

# ANNUAL REPORT 2024

**SOUTH-EASTERN REGION  
JOINT PROGRAMME**





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The beautiful view of Zazai Aryoub, Paktia Province. © STFA





# Participating UN Organizations



Programme Title & Project Number		Country, Locality(s), Priority Area(s)/ Strategic Results	
Programme Title: STFA Joint Programme for the South-eastern Region of Afghanistan: Addressing Basic Human Needs through UNSFA ('JP-South-eastern')  MPTF Office Project Reference Number: 140281- 4		Country: Afghanistan Region: South-eastern	
		Priority areas/Strategic Results: UNSFA Outcomes 1, 2, 3  Outcome 1: Sustained Essential Services Outcome 2: Economic opportunities and resilient livelihoods Outcome 3: Social Cohesion, Inclusion, Gender Equality, Human Rights, and Rule of Law	
Participating Organization(s)		Implementing Partners	
Organizations that have received direct funding from the MPTF Office under this programme: 11 PUNOs  1. Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) 2. International Organization for Migration (IOM) 3. United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) 4. United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) 5. United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) 6. United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) 7. United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-HABITAT) 8. United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) 9. United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) 10. United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS) 11. United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO)		Please refer to PUNO-specific reports	
Programme/Project Cost (US\$)		Programme Duration	
Total approved budget as per project document:	150,012,420	Overall Duration	29 months
MPTF /JP Contribution1:	40,299,790		
Agency Contribution	N/A	Start Date	14 Aug 2023
Government Contribution)	N/A	Original End Date	31 Dec 2023
Other Contributions (donors):	N/A	Current End Date	31 Dec 2025
Total Contributions:	40,299,790		
Programme Assessment/Review/Mid-Term Eval.		Report Submitted By	
Assessment/Review - if applicable please attach Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No Mid-Term Evaluation Report – if applicable please attach Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No		o Name: Hiroko Massey o Title: Trust Fund Manager o Participating Organization (Lead)2: N/A Email address: <a href="mailto:hiroko.massey@undp.org">hiroko.massey@undp.org</a>	



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Returnees in a queue waiting to be processed as they arrived in Paktia Province. © STFA



# List of Acronyms and Abbreviations

<b>CB-DEWS</b>	Community-Based Drought Early Warning Systems
<b>CfW</b>	Cash for Work
<b>CHC</b>	Comprehensive Health Clinic
<b>DaO</b>	Delivering As One
<b>DfA</b>	De Facto Authorities
<b>DIC</b>	Drop-in Centres
<b>DTC</b>	Drug Treatment Centre
<b>FAO</b>	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
<b>FHH</b>	Family Health House
<b>GBV</b>	Gender Based Violence
<b>IDP</b>	Internally Displaced Person
<b>IOM</b>	International Organization for Migration
<b>JP</b>	Joint Programme
<b>MCHC</b>	Mother and Child Health Centre
<b>MoU</b>	Memorandum of Understanding
<b>MPTF</b>	Multi-Partner Trust Fund
<b>MSME</b>	Micro, Small and Medium Enterprise
<b>PSS</b>	Psychosocial Support
<b>PUNO(s)</b>	Participating United Nations Organization(s)
<b>SDG</b>	Sustainable Development Goals
<b>STFA</b>	Special Trust Fund for Afghanistan
<b>UCT</b>	Unconditional Cash Transfer
<b>UN</b>	United Nations
<b>UNDP</b>	United Nations Development Programme
<b>UNESCO</b>	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
<b>UNFPA</b>	United Nations Population Fund
<b>UN-HABITAT</b>	United Nations Human Settlements Programme
<b>UNHCR</b>	Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
<b>UNIDO</b>	United Nations Industrial Development Organization
<b>UNODC</b>	United Nations Office for Drugs and Crime
<b>UNOPS</b>	United Nations Office for Project Services
<b>UNSFA</b>	United Nations Strategic Framework for Afghanistan
<b>WASH</b>	Water, Sanitation and Hygiene





# Executive Summary

Two midwives with a child at a STFA funded Family Health House in Logar Province. © UNFPA





The STFA Joint Programme (JP) for the South-Eastern Region is part of the UN's unprecedented effort to 'Deliver as One' (DaO) in the post-2021 political and socio-economic landscape of Afghanistan. The joint programme offers an integrated approach to programming for community-based development, enabling and catalyzing the collaboration of multiple agencies, funds and programmes to capitalize on complementarities and synergies unlikely to be available through a 'business-as-usual' approach.

In 2024, a total of 306,240 people (146,774; 47.9% women and girls), benefited from joint programme activities in the South-Eastern region, as follows:

- 205,823 people, including 100,748 (48.9% female), benefited from access to essential services. Of these, approximately, 101,026 people (48.7% female) benefited from enhanced basic community infrastructure, including access to irrigation, healthcare services, including evidence-based drug prevention, treatment and harm reduction services, gender-based violence and psychosocial support (GBV/PSS) services, and literacy programmes.
- 5,213 people (768; 14.7% women and girls), benefited from livelihood support such as Unconditional Cash Transfers (UCT), Cash for Work (CfW) (with results merged with infrastructure under output 1), income-generating agricultural support packages, and support to Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) including market access, training, and employment retention initiatives.
- 58,340 people (27,837; 47.7% women and girls) benefited from community resilience and disaster risk management interventions such as community-based drought early warning systems (CB-DEWS) and irrigation systems. Moreover, some infrastructure support activities also contributed to disaster risk management.
- 36,864 people (7,421; 47.3% female) benefited from activities to improve social cohesion such as capacity-building and awareness-raising in communities and for journalists.

Throughout 2024, STFA activities encountered challenges. The most common related to the operating environment is the general restrictions imposed by the de facto authorities (DfA) such as on women's mobility or access to public spaces, prolonged memorandum of understanding (MoU) signature processes, and repeated de facto authorities (DfA) demands to participate in recruitment/procurement processes, which created obstacles to meeting targets, requiring time-consuming negotiations and workarounds.

Inflation and shifting exchange rates, adverse weather conditions, and remote project locations also hindered operations.

The STFA Secretariat (TFMU) continued to closely engage with PUNOs, donor partners, and other key stakeholders to monitor the restrictions imposed on women's work and education, continually assessing their implications on programming and options to manage the negative consequences in a principled manner. At the same time, PUNOs were, in many cases, also effective in introducing alternative, proactive measures to continue – and if possible, expand – the meaningful engagement of women and such efforts are expected to continue.

In the South-Eastern region, Third-Party Monitoring confirmed strong alignment of project interventions with community needs, particularly in basic services and livelihoods. Relevance was rated at 85 percent, with basic services achieving 100 percent and livelihoods 87 percent. Effectiveness was rated at 81 percent, reflecting success in enhancing access to services and promoting self-reliance. Sustainability scored 84 percent, though continued focus on capacity building and local ownership is needed. Social cohesion efforts showed lower relevance at 56 percent, highlighting the need for more localized and culturally responsive approaches.

With activities beginning in part through 2023, the end of 2024 marked the first complete year of implementation of JP activities under STFA in the South-Eastern region. This report presents the consolidated progress and results collectively achieved and reported by the 11 PUNOs active in the region for the period January to December 2024.





# Purpose

Owner of Sadaf Logar Dairy Processing Company  
talking about his business, Pul-e-Alam, Logar  
Province. © IOM





The STFA regional and sectoral JPs build on the longstanding experience of PUNOs in Afghanistan and the early findings and lessons learned during implementation of activities in the Northern and Southern regions following the August 2021 powershift. Interventions are designed to capitalize on the different mandates and capacities of PUNOs, avoiding duplication of efforts and promoting meaningful collaboration and synergies to ensure tangible impact for target communities. The STFA Joint Programmes (JPs) form part of the UN and its partners' unprecedented efforts to 'Deliver as One' (DaO) in the post-2021 political and socio-economic landscape of Afghanistan and are now embedded into the One UN Funding Framework.

The initiative aims to bolster inter-agency complementarities and synergies so that the output of one PUNO can contribute to other PUNOs' activities. This strategic approach is designed to optimize cost-effectiveness and capitalize on the unique areas of expertise, capacities and programmatic footprints of each PUNO. Key intervention areas and districts are prioritized based on the situational analysis of the region and other available information, including the Multi-Dimensional Poverty Index (MPI),

Priority Areas of Return and Reintegration, remote and underserved 'white' areas, food security data from the Integrated Food Security Phase Classification, and disaster-prone regions.

