



**Independent evaluation of 2030 Agenda for
Sustainable Development Sub-Fund Project**
*“Integrated Policy Strategies and Regional Policy
Coordination for Resilient, Green and Transformative
Development: Supporting Selected Asian BRI Partner
Countries to Achieve 2030 Sustainable Development
Agenda”*

June 2026

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List of Acronyms and Abbreviations

Acronym/abbreviation	Meaning/definition
ADB	Asian Development Bank
AGDPN	Asian Green Development Partnership Network
ASEAN	Association of Southeast Asian Nations
BRI	Belt and Road Initiative
CACF	Central Asia Climate Foundation / Project Office for Central Asia on Climate Change and Green Energy
CCAs	Common Country Analyses
COP28	28th Conference of the Parties (UN climate conference)
COVID-19	Coronavirus Disease 2019
DGDS	Division on Globalization and Development Strategies
ECIDC	Economic Cooperation and Integration among Developing Countries Unit
EQ	Evaluation Question
ETIN	Transformative Innovation Network (UNECE)
ETS	Emissions Trading System
EVs	Electric vehicles
G20	Group of Twenty
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GHG	Greenhouse gas(es)
GIZ	German Agency for International Cooperation (Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit)
HQ	Headquarters
KRI	Khazanah Research Institute (Malaysia)
LNOB	Leaving no one behind
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MOPAN	Multilateral Organisation Performance Assessment Network
NDC	Nationally Determined Contribution
NIMP	New Industrial Master Plan 2030
OECD-DAC	The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) Development Assistance Committee (DAC)
PM	Prime Minister
PVC	Polyvinyl chloride
R&D	Research and development
RC	Resident Coordinator
RCO	Resident Coordinator's Office
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
SMEs	Small and medium-sized enterprises
SPRC	Social Policy Research Centre (Pakistan)
STI	Science, Technology and Innovation
STIxNET	UNCTAD network focused on Science, Technology and Innovation (STI)
SubF	Sub-Fund (2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development Sub-Fund)
ToR	Terms of Reference

UN	United Nations
UNCT	UN Country Team
UNCTAD	United Nations Conference on Trade and Development
UNDA	United Nations Development Account
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNECE	United Nations Economic Commission for Europe
UNEG	United Nations Evaluation Group
UNESCAP	United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific
UNIDO	United Nations Industrial Development Organization
UNSDCF	United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework
US	United States (used in the report as US\$)
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
XB	Extrabudgetary (resources/funding)

Executive summary

Project overview: UNCTAD implemented the project "Integrated Policy Strategies and Regional Policy Coordination for Resilient, Green and Transformative Development: Supporting Selected Asian BRI Partner Countries to Achieve 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda" (project code: TKBG, hereinafter "the Project") from January 2022 to September 2025, with an approved allocation of US\$1,198,400, to support Kazakhstan, Malaysia, Pakistan, and Türkiye in advancing 2030 Agenda-aligned green, resilient structural transformation. It combined country diagnostics and integrated policy strategy reports with national consultations/workshops and regional exchanges, drawing on South-South learning from the outset, starting with China. It reported the participation of 742 stakeholders across activities¹, alongside planned sustainability elements such as an online course and a regional partnership/network mechanism.

Evaluation purpose, objectives, scope, and intended users/audiences: This independent final evaluation assessed the project's performance against OECD-DAC criteria (relevance, coherence, efficiency, effectiveness, sustainability) and the mainstreaming of cross-cutting issues (gender equality, disability inclusion, leaving no one behind principles, and environmental sustainability). The evaluation aimed to provide accountability to the 2030 Agenda Sub-Fund and UNCTAD management while generating lessons learned to inform future project design and implementation. Primary intended users include the Sub-Fund Steering Committee, UNCTAD's Economic Cooperation and Integration among Developing Countries Unit, UNCTAD management, and project implementing partners. The evaluation covered the entire project period (January 2022 – September 2025) across all four beneficiary countries, examining the full scope of project activities, including research outputs, national consultations, regional conferences, capacity building initiatives, and sustainability mechanisms. Key evaluation questions addressed the project's alignment with UNCTAD's mandate and country priorities, achievement of planned objectives, implementation efficiency, policy influence, sustainability prospects, and integration of cross-cutting principles.

Evaluation methodology: The evaluation used a mixed-methods triangulation approach that combined document review, key informant interviews, an online survey, and direct observation, including participation in the final project workshop in Shanghai in July 2025 and an in-person meeting with the project team in Geneva. 69 stakeholders participated in the evaluation (40.8% female, 58% male, and 1.2% not specified), including 57 in the online survey (11.4% response rate) and 12 in interviews.

¹ The stakeholder contact list shared with the evaluator contained 552 entries. All contacts were invited to participate in an online evaluation survey. Of these, 53 emails bounced, leaving a final survey universe of 499 stakeholders. A total of 57 responses were received, corresponding to a response rate of 11.4%.

Key findings: The evaluation's key findings are depicted in the SWOT analysis below, highlighting the project's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats, while maintaining links to the evaluation criteria.



STRENGTHS

- **Strong strategic alignment** and substantive credibility: Relevance, clear alignment to SDG 9 & 13; strong fit with UNCTAD's comparative advantages (e.g., trade-development-environment nexus)
- **High-quality knowledge products + convening power:** Excellent research, knowledge products, and consultations created a credible "analytical backbone" and meaningful multi-stakeholder dialogue at scale
- **Evidence of policy traction** where access/demand existed. Pakistan: inputs embedded in a national trade policy framework; Malaysia: spillovers to sectoral/climate-finance discussions), Kazakhstan (high participation and development-partner coordination).



WEAKNESSES

- **The approach to project design and country selection** reduced demand pull and the consistency of uptake.
- **Efficiency gaps:**
 - The **implementation architecture** was not resilient.
 - **Schedule slippage and late delivery pressure.**
 - **Room for improvement in UN-system coordination**, missing chances to amplify and de-risk work.
- **Most sustainability mechanisms under-delivered:** Network (AGDPN) and platform were launched/prepared but remained non-operational; resource mobilization did not generate follow-on support.



OPPORTUNITIES

- **Online course:** Ready-made scaling vehicle - codifies project learning and can be offered beyond the initial countries with relatively low marginal cost.
- **"Network strategy 2.0":** link stakeholders into established mechanisms such as UNECE's Transformative Innovation Network (ETIN) and UNCTAD's STixNET –preserving partnership gains while avoiding network fragmentation.
- **Future projects:** formal ties to UNSDCF/CCA processes and Resident Coordinator structures to increase legitimacy, reduce duplication.



THREATS

- **Sustainability mechanisms risk:** project benefits and policy influence may dissipate once external support ends, undermining long-term impact.
- **Managing expectations:** without active facilitation and clear value-added of newly established networks, engagement can drop and reputational risk rises for UNCTAD.

Conclusions

Excellence in technical substance requires pairing with strong implementation architecture and equity integration. The project produced high-quality research, facilitated meaningful dialogue, and achieved policy influence in some contexts, demonstrating UNCTAD's substantive expertise. Yet it struggled with potential implementation challenges (fluctuations in staffing, delivery delays, sustainability gaps) and did not systematically integrate UN cross-cutting issues beyond environmental sustainability.

Country-level outcomes varied. In Pakistan and Malaysia, engagement with national counterparts was strong and project outputs were taken up in policy and planning processes. In Türkiye and Kazakhstan, while the outputs were delivered, uptake was more limited due to competing national priorities and constrained institutional capacity. These differences highlight the importance of early and sustained stakeholder commitment, as well as alignment with country-specific policy cycles.

The pattern reveals that **technical excellence is necessary but not sufficient**: projects also require robust operational design, resilient management structures, adequate resourcing of sustainability mechanisms, and intentional integration of equity commitments from inception, not as afterthoughts during implementation and reporting.

Main lesson learned: Projects need both substantive excellence **and** strategic positioning, operational resilience, and genuine demand from policymakers and decision-makers to achieve lasting policy influence.

Recommendations

Based on the evaluation's key findings, and conclusions, the following recommendations are addressed to UNCTAD:

Recommendation 1: Make country selection and scoping explicitly demand-led and confirm stakeholders' engagement and understanding of the project's deliverables and timeline before committing resources. Clarity is needed especially on the specific policy problem being addressed, the intended use of the outputs, the roles and responsibilities of participating institutions, the focal points, and the decision window in which findings are expected to inform action. Articulate the country-level uptake pathway as part of the project's Theory of Change. This upfront alignment helps ensure that support is timely, relevant, and positioned to influence concrete policy processes rather than remaining analytical in nature.

Recommendation 2: Use existing regional/thematic platforms for information sharing and convening stakeholders wherever possible, rather than creating parallel networks that are hard to sustain or politically sensitive. Design new networks only when there is a clear niche, governance, and long-term facilitation capacity. With AGDPN, if active facilitation cannot be secured, position the platform explicitly as a knowledge repository and connect participants to

functioning communities of practice instead (existing regional and thematic networks facilitated by UNCTAD, UNECE or other UN entities, for example, ETIN or STIxNET).

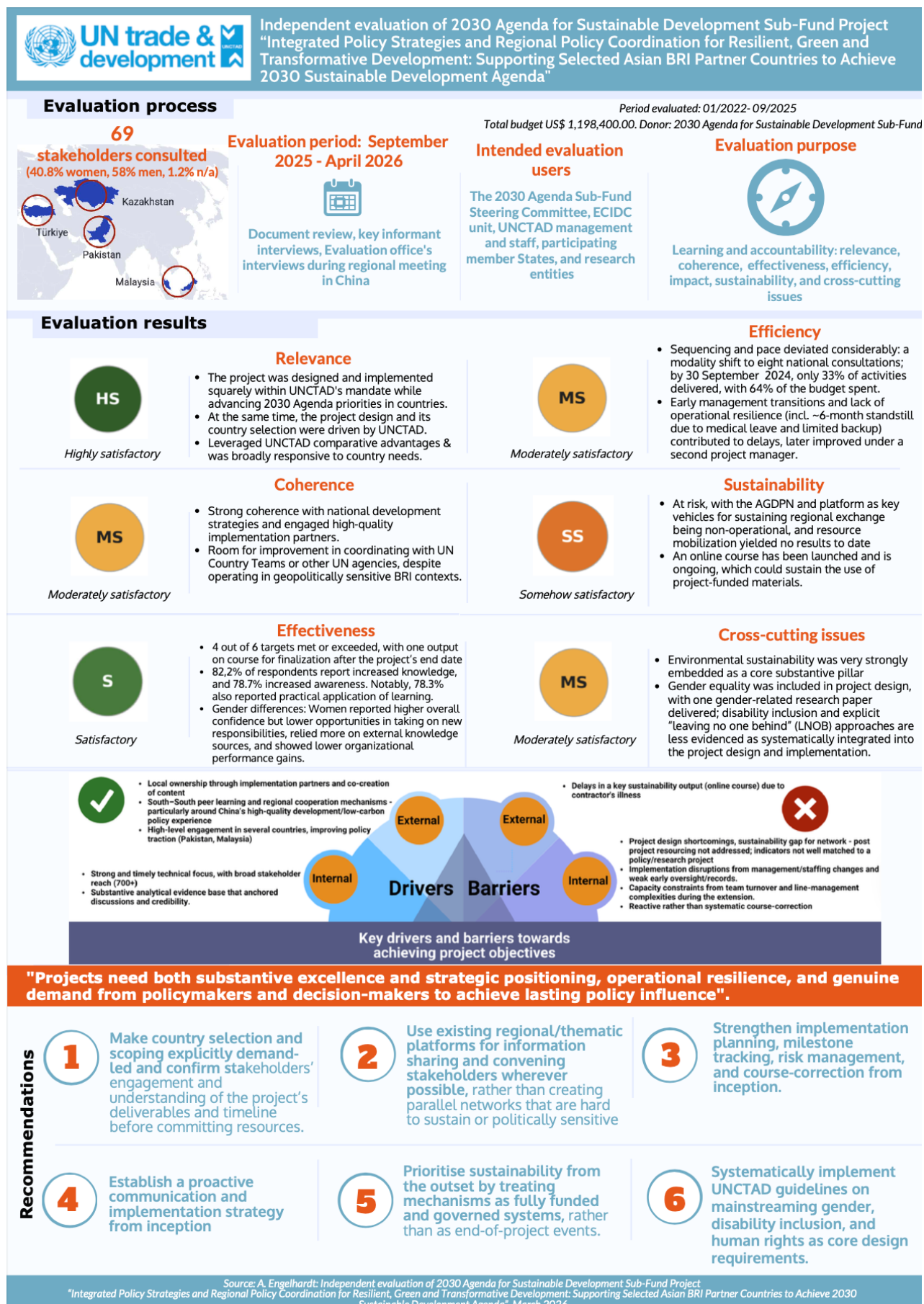
Recommendation 3: Strengthen implementation planning, milestone tracking, risk management, and course-correction from inception. Use the results framework as a live management tool, review risks regularly, and establish escalation procedures for delayed critical-path outputs.

Recommendation 4: Establish a proactive communication and implementation strategy from inception. Bridge the gap between research and action by ensuring that every analytical product is delivered in a format that supports concrete decisions and is followed by structured engagement. Rather than producing stand-alone reports, UNCTAD should provide integrated “Policy Packages” that combine a concise policy brief, a practical implementation roadmap, and clear financing options. After major consultations, the project should also organize dedicated “Policy Clinics” to work directly with counterpart ministries to turn recommendations into draft measures, concept notes, or specific regulatory language ready for consideration.

Recommendation 5: Prioritise sustainability from the outset by treating mechanisms as fully funded and governed systems, rather than as end-of-project events. Before launching any platform or network, especially where no similar structures exist, ensure it has an institutional home, a minimum resourcing plan, and a concrete sustainability plan that outlines how results will be maintained over time. The project plan should also include clear and varied measures such as early resource mobilization, ongoing partner engagement, integration into existing institutional structures, capacity-building for local ownership, and mechanisms to sustain results over time.

Recommendation 6: Systematically implement UNCTAD guidelines on mainstreaming gender, disability inclusion, and human rights as core design and implementation requirements. UNCTAD must shift from “participation-by-default” to a “by-design” approach by treating gender equality, disability inclusion, and the “leaving no one behind” (LNOB) principle as fundamental project requirements rather than optional targets. Specifically, these themes should be embedded directly into Terms of Reference (ToR) and the project’s results logic, supported by dedicated budget lines. Project design and oversight must require sex- and disability-disaggregated data, where available, and strict compliance with accessibility standards for all events and digital products.

Figure 1: Infographic summarizing the evaluation process and results



1. Introduction

This report presents the findings of the independent evaluation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development Sub-Fund Project “Integrated Policy Strategies and Regional Policy Coordination for Resilient, Green and Transformative Development: Supporting Selected Asian BRI Partner Countries to Achieve 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda”. UNCTAD’s Division on Globalization and Development Strategies (DGDS) implemented the project.

The report provides a project description, an overview of the evaluation approach, including objectives and scope, followed by the evaluation findings, conclusions, recommendations and related annexes.

2. Description of the Project

2.1 Background and Context

This summary is based on the original project document and subsequent progress reports, outlining the project background and its main objectives. The project sought to support four selected developing countries, Kazakhstan, Malaysia, Pakistan, and Türkiye, in advancing the 2030 Agenda. The selection of these countries was based on four primary criteria: their urgent need to manage both COVID-19 recovery and green transformation, and their established national development priorities, such as Kazakhstan’s green economy transition and Malaysia’s 12th Plan.

Furthermore, these countries were chosen because they are Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) partners, allowing the project to leverage existing network effects while ensuring broad geographical representation across the Asian region. Each country faces specific structural challenges in reaching the 2030 Agenda and currently lacks adequate regional policy coordination compared to more developed regions.

The COVID-19 pandemic exposed the acute vulnerabilities of developing economies, limiting their fiscal space and capacity to respond effectively, while climate change has intensified extreme weather events and placed unprecedented pressure on development pathways. Together, these shocks risk slowing progress toward the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and even triggering a “lost decade” without stronger international cooperation.

Although Asia has made notable advances in growth, industrialization, and regional integration, significant structural challenges persist across all four project countries, particularly in transitioning to low-carbon, resilient, and inclusive growth. Compared with other regions, regional policy coordination remains relatively weak, increasing the cost and complexity of national efforts.

In this context, South-South peer learning is considered a critical tool. China’s experience with its High-Quality Development (HQD) framework, including its commitment to peak carbon emissions by 2030 and reach carbon neutrality by 2060, offers valuable lessons. Its integrated approach, spanning industrial, financial, trade, and innovation policies, demonstrates how resilience can be strengthened while advancing green transformation.

The project, therefore, aimed to help participating countries strengthen their policy frameworks, improve institutional capacities, and benefit from shared learning and regional cooperation. The project also intended to utilize existing United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Frameworks (UNSDCF) to help the countries overcome institutional gaps and implement the integrated policy strategies. The establishment of the Asian Green Development Partnership Network (AGDPN) was envisioned to anchor these efforts, creating cross-border synergies and ensuring that national and regional strategies contribute meaningfully to the global response to climate change and to the pursuit of the 2030 Agenda.

2.2 Project Objectives and Expected Results

Overall objective: Support selected Asian BRI partner countries (Kazakhstan, Malaysia, Pakistan, Türkiye) to advance SDGs related to resilient, green, and transformative development through: (i) strengthened capacities for integrated national policy strategies (including South-South peer learning), and (ii) enhanced regional economic cooperation and policy coordination.

Expected outcomes (project results framework):

1. **Improved understanding** among policymakers and policy researchers of (a) binding constraints to resilient, green, and transformative development in their countries, and (b) China's policy experience in strengthening economic resilience and advancing HQD.
2. **Enhanced national capacities** to formulate integrated development strategies for green structural transformation and resilience, and to foster dynamic regional cooperation, including trade.
3. **Establishment of the Asian Green Development Partnership Network (AGDPN)** to promote experience sharing, policy coordination, and regional economic cooperation (supported by an online platform to sustain collaboration beyond the project lifecycle)

2.3 Project Strategies and Key Activities

Phased Implementation Approach

To deliver these outcomes, the project was structured in three sequential phases:

- **Phase 1 – Research and Knowledge Gathering**
Conduct in-depth research on China's policy strategies for HQD to inform participating countries' policy formulation. This included reviewing relevant past project work to build synergies and avoid duplication.
- **Phase 2 – Country Diagnostics and Capacity Building**
Undertake diagnostic analyses for each project country to identify strengths and binding constraints. Support the design of tailored integrated policy strategies and provide consultation meetings and capacity-building activities to ensure uptake by policymakers and researchers.
- **Phase 3 – Regional Cooperation and Network Establishment**

Promote regional policy coordination on green development through the formal launch of the AGDPN, supported by an online platform to sustain collaboration and knowledge exchange beyond the project's lifespan.

Across phases, the project produced a substantial body of knowledge products (diagnostics, strategies, thematic papers), supported outreach/advocacy around events, and aimed to institutionalize continued collaboration through AGDPN and the course/platform.

2.4 Target Countries and Beneficiaries

Target countries: Kazakhstan, Malaysia, Pakistan, and Türkiye with an explicit **regional dimension** to foster broader Asian policy exchange and cooperation.

Primary beneficiary groups:

- Policymakers and technical officials at national and sub-national levels
- Policy researchers and academic institutions
- Civil society organizations
- Private sector representatives and related stakeholders

Direct participation reached through project events: The project convened **742 participants** across the four beneficiary countries, China, and additional Asian countries participating in regional exchanges; **42% (314) were women**, and **93% of participants were from beneficiary countries**. Participation included the primary beneficiary groups targeted, as stated in the final project reporting.

2.5 Key partners and other key stakeholders

Implementation relied on collaboration with national and regional partners to convene stakeholders, co-produce analytical inputs, and strengthen ownership and uptake. Key partners and stakeholders named in the project reporting include:

- **Kazakhstan:** National Bureau of Economic Research; Project Office of Central Asia on Climate Change and Green Energy / CACF
- **Malaysia:** Khazanah Research Institute
- **Pakistan:** Social Policy Resource Centre
- **Türkiye:** Istanbul Kadir Has University; Economic Policy Research Foundation of Türkiye (TEPAV); Sustainable Economics and Finance Association (SEFiA)
- **China / regional cooperation:** Chinese Academy of International Trade and Economic Cooperation (CAITEC) (co-hosting regional conferences)
- **UN system collaboration:** UNESCAP (noted in relation to the final regional meeting), UNDP China (financial administrative support to the regional meetings in China)².

Stakeholders engaged through consultations, and events also included high-level government officials (including ministerial/vice-ministerial participation in several countries), government-

² The project team cooperated with UN Country Offices in all four beneficiary countries, plus China, for procurement, payments and communications support. The project team also informed substantive colleagues in all UN Country Teams at an early stage about the project, but further collaboration also depended on the capacity/interest of the CT. The greatest substantive collaboration was with the UN in Kazakhstan.

linked think tanks, sector institutions, and other regional participants beyond the four beneficiary countries.

2.6 Resources

Timeframe: January 2022 – September 2025 (extended from the original December 2024 end date via a no-cost extension approved in July 2024).

Financial resources: The project operated with a budget envelope of approximately **US\$1.2 million** (with reporting formats noting a total budget inclusive of project support costs and no co-funding or mobilized resources).

The final reporting also indicates very high utilization (**99.8%** against funds received) and provides a breakdown of spending across major cost categories).

Human and institutional resources: Implementation was led by UNCTAD (Division on Globalization and Development Strategies), with designated project management and finance roles, and delivery supported by national implementing partners and subject-matter contributors, including national experts producing sector/thematic papers.

2.7 Link to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

The project explicitly targeted **SDGs 8, 9, 13 and 17**, aligning integrated policy strategies for structural transformation with climate action and partnership-building:

- **SDG 8:** sustainable economic growth and productive employment (via strategies for inclusive, resilient transformation).
- **SDG 9:** sustainable industrialization, innovation, and resilient infrastructure (via industrial/structural transformation policy focus).
- **SDG 13:** climate action (via mitigation/adaptation-compatible development strategies and resilience focus).
- **SDG 17:** partnerships and means of implementation (via South-South peer learning and the AGDPN network/platform for ongoing cooperation).

