

2025

ANNUAL REPORT

TRUST FUND
MANAGEMENT UNIT
(TFMU) PROJECT

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Programme Title & Project Number		Country, Locality(s), Priority Area(s)/ Strategic Results	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Programme Title: STFA Trust Fund Management Unit Project • Programme Number: 00134030 • Multi-Partner Trust Fund (MPTF) Office Project Reference Number: 00134058 		Country/Region: Afghanistan	
		Priority area/ strategic results	
Programme/Project Cost (US\$)		Programme Duration	
Total approved budget as per project document:	14,423,770	Overall Duration	60 months
MPTF /JP Contribution :	14,423,770		
Agency Contribution	N/A	Start Date ¹	1 Jan 2023
Government Contribution)	N/A	Original End Date ²	31 Dec 2025
Other Contributions (donors):	N/A	Current End Date ³	31 Dec 2027
Total Contributions:	14,423,770		
Programme Assessment/Review/Mid-Term Eval.		Report Submitted By	
Assessment/Review - if applicable please attach Yes No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Name: Peter Nordstrom • Title: Senior Trust Fund Manager • Email address: peter.nordstrom@undp.org 	
Mid-Term Evaluation Report – if applicable please attach Yes No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>			

[1] 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

[2] As per approval of the original project document by the relevant decision-making body/Steering Committee.

[3] 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.

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List of Acronyms and Abbreviations

CSO	Civil Society Organization
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
IDP	Internally Displaced Person
ILO	International Labour Organization
IOM	International Organization for Migration
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MPTF	Multi-Partner Trust Fund
MSME	Micro-, Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises
OCHA	United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
PAIDAAR	Participatory Action for Integrated Developmental Assistance to Areas of Return
PUNO	Participating United Nations Organization
REEP	Rehabilitation and Economic Empowerment of People Recovering from Drug Use Disorders
SIDA	Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency
STFA	Special Trust Fund for Afghanistan
TFMU	Trust Fund Management Unit
UN WOMEN	United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UN-Habitat	United Nations Human Settlements Programme
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNIDO	United Nations Industrial Development Organization
UNODC	United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime
UNOPS	United Nations Office for Project Services
UNSFA	United Nations Strategic Framework for Afghanistan
WAHDAT	Weaving Afghanistan's Hope and Displacement Actions Together

Executive Summary

In June 2025, the STFA Steering Committee approved a cost extension of the TFMU project till December 2027 to ensure continuity of secretariat functions for the STFA.

In 2025, TFMU continued to perform four core functions: programme coordination, harmonization and quality assurance; resource management; monitoring and evaluation (M&E) and data management; and communications and outreach.

Resources declined in 2025 with \$24.75 million mobilized, reflecting local challenges and broader global funding pressures. Since 2021, over 95 per cent of cumulative contributions (\$265.51 million) have been allocated to joint programmes and joint projects, demonstrating strong use of available resources.

In 2025, programme delivery progressed across four regional joint programmes (in the Northern, Southern, Eastern and South-Eastern), regions) alongside five joint projects aligned with the revised STFA Strategic Note, which emphasizes area-based, community-driven approaches to joint programming. The Steering Committee approved three joint projects: Participatory Action for Integrated Developmental Assistance to Areas of Return (PAIDAAR) with a total budget of \$23.01 million (including \$15.80 million from STFA), Weaving Afghanistan's Hope and Displacement Actions Together (WAHDAT) with \$41.84 million, (including \$14.77 million from STFA), and Rehabilitation and Economic Empowerment of People Recovering from Drug Use Disorders (REEP) with \$3.24 million, (including \$2.32 million from STFA). All three focus on livelihoods, access to essential services, adaptation of climate change and social cohesion, targeting vulnerable populations, including returnees, internally displaced persons (IDPs) and host communities.

TFMU continued coordination through active engagement in inter-agency platforms. This promoted alignment with the United Nations Strategic Framework for Afghanistan (UNSFA) and complementarities among programmes and partners. The TFMU reinforced programme quality through structured reviews, timeline adjustments and support to PUNOs, including the approval of three technical programmatic revisions and 11 no-cost extensions to facilitate the completion of activities.

Improvements in data management, reporting and knowledge-sharing further strengthened the M&E system. Revamped digital platforms, integrated results frameworks and the systematic use of monitoring findings supported adaptive programming and improved reporting quality. Communications efforts expanded STFA's visibility through digital platforms and storytelling, and targeted outreach successfully engaged private-sector partners. Followers grew across platforms, reaching over 4,500 on LinkedIn and more than 3,000 on Twitter, an increase of more than 60 percent in 2025. Engagement also rose, with more replies, mentions, and quotes from donors, PUNOs, and other stakeholders.

TFMU facilitated six M&E, donor, communications and private sector missions across the Eastern, South-Eastern, Western and Northern regions. These enabled direct observation of programme implementation and engagement with beneficiaries, communities and stakeholders. They provided actionable feedback to PUNOs, informed programme adjustments, strengthened coordination at the field level and increased donor confidence by enhancing the visibility of results. Findings from third-party monitoring missions confirmed that STFA interventions are contributing to the delivery of essential services, livelihood support, disaster risk reduction and community resilience, particularly in vulnerable and hard-to-reach areas.

Private sector engagement advanced through two targeted missions and dialogue with over 12 major Afghan private sector entities, to help facilitate access to finance, markets and supply chain support for micro-, small and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs), including those led by women. These efforts strengthened economic opportunities and the sustainability of programme outcomes.

The programme pipeline and design of joint projects under the programme management function was affected by the limited predictability of resources. The restrictions related to physical access to the workplace by national female UN staff negatively impacted the TFMU cohesion and the morale of its two women staff who diligently continued carrying out their responsibilities from home to the best of their abilities. Societal restrictions, particularly those affecting women's participation, mobility, and field-level implementation significantly impacted implementation of the joint programmes and projects. Additional constraints included external delays in the approval of MoUs which shape the field level implementation. In response, TFMU and partners adopted flexible approaches to sustain delivery and adapt to the operating context.