As of December 2024, eight regional JPs covering the entire country had been developed and approved by the STFA Steering Committee, and four are being implemented in Northern, Southern, Eastern and South-Eastern regions. At the same date, four sectoral JPs were active: the CSO Twinning Project in the Eastern and Western regions, the Durable Solutions Initiative in the Eastern region, the Herat Post Earthquake Response Project in the Western region, and the Drug Use Prevention, Treatment and Rehabilitation Initiative in the Southeastern region. Further Regional JPs, along with other possible joint sectoral programmes, will be rolled out in stages based on the STFA resource allocation strategy and the availability of funds. Reflecting the UNSFA, the STFA JPs have three priorities:

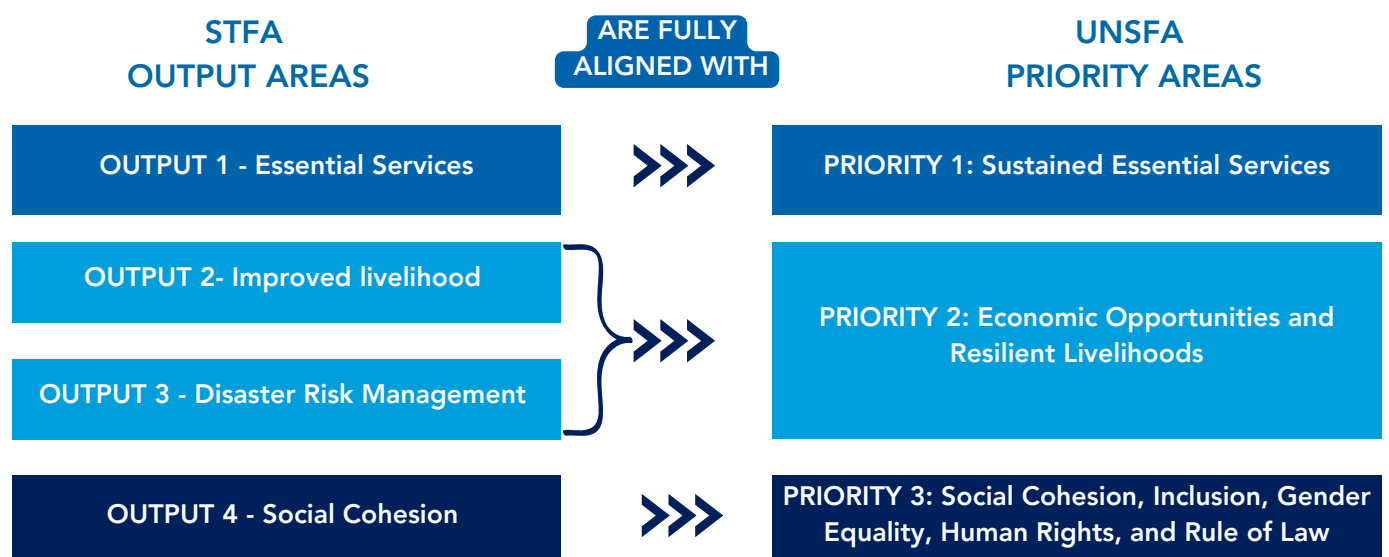


Figure 1: Illustrative alignment of STFA Outputs with the UNSFA Strategic Priorities



## IN 2024, THE STFA JPS WORKED TO DELIVER FOUR OUTPUTS:

1

Essential services and community infrastructure – including for health, agriculture, education, and energy supply - are functional, sustained and expanded to meet different needs of women and men.

2

Livelihoods, businesses and the local economy can recover, become more sustainable and be more resilient to instability.

### OUTPUTS

3

Communities have improved infrastructure, access to water and preparedness mechanisms to protect farm-based livelihoods and cope with climate and environment shocks and natural disasters.

4

Social cohesion, respect for human rights – including, in particular, the rights of women and girls and access to justice are progressively strengthened at the local level – contributing to greater community resilience.



DSRSG Indrika Ratwatte engages patients and staff at a Drug Treatment Center in Gardez, Paktia Province. © STFA

The original JP was designed with a total budget of \$150 million but with limits on funding that could be mobilized, an allocation of \$40.30 million was approved as of December 2024. The PUNOs are implementing the JP with \$37.29 million carried forward from the allocations approved in 2023 and allocation approved in 2024. The 13 contributing partners are: Czechia, Denmark, Finland, Germany, Iceland, Italy, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Norway, Qatar, Sweden, Turkey, and UNDP. A total of 11 PUNOs have received funding allocations to implement JP activities in the region.

Below is the 2024 annual report card for the South-Eastern region.

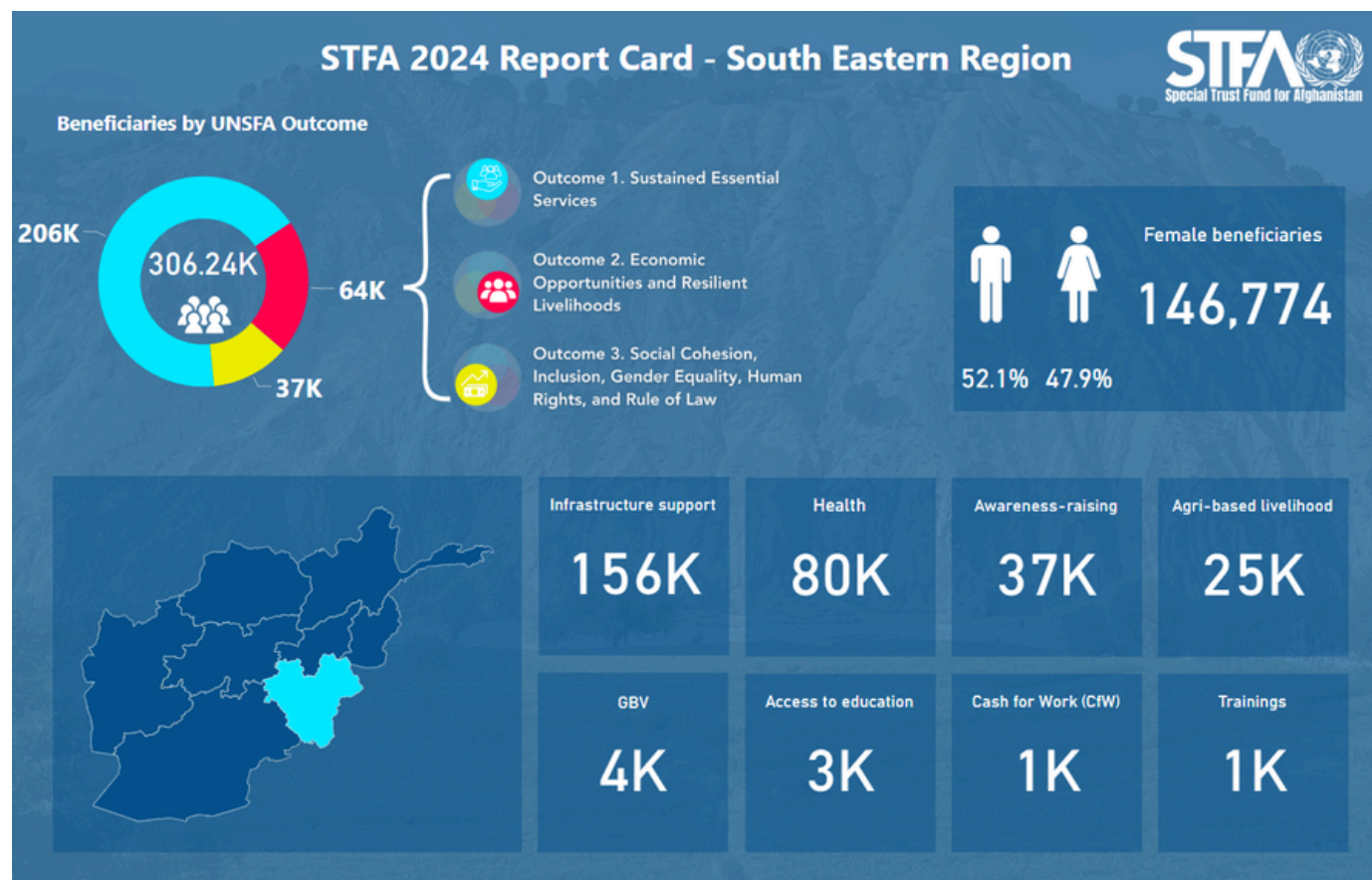
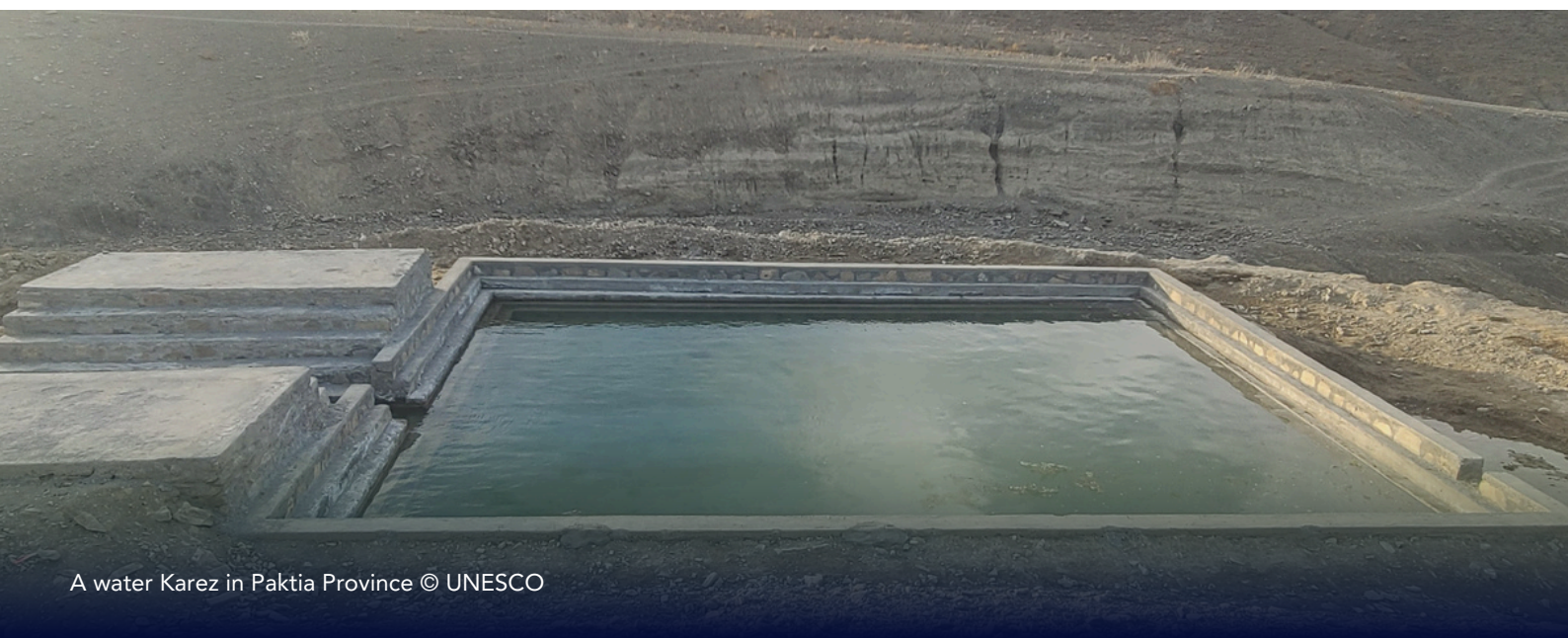