2.8 Innovative elements

Innovative aspects highlighted across the project documentation include:

- **Integrated, multi-pillar policy approach:** Linking macroeconomic, industrial, trade, finance, and innovation policy perspectives to address “binding constraints” for green and resilient transformation, rather than isolated sector interventions.
- **South-South peer learning anchored in concrete policy experience:** Systematic experience sharing on China’s HQD and green low-carbon policy strategies, structured to inform national strategy formulation in beneficiary countries.
- **Scalable capacity development model:** Design of an **online course** intended for repeated delivery (supporting continuity and broader reach), using the project’s analytical outputs as core learning inputs.

3. Evaluation objectives, scope, and questions

3.1 Purpose and objectives

The objective of this final independent evaluation is to determine, as systematically and objectively as possible, the relevance, coherence, efficiency, effectiveness, and sustainability of the project in relation to its stated goals, objectives, and achievements. In line with General Assembly resolutions³, the evaluation also examines the extent to which the project mainstreamed UN cross-cutting issues such as gender equality, environmental sustainability, disability inclusion, and the principle of “leaving no one behind” throughout its design and implementation⁴.

Beyond meeting accountability requirements to the 2030 Agenda Sub-Fund, UNCTAD and project stakeholders, the evaluation generates actionable learning by identifying good practices, challenges, and lessons that can inform the design and delivery of future interventions. It will provide evidence-based recommendations to strengthen project management, stakeholder engagement, and the sustainability of results.

Evaluation management: UNCTAD’s Independent Evaluation Unit managed the evaluation.

Intended users: The 2030 Agenda Sub-Fund Steering Committee, ECIDC unit, UNCTAD management and staff, participating member States, and research entities.

3.2 Evaluation scope, criteria and questions

The evaluation, undertaken between September 2025 and April 2026, covers the entire implementation period of the project, from January 2022 to September 2025, and addresses the following questions, framed according to the evaluation criteria set out in the United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG) Norms and Standards for Evaluation⁵:

Relevance

1. To what extent did the project’s design, objectives, and activities align with the guiding principles and priority areas of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development Sub-Fund and UNCTAD’s mandate and comparative advantages?
2. To what extent did the project respond to the needs and development priorities of the beneficiary countries, as identified in national strategies and plans?

³ General Assembly resolutions and Secretary-General Bulletins: human rights (A/RES/60/1; A/RES/76/6), gender (A/RES/71/243), disability inclusion (A/RES/75/154) and environment (A/RES/76/L.75 and ST/SGB/2019/7).

⁴ As disability inclusion and the principle of “leaving no one behind” were neither included in the project design nor its implementation, the evaluation will address those issues in terms of potential for future mainstreaming in UNCTAD projects.

⁵ The UNEG Norms and Standards (2020) define and promote internationally recognised evaluation criteria, including relevance, coherence, effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability, and the integration of cross-cutting issues such as human rights and gender equality.

Coherence

3. How coherent was the project with UN system strategies (e.g., UNSDCF, CCAs), national and regional initiatives, and other development interventions in the countries? To what extent did UNCTAD identify and engage the right partners?

Efficiency

4. Were activities implemented according to plan, within budget and timeframe? What, if anything, could have been done differently?
5. How adequate were project management and coordination arrangements in ensuring timely decision-making and adaptive responses to emerging challenges?

Effectiveness (including impact)

6. Have the activities achieved, or are likely to achieve, planned objectives as enunciated in the project document, including the SDG targets identified? Is there any evidence of (intended or unintended) outcomes?
7. What are key enabling and limiting factors with respect to the achievement of the project's results?

Sustainability

8. What measures were taken to ensure that project results, capacities and partnerships will continue beyond the project's end, and is there evidence of institutional or policy uptake?
9. Has the AGDPN and its online platform demonstrated potential for long-term viability, resource mobilisation, and continued engagement by stakeholders?

Mainstreaming of UN cross-cutting issues

10. How effectively were gender equality, environmental sustainability, disability inclusion, human rights, and "leaving no one behind" principles integrated into project design, implementation, and monitoring? What tangible results were achieved in these areas?

4. Methodology

The evaluation process began with the project's Theory of Change and validated the assumptions underlying the strategy and intervention logic. This approach complemented the use of the project's results framework to assess the achievement of results, thereby better understanding and validating the project logic.

Step 1: In reconstructing the Theory of Change, the evaluation mapped the sequence from inputs and activities to outputs, outcomes, and objectives, using the logframe and assumptions tables. The intervention logic focused on supporting Kazakhstan, Malaysia, Pakistan, and Türkiye to pursue resilient, green, and transformative development aligned with the 2030 Agenda. The main pathway ran from national diagnostics to integrated policy strategies and capacity building, and then to regional coordination through the Asian Green Development Partnership Network.

Step 2: The evaluation then tested the plausibility of the assumptions underpinning the Theory of Change. It assessed whether stakeholder engagement, institutional and technical capacity,

and political stability were sufficient to absorb and apply the project's outputs. It also examined assumptions about gender integration and the momentum for regional cooperation, identifying where assumptions were strong, weak, unrealistic, or missing.

The evaluation adopted an underlying utilization-focused design, as presented in Figure 1, ensuring that both the process and results were directly relevant and valuable to the intended clients. This inclusive approach was grounded in close collaboration and ongoing dialogue with key stakeholders such as the evaluation manager, the project team in Geneva, and implementation partners, while safeguarding the independence of the evaluation.

4.1 Data collection

For data collection, the evaluation applied a mixed-methods approach to triangulate findings and draw on diverse data sources. Combining qualitative and quantitative methods allowed for a balanced and comprehensive understanding of different perspectives. Quantitative analysis included the project's monitoring and evaluation (M&E) data, while an online survey gathered additional data on training activities. The survey of all workshop participants was structured around the Kirkpatrick model to assess training effectiveness.

Ethical standards: In line with UNEG's ethical guidelines, the survey was conducted anonymously, with strong attention to the safety and well-being of all project stakeholders throughout the evaluation.

For evaluating capacity building, the evaluator used the Kirkpatrick approach⁶.

Kirkpatrick's model was developed in 1975 and remains the most widely used model for evaluating training (Kotvojs, 2009)⁷, and it was relevant for this UNCTAD project due to its events/capacity building components. The model assessed four levels:

1. Reaction – what the participants thought and felt about the training.
2. Learning – the resulting increase in knowledge or skills or changes in attitudes.
3. Behaviour – the extent of on-the-job behaviour change by the participant as a consequence of the training and capacity improvement and application.
4. Results – the effects of the training on the participants' institution and clients/users/partners.

The evaluation focused on levels 2 to 4 to consider knowledge, attitude, and practice changes⁸. The data were systematically collected through the online survey. Targeting all workshop participants, the evaluator aimed to gather statistically representative and mainly quantitative data⁹. The analysis considered disaggregation of data by sex, age, and stakeholder groups such as government and non-government participants. Qualitative data

⁶ Kirkpatrick, Donald L. (1975). Techniques for Evaluating Programs. Parts 1,2,3 and 4. Evaluating Training Programs. ASTD.

⁷ Kotvojs, F., 2009. Development of a Framework for Evaluating Capacity Development Initiatives in International Development.

⁸ If memory recall limited the survey completeness of responses, the evaluators would focus on levels 3 and 4 of the survey results.

⁹ However, the 11.4% response rate was too low to gather statistically representative data, and the results were triangulated with other data sources for validation.

were quantified to the extent possible to balance the largely qualitative data from the interviews.

Qualitative methods comprised the review of the project’s comprehensive documentation, including annual progress reports, publications and planning documents, and Key Informant Interviews (KIIs).

The envisaged network evaluation approach could not be applied, as the AGDPN had not been established. Also, mapping policy change was not possible because insufficient data were available to assess higher-level project outcomes.

Sampling was not required, as the evaluation covered all project countries and components covered by the evaluation. 40.8% of the 69 total stakeholders reached through the evaluation were female, 58% were male, and 1.2% provided no sex-related indication. The survey reached 57 stakeholders, 20 female (35.1%) and 36 male (63.2%), while 1 stakeholder (1.7%) did not disclose the sex. Of the 12 interviewees, 8 were female, and 4 were male.

Participants in the online survey varied by country, with the largest group from Pakistan (27.9%), followed by Kazakhstan (22.1%). Malaysia accounted for 16.2%, and Türkiye for 14.7%. China represented 1.5%. Additionally significant, 17.6% were from other countries, as participants from various other Asian nations were invited during the second regional meeting.

The respondent pool was diverse in affiliation but primarily consisted of research and government sectors. The largest group was research/university respondents at 25.0%, followed by central government at 21.4%. The private sector accounted for 14.3%, and civil society/NGOs accounted for 12.5%. Other smaller groups included independent think tanks (7.1%), local government (5.4%), state-owned enterprises (5.4%), and various other affiliations (5.4%). International organizations represented the smallest share at 3.6%.

Figure 2: Description of the evaluation participants reached, including survey respondents.

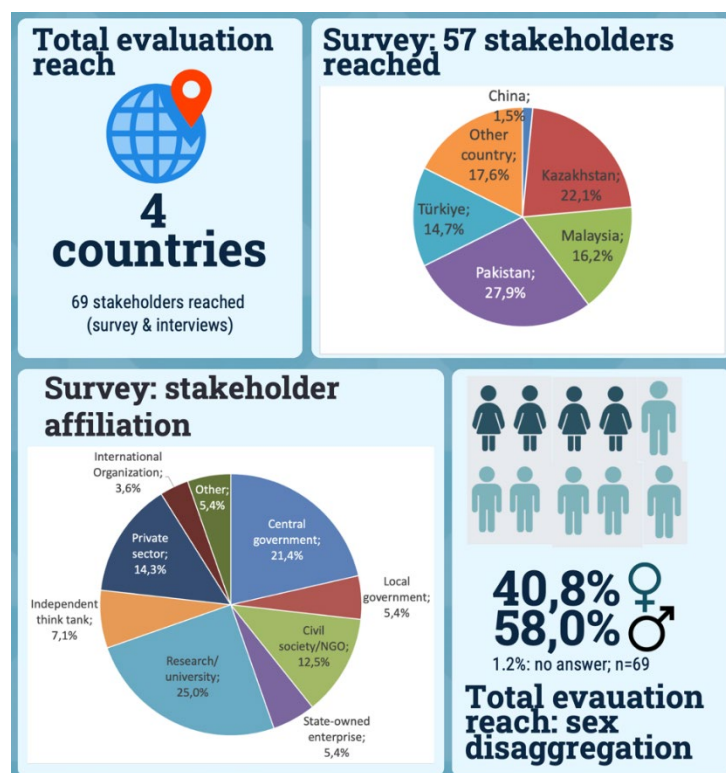


Figure 2 disaggregates the stakeholder groups reached during the evaluation, including the survey, showing a balanced representation of the four project countries, along with their affiliations.

4.2 Data analysis

The data analysis, which integrated qualitative and quantitative data, provided the foundation for addressing the evaluation questions. By examining documents, interview notes, and survey results, the evaluator identified common trends, divergent patterns, and inconclusive findings. Cross-source comparisons helped pinpoint the project's key success factors and challenges in achieving its objectives. Additionally, the analysis uncovered valuable lessons learned and highlighted good practices.

4.3 Rating approach

The evaluation rated all evaluation questions using the Sub-Fund's Likert-based rating scale as a starting point. The evaluator complemented the scale using colour-coded icons, as presented in Figure 3.

Figure 3: Assessment scale



4.4 Cross-cutting issues

Gender, human rights, LNOB, environmental sustainability, and disability perspectives were integrated into the data collection methods and tools through a specific evaluation criterion, a dedicated evaluation question, and data disaggregation during analysis.

4.5 Limitation and mitigation strategy

The initial document review and the inception meeting with the project team in Geneva revealed challenges in project management arrangements, leading to uneven project implementation. The evaluation assessed the project's efficiency and effectiveness in this context.

In addition, the evaluation's timing, near the project's closure, posed constraints. In particular, gaps in documentation and limited availability of reliable outcome and impact data constrained the depth and breadth of the evidence that could be generated. These data limitations restricted the extent to which longer-term effects and contributions to impact could be assessed. The very low survey response rates in some countries and stakeholder

groups (an overall 11.4% response rate) also risked introducing response bias and creating an unbalanced assessment. Together, these factors could have limited the robustness and representativeness of some findings and were taken into account when interpreting the evaluation's conclusions.

To address these limitations, the evaluation adopted a mixed-methods approach, as explained earlier in the methodology section, and deliberately used triangulation to strengthen the validity of the findings. To this end, the evaluation adopted several strategies:

- **Triangulation of evidence:** Multiple data sources were used to cross-validate findings, including project documentation, interviews and secondary data from national and regional sources. This approach helped address documentation gaps and strengthened the credibility of the conclusions.
- **Emphasis on contribution rather than attribution:** Given the limited outcome and impact data at the time of closure, the evaluation focused on assessing the project's contribution and plausible pathways of influence rather than making definitive causal claims.
- **Use of qualitative insights:** When quantitative evidence was limited, qualitative data from key informant interviews provided depth and contextual understanding of the results and processes.
- **Attention to representation:** To mitigate the effects of low survey response rates, findings were interpreted carefully, with attention to potential bias. Differences in stakeholder perspectives across countries and groups were explicitly acknowledged, and qualitative sources were used to balance and complement quantitative data.

5. Findings

This section presents the evaluation findings. The findings are systematically grouped by evaluation criteria and thoroughly address each evaluation question listed in the evaluation matrix (see Annex 3).

5.1 Relevance

Key findings: The project reflected UNCTAD's mandate, aligned with the 2030 agenda of the Sub-Fund, and was broadly responsive to country needs.

- The project was designed and implemented squarely within UNCTAD's mandate while advancing 2030 Agenda priorities in participating countries. At the same time, the project design and country selection showed uneven evidence of country-level demand articulation and were supported by a Note verbale from two countries.
- The project was broadly responsive to country needs by aligning national consultations and policy inputs to each country's green transition priorities, with the strongest traction in Pakistan and high engagement in Malaysia and to a lesser extent in Kazakhstan, and more moderate traction in Türkiye.

HS

The evaluation finds robust evidence that the project was designed and implemented fully within UNCTAD's mandate while advancing 2030 Agenda priorities in participating countries, resulting in a **highly satisfactory rating** based on the evaluator's use of the 2030 Sub-Fund rating system¹⁰.

5.1.1 Alignment with the guiding principles and priority areas of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development Sub-Fund and UNCTAD's mandate and comparative advantages (EQ1)

From the document review, the evaluation assessed the project as **strongly aligned** with both the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development Sub-Fund guiding principles and UNCTAD's core mandate and comparative advantages.

2030 Agenda Alignment

The project directly addressed two critical Sustainable Development Goals explicitly referenced in the documentation: **SDG 9 (Industry, Innovation, and Infrastructure)** and **SDG 13 (Climate Action)**. The integrated approach recognized the interconnectedness of these goals, examining how countries can simultaneously pursue economic growth, industrial development, and climate objectives, a core principle of the 2030 Agenda.

HS

The project's focus on **green industrialization** aligns with the 2030 Agenda's emphasis on sustainable production and consumption patterns, while addressing climate

¹⁰ 2030 Agenda alignment: HS (score 4); UNCTAD mandate: HS (score 4); UNCTAD comparative advantage: HS (score 4); Relevance for countries' development needs and priorities: HS (score 4); inclusiveness of project design: MS (score 2) = 18 out of a maximum of 20. $(18/20) * 4 = 3.6$

change mitigation and adaptation needs. As evidenced in the China case study, the project explored how countries can weave the green low-carbon transition into national economic policies and key sectors, demonstrating the policy integration approach central to the 2030 Agenda.

UNCTAD Mandate



Figure 4 summarizes the alignment of the project with UNCTAD's mandate and shows strong results.

Figure 4: Alignment of the project with UNCTAD's core mandate

UNCTAD Core Mandate Area	Project Application	Activities/Outputs
Trade and Development Nexus	Examining how countries balance structural transformation with environmental sustainability	• Sectoral studies on export-oriented industries (Pakistan textiles: 60% of exports) • Analysis of industrial policy and trade implications • Green manufacturing systems development
South-South Cooperation	Facilitating peer learning among developing countries using China's experience	• Four-country project (Kazakhstan, Malaysia, Pakistan, Türkiye) • China case study as learning platform • Two regional conferences in China • One module in the online course dedicated to China's experience • National Consultations with regional sharing • Knowledge exchange on green finance, industrial policy
Macroeconomic Policy for Development	Integrating climate transition into macroeconomic frameworks	• Analysis of macroeconomic policies for climate resilience • Green finance systems (China: \$1.68 trillion green credit) • Fiscal and monetary policy recommendations • Resource mobilization strategies
Industrial Policy and Structural Transformation	Supporting green industrial upgrading in developing countries	• Seven sectoral deep-dive studies (Pakistan) • Energy sector transformation analysis (Kazakhstan) • Technology acquisition strategies (Malaysia NIMP 2030) • Industrial structure adjustment (China)
Climate Change and Sustainable Development	Addressing climate vulnerability while pursuing economic growth	• Climate resilience strategies • Adaptation measures for infrastructure and agriculture • Low-carbon transition pathways • Climate finance mechanisms
Technology and Innovation	Promoting technology transfer and indigenous innovation for sustainability	• Renewable energy technologies • Electric vehicle infrastructure • Green manufacturing technologies • R&D capacity development
Financing for Development	Mobilizing resources for sustainable transformation	• Green financial system analysis (China case) • Green bonds, insurance, investment funds • Domestic and international climate finance • Public-private partnerships
Policy Analysis and Recommendations	Evidence-based policy formulation support	• National Consultations (multi-stakeholder) • Policy roundtables with government • Sectoral analysis reports • Integrated Policy Strategies Framework
Capacity Building and Technical Cooperation	Strengthening national capacities for green transformation	• National consultations bringing together government, academia, industry • Knowledge sharing workshops • Sectoral expertise development • Inter-ministerial coordination platforms

UNCTAD Comparative Advantages

The project leveraged **the following core UNCTAD comparative advantages:**



HS

Integrated Policy Strategies Approach

The project's methodology for developing **Integrated Policy Strategies for a Sustainable Future** reflects UNCTAD's holistic approach to development challenges. The project went beyond sector-specific interventions to examine cross-cutting issues such as green finance, industrial policy, energy transition, transport decarbonization, and agricultural transformation. Interviewees appreciated UNCTAD's deep, development-focused expertise, and strong programme design. Its specialist focus on the economic needs of developing countries was seen as especially timely as countries reassess outdated development models.

Interviewees noted that UNCTAD provided critical, substantive, and “eye-opening” feedback through national consultations, with civil servants and policymakers valuing the non-generic, technically rigorous advice and the progressive inclusion of gender and just transition perspectives. Continuous engagement and feedback throughout the project, alongside effective convening of researchers, ministries, and policymakers, helped translate research into realistic policy trajectories.

The Pakistan case demonstrates this integration: the project addressed macroeconomic and sectoral challenges and opportunities while emphasizing the need for stronger international support, including the New Collective Quantified Goal for climate finance and the Loss and Damage Fund agreed at COP28, thereby, linking national strategies with global climate finance mechanisms.

Multi-Stakeholder Partnership Approach

According to interviewees, another comparative advantage of UNCTAD is its convening power. The national consultations brought together, in a practical, policy-relevant way, government officials, industry leaders, financiers, researchers, and academics, reflecting the 2030 Agenda's emphasis on multi-stakeholder partnerships (SDG 17). High-level government participation, including ministers and secretaries from multiple ministries, underscores the project's success in convening diverse stakeholders around shared development challenges.

5.1.2 Relevance for needs and development priorities of the beneficiary countries (EQ2)



HS

Across the four beneficiary countries, the project responded to nationally salient green transformation priorities through tailored consultations and policy dialogue focused on climate-resilient structural transformation. The extent to which this fit was deliberately incorporated into the design is examined in the following section.

The evaluation finds that country engagement and sectoral emphasis varied by context. **Pakistan** showed very high senior government engagement and a strong sector focus (e.g., agriculture, textiles, transport, and targeted manufacturing areas); **Kazakhstan** emphasized

the energy transition (including decarbonization of oil and gas, renewables, mobility, and resilience) with high ministry-level participation; and **Malaysia** aligned consultations with industrial upgrading and net-zero-oriented priorities (e.g., semiconductors, advanced manufacturing, EVs, and the energy transition) with high-level involvement. **Türkiye** addressed green transition priorities across energy, industry, agriculture, and jobs/just transition, with an explicit gender lens, but evidence from interviews suggested comparatively less traction due to limited access to top decision-makers in a changing political context. Figure 5 depicts the project's relevance to the participating country's needs and priorities.