Lessons from 2025 highlighted the importance of adaptive programming, stronger integration of short-term recovery and long-term resilience efforts, and the need to address systemic constraints affecting funding, sustainability and scale.

Overall, TFMU delivered on most planned results in 2025, strengthening coordination, oversight, partnerships and learning across the STFA portfolio. It has reinforced STFA's ability to deliver integrated, responsive and evidence-based programming in support of resilience and recovery in Afghanistan.



TFMU staff with PUNOs during a field mission to South-Eastern region, in Paktia Province. © STFA/Mohammad Omar Kamal



Purpose

TFMU serves as the STFA secretariat. It is organized around four work areas: programme coordination, harmonization and quality assurance; resource management; M&E and data management; and communications and outreach.



STFA staff with the Norad and Norwegian Embassy delegation on a mission to Herat Province. © STFA/Mohammad Omar Kamal



Results

Outcome

Programme coordination, harmonization and quality assurance

In 2025, TFMU continued to conduct programme coordination, harmonization and quality assurance. Four regional joint programmes (Southern, Northern, Eastern and South-Eastern regions) progressed, with activities peaking in the Eastern and South-Eastern regions. In addition, five joint projects were implemented namely Herat Earthquake Recovery Response, Strengthening Women-led CSOs Twinning Initiative, Durable Solutions Initiative, the Drug Use Prevention, Treatment, and Rehabilitation Initiative and PAIDAAR. Below are key highlights under this result area, with challenges outlined in the latter part of the report.

(i) Strategic positioning of STFA and TFMU

UNSFA, STFA and the United Nations coordination architecture in Afghanistan: Given STFA's positioning under the UNSFA, TFMU collaborated closely with the Resident Coordinator's Office. It participated in various coordination bodies and clusters, including the Afghanistan Coordination Group (ACG), United Nations Country Team (UNCT), Humanitarian Country Team (HCT), Development Pillar Team, Programme Management Team (PMT), Gender Technical Group (GTG), Disability Inclusion Working Group, Risk Management Team, Durable Solutions National Working Group and Steering Group, Climate Working Group, Prevention of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (PSEA) network, United Nations Communications Group (UNCG), Data Management Working Group, M&E Working Group and Private Sector engagement platforms. These forums strengthened programmatic coordination and the identification of potential complementarities with other funding streams and United Nations agencies, funds and programmes beyond STFA.

Prioritizing investments: In April 2025, the Steering Committee approved an extension of the STFA ToR to 2027 to align with UNSFA, ensuring strategic coherence, accountability, visibility, and strengthened financial and programmatic oversight. The Steering Committee (SC) also approved the two year cost extension of the Trust Fund Management Unit (2026 – 2027) to ensure continuity of secretariat functions and three joint projects^[4] aligned with the Strategic Note's programmatic priorities; implementation of one of the joint projects started in 2025.

(ii) Coordination and harmonization

Streamlined implementation of STFA interventions in line with the Strategic Note: In 2025, three new joint projects were launched, adding to the four ongoing regional joint programmes and four existing joint projects. The three new projects are summarized below.

[4] The Steering Committee approved three joint projects: Participatory Action for Integrated Developmental Assistance to Areas of Return (PAIDAAR), Weaving Afghanistan's Hope and Displacement Actions Together (WAHDAT) and Rehabilitation and Economic Empowerment of People Recovering from Drug Use Disorders (REEP).

PAIDAAR

TFMU led the technical review of PAIDAAR, a 24-month, multi-agency initiative led by UNDP, in partnership with IOM, UN-Habitat and UNHCR. The project supports the durable (re)integration of returnees, IDPs and host communities across 69 settlements in Kunduz and Baghlan provinces. It aims to improve access to climate-resilient housing, essential services and community infrastructure; strengthen livelihoods through vocational training, business support and agricultural assistance; and improve social cohesion by establishing and capacitating local implementation committees, promoting inclusive community governance, and raising awareness of protection, housing, land and property rights and the mitigation of gender-based violence risks. It has a total budget of \$23.01 million (\$15.80 million from STFA), and was approved by the Steering Committee in June 2025, implementation is still in early stages.

WAHDAT

§ TFMU coordinated the design of WAHDAT, a 24-month joint project led by UNDP, in partnership with IOM, UN-Habitat and UNHCR. It aims to support the large-scale reintegration of returnees, IDPs and vulnerable host communities in 12 *manteqas*^[5] across Herat and Farah provinces. With a total budget of \$41.84 million, (\$14.77 million from STFA), the project focuses on expanding access to gender- and disability-responsive housing, essential services, climate-resilient community infrastructure and diversified livelihood opportunities. Through an integrated, area-based, community-driven approach, WAHDAT strives to enhance economic resilience, improve disaster preparedness and foster inclusive governance, contributing to durable solutions and stability in the operational areas. The Steering Committee approved this initiative in December 2025.

REEP

TFMU coordinated the design of REEP, a 24-month initiative led by UNDP in partnership with UNODC in Ghazni, Logar and Paktia provinces. The project aims to improve access to gender-responsive, evidence-based drug treatment while supporting the social and economic reintegration of people recovering from drug use disorders, especially women. With a total budget of \$3.24 million, (\$2.32 million from STFA), the project strengthens drug treatment centres and outpatient treatment centres, expands aftercare and family-based support, and promotes stigma reduction. It integrates vocational training, livelihoods assistance, MSME engagement and agriculture-based income opportunities, targeting approximately 1,200 people recovering from drug use disorders and 8,000 community members indirectly. The Steering Committee approved this initiative in December 2025.

Joint risk management: TFMU actively engaged in the United Nations Country Team's Risk Management Team to remain informed of emerging system-wide risks and mitigation measures, and to escalate matters requiring collective action. TFMU regularly participated in 11 meetings in 2025 to track high-level developments and evolving risks across Afghanistan, informing risk management at the STFA and joint programme levels. TFMU also managed and provided regular updates to the STFA-related risks in the UN Common Risk Assessment. In addition, the TFMU project risk log, managed by UNDP, was updated on a regular basis. Some risks identified during the design phase have since been retired, while open risks continue to be monitored and reported on.

