

PROJECT QA ASSESSMENT: DESIGN AND APPRAISAL

OVERALL PROJECT

EXEMPLARY (5) ●●●●●	HIGHLY SATISFACTORY (4) ●●●●○	SATISFACTORY (3) ●●●○○	NEEDS IMPROVEMENT (2) ●●○○○	INADEQUATE (1) ●○○○○
At least four criteria are rated Exemplary, and all criteria are rated High or Exemplary.	All criteria are rated Satisfactory or higher, and at least four criteria are rated High or Exemplary.	At least six criteria are rated Satisfactory or higher, and only one may be rated Needs Improvement. The Principled criterion must be rated Satisfactory or above.	At least three criteria are rated Satisfactory or higher, and only four criteria may be rated Needs Improvement.	One or more criteria are rated Inadequate, or five or more criteria are rated Needs Improvement.

DECISION

- **APPROVE** – the project is of sufficient quality to be approved in its current form. Any management actions must be addressed in a timely manner.
- **APPROVE WITH QUALIFICATIONS** – the project has issues that must be addressed before the project document can be approved. Any management actions must be addressed in a timely manner.
- **DISAPPROVE** – the project has significant issues that should prevent the project from being approved as drafted.

RATING CRITERIA

For all questions, select the option that best reflects the project

STRATEGIC

1. Does the project specify how it will contribute to higher level change through linkage to the programme's Theory of Change?

- **3:** The project is clearly linked to the programme's theory of change. It has an explicit change pathway that explains how the project will contribute to outcome level change and why the project's strategy will likely lead to this change. This analysis is backed by credible evidence of what works effectively in this context and includes assumptions and risks.
- **2:** The project is clearly linked to the programme's theory of change. It has a change pathway that explains how the project will contribute to outcome-level change and why the project strategy will likely lead to this change.
- **1:** The project document may describe in generic terms how the project will contribute to development results, without an explicit link to the programme's theory of change.

**Note: Projects not contributing to a programme must have a project-specific Theory of Change. See alternative question under the lightbulb for these cases.*

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Yes, the project has ToC linked to the programme ToC.

Evidence

Please see ProDoc pages #11-13 (ToC)

2. Is the project aligned with the UNDP Strategic Plan?

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Evidence

Yes, Please see Strategy and RF. (51 to 63 Please see Pro-Doc pages8-9)

- **3:** The project responds to at least one of the development settings as specified in the Strategic Plan¹ and adapts at least one Signature Solution². The project's RRF includes all the relevant SP output indicators. *(all must be true)*
- **2:** The project responds to at least one of the development settings as specified in the Strategic Plan⁴. The project's RRF includes at least one SP output indicator, if relevant. *(both must be true)*
- **1:** The project responds to a partner's identified need, but this need falls outside of the UNDP Strategic Plan. Also select this option if none of the relevant SP indicators are included in the RRF.

Yes, the project is aligned with the UNDP.

Strategic Plan and contributes three outcomes and six Signature solutions, 3, 5 & 6. (Refer to pages 5 and 6 of the Prodoc). (Refer to pages 8 and 9 of the Prodoc).

1. The project responds to two directions of change in the SP: leaving no one behind (LNOB) and building resilience; six signature solutions and two enablers as follows:
- 2.
3. Signature solution 1: Poverty and Inequality: Tackling inequality of opportunities by investing in the enhanced capabilities people need to move above the poverty line and keep moving forwards.
4. Signature solution 2 Gender Equality: Confronting the structural obstacles to gender equality and strengthening women's economic empowerment and leadership.
3. Signature solution 3: Energy: Increasing energy access for those furthest behind and accelerating the transition to renewable energy.
4. Signature solution 4: Environment: Putting nature and the environment at the heart of the natural economies and planning: helping governments protect, manage and value their natural assets.
5. Signature solution 5: Resilience: Supporting countries and communities in building resilience to diverse shocks and crises. Including conflict, climate change, disasters, and epidemics.
6. Signature solution 6: Governance: Helping countries address emerging complexities by "future-proofing" governance systems through anticipatory approaches and better management of risk.

