY – 31 DECEMBER 2020**

<p>Programme Title & Project Number</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Programme Title: Pilot of the UNSDG Operational Guide on LNOB for UNCTs in Nepal Programme Number (if applicable): 00117586 MPTF Office Project Reference Number:³ 	<p>Country, Locality(s), Priority Area(s) / Strategic Results²</p> <p>(if applicable) Country/Region: Nepal</p> <hr/> <p>Priority area/ strategic results</p>
<p>Participating Organization(s)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organizations that have received direct funding from the MPTF Office under this programme 	<p>Implementing Partners</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> National counterparts (government, private, NGOs & others) and other International Organizations
<p>Programme/Project Cost (US\$)</p> <p>Total approved budget as per project document: US\$ 41,730 MPTF /JP Contribution⁴:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> by Agency (if applicable): US\$ 41,730 <p>Agency Contribution</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> by Agency (if applicable) <p>Government Contribution (if applicable)</p> <p>Other Contributions (donors) (if applicable)</p> <p>TOTAL: US\$ 41,730</p>	<p>Programme Duration</p> <p>Overall Duration (months)</p> <p>Start Date⁵ 17 August 2019</p> <p>Original End Date⁶: 27 February 2020</p> <p>Current End date⁷: 26 December 2020</p>
<p>Programme Assessment/Review/Mid-Term Eval.</p> <p>Assessment/Review - if applicable please attach</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No Date: dd.mm.yyyy</p> <p>Mid-Term Evaluation Report – if applicable please attach</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No Date: dd.mm.yyyy</p>	<p>Report Submitted By</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Name: Stine Heiselberg Title: Head of Resident Coordinator’s Office Participating Organization (Lead): UNDP Email address: stine.heiselberg@un.org

¹ The term “programme” is used for programmes, joint programmes and projects.
² Strategic Results, as formulated in the Strategic UN Planning Framework (e.g. UNDAF) or project document;
³ The MPTF Office Project Reference Number is the same number as the one on the Notification message. It is also referred to as “Project ID” on the project’s factsheet page the [MPTF Office GATEWAY](#)
⁴ The MPTF or JP Contribution, refers to the amount transferred to the Participating UN Organizations, which is available on the [MPTF Office GATEWAY](#)
⁵ The start date is the date of the first transfer of the funds from the MPTF Office as Administrative Agent. Transfer date is available on the [MPTF Office GATEWAY](#)
⁶ As per approval of the original project document by the relevant decision-making body/Steering Committee.
⁷ If there has been an extension, then the revised, approved end date should be reflected here. If there has been no extension approved, then the current end date is the same as the original end date. The end date is the same as the operational closure date which is when all activities for which a Participating Organization is responsible under an approved MPTF / JP have been completed. As per the MOU, agencies are to notify the MPTF Office when a programme completes its operational activities.

NARRATIVE REPORT FORMAT

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In Nepal, various challenges remained in developing a system wide understanding of the people left behind despite significant constitutional, legal, and programmatic efforts to address the issues of marginalization and vulnerabilities. The UNCT Nepal undertook pilot implementation of the UNSDG Operational Guide on LNOB. It aimed to inform policies and programmes in Nepal with the issues of those left farthest behind, accelerate progress on the 2030 Agenda, and provide practical feedback on the Guide.

The pilot implementation of the Guide started at the end of 2019 with an objective of carrying out LNOB assessment and developing the LNOB guideline applicable for UNCT Nepal. At the onset of COVID-19, the original plan of applying the LNOB guidelines to a specific project or programme no longer seemed the best use of the project. When a little into the COVID-19 pandemic, the UNCT Nepal sought to understand how the pandemic and response was impacting on vulnerable and marginalized groups. The UNSDG Operational Guide on LNOB was applied to “UN Framework for Responding to the Socio-Economic Impacts of COVID-19 in Nepal (the SERF)” responding to the needs of changing context induced by the COVID-19. The application of the LNOB Guide provided approaches to inform the SERF of the issues of vulnerable groups and design a strategy to provide necessary assistance to them. The LNOB assessment carried out for the application of the LNOB Guide to the SERF was also extended to the Common Country Assessment (CCA) in 2021.