[5] A *manteqa* is an informal but relatively precise geographic delineation that lies between the village and district level. *Manteqas* are usually based around shared resources, particularly irrigation canals, forests and communal water resources, but also other services. Each *manteqa* encompasses all of the villages that rely on these shared resources.

Suhoor fundraising and collaboration event in Dubai: Under the leadership of the Resident Coordinator, the TFMU organized an exclusive suhoor fundraising and collaboration event on 26 March 2025 in Dubai, bringing together private sector partners during the final days of Ramadan. The event showcased the impact of STFA-supported MSMEs and explored opportunities for collaboration. Through this engagement, TFMU opened pathways to strengthen partnerships with private sector actors to support supply chains, improve access to finance and enhance logistical support for STFA-supported MSMEs. The initiative increased the visibility of Fund results and laid groundwork for expanding market linkages and fostering long-term private sector participation in Afghanistan’s economic recovery.

(iii) Quality assurance

Expanded and revised programme portfolio (pipeline development): In April 2025, the Steering Committee approved closure dates for all Joint Programmes and Joint Projects, with extensions of up to six months where required. TFMU facilitated and finalized the amendments of three Regional Joint Programmes Eastern, South-Eastern and Western JPs with the corresponding joint initiatives (annexed to the JPs) with PUNOs. Under the approved timeline,

	Programme	End Date
1	Southern and Northern Regional Joint Programme	31 December 2025
2	Eastern Region Joint Programme and Durable Solutions Joint Initiative	31 March 2026
	Four PUNOs (IOM, ILO, UNFPA and UN Women) requested no-cost extensions to complete their activities in line with the revised schedule.	
3	Strengthening Women-Led Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) Twinning Initiative	28 February 2026
	with an extension to 31 March 2026 if required.	
4	South-Eastern Region Joint Programme	30 June 2026
	Five PUNOs (UNIDO, UNESCO, IOM, FAO and UNODC) submitted no-cost extensions to complete planned activities within the extended timeframe of 30 June 2026.	

[5] A *manteqa* is an informal but relatively precise geographic delineation that lies between the village and district level. *Manteqas* are usually based around shared resources, particularly irrigation canals, forests and communal water resources, but also other services. Each *manteqa* encompasses all of the villages that rely on these shared resources.



	Programme	Closing Date
5	Drug Use Prevention, Treatment and Rehabilitation initiative	31 December 2025
6	Western Region Joint Programme (which was not funded)	28 February 2026
7	Post-Earthquake Recovery and Resilience-Building initiative	28 February 2026

was to close on 16 October 2025, with an extension to 28 February 2026 if required. Two PUNOs (IOM and UN-Habitat) requested no-cost extensions to complete their activities in line with the revised schedule.

TFMU facilitated formal submission of one major programmatic revision, following a request from UNOPS. In June 2025, the Steering Committee approved this revision which involved change of scope from reconstruction and rehabilitation of clinics to water harvesting and watershed management systems, complemented by a poultry support initiative targeting women, to address household needs and support income generation. This revision reallocated the previously approved budget of \$1,360,000, shifting \$985,208 from output 1 to output 2 (\$96,300) and output 3 (\$888,908). No additional funding was requested from STFA.

TFMU also reviewed and facilitated approval of four minor programmatic change requests, in accordance with the STFA Operations Manual. Each request was assessed based on the specific circumstances and subsequently approved or rejected as appropriate. These requests are summarised below:

Request	Decision
UNESCO: request to revise Output 1 targets related to literacy activities under the South-Eastern Regional Joint Programme.	Approved
UNODC: request for budget realignment within the South-Eastern Regional Joint Programme.	Approved
UN-Habitat: request to allocate a portion of the budget to tangible activities under Output 4 (social cohesion) within the Durable Solutions Joint Initiative in the Eastern Region.	Approved
UN Women: request to reprogramme an unspent balance of \$100,000 in the Southern Region.	Rejected, nearing end date of the JP.



In addition, TFMU facilitated six monitoring, communications and donor engagement missions to programme locations to strengthen oversight, enhance coordination with PUNOs and uphold accountability for implementation. Some highlights included the following:

February 2025

STFA organized an M&E mission to Herat province to review ongoing joint initiatives and assess field-level implementation [more detail under M&E section].

April 2025

STFA, with IOM, UNDP, UN-Habitat and UNHCR, organized a mission to Kunduz Province to visit potential sites for the PAIDAAR joint project, which was under formulation. The mission sought to better understand local conditions and engage directly from communities on the ground. It visited several activities supported by PUNOs through other funding streams and engaged with potential stakeholders for initiatives under the PAIDAAR joint project.

May 2025

STFA facilitated a donor mission to the South-Eastern and Eastern regions for the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida) delegation. Organized in partnership with OCHA, under the framework of the humanitarian-development-peace nexus, the mission provided first-hand insights into the experiences of returnees from Pakistan at the Torkham border, including access to services. A tour of the transit centre and discussions with key stakeholders highlighted how area-based, community-driven programmes address basic needs, support reintegration and strengthen community resilience. Sida commended the quality of implementation and expressed strong appreciation for partners in delivering results under challenging conditions.

May 2025

STFA organized a mission to Mazar-e-Sharif with private sector partners. The aim was to connect entrepreneurs in the Northern Region with private sector actors to improve access to markets, financing and mentorship. Private sector participants pledged real solutions, including low-interest loans, reduced transport costs and support for renewable energy. The mission linked field-based storytelling to the STFA crowdfunding campaign, amplifying impact and engagement.

August to September 2025

STFA and IOM co-organized a donor mission to Herat Province and Islam Qala to provide the Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation and the Norwegian Embassy delegation with a first-hand understanding of the impact of the increasing number of returnees from Iran. The visit, emphasizing a humanitarian-development-peace perspective, enabled the donor delegation to observe ongoing humanitarian interventions and activities addressing basic human needs. It offered an opportunity to review STFA's support to post-earthquake recovery and showcase progress. The donors commended STFA for enabling collaborative efforts among UN agencies, National Non-Government Organizations and International Non-Government Organizations to address deep-rooted challenges in vulnerable communities.