Enablers:

7. Digitalization- Supporting countries to build inclusive, ethical, and sustainable, digital societies.
8. Strategic Innovation- Empowering governments and communities to enhance the performance of entire systems, making them adaptive and resilient.

¹ The three development settings in UNDP's 2018-2021 Strategic Plan are: a) Eradicate poverty in all its forms and dimensions; b) Accelerate structural transformations for sustainable development; and c) Build resilience to shocks and crises

² The six Signature Solutions of UNDP's 2018-2021 Strategic Plan are: a) Keeping people out of poverty; b) Strengthen effective, inclusive and accountable governance; c) Enhance national prevention and recovery capacities for resilient societies; d) Promote nature based solutions for a sustainable planet; e) Close the energy gap; and f) Strengthen gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls.

9. Is the project linked to the programme outputs? (i.e., UNDAF Results Group Workplan/CPD, RPD or Strategic Plan IRRF for global projects/strategic interventions not part of a programme) It is linked to UNSF 2023-2025 outcomes 1 (By the end of 2025, more people in Afghanistan particularly the most marginalized, will be able to equitably, particularly the most marginalized, will be able to equitably access essential services that meet minimum quality standards.) and 2 (By the end of 2025, more people in Afghanistan will benefit from an increasingly stable, inclusive and employment rich economy, with greater equality of economic opportunities and more resilient livelihoods), and outcome 3 (By the end of 2025, more people in Afghanistan will be able to participate in an increasingly socially cohesive, gender equal, and inclusive society, where the rule of law and human rights are progressively upheld, and more people can participate in governance and decision-making.)	<table> <tr> <td> Yes (Refer to Pages 1, 9-10, 51 of the Prodoc and TOC Page 11) </td><td> No </td></tr> </table>	Yes (Refer to Pages 1, 9-10, 51 of the Prodoc and TOC Page 11)	No		
Yes (Refer to Pages 1, 9-10, 51 of the Prodoc and TOC Page 11)	No				
RELEVANT					
10. Does the project target groups left furthest behind? • 3: The target groups are clearly specified, prioritising discriminated and marginalized groups left furthest behind, identified through a rigorous process based on evidence. • 2: The target groups are clearly specified, prioritizing groups left furthest behind. • 1: The target groups are not clearly specified. <i>*Note: Management Action must be taken for a score of 1. Projects that build institutional capacity should still identify targeted groups to justify support</i> Adequate attention will be given to women and girls, considering the current discriminatory environments where women and girls are disproportionately lagging behind in each sector. As gender norm requires time to change, culture affects women's meaningful participation in many development projects, such as agricultural production and control over resources and infrastructures related projects. Women, persons with disabilities, individuals from ethnic minorities who are youth, women heads of households, and adult women will be prioritized. TO ensure women's inclusion and safety, their Mahram will also be part of the programme. IDPs and returnees also have the chance of being systematically discriminated against. Hence they will be supported to be an integral part of a community programme. NGOs, and CSOs, who work for women and who support persons with disabilities and ethnic minorities will be partnered to ensure the most marginalized and vulnerable groups have been included.	<table> <tr> <td>3</td><td>2</td></tr> <tr> <td colspan="2"> 1 The project clearly identifies vulnerable groups, especially women, girls, youthIDPs (women and girls, children are most vulnerable) and Returnees, Evidence Please see the stakeholder's engagement section of the ProDoc on page # 37 </td></tr> </table>	3	2	1 The project clearly identifies vulnerable groups, especially women, girls, youthIDPs (women and girls, children are most vulnerable) and Returnees, Evidence Please see the stakeholder's engagement section of the ProDoc on page # 37	
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1 The project clearly identifies vulnerable groups, especially women, girls, youthIDPs (women and girls, children are most vulnerable) and Returnees, Evidence Please see the stakeholder's engagement section of the ProDoc on page # 37					
11. Have knowledge, good practices, and past lessons learned of UNDP and others informed the project design? • 3: Knowledge and lessons learned backed by credible evidence from sources such as evaluation, corporate policies/strategies, and/or monitoring have been explicitly used, with appropriate referencing, to justify the approach used by the project. • 2: The project design mentions knowledge and lessons learned backed by evidence/sources, but have not been used to justify the approach selected.	<table> <tr> <td>3</td><td>2</td></tr> <tr> <td colspan="2"> 1 Yes, the project will capture the best practices and past lessons learned from UNDP's other projects. </td></tr> </table>	3	2	1 Yes, the project will capture the best practices and past lessons learned from UNDP's other projects.	
3	2				
1 Yes, the project will capture the best practices and past lessons learned from UNDP's other projects.					

