

SDGs Plus Programme 2023-2028

B0424 - Pakistan - Islamabad

REPORTING PERIOD 2023- 2028

Narrative

REPORT DATE: 25-05-2026

1. Executive Summary

2. Background

3. Key Results Achieved

- **Level of Reporting:**

Output level results

Project Outputs:

Public and private financing for development structured, identifying and channeling resources to reduce development financing gap focus

Contributing Outcomes:

Outcome 1 By 2027, the people in Pakistan, especially women, children, the most vulnerable and marginalized, have increased access to fundamental rights, gender equality and fundamental freedom through inclusive, accountable, effective and evidence-driven governance systems and rule-of-law institutions at all levels of government, contributing to good governance and stability

Contributing Outputs:

PAK_OUTPUT_1.3 Public and private financing and investment mechanisms mobilized for climate solutions and achievement of the SDGs

Progress Note:

Facilitating public and private sector for mobilizing SDGs investments to fill development finance gaps for SDGs is a critical component of the second-generation SDGs Plus programme. [E35]. To support the Govt. of Pakistan on public finance and debt management, UNDP established a Debt Management Lab at the Economic Affairs Division (EAD) to bolster EAD's systems and capacity for debt management and financial resilience [E42]. Similarly, in provinces, the respective SDGs units provided technical support on different aspects of public finance resilience. The Punjab SDG Unit organized a 5-day training session on 'Price Inflation' aimed to build the capacity of the Bureau of Statistics (BoS), Government of Punjab to compute provincial level inflation and relevant

indices [E40]. The AJK SDG Unit undertook expenditure tracking analysis of the Annual Development Plan (ADP) 2016-17 to 2021-22 for SDGs. The ADP 2021-22 and ADP 2022-23 Schemes have also been tagged with SDG Codes and printed in the final ADP document 2021-22 and 2022-23. The unit has carried an analysis of recurring and capital expenditures of GoAJ&K for the last three years [E41]. To promote private sector investments, UNDP supported the Government of Pakistan to produce Pakistan's first SDG Investor Map 2023 [E5] and prepared Pakistan SDG aligned portfolio of worth USD 2.8 billion that was launched at UNDESA SDG Investment Fair held in April 2023 in New York along with SDG Investor Map 2023 [E43]. Similarly in provinces, the SDG Unit Sindh provided technical support to the Government of Sindh in preparing a report on engagement strategy with the private sector including an initial approach, a methodology to engage public/private sector, and possible collaborations [E36]. The GB SDG unit developed a GB Prioritization Framework where district level SDG priorities and budgetary needs have been highlighted. The potential areas for public private partnership and public community partnership have also been outlined. The SDG units also hosted panel discussions and collaborated on events such as Tomorrow's Trailblazers: Youth Skills for a Changing World Event including panel discussions by private sector on future skills in social, environmental, and other fields and presentations by young entrepreneurs [E38]. A collaborative event with Institute of Business Management (IBM) was also organized by the unit to develop an SDG action plan and collect insights on SDGs implementation [E39]. The project's resource mobilization efforts helped UNDP mobilize USD 50,000 from UNESCAP for public sector capacity building for Integrated National Financing Framework for Pakistan [E44]. It is also collaborating with UNDESA to mobilize USD 45,000 to conduct feasibility studies and capacity development for SDG aligned projects for UNDESA SDG Investment Fair Pakistan presentation [E45]. UNDP has also collaborated with JS Bank financing for Climate Resilience Challenge Cup amounting 345,000 for which an MOU is being drafted [E9]. Currently, to facilitate the Government of Sindh, the SDG Investments and Climate Financing Facility is developing a pitchbook worth USD 2 billion for flood response projects [E46].