Figure 5: Project relevance by country

Country	National Priority Areas Addressed	Key Sectors Covered	Government Engagement Level
Pakistan	• Climate resilience and adaptation • Green industrialization • Economic recovery post-2022 floods • Debt sustainability	• Agriculture (25% GDP, 37% employment) • Textile (40% industrial workforce, 60% exports) • Transport (10% GDP) • 7 manufacturing sectors (plastic, vegetable oil, aluminium, PVC, detergents, wheat, textile dyeing)	High • National Coordinator to PM (Climate Change) • 3 Federal Secretaries • 2 Additional Secretaries • Multiple ministries
Kazakhstan	• Energy transition from fossil fuels • Climate risk adaptation • Transport decarbonization • Energy security ("energy trilemma")	• Oil and gas decarbonization • Coal industry prospects • Renewable and alternative energy • Electric mobility • Infrastructure resilience	High • Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources • Ministry of Energy • Institute for Power Engineering Development • Academic institutions
Malaysia	• Strategic technology acquisition • Domestic investment mobilization • Net Zero transition • Economic complexity advancement	• Semiconductors • Advanced manufacturing • Electric vehicles • Energy transition • Agritech	High • Deputy Investment, Trade and Industry Minister • Linkage to MADANI Economic Framework • Khazanah Research Institute partnership
Türkiye	• Green transition / net-zero direction and broader economic transition challenges • Climate policy instruments and policy evolution (incl. domestic emissions trading developments) • Just transition and inclusion (jobs/social impacts and gender-responsiveness of policy documents)	• Energy (renewables transition; energy security) • Manufacturing • Agriculture • Labour market/jobs (just transition; social impact analysis; gender implications)	Medium • Relatively lower access to high-level government decision-makers in Türkiye than in smaller developing countries¹¹
China	• Dual carbon goals (peak 2030, neutrality 2060) • Green low-carbon transition • Economic growth sustainability • Macroeconomic policy • Green financing	• Energy (renewables development) • Transportation (EVs) • Industry (steel, petrochemicals, building materials) • Urban/rural development • Agriculture development	Knowledge Sharing Role • Case study for peer learning • Policy lessons for other developing countries

The project demonstrated **high responsiveness overall** to beneficiary country needs, with activities explicitly aligned to national strategies and development plans.

¹¹ The survey results, indicating a higher relevance score for Türkiye and a lower score for Pakistan, are based on event participants' perceptions in the project countries. The above assessment is based on the document review and main counterpart perceptions.

Pakistan: Climate Resilience and Industrial Transformation

The project directly addressed Pakistan's priorities, as the country ranks 150 out of 185 on climate vulnerability and suffered \$30 billion in flood damages (8% of GDP) in 2022. It produced seven sectoral studies on plastic, textiles, agriculture, and other key industries, targeting sectors with high contributions to GHG emissions, environmental pollution, and harmful impacts on public health. This aligned with Pakistan's Climate Change Act 2017 and updated (Nationally Determined Contribution) NDC commitments.

High-level engagement included the National Coordinator to the Prime Minister for Climate Change and secretaries from multiple ministries,¹² demonstrating government interest and alignment with national coordination needs¹³.⁵

Malaysia: Technology-Led Growth and Net Zero

The project aligned directly with Malaysia's **New Industrial Master Plan 2030 (NIMP 2030)**, which prioritizes the "Net Zero" transition and "economic complexity advancement."¹⁴ Deputy Minister Liew Chin Tong explicitly tied the consultation to NIMP 2030 and the **MADANI Economic Framework**, emphasizing Malaysia's need to "strategically acquire and develop its own technology."¹⁵

The focus on semiconductors, EVs, and advanced manufacturing aligns with the government's RM120 billion domestic investment pledge for the energy transition and advanced manufacturing.¹⁶ This supports Malaysia's **12th Malaysia Plan (2021-2025)** priorities.

Kazakhstan: Energy Security and Transition

The project addressed Kazakhstan's "energy trilemma"—achieving "carbon neutrality while ensuring economic growth and maintaining energy security."¹⁷ Sessions on energy transition and green mobility¹⁸ aligned with Kazakhstan's **updated NDC (2023)** (15% emissions reduction by 2030, carbon neutrality by 2060) and the **Concept for Transition to Green Economy**. Participation by Ministries of Ecology and Energy¹⁹ confirmed alignment with the **Strategic Development Plan 2025**.

¹² Ibid.

¹³ The choice of partners could not be fully reestablished by the evaluation due to the loss of institutional memory. In the cases of Türkiye and Pakistan, UNCTAD had pre-established relationships with the main project counterpart institutions or staff involved.

¹⁴ Government of Malaysia (NIMP portal). *New Industrial Master Plan 2030 (NIMP 2030)*

¹⁵ Malaysian Investment Development Authority (MIDA) (via Bernama). *Malaysia must be strategic in acquiring and developing technology to be developed nations* (13 Aug 2024).

¹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷ Central Asia Climate Foundation / CACF. *The First National Consultation on Green Development Held in Kazakhstan, 10/2024*

¹⁸ UNCTAD & CACF. *Concept Note and Draft Programme – 1st National Consultation (Kazakhstan)* (meeting 9–10 Oct 2024).

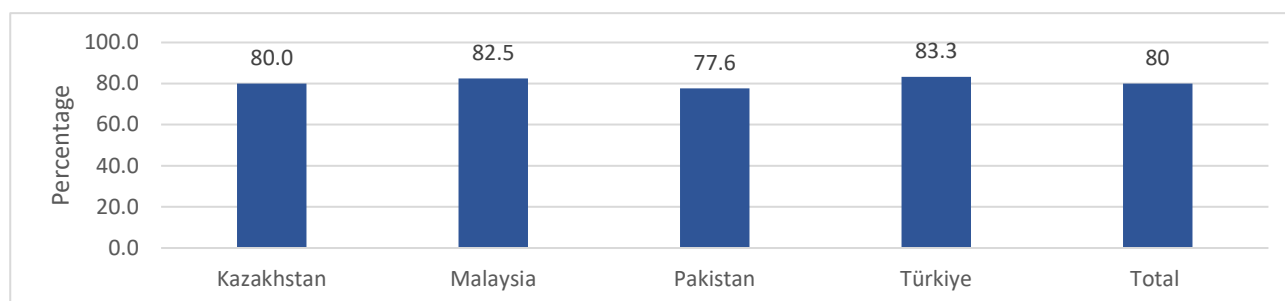
¹⁹ UNCTAD & CACF. *Concept Note and Draft Programme – 1st National Consultation (Kazakhstan)*

Türkiye: Green Transformation and Climate Action

Türkiye was the fourth beneficiary country under the project, and its participation aligns with its **11th Development Plan (2019-2023)** and **Green Deal Action Plan (2021)**, which prioritize green transformation, the circular economy, and climate change adaptation. Türkiye's **updated NDC (2023)** commits to a 41% emissions reduction by 2030, and the **National Climate Change Strategy** emphasizes sustainable industrialization—priorities consistent with the project's integrated policy approach. As a rapidly industrializing economy and a G20 member, Türkiye's engagement in South-South cooperation through this project supports its dual objectives of economic competitiveness and climate action. The evaluation found that the country benefited from the highest number of research papers (eight), focusing on agriculture, power, gender, finance, and manufacturing, and was complemented by two strategy papers.²⁰

The online survey confirmed the project's relevance to stakeholders' needs and priorities, as shown in Figure 6. Results are disaggregated by country, with an average relevance score of 80% across all countries. Among the four project countries, relevance ranged from 77,6% in Pakistan to 83,3% in Türkiye, with Kazakhstan (80%) and Malaysia (82,5%) in between. However, the evaluator needs to reiterate that the survey response rate was very low (11.4%), despite the two standard reminders sent, and that the results are not representative.

Figure 6: Relevance of the project for stakeholder needs and priorities



n=51²¹

Another relevant sub-criterion in the online survey concerns the timeliness of project-funded national and regional consultations, with an overall average of 75...7% and country-disaggregated results oscillating +/- 2% around the average.

²⁰ UNCTAD, 2025: Role of agriculture in green transition in Türkiye (Project Paper No. 8)

UNCTAD, 2025: Solar and wind power transition in Türkiye: An input-output analysis of growth, employment, and current account effects (Project Paper No. 13)

UNCTAD, 2025: Gender equality and green transition in Türkiye (Project Paper No. 9)

UNCTAD, 2025: Decarbonizing the Turkish power sector: Overview, challenges, opportunities, analysis and policy recommendations (Project Paper No. 11)

UNCTAD, 2025: Role of finance in Türkiye's green transition: Investigating opportunities under current trends and path dependence (Project Paper No. 12)

UNCTAD, 2025: Industrial development and green transformation: a firm-level study of Turkish manufacturing (Project Paper No. 10).

UNCTAD, 2025: Türkiye: Challenges and strategies towards green transformation and sustainable development. (Project Paper No. 7)

UNCTAD, 2025: Towards an integrated green transformation strategy: report for Türkiye (Project Paper No. 14).

²¹ The relevance question was answered by 51 out of the 57 survey respondents.

Project design

The project's scope, focus and support modalities were largely shaped by UNCTAD's existing frameworks, methodologies, and areas of technical expertise. A relatively standardized package of diagnostics, policy papers, consultations, conferences, and an online course was applied across countries, reflecting what UNCTAD was institutionally equipped to deliver. Strong results were observed in areas under UNCTAD's direct control, such as analytical quality, stakeholder participation, and knowledge outputs, confirming the robustness of its technical proposition.



At the same time, the project design and the selection of the four project countries showed uneven evidence of country-level demand articulation, based on countries' participation in the Belt and Road Initiative and their representation of an Asian subregion, among other criteria, and subsequently supported by two countries through a Note verbale during the project formulation. Middle-income countries²² were prioritised, as opposed to LDCs, on the basis that these types of economies have a stronger institutional and industrial base from which to develop green industrial strategies.

Weaker performance in sustainability, regional coordination, UN system synergies, and uneven uptake across countries indicate that the design may not have been sufficiently grounded in country-specific demand, institutional capacities, and political economy realities. The results are explored further under the “effectiveness” and “sustainability” sections.

²² Of the countries chosen, three are Upper Middle Income countries (Kazakhstan, Malaysia and Türkiye) and one is a Lower Middle Income country (Pakistan).

5.2 Coherence

Key findings: The evaluation finds a mixed strategic fit between the project and UN coordination structures.

- The project demonstrated strong coherence with national development strategies and engaged high-quality implementation partners.
- However, it showed room for improvement in coordinating with UN Country Teams or other UN agencies.

5.2.1 Strategic fit (EQ 3)



This section assesses the project's coherence with UN system strategies (e.g., UNSDCF, CCAs), national and regional initiatives, and other development interventions in the countries. It also analyses whether adequate partners were engaged. The evaluation finds mixed results on the project's strategic fit, resulting in a moderately satisfactory rating, based on the evaluator's use of the 2030 Sub-Fund rating system. Figure 7 summarizes the assessment across coherence dimensions.

coherence dimensions.

National development priorities & partner engagement



The project achieved strong coherence with national development priorities, explicitly aligning with Malaysia's NIMP 2030, Pakistan's Strategic Trade Policy Framework, Kazakhstan's Just Transition Strategy, and Türkiye's net-zero emissions pathway and domestic emissions trading system development. It engaged national partners (KRI, SPRC, CACF, and later TEPAV), who successfully mobilized ministerial-level participation in three of four countries

due to their positioning for policymaking.

In Kazakhstan, the National Bureau of Economic Research and, before this, the Project Office of Central Asia on Climate Change and Green Energy / CACF were selected as the national partners due to their extensive expertise and established track record in researching development-related economic issues. These institutions are uniquely positioned to facilitate the project's diagnostic research and national policy consultations, helping to identify the specific binding constraints of an economy heavily dependent on fossil fuel resources. To sustain results, the institute serves as a local knowledge repository that can continue to collaborate with UNCTAD beyond the project's duration.

For Malaysia, UNCTAD worked with The Khazanah Research Institute (KRI). KRI is a Malaysian non-profit policy research institute that produces rigorous, evidence-based research on the country's major socio-economic issues, turning data into policy recommendations aimed at improving Malaysians' well-being. Its work spans inequality, jobs and livelihoods, households and public wellbeing, housing and infrastructure, climate and food resilience, digitalisation and economic development, through reports, policy briefs, datasets, events, media commentary and public engagement

In Pakistan, the Social Policy Resource Centre (formerly Social Protection Resource Centre)

was selected for its robust research network and its ability to bridge the gap between national policy and international dialogue. Given Pakistan's high vulnerability to climate change despite its low emissions, SPRC's expertise was important in formulating integrated strategies that balance urgent economic growth with green recovery. The institute is positioned to ensure that project-derived policy tools are utilized in the drafting of future development frameworks. Its continued participation in UNCTAD expert meetings further ensures that the knowledge gained remains active and relevant.

Istanbul Kadir Has University and two independent think tanks, the Economic Policy Research Foundation of Türkiye (TEPAV); and the Sustainable Economics and Finance Association (SEFiA) were the partners for Türkiye. The Kadir Has University stands out due to its research excellence and capacity to conduct the detailed macroeconomic and industrial analyses required to address the country's coal dependency. As a research-focused institution, it provided a stable platform for policy innovation that is less susceptible to political shifts, which is critical for long-term transformative development. The university can sustain project results by incorporating the research findings into its academic and policy outreach programs, serving as a permanent repository for the project's data and strategies.

UN system coordination



However, the project exhibited a critical gap in **UN system coordination**, with uneven engagement with UNCT/RC offices (except in Kazakhstan, where RCO engagement facilitated stakeholder outreach) or with UNSDCF frameworks, as summarized in Figure 7.

Coordination with other UN agencies occurred only on an ad hoc basis, and evaluation feedback identified with missed opportunities to for collaboration with UNDP, UNIDO, and UN Women. In Kazakhstan, the project effectively coordinated with multiple development partners, including the Asian Development Bank, GIZ, and USAID, to create a multi-stakeholder platform for dialogue. However, in other countries, including Türkiye, development partner engagement remained largely opportunistic rather than strategically planned. While the quality of national partnerships and alignment with country priorities was exceptional across all four countries, the uneven systematic UN system integration²³ and limited strategic coordination with development partners represents important limitations in the project's overall coherence.

Interviewees noted that more systematic engagement with United Nations Country Teams (UNCTs) and alignment with United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Frameworks (UNSDCFs) could have generated significant benefits for the project. Such engagement would have facilitated stronger policy coherence, enabled access to established government and stakeholder coordination platforms, and enhanced the project's ability to position its analytical and normative work within nationally agreed development priorities. Leveraging UNCT mechanisms could also have strengthened inter-agency complementarities, particularly in areas such as industrial policy, gender-responsive trade, and sustainable infrastructure, while reducing duplication and amplifying development impact. In practical terms, earlier and more proactive participation in UNCT planning processes, joint programming initiatives, and shared analytical products would have increased the project's strategic relevance and operational reach.

²³ Partly due to the lack of demand from UNCTs, as explained by the project team.

Figure 7: Summary of the project's coherence across specific dimensions

Coherence Dimension	Rating	Justification
UN System Strategies (UNSDCF/CCAs)	LOW	Room for improvement in the engagement with UNCT/RC offices; no coordination with other UN agencies except ad hoc instances (e.g. Kazakhstan RCO engagement for stakeholder outreach); missed opportunities with UNDP, UNIDO, UN Women
National Development Strategies	VERY HIGH	Explicit alignment with NIMP 2030 (Malaysia), Strategic Trade Policy Framework (Pakistan), Just Transition Strategy (Kazakhstan); high-level government endorsement across countries
Regional Initiatives²⁴	MODERATE	AGDPN planned, prepared ²⁵ , expectations raised, but not implemented; engaged UNESCAP; facilitated peer learning; attracted non-project countries to regional meetings
Other Development Partners	MODERATE	Good engagement in Kazakhstan (ADB, GIZ, USAID); AIIB participated in the Malaysia and Türkiye meetings, Islamic Development Bank participated in Türkiye ; room for improvement for more systematic coordination.
Partnership Identification & Engagement	HIGH	Strong national partners with government access and technical credibility in Pakistan, Malaysia, Kazakhstan; improved engagement in Türkiye over time; effective China partnership

The project's faced limited ability to integrate into broader UN development coordination mechanisms, showing room for improvement to leverage UN comparative advantages and ensure coherence with country-level UN strategic frameworks²⁶.

Regional cooperation



The project achieved moderate success in regional cooperation. The policy experiences of China's HQD were central to the project's mission of facilitating South-South peer learning and capacity building for green transformation. In addition to providing the project's financial support through the UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development Sub-Fund, China brought extensive expertise in High-Quality Development (HQD) and green low-carbon strategies, serving as a primary reference point for the four project countries. The project leveraged China's experience in navigating the dual challenges of sustained economic growth and environmental preservation, specifically focusing on green industrial development, renewable energy transition, and green finance.

Chinese experts involved in the project spanned a wide range of policy and research institutions, including the Development and Research Centre of the State Council, the Research Institute of the People's Bank of China, and the China Academy of Urban Planning. The lead partner, the Chinese Academy of International Trade and Economic Cooperation (CAITEC), co-hosted and organized key regional meetings and workshops, such as the conferences in Changzhou (2023) and Shanghai (2025). CAITEC facilitated practical "on-site" learning by organizing visits to green and high-tech manufacturing industries in Changzhou, cutting-edge facilities like the Yangshan Phase IV automated terminal and CATL's Shanghai

²⁴ The regional component of the project included three parts: 1) research on China's policies aiming to facilitate peer-learning at regional level; 2) regional meetings to offer opportunities on the exchange of policy experience and peer learning; 3) AGDPN.

²⁵ Without any authorization by either the project management or OSG, three entities signed up to revised AGDPN ToRs (two academic institutions and one IP, no governments).

²⁶ The project team commented that UN agencies were approached but limited their participation due to resource constraints.

smart factory. These visits allowed international delegates to witness 5G-powered automation and zero-carbon production practices first-hand.

The diverse range of participants provided beneficiary countries with multi-dimensional insights into how integrated policy frameworks can mobilize domestic resources and foster green structural transformation. By engaging with Chinese experts, e.g. through the project output “*China’s Policy Strategies for Green Low-Carbon Development*”, beneficiaries gained access to evidence-based policy tools tailored to the realities of developing economies.

The planned establishment of the AGDPN would have been a core achievement, as at the time of the project design, such thematically oriented networks were non-existent in Asia. It intended to add value by establishing a systematic South-South peer-learning channel and a long-term knowledge repository that ensures policy alignment persists beyond the project’s official duration. The 2025 regional meeting successfully attracted policymakers from non-project countries, including Nepal, Sri Lanka, Thailand, and Indonesia, demonstrating spillover effects beyond the four beneficiaries. However, although the regional meetings were successful and the network was prepared, the project fell short of full implementation of the AGDPN due to a lack of post-project funding, as the network’s sustainability planning, including partner contributions, was not sufficiently addressed in the project implementation²⁷.

Given the lack of support to sustain the network, other UNCTAD networks could assume AGDPN’s envisaged role, as resulting from evaluation interviews. The evaluator identified existing platforms, such as STIXNET, a network focused on Science, Technology and Innovation (STI), and networks within the UN Secretariat, such as UNECE’s Transformative Innovation Network (ETIN), which is open to stakeholders beyond the UN-ECE region, as platforms that can connect project stakeholders and build on the valuable preparatory work in establishing the AGDPN, thereby ensuring that this work is not lost.

²⁷ The project design did include a one-year Sustainability Supporting Period (SSP) for AGDPN. Not for the AGDPN alone but for follow-up with governments on policy implication (**See project proposal**: “Strengthening Economic Cooperation and Integration Among Developing Countries has been one of the core mandates of UNCTAD since its inception. And UN member states agreed in BAPA+40 that “learning, sharing knowledge and experiences as well as best practices” is an important action to step up South-South Cooperation for 2030 Agenda. Hence, upon completion of the project, a one-year Sustainability Supporting Period (SSP) will be established with the support of UNCTAD. During the SSP, UNCTAD will continue to monitor the effectiveness and impact of project actions particularly the recognition of proposed policy strategies by the project countries government. The proposed AGDPN network can be effective tool to support SSP. They will then be shared, disseminated, discussed, developed and translated into multilateral consensus through UNCTAD future activities including research and analysis, intergovernmental debate, and other technical cooperation projects. The textbooks and other training materials developed through on-line course in this proposal will be used in future UNCTAD training activities.”) This was never included in budget planning.

5.3 Efficiency

Key findings: Implementation largely followed the project logic and achieved strong financial execution (99.8% utilization), with late-stage acceleration helping deliver most outputs despite delays that required a 9-month no-cost extension and pushed the online course beyond the project end-date.

- **Timeliness & delivery.** Sequencing and pace deviated considerably; modality shift from four to eight national consultations; and speeding up implementation towards the project's end.
- **Management & finances:** Early management transitions and lack of operational resilience (including 6-month standstill due to project staff medical leave and limited backup) contributed to delays, later improved under a second project manager; financial execution was very strong (99.8% utilization) but required redeployments and reallocations (e.g., travel underspend vs. personnel overspend).

 This section analyses the project's implementation, including the timeliness of execution against plan and project management and coordination. It also assesses what could have been done differently in the project management, providing valuable lessons for the management of future UNCTAD projects. The evaluation finds mixed results concerning the project's efficiency, with a moderately satisfactory rating, based on the evaluator's use of the 2030 Sub-Fund rating system²⁸.

5.3.1. Project implementation: timeliness and financial aspects (EQ4)

Implementation against plan (activities and outputs)

 Implementation followed the overall project logic (national consultations, regional conferences, research outputs, and sustainability mechanisms), but delivery deviated materially from the original sequencing and pace. The project made an early adjustment to the implementation modality, replacing one planned regional meeting on “binding constraints” with four national consultations (one per country) due to political events affecting planning in Pakistan and Kazakhstan. This improved depth at the country level but reduced early regional synergies²⁹.

The final project report indicates that, after initial delays, implementation was subsequently accelerated and that **EO2 (the second round of national consultations)** was implemented, with most papers processed and published (minor formatting/publication steps pending at the time of reporting).

²⁸ Implementation against plan: MS (score 2); timeframe: MS (score 2); budget execution: S (score 3); adequacy of project management: SS (score 1) = 8 out of a maximum of 16. $(8/16) * 4 = 2$

²⁹ i.e., the modality shift was from originally planned 4 to 8 national consultations (instead of 4 national consultation and an additional regional meeting). This took place in the very early phases of the project in 2022.

Timeframe



Activities were not fully implemented within the original timeframe, requiring a 9-month no-cost extension from 31 December 2024 to 30 September 2025. In addition, a key sustainability output, the online course, had not yet been rolled out due to the contractor's prolonged illness described below. The course design was "near completion" at the time of the final project reporting, with the first run after the project period (December 2025 and February 2026).

