

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”

Management Response¹

June 2026

UNCTAD/OSG/INF/2026/7

¹ **Note:** This document considers each recommendation that is addressed to UNCTAD, discussing them in the order they are presented in the evaluation report. This is done in the format of the management response matrix and includes:

- a. The recommendation number and text copied from the evaluation report;
- b. Indication of whether the recommendation is accepted fully, partially, or rejected;
- c. Description of actions to be taken, with comments as required on the conditions to be met during implementation, or on reasons leading to a partial acceptance or rejection of a recommendation;
- d. The responsible party for implementing the action/s;
- e. The timeframe or schedule for implementation, if required;
- f. Indication if and what resources are required for implementing the recommendation.

Management Response Matrix

Recommendation 1

Evaluation Recommendation (a)		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.
Management response (b) Accepted, partially accepted or rejected		Partially accepted For this project, the specific policy problem being addressed was very clearly articulated and remains a core concern for a large number of developing countries. Hence, the project was clearly "demand-led". This needs to be differentiated more usefully from actual country selection for given project proposals/designs and budgets within prescribed donor requirements for "demand-led" policy issues. With regard to "country scoping" in this context, the recommendation for stronger upfront alignment (particularly between project design and country-level uptake pathways, capacities, and partnerships) is clearly relevant and well taken in the case of this project. However, the connection between improved logframes (including the Theory of Change) and the project's analytical nature is not evident. It is unclear how strengthening these planning tools would address issues related to the project's analytical focus, or why this would be considered a specific response to the concerns raised.
Management Plan	Actions to be taken, and/or comments about partial acceptance or rejection (c)	Actions to be taken: The demand-driven nature of project designs is one of the principles of UNCTAD technical cooperation. DGDS will apply the demand-driven approach in the selection of beneficiary countries and ensure the active engagement of stakeholders. TCS, in its role of reviewer of project documents, will request the implementing Division to explicitly elaborate country demand in the project document and submit written justifications showing country demand or interest in the project.
	Responsible unit(s) (d)	UNCTAD DGDS, UNCTAD Technical Cooperation Section (TCS).
	Timeframe (e)	2026/27
	Resources required (Y or N) (f)	N

Recommendation 2

Evaluation Recommendation (a)		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).
Management response (b) Accepted , partially accepted or rejected		Accepted While the creation of relevant networks in this context (green industrialisation in developing countries) advanced quite substantively over the project's duration, this recommendation is well taken and fully accepted. Further exploration of possible pathways forward will depend on available budgets.
Management Plan	Actions to be taken, and/or comments about partial acceptance or rejection (c)	Designate UNCTAD/DGDS staff to the task of developing integration of planned AGDPN with existing communities of practice.
	Responsible unit(s) (d)	UNCTAD DGDS
	Timeframe (e)	2026/27
	Resources required (Y or N) (f)	Y (DGDS staff resources)

Recommendation 3

Evaluation Recommendation (a)		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.
Management response (b) Accepted , partially accepted or rejected		Accepted This is fully accepted from the point of view of this project and has been part of previous suggestions to the donor in final project reports. It is not necessarily clear that the specific difficulties encountered by this project also apply to other TC work in DGDS.

		Nevertheless, lessons learnt in this regard from this project will be taken on board.
Management Plan	Actions to be taken, and/or comments about partial acceptance or rejection (c)	DGDS will strengthen implementation planning by clearly defining milestones, assigning owners to critical-path outputs, and maintaining a structured risk register with regular updates. We will conduct routine progress reviews and apply timely course-corrections when deviations are identified, and trigger management attention when critical thresholds are breached.
	Responsible unit(s) (d)	UNCTAD DGDS, UNCTAD TCS.
	Timeframe (e)	2026/27
	Resources required (Y or N) (f)	N

Recommendation 4

Evaluation Recommendation (a)		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 organise dedicated “Policy Clinics” to work directly with counterpart ministries to turn recommendations into draft measures, concept notes, or specific regulatory language ready for consideration.
Management response (b) Accepted , partially accepted or rejected		Partially accepted Proactive communication and implementation strategy from inception is fine and has, to a considerable extent, been observed by the project team for this project, in the form of concrete policy road maps, based on “structured” engagement. If projects, such as this, should also engage in “policy clinics” to advise relevant national ministries on an ongoing basis on the implementation of policy recommendations/packages resulting from the project, this should be reflected in project budgets including ongoing external advisory roles beyond project duration, and based on full agreement on this by beneficiary country counterparts.
Management Plan	Actions to be taken, and/or comments	DGDS will adopt a proactive communication and implementation approach from the project design phase and ensure sufficient resources are allocated to communication activities.

	about partial acceptance or rejection (c)	
	Responsible unit(s) (d)	UNCTAD DGDS
	Timeframe (e)	2026/27
	Resources required (Y or N) (f)	N

Recommendation 5

Evaluation Recommendation (a)		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 mobilisation, ongoing partner engagement, integration into existing institutional structures, capacity-building for local ownership, and mechanisms to sustain results over time.
Management response (b) Accepted , partially accepted or rejected		Accepted See above, recommendation 2. This seems repetitive for the AGDPN, while the other main “sustainability mechanism”, in the context of this project - the e-course on green industrialisation in Asia - has gone ahead and has pathways to further development beyond this project, based on appropriate resource plans and sustainability considerations.
Management Plan	Actions to be taken, and/or comments about partial acceptance or rejection (c)	DGDS will adopt, in consultation with TCS, a proactive approach to ensuring sustainability of planned project outcomes through adequate resource mobilisation.
	Responsible unit(s) (d)	UNCTAD DGDS, UNCTAD TCS.
	Timeframe (e)	2026/27

	Resources required (Y or N) (f)	N
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Recommendation 6

Evaluation Recommendation (a)		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.
Management response (b) Accepted, partially accepted or rejected		Accepted In the case of this project, guidelines on disability inclusion and LNOB principles were implemented only after the start of this project, hence could not have been included in relevant ToRs. In regard to a "must" on required disaggregated data please specify "where available" since this obviously is a major problem, not specific to this project. The leap to "strict compliance with accessibility standards for events and digital products" is not clear.
Management Plan	Actions to be taken, and/or comments about partial acceptance or rejection (c)	DGDS will ensure full design integration of project requirements in regard to gender, disability inclusion and LNOB. Furthermore, as of May 2026, UNCTAD has a new UN Disability Inclusion Strategy (UNDIS) focal point. DGDS will communicate accordingly and designate division staff to coordinate.
	Responsible unit(s) (d)	UNCTAD DGDS, Gender Focal Point, UNCTAD TCS, UNCTAD OSG
	Timeframe (e)	2026/27
	Resources required (Y or N) (f)	Cost estimates not available