- **Level of Reporting:**

Output level results

Project Outputs:

Improved governance for SDGs aligned equitable and inclusive development planning, budgeting, expenditure tracking, monitoring, and reporting, with a special focus on underdeveloped / marginalized districts to achieve regional equalization

Contributing Outcomes:

Outcome 1 By 2027, the people in Pakistan, especially women, children, the most vulnerable and marginalized, have increased access to fundamental rights, gender equality and fundamental freedom through inclusive, accountable, effective and evidence-driven

governance systems and rule-of-law institutions at all levels of government, contributing to good governance and stability

Contributing Outputs:

PAK_OUTPUT_1.1 Open, agile, accountable and future-ready governance institutions and systems in place to co-create and deliver solutions to accelerate transparent and equitable service delivery and SDG achievement

Progress Note:

The SDG units provided technical support to the provincial governments on SDGs localization. The Punjab SDG unit drafted the Punjab Integrated Financing Strategy [E14]. The Punjab SDG unit also hosted a policy dialogue in Islamabad covering thematic presentations by UNDP and P&D Punjab envisioning a roadmap on climate change, population growth, and inclusive development highlighting synergies and the way forward for leveraging partnerships around SDGs in Punjab [E29]. UNDP supported Government of Punjab's South Punjab Secretariat in producing district profiles, South Punjab socio-economic baseline profile, and supported the preparation of the first South Punjab Regional Development Plan, to be launched in 2024 [E3]. In Sindh, the SDG unit undertook advocacy and outreach for SDGs focusing on private sector collaboration [E11] and prepared an IEC booklet for SDGs indicators [E25]. It also undertook financial/budgetary review and optimization for SDGs project in Sindh [E26]. In Balochistan, Acceleration Implementation Plan (AIP) was drafted for supporting the Government of Balochistan in identifying bottlenecks and accelerators for achieving the SDGs [E13]. The SDG unit prepared a survey plan for the SDG indicators that have not been covered in the existing survey and administrative data sets [E12]. The Balochistan SDG unit partnered with the Balochistan Bureau of Statistics on developing a SDG dashboard for automating Balochistan Bureau of Statistics yearbook data and identify the status of the SDG indicators [E27]. The unit also undertook a local government capacity building training for Nushki and Killa Abdullah districts [E28]. Gilgit-Baltistan (GB) aligned Annual Development Programmes for the year 2023-2024 with SDGs. The unit is also preparing a comprehensive five-year mapping report evaluating budget allocations and their utilization Gilgit-Baltistan SDG Priority Framework [E15]. The unit also established district level SDG scorecards for the ten districts of the region [E16]. A GB Data Gap Report has also been prepared to strengthen reporting on SDGs [E17] and [E18]. Similarly, at Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK), the AJK SDGs Index [E19] and also the AJK SDG District Scorecard have been developed [E20] and [E21] and the SDGs thematic clusters and also undertook an analysis of AJK ADP 2021-23 and its mapping with SDGs [E22]. The AJK unit subsequently trained 50 government officials on SDGs checklist included in PC-1. Responding to the 2022 floods that impacted Sindh and Balochistan the most, the Sindh and Balochistan SDGs unit provided technical support to the Government on a flood response plan [E23] and [E24]. In 2023, UNDP supported the Government of Pakistan in its efforts towards regional equalization and developed 20 district development plans for the 20 most impoverished districts of Pakistan including 11 in Balochistan, 5 in Sindh, 3 in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, and 1 in Punjab with the goal to reduce regional disparities,

strengthen national integration, and foster inclusive and equitable development [E2]. Separately, the SDGs Investment Facility also conducted a value-chain analysis and developed blended finance proposals for selected districts from 20 poorest districts of Pakistan [E30]. The Facility developed structure of the social impact bond as an innovative financing model for SDGs financing [E31]. In terms of advocacy for the SDGs, the Punjab SDG unit initiated an integrated digital media campaign which aims at maximizing awareness of development issues and reforms [E32]. Similarly, the Balochistan SDG unit produced and disseminated SDG knowledge products among key stakeholders [E33].

- **Level of Reporting:**

Output level results

Project Outputs:

Gender equality, inclusion, innovation and digital transformation mainstreamed in SDGs to achieve Leave No One Behind

Contributing Outcomes:

Outcome 4 By 2027, more women and girls at greatest risk of being left behind are able to benefit from and contribute to an environment in which they are empowered to exercise their fundamental rights, agency and decision-making power over all aspects, towards lives free from all forms of discrimination, violence and harmful practices.