Budget execution and value-for-money



Following the initial challenges described above, the project's financial execution was strong by its conclusion: total expenditure was US\$ 1,162,999.91 (incl. indirect support costs) against funds received of US\$ 1,164,800.00, leaving a balance of US\$ \$1,800 and an exceptionally high utilization rate of 99.8%.

However, the project required two budget redeployments and recorded notable reallocations (e.g., travel underspend and staff/personnel overspend relative to the second redeployment), reflecting the need to correct earlier budgeting assumptions and commitments and to adapt to implementation realities (including grant-out agreements and the online course).

What could have been done differently? The project documentation, including comments from the SDG Sub-Fund management in project progress reports, points to several corrective measures that, if applied earlier, could likely have reduced delays, avoided the extension, and limited budget redeployments:

1. **Earlier and stronger oversight, coordination, and record-keeping:** The report links setbacks to changes in the management structure, staffing turnover, and initial difficulties in maintaining systematic record-keeping, and concludes that late-stage pressures exposed a lack of appropriate project oversight and coordination and the absence of systematic budget planning and project documentation.
2. **Built-in early warning and course-correction mechanisms:** The "lessons learned" call for more systematic early intervention when delivery delays become apparent, explicitly noting that this could help avoid extensions and budget revisions except in genuinely exceptional circumstances.
3. **More realistic sequencing and risk management for dependency-heavy outputs** (notably the online course): The course timeline was significantly affected by the implementing partner's absence or illness, suggesting the need for contingency arrangements (e.g., co-delivery, backup focal points, or contractual continuity provisions) for critical-path outputs.
4. **Earlier alignment of contracting/grant modalities with the approved budget structure:** The second budget redeployment was needed partly because early grant-out agreements were incompatible with the original budget provisions, indicating that the front-end design of implementation modalities and contracting routes could have been tighter.
5. **More robust measurement of results for policy-oriented outputs:** The project manager notes that some indicators were insufficient for a research/policy formulation project and suggests considering indicators such as uptake of policy analysis by target groups.

Figure 8 presents the original budget, the two redeployments and the final expenditure by object class category, based on the final project report (2025).

Figure 8: Original project budget (planned expenditure), redeployments, and final expenditure

Object Class Category	A Original approved budget	B 1 st budget redeployment 19 July 2024	C 2 nd budget redeployment 29 May 2025	D Final expenditure (interim FS)	E % change C to D
Staff and other Personnel Costs	475,970.00	529,923.37	562,562.01	601,411.68	+7%
Travel on official business	363,030.00	214,508.32	202,175.06	172,726.47	-14%
Contractual Services	112,500.00	180,862.09	82,865.90	77,464.71	-6%
General Operating and other direct costs	168,500.00	194,706.22	165,674.03	159,907.28	-3%
Equipment vehicles and furniture (incl. depreciation)			1329.00	1329.00	+/- 0
Transfers and grants to counterparts			105,430.00	105,430.00	+/- 0
sub-total: project costs	1,120,000.00	1,120,000.00	1,120,000.00	1,120,000.00	----
UN IDC (4%)	44,800.00	44,800.00	44,800.00	44,800.00	
TOTAL	1,164,800.00	1,164,800.00	1,164,800.00	1,164,800.00	----

Source: Final project report, p. 16, 2025

5.3.2 Adequacy of project management (EQ5)



Project management and coordination were uneven for much of the implementation period (January 2022–mid-2024), with more effective arrangements only established during the final 15 months under the last project manager. The project underwent leadership transitions and experienced an absence of a structured handover between successive managers. These disruptions weakened continuity, contributed to implementation delays, and resulted in a nine-month no-cost extension and several budget reallocations. Deficiencies in early oversight, coordination, and documentation persisted until relatively late in the project lifecycle.

The project demonstrated limited operational resilience to staffing disruptions. Extended medical leave, combined with the absence of contingency management arrangements, led to a temporary suspension of implementation lasting approximately six months. Internal coordination challenges, including delays in accessing counterparts, inputs, and deliverables, required repeated follow-up and, at times, generated internal friction. Interview evidence suggests that earlier supervisory guidance and mentoring could have strengthened decision-making and coordination practices.

Management arrangements stabilized from mid-2024 onwards. Following the retirement of the division director, oversight shifted to the ECIDC unit, which became the project's organizational home. In November 2024, the ECIDC chief formally assumed the role of project manager, combining oversight and implementation responsibilities. This transition coincided with improvements in budget management, coordination and delivery focus. Incomplete and fragmented record-keeping under previous management further constrained implementation and evaluation processes.

While performance improved toward project closure, some delays could not be fully recovered. A small number of outputs remained outstanding, including delays to the online course due to the contractor's prolonged illness in 2025. Overall, partners assessed the quality of events and meetings positively. However, staff workload pressures and administrative processes, particularly relating to payments and registration procedures, occasionally created avoidable friction. The project demonstrated adaptive capacity in selected areas, such as accommodating additional sectoral studies in Pakistan and adjusting the engagement approach in Türkiye. At the same time, lessons learned highlight the importance of systematic early-warning mechanisms and timely course correction to address emerging implementation risks.

Financial and staffing challenges further affected delivery. The original budget and the first budget revision approved in July 2024 did not include grant-out agreements, despite their use in early national consultations. This necessitated a second budget revision in May 2025 to regularize past and to carry out the planned grant-out arrangement for online course. Interim budget decisions that restricted the use of grant-outs created practical difficulties, including delays in partner payments and unanticipated cost increases, such as VAT charges. Staffing changes compounded these constraints, including the lateral transfer of a technical officer, the early retirement of administrative support staff, and the non-extension of a junior professional officer position due to organization-wide budget limitations, all of which reduced implementation capacity during critical phases.

5.4 Effectiveness

Key findings: The project delivered most of the expected results at a high quality, speeding up implementation considerably after mid-term.

- The project successfully delivered most planned outputs (4 out of 6 indicators met, with one output on course for finalization after the project's end date), including high-quality research products, national consultations, and regional knowledge-exchange events across all four beneficiary countries.
- Research results were complemented by practical capacity-building workshops and policy recommendations at both national and sectoral levels, contributing to the formulation of integrated national policy strategies in at least one case (Pakistan).
- 82.2% of respondents report increased knowledge, and 78.7% increased awareness. Notably, 78.3% also reported practical application of learning.
- Gender differences: Women reported higher overall confidence but lower opportunities in taking on new responsibilities, relied more on external knowledge sources, and showed lower organizational performance gains; men reported higher application rates and attributed more of their knowledge directly to the project.
- The project's key enabling factors included a strong technical focus with integrated policy strategies that achieved broad stakeholder reach and engagement across beneficiary countries, combined with a high-level government participation (ministerial/vice-ministerial in 3 out of 4 countries) and strong country ownership throughout implementation.
- Constraining factors included substantial delivery delays due to operational limitations, design weaknesses, and reactive rather than systematic course correction during project implementation.



The evaluation finds that the project was successful in producing most of its outputs, with examples of uptake at the country level, resulting in a satisfactory rating, based on the evaluator's use of the 2030 Sub-Fund rating system³⁰.

5.4.1 Achievement of planned objectives (EQ6)

Original objectives included the following: improved understanding of China's policy experience; in-depth research; diagnostics of binding constraints; tailored, integrated policy strategies; capacity building; and establishment of the AGDPN.



Core planned deliverables (research outputs, national consultations, regional meetings) were delivered, though with significant delays, and variable depth by country. Evidence indicates strong SDG alignment (notably SDG 9 and SDG 13) and multiple positive intended and unintended outcomes, with the strongest policy uptake in Pakistan and Malaysia. Country results are summarized in Figure 9.

³⁰ Achievement of planned objectives: S (score 3); production and dissemination of high-quality research and knowledge products: HS (score 4); national consultations: HS (score 4); regional engagement: HS (score 4); AGDPN: SS (score 1), online course: S (score 3); behaviour change: S (score 3); factors affecting project results: MS (score 2) = 24 out of a maximum of 32. $(24/32) * 4 = 3$.

Figure 9: Project's country results

Country	Delivery	Uptake / influence	Assessment
Pakistan	7 sector studies (incl. 4 added).	Inputs embedded in Strategic Trade Policy Framework 2025–2030 ³¹ ; ministerial engagement; revision/presentation requests.	High; expanded scope.
Malaysia	Aligned with NIMP 2030 & net-zero; focus: semiconductors/ EVs	Spill overs to semiconductor strategy ³² + climate finance; ASEAN networking.	Strong; spill overs.
Kazakhstan	Energy trilemma; high ministry participation; nuclear expertise valued.	Coordination with ADB/GIZ/USAID.	High participation; moderate uptake.
Türkiye	Comprehensive coverage incl. just transition/gender lens.	Lower traction; aligned with net-zero pathway ³³ , climate law and ETS discussions.	Mixed results.

The evaluation found that the project delivered most of its planned outcomes and outputs, producing a coherent package of research products, national consultations, and regional knowledge-exchange activities that broadly met the project's core objectives, as presented in Figure 10.

Figure 10: Project's achievement against logframe objectives

EO/IA (baseline -> target)	Reported endline evidence (project-led post-event survey data)	Status
EO1-IA1.1 (inadequate knowledge -> 100% improved understanding)	100% improved understanding; response: 90% beneficiaries (9/10), 43% overall (19/44 ³⁴); supported by UNCTAD publication (Nov 2023).	Achieved
EO1-IA1.2 (no diagnostics/strategies -> >=70% confirm relevance)	100% relevance confirmed; govt participation: 27% KZ/MY, 20% PK, 7% TR; no TR survey (1st meeting); response: PK 56%, MY 26%, KZ 6%. (The external evaluation survey showed high to very high relevance ratings ranging from 77.6%-83.3%)	Achieved; uneven participation
EO2-IA2.1 (strategies need strengthening -> >=70% endorse recommendations)	100% endorsement at 2nd consultations; govt participation: 43% TR/MY, 32% KZ, 23% PK; response: TR 48%, MY/PK 24%, KZ 3%.	Achieved; low KZ response
EO2-IA2.2 (inadequate capacity -> >=70% report improved capacity via online training)	Online course delayed/running after project end; design near completion; first run December 2025 to February 2026; baseline surveys planned pre-course.	Delayed, implementation ongoing at time of the evaluation
EO3-IA3.1 (no regional network -> ToR endorsed + launch)	ToR presented at 2nd regional conf (9–10 Jul 2025, Shanghai); cleared 28 Sep 2025; endorsements from 3 entities (KZ & TR universities; PK implementing partner); remained non-operational.	Partially achieved
EO3-IA3.2 (no platform -> platform established)	Platform established end-Mar 2025; longer-term sustainability depends on follow-on developments (no extra project budget), with potential to link project stakeholders to complementary, existing platforms of UNCTAD or other parts of the UN Secretariat.	Partially achieved: platform fully developed, but not operational

³¹ <https://tdap.gov.pk/policy-framework/>

³² https://www.miti.gov.my/miti/resources/NSS_141024.pdf

³³ <https://ipc.sabanciuniv.edu/Content/Images/CKeditorImages/20240808-10085077.pdf>

³⁴ Source: Project-led post-event survey data

Across participating countries, the work strengthened understanding of policy pathways for resilient, green, and transformative development, drawing explicitly on China's policy experience, while supporting the formulation of more integrated national policy strategies. Delivery, however, was uneven across countries and affected by implementation delays, resulting in variable depth of engagement and differing degrees of policy traction. Overall, the evidence indicates strong alignment with SDG 9 (Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure) and SDG 13 (Climate Action), complemented by secondary contributions to SDG 8 (Decent Work and Economic Growth) and SDG 17 (Partnerships for the Goals).

A central output of the project, according to interviewees, was the production and dissemination of **high-quality research and knowledge products**. These included country-specific sectoral studies and broader diagnostic analyses that identified strengths and binding constraints relevant to green industrial transformation in each national context. The research outputs were complemented by **practical, implementable policy recommendations at both sectoral and economy-wide levels**, enabling stakeholders to translate analytical findings into decision-ready options. Stakeholders in Pakistan, for example, appreciated the iterative process of designing the programme and establishing roadmaps, as well as the technical inputs and models offered by UNCTAD, such as the climate model. Positive feedback on the project's contribution to green industrialization in Kazakhstan³⁵ and Pakistan^{36 37} was also reported in the media.

HS

The research agenda proved adaptive in certain contexts; for example, in Türkiye, parallel domestic policy developments (including net-zero pathway discussions and climate law progress) created a policy window that the project's analytical work was able to align with and inform, even if these developments were not attributable to the project. However, those findings need to be interpreted in the absence of representative evaluation survey results, given the low survey response rate.

HS

National consultations constituted a second major delivery stream and served as the primary mechanism for stakeholder validation, alignment and partnership-building. Multi-stakeholder consultations were successfully convened across the project countries. These events helped test the relevance of the diagnostic work, socialize policy recommendations, and reinforce cross-sectoral perspectives on industrial transformation and climate objectives. Several interviewees indicated that the project brought together diverse stakeholders that would normally not meet. Participation and influence varied by context: Pakistan and Malaysia demonstrated particularly strong engagement and clearer pathways to policy uptake, while Türkiye's initial consultation was more academic in composition, and subsequent efforts improved policymaker participation but remained comparatively limited.

HS

The project also delivered substantive **regional engagement** through convening regional meetings in China that facilitated **South-South peer learning** and practical exposure to policy implementation. These meetings were consistently described in interviews as distinctive for combining technical content with applied insights derived from site visits to Chinese

³⁵ <https://sdsnkz.nu.edu.kz/news/tpost/k0z247c6c1-sdsn-kazakhstan-participates-in-national>

³⁶ <https://www.dawn.com/news/1894510>

³⁷ <https://www.sprc.org.pk/second-national-consultation-on-green-industrialization-in-pakistan-unctad-sprc/>

firms and local governments. Importantly, the regional events extended benefits beyond the core project countries by attracting policymakers from additional countries such as Nepal, Sri Lanka, Thailand, and Indonesia, thereby broadening knowledge diffusion and reinforcing SDG 17 contributions through regional cooperation and exchange. Interviewees also valued the regional meetings held in China for enabling cross-country learning, and first-hand exposure to China’s planning and coordination model.

In several countries, outputs resulted in demonstrable **outcome-level effects**. In Pakistan, delivery was particularly strong. Multiple sectoral studies were completed (including additional sectors added in response to government demand), senior-level engagement was secured, and project insights materially **informed national policy processes**, most notably the Strategic Trade Policy Framework (2025–2030), ³⁸ and follow-on cross-ministry interactions on green industrialization and financing.

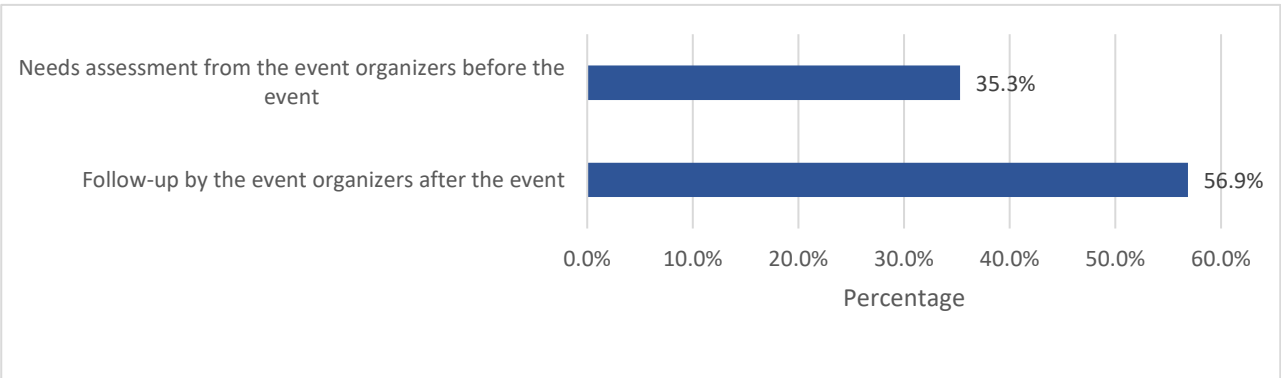
In Malaysia, strong strategic alignment with national industrial and net-zero priorities supported a clear sectoral focus (e.g., semiconductors, electric vehicles (EVs), advanced manufacturing), and the project generated **spillover effects across related policy workstreams**, including climate finance and a separate semiconductor industrial policy initiative³⁹.

Kazakhstan demonstrated **high-level participation** through the active involvement of the RCO and **effective coordination** with development partners. Project discussions addressed the “energy trilemma” (carbon neutrality, growth, and energy security) and benefited from relevant technical expertise.

In the second national consultation in Türkiye, all respondents to the project-led survey, including government respondents, **endorsed the Türkiye policy recommendations** from the project-funded research papers, indicating strong stakeholder alignment with the proposed strategy. Türkiye also demonstrated institutional commitment to the regional mechanism by having a national university formally endorse the AGDPN Terms of Reference, thereby supporting the establishment of the partnership network.

Pre- and post-event engagement

Figure 11: Project team’s pre- and post-event engagement with participants



³⁸ <https://tdap.gov.pk/policy-framework/>

³⁹ https://www.miti.gov.my/miti/resources/NSS_141024.pdf

n=51; source: Evaluation survey

The evaluation also inquired about the project's pre- and post-event engagement (see Figure 11). 35% of respondents reported that a needs assessment was conducted before organizing the country or regional events, while 57% reported post-event follow-up by project staff.

 Two planned outputs were delivered only partially or with a delay. First, the AGDPN advanced in design and foundational setup. Terms of reference were prepared, and a virtual platform was reported as developed. However, the network's operational sustainability remains constrained by the absence of secured post-project funding and limited evidence of active facilitation beyond a repository function. Post-project funding would ensure continuous maintenance of the digital platform, the regular curation of new green development research, and the active moderation of South-South peer exchanges among partner countries. As such, while the platform was ready for use, the AGDPN is not operational, and stakeholders are uncertain about the network's status, given expectations raised about a UNCTAD-led network where project stakeholders could participate after the project ends.

 Second, the online course on green industrialization, developed in partnership with the University of Leeds, was delivered later than planned, nearing completion only toward the project's end. The first full run of the course took place between December 2025 and February 2026, after project closure. While this delayed the realization of associated indicators, the course design and planned hosting arrangements create a credible pathway for ongoing availability of the research and adaptation to new contexts, resulting in a satisfactory rating.

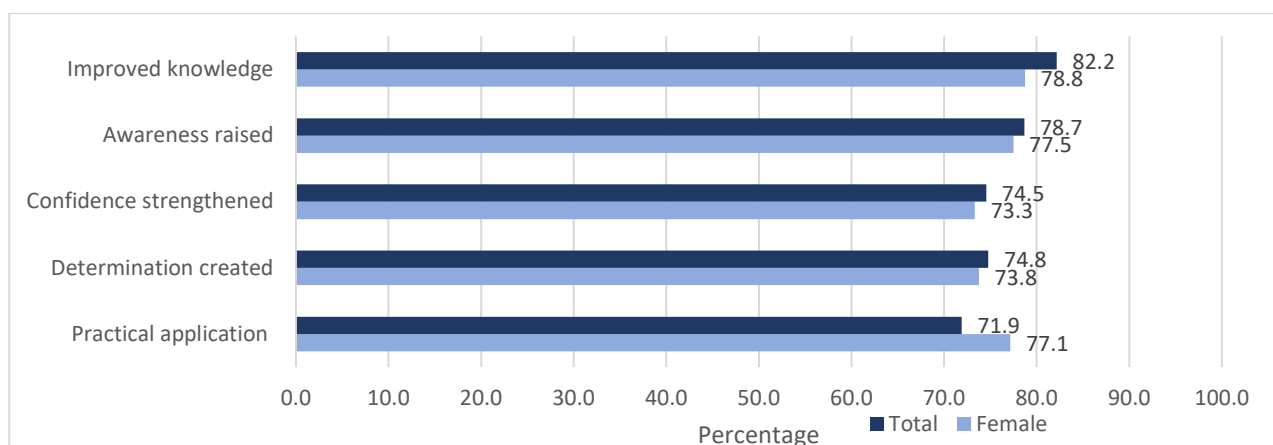
Taken together, the project's delivery can be characterized as substantively successful against its principal outputs and intended outcomes, with particularly strong performance where high-level government engagement and clear policy demand supported uptake. At the same time, implementation delays and uneven national access to senior decision-makers constrained depth in some settings and affected the timeliness of capacity-building products. The strongest evidence of outcome realization was found in policy influence and expanded scope in Pakistan, and in strategic spillovers and regional networking in Malaysia.

5.4.2 Behaviour change

 The evaluation also examined the knowledge–awareness–confidence–determination–change of practice continuum to review the degree of behaviour change created by the project. The online survey administered by the evaluator, using the Kirkpatrick evaluation approach to capacity building, revealed overall positive to very positive results, with variations across countries and gender. As stated in the methodology section, those results need to be interpreted in the context of a low survey response rate.

Figure 12 depicts the encouraging results of the project-funded events, national and regional consultations, based on the evaluation's online survey responses.