Figure 2: South-Eastern Region STFA Report Card – 2024.





# Results

Zahra, a female beneficiary with her livestock that she received through the support of STFA in Nawur, Ghazni Province. © FAO





## III. Outcomes

In 2024, approximately 306,240 people (146,774; 47.9% women and girls) benefited from the JP in the region. The analysis of available data indicates that the joint programme has contributed to generating significant and tangible impacts on the lives and livelihoods of targeted beneficiaries in multiple dimensions. Since inception in 2023, approximately 318,619 people (151,108; 47.4% women and girls) have benefited from programme activities aligned with the three priority areas of the UNSFA.

While final evaluations of the Joint Programmes are scheduled for a later phase, findings from the 2024 Third-Party Monitoring Agent (TPMA) offer a comprehensive snapshot of programme performance and community-level outcomes across the STFA portfolio. The TPMA conducted field monitoring at 2,919 activity sites under 513 projects, engaging nearly 5,500 beneficiaries from 2,572 communities across 210 districts in four regions. These findings, in the absence of completed outcome evaluations, serve as a credible proxy for assessing progress toward intended results.

In the South-Eastern region, relevance ratings reached 85 percent, reflecting strong alignment of STFA-supported interventions with local development priorities. Projects targeting essential services, such as water, electricity, and healthcare were rated at 100 percent, indicating their vital role in addressing long-standing service delivery gaps. Livelihoods interventions also resonated strongly with community needs, receiving an 87 percent relevance score.

Social cohesion programming, however, scored lower at 56 percent, suggesting the need for more culturally attuned and participatory approaches to promote community engagement and peacebuilding. Effectiveness ratings stood at 81 percent, with beneficiaries affirming improvements in access to basic services and economic self-reliance. Sustainability was also rated positively at 84 percent, driven by enhanced local ownership and growing confidence in the durability of outcomes, especially in livelihoods and service delivery. Continued investment in capacity building will be essential to solidify these gains.

The findings of a remote monitoring exercise focusing on literacy programmes show promising results for the overall country programme which extends to 32,345 learners (78% female) across 15 provinces. In particular 96 percent of learners enrolled at the start of literacy classes completed the nine-month course, indicating a successful completion rate; at the end of the course, 98 percent of learners reported they could read and write simple texts and perform basic calculations; and 87 percent of learners felt capable of self-studying to further enhance their knowledge post-course.

In a highly fragile context, these outcomes collectively reflect meaningful progress towards more equitable, sustainable and resilient development outcomes rooted in local capacities and aligned with UN values.





## III. Outputs

In 2024, approximately 306,240<sup>1</sup> people (146,774; 47.9% women and girls) benefited from the programme. The majority benefited from the provision of essential services, most significantly access to improved infrastructure under Output 1 and livelihood support under Output 2. However, the four output areas have important cross-cutting impacts: 'cross-fertilization' is common and indeed an objective across programmatic interventions. For instance, irrigation works implemented under Output 1 also contribute to the protection of people from flood hazards under Output 3. Likewise, CfW initiatives implemented under Output 2 support infrastructure enhancements under Output 1, and community-level consultations under Output 4 may contribute to programming for the other three output areas. The following section provides a more detailed breakdown of all four STFA JP output areas for the Southeastern region.



Men in an agroforestry plantation in Khost Province. © FAO

[1] Progress figures reflect the number of unique beneficiaries reached. In instances where individuals received multiple types of support from different Participating UN Organizations (PUNOs), each beneficiary was counted only once to avoid duplication. Further verification of beneficiaries count will be conducted through monitoring visits, including Third-Party Monitoring (TPM) and regular field monitoring by UN agencies.





## UNSFA Priority Area 1: Sustained Essential Services



**OUTPUT 1:** Essential services and community infrastructure – including for health, agriculture, education, and energy supply – are functional, sustained and expanded to meet different needs of women and men.

In 2024, approximately 205,823 people (100,748; 48.9% female) benefited from the provision of essential services.

### Infrastructure

In 2024, 101,026 people (48.7% female) benefited from improved community-based infrastructure that provided access to essential services and reduced risks of natural hazards, particularly flooding, and improved access to water and housing. Highlights include the following:

**33**

irrigation infrastructures rehabilitated in Ghazni, Logar, Paktika and Paktya provinces, benefiting 2,619 households (20,594 individuals; 10,868 female). Additionally, 2,880 individuals (at least 30% female and 50% youth) benefited from CfW support. The infrastructure will irrigate approximately 35,944 hectares, supporting crop production.

**16**

project interventions improved access to essential services such as water, roads, energy and education with over 11,077 households benefiting<sup>2</sup>. This included nine watershed management and 11 irrigation initiatives, one road, four culverts, two solar plants for WASH facilities, and 76 solar kits for returnees. This has increased agricultural productivity, thereby improving the quality of life for farmers and other community members by providing essential resources and enhanced opportunities to meet daily needs and support long-term development.

**1**

water supply project in Paktya province with two submersible pumps and two 15kW solar energy systems to pump and supply water.

**29**

karezes (traditional water management structures) rehabilitated in Paktia and Logar provinces. The initiative, implemented through cash-for-work (CfW) schemes, benefited 2,320 households (16,240 individuals, including 8,120 female) and generated 23,780 short-term working days. By engaging both skilled and unskilled labourers from local communities, the project not only enhanced livelihoods and agricultural productivity by raising water levels but also contributed to skill development among local workers.

[2] Exceeding the original target of 5,286 households.



Water wells provided clean and safe drinking water for 1,463 people (724 female). Furthermore, the installation of water taps inside homes reduced protection risks for women and children responsible for fetching water. In each community, five community members were trained in operation and maintenance of the water supply system. The project planned to provide water for a second community, but although efforts were made (including two additional drillings), no water was found. In a consultative process, the communities concerned then prioritized disaster protection walls, which were constructed.

## 215

permanent houses constructed in Paktika province to ensure access to safe, dignified and durable housing solutions, 215 families comprising 1,750 individuals (940 female) benefited. The families are responsible for ongoing maintenance, minor repairs and any upgrades.