Contributing Outputs:

PAK_OUTPUT_4.1 Empowerment of women, girls, transgender persons and vulnerable and institutional leadership is promoted through gender responsive policies, programmes, strategies and instruments through the provision of public and private financing and institutional development and strengthening.

Progress Note:

The SDG units in Balochistan and Sindh facilitated the training consultation on gender mainstreaming delivered by UNDP Senior Gender Advisor, Dr. Farzana Bari gender including inclusive methodologies, SDG project cycle alignment, & institutional gender responsiveness. It was attended by senior and mid-level government officials [E10]. With support from UNDP and National Commission on the Status of Women (NCSW), the Balochistan SDG unit hosted a consultative session on “Gender Digital Divide in Pakistan” including CSOs, the private sector, and academia to discuss and explore how the country can move beyond Pakistan’s gendered digital divide and leverage digital transformation as a tool for sustainable growth [E47]. The unit also participated in the SDG Bootcamps organized with collaboration between Jazz and UNDP at the university of Balochistan. There were three bootcamps held in Quetta and Lasbela attended by 40 young women entrepreneurs [E48]. The Head of sub-office, Balochistan on SDG delivered a lecture on

SDGs and gender equality to the government officers attending Mid-Career Management Course (MCMC) organized by Balochistan Civil Services Academy [E49]. The SDG Sindh unit developed the Management Information System (MIS) platform which employs analytical tools to study data trends, aid in decision making, and generate evidence-based reports and policies to address gender disparities. In this context, the unit hired a MIS consultant to foster gender equality, empower women, and facilitate comprehensive socio-economic development in the area. The MIS consultant will facilitate the utilization of a comprehensive platform in Sindh for analyzing and monitoring gender-based data and progress [E50]. The Punjab SDG unit delivered a presentation at the Women Development Department regarding the progress on SDG, gender disaggregated data gaps, and data monitoring and reporting mechanism. Attendees from the provincial line departments examined the incorporation of SDGs into Punjab's development policies, plans, challenges, and future strategies aimed at promoting sustainable development in Punjab [E51]. The Balochistan unit also supported Balochistan University of Information Technology, Engineering, and Management Sciences (BUIITEMS) for annual job fair 2023 to enhance students career prospects through job placements [E53]. The GB and Punjab SDG units conducted the Innovation Challenge Cups to promote youth entrepreneurship in the regions. The Challenge Cup was culminated with a multistakeholder conference where the winners of the Challenge Cups showcased/pitched their prototypes/products to the private sector [E54]. The SDG units in Sindh, Balochistan, Punjab, KP, GB, and AJK were able to facilitate and organize Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) and Key Informative Interviews (KIIs) for the NHDR team including interactions and consultations with the provincial government, industry leadership, sector specialists, youth, academia, community, and religious minorities representatives to discuss digital development portfolio in the provinces and policy solutions for better data generation and integration across government departments and industries [E55]. Under the programme, UNDP was able to develop structure of the dashboard (Talk to Transact Tool) for project screening on SDG, ESG, and financial lenses for investments. It is designed to evaluate and assess the proposed project and will act as a benchmark against industrial standards [E56].

- **Level of Reporting:**

Project level results

Contributing Outcomes:

Contributing Outputs:

Progress Note:

CPD Output 4.1: Empowerment of women, girls, transgender persons and vulnerable groups; Institutional leadership promoted through gender-responsive policies, programmes, strategies & instruments; Provision of public & private financing; Institutional development & strengthening. In continuation of project work in 2022, providing technical assistance, evidence-based analysis and capacity building, the project continued to build capacities of federal and provincial governments on gender

mainstreaming. The SDG units in provinces of Sindh and Balochistan, organized trainings focused on gender mainstreaming for senior and mid-level government officials [E10]. [E10] Gender Mainstreaming Training • Gender Mainstreaming Training in Quetta, Balochistan https://twitter.com/UNDP_Pakistan/status/1625689036122910720 • Gender Mainstreaming Training in Karachi, Sindh <https://twitter.com/SindhSDGsUnit/status/1638854639499214849>