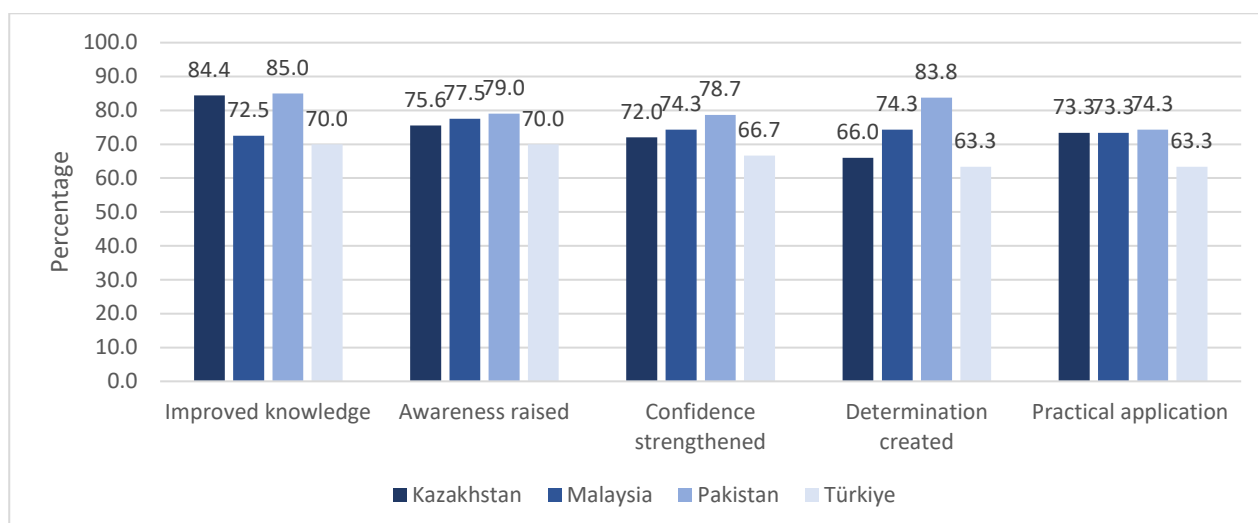
Figure 12: Results of project-funded events



n=49

Considering country-level disaggregation of survey results across the knowledge–awareness–confidence–determination–change of practice continuum, outcomes are broadly positive in all four countries, with clear differences in how strongly learning translates into intent and application, as shown in Figure 13.

Figure 13: Results of project-funded events – disaggregated by country

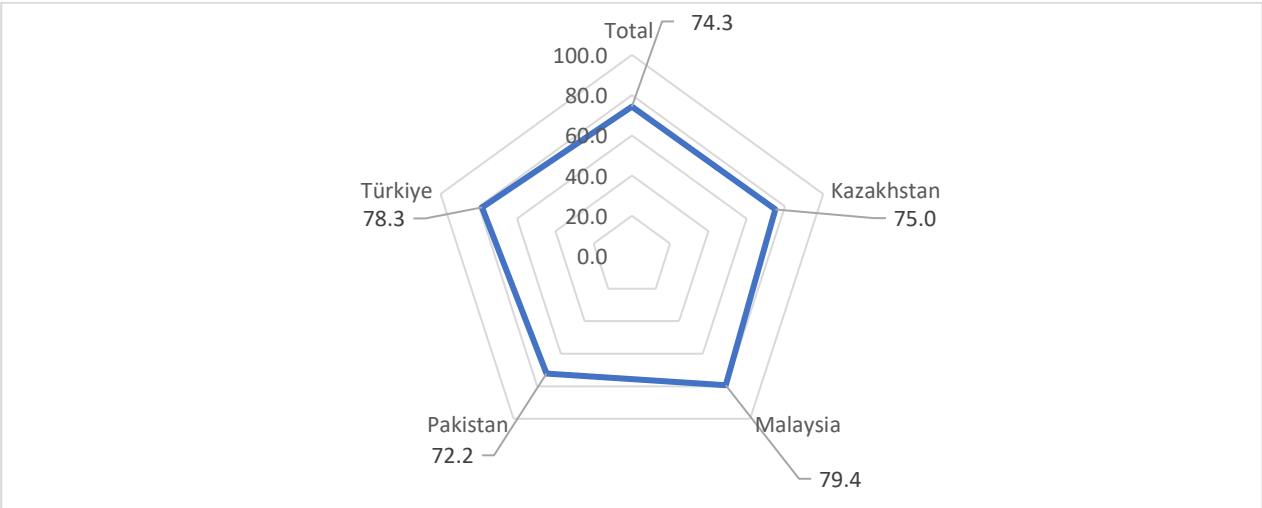


n=49

Pakistan is the strongest and most consistent performer across the full chain: very high gains in knowledge (85.0%) and awareness (79.0%) are matched by strong confidence (78.7%), a standout level of determination (83.8%), and the highest practical application (74.3%), suggesting the events most effectively converted policy learning into commitment and early behaviour change. Kazakhstan shows similarly high knowledge gains (84.4%), especially in determination (66.0%), before recovering somewhat in practical application (73.3%), indicating strong uptake of content but comparatively weaker reinforcement of intent. Malaysia presents the most even profile, with mid-to-high results across each step (72.5–77.5% from knowledge through confidence, 74.3% for determination, and 73.3% for application), reflecting steady progression from understanding to use. Türkiye records the lowest results across the continuum (70.0% knowledge/awareness; 66.7% confidence; 63.3% determination and application), pointing to more limited conversion from learning to sustained intent and practice.

Stakeholder perceptions of the overall usefulness of the events are positive, as shown in Figure 14.

Figure 14: Stakeholder perception about the usefulness of project-funded events (%)

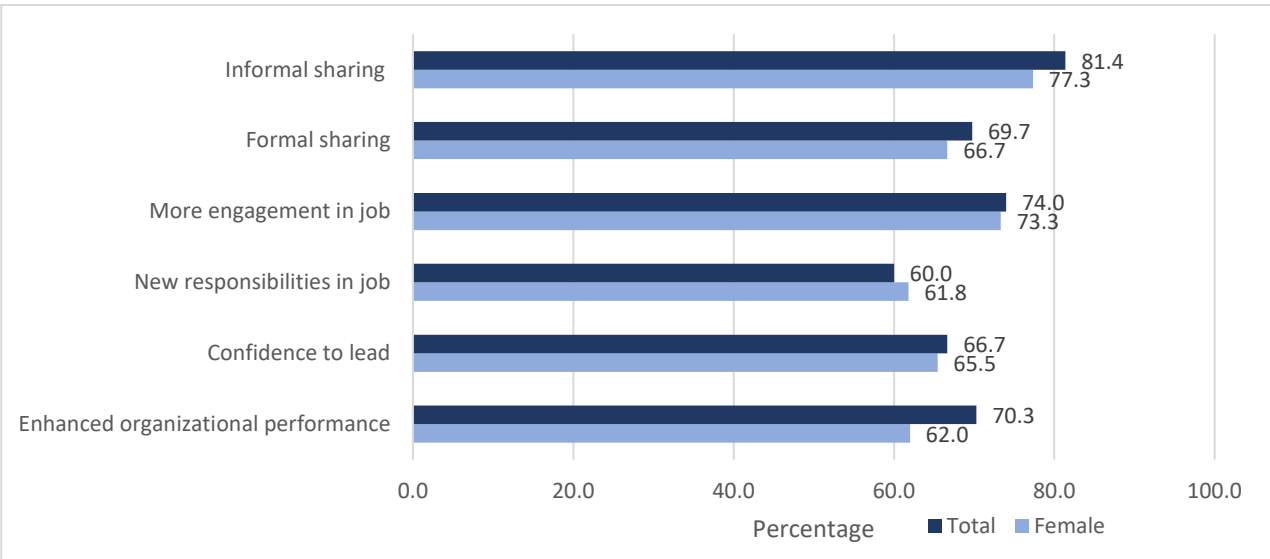


n=47

Participants from Malaysia reported the highest satisfaction (79,4%), followed by Türkiye (78,3%), Kazakhstan (75%), and Pakistan (72,2%). All these countries are close to the average of 74,3%, which includes stakeholders from non-project countries. When disaggregating the total results by sex, 68,9% of female respondents found the events useful, compared to 77,1% of men.

The online survey also inquired about the specific use of knowledge acquired at project-funded events and the effects on the participants and their institutions, providing interesting insights. The gender-disaggregated results in Figure 15 suggest that the events on integrated policy strategies and regional policy coordination are driving strong workplace diffusion overall, while women report slightly weaker spillover effects in several areas.

Figure 15: Post-event use and effects

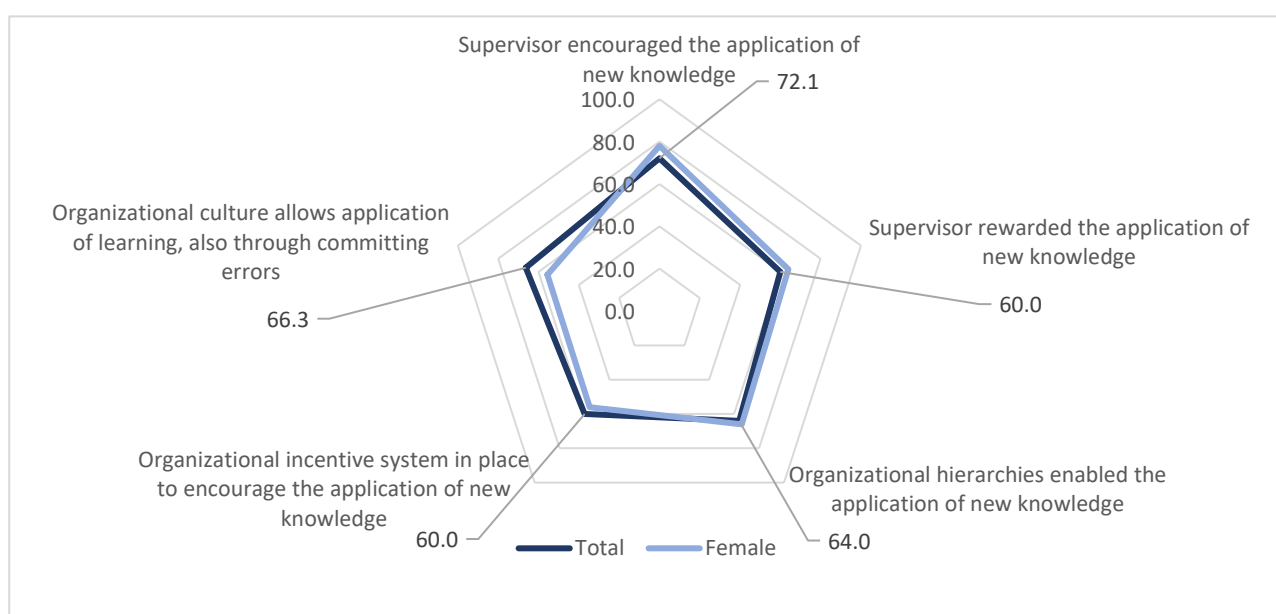


n=44

Informal sharing remains high but is slightly lower among women (77.4%) than the overall average (81.4%), and the same pattern holds for formal sharing (66.7% among women vs 69.7% overall). Day-to-day engagement is essentially comparable (73.3% among women vs 74.0% overall), indicating that the content is being taken up and used in routine work at similar levels.

The most meaningful differences emerge where influence and institutional traction matter most. Women report marginally lower confidence in their leadership (65.4% vs 66.7% overall) but slightly higher uptake of new responsibilities (61.8% vs 60.0% overall). The largest gap is in perceived enhanced organizational performance, where women's ratings are notably lower (62.0% vs 70.3% overall). Finally, the evaluation sheds light on the rationale for using knowledge acquired at project-funded events and on the effects on participants and their institutions, as presented in Figure 16.

Figure 16: Rationale for the application of knowledge gained at project-funded events (%)



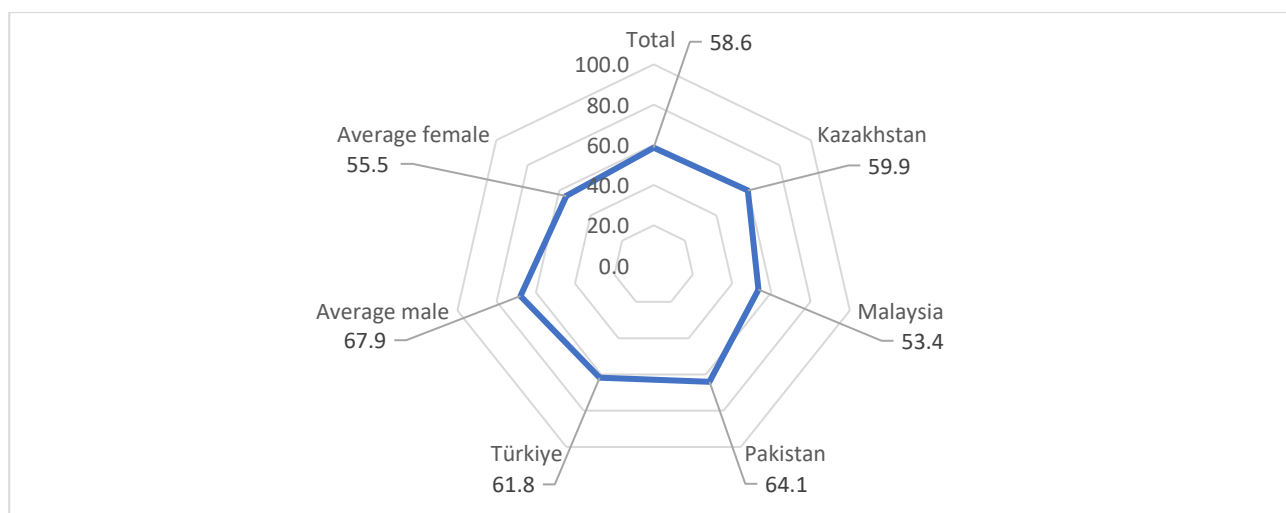
n=44

The enabling environment shows a mixed picture: immediate managerial support is strong, with women reporting higher supervisor encouragement (78.0% vs 72.1%) and rewards for applying new knowledge (64.0% vs 60.0%) than the total. Structural factors are moderately supportive and slightly more positive for women regarding hierarchies (66.0% vs 64.0%), but system-level conditions lag. Women rate organizational incentives slightly lower (56.0% vs 60.0%) and, most notably, perceive a substantially less supportive learning culture that tolerates experimentation and errors (55.6% vs 66.3%). Overall, the application appears driven more by supervisors than by institutionalized incentives and culture, with the largest constraint for women sitting at the organizational culture level.

The analysis of behaviour change insights closes with the attribution question, revealing interesting nuances between project countries and between male and female participants in national and regional project-funded events. The survey enquired “How much of applying the indicated knowledge/skills to your workplace can you attribute directly to the UNCTAD event(s)”?

Figure 17 shows that the overall attribution of respondents' knowledge and skills in Resilient, Green and Transformative Development credited to the UNCTAD project is 58.6%, meaning participants attribute about 41.4% of their knowledge in these areas to sources other than the project.

Figure 17: Attribution of knowledge and skills around Resilient, Green and Transformative Development, including policy Strategies and Regional Policy Coordination (%)



n=44

The country-level data reveals varying degrees of UNCTAD project impact. Pakistan shows the highest attribution at 64.1%, suggesting the project had a particularly strong influence there, with only about 36% of knowledge coming from elsewhere. Türkiye (61.8%) and Kazakhstan (59.9%) also show above-average attribution to the project. Malaysia stands out with the lowest attribution at 53.4%, indicating that nearly half (46.6%) of participants' knowledge comes from other sources, suggesting either stronger pre-existing capacity or alternative training programs in that country.

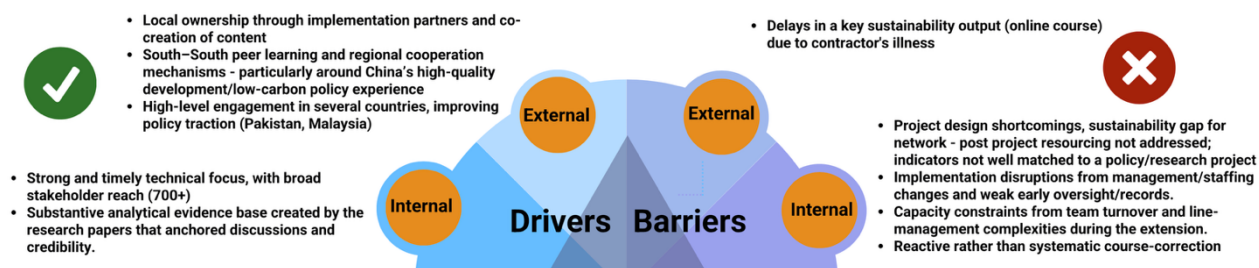
The gender dimension is noteworthy. Male participants attribute 67.9% of their knowledge to the UNCTAD project, while female participants attribute only 55.5%; a 12-percentage point gap. This suggests that women may have drawn more heavily on other sources for building their expertise (44.5% from elsewhere).

5.4.3 Factors affecting project results (EQ7)



Overall, project results were enabled by a strong technical proposition, high engagement, and a substantial body of analytical outputs, but constrained by prolonged early-stage management/coordination weaknesses, staffing disruptions, and delays to one sustainability-critical output, the online course, and non-operationalization of another, the AGDPN. Figure 18 summarizes the results.

Figure 18: Factors influencing the project implementation and results attainment



Key enabling factors

The project benefited from a **strong and timely technical focus** on integrated policy strategies for resilient, green, and transformative development, including selected sector insights such as energy transition challenges in the power sector or, sectoral decarbonisation pathways for textiles, agriculture, and transport, or social dimensions of green transition, which resonated with national priorities and helped stimulate policy debate across all four beneficiary countries. It achieved **broad stakeholder reach**, engaging 742 participants with strong representation from government, academia, civil society, and the private sector. This engagement was underpinned by a **substantial analytical “backbone”**: a large volume of diagnostic and strategy reports, alongside country- and sector-specific policy papers, which strengthened the credibility of discussions and generated durable reference materials intended to support future work, including the planned online course. **Local ownership** was reinforced through close coordination with national implementation partners and contributors, who helped co-create paper topics and engagement strategies and ensured alignment with evolving country agendas. The project also added value through **South-South peer learning** and regional cooperation, with regional conferences, particularly experience-sharing on China's high-quality development and low-carbon policy approach, widely described by interviewees as distinctive and highly valued. These efforts contributed to establishing foundations for the AGDPN and its online platform, designed to sustain collaboration beyond the project period (but not implementable due to UNCTAD budget constraints). In several countries, **high-level participation (ministerial or vice-ministerial)** further increased policy traction, including at least one instance where project analysis prompted direct ministerial follow-up and internal circulation within government.

Constraining factors

At the same time, delivery was constrained by operational and monitoring limitations that reduced efficiency and delayed some intended benefits. Implementation was disrupted by **management and staffing changes** and by **weak early oversight and record-keeping**, contributing to substantial slippage. During the extension period, **operational weaknesses** intensified due to turnover among assistant staff, internal transfers, and line-management complexities that limited the new project manager's authority over key team members for much of the period, increasing delivery pressure toward the end of the project. A major sustainability output, the online course, was delayed beyond project closure because of the **unplanned medical leave** of the primary service provider and **poor risk management**, postponing achievement of the associated indicators. **Monitoring also proved challenging** - indicators were not well tailored to a macro-level policy and research initiative, and survey response rates were highly uneven (notably very low in Kazakhstan), limiting the strength and

comparability of evidence from participant feedback. Finally, while the project demonstrated adaptive problem-solving, the experience highlighted a tendency toward **reactive rather than systematic course-correction**, underscoring the value of clearer early-warning mechanisms to address emerging delays. Sustainability prospects are promising in concept through the AGDPN/platform and online course, but the **lack of dedicated post-project resourcing for continued network engagement** creates a risk that momentum and networks may be difficult to maintain without follow-on funding.

Based on the above analysis, Figure 19 examines more closely the project's reconstructed Theory of Change (ToC) elements based on the project proposal, combined with a validation using a traffic light scale. The ToC shows a **"split validity"**: strong technical validation (green lights for expertise, participation, national-level work) but critical challenges in systemic elements (red lights clustered around sustainability, coordination, and political assumptions).

Of the eleven project assumptions, only two fully held. The analysis reveals that **micro-level assumptions held** (expert quality, stakeholder engagement) while **macro-level assumptions failed** (regional mechanisms, UN coordination, political stability, cross-cutting integration). This aligns with the evaluation's core finding: *technical excellence necessary but not sufficient*. While broadly aligned with national priorities, and successful in producing quality outputs, the project relied on the assumption that high-quality technical inputs would automatically translate into sustained systemic change, an assumption that did not consistently hold in practice. **The 71% non-green rate** (ten out of 14 yellow and red ratings) indicates the project proposal significantly underestimated implementation complexity and overestimated institutional sustainability mechanisms.

A key design assumption about the project's sustainability, namely the establishment of the AGDPN, failed because UNCTAD's post-project funding was not assured amid the current UN funding crisis. The project also launched the network at the very end, without a fundraising strategy in place, suggesting a design – implementation gap. At the same time, a second sustainability assumption appears to hold, as the project-funded online course incorporates the project's research findings and is hosted on the UNCTAD e-learning platform. UNCTAD envisages continuing the e-training course, which would require limited maintenance, and broadening its reach beyond the four project countries.