• 1: There is little or no mention of knowledge and lessons learned informing the project design. Any references made are anecdotal and not backed by evidence. *Note: Management Action or strong management justification must be given for a score of 1	Evidence Please see pages #16 & 17 related to lessons learned, and page 36 on Knowledge	
12. Does UNDP have a clear advantage to engage in the role envisioned by the project vis-à-vis national/regional/global partners and other actors? • 3: An analysis has been conducted on the role of other partners in the area where the project intends to work, and credible evidence supports the proposed engagement of UNDP and partners through the project, including identification of potential funding partners. It is clear how results achieved by partners will complement the project’s intended results and a communication strategy is in place to communicate results and raise visibility vis-à-vis key partners. Options for south-south and triangular cooperation have been considered, as appropriate. <i>(all must be true)</i> • 2: Some analysis has been conducted on the role of other partners in the area where the project intends to work, and relatively limited evidence supports the proposed engagement of and division of labour between UNDP and partners through the project, with unclear funding and communications strategies or plans. • 1: No clear analysis has been conducted on the role of other partners in the area that the project intends to work. There is risk that the project overlaps and/or does not coordinate with partners’ interventions in this area. Options for south-south and triangular cooperation have not been considered, despite its potential relevance. *Note: Management Action or strong management justification must be given for a score of 1	3	2
	1	
	Yes, UNDP has a clear advantage as implementing partner for this project	
	Evidence Please see pages Implementatoin arrangement pages 18-19	
PRINCIPLED		
13. Does the project apply a human rights-based approach? • 3: The project is guided by human rights and incorporates the principles of accountability, meaningful participation, and non-discrimination in the project’s strategy. The project upholds the relevant international and national laws and standards. Any potential adverse impacts on enjoyment of human rights were rigorously identified and assessed as relevant, with appropriate mitigation and management measures incorporated into project design and budget. <i>(all must be true)</i> • 2: The project is guided by human rights by prioritizing accountability, meaningful participation and non-discrimination. Potential adverse impacts on enjoyment of human rights were identified and assessed as relevant, and appropriate mitigation and management measures incorporated into the project design and budget. <i>(both must be true)</i> • 1: No evidence that the project is guided by human rights. Limited or no evidence that potential adverse impacts on enjoyment of human rights were considered. *Note: Management action or strong management justification must be given for a score of 1	3	2
	1	
	The core objective of this project is based on the human rights-based approach.	
	Evidence Please see the Strategy and Results Framework of ProDoc, in particular result 4.3 , page 41 and human rights integration to the risk register (42 p)	
	3	2