## Essential Health Services

In 2024, 80,099 people (48.1% female) benefited from improved access to essential health services including new and rehabilitated clinics, drug prevention, treatment and harm reduction services and awareness-raising efforts, and psychosocial support. Highlights include:

## 18,598

individuals received general health services in 14 FHHs across Khost (5) and Logar (9). With the community providing the land for the FHHs and overseeing the quality of services through the Health Shuras (community-based health committees), service provision is planned to evolve into a community-led endeavour. Midwives and other health personnel are being paid through implementing partners. With the current duration of funding dependent on project funding, the most appropriate and realistic modality for long-term sustainability, including community-led solutions, is proactively being explored.

## 46,124

beneficiaries reached through two Mother and Child Health Centres (MCHCs) in Paktika province and one in Khost province. Of these beneficiaries, 1,444 women and girls received individual PSS services, 3,178 participated in group PSS sessions, and 1,693 accessed essential health services provided by female medical doctors. Additionally, 1,420 women received antenatal care, 961 received postnatal care, and 117 women with reproductive health concerns were referred to higher-level health facilities.

## 4

health facilities in four districts (Gardez, Sayed Karam, Jani khail and Zurmat) in Paktia province equipped with medical and non-medical equipment to improve basic essential healthcare services.

## 2

waiting halls, with sanitation facilities and water supply systems constructed at health facilities in Gardez province benefiting 56,000 people (28,008 male, 27,992 female). The improvements ensured that people no longer sit outside when waiting for medical attention.





## 3

NCHCs constructed and equipped in Gardez, Gayan, and Barmal districts in Paktika province. While the NCHC in Rubat Camp in Gardez is completed, the other two NCHCs are in progress and expected to complete in 2025.

## 7,699

individuals (3,069 male, 4,630 female) and psycho-education sessions reaching 10,610 individuals (4,566 male, 6,044 female); this improved access to comprehensive health and protection services.

## 24,750

individuals (2,740 female) benefited from drug prevention, treatment and harm reduction services. In addition, 30 service providers (all male), including psychologists, counsellors and social workers received a five-day technical training.

## 70

youths (all male), including from the Youth Department, Olympic Department and Provincial Public Health Directorate in Ghazni province are now serving as drug use prevention and life skills ambassadors using the knowledge from the drug prevention and life skills training provided through STFA.

## 32,817

individuals (2,273 female) benefited from awareness-raising efforts through DIC and outreach teams at five DTCs across the region and in prison settings. At least 1,000 youths received messages about drug prevention and drug use disorders through a friendly football tournament conducted in Ghazni city. In addition, 3.39 million people (area under the coverage of the radio) were reached across 10 provinces through a radio programme on drug use prevention and treatment aired on popular radio stations<sup>3</sup>, including Radio Killid 88FM and Mursal 108FM.

## 720

beneficiaries (360 male, 360 female) recovering from drug treatment programmes and their female family members participated in vocational skills training.

## 5

health facilities for drug use prevention and treatment rehabilitated through CfW, resulted in improvement in access to health services and the enhancement of the quality of care. It also promoted improved safety, and comfortable patient rooms.

[3] With 10 radio stations across 10 provinces, Radio Killid is well-established and respected, consistently ranked among the top five stations in the country. Mursal 108FM is a female-led, managed and focused radio station broadcasting in Kabul and neighbouring provinces.





Two mothers and their children waiting to receive medical care at a Family Health House in Pul-e-Alam, Logar Province. © STFA

## Education

In 2024, 3,180 people (61.3 % female) benefited from improved access to equitable and quality education including community-based literacy programmes. Highlights include the following:

### 3,180

learners (1,950 female) participated in Youth and Adult Literacy and Basic Education programme in Paktia province. The community-based literacy programme provided basic literacy skills, enabling learners to read, write and perform basic calculations. Village Literacy Committees and District Community Mobilizers, composed of community members and supported by the JP, played a key role in enrolment, retention, and class operations. By fostering local ownership, they help sustain literacy efforts beyond project support. The JP continues to enhance their capacities to ensure active, long-term community engagement in promoting literacy.

The 'Literacy for a Brighter Future' campaign continued to increase public awareness of the importance of literacy and basic education, especially for women and adolescent girls. On International Literacy Day 2024, nearly 20 social media posts were published with inspiring stories from learners, highlighting challenges and the impact that literacy classes had on their lives. These messages gained significant attention reaching more than 250,000 people mainly in Afghanistan.





## UNSFA Priority Area 2: Economic Opportunities and Resilient Livelihoods



**OUTPUT 2:** Livelihoods, businesses and the local economy can recover, more sustainable and more resilient to instability.

In 2024, 5,213 people (14.7% female) benefited from livelihood support. Key outputs included UCT and CfW schemes, agricultural support packages and agricultural training, and MSME support, including business training and income generation schemes. Highlights include the following:

### 300

individuals received unconditional cash transfers (UCT) of US\$80 per household, targeting the most vulnerable and food-insecure populations. While the sufficiency of the US\$80 varied depending on household size, location and specific needs, the assistance played a crucial role in easing immediate financial pressures and stabilizing household expenses.

### 1,069

households (7,730 people; 4,360 female) benefited from livelihood support including home gardening packages to 500 households (3,579 people; 2,009 female); micro/poly greenhouses to 369 households (2,652 people; 1,474 female); and dairy kits to 200 households (1,499 people; 877 female). These interventions equipped beneficiaries with essential tools and techniques to increase agricultural efficiency and productivity.

**The ASYREC system** is now installed and tested and ready for implementation with Pashto and Dari language customizations.<sup>4</sup> By automating and digitizing the consignment management process, the system enables quick response times in delivering essential relief supplies to disaster-stricken areas. Additionally, the system promotes transparency and accountability by maintaining a comprehensive record of consignments, tracking their movement, and ensuring accurate reporting. The first phase of the project concluded with comprehensive testing, business unit creation, and collaboration for feedback.

### 1,142

temporary jobs (59 female) created through CfW schemes with 90 percent of beneficiaries participating in water management, playground rehabilitation, culvert and road rehabilitation. These CfW activities provided critical short-term financial relief while contributing to restoring and maintaining vital community infrastructure, ensuring its continued functionality and lasting benefits for agricultural productivity and water management. Female participation was low due to the physically demanding nature of the interventions.

### 175

MSMEs (12 male-led and 163 female-led) received technical and financial support and generated 638 jobs (511 female). The focus on female-led businesses tapped into the potential of women as key drivers of economic development, contributing to a more inclusive and resilient local economy.

[4] ASYREC stands for ASYCUDA for Relief Consignments with ASYCUDA (Automated System for Customs Data) being a computerized system developed to assist customs authorities in processing declarations and managing revenue. The ASYREC module is specifically designed to facilitate and expedite the clearance of relief consignments during emergencies, ensuring that humanitarian aid reaches affected populations promptly.

## 20

community based Technical and Vocational Education and Training centres were established and equipped. As a result, 285 female beneficiaries were trained and issued training packages; 12 greenhouses were established in Logar, Paktia, Khost, Ghazni and Paktika provinces (one for female beneficiaries); 140 small farmers were trained on greenhouse management; and 21 female-led poultry farms were established following training on poultry farm management.

## 330

people (all male) implemented CfW schemes to restore green spaces and clean community infrastructures and social spaces in Gardez province. The CfW schemes generated 6,600 workdays. Efforts were made to include women in CfW activities, but this was prohibited by the DfA.

## 90

MSMEs (male-owned) benefited from street cabin shops constructed, installed by the project, providing a safe and organized space for business operations, while increasing visibility and accessibility to customers. The 90 MSMEs were oriented on record keeping and market analysis.

## 44

women trained on tailoring training over 4.5 months in Gardez city. Due to restrictions on female gatherings, participants were formed into groups of five and training was provided in homes. To ensure quality of the training, two trainers and two supervisors were engaged who ensured the programme was progressing according to the workplan and delivered according to the curriculum. At the end of the training, each trainee was provided with start-up kits that included sewing machines, scissors, thread, needles, fabric chalk, measuring tapes, pins and holders, ironing tables and fabric. As of December 2024, 14 women had established tailoring business operating from their homes.



Roadside vendors supported with new cabins through STFA support in Gardez, Paktia Province. © UN-Habitat



## 160

MSMEs (80 female-led) in Khost and Paktika provinces received livelihood support, income generation, enterprise development and market access. Following beneficiary selection, the programme provided business development training, cash grants for enterprise start-up, and support for establishing market linkages. The programme prioritized female-led and youth-led MSMEs to strengthen economic inclusion, self-reliance and empowerment, and a mixed grant modality ensured cultural appropriateness and assistance that matched the specific needs of each beneficiary. To identify opportunities for future referrals, the programme also mapped the actors operating in various sectors and their interventions.

## 410

farmers supported on orchards establishment and rehabilitation, 410 farmers (30 female-headed households) supported on vegetable production, and 60 lead farmers entrepreneurs (20 female), as well as input suppliers and small entrepreneurs supported on business development and market linkages.