September 2025

STFA organized an M&E and communications mission to the South-Eastern Region, covering project sites across Paktia, Khost, Logar and Ghazni provinces, to assess the implementation of the Regional Joint Programme and Drug Use Prevention, Treatment, and Rehabilitation Initiative. The mission team observed progress and engaged with stakeholders, including beneficiaries, community leaders. The team also collated inputs for development of communications products and captured lessons for wider dissemination. The visit showcased how interventions are providing essential services such as health, education, water and sanitation, supporting livelihoods as well as climate change adaptation and disaster risk reduction at the household and enterprise levels. It highlighted collaboration among communities United Nations organizations, with each contributing its expertise.

Together, these missions enabled regular feedback loops, peer to peer learning across regions, and enabled donor engagement with beneficiaries and implementing partners.



Community members place turbans on TFMU and PUNO staff during their visit to Logar Provinc.. © STFA/Mohammad Amin Hassan Zadeh



Resource Management

In 2025, STFA mobilized

\$24.75

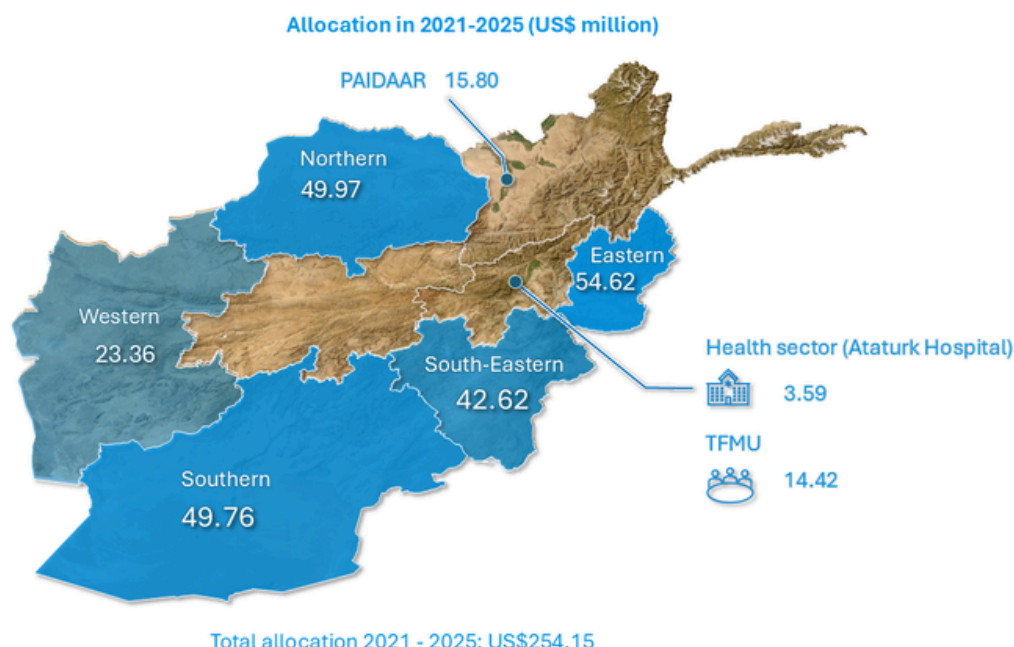
million from seven contributing donors, a 33 percent decline from the \$36.92 million received in 2024; and \$0.03 million from crowdfunding.

Several factors explain the decrease. First, the operating environment remained challenging due to continued restrictions imposed by the *de facto* authorities. These resulted in limitations on Afghan women workers, the reduced participation of women as beneficiaries and restricted access to duty stations for United Nations national women personnel. Second, broader global factors comprised shrinking international aid budgets, competing humanitarian priorities, a continued preference among some donors for bilateral funding mechanisms and a shifting focus to other crises.

Contributor/Partner	Contribution (in US\$ Million)
Denmark	6.92
Iceland	0.79
Italy	5.2
Norway	4.25
Poland	0.1
Republic of Korea	1
Sweden	6.45
Crowdfunding	0.03
Total	24.75

As of December 2025, more than 95 percent of cumulative contributions (\$254.15 out of \$265.51 million), received from 2021 to 2025 had been allocated for STFA programming. Figure 2 shows funding allocations since the start of STFA.

Cumulative allocation of STFA resources as of 31 December 2025



Monitoring and Evaluation, Reporting, Learning and Data Management

In 2025, the STFA M&E framework was further strengthened, building on progress from previous iterations. The framework continued to enhance programmatic oversight, inform evidence-based decision-making, improve implementation quality, strengthen reporting and promote knowledge-sharing. Key components, including oversight and quality assurance, data management, reporting and knowledge management, were revamped and operationalized to support adaptive programme management.

Data management: Enhancements to the STFA data management platform improved functionality, accuracy, and alignment with monitoring and reporting needs. The full integration of STFA results frameworks backed consistent application across programmes and projects.

Results and resources frameworks and workplans for the four regional joint programmes^[7] and seven sectoral projects^[8] were systematically reviewed, updated and refined in line with funding allocations. This enabled accurate fund-level reporting and supported evidence-based planning for both TFMU and third-party field monitoring activities. Expanded beneficiary data categories, including persons with disabilities, IDPs and returnees, were incorporated into results and resources frameworks (baselines, milestones and targets) and reporting templates, strengthening data comprehensiveness and inclusivity and demonstrating flexibility to accommodate evolving stakeholder requirements.

Improvements to the STFA online reporting platform streamlined processes, reduced errors and minimized redundancies. The upgraded dashboard provides clear, visual insights into the progress of joint programmes and sectoral projects with various disaggregation^[9] to enhance accessibility and decision-making. Furthermore, a dedicated final reporting platform now enables PUNOs to submit final reports for completed joint programmes and projects.