Figure 19: Project's Theory of Change elements and validation

Element from project document	Validation using final evaluation report	
Main problem analysis		
Problem 1: countries faced post-COVID vulnerability and climate pressures, and needed integrated policy strategies to address “binding constraints” to resilient, green, transformative development	Confirmed as relevant and demand-aligned in practice: the evaluation found very high coherence with national development strategies and strong traction where national policy demand and ownership existed.	
Problem 2: Asia lacked adequate regional policy coordination / effective cooperation frameworks for green transformation	Partly validated: the evaluation found moderate success in regional cooperation (peer learning, spillovers), but the intended regional mechanism did not function as planned after launch, no pull from a regional mechanism or project countries to lead.	
Results chain		
Results chain (activities/outputs → outcomes): HQD policy papers + regional conference; diagnostics + regional consultation; policy strategy reports + national consultations + training/online course; AGDPN conference + platform → improved understanding, improved national capacity, and sustained regional coordination	Largely supported for knowledge, dialogue, and national-level influence, including through online course; weak for the “sustained regional coordination” leg because AGDPN/platform did not become operational post-project.	 
Main assumptions		
National alignment and good local partners are sufficient to achieve policy impact	National alignment opens doors and creates entry points, but it's not sufficient for scale or sustainability without broader UN system backing.	
Active participation and full support of stakeholders	Mostly held: evaluation reported broad reach (hundreds of participants) and high-level government participation (ministerial/vice-ministerial in 3 of 4 countries).	
Stakeholder responsiveness to diagnostics and policy recommendations	Partly held: evaluation documented demonstrable outcome-level effects and concrete policy influence in some settings (especially Pakistan; also spillovers in Malaysia), but uptake was not uniform.	
Adequate institutional/governance frameworks and baseline technical capacity to absorb and apply outputs	Mixed: evaluation noted strong uptake where policy demand and ownership were clear, but also reported delays and uneven depth, plus monitoring limitations that constrained comparability.	
Assumption: availability of qualified experts (China HQD + country contexts)	Largely supported: evaluation highlighted a strong technical proposition, substantial analytical backbone, and high-quality implementation partners.	
Assumption (explicit in proposal): Projects engagement with UN entities and UNCT/RC engagement would increase synergies and coordination	Mixed: evaluation identified a gap in systematic UN system coordination (with Kazakhstan as a partial exception) and room for improvement with other UN agencies. UN coherence is a strategic multiplier—without it, the project left complementary resources unused, risked duplication, and worked harder for smaller results	
Assumption: AGDPN and platform would help sustain engagement; post-project resourcing would be sufficient to operationalize the network	Not supported: evaluation found no convincing sustainability of AGDPN due to missing post-project resourcing plan, limited resource mobilization, and limited evidence of active facilitation beyond a repository function.	
Assumption: adequate financial resources would be available to implement integrated strategies and sustain key mechanisms	Partly failed for sustainability: evaluation explicitly linked the non-operationalization of AGDPN to lack of assured post-project funding and limited resource mobilization results. Worked in the case of the online course	
Assumption: political stability and absence of major shocks like natural disasters	The evaluation reported that natural disasters in project countries, shifting political priorities, and ministerial hesitation in Türkiye affected consistency of participation, indicating sensitivity to political context.	
Assumption / cross-cutting logic: gender equality would be strengthened through strategies, a dedicated gender paper, agenda items, and encouraging women's participation	Weakly validated: evaluation found gender equality was not clearly embedded in the project implementation (except one dedicated research output), and stakeholder feedback described gender mainstreaming as uneven/ad hoc.	

5.5 Sustainability

Key findings: The sustainability of results is at risk due to a non-operational AGDPN and no resource mobilization; but partly offset by UNCTAD's ongoing e-learning course.

- Capacity-building and learning were supported through the design of an online course to codify learning and extend reach. Delivery took place between December 2025 and February 2026 with plans to continue via its current location, UNCTAD's e-learning platform.
- The project leaves behind substantive knowledge products (diagnostic/strategy reports and policy papers) that can sustain national and regional policy dialogue.
- The project aimed to establish the AGDPN and an associated online platform to maintain regional collaboration, peer exchange, and ongoing visibility of outputs, though neither is operational.
- Institutional uptake varies: high-level engagement is evident in three of four countries (including ministerial follow-up in Pakistan), with longer-term continuity likely through links to existing UN and regional networks.

MS

The evaluative evidence shows that the sustainability of the project is at risk, with the AGDPN and the related platform as key vehicles for sustaining regional exchange being non-operational and no further resource mobilization by UNCTAD. At the same time, the online course has been launched and is ongoing, which could sustain the use of project-funded materials, as it will be part of UNCTAD's e-learning repository. This led to a “moderately satisfactory” rating, based on the evaluator's use of the 2030 Sub-Fund rating system⁴⁰.

5.5.1 Measures taken to ensure sustainability of project results, capacities and partnerships and evidence of institutional or policy uptake (EQ8)

MS

The project took several deliberate steps to sustain results, capacities, and partnerships beyond its formal end, as depicted in Figure 20. Sustainability was pursued through institutionalized cooperation mechanisms and durable knowledge assets. The project aimed to establish the AGDPN and an associated online platform to maintain regional collaboration, peer exchange, and ongoing visibility of outputs, though neither is operational. In parallel, it produced a substantial body of diagnostic and strategy reports and country- and sector-specific policy papers that provided a credible analytical foundation for continued policy engagement and future programming. Capacity-building was further embedded through the design of an online course intended to consolidate and disseminate project knowledge more widely. Although its roll out slipped beyond the project end-date due to unplanned medical leave of the service provider, the course is currently being implemented and available on the UNCTAD e-learning platform. Sustainability prospects were also strengthened by co-creation with local implementation partners and contributors, which reinforced local ownership and alignment with evolving national agendas, and by South–South peer learning modalities

⁴⁰ Measures taken to ensure sustainability of project results: MS (score 2); AGDPN: Long-term viability, resource mobilization and continued stakeholder engagement: SS (score 1)) = 3 out of a maximum of 8. $(3/8) * 4 = 1.5\%$

(including valued regional experience-sharing) designed to sustain demand for continued engagement through AGDPN.

There is also evidence of institutional and policy uptake, particularly through high-level engagement and follow-up actions. The project report highlights ministerial or vice-ministerial participation in three of four beneficiary countries and documents at least one instance in Pakistan where engagement led to direct ministerial follow-up and the circulation of project analyses within government; clear indications that outputs were not only received but also used within institutional processes.

At the same time, the analysis notes sustainability risks. The delayed online course postponed the achievement of a key sustainability indicator, and the absence of dedicated post-project resourcing for continued UNCTAD engagement creates uncertainty about how consistently AGDPN/platform activities can be maintained without follow-on funding.

Figure 20: Summary of the project's sustainability measures

Sustainability / uptake dimension	Measures taken	Evidence of continuation or uptake	Key risks / gaps noted
Regional partnerships and collaboration	AGDPN launched and related online platform set up to support ongoing regional cooperation and exchange. However, not operational	Foundations laid for continued networking and visibility of outputs via platform mechanisms	No dedicated post-project funding provision for ongoing UNCTAD-linked engagement
Knowledge continuity and institutional memory	Produced a large set of diagnostic/strategy reports and policy papers as durable reference materials	Outputs used to anchor national/regional debates and intended to remain usable beyond the project period	Value depends on continued dissemination and institutional anchoring; not all uptake is systematically evidenced
Capacity building and learning	Designed an online course to codify learning and extend reach	Course design reported near completion with first run anticipated shortly after project period	Course delivery delayed beyond closure due to partner illness, plans to continue in the future on UNCTAD e-learning platform
Local ownership and alignment with national agendas	Co-creation of paper topics and engagement strategies with local implementation partners and contributors	Greater likelihood of continued use and relevance as content aligns with evolving national priorities	Continuity can be affected by partner capacity constraints and turnover
Policy traction and institutional uptake	High-level engagement strategy, including convening senior government stakeholders	Ministerial/vice-ministerial participation in 3 of 4 countries; at least one case of ministerial follow-up and internal circulation of project analysis (Pakistan)	Uptake evidence is stronger in specific cases than system-wide; monitoring limitations constrain comparability

5.5.2 AGDPN: Long-term viability, resource mobilization and continued stakeholder engagement (EQ9)



While the AGDPN was established during the project period, with its Terms of Reference in place and a virtual platform technically operational, its longer-term sustainability seems not to have been addressed⁴¹. Key enabling conditions for durability remain underdeveloped, including a dedicated post-project resourcing plan and a clear institutional home for ongoing facilitation.

Stakeholders also noted that the evolving funding environment and internal capacity constraints limit UNCTAD's ability⁴² to maintain and actively curate the platform as originally envisaged.

Resource Mobilization and Engagement Outlook

Efforts to mobilize resources to operationalize the network beyond the project appear to have yielded limited results so far, constraining the ability to move from set-up to sustained programming and outreach. Stakeholder interest in continued engagement is present, particularly among some participants in Türkiye and Malaysia, but has not yet translated into consistent participation, and the platform is still perceived by several respondents as remaining “under development” despite project closure. In this context, there are credible opportunities to strengthen continuity by linking project stakeholders to **existing regional and thematic networks** that have expanded since the project began, including those supported by UNCTAD and other parts of the UN system. This approach could preserve the project's partnership and knowledge-sharing gains while avoiding fragmentation in an already crowded landscape of networks and may offer a more realistic pathway to sustained engagement given UNCTAD's current coordination bandwidth and the growth of complementary networks in this policy space.

⁴¹ By decision of UNCTAD's SG (at the time), no further internal resources, including staff resources, can be dedicated to the network.

⁴² As of now, this ability is non-existent.

5.6 Cross-cutting issues

Key findings: Cross-cutting integration was uneven in the project design and implementation

- The project integrated environmental sustainability explicitly and as a core pillar within the resilient, green, transformative development agenda.
- Gender equality was embedded as a design feature, but implementation was limited, except for one dedicated research output.
- LNOB: The project had broad stakeholder reach (e.g., 742 participants across 4 countries and representation across sectors), but documents and interviews do not show targeted inclusion strategies for marginalized or underrepresented groups.
- Disability inclusion was less evidenced in the project's design or implementation.

MS

The evaluation finds that the integration of “cross-cutting” principles was uneven, with a “moderately satisfactory” rating ⁴³. Environmental sustainability was very strongly embedded as a core substantive pillar, whereas gender equality, disability inclusion, and explicit “leaving no one behind” (LNOB) approaches are less evidenced as systematically integrated into implementation, except for a research paper on gender titled “Gender

Equality and Green Transformation in Türkiye”⁴⁴.

5.6.1 Integration of environmental sustainability, disability inclusion, and “leaving no one behind” principles (EQ10)

Environmental sustainability

HS

Environmental sustainability has been deeply and explicitly integrated into project design and delivery, given the project's central framing of resilient, green, and transformative development and its emphasis on integrated policy strategies. This theme was operationalized through national consultations, regional conferences and a substantial set of analytical outputs (diagnostic/strategy reports and policy papers), and reinforced through South–South learning (including exchanges on low-carbon/high-quality development experience) and the establishment of AGDPN. Tangible results in this area therefore include (i) a large body of environment/green-development-oriented policy analysis, (ii) multi-stakeholder policy dialogue at scale, and (iii) regional cooperation mechanisms to continue discourse and knowledge-sharing (recommended for relocation to existing UN Secretariat networks).

The research papers underscore the environmental sustainability lens of the project: the portfolio focuses on how emerging and middle-income economies are integrating climate objectives into development strategies, with a strong emphasis on green industrialisation, energy transition, and sector-specific decarbonisation pathways. Collectively, the papers

⁴³ Environmental sustainability: HS (score 4); gender equality: SS (score 1); disability inclusion: NS (score 0); LNOB: SS (score 1) = 6 out of a maximum of 16. $(6/16) * 4 = 1.5$

⁴⁴ Özge İzdeş Terkoğlu, 2025: Gender Equality and Green Transformation in Türkiye. Integrated Policy Strategies and Regional Policy Coordination for Resilient, Green and Transformative Development: Supporting Selected Asian BRI Partner

Countries to Achieve 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda UNCTAD Research Paper No. 9.

underscore the need to align climate policy with industrial, trade and social objectives to support sustainable and inclusive growth. Figure 21 provides details of the research topics disaggregated by country.

Figure 21: Topics of project-funded research papers, underscoring the project's environmental sustainability lens

Country	Main Research Themes
Malaysia	• Climate scenarios and macroeconomic policy responses to climate change • Energy transition challenges, especially in the power sector • Green industrialisation strategies and structural constraints • Electric vehicle transition: policies, performance, and prospects • Greening strategic industries (e.g. semiconductors) • Role of state-owned enterprises and governance in green transformation
Pakistan	• Green industrialisation frameworks and binding constraints • Sectoral decarbonisation pathways (textiles, agriculture, transport) • Micro-sectoral greening of manufacturing and consumer goods industries (wheat, vegetable oil & ghee, plastics, kitchenware, detergents, dyeing & finishing) • Climate finance access, including the Loss and Damage Fund • Integration of environmental objectives into industrial and trade policy
Türkiye	• Economy-wide green transformation strategies • Power sector decarbonisation and renewable energy transitions (solar, wind) • Industrial transformation and firm-level manufacturing analysis • Role of finance, investment constraints, and path dependency • Sectoral studies in agriculture, energy, and transport • Social dimensions of green transition, including gender equality
Kazakhstan	• Economy-wide green transformation and sustainable development challenges • Decarbonisation of fossil-fuel-dependent sectors (oil, gas, coal) • Energy sector transition and diversification • Transport sector decarbonisation opportunities • Climate change adaptation alongside mitigation
China	• Environmental dimensions of trade and investment under “30–60” decarbonisation goals • Low-carbon development strategies and South–South cooperation • Alignment of industrial, trade, and climate policy

Gender equality



Gender equality was clearly visible as a design feature, but implementation was limited, apart from one research paper titled “Gender Equality and Green Transformation in Türkiye”. Multiple stakeholder comments characterize gender mainstreaming as uneven or ad hoc and recommend embedding it explicitly in research papers’ ToRs and resourcing it

with dedicated gender expertise.

The initial project document emphasized the importance of gender, for example, Output 1.1: Eight policy papers on China's experience, where the "dimension of Gender equality and poverty alleviation will be included", Output 1.2: "dimension of gender equality and the vulnerable groups will be included through a policy paper that covers the issue analysis for four countries", Output 1.4: A regional consultation where "Gender equality and development needs of vulnerable groups (leaving no one behind) will be included in meeting agenda" and "women representative[s] will be required for panel discussion".

However, interviewees described the project's gender integration as producing mixed results. Although a high-quality, standalone gender paper was created for Türkiye, other countries, such as Pakistan, experienced only partial integration, and gender-related terms were often simply "sprinkled" into various background papers without a systematic approach. There is no mention of gender analysis in other research outputs or of gender-responsive policy framing.

Two researchers noted that the terms of reference for the project-funded research papers did not include any explicit gender-related provisions, which resulted in the issue not being addressed in subsequent research. However, this finding is challenged by the project team, who stated that authors were encouraged by the project team to include a gender section during the feedback process for each paper, but this was not always achieved.

Nonetheless, the project team encouraged female participation in the project-funded events.

The project results concerning knowledge, awareness, and behaviour change are often slightly higher for men than for women. For new job responsibilities in resilient, green, and transformative development (61,8% vs. an average of 60%), women are engaging with and applying the learning but may face more constraints in translating it into broader organizational gains, visibility, or recognized performance improvements, as shown in the evaluation's survey results.

While immediate managerial support is strong, with women reporting, through the evaluation survey, higher supervisor encouragement to apply knowledge gained from the project-funded events and materials in the evaluation survey, women face system-level conditions (56.0% vs 60.0%) and, most notably, perceive a substantially less supportive learning culture that tolerates experimentation and errors (55.6% vs 66.3%).

As a result, any contribution is, at most, indirect, delivered through broad policy dialogue and knowledge products rather than demonstrably gender-transformative or gender-responsive. Moving forward, some interviewees viewed the Türkiye analysis as having significant potential because it establishes a replicable methodology for sector-specific gender analysis.

Disability inclusion



Disability inclusion is not documented in the project design and implementation, as it was not a requirement at the time of project conceptualisation. There is no reference to accessibility measures for events or digital products (e.g., accessible venues, captioning, screen-reader compatibility), intentional outreach to organizations of persons with disabilities, or disability-disaggregated participation and satisfaction data.

Consequently, no tangible disability inclusion results can be confirmed from the available evidence. One management-level reflection frames disability as still “early stage” and not yet a default design feature. Where it appears at all, it is mentioned indirectly as a recommendation to improve the accessibility of event materials (e.g., accessible formats), as gathered through the evaluation's online survey⁴⁵.

⁴⁵ While it was not a requirement at the time of project conceptualisation, UNCTAD introduced in 2022 mandatory requirements for project managers to perform an ex-ante assessment during the project design stage to ensure human rights and disability inclusion are integrated into all technical cooperation programmes. Managers are expected to use a standardized checklist to identify marginalized groups (such as those excluded due to race, gender, or disability) and analyse the root causes of disparities by consulting primary sources such as the Common Country Analyses. The guidelines emphasize prioritizing these groups in project activities, ensuring they have an active role in decision-making, and removing barriers to official information. Furthermore, project managers must implement monitoring measures to detect unintended impacts on marginalized populations and

“Leaving no one behind” (LNOB)



The project demonstrated broad stakeholder engagement, involving 742 participants from four countries and representing government, academia, civil society, and the private sector, reflecting an inclusive approach. At a macro level, LNOB was supported by analyzing how green industrial policies impact disadvantaged groups, especially workers in fossil sector actors, youth, minority groups) or through LNOB-oriented indicators. Therefore, the most defensible tangible result is the breadth of engagement across stakeholder categories, rather than evidence of inclusion of those most at risk of being left behind. Qualitative suggestions captured during the evaluation reinforce that LNOB would benefit from systematically widening participation and agency (e.g., SMEs, youth, civil society, women-led enterprises) and improving the accessibility and language coverage of materials.

ensure physical accessibility by selecting inclusive workshop facilities and venues. These requirements were not applied retroactively to this project.

6. Conclusions

The conclusions logically follow from the findings and address evaluation questions relevant to the intended users' decision-making. They are evidence-based, grouped by evaluation criteria, and reference the evaluation questions (EQ), thereby answering the “so what” question. Figure 22 clearly shows the robust mapping from key evaluation findings to conclusions and recommendations. Lessons learned and good practices are presented in section 8.

Relevance

Alignment without demand pull: The project aligned with UNCTAD's mandate (across nine core mandate areas), the 2030 Agenda (SDGs 9 and 13), and participating countries' green transformation priorities. However, it seemed that UNCTAD identified opportunities and enlisted countries' participation, which was confirmed by two countries' Note verbale before project document approval, rather than responding to explicit country requests. This explains why relevance was uneven and policy traction varied by country, ranging from high uptake in Pakistan and Malaysia to mixed results in Türkiye (EQ1).

Access to decision-makers determines whether relevant research translates into policy influence. Türkiye demonstrated strong thematic relevance (comprehensive coverage, including the just transition and gender) but achieved lower policy traction due to limited access to top decision-makers. Pakistan, by contrast, embedded project inputs directly into its Strategic Trade Policy Framework 2025-2030 because the project secured sustained ministerial engagement. Relevance creates the possibility of influence; access to policymakers determines whether that possibility is realized. The project design failed to treat “relevance” as a test of decision-making opportunities and stakeholder pull, not only thematic alignment (EQ1/EQ2).

Coherence

High national coherence created policy entry points: Close alignment with national development strategies and the use of credible in-country partners enabled high-level participation and increased the likelihood that analytical work would enter real policy processes. In practice, national fit served as the main accelerator of uptake (EQ3).

Weak UN-system coherence reduced leverage: Room for improvement in the systematic coordination with UN Country Teams/Resident Coordinators and other UN agencies meant missed opportunities to (a) amplify results through complementary mandates, (b) reduce duplication, (c) sustain results through on-going engagement on the topic, (d) communicate around results, and (e) mobilise additional resources for follow-up support, among others. Coherence gaps reduced scale, sustainability, and perceived neutrality even when national alignment was strong (EQ3).

Efficiency

Resilience and early warning emerged as key constraints: management transitions, limited backup capacity, and weak early oversight and record-keeping contributed to delays, while later acceleration showed that recovery was possible once coordination strengthened. The

project's main efficiency lesson is organizational: delivery resilience and course-correction systems mattered more than the technical complexity of outputs (EQ5).

Effectiveness

The project model worked where demand existed and access was enabled: Delivery of most outputs at high quality (research, consultations, and regional learning) produced outcome-level effects in several settings, with the clearest policy influence where governments actively engaged and requested or usefully absorbed the work (notably Pakistan, with spillovers also visible in Malaysia). The project's effectiveness was less about producing outputs and more about converting them into policy traction through high-level engagement and timing (EQ6).

Operational disruptions, monitoring limitations, and delays in key sustainability components reduced the timeliness and potential durability of results. Moreover, the project's design overestimated the extent to which strong technical inputs alone would translate into sustained systemic change. As a result, while the project was effective in generating knowledge and convening stakeholders, its longer-term influence and institutional sustainability remain uncertain without continued support and follow-up initiatives. (EQ6/EQ7).

Sustainability

Sustainability hinges on resourcing and facilitation, not just setup: The AGDPN and its associated platform were created but remain non-operational, and resource mobilization did not materialize. Thus, the intended regional sustainability mechanism risks becoming a static repository rather than a living community of practice. Sustainability is currently a structural risk, not a technical one. Without an institutional home, facilitation capacity, and a funding plan, momentum dissipates (EQ8).

More durable assets partially offset network weakness: The online course (hosted on UNCTAD's e-learning platform) and substantive knowledge products offer a lower-cost pathway for continued diffusion, reuse, and country-level uptake, which is strongest where policy processes have already absorbed the work (e.g., Pakistan). Sustainability is more likely through products and national anchoring than through regional networking unless follow-on support is secured or the network is integrated into existing UN Secretariat platforms (EQ8).

Linking to existing networks is more sustainable than creating new ones. Several respondents suggested linking project stakeholders to existing regional and thematic networks (UNCTAD, UNECE, other UN platforms) to preserve partnership gains and avoid fragmentation in an already crowded landscape. This approach recognizes UNCTAD's current coordination bandwidth and offers a more realistic pathway to sustained engagement than expecting a new network to become self-sustaining without dedicated resources. (EQ8/EQ9).

Cross-cutting issues

Integration without intentionality is insufficient. Environmental sustainability was deeply embedded as the project's substantive core (green industrialization, climate resilience, low-carbon transition) because it was the project's explicit purpose. Gender equality was part of the project design but not systematically integrated into project implementation. Gender was

the focus of one research paper (Türkiye) and addressed by encouraging female event participation, but without gender analysis in other outputs, gender-responsive policy framing, or dedicated gender expertise. Disability inclusion remains undocumented. LNOB showed broad stakeholder engagement (742 participants) but lacked targeted inclusion strategies for marginalized groups. Cross-cutting principles require the same degree of deliberate design as technical objectives; their integration cannot be assumed (EQ10).