## 19

participants (all female) completed the three-month tailoring course as part of psychosocial support to improve mental well-being through skills development and the promotion of positive coping strategies.

## 720

individuals (360 female) benefited from vocational skills training, life skills training, PSS, CfW opportunities, hygiene awareness sessions, and the distribution of hygiene kits to support the recovery and reintegration of individuals who completed drug treatment programmes and their female family members through a package of vocational and PSS interventions.

- **360** male beneficiaries who had completed drug treatment participated in six-month vocational skills training programmes, combined with life skills training and PSS. The training enhanced participants' technical knowledge and professional skills in the respective trades, and upon completion of the training, beneficiaries received toolkits relevant to their respective trades. Pre- and post-training assessments showed significant improvement, with average scores increasing from 10.65 to 29.81 out of 40 points. As a result, 38 male participants secured employment by the end of the project, and 101 expressed confidence in finding employment in the near future.
- **360** female family members of male drug recovery patients – received tailoring kits and a short orientation session on the use of the kits. These women were included as beneficiaries in recognition of the challenges they faced due to substance use within their households. They produced linen and curtains for the DTCs through a CfW scheme, earning US\$95 per month. Although the project initially planned to deliver comprehensive tailoring training, only a brief session on kit usage was implemented due to DfA restrictions. In addition, female beneficiaries in Paktia province received hygiene kits and participated in awareness sessions on personal hygiene and proper use of the tailoring kits. Survey responses indicated that the hygiene kits and awareness sessions significantly supported their personal care needs, highlighting the limited availability of such essential items and the positive impact on health, hygiene and overall well-being.

**The JP also facilitated** minor rehabilitation at five health facilities through CfW schemes. This generated 18,720 working days (9,360 working days for female beneficiaries) against a target of 14,400 working days, with the discrepancy caused by local requirements for working days per month to change from 20 to 26 working days.



**OUTPUT 3:** Communities have improved infrastructure, access to water and preparedness mechanisms to protect farm-based livelihoods and cope with climate and environment shocks and natural disasters.

In 2024, climate change adaptation, disaster preparedness and early warning support activities benefited 58,340 individuals (47.7% female) elevating community capacity and resilience. Highlights include the following:

## 17

community-based drought early warning systems (CB-DEWS) established in 17 districts of Ghazni, Khost, Logar, Paktika, Paktia provinces, benefiting 12,528 individuals, including 5,443 herders and 7,085 smallholder farmers. These interventions, implemented through active community participation, strengthened local drought preparedness and response capacity. This inclusive approach has contributed to improved community preparedness, enhanced food security, and greater resilience to droughts and floods.

## 500

earthquake-affected people (12 female) participated in disaster risk reduction sessions.

## 6

stone masonry flood protection walls with a total length of 1,385m constructed and handed over to communities across communities in Gardez and Khost provinces. These disaster risk reduction infrastructures protected 5,550 households (38,850 people; 19,717 female) from recurrent flooding. The interventions exceeded the original project target by 420 percent due to the strategic distribution of protection structures across high-risk areas. As a result, affected communities experienced a measurable reduction in physical damage, financial losses and emotional stress caused by seasonal floods.

## 4

stone masonry irrigation canals with a total length of 1,880m constructed and handed over to communities in Gardez, Khost and Paktia provinces. The canals achieved 203 percent of the project target benefiting approximately 3,250 farming households (22,750 people; 11,387 male, 11,363 female) by increasing crop yield and income. This was attributed to the extended length of the canals, which enabled irrigation of additional farmland as the canals reduced water loss and improved control overflow and distribution, ensuring more consistent water supply for crops and promoting optimal growth. While the project initially targeted 322 female farmers, none were reached directly. However, women are expected to benefit indirectly through increased household income. On average, the canals discharge 300-350 litres of water per second, irrigating approximately 2,104 ha (10,520 jeribs) of farmland. Farming households were encouraged to allocate a portion of earnings from crop sales each year to support ongoing maintenance and management of the irrigation infrastructure.





## 6

flood protection walls, two water storage points, and five small canals implemented through CfW schemes to safeguard livelihoods linked to local agriculture and reduce flood risks to communities were completed in Khost and Paktika provinces. In addition to constructing the small-scale community infrastructures, CfW was employed to address community-identified priorities, including cleaning canals, digging trenches and semi-circles, levelling roads, and building small storage systems for rainwater. These initiatives mitigated risks of flooding by improving drainage in target areas and increasing community-level resilience against natural disasters. With 100 percent completion at the end of December 2024, the interventions benefit an estimated population of 13,250 individuals (6,997 male, 6,253 female), strengthening community-based risk mitigation against flooding in target areas. Additionally, under the intervention, 500 individuals (426 male, 74 female) benefited from CfW schemes for three months with a daily wage of AFN 400. These employment opportunities provided income generating activities, helping beneficiaries meet basic needs and overcome shocks.

## 4,320

individuals (2,160 female) participated in awareness sessions on intangible cultural heritage, illicit trafficking of objects from monuments and archaeological sites, safeguarding cultural infrastructure and community assets for future generations, and operation and maintenance of karezes in Paktia, Khost and Logar provinces.



A 550-meter irrigation canal built through STFA support in Gardez, Paktia Province, bringing water to 4,000 acres of farmland. © UN-Habitat



## UNSFA Priority Area 3: Social Cohesion, Inclusion, Gender Equality, Human Rights, and Rule of Law



**OUTPUT 4:** Social cohesion, respect for human rights – including, in particular, the rights of women and girls and access to justice are progressively strengthened at the local level – contributing to greater community resilience.

In 2024, community outreach and engagement programmes benefited over 36,864 individuals (47.3% female) with activities focusing on capacity-building and awareness-raising in communities and for journalists. Highlights include the following:

- **2,619 individuals** directly benefited from JP activities aimed at strengthening social cohesion. These activities, designed to foster unity and collaboration within communities, provided support through capacity-building workshops, awareness-raising campaigns, and community engagement efforts.
- **3,010 people (265 female)** benefited from awareness-raising sessions on community safety and conflict mitigation, dispute resolution, social cohesion and conflict prevention. The development of seven playground infrastructures provided a dedicated space for sports and recreational activities aimed at enhancing teamwork, promoting healthy living, and building a sense of belonging and cooperation among youth. The impact of these activities extends beyond immediate results, laying the groundwork for a more inclusive, tolerant and resilient society, and potentially shaping the community's future.
- **75 journalists (26 female)** in Khost, Logar, Ghazni, Paktia and Paktika provinces trained on topics including education, livelihoods, health, agriculture, and other social issues. The initiative facilitated the production and dissemination through radio and social media of 540 news reports addressing critical issues such as education, health, humanitarian crises, and environmental protection. Furthermore, 105 roundtable discussions on topics such as health, education and climate change fostered public dialogue and community involvement and facilitated wider information sharing and awareness. Additionally, 65 local community leaders received training to raise awareness on the importance of access to information. These activities strengthened the capacity of journalists, empowered local media, and increased access to vital information. By aligning media outputs with education and livelihood initiatives, the programme enhanced public awareness and fostered community resilience and informed decision-making.
- **10 community structures** with 20 members on average (14 male, 6 female) were oriented in participatory approaches, monitoring, and future community infrastructure management. During project implementation they played a crucial role in prioritizing community concerns and supporting monitoring to ensure accountability. They were also crucial in ensuring women's and girls' inclusion in the project.
- **19,291 individuals (12,000 male, 7,291 female)** in Ghazni, Khost, Paktika and Paktia provinces participated in awareness-raising sessions on topics such as fraud, corruption, children's and women's rights, and the value of STFA interventions. In parallel, information on the programme's community feedback mechanisms was disseminated, underpinning the principles of accessibility and accountability. Notably, the project's well-established community networks enabled the identification of vulnerable individuals, as well as referrals to other service providers.





# Delays in Implementation, Challenges, Lessons Learned & Best Practices

A football player of a local team posing for a photo in a football play ground supported by STFA in Pul-e-Alam, Logar Province.  
© STFA



## IV. Challenges

In 2024, implementation of activities faced multiple challenges, including conditions imposed by the DfA, security risks, exchange rate fluctuations, and remote project locations. The following are the most significant challenges reported by STFA PUNOs in 2024.

**Challenging operating environment:** The DfA decree issued on 24 December 2022 and its subsequent extension in April 2023 remained a key operational constraint. The decree hindered women's employment with UN agencies and NGOs, and limited women's participation in field-based activities. Although coordination efforts resulted in exemptions that enabled most female personnel to resume their roles, the environment remains volatile, with ongoing risks of further restrictions. These challenges also extended to bureaucratic delays in project registration and MoU finalization, along with mandated design changes that increased operational complexity and costs.