Oversight and quality assurance: TFMU continued to perform programme oversight and quality assurance in 2025 through systematic monitoring, independent verification and evaluative processes. These efforts upheld robust accountability, supported adaptive management and reinforced evidence-based decision-making across the STFA portfolio.

- Third-party monitoring activities were fully operational in 2025, with three full cycles of field monitoring conducted across all regions, covering 16 regional visits to 662 programme and project implementation sites. The missions independently verified achievements, assessed quality and relevance, and generated actionable learning to inform ongoing implementation and future programming. At the fund level, oversight of third-party monitoring services included the review, validation, dissemination and archiving of 11 field visit reports. Reports, technical coordination meetings and bilateral exchanges shared key findings and lessons with PUNOs.

[7] Northern, Southern, Eastern and South-Eastern

[8] CSO Twinning Initiative; Herat Post-Earthquake Recovery and Resilience-Building initiative; Drug Use Prevention, Treatment Initiative and Rehabilitation project; Durable Solutions Joint Initiative; PAIDAAR; REEP and WAHDAT.

[9] By region, joint programme/project and PUNO



- At the strategic level, TFMU facilitated one third-party monitoring learning exchange with STFA stakeholders to improve the interpretation and application of monitoring findings. In addition, another TPM learning exchange was included in the annual STFA stocktaking event to translate field level insights into strategic corrective actions and lessons for adaptive programming.
- The third-party monitoring dashboard provides timely and accurate performance data. Infographics and narrative summaries offered key statistics and insights, enabling stakeholders to review progress, interpret findings and engage in programme oversight.
- **Monitoring missions:** In 2025, TFMU led two M&E field missions with PUNOs in the Western and South-Eastern regions. They collected critical field-level insights, verified PUNO-reported results and provided targeted feedback to inform programme adjustments and future planning. Some highlights are as below:
 - *Herat Province mission (February 2025):* The mission assessed the Herat Post-Earthquake Recovery and Resilience-Building initiative across 10 sites, engaging beneficiaries, communities UN agencies and their implementing partners. While interventions in health, shelter, livelihoods and community resilience showed positive early indications of impact; challenges related to implementation delays, limited coordination among PUNOs and occasional misalignment with local needs were noted. Key recommendations emphasized early community engagement, integrated programming, harmonized shelter designs, robust monitoring with a feedback loop to address identified challenges, and bottlenecks, and early sustainability planning to enhance effectiveness and long-term impact.
 - *South-Eastern Region mission (September 2025):* During the mission to 27 sites across Paktia, Khost, Logar and Ghazni Provinces, the team observed progress, engaged with stakeholders, including beneficiaries, community leaders, and service providers, and captured lessons from the Regional Joint Programme and Drug Use Prevention, Treatment and Rehabilitation initiative. Findings showed that the interventions are contributing to essential services, livelihoods, disaster risk reduction and community engagement, and demonstrated effective multi-agency collaboration. Good practices included community-led maintenance of water systems, peer mentoring among MSME graduates, and women-only safe spaces in technical and vocational education and training centres, markets and drop-in centres. Challenges comprised limited local capacity, recurring basic needs, barriers to women’s participation, pressures from returnees and constraints on the sustainability of education and health interventions. These issues highlighted the need for adaptive programming, consistent STFA visibility and engagement with local authorities.
- **Final evaluations:** final evaluations are essential for understanding the outcomes of completed joint programme activities and also serve as an accountability and learning framework. In 2025, TFMU commissioned a joint final evaluation for the Northern and Southern regional joint programmes. The final evaluation report providing insights into programme achievements, challenges and lessons learned to inform future programming will be released in second quarter of 2026. The TFMU also initiated procurement processes for three final evaluations of the Herat Post-Earthquake Recovery and Resilience-Building project, the South-Eastern Regional Joint Programme, and the Drug Use Prevention, Treatment and Rehabilitation initiative, with implementation and finalization planned for 2026. Findings will be shared with STFA stakeholders for institutional learning, evidence-based planning and strategic decision-making to improve design and delivery of future programmes.

- **Reporting:** In 2025, TFMU played a central role in supporting STFA accountability for results by leading the preparation of 10^[10] annual reports for the 2024 implementation period. Additionally, TFMU led development of the bi-annual update for the first half of 2025, highlighting key progress and overview of the operational context. On occasion, TFMU responded to ad hoc reporting requests from donors and partners, enabling informed decision-making across the STFA portfolio.
- **Knowledge management:** In 2025, the team oversaw the development, review and dissemination of 23 knowledge products, including field visit reports, the biannual report, the 2024 annual reports and 11 third-party monitoring reports, and systematically archived them in the library. To strengthen institutional learning and information-sharing, TFMU established a centralized STFA document library within the data management platform, consolidating all finalized reports and knowledge products for easy stakeholder access. The platform was internally reviewed during the year and will be fully integrated into a broader knowledge management initiative for roll-out in 2026.
- **M&E Working Group:** In 2025, the STFA M&E Working Group, operating under the Programme Management Team, continued to strengthen coordination, harmonize monitoring and enhance reporting quality across the portfolio. TFMU actively participated in meetings organized through the Working Group, contributing to joint planning, dialogue and follow-up with PUNOs' M&E and programme focal points.



STFA staff pose for a photo with midwives during a visit to an FHH in Logar Province. © STFA/Mohammad Omar Kamal

[10] 10 reports covering four regional joint programmes, four sectoral projects, fund level and the TFMU.



Communications and Outreach

In 2025, TFMU strengthened STFA visibility through a more structured and consistent communications approach across



and the dedicated SharePoint workspace for PUNOs and donors. Messaging focused on joint programme results, donor contributions, partnership milestones, field-level impact, and the Fund's role as a platform for coordinated support to Afghanistan. This helped position STFA not only as a financing mechanism but as a practical example of pooled funding and joint delivery.