- **Level of Reporting:**

Project level results

Contributing Outcomes:

Contributing Outputs:

Progress Note:

CPD Output 1.1 Open, agile, accountable and future-ready governance institutions and systems in place to co-create and deliver solutions to accelerate transparent and equitable service delivery and SDG achievement. The programme has continued to leverage its integrator role on SDGs localization. UNDP in collaboration with UNRCO produced Pakistan's SDGs Integrated Insights Report which was launched on 13th September at a high-level event at UNHQ New York [E1]. UNDP has also provided technical support to the Government of Pakistan in profiling the least developed districts in preparation of data-driven District Development Plans and establishing the Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) Framework for 20 poorest districts with the aim of regional equalization [E2]. In the same context, UNDP also supported Government of Punjab's South Punjab Secretariat in producing district profiles, South Punjab socio-economic baseline profile, and supported the preparation of the first South Punjab Regional Development Plan which is to be launched in 2024 [E3]. All UNDP supported SDG units have been providing continuous support to their respective governments with SDGs aligned policymaking, integrated SDGs into existing and newly established government structures, their operationalization, and sustained coordination to accelerate the implementation of the SDGs and its localization.

- **Level of Reporting:**

Project level results

Contributing Outcomes:

Contributing Outputs:

Progress Note:

CPD Output 1.3 (IRRF E.3). Public and private financing and investment mechanisms mobilized for climate solutions and achievement of the SDGs Under the programme, the

SDG Investments and Climate Financing Facility, a joint collaboration between the Government of Pakistan and Ministry of Finance launched Pakistan's first ever SDG Investor Map for investors, private sector, and government. The investor map is an intelligence tool which identifies a range of investment opportunities and converts the national SDG needs, government policy priorities, and commitments into actionable opportunity areas for investment. The map plays a crucial role in narrowing the development financing gap, aiding the national financing framework, attracting private capital for addressing post-pandemic and natural disaster-related development requirements, and expediting the attainment of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) [E5]. The programme also launched and disseminated a policy brief on "Greening the Financial System of Pakistan" which highlights the ways Pakistan's National Determined Contributions (NDC) can be achieved under the Paris Agreement. It focuses on tapping blended climate financing facilities for international sources and provides policy measures by multi-stakeholders including ministries, banks, and regulators for a transition towards a green financial system [E6]. There were multiple capacity building initiatives undertaken within the programme including a seminar on 'Pakistan Islamic Financing Landscape: Financial Resilience and Sustainability' in partnership with National Institute of Banking and Finance (NIBAF), State Bank of Pakistan where multiple stakeholders carried policy discussions on bridging the SDG financing gap through Islamic finance. The seminar also brought forth recommendations on bridging the SDG funding gap through the deployment of innovative Islamic finance instruments [E7 - https://twitter.com/UNDP_Pakistan/status/1709195726247616580]. The SDG Investments and Climate Financing Facility has also mobilized USD 500,000 BMZ funding for Disaster Insurance and Risk Financing for 2 years to develop an eco-system on disaster insurance and risk financing including activities around evidence-based analysis, capacity building, and undertaking pilot interventions [E8]. UNDP also secured commitment from the JS Bank to partner and facilitate UNDP's initiatives on promoting private sector investments for bankable SDG-aligned climate resilient projects [E9].

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4. Key Challenges Encountered