**Security risks:** Security risks ranged from medium to high, posing substantial challenges to effective programme delivery, particularly for female PUNO field staff and female staff of implementing partners. These risks led to delays and occasional interruptions due to social conflict. To mitigate the impact, remote monitoring tools were utilized where feasible, and field activities were adapted in coordination with local stakeholders to enhance access and reduce exposure to risk.

**Female beneficiary participation:** DfA bans affected female beneficiary participation and project delivery at implementation sites. In some cases, the ban on women's and girls' education and training resulted in limited availability of training venues. Female participation in CfW initiatives was also limited by cultural norms and the type of work involved but gender-sensitive adjustments were made to increase outreach where feasible.

**Limited skilled labour:** A shortage of skilled labour led to delays in infrastructure works and quality concerns due to substandard workmanship and inadequate technical oversight.

**Inflation and exchange rates:** Inflation and shifting exchange rates contributed to market price increases for construction materials and works resulting in implementation cost challenges. Limited bank facilities in the remote areas also hindered the disbursement of grants.

**Remote project locations and difficult terrain:** Remote locations posed logistical challenges, increasing transportation costs and complicating access, and difficult terrain required additional site development. The lack of mobile network coverage and other communication infrastructure also posed a major challenge in some areas making it difficult to coordinate efforts.





## V. Lessons Learned

The following are key lessons learned during 2024:

**Operating environment requires agility and adaptability:** The operating environment continued to be challenging for national female staff and female beneficiaries. This resulted in the need to plan for flexible working and field level monitoring arrangements, consequently TFMU and PUNOs maintained a commitment to gender representation across its workforce. Beneficiary targeting, and selection were guided by a principled approach and localized operational adaptations, exemptions, and solutions. This included a needs-based response, strengthening safeguarding standards, promoting gender-sensitive programming and rejecting male-only delivery mechanisms. To mitigate risks for female beneficiaries and staff, the Prevention of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (PSEA) Network in Afghanistan introduced the Sexual Exploitation and Abuse Risk Overview (SEARO) tool, which identifies SEA risks across Afghanistan, guiding targeted and evidence-based interventions. The PSEA Network also ensured that aid workers operate in a safe and supportive environment with Zero Tolerance for Sexual Harassment (SH), emphasizing the dual responsibility of protecting communities and safeguarding the humanitarian and Basic Human Needs workforce. Regional sub-working groups established in the North, South, Central, and West regions provided direct community engagement and localized responses<sup>5</sup>.

**Security risks:** Responding to high risk involved minimizing movement close to national borders and jointly planning field missions to share and limit armed escort costs.

**Female beneficiary participation:** To address DfA restrictions on women's participation in field-based activities such as CfW schemes and training programmes, proactive, context-specific strategies to foster women's inclusion were required. These included alternative approaches such as engaging women after male working hours, hiring female facilitators, and providing training sessions in private houses. Despite these efforts, restrictive directives and prevailing social norms continued to limit women's full engagement. This underscores the importance of proactively creating opportunities for women, even amid the prevailing operational challenges. It also became apparent that women-owned MSMEs require more comprehensive support than short-term training and cash or asset assistance.

**Increased DfA Involvement:** Advocacy efforts were successful in some cases to secure approval for women's participation, and negotiation and handover coordination with the DfA was essential to ensure approval for implementation planning, operations and delivery. In some cases, PUNOs divided their efforts to coordinate with the DfA according to mandate. Flexibility in timelines and budgets, stakeholder engagement, risk assessments, community training and innovative construction methods proved necessary, along with adaptive coordination, persistence, and agility in implementation. Additionally, to minimize risks and implementation delays, it is vital to assess partner acceptability and evaluate their efficiency through small-scale projects before committing to long-term contracts.

**Community Engagement:** Community engagement was often critical in achieving project acceptance and sustainability and helped shift restrictive norms in some instances. The involvement of formal and informal community groups and influential community members was instrumental in ensuring community buy-in. This approach not only strengthened relevance but also fostered a sense of ownership among community members which is key to sustainability.

[5] STFA is implementing in North, South, and West regions where Regional PSEA sub-working groups are active.



Likewise, regular consultations with local stakeholders such as chamber of commerce enhanced results in some cases. Strengthening local ownership through capacity-building initiatives, cooperative models and community-driven solutions proved essential in fostering self-reliance and ensuring that interventions remain locally owned, adaptable to evolving challenges, and capable of sustaining impact.

**Limited Skilled Labour:** In some cases, the initial CfW approach had to be replaced by contractors due to a lack of skilled labour, but contractor shortcomings in safety compliance and quality control still had to be addressed via site visits, training and feedback.

**Women-only Services:** The establishment of women-only service facilities, such as Maternal and Child Health Centres (MCHCs) staffed exclusively by female service providers, has proven effective in the Afghan context. This approach reduces stigma and overcomes cultural barriers, enabling women and adolescent girls to access essential services in a safe and supportive environment. It has fostered trust and led to increased service uptake among female beneficiaries. Integrating Vocational Skills Training into MCHC interventions has further strengthened outcomes by equipping women and girls with practical knowledge and resilience-building skills. These trainings support their capacity to manage difficult circumstances and serve as a protective factor against psychosocial distress, contributing to long-term well-being and self-reliance.

**Collaboration and Coordination:** PUNO working groups successfully collaborated through regular meetings to share experiences and knowledge and organize joint visits and activities. Coordinating with other PUNOs helped minimize duplication of efforts, ensuring interventions were complementary and resources were optimized. However, to prevent delays, it is essential to assess inter-agency policies on data sharing and collaboration during the planning phase and address any potential barriers in advance. Likewise, early coordination on milestones and site selection is essential to minimize external interference that could hinder implementation.

**Continuous Innovation:** Flexibility and innovation in developing pragmatic solutions are crucial, especially in the current fragility context. In one instance, the swift reallocation of resources to address urgent livelihood needs allowed the project to start without delay and for relations to be built with local DfA authorities, who appreciated the timely response. This flexibility highlights the effectiveness of bottom-up, localized approaches, which are supported by communities and authorities.

## VI. Risk Analysis

During the planning and development of the Joint Programme for the Southeastern Region, a risk management framework was established to categorize risks into contextual (political, security), programmatic, operational/financial, and organizational types. In 2024, as in the previous year, no new risks were reported. However, the primary materialized risk continued to be the deterioration of the human rights situation, particularly affecting women across the country. Despite these persistent challenges, PUNOs have maintained a principled approach to delivery. Mitigation measures included sustaining 'by women to women' modalities and adapting implementation strategies to preserve access, inclusion, and accountability across the STFA-supported portfolio.





## VII. Qualitative Assessment

In 2024, the joint programme continued to deliver multisectoral support across key thematic areas, contributing to improvements in infrastructure, livelihoods, health services, and social cohesion. Implementation remained grounded in community needs, inclusion and resilience-building, while adapting to operational challenges, particularly related to the participation of women and girls under restrictive conditions. The programme maintained a focus on sustainability and equity, with results contributing to both immediate relief and longer-term development outcomes.

Infrastructure rehabilitation activities – focusing on flood protection walls, culverts, and drainage channels – have strengthened disaster risk reduction and protected agricultural lands from erosion and seasonal flooding. As a result, local economies and food systems have been safeguarded, and farming communities are now better equipped to manage environmental shocks. Simultaneously, the rehabilitation of irrigation and water supply systems has reduced water scarcity, improved agricultural output, and ensured more reliable access to clean drinking water. These improvements have had tangible impacts on community health, particularly for women and children, who now spend less time collecting water and face fewer protection risks. A comprehensive operation and maintenance strategy, incorporating routine, preventive and emergency procedures, has been established to sustain these infrastructure investments and support long-term functionality.

Health-related interventions under the JP also showed substantial progress. Support to health facilities, including new and rehabilitated clinics and expanded drug treatment and harm reduction services, improved access to quality care for vulnerable populations. The integration of PSS, awareness-raising and capacity-building for service providers ensured that services were aligned with international standards and better able to address both immediate and long-term recovery needs. By increasing the number and capacity of technical staff in DTCs, the programme supported continuity of care and service quality. Additionally, vocational training and CfW initiatives targeting individuals recovering from drug use disorders provided opportunities for economic reintegration and self-reliance, enhancing the overall resilience of affected individuals and communities.

Livelihoods interventions remained central to the JP's support during a period of continued national socio-economic crisis. UCT and CfW schemes offered immediate relief to vulnerable households and agriculture-based livelihood support – including agricultural packages and technical training – demonstrated positive impacts on food security and income generation, particularly for women-headed households. Support to MSMEs, including training and market linkage development, contributed to job creation, income stability, and increased access to essential services, empowering vulnerable populations to build more secure and sustainable futures.