The UNCT Nepal carried out consultations with 35 different groups identified by the UNCT based on groups already known to be left behind and others suspected to be newly impacted by COVID-19. The 35 groups covered various segments of the population (e.g. women, gender and sexual minorities, indigenous peoples, Dalits, ex-bonded labourers, religious and ethnic minorities, persons with disabilities); and constituency groups (e.g. civil society, teachers, private sector). The summaries of the consultations were further discussed and incorporated into the SERF with the strategies to provide assistance to the most vulnerable groups.

The consultations and analysis done in the process of developing the SERF has also fed into the Common Country Analysis process, which the UNCT is currently undertaking. The LNOB pilot has helped inform the UNCTs thinking around support to the federalization process, considerations around the restructuring of the social security system to reflect basic income for women (with funding from HDDP); and ensuring the concerns of those left behind are addressed by the national development policies including the LDC Graduation strategy.

I. Purpose

In Nepal, several groups are at risk of being left behind because of gender, ethnicity, caste, religion, sexual orientation, disability, poverty, and geography. In the 2012 and 2017 Common Country Analyses, the UNCT Nepal had a strong focus on analyzing the underlying factors for exclusion. In the subsequent UNDAFs, the UNCT Nepal explored ways, including having a dedicated outcome to addressing social inclusion in the 2013-2017 UNDAF. The UNCT-SWAP Gender Equality Scorecard found that there was a need for a stronger gender analysis within groups to recognize specific power relations in order to give better guidance on the gendered nature of marginalization, access to resources and enjoyment of human rights within marginalized groups.

The current UNDAF (2018 – 2022) adopted a Human Rights-Based Approach, under the overall framework of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The current CCA and UNDAF provide a

solid foundation for analysis of and attention to inequality and groups left behind. The Government of Nepal (GoN) championed the SDGs by identifying national targets and indicators early and aligning the 15th Five Year Plan to SDGs. The National Planning Commission, a planning body of the GoN, has asked the UN to provide assistance in addressing the issue of groups left behind.

Challenges remained in terms of the understanding of who is being left behind and why (including how the composition of these groups is changing because of political and economic changes in the country). Therefore, the design and implementation of strategic interventions to address the challenges is crucial. In this background, the UNCT Nepal undertook the pilot implementation of the LNOB interim operational guide. The pilot implementation aimed to inform policies and programmes in Nepal with the issues of those farthest behind, accelerate progress on the 2030 Agenda, and provide practical feedback to the LNOB Guide.

However, due to the emerging context of the COVID-19, the original plan of applying the LNOB guidelines to a specific project or programme no longer seemed the best use of the project. When a little into the COVID-19 pandemic, the UNCT Nepal sought to understand how the pandemic and response was impacting on vulnerable and marginalized groups. The UNSDG Operational Guide on LNOB was applied to the “UN Framework for Responding to the Socio-Economic Impacts of COVID-19 in Nepal (the SERF)” responding to the needs of changing context induced by the COVID-19.

II. Assessment of Programme Results

i) Narrative reporting on results:

• Key Results (Outcome and outputs)

At the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, the UNCT Nepal sought to understand how the pandemic and response was impacting on vulnerable and marginalized groups. Hence, the UNSDG Operational Guide on LNOB was applied to the “UN Framework for Responding to the Socio-Economic Impacts of COVID-19 in Nepal (SERF)” responding to the needs of changing context induced by the COVID-19. The application of the LNOB Guide provided necessary guidance to inform the SERF of the issues of vulnerable groups and design a strategy to provide necessary assistance to them. The LNOB assessment carried out for the application of the LNOB Guide to the SERF was also extended to the Common Country Assessment (CCA) in 2021.

In the UNCT planning retreat held in January 2020, the UNRCO presented the LNOB guide to the members of the UNCT and facilitated a discussion for identifying groups of people who have been left farthest behind. The discussion identified those that have been left behind within the five categories—discrimination, socio-economic status, governance, geography, and vulnerability to shocks—as per the LNOB guideline. As the agencies agreed to apply the LNOB guide in the emerging context of COVID-19, specifically in designing the SERF in June 2020, they jointly reviewed the list of the groups left farthest behind identified in January 2020, applying additional lenses of the COVID-19 shocks and came up with the 35 most vulnerable groups for consultations in the technical advice and support of the expert consultants. Finally, UNCT Nepal carried out meaningful consultations with 1,197 participants, in 35 groups of most vulnerable population that were identified after a rigorous discussion among the UN agencies in Nepal. The 35 groups covered various segments of the population (e.g. women, gender and sexual minorities, indigenous peoples, Dalits, ex-bonded labourers, religious and ethnic minorities, persons with disabilities); and constituency groups (e.g. civil society, teachers, private sector).