7. Recommendations

The following recommendations are specific, relevant, actionable, targeted, and prioritized. As noted earlier, Figure 22 clearly shows the robust mapping from key evaluation findings to conclusions and recommendations. The recommendations are grouped by evaluation criteria, and all relate to the design of future projects, except for recommendation 2, which calls for immediate action by UNCTAD.

Recommendation 1: Make country selection and scoping explicitly demand-led and confirm stakeholders' engagement and understanding of the project's deliverables and timeline before committing resources. Clarity is needed especially on the specific policy problem being addressed, the intended use of the outputs, the roles and responsibilities of participating institutions, the focal points, and the decision window in which findings are expected to inform action. Articulate the country-level uptake pathway as part of the project's Theory of Change. This upfront alignment helps ensure that support is timely, relevant, and positioned to influence concrete policy processes rather than remaining analytical in nature.

Addressed to: UNCTAD DGDS, Technical Cooperation Section (TCS).

Budget implications: low to medium. Mainly staff time for screening and documentation.

Prioritization: High.

Recommendation 2: Use existing regional/thematic platforms for information sharing and convening stakeholders wherever possible, rather than creating parallel networks that are hard to sustain. Design new networks only when there is a clear niche, governance, and long-term facilitation capacity. With AGDPN, if active facilitation cannot be secured, position the platform explicitly as a knowledge repository and connect participants to functioning communities of practice instead (existing regional and thematic networks facilitated by UNCTAD, UNECE or other UN entities, e.g. ETIN or STIxNET).

Addressed to: UNCTAD DGDS.

Budget implications: Low to Medium.

Prioritization: Very High.

Recommendation 3: Strengthen implementation planning, milestone tracking, risk management, and course-correction from inception. Use the results framework as a live management tool, review risks regularly, and establish escalation procedures for delayed critical-path outputs.

Addressed to: UNCTAD DGDS.

Budget implications: Low to Medium.

Prioritization: High.

Recommendation 4: Establish a proactive communication and implementation strategy from inception. Bridge the gap between research and action by ensuring that every analytical product is delivered in a format that supports concrete decisions and is followed by structured engagement. Rather than producing stand-alone reports, UNCTAD should provide integrated “Policy Packages” that combine a concise policy brief, a practical implementation roadmap, and clear financing options. After major consultations, the project should also organize dedicated “Policy Clinics” to work directly with counterpart ministries to turn recommendations into draft measures, concept notes, or specific regulatory language ready for consideration.

Addressed to: UNCTAD DGDS.

Budget implications: Medium.

Prioritization: Medium.

Recommendation 5: Prioritise sustainability from the outset by treating mechanisms as fully funded and governed systems, rather than as end-of-project events. Before launching any platform or network, especially where no similar structures exist, ensure it has an institutional home, a minimum resourcing plan, and a concrete sustainability plan that outlines how results will be maintained over time. The project plan should also include clear and varied measures such as early resource mobilization, ongoing partner engagement, integration into existing institutional structures, capacity-building for local ownership, and mechanisms to sustain results over time.

Addressed to: UNCTAD DGDS.

Budget implications: Medium to High (depending on ambition).

Prioritization: High.

Recommendation 6: Systematically implement UNCTAD guidelines on mainstreaming gender, disability inclusion, and human rights as core design and implementation requirements. UNCTAD must shift from “participation-by-default” to a “by-design” approach by treating gender equality, disability inclusion, and the “leaving no one behind” (LNOB) principle as fundamental project requirements rather than optional targets. Specifically, these themes should be embedded directly into Terms of Reference (ToR) and the project’s results logic, supported by dedicated budget lines. Project design and oversight must require sex- and disability-disaggregated data, where available, and strict compliance with accessibility standards for all events and digital products.

Addressed to: UNCTAD DGDS, Gender Focal Point.

Budget implications: Medium.

Prioritization: Medium.

Figure 22: Main findings, conclusions, and recommendations matrix

	Main findings	Conclusions	Recommendations
Relevance	The project was designed and implemented squarely within UNCTAD's mandate while advancing 2030 Agenda priorities in participating countries. At the same time, the project design and its country selection showed uneven evidence of country-level demand articulation.	Alignment without demand pull: The project achieved alignment with UNCTAD's mandate, the 2030 Agenda (SDG 9 and 13), and participating countries' green transformation priorities. However, UNCTAD identified opportunities and convinced countries to participate, rather than responding to explicit country requests. This explains why relevance scored high on paper, but policy traction varied significantly by country—from high uptake in Pakistan and Malaysia to mixed results in Türkiye. Access to decision-makers determines whether relevant research translates into policy influence. Türkiye demonstrated strong thematic relevance (comprehensive coverage, including the just transition and gender) but achieved lower policy traction due to limited access to top decision-makers. Pakistan, by contrast, embedded project inputs directly into its Strategic Trade Policy Framework 2025-2030 because the project secured sustained ministerial engagement. Relevance creates the possibility of influence; access to policymakers determines whether that possibility is realized. The project design failed to treat “relevance” as a test of decision-making opportunities and stakeholder pull, not only thematic alignment.	For future project design: Recommendation 1: Make country selection and scoping explicitly demand-led and confirm stakeholders’ engagement and understanding of the project’s deliverables and timeline before committing resources Addressed to: UNCTAD DGDS, Technical Cooperation Section (TCS). Budget implications: low to medium. Mainly staff time for screening and documentation. Prioritization: High
	The project was broadly responsive to country needs by aligning national consultations and policy inputs to each country’s green transition priorities, with the strongest traction in Pakistan and high engagement in Malaysia and to a lesser extent in Kazakhstan, and more moderate traction in Türkiye.		
	Main findings	Conclusions	Recommendations
Coherence	The project demonstrated strong coherence with national development strategies and engaged high-quality implementation partners.	High national coherence created policy entry points: Close alignment with national development strategies and the use of credible in-country partners enabled high-level participation and increased the likelihood that analytical work would enter real policy processes. In practice, national fit served as the main accelerator of uptake. Weak UN-system coherence reduced leverage: Room for improvement in the systematic coordination with UN Country	No recommendation, is already part of UNCTAD guidance

	However, the project showed room for improvement in coordinating with UN Country Teams or other UN agencies.	Teams/Resident Coordinators and other UN agencies meant missed opportunities to (a) amplify results through complementary mandates, (b) reduce duplication, (c) sustain results through on-going engagement on the topic, (d) communicate around results, and (e) mobilise additional resources for follow-up support, among others. Coherence gaps reduced scale, sustainability, and perceived neutrality even when national alignment was strong	For future project design and for the UNCTAD project team: Recommendation 2: Use existing regional/thematic platforms for information sharing and convening stakeholders wherever possible, rather than creating parallel networks that are hard to sustain. Design new networks only when there is a clear niche, governance, and long-term facilitation capacity. With AGDPN, if active facilitation cannot be secured, position the platform explicitly as a knowledge repository and connect participants to functioning communities of practice instead (existing regional and thematic networks facilitated by UNCTAD, UNECE or other UN entities, e.g. ETIN or STIxNET). Addressed to: UNCTAD DGDS Budget implications: low. Knowledge-repository positioning is cheaper; costs relate to basic curation, maintenance, and linking users to existing communities rather than sustaining a new one. Prioritization: Very high, top priority
	Main findings	Conclusions	Recommendations
Efficiency	Timeliness & delivery: Sequencing and pace deviated considerably; modality shift from four to eight national consultations; online course delayed to December 2025/February 2026.	Implementation weaknesses, compounded by unresolved design gaps, contributed to persistent delivery disruption, requiring a no-cost extension and pushing the online course past the project end date.	For future project design: Recommendation 3: Strengthen implementation planning, milestone tracking, risk management,

	Management & finances: Early management transitions and lack of operational resilience (incl. 6-month standstill due to medical leave and limited backup) contributed to delays, later improved under a second project manager; financial execution was very strong (99.8% utilization) but required redeployments and reallocations (e.g., travel underspend vs. personnel overspend).	Resilience and early-warning were the binding constraints: Management transitions, limited backup capacity, and weak early oversight/record-keeping contributed to delays, while later acceleration showed recovery was possible once coordination strengthened. The project's main efficiency lesson is organizational: delivery resilience and course-correction systems mattered more than the technical complexity of outputs (EQ5).	and course-correction from inception. Use the results framework as a live management tool, review risks regularly, and establish escalation procedures for delayed critical-path outputs. Addressed to: UNCTAD DGDS Budget implications: low to medium. Requires additional inception effort (staff time and possibly short consultancy support for M&E/risk/cross-cutting design). Usually cost-effective by preventing delays and rework later. Prioritization: High No recommendation
	Main findings	Conclusions	Recommendations
Effectiveness	The project successfully delivered most planned outputs (4 out of 6 targets met or exceeded, with one output on course for finalization after the project's end date), including high-quality research products, national consultations, and regional knowledge-exchange events across all four beneficiary countries.	The project model worked where demand and access existed: Delivery of most outputs at high quality (research + consultations + regional learning) produced outcome-level effects in several settings, with the clearest policy influence where governments actively engaged and requested/usefully absorbed the work (notably Pakistan, with spillovers also visible in Malaysia). The project's effectiveness was less about producing outputs and more about converting them into policy traction through high-level engagement and timing.	For future project design: Recommendation 4: Establish a proactive communication and implementation strategy from inception. Bridge the gap between research and action by ensuring that every analytical product is delivered in a format that supports concrete decisions and is followed by structured engagement. Addressed to: UNCTAD DGDS Budget implications: medium. Requires additional stakeholder mapping, high-level engagement time, and follow-up touchpoints. This is typically a reallocation from lower-value activities rather than
	Research results were complemented by practical capacity-building workshops and policy recommendations at both national and sectoral levels, contributing to the formulation of integrated national policy strategies in at least one case (Pakistan)		

The project's key enabling factors included a strong technical focus with integrated policy strategies that achieved broad stakeholder reach and engagement across beneficiary countries, combined with a high-level government participation (ministerial/vice-ministerial in 3 out of 4 countries) and strong country ownership throughout implementation.		a major cost increase, but it does require deliberate budgeting for sustained engagement. Prioritization: Medium
82,2% of respondents report increased knowledge, and 78.7% increased awareness. Notably, 78.3% also reported practical application of learning. Gender differences: Women reported higher overall confidence but lower opportunities in taking on new responsibilities, relied more on external knowledge sources, and showed lower organizational performance gains; men reported higher application rates and attributed more of their knowledge directly to the project.	Gender differences point to unequal conversion of learning into opportunity: Women reported strong confidence but fewer opportunities to take on new responsibilities and lower perceived organizational performance gains, implying that capacity-building benefits can be constrained by workplace conditions even when learning occurs. The effectiveness should be judged not only by skills gained but by whether systems allow different groups to apply those skills, as achieved by the application of the evaluation's Kirkpatrick approach to assess capacity building results.	
Constraining factors included substantial delivery delays due to implementation weaknesses, compounded by unresolved design gaps, and reactive rather than systematic course correction during project implementation.	Operational disruptions, monitoring limitations, and delays in key sustainability components reduced the timeliness and potential durability of results. Moreover, the project's design overestimated the extent to which strong technical inputs alone would translate into sustained systemic change. As a result, while the project was effective in generating knowledge and convening stakeholders, its longer-term influence and institutional sustainability remain uncertain without continued support and follow-up initiatives.	

	Main findings	Conclusions	Recommendations
Sustainability	Capacity-building and learning were supported through the design of an online course to codify learning and extend reach. Delivery took place between December 2025 and February 2026 with plans to continue via its current location, UNCTAD's e-learning platform.	More durable assets partially offset network weakness: The online course (hosted on UNCTAD's e-learning platform) and the substantive knowledge products provide a lower-cost pathway for continued diffusion and reuse, and country-level uptake is strongest where policy processes already absorbed the work (e.g., Pakistan). Sustainability is more likely through products and national anchoring than through regional networking unless follow-on support is secured or the network is integrated into existing UN Secretariat platforms.	For future project design: Recommendation 5: Prioritise sustainability from the outset by treating mechanisms as fully funded and governed systems , rather than as end-of-project events. Before launching any platform or network, especially where no similar structures exist, ensure it has an institutional home, a minimum resourcing plan, and a concrete sustainability plan that outlines how results will be maintained over time. Addressed to: UNCTAD DGDS Budget implications: medium to high (depending on ambition). Active sustainability requires facilitation capacity, governance support, and communications. If resources are not available, scale the mechanism down rather than launching an unfunded "living network." Prioritization: High See also Recommendation 2
	The project leaves behind substantive knowledge products (diagnostic/ strategy reports and policy papers) that can sustain national and regional policy dialogue.		
	The project aimed to establish the AGDPN and an associated online platform to maintain regional collaboration, peer exchange, and ongoing visibility of outputs, though neither is operational.	Sustainability hinges on resourcing and facilitation, not just setup: The AGDPN and its associated platform were created but remain non-operational, and resource mobilization did not materialize. Thus, the intended regional sustainability mechanism risks becoming a static repository rather than a living community of practice. Sustainability is currently a structural risk, not a technical one. Without an institutional home, facilitation capacity, and a funding plan, momentum dissipates.	
	Institutional uptake varies: high-level engagement is evident in three of four countries (including ministerial follow-up in Pakistan), with longer-term continuity likely through links to existing UN and regional networks.	Linking to existing networks is more sustainable than creating new ones. Several respondents suggested that linking project stakeholders to existing regional and thematic networks (UNCTAD, UNECE, other UN platforms) would preserve partnership gains while avoiding fragmentation in an already crowded landscape. This approach recognizes UNCTAD's current coordination bandwidth and offers a more realistic pathway to sustained engagement than expecting a new network to become self-sustaining without dedicated resources.	

	Main findings	Conclusions	Recommendations
Cross-cutting issues	The project integrated environmental sustainability explicitly and as a core pillar within the resilient, green, transformative development agenda.	Integration without intentionality is insufficient. Environmental sustainability was deeply embedded as the project's substantive core (green industrialization, climate resilience, low-carbon transition) because it was the project's explicit purpose. Gender equality and disability inclusion were not systematically integrated into project implementation or monitoring. Gender was addressed through one research paper and encouragement in event participation but lacked gender analysis across outputs and dedicated expertise. Disability inclusion, meanwhile, remained undocumented. LNOB showed broad stakeholder engagement (742 participants) but lacked targeted inclusion strategies for marginalized groups. Cross-cutting principles require the same degree of deliberate design as technical objectives; their integration cannot be assumed.	Recommendation 6: Systematically implement UNCTAD guidelines on mainstreaming gender, disability, and human rights as core design and implementation requirements. UNCTAD must shift from "participation-by-default" to a "by-design" approach by treating gender equality, disability inclusion, and the "leaving no one behind" (LNOB) principle as fundamental project requirements rather than optional targets. Addressed to: UNCTAD DGDS Budget implications: High Prioritization: Medium
	Gender equality was included in the project design, but implementation was uneven: one dedicated research paper (Türkiye) and encouragement of female event participation, but without systematic integration across research ToRs, outputs, or gender-responsive policy framing. Disability inclusion was not documented.		
	LNOB: The project had broad stakeholder reach (e.g., 742 participants across 4 countries and representation across sectors), but documents and interviews don't show targeted inclusion strategies for marginalized or underrepresented groups.		
	Disability inclusion was not evidenced in the project's design or implementation.		

Annexes

Annex I: Evaluation ToRs

Terms of Reference (TOR)

Independent Evaluation of 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development Sub-Fund Project *“Integrated Policy Strategies and Regional Policy Coordination for Resilient, Green and Transformative Development: Supporting Selected Asian BRI Partner Countries to Achieve 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda”*

Introduction and Purpose

This document outlines the Terms of Reference (TOR) for the independent final project evaluation of the **2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development Sub-Fund Project: “Integrated Policy Strategies and Regional Policy Coordination for Resilient, Green and Transformative Development: Supporting Selected Asian BRI Partner Countries to Achieve 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda”**. The evaluation will provide accountability to UNCTAD management, the Capacity Development Programme Management Office of UN-DESA, project stakeholders, as well as UNCTAD's member States, with whom the final evaluation report will be shared.

The evaluation will systematically and objectively assess project design, project management, implementation, overall results, and the mainstreaming of UN cross-cutting issues such as gender equality and the principles of "leaving no one behind". Based on these assessments, the evaluation will formulate practical and constructive recommendations to project stakeholders, particularly UNCTAD and the Capacity Development Programme Management Office of UN-DESA, including on operational and administrative aspects, with the aim of optimising the results of future projects.

Project background

With a budget of **USD 1,198,400** (including 7% PSC), the project aimed to assist four developing countries in Asia in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and green transformation. It sought to enhance national capacities to formulate integrated policy strategies, including through South-South peer learning, and to foster regional cooperation in project-related areas, particularly through the establishment of the Asian Green Development Partnership Network (AGDPN). Experience-sharing and peer learning aimed at further enhancing the capacity of policymakers and institutions, with China's experience since 2015 in promoting high-quality development among Asian countries, serving as a potentially valuable reference point.

The four countries selected were Kazakhstan, Malaysia, Pakistan, and Türkiye. Persistent challenges posed by the climate crisis, combined with the unprecedented shock of the Covid-19 pandemic, have exposed the vulnerability of developing countries such as these, threatening to impede their efforts to achieve the SDGs. Regional cooperation and policy coordination regarding green development, meanwhile, remains inadequate. At the start of the project, the four countries were missing effective

integrated development strategies at the national level, which are essential for achieving the dual objectives of sustained economic growth and green transformation.

Specifically, they were chosen based on four criteria: (i) the countries are recovering from the COVID-19 shock while pursuing green transformation, (ii) they have the ability to leverage the network effect as Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) partners and (iii) they provide geographical representation across the Asian region.

Project activities and objectives

The project sought to foster partnerships and strengthen policy coordination at the regional level in Asia, supporting selected BRI partner countries in achieving the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda. Its overarching objective was to strengthen regional partnerships and enhance national capacities to develop integrated policy strategies for resilient, green, and transformative development. The detailed project logical framework is provided in Annex 1.

Project outcomes

The project pursued **three key outcomes**:

1. **Improved understanding** among policy researchers and makers in the target countries of:
 - The binding constraints to achieving resilient, green, and transformative development; and
 - China's policy experience in strengthening economic resilience and advancing High-Quality Development (HQD).
2. **Enhanced national capacities** in the project countries to formulate integrated development strategies in regard to green structural transformation and resilience, and foster dynamic regional cooperation.
3. **Establishment of the Asian Green Development Partnership Network (AGDPN)** to promote experience sharing, policy coordination, and economic cooperation at the regional level.

Phased Implementation Approach

To deliver these outcomes, the project was structured in three sequential phases:

- **Phase 1 – Research and Knowledge Gathering**
Conduct in-depth research on China's policy strategies for HQD to inform participating countries' policy formulation. This included reviewing relevant past project work to build synergies and avoid duplication.
- **Phase 2 – Country Diagnostics and Capacity Building**
Undertake diagnostic analyses for each project country to identify strengths and binding constraints. Deliver tailored integrated policy strategies and provide training and capacity-building activities to ensure uptake by policymakers and researchers.
- **Phase 3 – Regional Cooperation and Network Establishment**
Promote regional policy coordination on green development through the formal launch of the

AGDPN, supported by an online platform to sustain collaboration and knowledge exchange beyond the project's lifespan.

Key Outputs

Under Outcome 1 – Understanding Constraints and Policy Experience

- Eight policy papers on China's HQD experience, covering diverse policy areas and integrating gender equality and poverty alleviation dimensions.
- Regional conference in China to share findings from the policy papers
- Four national policy consultations with high-level officials and stakeholders to analyse binding constraints on green transformation policies
- Four country-specific diagnostic reports identifying national constraints.

Under Outcome 2 – Strengthened National Capacities

- Four integrated policy strategy reports, each tailored to a project country and addressing how to unlock constraints to resilient, green, and transformative development.
- Four national policy consultations with high-level officials and stakeholders to develop and discuss the strategies.
- A 12-day online training course for policymakers and researchers, drawing on project outputs and relevant international research.

Under Outcome 3 – Regional Network and Collaboration

- High-level regional conference to launch the AGDPN and foster policy coordination.
- Creation of an online platform to operationalize the AGDPN and ensure its long-term sustainability.
- Ongoing platform maintenance and development of strategies to expand AGDPN's regional visibility and effectiveness.

Partnerships

The project engaged a wide range of stakeholders from government, academia, civil society, and the private sector. Key partners included the Khazanah Research Institute (KRI), Malaysia; Project Office of Central Asia for Climate Change and Green Energy/Central Asia Climate Fund and National Bureau of Economic Research, Kazakhstan; Kadir Has University, Sustainable Economics and Finance Association (SEFiA) and the Economic Policy Research Foundation (TEPAV), Türkiye; Social Policy Research Centre (SPRC), Pakistan

Link to the SDGs

By implementing targeted policy strategies and strengthening regional cooperation, the project contributed directly to multiple Sustainable Development Goals:

- **SDG 8** – Sustained, inclusive, and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment, and decent work for all.
- **SDG 9** – Resilient infrastructure, inclusive and sustainable industrialization, and innovation.
- **SDG 13** – Urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts.
- **SDG 17** – Strengthening implementation means and revitalizing global partnerships for sustainable development.

Evaluation scope, objectives and questions

The objective of this final independent evaluation is to determine, as systematically and objectively as possible, the relevance, coherence, efficiency, effectiveness, and sustainability of the project in relation to its stated goals, objectives, and achievements. In line with General Assembly resolutions⁴⁶, the evaluation will also examine the extent to which the project mainstreamed UN cross-cutting issues such as gender equality, environmental sustainability, disability inclusion and the principles of “leaving no one behind” throughout its design and implementation.

Beyond meeting accountability requirements to the 2030 Agenda Sub-Fund, UNCTAD and project stakeholders, the evaluation will generate actionable learning by identifying good practices, challenges, and lessons that can inform the design and delivery of future interventions. It will provide evidence-based recommendations to strengthen project management, stakeholder engagement and the sustainability of results.