The JP also supported social cohesion and inclusion through targeted community engagement and capacity-building. Literacy training initiatives across multiple provinces proved effective in increasing access to education for marginalized groups, especially women and girls. These efforts complemented broader activities aimed at promoting human rights, women's rights, and participatory governance. While fewer in absolute numbers than other sectors, social cohesion beneficiaries played an important enabling role across outputs, particularly in creating conditions for trust-building and inclusive programming. Capacity-building for journalists and partnerships with local radio stations ensured wide dissemination of key messages, promoting peace, inclusion, and behavioural change at the community level.



Notably, the UN's principled approach guided all aspects of JP implementation. Rooted in humanitarian principles, human rights, gender equality and inclusion, this approach ensured that assistance remained contextually appropriate, conflict-sensitive, and responsive to the needs of marginalized populations. Programming was informed by continuous community consultations and assessments, allowing for adaptive delivery modalities, especially where restrictions on female participation posed significant challenges. In such cases, alternative mechanisms – such as home-based services, female-led community groups, or remote outreach – enabled the continued delivery of services to women and girls. By centring accountability, transparency, and local ownership, the principled approach contributed to the programme's legitimacy and sustainability. Furthermore, the JP's alignment with Afghanistan Coordination Group (ACG) principles reinforced its commitment to inclusive development and rights-based delivery, even under complex and restrictive operational conditions.

Effective coordination among PUNOs, local authorities, implementing partners and community groups remained critical in delivering JP interventions. Engagement with local governance structures and civil society organizations enhanced the programme's reach and responsiveness. These partnerships supported joint planning and resource mobilization, knowledge exchange, and local capacity-building, all of which contributed to sustainable impact. In locations where security incidents or community sensitivities arose, the programme adapted quickly, pausing or modifying interventions in line with local dynamics. Division of efforts across PUNOs and the DaO modality allowed for technical specialization while ensuring cohesive delivery, especially for cross-cutting priorities such as gender equality and youth empowerment.

While implementation faced challenges, including restricted access and limited opportunities for direct engagement with women due to DfA strictures, PUNOs adopted flexible and innovative approaches to ensure that planned activities could proceed. These included remote modalities, gender-sensitive targeting strategies, and enhanced partnerships with local actors. Such efforts reflect the programme's ongoing commitment to delivering principled and inclusive support, even in adverse operational environments.

In conclusion, the JP's multi-dimensional and inclusive approach contributed significantly to progress against planned outcomes. By addressing immediate humanitarian needs while laying the foundation for long-term development, the programme supported community resilience, enhanced service delivery, and strengthened local systems. The integration of infrastructure, livelihoods, health, and social cohesion interventions ensured a coherent response aligned with local priorities. The JP's emphasis on sustainability, gender equality, human rights and local ownership underscores its value as a model for principled, responsive, and inclusive programming in complex settings. Moving forward, the programme remains well-positioned to build on these gains and continue supporting Afghanistan's most vulnerable populations.





## VIII. Partnerships

**Strategic positioning and coordination:** STFA's strategic positioning within the UN's coordination framework has been a cornerstone of its effectiveness in Afghanistan. STFA has ensured seamless engagement in key UN coordination bodies and clusters, enabling optimal programmatic impact through identification of synergies and complementarities across funding streams and agencies. Under the strategic leadership of the UN Resident Coordinator (RC/HC), STFA is positioned to still be responsive to the evolving context in Afghanistan. STFA is actively involved in critical coordination platforms, including the Humanitarian Country Team (HCT), the Risk Management Team (RMT), the National Durable Solutions Secretariat, the Programme Management Team (PMT), and the RCO-led Monitoring and Evaluation Working Group. This collaboration allows STFA to align with broader UN strategies, fostering coordinated actions with humanitarian and development partners to deliver durable solutions for vulnerable communities. Furthermore, STFA's engagement with these coordination mechanisms ensures its interventions are prompt, effective, and aligned with UN-wide risk management measures. These platforms strengthened STFA ability to adapt to dynamic needs, supporting long-term stability and resilience through integrated, complementary programming.

**Inter-fund coordination and joint efforts:** In 2024, STFA continued to coordinate with other key funding streams, such as the Afghanistan Resilience Trust Fund (ARTF) and humanitarian funding mechanisms. Notable initiatives included the joint ARTF/STFA briefings held in Istanbul and Dubai, where the funding streams shared updates and proved how the combined resources of different funding streams were effectively used to support programme activities. These joint briefings reinforced the importance of coordinated action, highlighting the alignment and complementarity of various funding sources to maximize their collective impact on Afghanistan's recovery and development.

**Private sector partnerships:** A significant milestone in 2024 was the launch of the STFA crowdfunding campaign. A dedicated campaign page (<https://bethehope4afg.org>) was developed, and a donation platform was established in partnership with the UN Foundation through an administrative arrangement. The campaign was officially launched during the STFA Steering Committee meeting on 1 October 2024. In 2024, TFMU also started outreach efforts to the private sector to raise awareness and foster partnerships. As part of these efforts, the STFA Steering Committee Chair delivered a keynote speech at the Afghan American Chamber of Commerce (AACC) Afghanistan Private Sector Programme held in Dubai on 28 September 2024. TFMU also engaged with prominent Afghan business leaders, including representatives from banks<sup>6</sup>, among others, to underscore the importance and critical role of the Afghan private sector in the country's economic future. These efforts laid the groundwork for expanded networking and partnership opportunities.

[6] Ghazafar Bank and Afghanistan International Bank (AIB)





# Annexes

A mother and her kids at a Family Health House  
in Logar Province. © STFA





# Annex I. Indicator-Based Performance Assessment

*\*Numbers in parentheses are female figures.*

JP output indicator	Unit	Baseline	2024 Target	2024 Progress	Reasons for Variance with Planned Target	Source of Verification
Output 1. Essential services and community infrastructure - including for health, agriculture and energy supply - are functional, sustained and expanded to meet different needs of women and men.						
1a. Number of people that have benefited from UN-supported essential services and/or new/rehabilitated infrastructure, disaggregated by type of service and sex.	People	0	33,725 (17,580)	140,501 (69,920)		PUNO reports
	Facilities/ Infrastructure	0	567 (0)	215 (0)		
	Kits	34,000	3 (0)	0 (0)		
	Households	0	76 (11)	76 (11)		
	Other	0	10 (0)	0 (0)		
1b. Number of people that have benefited from UN-supported maternal/reproductive health care services (health)	People	0	50,000 (45,000)	29,397 (24,266)		PUNO reports
1c. Number of people that have benefited from drug-treatment, drug rehabilitation services (health)	People	0	11,680 (2,000)	32,701 (4,568)		PUNO reports
1d. Number of functional, UN-supported, facilities providing basic health assistance (including basic health assistance services for women and girls)	Facilities/ Infrastructure	0	6 (0)	5 (0)		PUNO reports
1f. Number of children, adolescents and adults (including adolescent girls and women) who benefit from primary and secondary education, basic general literacy and vocational education programmes (at least 50% female)	People	570	3,509 (1,919)	3,224 (1,994)		PUNO reports
	Facilities/ Infrastructure	2	1 (0)	0 (0)		
1g. Hectares of rehabilitated and/or newly irrigated land for agricultural activities	Hectares	0	240 (0)	0 (0)		PUNO reports
1k. # of irrigation systems rehabilitated and/or maintained	Facilities/ Infrastructure	0	16 (0)	0 (0)		PUNO reports
	Other	0	30 (0)	33 (0)		
	Kms	0	30 (0)	0 (0)		
Output 2. Livelihoods, businesses and local economy are able to recover and are more resilient to instability						
2a. Number of people who benefited from UCT (at least 80% women)	People	0	2,100 (1,680)	0 (0)		PUNO reports
2b. Number of people who have benefited from newly-created income-generation opportunities, disaggregated by sex, age and province	People	0	200 (200)	3,503 (258)		PUNO reports
	Households	0	8,575 (7,717)	550 (3)		