14. Does the project use gender analysis in the project design? • 3: A participatory gender analysis has been conducted and results from this gender analysis inform the development challenge, strategy and expected results sections of the project document. Outputs and indicators of the results framework include explicit references to gender equality, and specific indicators measure and monitor results to ensure women are fully benefitting from the project. <i>(all must be true)</i> • 2: A basic gender analysis has been carried out and results from this analysis are scattered (i.e., fragmented and not consistent) across the development challenge and strategy sections of the project document. The results framework may include some gender sensitive outputs and/or activities but gender inequalities are not consistently integrated across each output. <i>(all must be true)</i> • 1: The project design may or may not mention information and/or data on the differential impact of the project's development situation on gender relations, women and men, but the gender inequalities have not been clearly identified and reflected in the project document. *Note: Management Action or strong management justification must be given for a score of 1	1 Yes, basic gender analysis has been conducted for this project. The RF include some gender outputs, activities and indicators. Evidence Please see pages 3 to 8 for gender analysis, and gender segregated data in the result framework Page- 51 to 63	
9. Did the project support the resilience and sustainability of societies and/or ecosystems? • 3: Credible evidence that the project addresses sustainability and resilience dimensions of development challenges, which are integrated in the project strategy and design. The project reflects the interconnections between the social, economic and environmental dimensions of sustainable development. Relevant shocks, hazards and adverse social and environmental impacts have been identified and rigorously assessed with appropriate management and mitigation measures incorporated into project design and budget. <i>(all must be true)</i>. • 2: The project design integrates sustainability and resilience dimensions of development challenges. Relevant shocks, hazards and adverse social and environmental impacts have been identified and assessed, and relevant management and mitigation measures incorporated into project design and budget. <i>(both must be true)</i> • 1: Sustainability and resilience dimensions and impacts were not adequately considered. *Note: Management action or strong management justification must be given for a score of 1	3	2 1 Evidence Please see the Sustainability section of the ProDoc, page # 39
10. Has the Social and Environmental Screening Procedure (SESP) been conducted to identify potential social and environmental impacts and risks? The SESP is not required for projects in which UNDP is an Administrative Agent only and/or projects comprised solely of reports, coordination of events, trainings, workshops, meetings, conferences and/or communication materials and information dissemination. [if yes, upload the completed checklist. If SESP is not required, provide the reason for the exemption in the evidence section.]	Yes	No SESP has been conducted Evidence Please see the SESP Annex 2
MANAGEMENT & MONITORING		
11. Does the project have a strong results framework? • 3: The project's selection of outputs and activities are at an appropriate level. Outputs are accompanied by SMART, results-oriented indicators that measure the key expected development changes, each with credible data sources and populated baselines and targets, including gender sensitive, target group focused, sex-disaggregated indicators where appropriate. <i>(all must be true)</i>	3	2 1 Yes, the project's RF is well-defined with outputs, activities, baselines, and targets as well as

• 2: The project's selection of outputs and activities are at an appropriate level. Outputs are accompanied by SMART, results-oriented indicators, but baselines, targets and data sources may not yet be fully specified. Some use of target group focused, sex-disaggregated indicators, as appropriate. <i>(all must be true)</i> • 1: The project's selection of outputs and activities are not at an appropriate level; outputs are not accompanied by SMART, results-oriented indicators that measure the expected change and have not been populated with baselines and targets; data sources are not specified, and/or no gender sensitive, sex-disaggregation of indicators. <i>(if any is true)</i> *Note: Management Action or strong management justification must be given for a score of 1	with SMART indicators. Evidence Please see RF in the ProDoc 51 to 63	
12. Is the project's governance mechanism clearly defined in the project document, including composition of the project board? • 3: The project's governance mechanism is fully defined. Individuals have been specified for each position in the governance mechanism (especially all members of the project board.) Project Board members have agreed on their roles and responsibilities as specified in the terms of reference. The ToR of the project board has been attached to the project document. <i>(all must be true)</i>. • 2: The project's governance mechanism is defined; specific institutions are noted as holding key governance roles, but individuals may not have been specified yet. The project document lists the most important responsibilities of the project board, project director/manager and quality assurance roles. <i>(all must be true)</i> • 1: The project's governance mechanism is loosely defined in the project document, only mentioning key roles that will need to be filled at a later date. No information on the responsibilities of key positions in the governance mechanism is provided. *Note: Management Action or strong management justification must be given for a score of 1	3	2
	1	
	Yes, the project governance is defined (section VIII) with a short description (pages 75-76) of key roles with a stand-alone TORs for the Project Board (Annex 5.- pages 80-83)	
	Evidence Please see pages # 78-79 for the project organogram (page 32) and the short descriptions of the key persons role (page 31).	
13. Have the project risks been identified with clear plans stated to manage and mitigate each risk? • 3: Project risks related to the achievement of results are fully described in the project risk log, based on comprehensive analysis drawing on the programme's theory of change, Social and Environmental Standards and screening, situation analysis, capacity assessments and other analysis such as funding potential and reputational risk. Risks have been identified through a consultative process with key internal and external stakeholders. Clear and complete plan in place to manage and mitigate each risk, reflected in project budgeting and monitoring plans. <i>(both must be true)</i> • 2: Project risks related to the achievement of results are identified in the initial project risk log based on a minimum level of analysis and consultation, with mitigation measures identified for each risk. • 1: Some risks may be identified in the initial project risk log, but no evidence of consultation or analysis and no clear risk mitigation measures identified. This option is also selected if risks are not clearly identified and/or no initial risk log is included with the project document. *Note: Management Action must be taken for a score of 1	3	2
	1	
	Yes, the project is associated with an initial risk log based on a minimum level of analysis.	
	Evidence Please see pages # 42-50 of the ProDoc, the section related to Risk	