The objectives of the consultations were to identify and analyse causes of exclusion of those groups that have been left behind and to inform the design of the SERF with the LNOB perspective by giving an

opportunity to the agencies to understand and internalize the problems that their beneficiaries face. Therefore, these group consultations were carried out in the leadership of the UN agencies themselves, but in the technical support of the expert consultants. The agencies leading the consultations got an important opportunity in steering the conversations towards specificities, rather than generic answers – both in terms of challenges and policy recommendations. While the purpose of the consultations was to identify the challenges faced by those who have been left farthest behind as well as the solutions that they were seeing (idea harvesting), an equal priority was placed upon the opportunity for agencies to enhance their own capacity by participating in the consultation and receiving firsthand information rather depending on the analyses readily provided by the consultants.

Many groups talked about the difficulties they are facing with food insecurity, access to health care services, confusing government regulations, stigmatisation against infected people, etc. in the face of COVID-19. They also shared that their historical processes of deprivation and discrimination intensified their exclusion in the face of crisis. The findings from the group consultations have been analyzed in technical assistance of expert consultants who were recruited to carry out the LNOB pilot analysis and included under the heading “Socio-Economic Recovery that Leaves No One Behind: The People We Must Reach” in the SERF. These findings have informed the SERF to align the programmatic initiatives to address the root causes of exclusion and vulnerability of those left behind. The expert consultants supported this process by reviewing the SERF from the perspective of the LNOB methodology and providing technical advice to adopt programmatic approaches to benefit those left behind. In October 2020, the consultants made a presentation to the UNCT, incorporating the key aspects of the process, findings and lessons. This resulted in robust identification and strengthened analysis of root causes of development challenges faced by the most vulnerable groups in Nepal; identification of programmatic areas of interventions such as redesigning of social security programme to address root cause of deprivation; and laying out of robust strategy for ongoing engagement of communities in the process of implementation and monitoring of the SERF.

- **Describe any delays in implementation, challenges, lessons learned & best practices:**

This project was initially delayed because of the need for discussion amongst the UNCT on the content of the Guide to ensure that it was fully internalised and to inform the design of the pilot and steps to be taken in Nepal. There were also some unexpected challenges in identifying and engaging suitable consultants to support the work. As soon as the consultants were onboard to carry out the LNOB assessment, the COVID-19 virus became a global pandemic which resulted in a complete lockdown of Nepal, and a re-orientation of the UNCT’s efforts to fully support the immediate health response. The Steering Committee for the LNOB Pilot in Nepal applied the LNOB Guide to the new situation in Nepal resulting from COVID-19 to inform the UNCT’s analysis and support to the national and local policies and programmes designed to address the socio-economic impact of the pandemic in Nepal.

COVID-19 and the health response (including national lockdown and restrictions on international travel and migrant workers) had a significant impact on many of the groups that were already vulnerable in Nepal. Newly vulnerable groups also emerged. This was a valuable opportunity to apply the Guide to the UNCTs analysis of the groups that were at risk of being left behind in this new context, and to help frame the priorities actions for addressing this in the short and immediate term.

Application of any standard guideline such as LNOB guideline is challenging in real world. While the LNOB guideline is rich for theoretical understanding of the issues of exclusion, inequality and vulnerability, it offers very little substantive or practical guidance on addressing the central issues of LNOB in the real exercise. Historical issues of discrimination and human rights in Nepal – central to LNOB – are not only issues of capacity or awareness or laws. They must be situated in the current context of impunity, weak institutions, hierarchical mindsets, and even weaker rule of law. Removing

these culturally rooted barriers of justice and equality require flexible, adaptable, and politically astute analyses of the country context and programmatic approaches.