STFA's digital presence grew significantly during the year. Across platforms, followers increased to:

4.5K  3.1K 

reflecting more than 80 percent growth over the year, with similar upward trends on Facebook, Instagram, and YouTube. Engagement also increased by over:

70%

with higher impressions, shares, replies, mentions, quoted posts, and reposts from donors, PUNOs, UN partners, and other stakeholders. This growth showed stronger interest in STFA content and increased recognition of the Fund's work among development, humanitarian, donor, and public audiences.

Throughout the year, TFMU produced and disseminated a wide range of communication materials, including brochures, human-interest stories, short video features, social media carousels, infographics, illustrated narratives, donor visibility products, and event-related communication packages. These materials highlighted STFA achievements across programme and project locations and reflected the collaborative engagement of implementing PUNOs. Products also recognized donor contributions by linking their support to tangible results in communities.

[7] Northern, Southern, Eastern and South-Eastern

[8] CSO Twinning Initiative; Herat Post-Earthquake Recovery and Resilience-Building initiative; Drug Use Prevention, Treatment Initiative and Rehabilitation project; Durable Solutions Joint Initiative; PAIDAAR; REEP and WAHDAT.

[9] By region, joint programme/project and PUNO

The STFA website also became a stronger reference point for programme updates, donor visibility, stories, publications, and multimedia content. The periodic updates improved access to information for partners and external audiences. In total, STFA published 15 news and blog articles and more than 15 videos, which were amplified across STFA platforms, partner channels, and the website on the MPTF Gateway. Also, the SharePoint workspace enabled more direct communication with donors and PUNOs by providing a common space for reports, visibility materials, visual assets, and coordination products.

Communications in 2025 also placed greater emphasis on stakeholder engagement. TFMU increased direct communication with donors, PUNOs, UN agencies, and communities through tailored updates, meetings, planning sessions, missions, and campaign materials. This improved consistency in external communication and supported more timely visibility around milestones, field missions, events, and new initiatives.

A key area of progress in 2025 was STFA's stronger contribution to coordinated UN communications and joint visibility. Through co-chairing the UN Communications Group (UNCG), STFA supported coherent, aligned messaging across the UN system on shared priorities, joint initiatives, strategic moments, campaigns, and high-level events.

This included closer collaboration on communications planning, common narratives, coordinated messaging, and visibility approaches that better reflected the collective impact of UN support in Afghanistan. As part of these efforts, STFA supported communications capacity assessments to identify opportunities for stronger joint storytelling, more consistent external messaging, and greater visibility for inter-agency results. This drove a significant increase in UN-wide reporting and outreach throughout the year. For instance, the UN Afghanistan Results Report prominently featured stories demonstrating the UN 'delivering as one.' Furthermore, cross-social media initiatives, joint multimedia campaigns, and the UN Afghanistan nationwide radio programme successfully broadened public awareness of our collective impact at the community level.

STFA marked its fourth anniversary with a dedicated digital campaign that reflected on achievements to date, showcasing field-level transformation stories and acknowledging the collective efforts of donors, partners, and implementing agencies.

In addition, TFMU reviewed and updated branding materials to better align with the Fund's visual identity and strategic messaging. Colour palettes, design elements, templates, and layout approaches were refined to create a more cohesive and recognizable look across platforms, reports, presentations, social media products, and publications.

Building on the momentum of the ["Be the Hope"](#) crowdfunding initiative launched in 2024, outreach efforts continued in 2025 through refreshed campaign messaging and digital storytelling. The campaign helped expand public engagement, diversify outreach, and connect wider audiences to Afghanistan's resilience and recovery priorities.



Private Sector Engagement

Following intensified outreach to the private sector to raise awareness and build partnerships, TFMU engaged leading Afghan business figures, including Ghazanfar Bank and the Afghanistan International Bank, to spotlight the private sector's central role in Afghanistan's economic future. These efforts supported the sustainability of completed joint programme results and the launch of a support programme for women-led MSMEs, laying the groundwork for expanded networking and partnerships. Engagement with the Ghazanfar Bank Group resulted in financial access for women entrepreneurs beyond STFA direct support. In 2025, Ghazanfar Bank provided tailored Islamic financing support to 37 Afghan women-led MSMEs, with loans varying from AFN 40,000 to AFN 5 million (approximately \$588 to \$73,529), depending on eligibility threshold.

Capitalizing on this momentum, an STFA mission to Mazar-e-Sharif in May 2025 convened private sector representatives, including Ghazanfar Bank, Kam Group, ASEEL, Hesab Pay and others, alongside MSMEs (primarily women-led) to explore practical avenues for private sector support. A follow-up meeting on the same agenda took place in Dubai in October 2025. Led by the STFA Chair, it brought together prominent Afghan business leaders. These engagements have prompted increased private sector commitments to improve MSME access to finance and international markets, and to reduce cargo and other operational costs. Notably, ASEEL has begun onboarding over 140 MSMEs referred by four PUNOs (ILO, IOM, UNDP and UN Women) to its e-commerce platform, expanding market opportunities.

These combined achievements reflect steady engagement with the private sector and ongoing commitment to strengthening MSME participation and access to global markets. The new onboarding cases indicate continued interest from local enterprises and the relevance of programme support services. The earlier group of 140 MSMEs represents a significant foundation for broader economic inclusion and capacity development. STFA has maintained follow-up with both PUNOs and private sector partners, proactively arranging and facilitating conversations to translate commitments into concrete collaboration. Through ongoing coordination and by linking PUNOs with private sector actors such as Ghazanfar Bank, Kam Group, ASEEL, Hesab Pay and others, STFA is strengthening working relationships, aligning solutions to the needs of MSMEs (especially those led by women) and sustaining a practical pathway to broaden access to finance, open international market channels, and lower cargo and other operating costs for enterprises.



STFA staff meet with private sector actors and PUNOs in Balkh Province. © STFA/Mohammad Omar Kamal



Challenges

Operating environment and administrative constraints

1

In 2025, programme implementation faced challenges due to evolving policies under the *de facto* authorities as well as delays in PUNOs securing memorandums of understanding, permits and other required clearances. Gender-focused interventions were particularly affected by restrictions on women's participation and mobility. Despite these constraints, PUNOs continued to make progress by engaging with local authorities and using phased, community-driven approaches. This highlighted the need for adaptive, flexible programming in a complex, changing operating environment.