	Management (page 77) .	
EFFICIENT		
14. Have specific measures for ensuring cost-efficient use of resources been explicitly mentioned as part of the project design? This can include, for example: i) using the theory of change analysis to explore different options of achieving the maximum results with the resources available; ii) using a portfolio management approach to improve cost effectiveness through synergies with other interventions; iii) through joint operations (e.g., monitoring or procurement) with other partners; iv) sharing resources or coordinating delivery with other projects, v) using innovative approaches and technologies to reduce the cost of service delivery or other types of interventions. <i>(Note: Evidence of at least one measure must be provided to answer yes for this question)</i> <i>Please see pags # 39 of the ProDoc, the section related to Project Management clearly highlights the cost efficiency and effectiveness.</i>	Yes (3)	No (1)
15. Is the budget justified and supported with valid estimates? 3: The project’s budget is at the activity level with funding sources, and is specified for the duration of the project period in a multi-year budget. Realistic resource mobilisation plans are in place to fill unfunded components. Costs are supported with valid estimates using benchmarks from similar projects or activities. Cost implications from inflation and foreign exchange exposure have been estimated and incorporated in the budget. Adequate costs for monitoring, evaluation, communications and security have been incorporated. 2: The project’s budget is at the activity level with funding sources, when possible, and is specified for the duration of the project in a multi-year budget, but no funding plan is in place. Costs are supported with valid estimates based on prevailing rates. 1: The project’s budget is not specified at the activity level, and/or may not be captured in a multi-year budget.	3	2
	1	
	Yes, the project budget is well defined for activities, and with fund resources and duration of the project.	
	Evidence Please see the attached project AWP and the Clearing Slip from the relevant units, including the Programme Finance. Pages 67-74	
16. Is the Country Office/Regional Hub/Global Project fully recovering the costs involved with project implementation? 3: The budget fully covers all project costs that are attributable to the project, including programme management and development effectiveness services related to strategic country programme planning, quality assurance, pipeline development, policy advocacy services, finance, procurement, human resources, administration, issuance of contracts, security, travel, assets, general services, information and communications based on full costing in accordance with prevailing UNDP policies (i.e., UPL, LPL.)	3	2
	1	
	Yes, the AWP budget section covers the costs for DEU, Policy, Programme	