JP output indicator	Unit	Baseline	2024 Target	2024 Progress	Reasons for Variance with Planned Target	Source of Verification
2b.1. Number of people who have benefited from productive employment through CfW schemes (at least 30% women; 50% youth)	People	409,198	23,295 (822)	1,550 (430)		PUNO reports
2c. No. of worker-days generated with UN-support	Work days	0	37,600 (7,200)	49,100 (9,360)		PUNO reports
2f. Number of MSMEs that benefit through financial capital support, training and/or other forms of asset support, disaggregated by women-led and men-led MSMEs	People	0	90 (0)	90 (0)		PUNO reports
	Households	0	160 (80)	160 (80)		
	MSMEs	68,000	315 (192)	0 (0)		
Output 3. Communities have improved infrastructure, access to water and preparedness mechanisms to protect farm-based livelihoods and cope with climate shocks and natural disasters						
3a. Number of districts with functional early warning systems and other preparedness mechanisms for climate shocks and natural disasters	Districts	0	17 (0)	17 (0)		PUNO reports
3b. Number of people who acquired knowledge and skills on disaster preparedness (including explosive hazard awareness) and climate-resilient livelihoods (at least 30% women)	People	4,046	7,000 (2,100)	0 (0)		PUNO reports
3c. Number of farmers who benefited from training and assets for improved, climate-smart, agriculture (at least 30% women)	People	72,054	10,146 (3,893)	3,250 (0)		PUNO reports
3d. Number of people that benefit from rehabilitated and/or newly constructed disaster-resilient community infrastructure and nature-based solutions	People	0	40,610 (20,176)	55,090 (27,837)		PUNO reports
	Facilities/ Infrastructure	0	13 (0)	13 (0)		
	Hectares	946	135 (0)	0 (0)		
Output 4. Social cohesion, human rights, access to justice are strengthened at local level						
4a. Number of CBOs/CSOs with improved capacity for participatory and inclusive community planning (at least 20% women-led)	Other	0	2 (0)	0 (0)		PUNO reports
	CSOs	882	30 (0)	0 (0)		
4b. Number of people with better awareness about human rights , social cohesion and conflict prevention (at least 50% women)	People	2,452	30,780 (15,171)	36,864 (17,421)		PUNO reports
	Consultation sessions	6	6,062 (90)	0 (0)		





## Annex II: Real-Life Stories: From the Field

### *Restoring Water Access Through Karez Rehabilitation in Paktia Province*



A child takes water from Gardan Shaikan village's rehabilitated Karez in Paktia Province. © STFA

“  
The  
transformation  
is visible in the  
rhythm of our  
everyday lives.  
”

In Gardan Shaikhan village in Zurmat district in Paktia province, the traditional karez water system has long played a vital role in supporting agriculture and sustaining livelihoods. However, as the system deteriorated over time, the water discharge rate declined significantly, disrupting crop production and placing additional strains on households and livestock. The shortage of water also contributed to disputes over its distribution, further compounding community challenges.

To address this issue, the JP supported the rehabilitation of the village's karez system. The intervention restored the water flow, significantly increasing the discharge rate and re-establishing a reliable water supply for agricultural and household use. This improvement has alleviated water scarcity, reduced conflict over water allocation, and enabled farmers to refocus their efforts on improving agricultural productivity. The renewed water access has benefited crops, livestock, and household needs, contributing to better food security and overall living conditions.

Mirza Khan, a local farmer, reflected on the transformation, saying, “The changes are clear in our daily lives. Our fields are thriving again, and we can provide water for our homes and animals.”

The project underscores the importance of maintaining traditional water systems and highlights the tangible impact of community-focused rehabilitation efforts in enhancing rural resilience and livelihoods.



## Supporting Urban Livelihoods Through Cabin Shops in Gardez City

“

**I have now settled in one location, and my customers know where to find me. This has made a real difference for my business.**

”



Salih's new cabin in Gardez City in Paktia Province. © UN-Habitat

To enhance urban livelihoods and improve public infrastructure, the JP constructed 90 cabin shops in Gardez city in Paktia province. The initiative aimed to create stable earning opportunities for local vendors while improving the shopping experience for customers. In addition to offering safe and secure spaces for business operations, the cabin shops have helped organize public roadways, improving safety and accessibility for both vendors and pedestrians.

“I have been in this small business since I migrated to Gardez city 20 years ago from my hometown, Zurmat,” said Salih Rahim, a 40-year-old IDP and one of the shop beneficiaries who supports a family of 15. “I’ve always struggled to settle in one location and afford a shop or cabin that would allow me to build a customer base and a reputation.”

He explained that before receiving a cabin shop he used to sell goods while navigating traffic and was often moved on by municipal authorities. “The alternative locations had no customers, and that affected my daily income,” he said. “During the harsh winters, which sometimes last for seven months, I could not protect my goods from rain and snow, and I was unable to sell anything.”

With the new cabin shops, vendors like Salih now have a designated, protected space to conduct their business year-round. The cabins not only ensure vendor safety and stability but also contribute to creating more organised and welcoming public spaces for shoppers.

This intervention demonstrates the role of inclusive urban planning in supporting informal livelihoods, increasing economic resilience, and enhancing access to safe, structured commercial environments for both vendors and consumers.



## From Roadside to Resilience: Supporting Entrepreneurship for a Disabled Cobbler in Khost



Mohammad Kazim, a person with disability in his new shop in Khost Province. © UNHCR

**“I have a real shop, and my customers know where to find me. I feel confident again, and I can finally support my family without relying on anyone.”**

Mohammad Kazim, a 35-year-old man from Khost province, has lived with significant challenges since childhood. After losing both legs to a landmine explosion, he faced not only lifelong physical limitations but also persistent economic hardship. Living as an IDP in a rented home, Kazim struggled to find formal employment due to his disability.

Although he learned cobbling from his father, Kazim worked informally by the roadside with limited tools and an inadequate workspace, earning too little to meet his family's basic needs, including school fees for his children. “I felt hopeless,” Kazim said. “Even though I had a skill, I didn't have the tools or a proper place to work. I couldn't support my family, and I relied on others just to get by.”

In 2024, the JP in partnership with the Community Action for Healing Poverty Organization, identified Kazim for support. He received a cash grant of AFN 58,300 in two instalments, enabling him to purchase cobbling equipment and establish a functional workspace and shop. Alongside this, he completed business development and market linkage training, equipping him with the skills to run a sustainable enterprise. The intervention, located within a Priority Area of Return and Reintegration in Matun City, aimed to transition Kazim from informal roadside work to a more stable and dignified business.

The results have been transformative. With a formal shop and proper equipment, Kazim has seen a marked improvement in both his operations and income stability. Within two months of reopening his business, his monthly earnings increased from AFN 9,000 to AFN 11,500. This steady income has allowed him to meet household expenses and pay his children's school fees. “Now I can stand on my own feet,” Kazim said.

This intervention demonstrates the value of pairing financial support with capacity-building. It highlights how skill-based entrepreneurship can empower individuals with disabilities, support sustainable livelihoods, and strengthen community reintegration in displacement-affected areas.



## Overcoming Addiction: Shareef's Journey to Recovery and Renewal in Ghazni

“  
I told him I was  
ready – ready to  
change, to get  
help, to find a  
way out.”



Shareef (a pseudonym), a 40-year-old resident of Gilan district in Ghazni province, has lived through a long and difficult struggle with addiction. At the age of 20, driven by economic hardship, he left his home and travelled to Quetta in Pakistan. Living in difficult conditions with friends, he eventually found work in a plastics manufacturing factory.

While he initially remained focused on his job, the long working hours and financial pressures began to take a toll. “I was exhausted and overwhelmed,” Shareef recalled. “One of my friends offered me drugs to help me cope with the stress. I didn’t realize it then, but that was the start of a long and painful journey.”

Over the next ten years, Shareef became dependent on substances, spending most of his income on drugs. His physical and mental health steadily deteriorated. Hoping to rebuild his life, he returned to Ghazni to be closer to his family. However, the addiction persisted, leading to isolation and further decline. He eventually lost family support and began living on the streets.

Despite the worsening situation, Shareef never gave up hope. He held on to the belief that recovery was possible with faith and the right support. One day, while in a known drug-use hotspot, an outreach worker from a local STFA-supported DIC approached him and introduced the treatment services available in Ghazni. “When the outreach worker told me about the treatment programme, I felt like a door had opened,” Shareef said.

Following a series of motivational counselling sessions, Shareef was admitted to an STFA-supported DTC for a 45-day rehabilitation programme where his family was engaged in his recovery process and encouraged to support his reintegration. Over the course of treatment, Shareef experienced significant improvements in his health and wellbeing. He later returned to his village and began working on his cousin’s farmland, gradually rebuilding his life.

Today, Shareef is healthy, stable, and full of hope. He expresses deep gratitude for the support provided by the DIC team and remains committed to maintaining his recovery. His story reflects the transformative power of compassionate outreach, family engagement, and accessible recovery services.



## Annex III: A Brief Note on Resources

N/A

## Annex IV. Other Assessments or Evaluations

No assessments conducted.

## Annex V. Programmatic Revisions

The JP prodoc was revised in 2024 to reflect the joining of ILO and WHO as new PUNOs to this JP and addition of budget of ILO and WHO. The budget adjustments were accommodated through deductions from the total budget of the PUNOs with budget of greater than \$5 million, while keeping the total budget of the JP unchanged.



A mountain view from Paktia Province. © STFA



# DELIVERING AS ONE

**Cover Photo:**

A worker in Sadar Logar Dairy shows their products, Pul-e-Alam,  
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