- **Qualitative assessment:** Provide a qualitative assessment of the level of overall achievement of the Programme. Highlight key partnerships and explain how such relationships impacted on the achievement of results. Explain cross-cutting issues pertinent to the results being reported on. For Joint Programmes, highlight how UN coordination has been affected in support of achievement of results.

The pilot implementation of the LNOB Guide in Nepal was jointly carried out by the UNCT after the comprehensive discussion and identification of the groups who have been left farthest behind. In the process, the UNCT formed a LNOB Pilot Task Team to guide and supervise the pilot implementation of the LNOB Guide. The Task Team included UNRCO, UNDP, ILO, and UN Women. The Task Team met several times to discuss and identify the approaches and key steps forward in the implementation of the LNOB Guide in Nepal. Key decisions, including the application of the LNOB Guide to the SERF, were taken jointly by the LNOB Pilot Task Team.

The collaborative approach adopted by the UN agencies has resulted in a renewed understanding of the structural barriers faced by vulnerable groups—both traditional and newly made—to enjoy the fair share in development outcomes. Similarly, the UNCT leadership in the consultation with vulnerable groups in Nepal has contributed in renewing, strengthening, and starting partnership with the groups that have been left behind as well as identifying areas of strategic partnership in the emerging context. These new strategic areas include but not limited to partnership with those left behind to ensure their meaningful participation in the process of institutionalization of federalism; ensuring concerns of those left being in the national surveys such as the National Census of 2021, and ensuring their concerns in designing strategy for LDC graduation.

ii) Indicator Based Performance Assessment:

Using the **Programme Results Framework from the Project Document / AWP** - provide an update on the achievement of indicators at both the output and outcome level in the table below. Where it has not been possible to collect data on indicators, clear explanation should be given explaining why, as well as plans on how and when this data will be collected.

	<u>Achieved</u> Indicator Targets	Reasons for Variance with Planned Target (if any)	Source of Verification
Outcome 1⁸ Indicator: Baseline: Planned Target:			
Output 1. UNCT applies the LNOB Guide to key activities, with support provided as required by Nepal Support Pilot Team.			
Indicator 1.1.1 Guide disseminated to the UNCT and relevant partners and stakeholders Baseline: Planned Target:	In the UNCT planning retreat held January 2020, the UNRCO presented the LNOB guided to the members of the UNCT and facilitated a discussion for identifying groups of people who have been left behind.		The minutes of the UNCT Retreat in January 2020.
Indicator 1.1.2 Guide applied to country level activities that will result in development of an LNOB assessment report. Baseline: Planned Target:			
Output 1.2 The operationability of the LNOB Guide is tested in Nepal.			

⁸ Note: Outcomes, outputs, indicators and targets should be **as outlined in the Project Document** so that you report on your **actual achievements against planned targets**. Add rows as required for Outcome 2, 3 etc.

<p>Indicator 1.2.1 Guide applied to country level activities to inform the development of an LNOB Strategy.</p> <p>Baseline: Planned Target:</p> <p>Indicator 1.2.2 LNOB Guide is introduced and applied by UNCT, applying relevant steps and cross-cutting elements of the Guide.</p> <p>Baseline: Planned Target:</p>	<p>The UNSDG Operational Guide on LNOB was applied to “UN Framework for Responding to the Socio-Economic Impacts of COVID-19 in Nepal” responding to the needs of changing context induced by the COVID-19.</p>	<p>As at the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, the UNCT Nepal sought to understand how the pandemic and response was impacting on vulnerable and marginalized groups.</p>	<p>The UN Framework for Responding to the Socio-Economic Impacts of COVID-19 in Nepal</p>
---	---	---	---

iii) A Specific Story (Optional)

Please see below the annex 1

III. Other Assessments or Evaluations (if applicable)

- Report on any assessments, evaluations or studies undertaken.

No Application

IV. Programmatic Revisions (if applicable)

- Indicate any major adjustments in strategies, targets or key outcomes and outputs that took place.

No Application

V. Resources (Optional)

- Provide any information on financial management, procurement and human resources.
- Indicate if the Programme mobilized any additional resources or interventions from other partners.

No Application

Annex 1

[Internal document. Contact HRM Fund Secretariat]