Funding limitations and resource predictability

2

Fluctuating donor contributions and uncertain resource mobilization continued to constrain multi-year initiatives, particularly in mine action and durable solutions programming. Parallel funding mechanisms, where PUNO contributions complement STFA resources, provided partial relief by expanding reach, reducing duplication and fostering coordinated multi-agency delivery. While not a full solution to unpredictable funding, this approach strengthened programme effectiveness and created synergies with other funding streams, demonstrating its value as a strategic tool in a complex operating environment.

Strengthening long-term impact through integrated and sustainable programming

3

While individual interventions demonstrated positive results at the micro level, structural constraints in market systems, value chain integration and post-support mechanisms limited scalability and long-term sustainability. For example, MSMEs and technical and vocational graduates achieved measurable gains, yet many remain locally confined or operate in saturated markets. Agricultural productivity is often disconnected from structured market channels. This highlights the need for strategic, demand-driven and value chain-oriented approaches that link inputs, production, processing and market access. Bolstering these systemic connections will enhance economic resilience, support sustainable livelihoods and help extend programme outcomes beyond immediate, short-term achievements.



Lessons Learned

Adaptive and context-sensitive programming

1

Flexible planning and localized implementation remain critical in navigating a complex political and sociocultural landscape. Adjustments, such as shifting public engagement to discreet community forums, adapting training content or working through trusted local actors, enabled essential activities to continue meaningfully under operational constraints. The integration of real-time monitoring, third-party verification and community feedback strengthened programme responsiveness, evidence-based decision-making and sustainability.

Linking short-term recovery with durable outcomes

2

Evidence from 2025 underscores the strategic importance of designing interventions that bridge immediate relief and long-term resilience. Prioritizing high-impact, multisectoral initiatives, whether in healthcare, livelihoods or disaster risk reduction, supports continuity, risk mitigation and value creation. At the same time, it reinforces local ownership and the institutionalization of practices such as water user committees, municipal handovers and community disaster preparedness structures.

Good Practice

Empowering communities and strengthening local economic resilience

STFA interventions have demonstrated that combining local ownership, capacity-building and inclusive economic approaches is critical for sustainability and long-term outcomes. Community action plans have enabled communities to actively shape and guide programme outcomes, fostering resilience and accountability for sustaining results beyond project timelines. Pro-poor and gender-responsive targeting have helped interventions to reach the most vulnerable households, with women participating meaningfully in livelihoods and enterprise activities. Building on these gains, strategic group-based approaches, such as consortium and collective enterprise models, are recommended to strengthen economic outcomes, enhance value chain integration, and support scalable, durable interventions. This integrated approach illustrates that empowering communities, socially, economically and institutionally, supports both immediate recovery and long-term development outcomes.



Qualitative Assessment

In 2025, TFMU achieved its targets in the results framework, demonstrating strong delivery performance despite a complex and evolving operating environment. Building on lessons learned, TFMU reinforced its strategic leadership by advancing adaptive, evidence-based programming. A key milestone was the revision of the STFA Strategic Note, informed by a comprehensive stakeholder stocktaking exercise and endorsed by the Steering Committee. This strengthened alignment with operational realities and emerging priorities.

To safeguard implementation continuity, TFMU led a collaborative process with key stakeholders that resulted in the Steering Committee's approval of revised closure timelines for all joint programmes, allowing extensions of up to six months. Corresponding amendments formalized with PUNOs enabled several to request no-cost extensions to complete planned outputs in line with updated schedules.

TFMU further strengthened oversight and accountability through targeted monitoring and donor engagement missions. These enhanced field-level coordination and made performance visible, contributing to sustained donor confidence. In tandem, TFMU's reporting and quality assurance function supported the consistency and reliability of results data while systematically integrating monitoring insights into programme adjustments, fostering learning and adaptive management across the portfolio. At the systems level, TFMU deepened engagement in United Nations coordination mechanisms, actively contributing to key inter-agency platforms, including the United Nations Country Team, Humanitarian Country Team, Programme Management Team and relevant technical working groups. Continued inputs to United Nations reporting processes, including system-wide efforts directly under the United Nations Secretary-General, strengthened evidence-based programming, risk-informed oversight and coherent advocacy. TFMU advanced resource mobilization and strategic partnerships, including targeted private sector engagement to enhance market linkages, financial access and supply chain opportunities for STFA-supported MSMEs. This contributed to more sustainable economic outcomes.

Finally, TFMU drove the pipeline development of integrated, multisectoral joint initiatives, reinforcing the STFA's area-based approach to more effectively address interconnected vulnerabilities and promote resilience.

Overall, TFMU's work in 2025 strengthened strategic coherence, operational adaptability and partnerships, enabling more responsive, evidence-driven programming across the STFA portfolio.





Annexes

Photos of the Stock-taking Exercise with STFA donors and PUNOs in Kabul Province. © STFA/Mohammad Omar Kamal



Annex I. Indicator-based Performance Tracker

(The figures in brackets are female figures.)