The evaluation will cover the entire implementation period of the project, from January 2022 to September 2025, and will address the following questions, framed according to the evaluation criteria set out in the United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG) Norms and Standards for Evaluation⁴⁷. These questions will be further refined in the inception report to ensure they are methodologically robust, context-specific, and fully aligned with best practices in evidence-based assessment.

Relevance

11. To what extent did the project’s design, objectives, and activities align with the guiding principles and priority areas of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development Sub-Fund and UNCTAD’s mandate and comparative advantages?
12. Did the project respond to the needs and development priorities of the beneficiary countries, as identified in national strategies and plans?

Coherence

13. How coherent was the project with UN system strategies (e.g., UNSDCF, CCAs), national and regional initiatives, and other development interventions in the countries? To what extent did UNCTAD identify and engage the right partners?

Efficiency

14. Were activities implemented according to plan, within budget and timeframe? What, if anything, could have been done differently?

⁴⁶ General Assembly resolutions and Secretary-General Bulletins: human rights (A/RES/60/1; A/RES/76/6), gender (A/RES/71/243), disability inclusion (A/RES/75/154) and environment (A/RES/76/L.75 and ST/SGB/2019/7).

⁴⁷ The UNEG Norms and Standards (2020) define and promote internationally recognised evaluation criteria, including relevance, coherence, effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability, and the integration of cross-cutting issues such as human rights and gender equality.

15. How adequate were project management and coordination arrangements in ensuring timely decision-making and adaptive responses to emerging challenges?

Effectiveness (including impact)

16. Have the activities achieved, or are likely to achieve, planned objectives as enunciated in the project document, including the SDG targets identified? Is there any evidence of (intended or unintended) outcomes?
17. What are key enabling and limiting factors with respect to the achievement of the project's results?

Sustainability

18. What measures were taken to ensure that project results, capacities and partnerships will continue beyond the project's end, and is there evidence of institutional or policy uptake?
19. Has the AGDPN and its online platform demonstrated potential for long-term viability, resource mobilisation, and continued engagement by stakeholders?

Mainstreaming of UN cross-cutting issues

20. How effectively were gender equality, environmental sustainability, disability inclusion, and "leaving no one behind" principles integrated into project design, implementation, and monitoring? What tangible results were achieved in these areas?

Evaluation methodology

The evaluation will be a transparent and participatory process, engaging the project's implementing entities and key stakeholders. It will adopt a theory-driven, utilisation-focused approach, guided by the project's results framework. Both qualitative and quantitative methods will be employed, with data triangulated from multiple sources to ensure objective conclusions and findings.

Data collection methods for this evaluation will include, but are not limited to:

- Desk review of project documents and relevant materials.
- Interviews with UNCTAD staff, a representative sample of project participants, partners, and other key stakeholders.
- Direct observation of meetings and project activities.
- Online surveys of project beneficiaries and other relevant stakeholders, as appropriate.
- Collection and analysis of relevant web and social media metrics related to project outputs.

As part of the desk review, which will inform the Inception Report, the evaluator will examine the project document along with additional materials such as mission reports, progress and financial reports, publications, and studies; both those produced under the project and those received from national

counterparts. A list of project beneficiaries, as well as other partners and stakeholders involved in the project, will be provided to the evaluator.

In the Inception Report, the evaluator will further elaborate on the evaluation methodology, specifying the focus and approach for the exercise. This will include developing tailored questions for different stakeholders based on a stakeholder analysis, designing the sampling strategy, and identifying the sources and methods for data collection.

The evaluator is required to submit a separate final list of interviewees as an annex to the evaluation report. The evaluator must ensure broad representation of stakeholders, including those in disadvantaged or minority positions, as appropriate.

Deliverables and Expected Outputs

The evaluation, based on its findings and assessments of the criteria outlined above, should draw conclusions, provide recommendations, and identify lessons learned from project implementation. Specifically, the evaluation should:

- Highlight what has been successful and can be replicated elsewhere;
- Identify specific achievements that provide additional value for money or relevant multiplier effects, as appropriate;
- Indicate shortcomings and constraints encountered during implementation, while identifying remaining challenges, gaps, and needs for future action;
- Offer pragmatic recommendations to strengthen future work, addressing beneficiaries' needs and creating synergies through collaboration with UNCTAD divisions, international organizations, development partners, and other relevant forums;
- Draw lessons of wider applicability for replication in other projects or countries;
- Review exit strategies, assessing how well they are tailored to the needs of member States and implementing entities.

All assessments must be supported by evidence, direct or indirect, and by well-substantiated reasoning. Recommendations should be relevant, specific, practical, actionable, and time-bound, directly informed by the evaluation findings.

Three key deliverables are expected from this evaluation:

- a) An inception report⁴⁸;
- b) A draft evaluation report; and
- c) The final evaluation report⁴⁹

The **Inception Report** should summarize the desk review and define the evaluation methodology, including the evaluation matrix, sampling strategy, stakeholder mapping, and data collection instruments. It will also clarify the exact focus, scope, and approach of the evaluation.

⁴⁸ The quality of the inception report should meet standards set out in UNEG Quality Checklist for Evaluation Terms of Reference and Inception Reports: http://www.uneval.org/papersandpubs/documentdetail.jsp?doc_id=608

⁴⁹ The quality of the evaluation report should meet standards set out in UNEG Quality Checklist for Evaluation Reports: <http://www.uneval.org/document/detail/607>

The final report of the evaluation must be composed of the following key elements:

- Executive summary;
- Introduction to the evaluation;
- A concise description of the project, including objectives, expected accomplishments, strategies, and key activities;
- A clear description of the evaluation objectives, scope, questions, and methodology;
- **Findings and assessments according to the criteria listed in Section IV of this ToR;**
- **An overall score for each evaluation criterion** using the rating system provided by the UN-DESA 2030 Agenda Sub-Fund of the UNPDF (see Annex 2). If a different scoring system is used, the evaluator should provide guidance on equivalence with the Sub-Fund scale;
- Conclusions and recommendations drawn from the assessments.
- Annexes, including a list of documents and stakeholders consulted, survey instruments, and this ToR.

Description of duties

The evaluation will be conducted by an independent evaluator and facilitated by the UNCTAD Independent Evaluation Unit (IEU), in close collaboration with the UNCTAD Project Team. The evaluator reports to the Chief of the IEU and carries out the evaluation under the guidance of IEU, in coordination with the UNCTAD Project Team. The evaluator is responsible for the overall design, data collection, analysis, and reporting of the evaluation, as outlined in this Terms of Reference.

The evaluator shall act independently, in accordance with the UNEG Ethical Guidelines⁵⁰, and in their personal capacity, not as a representative of any government or organization that could present a conflict of interest. The evaluator must have no prior involvement with the project or in any capacity linked to it. The evaluator is expected to adhere to UNEG norms and standards, as well as UNCTAD's Evaluation Policy⁵¹, ensuring the integration of human rights, gender equality, and disability perspectives wherever feasible. The evaluation should be comprehensive, fair, objective, and unbiased. Any difficulties, uncertainties, or concerns encountered during the evaluation must be reported immediately to the Chief of IEU for guidance or clarification.

The UNCTAD Project Team will support the evaluation by providing relevant documents for desk review, contact details of stakeholders, and any additional information requested by the evaluator. Project managers are responsible for ensuring senior management engagement throughout the evaluation and for providing timely feedback during the quality assurance and factual clarification process coordinated by IEU. The project team will also review and comment on the inception, draft, and final reports and will prepare a management response to the evaluation recommendations.

The UNCTAD Independent Evaluation Unit finalises the TOR and approves the selection of the evaluator. It reviews the evaluation methodology, clears the draft report, ensures quality assurance of the final report, and participates in the dissemination of the final report. Where relevant, IEU may also participate in data collection activities to support the evaluation process. Throughout the evaluation, IEU engages the project team to support the evaluation and validate the findings.

⁵⁰ <https://www.unevaluation.org/unevaluation/publications/unevaluation-ethical-guidelines-evaluation>

⁵¹ "Evaluation Policy" of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), June 2023. https://unctad.org/system/files/information-document/osg_evaluationpolicy2023_en.pdf

Qualifications and experience⁵²

Education: Advanced university degree in economics, trade, development, public administration, rural development, or related field.

Experience: At least 7 years of experience in conducting or managing evaluations, or in programme management, preferably on interventions in the areas of trade-related technical assistance and capacity building. Solid understanding of the UN context and the SDGs. Experience conducting public policy and/or development programme evaluations. Solid understanding of gender responsive and equity-focused evaluation design, data collection and analysis methods. Ability to develop clear, realistic, feasible recommendations.

Language: Fluency in oral and written English.

Conditions of Service

The evaluator will serve under a consultancy contract as detailed in the applicable United Nations rules and regulations. The evaluator will not be considered as staff member or official of the United Nations but shall abide by the relevant standards of conduct. The United Nations is entitled to all intellectual property and other proprietary rights deriving from this exercise.

Evaluation communication and dissemination plan

The final evaluation report and key findings will be disseminated widely to all relevant stakeholders including through the following channels:

- A copy of the final evaluation report and management response will be made available publicly on the UNCTAD website;
- A summary of the key evaluation findings, highlighting the results of the project and lessons learned, will be shared with UNCTAD member States as part of the annual reporting on evaluation activities; and
- Other communication briefs and products as appropriate.

⁵² The United Nations shall place no restrictions on the eligibility of men and women to participate in any capacity and under conditions of equality in its principal and subsidiary organs.

Annex ii. Project results framework

Logic Intervention	Indicators	Means of Verification
Objective <i>To strengthen regional partnership and national capacities of developing integrated policy strategies in selected countries to achieve the resilient, green and transformative development for 2030 Agenda</i>		
Outcome 1 Improved understanding of the policy researchers and makers of the project countries on: 1) the binding constraints in their resilient, green and transformative development; 2) China's policy experience in strengthening economic resilience and advancing HQD	IA 1.1 <i>Baseline: inadequate knowledge on China's policy experience in strengthening economic resilience and advancing HQD.⁵³</i> <i>Target: at least 70% of the participants from project countries in regional conference report improved understanding of China's policy experience in strengthening economic resilience and advancing HQD and at least 70% of government participants recognize that China's policy experience may provide a reference point in their policy formulation process.</i>	This indicator will be verified based on the survey conducted at the end of regional conference.
	IA 1.2 <i>Baseline: none available comprehensive analysis on the binding constraints of project countries.</i> <i>Targets: at least 70% of government participants in regional consultation meeting confirm the relevance of the analysis of diagnostic reports in formulating integrated policy strategies to pursue resilient, green and transformative development aiming to achieve 2030 Agenda.</i>	This indicator will be verified based on the survey conducted at the end of regional consultation meeting.
Output 1.1 (Year 1) Eight policy papers produced on China's policy experience in strengthening economic resilience and advancing HQD that covers the policy areas of public fiscal policy, monetary policy, trade policy (including Regional Value Chains), investment policy, innovation policy, financial system reform (including public development banks and regulatory policy), industrial policy, boosting domestic consumption (including "dual-circulation" strategy), and overall analysis on green developmental state. The dimension of Gender equality and poverty alleviation will be included.		
Output 1.2 (Year 1) Four comprehensive diagnostic reports drafted (each country will have one) on the binding constraints of project countries in pursuing resilient, green and transformative development and dynamic regional cooperation including trade. The purpose of diagnostic studies is to identify the key challenges or binding constraints. The dimension of gender equality and the vulnerable groups will be included through a policy paper that covers the issue analysis for four countries.		
Output 1.3 (Year 1) One regional conference (3 days) held in China to discuss China's policy experience in strengthening economic resilience and advancing HQD, based on the eight policy papers produced under output 1.1. About 100 participants from China, project countries, and other interested countries may be expected. Given the uncertainty of the pandemic, in case the in-person conference proved not applicable in China, the project will		

⁵³ For example, based on the Google scholar search. There's very little research work done in English on this topic.

Output 1.4 (Year 2) Based on four comprehensive diagnostic reports (output 1.2), one regional consultation organized in a project country (3 days) to discuss the binding constraints of project countries. About 60 participants from project countries may be expected. Gender equality and development needs of vulnerable groups (leaving no one behind) will be included in meeting agenda. The women representative will be required for panel discussion, if appropriate. And women participants will be invited and funded to attend the consultation meeting.		
Outcome 2 Improved national capacities of the project countries in formulating integrated development strategies and building dynamic regional cooperation including trade.	IA 2.1 <i>Baseline: none available integrated policy strategies (or existing strategies need to be strengthened) on resilient, green and transformative development</i> <i>Target: at least 70% of the government participants to national consultation report their endorsement of the policy recommendations that are included in the 4 strategies papers for respective countries.</i>	The indicator will be based on the survey that will be conducted at the end of national consultation and, after the consultation, the written comments and recognition letters/emails received by UNCTAD from national government stakeholders showing the ownership of the delivered policy strategies.
	IA 2.2 <i>Baseline: inadequate capacity of policy researchers and makers on developing and implementing integrated policy strategies for resilient, green and transformative development.⁵⁴</i> <i>Target: at least 70% of the participants to on-line training report the improved knowledge and understanding on their national constraints and enhanced capacity in formulating the integrated policy strategies for resilient, green, and transformative development.</i>	This indicator will be based on pre- and post- training survey with participants identifying their understanding regarding the policy strategies towards resilient, green and transformative development.
Output 2.1 (Year 2) Four integrated policy strategies reports, which are different from diagnostic analysis, delivered (each country will have one) that cover comprehensive policy areas for project countries on how to unlock binding constraints to achieve resilient, green and transformative development and dynamic regional cooperation including trade. The policy areas covered by strategies report might vary among project countries to accommodate local circumstance, but generally may include macroeconomic, finance, industrial, trade, investment, employment, innovation, regulation, etc. The dimension of gender equality and the vulnerable groups will be included.		
Output 2.2 (Year 2-3) Four national policy consultations (2 days each) (each country will have one) organized with high/senior level government officials on the relevance of the policy strategies and how to translate them into policy actions. About 40 participants, including policymakers, policy researchers, private sectors and civil societies, for each consultation may be expected.		

⁵⁴ Given that various key structural challenges remain unaddressed for years, now with recent economic shock and the global trend of green transformation which may add the complexity to the persistent challenges, an integrated and innovative policy strategies might be urgently needed, which further require the improved capacity and rethinking on policy making.

Output 2.3 (Year 2)

One on-line course (12 days) organized for policy researchers and makers of project countries on resilient, green and transformative development and regional cooperation including trade, supported by UNCTAD Virtual Institute. The output 1.1, 1.2 and 2.1 will be the key inputs for compiling the training materials. But other sources including academic research findings, policy research papers from international organizations will also be referred.

Outcome 3 Established Asian Green Development Partnership Network (AGDPN) among Asian countries for experience sharing, policy coordination and economic cooperation at regional level	IA 3.1 <i>Baseline: none existing Asian regional partnership network focusing on green development</i> <i>Target: ToR of the AGDPN is developed and endorsed among the participants in the regional conference meeting and the AGDPN is successfully launched at the meeting with the majority support from relevant country representatives.</i>	The indicator will be based on the conference report reflecting the endorsement of the ToR regarding establishing AGDPN at the regional conference.
	IA 3.2 <i>Baseline: none on-line platform to facilitate policy coordination and economic cooperation on green development in Asian region</i> <i>Target: an on-line platform on green development in Asian region is established that materialize AGDPN and enhance the sustainability of the partnership network beyond project life circle.</i>	The indicator will be based on the data regarding the visits, views, downloads and comments regarding the on-line platform.

Output 3.1 (Year 3):

A high-level regional conference (3 days) organized to launch Asian Green Development Partnership Network (AGDPN) on policy coordination and economic cooperation among Asian countries regarding resilient, green and transformative development and dynamic regional cooperation including trade. Apart from project countries, some other Asian developing countries might also be invited (including those involved in previous PDF and DA projects). About 120 participants are expected to attend the conference.

Output 3.2 (Year 3):

An on-line platform established to materialize AGDPN and enhance its sustainability.

Output 3.3 (Year 3):

The on-line platform maintained and strategies or initiatives developed to enhance the effectiveness and regional exposure of the AGDPN.

Annex iii. Evaluation Matrix

Evaluation Questions	Criteria		Key Issue	Judgement Criteria	Means of Verification (source/method)
1. To what extent did the project's design, objectives, and activities align with the guiding principles and priority areas of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development Sub-Fund and UNCTAD's mandate and comparative advantages?	Relevance	Alignment of project design	- The project objectives and activities are explicitly and logically linked to relevant 2030 Agenda principles and SDG targets. - The project design reflects UNCTAD's mandate and leverages its comparative advantages in policy analysis, capacity development, and regional cooperation. - Strategic alignment is clearly documented and evident in project documentation and stakeholder perceptions.	Document review	
2. To what extent did the project respond to the needs and development priorities of the beneficiary countries, as identified in national strategies and plans?	Relevance		Matching needs and priorities	- Project objectives and outputs are consistent with national development priorities and sector strategies. - Beneficiary countries and stakeholders recognize the project as relevant and responsive to their needs. - Evidence of alignment is found in national strategies, plans, and stakeholder feedback.	Document review Key informant interviews Online survey
3. How coherent was the project with UN system strategies (e.g., UNSDCF, CCAs), national and regional initiatives, and other development interventions in the countries? To what extent did UNCTAD identify and engage the right partners?	Coherence	Project fit; Validity of stakeholder analysis	- The project design demonstrates clear complementarity with UN system strategies and avoids duplication. - Synergies with other national, regional, and international initiatives are evident. - Stakeholder mapping and engagement strategies are appropriate and comprehensive, involving relevant actors	Document review Key informant interviews Online survey	

			at national and regional levels.		
4. Were activities implemented according to plan, within budget and timeframe? What, if anything, could have been done differently?	Efficiency		Project planning; Human and financial resources	- Activities were delivered as planned, within budget, and according to the established timeline. - Any deviations were well-justified and effectively managed. - Implementation mechanisms were cost-efficient and adaptive.	Document review Key informant interviews
5. How adequate were project management and coordination arrangements in ensuring timely decision-making and adaptive responses to emerging challenges?	Efficiency	Project governance and changes over time	- Governance structures and management processes were functional, responsive, and adapted effectively to changing circumstances. - Decision-making was timely, inclusive, and facilitated effective problem-solving. - Roles and responsibilities were clear and efficiently executed.	Document review Key informant interviews	
6. Have the activities achieved, or are likely to achieve, planned objectives as enunciated in the project document, including the SDG targets identified? Is there any evidence of (intended or unintended) outcomes?	Effectiveness, impact		Project short, medium, and long-term results	- There is demonstrable progress toward short-, medium-, and long-term results. - Outputs are of high quality and have contributed to expected outcomes. - Evidence exists of positive unintended outcomes or early signs of impact.	Document review Key informant interviews Online survey
7. What are key enabling and limiting factors with respect to the achievement of the project's results?	Effectiveness	Response to the "why" and "how" questions	- Enabling factors (e.g., political will, institutional capacity, partnerships) have demonstrably facilitated result achievement. - Limiting factors (e.g., contextual, institutional, operational) are clearly identified and their effects understood. - The project's response to these factors is	Document review Key informant interviews Online survey	

				documented and assessed.	
8. What measures were taken to ensure that project results, capacities and partnerships will continue beyond the project's end, and is there evidence of institutional or policy uptake?	Sustainability	Uptake	• Sustainability strategies were embedded in project design and implementation. • Evidence exists of institutionalization of results, policy uptake, or continued use of tools and knowledge products. • Partnerships or capacities built are likely to endure post-project.		Document review Key informant interviews Online survey
9. Has the AGDPN and its online platform demonstrated potential for long-term viability, resource mobilisation, and continued engagement by stakeholders?	Sustainability			Platform maturity • The platform shows signs of institutional maturity (e.g., governance, user base, resources). • There is evidence of ongoing or planned resource mobilization. • Stakeholders demonstrate continued engagement and value from participation.	Document review Key informant interviews Online survey Network analysis
10. How effectively were gender equality, environmental sustainability, disability inclusion, and "leaving no one behind" principles integrated into project design, implementation, and monitoring? What tangible results were achieved in these areas?		Cross-cutting issues	Gender equality, environmental sustainability, disability inclusion, and "leaving no one behind" principles	• Cross-cutting principles were explicitly integrated in project design and implementation. • Activities and outputs reflect meaningful consideration of these principles. • Tangible and documented results (e.g., gender-sensitive analyses, inclusive participation, environmental safeguards) were achieved.	Document review Key informant interviews Online survey

Annex iv. – Rating system and Summary of Evaluation findings

The evaluator should score each evaluation criterion [i.e. relevance, coherence, efficiency, effectiveness (including impact), sustainability, and the mainstreaming of UN cross-cutting issues] using the below rating system.

Rating	Description
Highly Satisfactory (HS)	<i>The project performed well overall against a particular evaluation criterion with no short comings.</i>
Satisfactory (S)	<i>The project performed well overall against a particular evaluation criterion with but had minor short comings.</i>
Moderately Satisfactory (MS)	<i>The project performed moderately well against the particular criterion (performing satisfactorily against almost half of the evaluation questions) and has short comings and room for improvement.</i>
Somehow Satisfactory (S S)	<i>The project performed poorly overall against majority of the evaluation questions and there is need to take steps to improve the project aspect being evaluated.</i>
Not Satisfactory (NS)	<i>The project performed poorly in almost all the evaluation questions and there is need for immediate and significant changes to be made to improve project outcomes.</i>
Unable to Assess (UA)	<i>The available information does not allow an assessment of the level of outcome achievements.</i>

Criterion	Rating
Relevance	HS
Coherence	MS
Efficiency	MS
Effectiveness	S
Sustainability	SS
Mainstreaming cross-cutting issues	MS

Annex v. Interviews

The evaluation interviewed 12 stakeholders through interviews. In accordance with UNEG ethical guidelines and to safeguard the anonymity of evaluation participants, their names are not published in this report.

Annex vi: List of documents reviewed

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