• 2: The budget covers significant project costs that are attributable to the project based on prevailing UNDP policies (i.e., UPL, LPL) as relevant. • 1: The budget does not adequately cover project costs that are attributable to the project, and UNDP is cross-subsidizing the project. *Note: Management Action must be given for a score of 1. The budget must be revised to fully reflect the costs of implementation before the project commences.	Finance, quality assurance, security, operations, etc.	
	Evidence Please see the AWP the (GMS and DPC) related costs are reflected in the AWP.	
	Pages 67-74	
EFFECTIVE		
17. Have targeted groups been engaged in the design of the project? • 3: Credible evidence that all targeted groups, prioritising discriminated and marginalized populations that will be involved in or affected by the project, have been actively engaged in the design of the project. The project has an explicit strategy to identify, engage and ensure the meaningful participation of target groups as stakeholders throughout the project, including through monitoring and decision-making (e.g., representation on the project board, inclusion in samples for evaluations, etc.) • 2: Some evidence that key targeted groups have been consulted in the design of the project. • 1: No evidence of engagement with targeted groups during project design.	3	2
	1	
	Yes, consultations took place with targeted groups, including women, youth, vulnerable groups, CSOs and community-based institutions, who are engaged in the project's design stage. In addition to lessons learned. Evidence Please see the Stakeholder Engagement Section of the ProDoc (page 37)	
18. Does the project plan for adaptation and course correction if regular monitoring activities, evaluation, and lessons learned demonstrate there are better approaches to achieve the intended results and/or circumstances change during implementation?	Yes (3)	No (1)
19. The gender marker for all project outputs are scored at GEN2 or GEN3, indicating that gender has been fully mainstreamed into all project outputs at a minimum. Output 1 and 3 will have achieved GEN1, Output 2 will achieve GEN2, and Output 4 (4.2) result will achieve GEN3 rating.*Note: Management Action or strong management justification must be given for a score of “no”	Yes (3)	No (1)
	Evidence Programme Result framework (51 to 63) and	
Also refer to results 2.3, and 4.2		

		Partnership pages 32- 33	
SUSTAINABILITY & NATIONAL OWNERSHIP			
20. Have national/regional/global partners led, or proactively engaged in, the design of the project? • <u>3</u> : National partners (or regional/global partners for regional and global projects) have full ownership of the project and led the process of the development of the project jointly with UNDP. • <u>2</u> : The project has been developed by UNDP in close consultation with national/regional/global partners. • <u>1</u> : The project has been developed by UNDP with limited or no engagement with national partners.	3	2	
	1		
	This project has been designed closely with national partners such as NGOs, INGOs, CSOs and other UN agencies. Evidence Please see the section on Partnerships on pages #321- 33 of the ProDoc.		
21. Are key institutions and systems identified, and is there a strategy for strengthening specific/ comprehensive capacities based on capacity assessments conducted? • <u>3</u> : The project has a strategy for strengthening specific capacities of national institutions and/or actors based on a completed capacity assessment. This strategy includes an approach to regularly monitor national capacities using clear indicators and rigorous methods of data collection, and adjust the strategy to strengthen national capacities accordingly. • <u>2</u> : A capacity assessment has been completed. There are plans to develop a strategy to strengthen specific capacities of national institutions and/or actors based on the results of the capacity assessment. • <u>1</u> : Capacity assessments have not been carried out.	3	2	
	1		
	The project has experience in the implementation of ABADEI PIP (phase 1) and has lessons learnt, in addition to conducting a rating of partners' capacity to deliver. (Page 20, M&E framework) Evidence.		
22. Is there is a clear strategy embedded in the project specifying how the project will use national systems (i.e., procurement, monitoring, evaluations, etc.,) to the extent possible? Since it is a DIM method, there is no national system.	Yes (3)	No (1)	

23. Is there a clear transition arrangement/ phase-out plan developed with key stakeholders in order to sustain or scale up results (including resource mobilisation and communications strategy)?

Yes, the project will work closely with those service provider agencies covering health, social services, employment training, essential basic services, and those supporting returnees and IDPs or women-specific services, to improve sustainability and provide a scaling-up mechanism. There are specific interventions dedicated in Outcome 4 – such as working with CDCs and developing eight Territorial Plans.

Yes (3)

No (1)