	Achieved indicator targets	Reasons for variance with planned target (if any)	Source of verification
Output 1.1: Trust Fund programme management and oversight services provided for effective and efficient fund operations			
<p>Indicator 1.1.1: Number of STFA coordination mechanisms functional and maintained</p> <p>Baseline: 4 Steering Committee meetings 4 Technical Coordination Working Group meetings</p> <p>Planned target: 4 Steering Committee meetings annually at least 4 TCWG meetings annually</p>	<p>4 Steering Committee meetings (April, June, October and December)</p> <p>4 Technical Coordination Working Group meetings (March, May, September and November)</p>	N/A	TFMU SharePoint (minutes of meetings, presentations)
<p>Indicator 1.1.2: Number of joint programme initiatives identified and implemented by PUNOs</p> <p>Baseline: Identify: 8 regional joint programmes, 1 health sectoral project Implement: 2 regional joint programmes, 1 health sectoral project</p> <p>Planned target: Implement 4 regional joint programmes, 1 health sectoral project</p>	Implemented 4 joint programmes, 5 joint projects	N/A	STFA SharePoint (signed project documents)
<p>Indicator 1.1.3: STFA contributing donors and participating UN agencies are satisfied with TFMU performance</p> <p>Baseline: N/A Planned target: 80% satisfied or very satisfied</p>	N/A ¹¹	No survey conducted	Independent survey
Output 1.2: Trust Fund financial management and oversight services provided for effective and efficient fund operations			
<p>Indicator 1.2.1: Amount of resources mobilized to implement STFA pipeline projects and programmes (US dollars)</p> <p>Baseline: \$53.7 million Planned target: \$177 million</p>	Resources mobilized in 2025: \$24.75 million	Overall aid flows to the country have declined; STFA followed a similar trend	STFA page on the MPTF Gateway
<p>Indicator 1.2.2: Available resources are allocated with the MPTF Office</p> <p>Baseline: \$64 million Planned target: Maximum 70% of available resources</p>	\$36.53 million allocated per Steering Committee decisions	N/A	Steering Committee meeting minutes

[11] While STFA stakeholders – both donors and PUNOs – continue to rely on and value the work of TFMU, there has been growing recognition of resource constraints and the implications in terms of TFMU size and services. Through the stocktaking exercise in November 2024, the STFA Steering Committee agreed to downsize the Fund's original level of ambition in terms of the scale, scope and geographic coverage of delivery to programmes, with a focus on women's empowerment, durable solutions and climate change resilience in a more limited number of geographic locations.

	Achieved indicator targets	Reasons for variance with planned target (if any)	Source of verification
<p>Indicator 1.2.3: Number of financial audits conducted.</p> <p>Baseline: N/A Planned target: One audit report for each PUNO</p>	<p>7 PUNOs reported in 2024 that they had conducted an audit</p>	<p>Other United Nations organizations will share audit reports once cleared by their headquarters in line with internal audit policies</p>	<p>PUNO audit reports</p>
<p>Output 1.3: STFA information management and results system, as well as data collection and analysis tools, designed and established, including digital dashboards.</p>			
<p>Indicator 1.3.1: An M&E mechanism is in place to track the results progress of joint programmes and PUNOs' performance</p> <p>Baseline: Partially developed Planned target: Fully developed</p>	<p>Fully developed</p>		<p>Data management system SharePoint Workspace Third-party monitoring agent contract Final evaluation</p>
<p>Indicator 1.3.1(a): Number of M&E mechanisms developed</p> <p>Baseline: 3 Planned target: 3</p>	<p>2</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Knowledge management platform · Oversight and quality assurance mechanism 		<p>SharePoint workspace Data management system Third-party monitoring agent contract Final evaluation</p>
<p>Indicator 1.3.1(b): Number of M&E mechanisms implemented</p> <p>Baseline: 3 Planned target: 3</p>	<p>5</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Oversight and quality assurance processes · Third-party monitoring · Data management platform · Integrated M&E Working Group, under the United Nations Country Team coordination architecture, in collaboration with the Resident Coordinator's Office · Knowledge management platform · Final evaluation 		<p>Monitoring mission reports Third-party monitoring agent contract Data management system SharePoint Workspace Final evaluation</p>
<p>Indicator 1.3.2: Number of M&E missions conducted (disaggregated by type of mission)</p> <p>Baseline: 2 Planned target: 12</p>	<p>21 missions conducted</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · TFMU: 8 · Third-party monitoring: 17 		<p>Mission reports Third-party monitoring reports</p>
<p>Indicator 1.3.3: Percentage of STFA evaluation plan implemented</p> <p>Baseline: Evaluation plan developed Implemented: 0% Planned target: 0%</p>	<p>0%</p>		<p>Final evaluation report</p>



	Achieved indicator targets	Reasons for variance with planned target (if any)	Source of verification
<p>Indicator 1.3.4: Number of progress reports and progress updates developed and disseminated to STFA stakeholders</p> <p>Baseline: 4 (1 annual, 3 quarterly) Planned target: 4 (1 annual, 3 quarterly)</p>	<p>2 sets of reports</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · 10 annual reports (2024) · 1 biannual update (January to June 2025) 	<p>Reporting was streamlined from quarterly to biannual updates in 2023</p>	<p>Annual reports on MPTF Gateway Biannual update disseminated via email (also on SharePoint) Project update disseminated via email (also on SharePoint)</p>
<p>Output 1.4: Communication content created and distributed, through relevant, appropriate and culturally sensitive channels, to improve awareness of the Afghan public on the strategies, policies and plans supported through the Fund</p>			
<p>Indicator 1.4.1: Number of communication products developed and disseminated</p> <p>Baseline: 6 Planned target: 10</p>	<p>15 news and blog articles; over 15 videos for social media and key STFA meetings</p>	<p>N/A</p>	<p>STFA page on the MPTF Gateway and STFA SharePoint</p>
<p>Indicator 1.4.2(a): STFA website in place</p> <p>Baseline: Yes Planned target: Yes</p>	<p>Yes</p> <p>The STFA website has been redirected to the MPTF Gateway to support integration with other MPTF initiatives, enabling synergies, collaboration and cross-promotion</p>	<p>N/A</p>	<p>STFA page on the MPTF Gateway</p>
<p>Indicator 1.4.2(b): STFA website in place and functional</p> <p>Baseline: Moderately functional Planned target: Fully functional</p>	<p>Fully functional</p> <p>The STFA dedicated website (www.stfa.af) was deactivated in 2023 but has been successfully migrated to the MPTF Gateway and is fully functional</p>	<p>N/A</p>	<p>STFA page on the MPTF Gateway</p>





DELIVERING AS

 **ONE**

The word 'ONE' is rendered in a very large, bold, white sans-serif font. To its left is a circular icon representing the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), which is a ring of 17 colored segments.

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