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5. Project Risks and Issues

The design of project activities will continuously envisage and track political, social, economic, security and environmental developments with potential to adversely impact program implementation. UNDP will apply its rights-based, social, and environmental screening standards and principles to identify and manage the risks. Major risks for the implementation of this project include: Political Risks Policy shifts affecting the development agenda due to political transition expected during and after the 2023 elections which may lead to a change in the nature of support demanded from UNDP. This will be mitigated by securing parliamentary buy-in and strengthening partnership with federal, provincial, and regional governments. Financial Risks Mobilizing sufficient resources for SDGs- The project envisages the Government of Pakistan as one of the financier. Hence, project implementation shall depend on the timely release of resources from the government. Previously, the release of government tranche was delayed due to financial constraints and changing government priorities. Similarly, the same is expected to be experienced during the second phase of the project, hampering the implementation of the project activities, impacting the timelines, requiring no-cost extensions, and forcing cost-overruns. Strategic Risks Continued government and non-government stakeholders' engagement on SDGs- The project is heavily dependent on the buy-in and ownership of the Government. The first phase of the project reflected complete government buy-in with the adoption of SDGs as national agenda. Any change in this, either due to political uncertainty, change of government or focal persons will result in weak delivery of the project. Similarly, government ownership of the project products will be contingent upon their alignment with national priorities and government's narrative. Any deviation may impact government refusal to endorse UNDP products, hence compromising project implementation. Besides, considering SDGs is very broad agenda that involves multiple stakeholders, there is an additional risk that excluding stakeholders will create problems for project's smooth implementation. Social and Environment Inclusion of women, girls, transgenders and other vulnerable groups and least developed areas/regions - SDGs achievement is contingent on engaging women and marginalised groups and ensuring that all geographical region/areas are engaged/included in development process. Exclusion of any particular group from decision making or project implementation have repercussions on successful implementation of the project, especially from the lens of 'leaving no one behind'. Safety and Security Implications of COVID-19 and the 2022 Floods- Covid-19 had adverse impact on the implementation of the project during the last two years and the risk of any new variant of Covid-19 or its surge may further delay its implementation. Moreover, there is a high risk that 2022 floods will have devastating impact on Pakistan's progress to achieve SDGs by 2030. However, UNDP will continue accessing the impact and adjust program strategies according to the emerging needs of the affected population. UNDP will also assess the risks to programme and its staff located in Islamabad, four provinces, AJK and GB. Security issues related to public events, activities, travel, and local or international staff will be evaluated systematically and on a case-by-case basis.

6. Lessons Learned

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7. Conclusions and Way Forward

1. Upgrade and Strengthen Data Eco-system for policymaking and evidence-based decision making by creating platforms to streamline periodic and real-time bottom-up progress, monitoring, and reporting. SDG Plus Programme will facilitate national and provincial government to develop integrated systems for data governance, analytics, leveraging data innovations into actionable measures, policy structures and mechanisms for coordination among stakeholders for better tracking of SDG targets and indicators, knowledge exchange programs, and capacities of national and sub-national data stakeholders in data collection and undertaking research in new technologies.

2. UNDP's SDG Plus will continue to facilitate the federal and provincial government for implementation of MoPD&SI's umbrella programme of the 20 poor districts envisaged to alleviate extreme poverty in the least developed districts/areas selected. It will facilitate in federal government and relevant provincial/regional governments for developing effective data, policy, and coordination mechanisms for designing and implementation of the government's umbrella programme. The SDG Plus programme will remain flexible and responsible to the emerging needs and priorities of government's umbrella programme for least developed districts.

3. The SDG Plus will continue its facilitation in enabling policy environment, technical capacities, and partnerships to mobilize and leverage public and private financing for development aligned with SDGs necessity for Pakistan's sustained and inclusive economic stability and growth. It will facilitate mobilization of private sector financing for SDGs and climate resilience through a mix of instruments, including blended finance models, instruments, investments, and piloting / scaling of public-private financing initiatives.

4. Leveraging UNDP's global Digital Strategy 2020-2025, National Human Development Report 2024 on Digital Transformation as well as cross-UNDP and cross-UN digital transformation and innovation programming pilots and partnerships, the SDGs Plus will strengthen the emerging digital social contract of Pakistan by developing e-governance policy research and solutions; building capacities; and increasing access to connectivity for e-service delivery.

5. Building Partnerships including federal and provincial ministries and line departments, parliamentary and policy institutions and representatives, development partners, CSOs, academia, thinktanks, media, and the private sector. In line with UNDP's SDG integrator role, the programme will strengthen its existing partnership platforms to coordinate with initiatives of different stakeholders working across SDGs.

8. Other Reporting Requirements

- No items to display.

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